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Criminal Masculinities and the Newgate Novel

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in English

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Abstract

This dissertation builds upon the seminal work of Keith Hollingsworth in his *The Newgate Novel, 1830-1847* and expands analysis of the contentious Victorian subgenre into the realm of studies in masculinities. Outside of critical opinion that the novels were defined by the reactionary and conservative reception of Victorian reviewers who saw the novels as morally outrageous and socially dangerous, the genre, as this dissertation argues, was markedly concerned with specifically male readerships. Victorian critics were concerned about the effects reading criminal literature had on boys becoming men, and, accordingly, this dissertation argues that the reformatory political and social climate of the 1830s and 40s was also a great period of examination and literary reflection upon the growth of the boy into the man. This dissertation considers the major canon of Newgate novels identified by Hollingsworth and includes chapters on William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood*, Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Paul Clifford* and *Eugene Aram*, Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* and *Barnaby Rudge*, and William Harrison Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*. The dissertation examines how and why each of these texts is concerned with depicting, in often meticulous detail, the growth of a young male protagonist into manhood in a society that demands or necessitates his transformation into criminal. As masculinities and crime are conflated, masculinities are often essentially criminal, and criminalities often masculine. The dissertation engages with James Eli Adams' and John Tosh's writings on Victorian masculinities, ultimately discovering that the various masculinities depicted in Newgate novels were against established programs of self-discipline and "gentlemanliness", instead favouring zones of literal and figurative illegality, alternative gender expression, queerness and incarceration. The novels dramatise criminal dress, male bodies, homosocial bands/bonds and societies, the penal spectacle, father-son relationships, and

jailbreaking, demonstrating a need for the expression of masculinities that transcend programs of discipline and heteronormativity into the often fraught and dangerous realms of criminal-masculine excarceral *jouissance*, as feats of excarcerality become expressions of alternative masculinities.

Keywords

Newgate novel, masculinities, gender, criminology, Victorian novel, Victorian masculinities, queer theory, excarceration, William Godwin, Charles Dickens, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, William Harrison Ainsworth

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Introduction

“A rope so charming a zone”

Highwaymen: the very term implies transit. It conjures moonlit images of movement on open roads and the criminal danger inherent in travel. It paints images, more specifically and fancifully speaking, of moustachioed bandits armed to the teeth, disguised thugs and gangs of men halting carriages and stealing cargo, while the passengers inside shriek or are forced into submission by a deftly-handled pistol.

The idea of the highwayman is rife with transition and transgression. Criminal men, disguised by darkness of night or alias, or merely riding boldly through the brush on horseback by light of day to threaten and steal, or even murder, could be riding the great variable unknowns of transit. And the backways and alleys, hideaways and undergrounds of the urban labyrinth—when those are revealed to be just as treacherous and fraught as the highway, there is no place of transit safe for the citizen, no path or byway safe from the shadow of the thug or the bandit.

Transit into urban shadow or country lane is personal and legal risk, the possibility of theft and harm. These criminal men haunt the shadow and the lane, passing more deftly and more capably than subjects without crime, subjects who remain outside the transgression—and the pure capability and knowledge of transition on which criminality is founded. The highwayman, or the simple thug, knows these shadows and lanes, the maps to the urban labyrinth and the certain danger of the twilight countryside, better than any other, and these are the ideas that underlie the highwayman, the robber, the fence, the bravo and the murderer.

Because there are so many subsets and terminologies legal, literary, gendered and cultural like the above into which “the criminal” can expand, the idea of the highwayman, or really the criminal in transit, also relies on a fracturing and multiplication of ideas about men. Victorian

fictional depictions of the specifically male criminal rely on an array of ideas and conceptualisations of which the highwayman is only one example. The highwayman can be dashing and handsome, an object of readerly and female heteronormative desire whose well-dressed exploits are conceived as romantic and (not unproblematically) heroic. The highwayman can also be a ruthless plunderer and murderer interested only in financial gain. There are thick-necked, bullish drunkards, singing flash ditties at the village tavern while swains, prostitutes and readers delight in the hearing and the jovial enjoyability of the picaro. There are errant apprentices whose neglect of their ordained craft destines them for no use whatsoever but to hang at the scaffold. There are orphan boys forced into gangs for survival. These orphans may be victims of an unbalanced society and economy and the sightless legal system that creates and punishes them, or they may be deliciously handy at their profession, little thugs-in-training who delight in the chase and the conquest of theft. Criminals—shockingly—can be gentlemen masquerading in high society who retire from the ball to their den where they are hailed by their rambunctious low-born comrades. There are noble sons cut off by perversions of inheritance by evil uncles and half-brothers, cast into a life of misery and crime from which they will escape, blazingly, at the behest of the perfectly-timed narrative, though they will have never lost that innate nobility and gentlemanliness of comportment and action all through their criminal life. The criminal-masculinity argues that “gentlemanly” comportment can facilitate both success in the criminal band and the revelation of high-class birth and wealth, two otherwise contradictory class- and gender-based currents.

Early Victorian typologies of criminal men rely on transgression and transition in social roles, professional tasks and personal identities ascribed to men and the understanding of masculinities in the context of the era. The orphan boy ensnared by gang activity is in transition

to criminal man. The highwayman, really the lost highborn son cut off from rightful inheritance, is in transition to the revelation of his true high-born identity. The apprentice with the certain talent for crime is on his way to Newgate and death at the noose. The criminal is incarcerated and exarcerated, imprisoned or escaping. His freedoms and identities are constantly in flux.

These fictional criminal typologies, and the texts in which they circulate, rely on narrativisations of male biography, inheritance, profession and identity. Cultural, literary and theoretical ideas about Victorian masculinities reveal themselves in conjunction with and set against the currents of criminal representation in fiction. These gendered ideas of the man in transition, or the man who transgresses his socially and legally ascribed roles and performed identities—or even the man who becomes extremely adept in performances that manipulate these roles and identities—are what Victorian authors and readers were concerned with during the trend of the Newgate novel in the 1830s and 40s.

Critics study the Newgate novel in the wake of Keith Hollingsworth's seminal 1963 text *The Newgate Novel, 1830-1847*, which remains the only book-length examination of the Victorian subgenre. In that examination Hollingsworth offers a two-tiered definition of "the Newgate novel" that has generally remained the authoritative definition in subsequent scholarly considerations of the "school", its adherents and its critics. Firstly, Hollingsworth declares, the "single element common to the Newgate novels [is] the use of a criminal as an important character" (14). I believe we can extend the rule of the criminal protagonist to generic fact, as this is true of all of the Newgate novels considered in this study. Outside this certainty, the term Newgate novel can be "misleading to the casual reader because it suggests a type or a school with internal qualities giving it a unitary character, whereas the external reasons for the grouping

are the more substantial ones” (14). Namely, Hollingsworth further explores, the Newgate school was one defined by its virulent critical reception:

What firmly draws the Newgate novels together is that most of them met strong opposition on the ground of morality or taste. Other faults might be alleged against them, but the general objection was that they familiarized their readers with vice and crime, perhaps to a degree socially dangerous. We are dealing with a school defined by its contemporary critics. (14)

Newgate novels frequently drew their protagonists from the many editions and printings of the *Newgate Calendar*, Hollingsworth also tells us in his defining passages on the Newgate novel, and Donald Rumbelow in *The Triple Tree: Newgate, Tyburn and Old Bailey* elaborates on the many criminal sources potential Newgate writers had at their disposal, including the “various versions of the *Newgate Calendar*, which had developed on from the *Tyburn Chronicle* and *The Malefactor’s Bloody Register*, the most popular being the Knapp and Baldwin edition and that of the Reverend Wilkinson” (141). Beth Kalikoff in *Murder and Moral Decay in Victorian Literature* describes the culture of “gallows literature” that pervaded the Victorian era—there was, perhaps, not even a need for a singular source such as the *Newgate Calendar* for authors of what would be recognised as the “Newgate novel” when the gallows literature of the 1830s and onward placed a fanatical eye on crime and murder in magazines, newspaper articles, drama, broadsheets and street ballads (Kalikoff 7); the early Victorian publishing climate and imaginations public and private proved the period fecund for thinking about crime and creative ways in which to represent it.

The figure of the criminal-hero emerged triumphant:

Claude Duval, Dick Turpin, and several others became the centers of attractive legend; they shone brightly in the thoughts of boys, and stirred the imagination of men who lived in narrow

rooms and dirty alleys. Turpin and Jack Sheppard, for particular reasons, were the folk heroes of poor city boys in the middle of the nineteenth century. (Hollingsworth 6-7)

Criminal protagonists, whether voluntarily or involuntarily embroiled in crime for survival, had never seemed so ripe for the readerly imagination. These Newgate novels are also tied particularly to the gendered reading audience of boys and young men, as the reactionary response in the special case of Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* proved—questions of exposure to criminal literature and the sympathy for (and identification with) criminal protagonists incited panic that such reading material would persuade boys into criminal “careers” (see chapter 4).

Newgate novels were both externally and internally representational of male reading; externally due to the critical concerns they raised, and internally due to a repetitive fascination with fictionalised scenes of boyhood reading. Young Paul Clifford, *Oliver Twist* and *Jack Sheppard* all read the criminal literature they inhabit, informing bizarre and compact mises en abyme self-reflexive of their own time and place within popular subgenre and the young male lives these texts were representing and affecting. In these novels it is commonplace to receive “reading lists” of the broadsides, criminal histories and romances that the boy protagonist consumes, and the result is a subgenre particularly self-referencing and surprisingly sensitive about the particular place reading has in the development of the young male-gendered subject on his way to a “finished” or decided manhood/masculinity. Reading is formative and problematic; *Oliver*, for instance, rejects the criminal reading Fagin provides him, while Paul and Jack receive the reading as matter of course. Nevertheless, the picturesque scenes of boyhood reading common to the Newgate novel position the subgenre inside of itself at the same time it stresses the importance of criminal reading in the formative period of the male life cycle, and urges

audiences to recognise the connection between masculine kinds of reading and the subgenre that was unfolding in popular real time.

The Newgate novel did not spring to life spontaneously from the cavalcade of prison ordinaries' accounts and bloody registers; it was informed, as Hollingsworth points out, by the long precedent of picaresque literature in Europe and by the Gothic novel (15). Bunting from *Eugene Aram* is a character cut from immediately familiar and recognisable picaresque cloth, while excursions into skeleton-riddled caves and banditti-haunted forests decorate the Newgate novel with description that would fit seamlessly in the pages of a Gothic tale. Additionally, Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) and Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1743) had already set a long-established precedent for the particularly English criminal novel; Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) is a foundational Newgate text to which Newgate novels such as *Jack Sheppard* and *Catherine* frequently refer. Stephen Halliday considers these three texts as precursors to the Newgate novel, with the Newgate novel smoothly bridging the criminal historical fiction of the eighteenth century with the crime and sensation novels that would follow in the late Victorian era (259). Although crime fictions bearing great similarities to the defining features of Newgate novels had already existed for a hundred years and more—fictions with criminal protagonists, fictions that featured extended depictions of the titular prison itself, fictions concerned with sensational crime and picaresque roguery—the major difference, once again, was the critical response and popular reception of these “new” crime fictions of the 1830s and 40s:

The simple fact that controversy developed raises a question. When the Newgate subject was so old and so familiar, why should it attract a new kind of attention, genuinely hostile, after 1830? One answer is that what came to be done had real novelty: the new books were not repetitions. Although *Jonathan Wild* was a narrative about an eighteenth-century gangster, its

real subject was the ‘greatness’ of men great in the eyes of the world; the new books found interest in the criminal himself. The other answer is that the times had changed: *Moll Flanders* published as new in 1840 would not have been welcomed. The Newgate novels appeared in the era of the Reform Act of 1832, when social change was both swift and deep. (Hollingsworth 15-6)

Hollingsworth hints at two major differences which later critics pick up on: first, the “psychological” emphasis on the criminal as individual, and second, the immediate sociopolitical context of the 1830s and 40s, including the periods leading up to them.

Furthermore, Juliet John views the difference between the criminal fictions of the eighteenth century and the early Victorian Newgate novels as aesthetic and moral:

The fact that these novels attracted such attention has much to do with the shifting grounds of morality and taste which underpinned the transition from a ‘Romantic’ to a ‘Victorian’ era; the individualism and amorality of the protagonists of these novels was disparaged largely because the Romantic age of heroes and rebellion was being replaced by a time when social responsibility and duty were the watchwords. (li)

Frederick C. Cabot might agree, citing the “general decline of eighteenth-century didactic satire” in favour of “preaching moral truths” (405) being ostensible and major differences between the earlier criminal fictions and the Victorianisation of the criminal-protagonist narrative. There were reasons behind such preaching, as it was clear these Victorian crime novels were politically sensitive in a time of great legal upheaval. Bulwer’s Newgate fictions immediately precede the Reform Act of 1832, while Dickens’ “Newgate novels”—considered as such against his voiced wishes—rue the injustices of the New Poor Law and the gothic mob mentality behind political upheaval and human tendencies towards the spectatorship of penal practice and criminal

punishment. The aestheticisation of crime posed grievous political and moral questions for Victorians of the early period, and the enjoyment and consumption of such aestheticisation required the intense public and critical attention towards what these crime fictions represented as a dubious “school” whose members had not planned or wished such a union in the critical mind.

There had, in addition to the long history of the picaresque, been an outstanding tradition of a culture fascinated with the trappings and the spectatorship of crime. There was a consumer culture surrounding crime and punishment in the context of the Newgate novel, and “Trials and executions excited, of course, the grisly appetite of souvenir hunters....The universal feeling for mementoes, which signifies their aid to the imagination, is very close to the foundations of magic: the hangman’s rope, cut into small pieces, was always eagerly bought” (Hollingsworth 8). The last confessions of the hanged became pamphlets, often recorded by the hangman, and the life and thoughts of the criminal were publishable text and consumer collectibles. Thomas Mathiesen’s idea of the synopticon comes in handy in describing the role the newly-developed mass media played in the public’s access to, and enjoyment of, the criminal figure:

As a striking parallel to the panoptical process, and concurring in detail with its historical development, we have seen the development of a unique and enormously extensive system enabling *the many to see and contemplate the few*, so that the tendency for the few to see and supervise the many is contextualized by a highly significant counterpart. I am thinking, of course, of the...mass media. (219)

Mathiesen complicates Foucault’s thinking that the law makes the punishment of the criminal the most hidden part of the penal process by taking into consideration the mass transmission of the depiction of the criminal into multiform media:

news about prisoners, escapes, robberies, murder – are the best pieces of news which synopticon... can find. Inside synopticon, which devours this news, the material is purged of everything but the purely criminal – what was originally a small segment of a human being becomes the whole human being – whereupon the material is hurled back into the open society. (231)

The criminal culture surrounding the emergence of the Newgate novel understood and enjoyed its proliferations and fetishised (in the pamphlet, in the novel, in the purchasable length of rope that hanged the criminal) media forms, and these forms were what communicated reduced ideas about the personal identity in which those identities are primarily understood only as “criminal”. This process, made possible by synopticon, is seen at numerous points in the Newgate novel itself. Caleb Williams despairs at his reduction to (falsely accused) criminal in the emergent synoptic context of the criminal pamphlet. Paul Clifford reads news reports of his own crimes—and the notoriety with which those reports have endowed him. Jack Sheppard discovers placards attached to the sites of his escapes, and overhears the chatter of women eagerly lining up to purchase narrative accounts of his exploits. Newgate novels were reflective of the synoptic processes Mathiesen describes, and at their most vociferous, they decry the replacement of the human individual with the monotonous idea of the mere “criminal”.

The early Victorian context was thus marked by the mass media consumption and fetishisation of the criminal marked in problematised contest with politically-conscious liberal thinking and conservative moralistic backlash. The moral centre of debate was often the idea of criminal as individual and the intersection of the individual-criminal and policy—when and where is the criminal created? Is the criminal individual and should he be depicted/aestheticised as one? Does the consumption of criminal media create the criminal? Does policy create the

criminal? These questions are variously answered and taken up by individual novels of the Newgate phenomenon, whose thematic centre, time and time again, is the rite of passage of the boy into manhood. The sites in which these questions are variously asked and answered—either more or less definitively—are sites inhabited by the orphan boy and his scene of criminal reading, the evil uncle and the half-brother, the demonic leader of the gang, and the noble inheritance dangling tantalisingly out of reach while presentiments of the noose haunt the protagonist and his criminal friends and enemies.

The early Victorian context also ruminated on the mortal spectacle, fraught with the problems of its spectatorship. This mortal theme of crime and punishment was further problematised by “quasi-erotic” depictions of male corporeality, as Gatrell writes, invoking an air from *The Beggar’s Opera*:

Another kind of gratification was evinced by those women who attended scaffolds so avidly.

We have seen that their shrieks and excitement mystified polite observers, so offensive were they to conventional views of femininity. But the quasi-erotic fantasies put upon the brave man facing death (impotent in his subjection to death, we note) was well understood by earlier generations:

Beneath the left ear so fit but a cord

(A rope so charming a zone is!),

The youth in his cart hath the air of a lord,

And we cry, “There dies an Adonis!” (74)

Gatrell contradicts himself somewhat in considering the sexual potency of the male body subjected to death—in the above passage he reads the male body as “impotent”, but later considers how the penis, in eighteenth-century accounts of hanged men, often became erect, or

even may have ejaculated, during execution (46). Male sexuality and desiring is entangled in the penal process and in criminality and its spectatorship. Heteronormative female desire towards the criminal male subject is also a recurring theme of the Newgate novel. It is a normalising and eventually redemptive force for the transgressive criminal male in *Paul Clifford*, but problematic in *Eugene Aram* and *Jack Sheppard* where female desire for the criminal male is destructive for the female and adds to the reduction of the criminal from individual into narrativised criminal (see chapters 2 and 4).

There is no doubt that the Newgate novel is concerned with the corporeality of the criminal, often reading understandings of an individual's brand of masculinity via the cypher of the body. This is also physiognomic, probably borrowing from theories such as Browne's and Lavater's and prefiguring the phrenology of Lombroso. In the Newgate novel we receive lavish and extended considerations of the male body and dress—buttons strain and waistcoats compress as the body of the male criminal is read by the narrator. This descriptive tendency reveals the importance of the body, not only in the understanding of individual modes and typologies of masculinity but in their relation and role in criminal performance and success. There is also no doubt that the “zone” of the “rope”—the noose set around the criminal neck—is a space defined and inhabited by the male body and concepts of the masculine. The intersection of the handsome male body and criminal punishment is also frequently and beautifully confused with ideas of class—after all, the criminal riding in his cart has the “air of a lord”. Thus are the central questions surrounding the early Victorian genesis of the Newgate novel tangibly questions of masculine gender and its aesthetic, moral, bodily, political and personal representations.

The methodologies employed in the following chapters are multiple, taking into account the individual ideas of the individual Newgate novels and their authors; that is not to say that

each Newgate novel inhabited a contextual vacuum, and I have made connections, chronologically, between the published novels where the connections have begged to be made. The most unifying theoretical threads in this project are the ideas in gender studies proffered by James Eli Adams in *Dandies and Desert Saints* and John Tosh in *A Man's Place*. Adams makes a famously useful case for the defining feature of Victorian discourses of masculinities, apparently varied as they were, lying in their appeal to self-regimentation and discipline:

these [masculine rhetorics of individual authors] are persistently related in their appeal to a small number of models of masculine identity: the gentleman, the prophet, the dandy, the priest, and the soldier. Each of these models is typically understood as the incarnation of ascetic regimen, an elaborately articulated program of self-discipline. As such, they lay claim to the capacity for self-discipline as a distinctly masculine attribute. (2)

Acceptable formations of individual masculine style, in the Victorian era, became increasingly about fitting into one of these gendered typologies defined by their ascetic qualities and adherence to regulation, labour (occupational, spiritual, physical and/or intellectual) and consistency. Adams also anticipates Tosh's ideas in *A Man's Place* when he considers the spheres of the public and the private and the increasing emphasis Victorians placed on their distinction in the midst of newfound middle-class mobility:

The separation of home and workplace, and the increasingly rigorous gendering of that division, led to a growing isolation of middle-class fathers from their sons, who in their early years were immersed in a sphere increasingly designated 'feminine,'The expanding social mobility available to young men in an industrial society also strained relations between generations and unsettled customary genderings of male labor, as traditional continuities between the 'places' of father and son were disrupted. (5)

This class-based disruption of father and son is what we see depicted repetitively in the Newgate novel, orphan boys representing the ultimate in the son alienated by the father, and apprentices (even young men “apprenticed” to criminal gangs) focalising the complex interplay of professional and transgressive surrogacies of fatherhoods. Adams stresses that regimens of self-discipline were all the more needful due to these newfound divides of paternity and class, but the Newgate novel instead decides to focus on the breakdown and anarchy of those divides.

As Tosh reveals, the essential failure of the public and private spheres to clearly divide and define masculinities also carried with it an element of liberty: “Indeed much of men’s power has resided in their privileged freedom to pass at will between the public and the private. As a social identity masculinity is constructed in three arenas – home, work and all-male association” (2). For Adams the ultimate concrete expression of decided masculine style lies in the typology that befits programs of asceticism and self-control, but for Tosh, the newfound freedom of the masculine identity relied on ability to transition at will between three defining spaces. This was not without its aftereffect of paternal-filial breakdown or sense of reliance on agreed-upon attributes of masculinity:

a man’s place in posterity depends on leaving sons behind him who can carry forward his name and lineage. Whether that place in posterity is creditable or not depends on the son’s masculine attributes – his manly character and his success in stamping himself upon the world. There is always a question mark over how well equipped sons are for later life. (4)

Masculine definition, or self-realisation, was built upon the complex interaction between and success in the spheres of the domestic, the professional/occupational, and “all-male association”, contrary to Victorian cultural ideas that domesticity was a purely feminised space (Tosh 2, Adams 3). Tosh’s and Adams’ ideas differ in Adam’s belief that self-discipline is the defining

attribute of acceptable Victorian modes of masculinity, while Tosh believes that they were defined by the transition between spheres. However, both agree that the definition of socially-acceptable modes of masculinity may have created a pressure that distanced a son's developing/potential masculinity from the father's newfound ideas of his own manhood.

In addition to this pressure, Adams' delving into ascetic manhoods does not consider what happens when the male subject swerves completely away from acceptable ascetic programs of masculinity. My main reading of the Newgate novel's represented masculinities is that the criminal figure is indeed the anarchic, contentious, illegal, and perhaps anti-"masculine" masculinity that appears alien and other to acceptable programs of gentlemanly or ascetic masculinities. These criminal masculinities are recognisably masculine in the many ways that Tosh describes due to their sheer flexibility and capacity to understand and achieve success in so many different masculine-gendered spheres, yet they are also abject—bestial, corporeal, transgressive, toxic and literally and figuratively against the law. Newgate novels concern themselves with these inchoate criminal masculinities that manipulate recognisable programs of masculinity to the gothic and problematised ends of criminality and the young man struggling against class breakdown and his alienation from the father figure. If there was room for the expression of anti-masculine masculinities in literary form, it would have to be criminal, a tension of masculine adventure into subversive action and desiring against the socially acceptable and the legal. If Adams and Tosh are correct in their assessments of Victorian regimented and multi-sphere masculinities, then the Newgate novel revealed the reactionary struggle of acceptance or rejection of these new terms and definitions of masculinities, sometimes in the extremes of blood and gore. The Newgate novel of the 1830s and 40s, an inherently male form, became the platform for vibrant masculine discussion of masculine gender.

Newgate novels were keenly aware of the strictures of self-regimenting Victorian programs of masculinity. In order to imagine alternative and transgressive possibilities outside the normal and the legal (figurative or literal), these novels and authors had to take note of an essential masculine energy and explore and work such energy as textual problem or central theme. In his *Victorian Masculinities* Herbert Sussman's ideas of monastic masculinities within Victorian art forms and aestheticisations explore such a tension between innate male "energy" and depictions of masculine regimentation. Sussman notes the prevalence of depictions of monks in Victorian artforms, arguing that "the monk becomes the extreme or the limit case of the central problematic in the Victorian practice of masculinity, the proper regulation of an innate male energy" (3). Sussman picks up on the Victorian masculinity-studies thinking that maleness was often a "regulation of an innate male energy" and close reads these depictions of cloistered masculinities (often late Victorian, although I believe his theories apply to the earlier Newgate novel). Sussman considers how the labour/occupational-based and heteronormative domestic definitions of Victorian manhoods may have created a psychic need for monastic forms of homosocial bonding for men:

For those middle-class male writers dissatisfied with the demands of this hegemonic valorization of domesticity, marriage, and even heterosexuality, the monastery as a sacralized, celibate all-male society safely distanced in time provides a figure through which they could express in covert form, or as an open secret, their attraction to a world of chaste masculine bonding from which the female has been magically eliminated, an attraction that clearly resonated with the longings of their middle-class male readers. (5)

The historicity of such aesthetic representation of monastic bonding-societies also may explain the obsessive tendency of the Newgate novel to be set in the eighteenth century. Sussman continues:

And even in writers who present the all-male world of the monastery not as a utopia, but as a prison, notably Browning and the Pre-Raphaelites, we see a deep if often covert apprehension about a life lived outside a self-engendering male community, a barely concealed apprehension about bourgeois marriage sapping male energy and domesticity vitiating male creative potency. (5)

Thus, in Sussman's view, it is fairly inconsequential whether or not the monastic, secretive forms of psychic male-bonding for the definition of a masculine identity and regulation of a quintessential male energy or merely "maleness" is seen as creative or as problematic, for the need for such masculine definition of energy remains set against the newly-regularising spheres of heteronormative domesticity and profession. I channel these arguments of Sussman's to explain the homosocial criminal band/bond (used interchangeably, as one implies the other in certain Newgate novels)—the friendship between men evident in the criminal bands of the Newgate novels is often the sphere in which the transgressive criminal masculine identity is formed, shared, perfected, lauded and enjoyed by the male characters. In *Paul Clifford*, the criminal band is the place in which individual masculinities and male-gendered styles and subjectivities shine together, offering different abilities, skills, and even aesthetic appearances to the group that must cooperate to avoid the noose and the law: in other words, the secret criminal homosocial band relies on that very secrecy and individuation of male energy for its individual members to *actually* survive, rather than just undergo a psychic death of energy of creativity. Even in the villainous criminal band of *Oliver Twist*, where Oliver is tasked with learning and

emulating the criminal skills of the other boys, the boys are mutually dependent on those criminal skills and secrecy for survival, and crime itself becomes transitive—passed from one subject to another—for one boy often is apprehended and/or penalised for the crimes of another. The Newgate novel illustrates just how important cloistered/secret homosocial societies are for the survival of the often young, often lost male subject who is set upon by the strictures of legal society and the alienation he suffers from domesticity or the father.

Godwin is fascinated with masculine styles in his *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood*; Bulwer explores how *fun*, or tragically sympathetic, it is for masculinities to realise their own necessitation into socially rigid gendered rites and to begin to exercise resistance to those forms. Dickens sees the problem of masculine energy and its regulation as socially problematic yet cathartic. Ainsworth picks up on the utter theatricality of the escape and the freedom of the incarcerated man. What all the major Newgate authors light upon is a central tension between gender-regulating forces of masculinity and an innate desire to *be*, and *do*, a masculinity that is other, or shapeless, or energetic—that is to say, a masculine potential for gendered selfhood that is pure unregulated masculine energy. In the Newgate novel there was a desire for the expression of masculinities outside the socially, legally or personally negotiable, and expressions of raw masculine energy begin to become transgressive in the very act of their articulation and/or depiction. These masculinities begin to act out and spill out into the forms of crumbling prison walls and glorious jailbreaks, the sympathetic criminal, and the massively individualistic, counter-social male.

Upon the bases of Tosh and Adams' vital theory on Victorian masculine styles and Sussman's conceptualisation of male energy and limit/extreme cases, I then make use of the queer theory of Lee Edelman to further explain and explore these tendencies of the Newgate

novel. Edelman channels Lacan and the idea of the *sinthome*, that symptom which is not in need of analysis but enjoys (as *jouissance*) its own end. Edelman uses the idea of the *sinthome* to create *sinthomosexuality*. In *No Future*, he positions the figure of the homosexual as a person who disrupts an overbearing idea and current of “reproductive futurism”: “terms that impose an ideological limit on political discourse as such, preserving in the process the absolute privilege of heteronormativity by rendering unthinkable, by casting outside the political domain, the possibility of a queer resistance to this organizing principle of communal relations” (2). This thread of thinking lends a continuous and understandable genetic and future-thinking logic to political and social discourse and dialectics in which the social order is “authenticated” by the “inner Child” (2-3) and the heteronormativity that creates both the figurative and literal child. Newgate novels are often organised around such thinking. The genetic history of the criminal, who often is a gentleman by birth misplaced by the vicissitudes of fortune and the abuses of society, often forms a main plot in these texts. Because political and social dialectics are regulated by this futuristic and heteronormal dependency, for Edelman homosexuality breaks not only an implied logic of biological reproduction but the logical threads and consistencies of political and social discourses. Thus does “queerness”, in contrast to the linear logic of reproductive futurism, figure “the place of the social order’s death drive”. Queerness and homosexuality exercise Lacanian *jouissance* by virtue of its own embrace of the logic-breaking place in which reproductive futurism and politics have placed it (3-6).

Edelman defines *sinthomosexuality* as

the site where the fantasy of futurism confronts the insistence of a *jouissance* that rends it precisely by *rendering* it in relation to that [death] drive....homosexuality is thought as a threat to the logic of thought itself insofar as it figures the availability of an unthinkable

jouissance that would put an end to fantasy—and, with it, to futurity—by reducing the assurance of meaning in fantasy’s promise of continuity to the meaningless circulation and repetitions of the drive. (38-9)

Homosexuality for Edelman is regimented by the death drive, since it represents a rupture in “reproductive futurism” (2) that can only enjoy a self-inhabiting circuit (of *jouissance*) that has no future, no lineage (thus destroying the “fantasy” that is reproductive futurism). Thus we have the figure of the *sinthomosexual*, he who inhabits a future-cancelling jouissance that circuits around the self and breaks the paths of futurity. Edelman’s major literary example of the *sinthomosexual* is *A Christmas Carol*’s Ebenezer Scrooge—who followed on the heels of the Newgate novel’s final days—a money-hoarding curmudgeon “made to account metonymically” (42) for the death of a little boy (for further discussion, see chapter 2). Similar figures—rather, *sinthomosexuals*—appear specifically in *Paul Clifford* and *Eugene Aram*, where the evil lawyer-uncle (two fraught masculine modalities) Brandon seeks to destroy the marriage of his niece to the criminal Paul (who is really his son), and the titular Eugene Aram is treated as problematic but forgivable male identity (despite his real criminality) under the purposes of the hermetic scholar—who is in turn the ultimate *sinthomosexual*. The Newgate novel once again explores the anarchic breakdown of the father-son relationship by going to extreme detail in its presentation of the threats reproductive futurism faces from the criminal (unfit to marry) and the alternative (queered) masculinities represented by problematised profession and masculine style (the rich bachelor, the monstrous uncle). The *sinthomosexual* is the figure to which the Newgate novel repairs for a possible expression of a logic-breaking, self-gratifying, illogically-regulated masculinity that lives outside the practice of socially-acceptable practices of gendered selfhood described by Adams and Tosh. The criminal often enjoys his own form of being and enjoys

practicing a masculinity that is contrary to legal and social forms, and indeed sometimes outside of reproductive and futuristic logic.

What is then left for the alternatively-gendered, or unrecognizably-gendered/queer criminal, is to let out or express—to ejaculate—that masculinity so essential to the gendered self. This can be achieved by manipulating the rules of gentlemanliness (*Paul Clifford*, *Oliver Twist*) while also mastering the criminal delights and arts, enabling the criminal masculinity to enjoy the best of both worlds. It can be a glorious (*Eugene Aram*) or villainised (*Paul Clifford*, *Barnaby Rudge*) *sinthomosexuality* that breaks comfortable Victorian futurism and domestic logic. Alternately, it can be firmly what Peter Linebaugh describes as excarceration.

Although Linebaugh defines the term only fleetingly, it has become something of an organising theme in recent articles on individual Newgate novels. He describes it as a tradition dating from criminal narratives and literature of the eighteenth century:

Doubtless, incarceration, in its many forms and for many purposes, was a major theme that can easily and exactly be particularized for London in the early eighteenth century. Yet the theme of incarceration brought with it a counter-theme of excarceration. As the theme of incarceration was played out in workhouse, factory, hospital, school and ship, so the counterpoint of excarceration was played out in escapes, flights, desertions, migrations and refusals. (23)

The narrative of excarceration valourises the escape artist and explains the cultural phenomenon of Jack Sheppard and his legacy (30-3). Speaking specifically about *Barnaby Rudge*, Adam Hansen adds to Linebaugh's considerations, writing: "If confinement isolates and discriminates, excarceration causes or reveals connections between people and places that authorities and ideologies try to keep separate. It is transgressive, associative, confusing" (93). *Barnaby Rudge's*

particular display of Newgate burning, homes destroyed and workshops looted exemplifies, fittingly at the close of the Newgate novel's height, the vast importance of incarceration as theory in the Newgate novel. The central message, I argue, is that it is the elemental "essence" of manhood to incarcerate itself from definition—rather, its new definition lies in its very ability to transgress and be elemental, an energy in the liquid movement of water and destructive capabilities of fire. The Newgate novel moves towards the homosocial refinement of its own definitions when most set against the carceral forces of the law and profession. When something is transgressive it is by nature "associative" because it makes connections between the fields and spheres it transgresses. The major work of the Newgate novel masculinity lies in exercising associations between spheres, its own *jouissance* in finding a masculine-gendered expression in no need of social, legal or political mitigation, and the multiplications of masculinity that took place between the literatures and gendered ideologies of the eighteenth century, Romanticism, and the nascent Victorian context.

It has been my interest to remain within the above unifying methodologies of gender studies in what follows, more specifically, the "study of masculinities," (8) a term borrowed directly from Sussman. While always remaining in this study of masculinities I have variously ventured into criminology, psychoanalysis, social and queer theory where the close readings of individual Newgate novels make such readings feel natural and necessary. The small amount of attention devoted to the female characters found in these Newgate novels I hope is not, to channel Adams, misconstrued as writing against feminism (3) or somehow discouraging of feminist readings of these novels. There is an overwhelming amount of scholarship, for example, dedicated to the female characters of *Oliver Twist*, and I would specifically encourage further readings of Lucy in *Paul Clifford* and of Bess, Poll and Mrs. Sheppard in *Jack Sheppard* as there

has been less written on these characters (and texts in general). I have read some of these characters' femininities, and their places set in and against the spheres and movements of masculine identities, where those readings of femininity have seemed pressing and requisite in relation to binaries of gender, but make no claim to expertise or final words on feminist readings or studies in femininities in these pages. I hope that my ideas about the Newgate novel being a primarily male space of gendered reckoning and discussion can be taken as in addition to rather than against the ideas of femininities the novels present, and firmly believe that these novels have created inarguably male psychic spaces while still revealing fascinating ideas and aestheticisations about the woman's place in the world of the criminal male. Once again, the case must be decided by each individual novel—for instance, *Caleb Williams* is a novel almost entirely devoid of female presence, and *Barnaby Rudge*'s proliferation of sons and fathers and surrogate father figures is undeniably centered on questions of masculinity and the paternal-filial bond. The idea of homosocial space, psychic or otherwise, is so omnipresent in the Newgate novel, and in criminology itself (Wiener 1-2), that to turn a blind eye to the maleness of the Newgate novel is to fundamentally misread the subgenre.

The chapters of this study appear chronologically in order of publication of the individual Newgate novel (hence why *Oliver Twist* and *Barnaby Rudge* have not been amalgamated in a single chapter on Dickens, their places being radically different in the development of Newgate modalities of masculinity). I have adhered to the small canon of major Newgate novels set out by Hollingsworth and those regularly glossed and footnoted by critics of the Victorian novel. Three inclusions are readable as atypical: William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood* are certainly not normally remembered as "Newgate novels", and *Eugene Aram*, which I feel is

essential to understanding the importance of the *sinthomosexual* in the Newgate trend, is not always among the “canon” of Newgate literature considered by critics.

In Chapter 1 I read Godwin’s novels as important entry points and “blueprints” to the era that witnessed the Newgate novel. This is not an original idea, as Hollingsworth himself sees *Caleb Williams* as the dawn of the Newgate novel, noting that Godwin wrote the novel after reading the *Newgate Calendar* (12). James L. Campbell details how Bulwer wrote *Paul Clifford* from Godwin’s example, using the *Calendar* as inspiration in addition to including Godwinian political sentiment as one of the novel’s main points: “Uniting all these compositional strands is a serious thesis that the law is an instrument of class control used by the ruling class to enrich itself and to set the various classes in society at war with each other. In this view of an openly warring society, Bulwer’s novel parallels William Godwin’s argument in *An Enquiry*” (40). Outside of these biographical and political alignments, *Caleb Williams* (1794) presents a prototype of the Newgate novel in its intense concern with the effects of the homosocial and the keeping of the criminal secret. In this novel we have a low-class male employee (Caleb) who must live or die at the behest of the empowered male other (Falkland) whom he by turns admires, emulates, and comes to see as the antithesis or destruction of his ego, his own self. Caleb, whose main crime is knowledge of the criminal secret of the male other, must become a criminal himself, and sees the effect of the synopticon in reducing his own biography to criminal narrative. This is set against the narrative backstory of young Tyrrel and Falkland, whose personal feuding has its roots in disagreements of masculine corporeality and style. The novel presents the idea that masculinity is a monopolising force that does not allow for the competition of alternatives within the social sphere, and masculinities become mutually-destroying or ablative. In *Fleetwood* (1805), Godwin explores an exercise in writing the male life by

chronicling the biography of the titular character Casimir Fleetwood. The first-person narrative follows his student life at Oxford, where he is met by a competitive-masculine and toxic environment similar to the gendered portrait of the social sphere seen in the prior *Caleb Williams*. The novel then chronicles his journey into continental Europe and his eventually fraught and misguided marriage. *Fleetwood* considers the male biography in both the private and the public; its core inhabits processes of male emulation (which I consider via Freud) as Fleetwood considers and weighs his own interior and exterior identities with and against those masculine figures around him. Both *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood* are novels of male identities and masculine styles that place an emphasis on masculinities in transition between the spheres, social spaces and psychic interiorities of the self and the other. Even more so than the Newgate novels that precede them, these novels catalogue pre-Victorian conceptions of masculinities and their transitiveness (ability to travel) in the currents of influence these spheres and forces exert upon the male-gendered subject. Godwin is concerned with the *power* at work in the masculinities others hold for the formative and self-reflexive male-gendered self.

Chapter 2 closely studies the first (retroactively) recognised Newgate novel, Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Paul Clifford* (1830). *Paul Clifford*'s first line, "It was a dark and stormy night", has enjoyed more fame than its parent text, coming, perhaps unfairly, to represent the extent of the author's literary abilities and to banish him into a netherworld of conceptualisations of "overwriting" and "purple Victorian prose". David Huckvale in his *A Dark and Stormy Oeuvre* notes how the line (and Bulwer) are remembered only for this first sentence thanks to a purple prose contest hosted by San José University (6). Bulwer (termed so in criticism as he was not yet "Bulwer-Lytton" at the time of publishing *Paul Clifford*) was intimately inspired by Godwin, and *Paul Clifford*'s strong Godwinian social message that circumstances and the law

are what create the criminal rather than the criminal being a naturally aberrant lifeform born into his criminality is palpable throughout the novel. In this chapter I reveal how Bulwer was inspired by Godwin's microscopic focus on cataloguing individual styles of masculinity, this time represented by the variants found in Paul's criminal gang. In this Newgate novel more than any other, the very transitiveness/transgression of the masculinity that does not seem to adhere to one shape or one style becomes the benchmark of the gendered ideal for the male subject—that is, *transition*, or movement between and mastery of the spheres and styles and classes of masculinity, is the highest glamorous indicator of a masculine gender. This novel is also fascinated by corporeality and male dress, romanticising the criminal male in ways critics of the Newgate novel would come to detest despite the novel's well-meaning social consciousness and argument. However, the success of the criminal figure, who relies on the male-bonding space of the secret criminal society, is challenged by Paul's heteronormative attraction and eventual marriage to Lucy Brandon at the end of the novel. Bulwer followed *Paul Clifford* with *Eugene Aram* in 1832. This wildly popular novel adapted a historical criminal for its protagonist instead of one imagined, focusing on the convicted murderer Aram, but fabricates for him a love affair and engagement with a local gentlewoman. The novel allegorises the place of the *sinthomosexual* in society when its majority depicts the gothic struggle of Aram's scholarship with his heteronormative love interest pitted against his identity as criminal and the crimes of his past; so too does this play out as dramatic irony for the reader, who knows of Aram's crimes that contrast his attempts at reconciliation with society and the redemptive force of heteronormative marriage. Ultimately Aram's crimes are detected—moments before the wedding—and the novel is the perfect examination of the cloistered, “unproductive” (*sinthomosexual*) masculinity set against the criminal masculinity and the heteronormal masculinity, all at war within the same plot and

character. Bulwer's novels, due to their immense popularity and widespread readership, set the stage for all those "Newgate novels" that followed in the 1830s and 40s.

Chapter 3 studies Charles Dickens' first contribution to the Newgate form—though he bristled at his identification with the trend—in *Oliver Twist*, appearing 1837-9. Dickens took the Newgate criminal off the highway and onto the streets with this serial novel, integrating the criminal-underworld tonality of the urban labyrinth, and its potential for enjoyable/consumable criminal plots, into the developing subgenre. This novel presents the singular case of the orphan boy recognising the snares of criminal-masculinity as machinations of the evil masculine other (Fagin, Sikes and Monks) and not being able to resist for himself such movements into criminality. I examine how the path of the inchoate male subject—the boy—is in *Oliver Twist* fraught with images and processes of death, as any grasping at mutual goodness for the inchoate male subject is by its nature difficult and seemingly impossible in the society and spheres the novel depicts. The text cycles replacement figures of surrogacy, maternal and paternal, for the pre-criminal boy who is not the hero of his own life or his own Newgate novel, and after a long and complicated narrative, places him in the home of the queered bachelor Brownlow. The novel expresses a social concern for the figurative boy who indexes both the transgressive criminal desiring of Victorian masculinities and criminal figures the Newgate novel was concerned with and the possibly redemptive forces of the maternal and paternal figures who are variably called to his rescue.

Chapter 4 reads the most sensational Newgate novel of all—William Harrison Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*, which appeared serially 1839-40. From its opening, the novel is concerned with the inscribing of signs—young Jack, an orphan apprenticed to woodworking, inscribes his name on a beam in the shop, and the novel expands the theme from there. The novel

takes particular interest in apprenticeship and its place in the professional formation of the young masculinity—Sheppard is paired with fictional adopted brother Thames to establish the theme of the industrious apprentice versus the idle. Thames represents hale, hearty and hardworking masculinity based on the promises of industry and the heteronormative (he wins the affections of their adopted sister, whom Jack loves) while Jack falls into the path of the transgressive automatic process of the non-conforming young male subject—the path of the criminal. The novel is not so clear-cut as this initially-established Hogarthian picture, however. The novel begins to celebrate rather than condemn Jack's transgressive criminal prowess—his tiny corporeal form is perfect for tight escapes—and the novel operates on the ideal of excarceration, showing that the male who escapes the strictures of profession-based masculine identity is the ideal male. Jack is dogged throughout his life by the gothic villain Jonathan Wild, who in this novel represents the criminal archive and a masculinity so tied to criminal archaeology/artifact that it becomes lifeless and monolithic in its materiality. Wild wishes to destroy the excarceral/criminal other in Jack, abjecting his recognition of another transgressive, alternative criminal masculinity, and is eventually successful in doing so. In addition to this gothic process, Wild also reveals a plotline of the masculine-competitive with Jack's father, who was successful in wooing Wild's love object, Mrs Sheppard, causing Wild to have a murderous grudge for the son, who becomes a centre for his past, wronged heteronormative desire. Wild's successful destruction of Jack does not signify, however, as the *signs* that Jack has left—his constant inscriptions, the artifact culture of his jailbreaks, the posts that dot the countryside and mark his individual escapes, the songs and chapbooks that he has inspired—outlive the biography of the male subject in a curious and triumphant victory over, and manipulation of, the criminal archive Wild represents. Jack

excarcerates himself from existence and inscribes the permanence of the criminal-son onto the world.

Chapter 5 returns to Dickens for one of the final Newgate novels, 1841's *Barnaby Rudge*. The novel inhabits a fitting end to the subgenre as readers witness the fiery destruction of Newgate prison itself during the Gordon Riots of 1780. Dickens emphasises the primary concern of the Newgate novel—the interaction and definition of the father-son relationship—by penning a novel so bursting at the seams with fathers, sons, surrogate sons, adoptive fathers, and sonless fathers that it presents the father-son relationship as a labyrinth of connections and associations so complicated and multitudinous as to be bombastic and inherently uncanny, as convoluted and uncontrollable as the mob that stalks the city. In its repetitions and variations on the paternal-filial theme, the novel exercises conceptions of masculinities based on family and domesticity while also allowing for every conceivable intersection of profession/occupation, criminality, boyhood, paternity, innocence, tyranny and foppish gentility. The thug and the bachelor-fop interact, and are related by revelations of blood; the apprentice has a secret underground hideout where he plots to destroy societal peace; the perfect father figure holds the key to Newgate itself. These configurations/multiplications of masculinity, which consider every economic, social, public and private level of English life, revolve around the central figure of Barnaby Rudge, a young “simpleton” so pure and innocent he represents the ultimate tabula rasa of unformed boyhood/inchoate masculinity, or unformed masculinity caught at the crux and centre of the novel's complications of masculine gender. Thus does the text pivot around the potentiality of the inchoate male subject corrupted by the unnavigable sea of masculine styles and examples surrounding him. Just as Dickens paints these male-male relationships as a sea, so too does the novel symbolically render masculinity, as Sussman conceives, as raw male “energy”—a

reduction to destructive fire and pelting rain. Male bodies are vessels ready to overflow, to burst into fiery destruction or to pop their corks and foam over into anarchy. The ultimate symbol of excarcerality engendered by the Newgate novel, the destruction of Newgate by the mob, expresses the foremost message delivered by the subgenre: maleness, in its elemental capability, will not be contained by the strictures of “self-discipline”, for masculine energy will always excarcerate itself into freeform expression and movement.

A brief afterword follows this climactic chapter and reviews the content of the Newgate novels in retrospect alongside Foucault’s idea of the “reversible” criminal-hero figure from *Discipline & Punish* (67-9)—that is, criminality and heroism are not necessarily contradictory concepts in criminal literature, but rather operate together. The chapter also considers the role of the death drive in these novels which so often couple the journey of the male biography with an innate sense of mortality and self-destruction; I show how the morality of the male narrative, the subjecthood of the male-gendered individual navigating the fraught paths of the spheres and interior versus exterior identities, and those identities of the male other, are not necessarily incompatible with the erotic forces of narrativisation but are actually mutually-defining and reversible.

Engel and King have considered the place of “The Victorian Novel Before Victoria”—just what features, exactly, defined the oft-forgotten period of the 1830s in which the genre of the Victorian novel was not quite Victorian yet—and have argued that there was indeed a “flowering of Victorian fiction” (ix) before the coronation of the queen. I hope this project puts on display the intricacies and important critical questions of the criminal novels of the early Victorian period—novels that are more than a convenient bridge between the traditions of the eighteenth-century criminal and picaresque novels and the later sensation novels and detective pieces of the

late Victorian age, but rather a developed and tangible body of novels in and of themselves, novels whose major defining theme and unity can be found in the questions and dissections of masculinities they practice and repeat. I hope the project contributes not only to rectify the definite lack of writing on the subgenre, but also sheds light on the Victorians' focus on and imagining of masculinities that did not fit into emergent ideas of self-regimentation and discipline. There was something fierce, something animalistic, something simultaneously criminal and gentlemanly, simultaneously carceral and fluidly elemental about the masculinities presented in these inflammatory texts. The Victorian imagination was fascinated by the possibilities for the excarceral masculinity—the masculinity that slipped through the bars, by turns threatening and irresistible to the public and private imaginations.

Chapter 1

1 Proto-Newgate Enquiries in Masculinities: Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood*

In the middle portion of volume III of William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, Caleb gets the chance to read his own narrative. Bearing the snappy title of "the Most Wonderful and Surprising History, and Miraculous Adventures of Caleb Williams", the "paper" is drawn to Caleb's attention by the cries of a hawker. It reports upon the at-large criminal Caleb Williams, and its readers

are informed how [Caleb] first robbed, and then brought false accusations against his master; as also of his attempting divers times to break out of prison, till at last he effected his escape in the most wonderful and incredible manner; as also of his traveling the kingdom in various disguises, and the robberies he committed with a most desperate and daring gang of thieves; and of his coming up to London, where it is supposed he now lies concealed; with a true and faithful copy of the hue and cry printed and published by one of his majesty's most principal secretaries of state, offering a reward of one hundred guineas for apprehending him. All for the price of one halfpenny. (258)

This text-within-the-text hinges on dramatic irony when we consider that readers of *Caleb Williams* have already aligned themselves with Caleb's narrated experience, and thus are able (unlike the hawker's audience) to separate "fact" from fiction with regards to these counterfeit "Miraculous Adventures". Nevertheless, the paper, and the scene and description surrounding it here in volume III of Godwin's novel, succinctly encapsulate the genre of criminal literature in the late eighteenth century. The narrative is 1) wonderful and incredible; 2) it enumerates the criminal's various disguises and concealments; 3) it contains accounts of robberies in conjunction with "a most desperate and daring gang of thieves"; 4) it is authoritative, containing

copy from a principal secretary of state; and 5), it is an interactive text in the sense that, because of its reality as the true narrative of an at-large criminal, it can be used as information in identifying and apprehending the criminal it narrates, for the reward of one hundred guineas, hence the text calls for legal action from its reader. The “Miraculous Adventures” in this scene captures the excitement of the criminal narrative for eighteenth-century audiences. Its descriptors flesh out the electricity and immediacy of the publicly recognisable genre of criminal literature, in its diction borrowing from the literary and news reportage alike. The “Miraculous Adventures” not only has this intrinsic value as entertaining medium, but also the extrinsic merit of being authoritatively “based on a true story”. The paper, not only something that can be purchased and enjoyed now, is still *happening*—a text in progress that, due to its basis in fact, might be expanding itself in the real world as one reads it. The paper can also lead to immediate personal and financial gain, if one is able to learn properly from it and identify the criminal (as Caleb narrates, “the public was warned to be upon their watch against a person of an uncouth and extraordinary appearance, and who lived in a recluse and solitary manner” [259]) in order to claim a reward from one his majesty’s secretaries. And finally, the text here functions as performance via advertising: the hawker’s voice echoing on the street is able to capture Caleb’s attention from some distance, alerting not only Caleb but an implied public of “a million of men, in arms against” him (259). Street literature is exactly that—literature not only about the streets and the criminals that inhabit them, but also sold on the streets in the form of a loud public vocal performance that echoes its immediate content. All for the price of one halfpenny.

Thus the “Caleb Williams” in *Caleb Williams* encapsulates some of the major defining qualities of criminal literature—journalistic and literary—and the synoptic operation of its 1794 context. It is a moment that not only parodies the troubles of young Caleb by becoming the

tangible, readable, physical artifact of his own misrepresented criminal and life experiences—the public opinion of his criminal status and guilt literally manifest in Caleb’s hands—but also a moment of self-parody in which we get the defining qualities of *Caleb Williams* as criminal narrative reduced *ad absurdum* to a smaller text tucked inside of it. The effect is both metafictional and a plot point; mostly it functions as a reminder to Caleb that his fabricated criminal guilt, originally established and perpetuated by the villainous Falkland, has moved beyond the mere personal vendetta into the domain of the public. Caleb realises the expanded extent of his persecution:

This paper was the consummation of my misfortune. Nothing could happen beyond it but the actual apprehension with which I was menaced. Disguise was no longer of use to me. A numerous class of individuals, through every department, almost every house of the metropolis, would be induced to look with a suspicious eye upon every stranger, especially every solitary stranger, that fell under their observation. The prize of one hundred guineas was held out to excite their cupidity, and sharpen their penetration. (259)

Caleb, affirming the idea that the paper acts as a “consummation” of his fate on a number of levels (physical as textual artifact, plot-wise as Caleb’s obscurity is made more difficult after this point, metafictional for the reasons listed above), also subsumes the idea of synoptic observation and paranoia: that is, Falkland’s uncanny knowledge and observance of Caleb’s actions up to this point are now not only personal, but a public, national observance, a media form reducing the idea of the individual to the understandable, consumable figure of the criminal. The “Miraculous Adventures” also operates on the *panoptic* observation of others—the observation and penetration that so recurs in Godwin’s novels, becoming a major fictional preoccupation for him—and also an impetus towards that reward of a hundred guineas. The “Miraculous

Adventures”, being an enjoyable tale in its own right, calls its readers to action in reality, where it places an emphasis on paranoid observation and an assumption of guilt in others. In the realm of their narrative-inspired penetration, any and every stranger vaguely matching the appearance of Caleb and his various disguises now harbours the possibility for criminal guilt.

Caleb is perceptive enough to light upon these truths of societal observation, both panoptic and synoptic, and the legal-literary discourses that inform the culture to which he is subject. After reading the “Miraculous Adventures”, Caleb is crestfallen to learn that Mrs Marney, a former guardian of one of his criminal disguises, has ended up in Newgate prison thanks to her “misprision of felony”: “This last circumstance affected me deeply. It was a most cruel and intolerable idea, if I were not only myself to be an object of unrelenting persecution, but my very touch were to be infectious, and every one that succoured me to be involved in the common ruin” (259). In the conveniently expedited action of a single sentence, Mrs Marney gets whisked right out of Newgate thanks to a “noble relation”. That curiosity aside, what is important about Caleb’s speech here is how he figures the criminal experience (as it pertains to criminal protagonists in novels in particular). Caleb’s figuring of observation and persecution relies on a number of processes that will all echo from the late eighteenth-century criminal novel as seen here onward into the Victorian Newgate and crime novels. Although Caleb’s sanity will become negligible in different ways in the novel’s two endings, Caleb and his readers know that he is innocent of the exaggerated crimes presented in the paper; as Caleb himself notes, “I was equaled [in the “Miraculous Adventures”] to the most notorious house-breaker in the art of penetrating through walls and doors, and to the most accomplished swindler in plausibleness, duplicity and disguise” (259). We will see Caleb’s disguise fail under the observation of Mr Spurrel only a few pages after the “Miraculous Adventures” scene; Caleb is no master criminal

to be “expected in this species of publication” (Caleb’s words, 259). As a criminal, Caleb’s actions do not live up to their representation as criminal narrative.

Whatever real guilt Caleb has is deeply personal and homosocial. If we are to infer real crimes upon Caleb, as B. J. Tysdahl maintains it is possible to do, then this is an allegorical reading to do with themes of sin and transgression of the personal: “Caleb is either a transgressor who is rightly punished for having entered forbidden tracts of land or the scout of the chosen people” (Tysdahl 56). In terms of what is purely legal and criminal, Caleb is caught up in the falsehood and machinations of Falkland. What begins as a transgression of personal freedoms and privacy can evolve into a public dissemination of information (the “Miraculous Adventures”) that subsequently spurs all public subjects to become spies who probe and “persecute” other subjects with assumed guilt. This can be read as an encapsulation of the general experience of criminal protagonists and characters throughout eighteenth-century and Victorian crime novels. Persecution and the assumption of guilt, in Caleb’s view, function as automatic, bacterial processes. They are concepts that pass easily between categories of the private and public, fiction and fact, subject and other. The criminal subject, whether innocent or guilty, fictional or real, is racked with the assumed guilt of others’ observation, and becomes a contagious figure that can effect the “common ruin” of others through their “very touch”. The process is not only textually and representationally loaded, but physically loaded.

Most importantly, Godwin touches on the synoptic amplification and proliferation of legal-literary, personally-public, and physically-social ironic processes that relate and reduce the criminal into tangible narratives and understandings. Combine these representations with how some ten pages previous to this scene we find Caleb making a living by writing these kinds of criminal narratives: “By a fatality for which I do not well know how to account, my thoughts

frequently led me to the histories of celebrated robbers; and I retailed from time to time incidents and anecdotes of Cartouche, Gusman d'Alfarache and other memorable worthies, whose career was terminated upon the gallows or the scaffold" (249-50). Godwin manages to capture several dimensions of criminal literature that will be key to my analyses of the later Newgate trend. For one, Godwin has placed a focus on how these criminal narratives inherently are fictional exaggerations geared towards public consumption before they are any sort of realistic account of criminal biography, represented in a deft moment of metafiction that even Caleb recognises and reels from. That trend of transplanting a real criminal into the textual and the fictional will remain of utmost importance, not only as a trend in the late eighteenth-to-mid-nineteenth-century novel but indefinitely. Godwin has also introduced the idea that personal guilt and persecution are fluid concepts that can infect the world of the social and the other quite easily. The main idea as it will pertain to the future development of the Newgate novel, however, is that guilt has very little basis in fact, and more of a basis in fiction, and to be a young man caught up in a manhunt for a criminal based on the publication of fabled criminal acts and daring physical disguises is a process that follows like "pathogenic distemper" (Gold 153). Regardless of one's real connections to the criminal act itself, the association of guilt (based on the dogged persecution of others) is what becomes the infection—something that takes hold on the subject and grows stronger with or without matching up with that subject's real actions and desires. One *becomes* the persecution itself, reduced to the *idea* that colours, or obfuscates, the subjectivity. That infection can lead surrounding *others* to ruin, as can a bacterial or viral infection. And this process is usually begun not by any real crime, but by the aesthetic and the representation of crime (here the "Miraculous Adventures"). What draws writers and public readerships to the production and consumption of criminal biography, real or fictional, is the question on Caleb's

tongue. Indeed, how do we account for the “fatality” which draws us to the writing and celebration of terminated criminal lives?

In *Caleb Williams* in particular, observation (panoptic, synoptic, public, private, subject, other, and otherwise) is related to the theme of masculine gender. The problems encapsulated by Caleb’s troubles in the plot, the metafictionality of his encounter with and reduction to synoptic eighteenth-century literariness and journalism, and the way in which these processes are figured as touch-based mutual infections of criminality are indeed all processes inherent to the operation of the homosocial relationships of three key characters—Caleb, his former master Falkland, and Falkland’s old rival, Tyrrel. When we consider the functioning of criminal narrative, synopticon, paranoid panopticon, psychic drama and the mutual guilt and legal and societal punishment of these characters, these are all processes that not additionally but fundamentally have their bases in the master-worker relationship of Falkland and Caleb as presented in the early novel and the even further back in time rivalry between Falkland and Tyrrel which ended in murder.

Disagreements and mismanagements in homosocial functioning, and an extreme tendency in Godwinian literature to figure masculine bonds as fanatically observational and mutually destructive, are the ideas that precede those functionings of criminality, journalism, narrative, and social theory so perfectly encapsulated by Caleb’s run-in with his own figurative existence.

Godwin’s *Caleb Williams* (1794) and *Fleetwood* (1805) will be the focus of this chapter. It will follow that the chapter is not primarily concerned with the Newgate novel, as these two productions predate the trend by 30 years. Godwin’s two novels are preoccupied at every level with masculinity—how young men observe and emulate the manners, behaviours and actions of the older male role models around them; how the bourgeois class performs and upholds certain masculine styles, and the differences between those styles; the stratification of masculinities

evident in different social classes, and the complications of tyranny, land ownership, patriarchy, inheritance, and master-servant dynamics. Jenny Davidson notes Godwin's propensity to attack "the ideologies of chivalry and reputation for their effects not on women but on men. Godwin's novels contain few female characters, and most readers would agree that the concerns of actual women are no more than peripheral to either his fiction or his philosophy" (614). As a result, Godwin's novels are ruminations on fraught masculinities and their constructions. They weigh representations of masculinities with an intense anxiety and paranoia for the fate of their protagonists and how those protagonists will manage to successfully or catastrophically emulate one problematic masculinity over another. Godwin's tendency to end his novels with a forced sense of accepting "things as they are" is in itself problematic, not only for the male subject who is seen to struggle immensely in each novel with the formulation of a stable masculine identity but for the female subjects (Emily in *Caleb*, Mary in *Fleetwood*) who get trampled on in their tyrannical wake.

Nevertheless, the novels are primarily concerned with the psychology, sociability, morality and anxiety of their (male) focal characters. Almost every facet of *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood* can be read through the filter of masculine gender and the attendant motivating factors of their psychologies and performances, public and private. In *Caleb Williams* we are given the newly fatherless young man Caleb, who is sent to work at the estate of the mysterious and powerful Falkland. His inquiries into the man's character—his personality and status as wealthy landowner and employer—will prove to be his ruin in ways physical and psychological, but before this, the novel is concerned with a clash between the two predominant masculine styles of Falkland and his rival Tyrrel. The multiplicity of masculine styles presented in these portions of the novel best underscore Godwin's obsession with the idea of competitive (never

complimentary) masculinities in late eighteenth-century Britain and the way in which masculinity is damagingly prescriptive rather than a free choice or range of options for the male subject. The resultant treatment of Caleb by Falkland (and the law and society Falkland is easily able to manipulate) demonstrates Godwin's political concerns as expressed in his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, but the unique way in which Caleb's downfall is not only the result of a justice system unfairly skewed towards the ruling elite but the result of a complicated string of masculine-gender emulations and the hostile climate of late eighteenth-century masculine styles will be the main contribution of this chapter towards a critical understanding of Godwin's fictional masterpiece.

Fleetwood plays out of a drama of masculine emulation on a much more widely extended panorama than does its older brother *Caleb Williams*. Godwin himself explains the differences between those two novels in the preface to *Fleetwood*'s first edition: *Caleb Williams* "was a story of very surprising and uncommon events, but which were supposed to be entirely within the laws of established course of nature" written "in a vicious style of writing" (47). *Fleetwood* is written on a more social and class-based relativity, perceived by Godwin as realistic rather than "surprising and uncommon": "The following story consists of such adventures, as for the most part have occurred to at least one half of the Englishmen now existing, who are of the same rank of life as my hero" (47-8). Godwin's relation of the male experiential narrative of *Fleetwood* to the gendered and classed experience of his readers highlights not only the novel's need to feel more realistic than the terrifying and paranoid events of *Caleb Williams*, but also the novel's main project as being a more or less accurate, plausible depiction of the male subject's experience as "gentleman" in English society. Godwin plans to write to the experience of the "gentleman" type about the construction of the "gentleman" type. As will be made evident by the

events of *Fleetwood* that are not necessarily less tempestuous than those of *Caleb Williams*, the paths towards a finished male type/identity are not at all simple.

Fleetwood follows Casimir Fleetwood's failed serial emulations of a number of different role models. Left fatherless like Caleb before him (albeit not at the outset of the narrative), Godwin's "new man of feeling" follows a traditional eighteenth-century script of a young man's entry into the dissipations of society before he is reformed (though as we will see with Godwin, never genuinely reborn or reformed) into a respectable, mature masculinity. Fleetwood constantly holds himself up, implicitly or explicitly, against the mold of every authoritative masculinity he encounters throughout the narrative, which encompasses his boyhood to his middle age. Although the novel's third volume falls into a compacted drama of paranoia, treachery and stolen inheritance easily relatable to the action of *Caleb Williams*, the novel retains its more contemplative discussion of masculinity, not only in regards to the many different patriarchs and paragons of various masculine styles it presents to Casimir and the reader, but also in regards to the primal basis of narrative operation: that is, the idea that the male life—the autobiography of the "man of feeling"—is the Freudian identification with one masculine style after another. To write a male life (directed at a finished audience of gentlemen who know the male life and its processes) is to find oneself in the midst of a gallery of templates to be emulated.

Thus *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood* are novels of masculinity. The progress of the unformed male subject who must conform to a finished or complete style/performance of masculinity is what informs not only the psychology of each protagonist but also the narrative action of each "biography"/novel. The societies Godwin chooses to focus on in his novels are always those dominated and inhabited by men; women exist to be either thrown aside (Emily in

Caleb Williams) or to be the receptacles of cathartic abuse and tyranny (Mary in *Fleetwood*). Without breaking that society down into an oversimplified statement that the public sphere is what is male and the private sphere is what is female, Godwin actually shows in both of these novels that there is no sphere that is not male; in the worlds of both *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood* the public and private are intensely male-only spaces where the designations between the two are the designations only between alternate styles of masculinity, and the intersections between the spheres can create dangerous complications for the lives of the characters. In these ways, the Godwinian novels of masculinity predate the exact central questions of male gender that Tosh and Adams identify as central to Victorian masculinities and I argue inform the absolute core of the Newgate novel. Caleb is the first involuntarily criminal protagonist of a novel that reads in so many ways like the later Newgate novels; *Fleetwood* is concerned with the masculine subject caught between self-defining (and externally-defined) movements between the spheres. These novels reveal that writing about the male biography—the biography concerned with the male-gendering of its central figure—is also inherently caught in abuses of the law.

Godwin's exercise in writing the fictional male biography begins with Caleb. "I was then eighteen years of age," Caleb narrates in the introductory passages of volume I. "My father lay dead in our cottage. I had lost my mother some years before. In this forlorn situation I was surprised with a message from the squire, ordering me to repair to the mansion-house the morning after my father's funeral" (4). Caleb is barely allowed a moment between the loss of one father and the surrogacy of the mysterious country squire Falkland. This transition opens the text's concern with masculine development and identification before we have even learned much about either of the two characters Caleb and Falkland. Even the contrast between how Caleb narrates the death of his father—visually, spread out on a cottage floor—and how he lists how he

also lost his mother some years before, in the form of an afterthought, emphasises the primacy of the paternal over the maternal in these opening pages. The visual detail of the father's corpse, though brief, seems loaded in comparison to the lack of detail we are given by Caleb regarding his mother; the information of both parental deaths, presented in succession in two different ways to the reader, forces a narratorial separation between the two—the father is visually *present* in the narration, while the mother has been dealt with prior to the narrative's opening. Falkland offers to take Caleb "into his family" if he ends up being a satisfactory secretary, and Caleb goes from fatherless to protected by mysterious squire in the space of three sentences; the processes of patriarchal surrogacy operate as by automation.

As a result of his isolated upbringing in a cottage on Falkland's estate, Caleb is also sheltered:

Though I was not a stranger to books, I had no practical acquaintance with men. I had never had occasion to address a person of this elevated rank, and I felt no small uneasiness and awe on the present occasion. I found Mr Falkland a man of small stature, with an extreme delicacy of form and appearance. In place of the hard-favoured and flexible visages I had been accustomed to observe, every muscle and petty line of his countenance seemed to be in an inconceivable degree pregnant with meaning. His manner was kind, attentive and humane. His eye was full of animation, but there was a grave and sad solemnity in his air, which for want of experience I imagined was the inheritance of the great, and the instrument by which the distance between them and their inferiors was maintained. (4)

For someone so seemingly sheltered and without practical acquaintance with men, Caleb seems to be able to read Falkland awfully well. His observations (and description of his observations) move amongst categories of reading Falkland's body (small, delicate) to physiognomic readings,

before making a huge leap into a consideration that his “air”, his eye, and his mannerisms are what maintain his power over his inferiors. Caleb’s observation is loaded, just as Falkland’s own physiognomy is loaded, with meaning; his curiosity about this landowner on whose estate he has lived with his late parents all his life manifests in an extreme simultaneous anxiety (uneasiness) and curiosity (awe). Because Caleb has acquaintance with books and not men, his initial reading scene of Falkland operates on a sense of physiognomical knowledge and social understanding but perhaps only a tenuous understanding of “men”—the personal, the psychological. Caleb can read the surface details (Falkland’s diminutive stature, his animated eyes) but not quite *get at* their signification—after all, Caleb recognises a face pregnant with meaning, but that meaning is, at this point, uncanny and “inconceivable”. Besides Caleb’s attentiveness to the physical and surface detail of Falkland’s appearance, he also has an intuitive sense of the social. Despite his admittance to a “want of experience”—Caleb must after all appeal to his imagination as to what Falkland’s grave and solemn air *means*—he reads a more or less accurate power dynamic into this currently foggy figure of Falkland, identifying the uncanny superiority and inconceivable agency Falkland seems to lord over all the other characters of the novel, Caleb especially. Caleb’s readiness to read Falkland, and perhaps start on some acquaintance with other men, is the key opener to what will become Caleb’s all-consuming and all-powerful curiosity towards Falkland. It is an innocent hunger that has an amount of book-learning but no practical real-world or dimension or application as of yet; Caleb, finding himself in the brand new role of secretary under an uncanny squire rather than the role of son under rural parents, searches for a bearing and a chance for identification with the superior.

The long passage of Caleb’s initial reading of Falkland also contrasts in many ways with the reader’s first acquaintance with Tyrrel, a fellow squire. Though not an eyewitness of the

events of Falkland's past, Caleb relates to the reader that he has joined together Mr Collins' story of Falkland's past with accounts "received from other quarters" (8-9). As a result the reader will take what they will of Caleb's reliability, but the initial descriptions of the two squires bear much in common. Tyrrel's

stature, when grown, was somewhat more than six feet, and his form might have been selected by a painter as a model for that hero of antiquity, whose prowess consisted in felling an ox with his fist, and then devouring him at a meal. Conscious of his advantage in this respect, he was insupportably arrogant, tyrannical to his inferiors, and insolent to his equals. The activity of his mind, being diverted from the genuine field of utility and distinction, showed itself in the rude tricks of an overgrown lubber. Here, as in all his other qualifications, he rose above his competitors; and, if it had been possible to overlook the callous and unrelenting disposition in which they were generated, you would not have denied your applause to the invention these freaks displayed, and the rough, sarcastic wit with which they were accompanied. (16)

The two passages of description afforded to Falkland and his enemy Tyrrel follow the same trajectory of description: they both begin with the physical and corporeal before moving towards a firm sense of the superiority that is maintained via that physicality and its resultant mannerisms and "air". The two men are opposites in many obvious ways. Falkland is delicate, uncanny, silently commanding; Tyrrel is overgrown, unlearned but not without "wit", and insolent.

The common quality that the two men share, however, is their automatic positioning as superior to others. If power and superiority are what Godwin is concerned with across his writing, his portraiture of two English squires who will both turn out to be tyrants establishes that there is no single road leading to that superiority; Falkland and Tyrrel are both indeed their own

men. The power that they maintain, automatically as the description would lead us to believe, is in alignment with what Freud (channeling a term from Le Bon) describes as “prestige”:

Prestige is a sort of domination exercised over us by an individual, a work or an idea. It entirely paralyses our critical faculty, and fills us with wonderment and respect. . . . Personal prestige is attached to a few people, who become leaders by means of it, and it has the effect of making everyone obey them, as though by the operation of some magnetic magic. (13)

That “magnetic magic” is implicit in Caleb’s personal reading of Falkland and in Caleb’s narration of Mr Collins’ and the pieced-together backstory that explains Falkland’s past with Tyrrel: Falkland’s uncanny air, his inconceivable face pregnant with meaning, automatically assembles his inferiors into a complicit power dynamic of social standing and governance under a superior being. Caleb cannot account for it, but understands its magnetism and its influence on others; this can also simply be symptomatic of his own newfound desire to identify with a powerful role model (as Freud maintains, prestige is a facet of the identification process). That magnetic magic is apparent in Tyrrel as power figure, though under a different form: Caleb notes how “The young men in [Tyrrel’s] circle looked up to this insolent bashaw with timid respect, conscious of the comparative eminence that unquestioningly belonged to the powers of his mind” (16). In the earlier description Caleb also narrates how, if “you” could overlook the grotesque callousness of his disposition, “you would not have denied your applause to the invention these freaks displayed”, which condescends to a creativity and magnetic influence in Tyrrel’s overblown displays of physical and social superiority. What remains is that the two men establish and maintain an unspoken but tangible influence over others in the world of their English coterie, and this is achieved magnetically, through an impression of prestige which ties

into the filter of Caleb's narratorial innocence as the displaced, recently orphaned observer in a new professional and familial role.

The descriptions of the two squires also began with an insistence on their bodies and the meanings attributed to them. Tyrrel has the "overgrown", larger-than-life masculine corporeality of a Hercules—and the description will follow uncannily into Dickens' much later *Barnaby Rudge* when the narrator describes Hugh. Tyrrel's primal athleticism and command of the physical recall an explicitly-related classicality (as Freud writes of prestige and its magnetism, "Since in every case it harks back to the past, it cannot be of much help to us in understanding this puzzling influence" [13]). His physical abilities are not entirely devalued by the narrator; their use in establishing a captive audience of inferiors is still highlighted. On the other hand, Falkland is the opposite: small, delicate, his is a form "pregnant" with meaning, whose active eye wordlessly maintains a command over others. Davidson calls Falkland

strikingly feminine. Knowledge of his own guilt causes Falkland to blush and blanch throughout the novel, and Caleb compulsively reads these physical symptoms in the manner of a jealous husband policing his wife's behavior. . . . Godwin depicts a world entirely governed by the gendered logic of appearances (614-5).

Combine this with Caleb's description of Falkland's physiognomy as "pregnant" with meaning, and how his "polished manners were admirably in union with feminine delicacy" (18), and one gets a picture of a masculinity made queer by a combination of female-associated qualities—that is to say, the modalities of masculinity embodied and exemplified by the effectively commanding and superior Falkland here establish his gendered style while including and operating upon that which is usually outside of "masculinity" ("feminine delicacy").

The emergent idea is, again, that Godwin is establishing that masculine tyranny can come in different “styles”, achieving the same persuasive result over one’s peers via different means; the efficacy of masculine-encoded tyrannies does not exclude queer configurations that ironically challenge the more primal, or recognisably “prestigious”, masculinities of a figure such as Tyrrel. Tyrrel, who “might have passed for a true model of the English squire” (16), and Falkland, who manages to establish a concrete power dynamic with only the electricity of his small and silent command, are actually two templates of masculinity presented to the reader early on in *Caleb Williams*. At this point in Falkland’s backstory he may still be new on the English squire scene, but due to the framing of the narrative (at this point we have already been through Falkland’s explosive statement that he will blow Caleb to smithereens for discovering his secret) it is well established that Falkland is not only extremely powerful but also effectively tyrannical and to be feared. Falkland represents a gender-complex masculinity that poses a problem for Tyrrel’s brutal, corporeal, and classical style of masculine representation. The rest of the backstory of volume I fleshes out the competition between the two squires and the destruction that competition leaves in its wake.

Thus, Falkland and Tyrrel represent two different modes of masculinity. The descriptions we are given of Falkland and Tyrrel represent alternative templates for the expression of the bourgeois male identity in the circles of the eighteenth-century British gentry. We are told from the start of Falkland’s backstory that he is a romantic figure, a gentleman who upholds ideals of chivalric conduct and continental masculine values; Tyrrel conversely inhabits another form of history-based masculinity, one more classical, but similarly “heroic”, and both men inhabit a sense of outmoded chivalry that, mysteriously, operates from a past *felt* by the observer (as Freud writes about the historicity being a key to prestige’s functioning). The fact that both men are able

to command and maintain a position of social and psychic superiority over others proves that both of these forms of masculinity are not only viable in the depicted cultural context but powerful, if not ideal.

Tyrrel, who is perhaps not as unthinking as Caleb writes, is able to identify his problem with Falkland as a gendered one:

The arrival of Mr Falkland gave a dreadful shock to the authority of Mr Tyrrel....Mr Falkland he described as an animal that was beneath contempt. Diminutive and dwarfish in his form, he wanted to set up a new standard of human nature adapted to his own miserable condition. He wished to persuade people that the human species were made to be nailed to a chair, and to pore over books. He would have them exchange those robust exercises which made us joyous in the performance and vigorous in the consequences, for the wise labour of scratching our heads for a rhyme and counting our fingers for a verse. Monkeys were as good men as these.
(18-9)

Initially, Tyrrel's shock merely derives from ideals of masculine corporeality. Falkland is small and dwarfish, completely other to Tyrrel's body; and as if that were not bad enough, Falkland also has the spectre of the feminine about him, and thus is already inhabiting a space of gender complexity or problematisation. Tyrrel's shock is not only the shock of finding another powerful, admired man within their (now mutual) coterie of English squires, but it is also the shock of one masculine style encountering an alternative. Because Tyrrel's masculine style is what constitutes his tyrannical authority over others, this encounter with an alternative masculine style inherently registers as a threat to the status quo of his agency. Tyrrel recognises that masculine styling, or emulation, is an imitative process: Falkland is seen as holding up his style of masculinity as "a new standard of human nature adapted to his own miserable condition", wishing "to persuade

people” to act in accordance with his own individual expressions of gender. Falkland’s particular masculinity carries within it the threat of identification—the idea that others might start imitating this masculinity “beneath contempt”. This is where Tyrrel’s problems with Falkland begin. The two men are two examples of authoritative English “squireness”, a category that inherently requires its candidates to uphold a gendered identity informed and complicated by social and cultural context. Held up in contrast, this cannot do, not just for Tyrrel but for the context of the novel and its represented eighteenth-century society. In other words, there can only be one “true model of the English squire” at a time. And this, of course, has to do with Tyrrel’s innate understanding of the competitive/alternative masculinity that Falkland upholds as societally appropriate and effective.

At first, Falkland is hesitant to become Tyrrel’s nemesis. In a moment that foreshadows Falkland’s hatred and suspicion towards Caleb, Falkland tells Tyrrel: “We are in a critical situation. We are upon the brink of a whirlpool which, if once it get hold of us, will render all farther deliberation impotent. Shall we be enemies? What benefit will be derived from that? Who ever found in gall, malice, suspicion and hatred the materials of happiness?” (27). This is one of the earliest instances of a discourse of destruction and annihilation that attends masculinity and identification within this text. Falkland and Tyrrel’s societal dueling is described as a process of inevitable destruction that will not only end in the annihilation of both parties, but also will become an all-consuming obsession and paranoia. Only a few pages after not heeding Falkland’s advice to stand down lest the two of them get swept up in a competition to the death, Tyrrel remarks: “This Falkland haunts me like a demon. I cannot wake, but I think of him. I cannot sleep, but I see him. He poisons all my pleasures. I should be glad to see him torn with tenterhooks, and to grind his heart-strings with my teeth. I shall know no joy, till I see him

ruined” (30). Falkland and Tyrrel’s competition foreshadows Caleb’s self-destructive fascination with Falkland, and Falkland’s desire to see Caleb ruined. It is a not complete foreshadowing in terms of its particular discourse of annihilation, though; if we return to the opening pages of the novel, in the initial scene where Falkland catches Caleb in his closet, where Caleb has just witnessed him closing the lid of the fatal chest with a heavy sigh:

Villain, cried he, what had brought you here? I hesitated a confused and irresolute answer.

Wretch, interrupted Mr Falkland with uncontrolable impatience, you want to ruin me. You set yourself as a spy upon my actions. But bitterly shall you repent your insolence. Do you think you shall watch my privacies with impunity? I attempted to defend myself. Begone, devil!

rejoined he. Quit the room, or I will trample you into atoms. (7)

Falkland, having already gone through one competitive experience to the death with another (an other) masculinity, has been primed into the attitude that all attempts at his authority and interiority (for which the chest is a psychic symbol in addition to being unrevealed real evidence of his crimes) must be configured under a discourse of annihilation and jealous contempt: all attempts at understanding his true identity, which began with Tyrrel’s personal issue with his masculine style, are now dangerous and to be destroyed. Falkland and Tyrrel’s long argument that solidifies their status as enemies once again stresses disagreement between styles of masculinity, as Falkland implores:

Mr Tyrrel, attend to reason. I might as well desire you to leave the county, as you desire me. I came here to you, not as to a master, but an equal. In the society of men we must have something to bear, as well as to perform. No man must think that the world was made for him. Let us then take things as we find them; and accommodate ourselves with prudence to unavoidable circumstances. (29)

Tyrell's response: "True, sir, all that is very fine talking. But I return to my text; we are as God made us. I am neither a philosopher nor a poet, to set out upon a wild-goose chase of making myself a different man from what you find me" (29). To get along as distinct masculinities within one society, Tyrrel would have to conform to a style not within his bearing (in his own words, coming to a peace treaty with this new masculine other would, for some reason, inherently require Tyrrel to change his own masculine style, and become "a different man"). Falkland is more idealistic: he imagines a society in which masculinities are accommodating towards alternatives; in fact, part of his idealistic figuring of masculinity includes the realisation that part of that very masculine self-styling includes the tolerance of gender identities outside of the internalised and gendered self. Tyrrel disagrees completely. He argues for a God-given, natural gender identity; or rather, to actively pursue an alternate style of male gender would be impossible for the concretely-realised, gendered self—once a gender identity is styled, it is immutable. Tyrrel was the reigning authoritative masculinity of his particular coterie before Falkland's arrival, and he is not about to change the rules of social superiority (and the functioning of prestige/identification) to allow for alternative styles. And thus Falkland and Tyrrel's fight to the death begins. Later in the narrative, we see a Falkland warped by years of masculine competition ending in the annihilation of the other—the whirlpool and paranoia he was able to so accurately foresee and acknowledge as unavoidable. Falkland's ideals of chivalry and accommodating the other get completely swept away in the wreckage, and the novel, of course, opens with his complete lapse into suspicion and hatred of the newly arrived masculine other, Caleb.

Godwin consistently figures all attempts at mutual understandings of masculine styles or gendered constructions of identity as things to be destroyed. Falkland's bombastic reaction to

finding his new hire in the proximity of his closet calls attention to the sensitivity of the male tyrannical figure, a figure not at all unknown to the gothic novels of *Caleb William's* 1790s publishing climate or even all the way back to a Lovelace of Richardsonian and sentimental literary tradition (something to be further explored with the later *Fleetwood*). Few novels dissect so closely the male tyrannical type as Godwin does in *Caleb Williams*, though. Against this figure of the psychologically damaged tyrant—the tyrant who became everything he was able to foresee as unreasonable and destructive—we have Caleb, who in the text functions as a pure form of the masculine identification act, just as Barnaby in *Barnaby Rudge* and to a somewhat lesser extent Oliver in *Oliver Twist*. Caleb himself acknowledges the identification process in an encounter with Falkland:

Oh, sir! do not talk to me thus! Do with me any thing you will. Kill me if you please.

Kill you? [Volumes could not describe the emotions with which this echo of my words was given and received.]

Sir, I could die to serve you! I love you more than I can express. I worship you as a being of a superior nature. I am foolish, raw, inexperienced,—worse than any of these;—but never did a thought of disloyalty to your service enter into my heart. (117)

In this exchange Caleb acknowledges his status as a *tabula rasa* (Tysdahl 68), a Lockean type, but more than that I believe Caleb wants to impress upon Falkland his role as unfathered material longing to receive shaping from an identity he has already decided is an prestigious, authoritative masculine model. This desire for identification and the formulation of his own identity unto manhood manifests as love and obsessive-compulsion towards observation. Implicit in Caleb's words is also the idea that all such masculine probing and identity-formation is a sort of compulsion towards annihilation, an expression of the death drive. Caleb acknowledges that

probing into Falkland's identity—and thus ultimately affirming the viability of his own eventual masculine identity—is also an acceptance of death, a voluntary placing of one's neck on the chopping block. In many more instances besides this one Caleb's speech is charged with the homosocial and even a homoerotic energy that complicates the erotic and the thanatotic. Caleb understands that desire towards knowing another masculinity in order to shape the gendered self is both formative and destructive for that self.

Caleb's high praise of Falkland does not retain its height throughout the rest of the novel. Convicted as a criminal through Falkland's machinations, the majority of the text sees Caleb fleeing the law. As James P. Carson notes, Caleb now "adopts numerous disguises, including that of a one-eyed beggar, thus dispersing the self into a series of masks" (138). I see Caleb's forced entry into a series of disguises not as a *dispersal* of his self, but rather the crisis of trying to form new masculine identifications while under duress. Just like the "Miraculous Adventures", Caleb's parade of disguises is a microcosm of the text's major concern with gender construction and identification. Unable to form himself into something that resembles his initial beloved masculinity, the unformed male subject thus undergoes a series of different transformations under the trauma of incompleteness or inability to emulate the original. It is also important to point out that this is the point in which Caleb makes a living writing various sordid tales of masculine criminal figures. As Caleb is himself a criminal figure in crisis, the text becomes particularly metafictional at this juncture, pointing at its own action that is the tumult and danger of constructing a gender. Male gendering thus circulates around the *writing* act, especially in *Caleb Williams*, where we see the protagonist not only consuming criminal narrative in reading (as will happen in almost every other Newgate novel in this study) but producing such narratives. At its core, masculinities, including criminal masculinities, circulate around

conceptions/understandings of literature, and literary conceptions of the self. Caleb's disguises fail, and the seemingly benevolent old man who offers him lodging recognises Caleb as a wanted criminal. It is not at all surprising that these disguises of Caleb's are ultimately ineffective, for in the world of Godwin, all acts of gender identification are inherently a movement towards destruction.

The courtroom scenes that make up the published ending of the novel finalise this idea that all paths of masculine identification lead to destruction. Caleb views an emaciated, spectral Falkland in court—an even smaller, more diminished version of his past self. After pouring his heart out about the suffering he was made to endure under Falkland's efforts to cover up his past crimes, Caleb implicates himself in Falkland's own guilt, speaking as if telling the truth of his suffering at Falkland's hands is a crime in and of itself:

No penitence, no anguish can expiate the folly and the cruelty of this last act I have perpetrated. But Mr Falkland well knows—I affirm it in his presence—how unwillingly I have proceeded to this extremity. I have revered him; he was worthy of reverence: I have loved him; he was endowed with qualities that partook of the divine.

From the first moment I saw him, I conceived for him the most ardent admiration. He condescended to encourage me; I attached myself to him with all the fulness of affection. He was unhappy; I exerted myself with youthful curiosity to discover the secret of his woe. (298)

After Caleb's long narrative of falling in with criminals, the donning of his various disguises, his living on writing criminal stories and his ultimate inability to escape Falkland's uncanny detection, he has come to resent Falkland; that much is evident in the speeches that occupy scenes prior to this one. But during the courtroom scene, in which the drama has been unfolding to a cathartic moment in which we can finally see Caleb vanquish the tyrant, Caleb unwittingly

falls back into the trap of Falkland's prestige: all the adoration and desire to identify with him as "divine" figure come flooding back.

At this point in which Falkland stands accused—and witnesses Caleb's reversion to a pure and obsessive admiration of his qualities—Falkland's resolve against Caleb as thing to be destroyed is shattered:

Williams...you have conquered! I see too late the greatness and elevation of your mind. I adore the qualities that you now display, though to those qualities I owe my ruin. I could have resisted any plan of malicious accusation you might have brought against me. But I see that the artless and manly story you have told, has carried conviction to every hearer. All my prospects are concluded. All that I most ardently desired is for ever frustrated. I have spent a life of the basest cruelty to cover one act of momentary vice and to protect myself against the prejudices of my species. I stand now completely detected. My name will be consecrated to infamy, while your heroism, your patience and your virtues will be forever admired. (301-2)

Falkland can now only experience esteem for Caleb because he believes Caleb's heartfelt, forgiving and "manly" speech has at last made Caleb into a recognisable, respectable, fully-formed masculinity. It is a masculinity in line with Falkland's long dissolved ideals of masculinity before he met his mortal enemy Tyrrel: a masculinity in line with heroism and virtuosity. The default mode of this text's portrayal of masculine styles has been to show that masculinity operates as a monopoly: when the dominant form of masculine expression meets an alternative, the unavoidable course taken is a battle to the death; one masculinity must destroy the other, as there is only ever room for one "example" of masculinity in the bourgeois English context that Tyrrel and Falkland shared. That dominant model has to do with authority and power, as both Falkland and Tyrrel's masculine styles are in the business of establishing and

maintaining magnetic holds over their inferiors. When Falkland first encountered Caleb in what he saw as an inferior, unformed male subject looking to take on a masculinity that would involve the probing of his own—and thus the possibility of exposing his interiority and the criminal guilt tied to that interiority, the criminal act that came about from a competition of masculine styles—he retains the mode of masculine destruction, because masculinity can only be a monopole. That Falkland now sees within Caleb an honest, manly, heroic masculine style means that Caleb's masculinity has now destroyed Falkland's—as he says, he is “now completely detected”. His worst fears have come to life: his interiority has been completely read and exposed by the inferior masculine other. The secret hidden in his commanding air, the meaning hidden in the impregnable surface of his physiognomy, is now out, and the outer is Caleb.

Godwin has no plans of ending the novel with such a complete victory for Caleb, however. In fact, both the published ending and the manuscript ending deal with annihilations not only of Falkland, but of Caleb. The most obvious annihilation comes to us in the form of the unpublished manuscript ending. This ending chooses not to have Falkland break down into an admiration of Caleb's newfound honesty and heroism—instead, Caleb is not vindicated, and is left to rot in prison. His final narration obliterates the man in favour of the object:

Well then,—It is wisest to be quiet, it seems—Some people are ambitious—other people talk of sensibility—but it is all folly!—I am sure I am not one of those—was I ever?—True happiness lies in being like a stone—Nobody can complain of me—all day long I do nothing—am a stone—a GRAVE-STONE!—an obelisk to tell you, HERE LIES WHAT WAS ONCE A MAN! (311)

Caleb here feels forced into the modality of object: if not an actual gravestone (which would signify his death in prison), then he has lost his sanity and views himself as insensitive material

that has passed from “man” into something insensate. This ending reports that Falkland is dead, and Godwin’s project of showing that all masculine identity formation is a movement towards death is completed. In this ending Falkland has won the court case, but no one masculine style lives to tell the tale and take the place as authoritative monopole or exemplary style of manhood. Both Caleb and Falkland in this ending lose their masculinity and their lives: Falkland in actual death brought about by the emaciating personal guilt that now informs his victorious masculinity, and Caleb by being pushed to the breaking point of shirking off his identification as gendered being.

The published ending, though not such a straightforwardly gloomy completion of Godwin’s grave message about male gender identification, also witnesses an annihilation of both Falkland and Caleb. After being forgiven by Falkland and absolved of criminal charges, Caleb (as in the manuscript ending) notes Falkland’s death soon after. Caleb’s movement towards a complete masculine self is deferred a final time: “Why should my reflections perpetually centre upon myself? self, an overweening regard to which has been the source of my errors! Falkland, I will think only of thee, and from that thought will draw ever-fresh nourishment for my sorrows!” (302-3). Caleb has denied himself any completion of an identity, and again shifts towards a *process* of identification that relies on contemplating only Falkland’s identity. Even more interesting is how Caleb regards his “overweening regard” to his *self* as what is the source of his errors: Caleb developing any sort of intrinsic identity not dependent on the emulation of others is an error, and the idea becomes a self-flagellation for Caleb in which he denies any finishing of his “revenge” against Falkland or absolution of guilt. Caleb’s is not the triumphant masculinity in the exemplary model of masculinity Godwin has shown us throughout the rest of the text. Caleb closes his narrative by completely abnegating his self:

I began these memoirs with the idea of vindicating my own character. I have now no character that I wish to vindicate: but I will finish them that thy story may be fully understood; and that, if those errors of thy life be known which thou so ardently desiredst to conceal, the world may at least not hear and repeat a half-told and mangled tale. (303)

Caleb, who regards himself as a non-entity, a vacuum without a “character”, passes over the narrative’s reason for existence completely to Falkland. The story of Falkland and Caleb’s destructive desire for each other has become Caleb’s desire to self-cancel, something no doubt inherited from Falkland’s desire to destroy Caleb, to trample him into atoms. Godwin has shown with *Caleb Williams* that all inquiry into masculine styling and all identification with gendered example is a movement towards annihilation. The system he portrays operates on a monopoly—there can only ever be one exemplary gender expression at any given time, and all encounters with alternative forms are realisations that the other needs to be destroyed. The process of destruction is so automatic that it takes on not only a discourse of inevitability and transference, but also an embodiment of the death drive that can make unformed and living subjects in search for a model to identify with eventually self-abnegate. As Alex Gold Jr. writes,

[Caleb] shows untiring ingenuity in his disguises and hairbreadth evasions, yet at the same time he unwittingly increases his own suffering...Inexplicable motives drive him to uncover Falkland’s secret, distempered thoughts increase his suffering, and irrational acts make him participate in his own pursuit. (148-9)

The socially-low masculinity discovering his own place in the complicated matrix of the text’s “passion between men” (Gold 145), a passion encoded in the terms of tyrannical and obsessive, is made a participant of his own detection and annihilation.

Themes of masculine emulation and competition will remain an emphasis for Godwin in 1805's *Fleetwood; or, the New Man of Feeling*, though this novel is devoid of the throes of masculine-other villainy so central to *Caleb Williams*. The protagonist Casimir Fleetwood, or "the new man of feeling", embarks on a tour of masculine styles and performativity—a tour unlike Caleb's abortive and dangerous foray into adult masculinity—that not only tracks his progress from childhood to middle age, but is also a *literal* tour across locales of England and the continent. The result is a more intensely contemplative probing of what it means to live a masculine life and embark on a finished, self-realised gender role: Casimir has the better part of a lifetime to study the men around him and compare and contrast himself with them, and as a result of this larger scope and wider canvas the results seem even less conclusive than Godwin's ideas about gender in *Caleb Williams*. And unlike *Caleb Williams*, in which we have more or less no other choice than to go by Caleb's narration and the information he is able to provide about his narrative and the people involved therein, in *Fleetwood* it is stated early on that it is the reader's job to determine Fleetwood's character set against a backdrop of the narrated events of his autobiography. Rather than witnessing an unformed masculinity struggle against the tyranny of finished, monopolising masculinities, in *Fleetwood* we see the unformed masculinity struggle against the tyranny of his own decisions and their frequently disastrous results. The reading process of *Fleetwood* thus hinges on two considerations: an understanding of Fleetwood's emulation/identification process with a parade of distinctly-drawn masculinities, and an understanding of the narrative voice that constantly foregrounds an idea of a finished masculinity at the *opening* of the narrative. Readers are tasked not only with taking in the various masculine styles (Fleetwood's enumeration and explanation of them) that constitute the major action of the novel, they are also tasked with a realisation that the narrator is speaking from the vantage point

of the culmination of that identification process, speaking from a point outside of the finished events of the narrative (the catalogue of masculine styles that Fleetwood must identify or not identify with). Thus, the events of the novel are elements that readers use to compare with an idea they are presented with from the frontispiece: “the new man of feeling”. What is the new man of feeling? What is he like? *Fleetwood* is the simultaneous process of a young man establishing his own gender identity in a gallery of masculine templates and the retroactive consideration of what constitutes the narrator’s (the new man of feeling) particular style of masculinity. That is to say, the reader’s idea of Fleetwood’s masculinity moves in two directions at once.

Fleetwood’s first line trumpets its concern with the patriarchal: “I was the only son of my father. I was very young at the period of the death of my mother, and have retained scarcely any recollection of her” (53). Fleetwood and Caleb’s mothers remain inconsequential, outside of Fleetwood’s note here that her absence deeply affected his father, influencing him to remove to the isolated Merionethshire (53). Unlike Caleb, Fleetwood is not made a total orphan from the onset of the narrative; rather, the death of his father is deferred (for now). Living in rural isolation with his melancholy father, Fleetwood is given a contemporaneously quintessential Romantic upbringing: “My earliest years were spent among mountains and precipices, amidst the roaring of the ocean and the dashing of waterfalls. A constant familiarity with these objects gave a wildness to my ideas, and an uncommon seriousness to my temper” (53). This is just one of the many early instances we are given by Fleetwood that foreshadow the stormy, tyrannical masculinity he will become later in the novel, but the major work of the scene foregrounds Godwin’s serious dislike of the social:

I had a presentiment that the crowded streets and the noisy mart contained larger materials for constituting my pain than pleasure. The jarring passions of men, their loud contentions, their gross pursuits, their crafty delusions, their boisterous mirth, were objects which, even in idea, my mind shrunk from with horror. I was a spoiled child. (54)

Unlike Caleb, who throws himself at his own risk into the destructive and competitive world of public masculinities because of an intense desire to observe and identify with one, Fleetwood has not arrived there quite yet. He is oddly and rightly (in Godwin's narrative tone) prescient regarding public masculinities ("the jarring passions of men, their loud contentions") and the unhappiness, humility and misanthropy that constitute their natural outcome. Fleetwood will nevertheless begin a gendered identification process, despite such childhood prescience, but for now Godwin continues to paint the isolated backdrop of a Romantic upbringing. As it turns out, however, such an upbringing is a breeding ground for possessive and imperialistic personalities: "I was engaged in imaginary scenes, constructed visionary plans, and found all nature subservient to my command. I had a wife or children, was the occupier of palaces, or the ruler of nations.... The tendency, therefore, of this species of dreaming, when frequently indulged, is to inspire a certain propensity to despotism" (56). The isolated, Rousseauvian nature of Fleetwood's Romantic upbringing as a young boy, spirited away to the countryside by his father, is figured as a sowing of seeds for a self-indulgent sensibility that gives way to "despotism". The process of an isolated childhood imagination—or at least Fleetwood's—also hinges on fantasies of ownership: the dreaming Fleetwood conjures up scenes and plans of not only land and property ownership, but also of having a family (which precedes these ideas of ownership and conquest). Already it is implied that familial status, when dreamed about by a formative childhood imagination, is clumped in with, or is a natural component of, self-indulgent and

despotic dreams of ownership and dominion. Readers familiar with the arc of *Fleetwood*'s larger narrative will read into this a heavy foreshadowing of how Fleetwood will treat his wife near the end of the novel, but taken alone, Fleetwood's Romantic childhood, made possible by the melancholy of a socially-removed, widower-father figure, is the natural inspiration for dreams of imperialistic and despotic impulses.

This is where Fleetwood's first (after his father) example of a finished masculinity finds its way into the narrative, in the form of his awkward and useless tutor, hired by his father so that Casimir might be exposed to some kind of formal education. He recollects:

He was certainly not a man of genius....But he was that which is better than a mere poet; he was an honest man. His heart was guileless; his manners were simple; and, though he could never be cured of a lying estimation of his own greatness, this did not prevent him from feeling and discharging what was due to others. (57)

So far so good: the tutor seems to be well-received by young Fleetwood initially, and his style of the "honest man" is described in consideration of its pluses and minuses. Although Fleetwood precociously realises the man is not an intelligent tutor, what matters is his particular style of masculinity: a simple guilelessness that does not "prevent him from *feeling* and *discharging* what was due to others". This is one of the narrating Fleetwood's first descriptions in the novel which tasks itself with drawing and describing a formed template of masculinity, and it acknowledges not only the particular aspects of being "an honest man" but also the sensible aspects—that is, part of the divisible tasks of one's particular masculinity has to do with *feeling* "what is due to others" before *discharging*. Embodying the "an honest man" is thus a process that involves sensible reflection and then action for/towards others: Fleetwood implies in his description an understanding of masculinity as a sensible and active process where what one feels and what one

discharges are what make up the identification of “an honest man”. Importantly, masculinity is again tinged with a propensity towards an interaction “with others” that is coloured with an imperialistic force—that is, any masculinity, even this “honest” one, seems to regard its role as “discharging what was due to others”—deciding what is owed and what should be owed to others before fulfilling whatever that entails. It operates on relations of power.

Alas, aligning himself towards this ultimately fallible tutor is not attractive for Fleetwood, and he reflects:

though I learned from my preceptor almost every thing valuable that he was able to teach, I never looked up to him. His foibles were obvious, and did not escape my observation. The understanding of my father was incomparably greater than that of this inmate of our family; nor did my father always refrain from ridiculing in his absence, and even sometimes alluding by a passing sarcasm in his presence, to my tutor’s weakness....This systematical persuasion of superiority occasionally broke out into little petulancies, which did not fail grievously to wound my kind friend’s self-esteem. (58)

At this early point in the novel, Fleetwood derides this newfound template of masculinity not only because his own “observation” makes him alert to the tutor’s frequent foibles, but because he has a naturally superior example of masculinity to compare him with: his father’s “understanding” and sarcastic treatment of the tutor becomes an ingrained and learned behaviour for Fleetwood, and he begins to act despotically towards the tutor, in “little petulancies” which nonetheless “grievously” wound’s the tutor’s self-esteem. Fleetwood’s identification (or rather, his lack of identification) with the tutor cuts off more quickly than any other masculine example in the narrative, and this is through Fleetwood’s natural observation of a masculine style deemed inferior and his still intact identification with a strong father figure through which he learns how

to treat the novel masculinity. Fleetwood calls it a “systematical persuasion”: the system of learning inscribed by the present father figure that plays into Fleetwood’s already internalised propensity towards despotism. And this is no small matter for the poor tutor, either—these little petulancies wound the tutor’s estimation of his own self, the “honest man” overconfident in his own poetic abilities. In this early stage, *Fleetwood* sets up a system of comparative masculinity that operates by emulation, performance and comparison. For now, it seems that the admirable “honesty” of the tutor figure does not override his “foibles” and Fleetwood’s sensitivity to weighing the worthiness and faults in others that presents itself in the “petulancies” of young despotism and the superiority implied in masculine observation so pervasive in the power dynamics of *Caleb Williams*.

So much for the tutor. Fleetwood lives in peace with his father for some years before being sent to Oxford, which constitutes a major trauma in his formative existence. His childhood presentiment that society, with its “jarring passions of men, their loud contentions” (54), seems destined to be proven against the touchstone of Oxford, which turns out to be a microcosm of men’s conformity to social examples of conduct and, in the critically famous scene of bullying leading to one of the students’ subsequent suicide, proves the theory of social competition and annihilation evident in *Caleb Williams*. Despite Fleetwood’s prescience that homosociety is noisy, contentious, and best left alone, he nonetheless enters Oxford student culture under an observatory impulse: “I was prompted to observe these animals, so different from any that had been before presented to my view, to study their motives, their propensities, and their tempers, the passions of their souls, and the occupations of their intellect” (72). Godwin continues to be concerned with men’s societal, psychological and personal observation of each other: the Godwinian hero is persistently curious about studying and discovering the “motives”,

“propensities” and “passions” of the men who surround them, as a taxonomist or zoologist studying “these animals, so different from any that had been before presented”. Fleetwood in particular is haughty about that observation—his view of young masculine others is already primed with ironic language of scientific observation of a species othered to the speaker/observer. However, he is soon disgusted to find himself assimilating into the Oxford crowd:

It was impossible to be of a purer nature, or to have a soul more free from everything gross, sordid, and groveling. The Fleetwood of the university had lost much of this, and had exchanged the generous and unsullied pride of the wanderer, for a pride of a humbler cast....My understanding was brutified; I no longer gave free scope to the workings of my own mind, but became an artificial personage, formed after a wretched and contemptible model. (72-3)

Fleetwood’s fairly seamless blending into life at Oxford (he writes as if he were able to simply sink into the background, and that social conformity forces a complicit participation in the events surrounding the bullying culture at Oxford) means he has identified with the “wretched and contemptible model” of the Oxford animal, a “brutification” process that forces him out of the now idealised identity of the solitary Romantic wanderer and self-indulgent, sensible boyhood. Further than this, it is also a splintering of his self, as he figures here: he makes a distinction between the “Fleetwood of the university” and what he was before and, through the power of the retrospective narration, what he will become after. Fleetwood finds the brutal social world of Oxford particularly animalistic and not at all conducive to independent thought and formations of identity; he acknowledges that his first thrusting into society, though a microcosm of society, means accepting an uncomfortable identification with a “contemptible model” one must

conform to (or be bullied to death, annihilated). Fleetwood's first lesson of masculinity is that masculine identification works as through automatised osmosis—to witness the animals of masculinity is to fall in with them, become one of them, even if those masculine “examples” are recognisable to the observer as other and contemptible. What is left seems to be the despair that is masculine feeling. After the Oxford episode, the novel recounts his journey to the continent, where he has a long “train of follies” (116) in France involving a series of disappointments with women in which they always end up being something other than what he initially expects—never completely felicitous.

Disillusioned with the brutality of English student culture and the infidelity of continental women, Fleetwood makes his way to Switzerland, where he remembers a friend of his father's:

I began now to think of M. Ruffigny, to whose protection and counsels my father had so emphatically recommended me...I had seen this friend of my father once only, when I was five years of age; and the vague and imperfect recollection which remained in my mind, gave a sort of sacredness to his figure, and made him appear in my thoughts like a visitor from the starry spheres. (118)

Fleetwood's disillusionment with men's natural state as assimilated brutes to an example of cruel conduct, and his other sort of disillusionment with the libertinism and fickleness of European women, lead him to an emotionally and psychologically vulnerable point in the narrative: he is travelling aimlessly and is met with reasons for vindicated misanthropy wherever he goes.

Fleetwood desires to meet with one of his father's connections, and his ruminations before meeting M. Ruffigny detail his self-conscious state:

I began to examine whether I was prepared to appear in his presence. I painted to myself his habitation as the grotto of an aërial spirit, whither I was repairing to do homage, and to

receive the communications of an all-penetrating wisdom...now that I had set my foot upon his native soil, I already seemed to feel the contact of his mind and the emanation of his virtues. (119)

Fleetwood's airy preconception of M. Ruffigny is loaded with the language of worship: M. Ruffigny is a spiritual idea to be venerated, and also a being who will impart what all formative masculinities in Godwin seek—an "all-penetrating wisdom", the privilege of panoptic, or at least interpersonally psychic, knowledge. Caleb, who lights upon Falkland's all-penetrating agency and observation, is particularly the worse for wear after its realisation, but for Fleetwood, the experience of an encounter with an idealised and all-powerful patriarchal masculinity has a particularly transcendent payoff. His initial conception of M. Ruffigny here also contains a contingent aspect of land ownership and property—that is, the idea that he is entering "his native soil" here in Switzerland, a place where formative masculinities or self-conscious wanderers have to bow down and be ready to receive superior knowledge. Fleetwood's encounter with M. Ruffigny is the height of patriarchal veneration within a text that will never truly get away from such ideology, similar to *Caleb Williams*' obsession with self-destructive masculine observation and probing.

Fleetwood meets with his aërial spirit, and M. Ruffigny's exclamation of "Casimir Fleetwood!" (120) is the first of the scant moments in the text in which Fleetwood's given name appears. His arrival in Switzerland at M. Ruffigny's estate is in this way a birthing process for Fleetwood: he is named here for the first time, and this is where Fleetwood's disastrous entry into the world can be soothed and sorted into something psychologically more coherent and reassuring for his sense of self (or so he thinks)—in other words, this is where he hopes to form a solidified identity in a hostile world.

The environs of Switzerland also live up to Fleetwood's visionary conception of M. Ruffigny; Fleetwood notes "I was lost in visions of paradise" (126) as they tour the lush and grandiose natural landscape. "I had forgotten Switzerland, and M. Ruffigny, and the world, and myself" he narrates, further emphasizing an idealised resetting of his identity and experiences. The Romantic inspiration drawn from the landscape is self-abnegating until M. Ruffigny calls him back into existence:

"Casimir! Casimir Fleetwood!" exclaimed my host, "where have you been?"

"In France:—at Paris."

"How have you been employed?"

"Not well.—My father sent me forth for improvement; but I have been employed in libertinism and dissipation."

"Fleetwood, I am also your father; and I will not be less indulgent, scarcely less anxious, than your natural parent. You know in gross, though you do not know in detail, the peculiar attachment I feel for every thing that bears the name of Fleetwood:—am I not your father?"

(127)

That initial "where have you been?" is especially vital: it asks where Fleetwood has been not only biographically (Fleetwood's journeys in France) but also in a general sense that teases Fleetwood out from his sensible and indulgent self-negation in the heavily Romantic landscape. The idea is that M. Ruffigny cannot allow for Fleetwood to become unFleetwood; as he explains, he has a peculiar veneration for all things bearing the name. He further communicates, after this speech, that Fleetwood's father is dead. M. Ruffigny's lead-up to this revelation is strategically planned: he places an emphasis on the idea that father figures are interchangeable, so interchangeable that he has placed himself in the position of being called an *actual* father to

Fleetwood, something insistent in his speech. This also implies the text's (and Fleetwood's) concern with finding idealised "examples" of masculinity, the idea being that they are numerous and replaceable in a way that *Caleb Williams* does not capture. For in *Caleb Williams*, the probing involved in finding, understanding and emulating a masculinity is itself a cursed and transgressive act, an act towards annihilation; in *Fleetwood* the unformed masculine identity is not allowed to imagine itself out of existence, but rather participate in an endless exchange of disposable identifications that defines the restive masculine sentimental journey. Fleetwood's father is dead, but that is acceptable, since M. Ruffigny is prepared to fill the role. The text's "Fleetwood, I am also your father" echoes the ongoing process of male comparison and identification. Resetting in Switzerland the masculinity spoiled by Oxford and France is an impossible task, for a resetting of the identity only leads to another automatic encounter with another "model". Fleetwood bemoans the death of his father, and describes how M. Ruffigny was exceedingly anxious for the future purity of my character and honour of my transactions....My father was now dead; and my host felt the task which had devolved upon him as of double obligation. I was a legacy which the friend most dear to him on earth had bequeathed to him, and a trust with which his last breath he had consigned to his care. As a legacy, the long attachment he had felt to the name of Fleetwood made him regard me as the most valuable estate that could have been conveyed to him. (133-4)

Once again Godwin uses language rife with ideas of property and stewardship in which Fleetwood is not only an obligation to a dear friend who is no longer of this world but property to be maintained and taken care of. Thus individual masculinities feel the weight of their responsibility in *Fleetwood*. M. Ruffigny sees himself as responsible not only for making sure the *name* of Fleetwood carries on in a respectable and legitimate way, but also for the formation

and solidification of Fleetwood's identity as a pure "character". Casimir is thus property, a living emblem of a patriarchal ideal (since patriarchy, in a filial sense, is something that must be venerated and treated as an object and ideal of worship) but also a "character", an identity in need of shaping and guidance towards a perceived moral configuration of which M. Ruffigny is responsible for overseeing. In *Fleetwood*, one can inherit another's son not only morally and socially, but also as property; something for grooming, something for ownership. As it turns out, M. Ruffigny was adopted in such a way by Casimir's grandfather, and his long inserted narrative goes in great depth to describe his upbringing as a young boy dispossessed by his own family and left to rot in a factory until his adoption by the graceful, idealised patriarchal figure. The moral of M. Ruffigny's long narrative seems to be that "Nature has formed us to the love of the venerable. Filial affection is an instinct twined with the very fibres of our heart. For the grey hairs of your grandfather, I had a mystical and religious awe" (196). The cult of paternal veneration in *Fleetwood* reaches its height here by the lake of Uri in Switzerland; Fleetwood loses one father and gains another, and it seems like his misanthropic troubles and problematic identity-formation stunted by Oxford and France are here absolved: "I felt, by the death of my father, and the society of my father's friend, purified from the dissipations which had too long engrossed me" (204). Morbidly enough, the death of one idealised model of masculinity is a process of purification—as mentioned earlier, Fleetwood has come to Switzerland under the desiring to cleanse and effectively reset his identity, and this is something accomplishable through the loss of one masculine relation/identification (because, in the world of Godwin's text here, it will simply be replaced by another). Any other kind and responsive masculine entity can "also" be a father; the effect on the unformed masculine identity is that of purification and resetting. This also implies that in Godwin, one masculinity's relation or identification to another

masculinity is not exclusive but replaceable: masculine examples are consumable and can be (and are) constantly switched in and out. Fleetwood's resetting process is perpetual, not an end but a cycle. Shortly after these lovely and idealised scenes, Fleetwood feels the weight of the identification process once again:

let me venture to say—I became assimilated, however imperfectly, to my admirable monitor. I whispered to my swelling heart, “Never, no, never will I belong to such men as these, and not make it the first object of my solicitude to become like them....In me the race of Fleetwoods shall survive; I will become heir to the integrity and personal honour of the virtuous Ruffigny”. (214-5)

When an unformed masculine identity is amongst honourable and virtuous examples of masculine conduct and identity, it *must* take on a project of becoming “like them”. The process is an “assimilation” and one that is, curiously, inherently “imperfect” in ways not elaborated by Fleetwood, as the circuit of logic has returned to the process undergone at Oxford. Fleetwood (speaking as retrospective narrator) ominously interjects: “Why do I write down these elevated vows, which, alas! I have never redeemed? I but the more sincerely subscribe to my own condemnation” (215). M. Ruffigny's guidance of Fleetwood is not affected, because the cyclic gendering process in *Fleetwood* by nature cannot be a completion, and he wanders away from Switzerland. The constant spiritual, aerial engendering of the paternal-filial connection at Switzerland has proven to be symptomatic of a Romantic propensity towards undeniable movements of power affecting and ablating (resetting) the individual subject.

Fleetwood's solitary wandering in Europe remains haunted by the need for identification and quality communion with another masculinity. He explores how the masculine identification process is a never-completed cycle: “How many disappointments did I sustain in the search after

a friend! How often this treasure appeared as it were within my grasp, and then glided away from my eager embrace! The desire to possess it, was one of the earliest passions of my life, and, though eternally baffled, perpetually returned to the assault” (230). *Fleetwood* is a narrative driven by the homosocial, perhaps even more so than *Caleb Williams*. In the latter, homosocial desire—the need to understand and identify with (or perhaps against) the masculine other—is annihilation and transgression, something inherently dangerous in need of destruction. In *Fleetwood*, the need for homosocial mutual sentiment, understanding, identification and communion is *the* reason for the “sentimental journey” of the new man of feeling:

I met with men, who seemed willing to bestow their friendship upon me; but their temper, their manners, and their habits, were so discordant from mine, that it was impossible the flame should be lighted in my breast. I met with men, to whom I could willingly have sworn an eternal partnership of the soul; but they thought of me with no corresponding sentiment, were engaged in other pursuits, they were occupied with other views, and had not leisure to distinguish and love me. (230-1)

Fleetwood’s existential despair is a result of the realisation that individual masculinities seem mutually incompatible; that perhaps this is the nature of masculine style itself, to be incompatible with the gendered other. Godwin’s obsession with mapping homosocial drives and tendencies constantly reveals them as destructive, incompatible or endlessly looping in a way that becomes uncanny or gothicised: masculine-identifying subjects are always in search for a comparative other—inescapably in search for the “treasure” of communion and identification—and that search is consistently pointless and blighted by difference rather than unified by it.

Because that search is a process that can know no end in *Fleetwood*, Fleetwood arrives at the next masculine site on his tour: a family man known as Macneil. The several pages of

description devoted to mapping Macneil's particular style of masculinity detail him as a family man, with "no further business remaining in his life, except to provide the children, the offspring of his marriage, with the motives and the means of a virtuous and happy existence" (234). He "seemed to be upward of fifty years of age, and was tall, robust, and manly in his appearance" (242). Contrary to the airy, spiritual configuration of M. Ruffigny, Macneil is "ruddy" (242), "manly" and more corporeally tangible (or corporeally described); nonetheless, his identity as "father" is similar to M. Ruffigny, serving as yet another template for how Fleetwood should live his life. Macneil will (extremely unceremoniously) convince Fleetwood here that what he needs to cure his wandering ills and existential despair is a wife, particularly his daughter Mary. Macneil's speech about an idea of masculine neighbourhood echoes Fleetwood's homosocial worldview, but with a few key differences:

"In every man that lives," he stoutly affirmed, "there is much to commend. Every man has in him the seeds of a good husband, a good father, and a sincere friend....I acknowledge, I am weak enough to be as much delighted with the spectacle of the lively and ardent affection of an Englishman to his son, as if it were directed toward the child of a Japanese. How much good neighbourhood there is in the world! what readiness in every man to assist every stranger that comes in his way, if his carriage is broken down....Whenever I see a man I see something to love,—not with a love of compassion, but a love of approbation." (248-9)

Similar to M. Ruffigny is Macneil's conveyance of a filial and patriarchal reverence: what makes the world a "good neighbourhood" is patriarchal and filial affection between men who recognise each other as fellow masculine roles and identities—a good husband, a good father, a sincere friend, or, later in the passage, a son. Society, and what makes society benevolent and socially effective and affectionate, is an amalgamation and recognition of various masculinity-dependent

roles and an acceptable and admirable multiplicity of masculinities, totally contrary to what *Caleb Williams* expresses in its plot. Just as fathers are interchangeable with Ruffigny, sons are interchangeable for Macneil—it does not signify whether a son is English or Japanese; what matters is that patriarchal affection is universal to mankind, and reveals that mankind is inherently good. This filial and patriarchal affection can be naturally extended to strangers. What firmly separates Fleetwood and Macneil’s worldviews—or perhaps genderviews—is Macneil’s idea that homosocial love (“Whenever I see a man I see something to love”) functions on approbation rather than compassion. Fleetwood shortly acknowledges that this long speech has not converted him from his natural mode of misanthropy (250), and the reason should be clear to see if we examine the differences between Macneil’s ideals of masculine identification and the homosocial and Fleetwood’s: Fleetwood longs for “an eternal partnership of the soul”, while Macneil vouches for “a love of approbation” rather than one of compassion. Macneil’s homosocial desire—or homosocial identification with masculine others—hinges on recognising and approving those modes as in accordance with his ideals of masculine “neighbourhood”—a benevolence inherent between societally accepted masculine roles (father, husband, son). This implies his masculinity—a sturdy, earthy, fatherly, domestic masculinity—is a “finished” style (as compared to Fleetwood’s necessarily and continuously unfinished masculine style) as it functions on a powered dialectic of being able to recognise and approve of other masculine roles. Macneil affects a stabilised masculine identity that serves to convert and conform Fleetwood to something similar to it: that is, Fleetwood marries Macneil’s daughter Mary under the illusion that becoming such a family man will cure his melancholy wandering, the wandering that is the drive, and repetition compulsion, of the homosocial. Macneil’s particular style of masculinity recognises benevolence and peace amongst masculine others, but only if they conform to

heteronormalised roles, and as such, Macneil seeks to heteronormalise Fleetwood's misanthropic feeling and worldview. When Macneil also convinces Fleetwood to purchase his estate to finance his family's move to Italy (260), the act is doubly loaded: Macneil not only tries to pass his masculine style and worldview on to Fleetwood, he also passes on the rights to his physical property (at Fleetwood's expense). As with the passages surrounding M. Ruffigny, where Fleetwood is figured as his inherited physical property, acts of masculine transference in Godwin often have to do with an act of inheritance as well: something to make the masculine transference doubly concrete. Macneil's ideals of masculine neighbourhood and cooperation that are so different from the competitive arenas of masculinities in *Caleb Williams* deflate when they begin to effect the major unhappiness of Fleetwood and Macneil's daughter Mary, who must now endure her husband's encroaching tyranny. Macneil affirms utopic depictions of cooperative masculinities and vouches for the importance of homosociety in the masculine biography or journey, but is revealed as naïve and inexecutable due to its tendency to be complicated by transference of property and subject to the strictures of heteronormalising forces that inherently destroy the masculine sentimental journey.

What follows in the final act of Godwin's *Fleetwood* is a paranoid narrative of inheritance and usurpation of property that mimics the style of *Caleb Williams*. Fleetwood, after unsurprisingly finding that married life does not suit him, treats his wife as property, something that can be stolen away by other men, although this is far from the truth of her actual personality. Fleetwood's cousins, Kenrick and Gifford, are introduced to the plot, and the latter manages to fuel Fleetwood's delusions of being cuckolded by Kenrick while staging a scheme for usurping Fleetwood's inheritance. The action is rushed and melodramatic in a way that prefigures the Victorian sensational novel, not at all like the slow and steady Romantic wanderings and

contemplations of the first two volumes, and serves to reinforce Godwin's concern with paranoia and the guilty psyche. The final act is also an illustration of the hostile world of competitive masculinities: men are out to get each other (Gifford) while innocent others become implicated in paranoid conspiracies. Taken as a whole, Fleetwood's marriage seems like a necessary movement of plot before anything else; Mary is the result of an alternative and heteronormalising masculinity being pushed onto Fleetwood, whose worldview is naturally incompatible with Macneil's. After Macneil's death at sea with his family, Fleetwood is left literally and psychically with the management of Mary, whom he tyrannically mistreats; Fleetwood, then, certainly does not agree that being a good husband is part of his masculine role in a society built on the benevolence of universally good and logical heteronormal masculine roles.

Gifford, who dresses as a highwayman to finally effect his inheritance scheme on Fleetwood (planning to murder him), is apprehended at the end of the novel by a certain Mr. Scarborough. Mr. Scarborough clears up the plot, Gifford is hanged, and Fleetwood and Mary are left to take care of their newborn son. Mr. Scarborough, in these last few pages of the novel, also constitutes the final masculine template on Fleetwood's tour:

I had never carefully observed [Scarborough's] figure till now. There was something almost awful in it, and that even to me, who could have no extrinsic occasion to stand in awe of my country neighbor. He was tall, and of a carriage bold and graceful. His hairs were of a pure brown, uncontaminated with art. There was a good sense and penetration, mixed with an uncommon air of severity, in his countenance. He seemed born to command. When he spoke, there was no spark of self-diffidence or embarrassment. He appeared always to see the right method of proceeding, to confide in his own judgment, and to be firm. Had I beheld such a

figure placed on a bench of justice, I should have said, “There sits one of the judges of the patriarchal world [...]” (396)

This description of Mr. Scarborough, appearing within the closing pages of the novel, seems rightly set to represent a final and ideal picture of masculine style in a narrative that has made masculine identification and representation its primary concerns: here is “one of the judges of the patriarchal world”, in the sense that Mr. Scarborough’s firm, commanding, “uncontaminated” and clairvoyant brand of masculinity not only represents the agent that was able to see through Gifford’s inheritance plot for Fleetwood’s sake, but also represents a winning masculinity, the one style set to preside over Fleetwood’s search through the gendered styles of Europe. His is a seemingly perfect masculinity: strong, with “no spark of self-diffidence”, perhaps constituting the opposite of Fleetwood’s self-reflective and troubled journey.

But things cannot go so neatly tied up in *Fleetwood*. In the final inserted narrative of the novel—similar to M. Ruffigny’s narrative but much shorter in length—Mr. Scarborough spontaneously lets his backstory flow out to Fleetwood:

“Oh, Mr. Fleetwood, you called yourself the most unfortunate of mankind! You have never known, like me, the misery of not being able to excite love in any of the persons most dear to you! Men style me honest, and honourable, and worthy; I am alone in the world, surrounded with a magic circle, that no man oversteps, and no man is daring enough to touch me! This is called Respect—its genuine name is Misery!” (402)

Mr. Scarborough’s story has to do, in short form, with the tragically flawed upbringing of his son. He explains to Fleetwood that his crime was being an overbearing and tyrannical father to his son: “it was I that killed him!....I was never satisfied with any thing short of perfection. I crossed him in all his humours; I never allowed him a moment of freedom. Task still succeeded

to task, and in none of them could he obtain my applause” (402). The text’s ultimate example of a father-son relationship is one of tyranny and patriarchal judgment (to use Fleetwood’s own figure of speech regarding Mr. Scarborough); sons are beings to be modeled as perfectly as possible, and it is the father’s role to oversee that process. The message behind this, however, is critical. The modeling of a son towards an ideal of perfection—the shaping of an unformed masculine subject towards a certain template or result—is inherently damaging if taken to a fine art. Mr. Scarborough’s image as a perfect masculinity is unraveled by the tragic story of his overbearing upbringing of his son, his son’s death as the result (which is not fully elucidated for the reader), which also alienates him from his wife. Mr. Scarborough, who seems absolutely eager to disillusion Fleetwood from his opinion that his is an authoritative and ideal masculine style, represents an ultimate masculine agency that is (perhaps, at this point, not so surprisingly) tragically flawed and dysfunctional in reality. His attestation that Fleetwood cannot understand his isolation, an isolation that he figures as “a magic circle, that no man oversteps, and no man is daring enough to touch”, is heavily ironic when we remember Fleetwood has a very similar idea of the homosocial world and emulation process: that is, a perfect idea of existence would be an “eternal partnership of the soul” with another man whose sentiments are in accordance with one’s own, something that can never be found or fulfilled. Mr. Scarborough and Fleetwood feel the same impossibility of social perfection or sentimental harmony with another; Mr. Scarborough because of his mistreatment of his son, Fleetwood because he has never met another soul that has inspired feelings of harmony or inspiration with himself. Mr. Scarborough is the text’s final statement that the “new man of feeling” and his sentimental journey are tragically doomed: that is to say, if the new man of feeling is a man who endlessly seeks completion through the harmony provided by another man of feeling (one who harbours

“corresponding sentiment” [230]), then that style of masculinity and that process are both doomed to failure, incompleteness, or the possibility of homosexual panic. Godwin’s use of the term is ironic for the text, as it serves to reveal the difficult and tragic nature of constructing a new idea of masculinity itself: Fleetwood has simply become a misguided tyrant frustrated in personal and intersocial philosophy and abusive of his well-meaning wife. If this is what the “new man of feeling” is, the message is hopelessly misanthropic: Mr. Scarborough’s socially-ascribed “honesty” is the curse of “respect” that it confers on the completed and seemingly appropriate masculinity. Fleetwood’s tutor, Macneil’s community of homosocial good-feeling and Mr. Scarborough’s respectable character of Good Samaritanism have all dealt with the curse that is “honesty”—to be an “honest” man is to show that masculinities rely on emulation that always deals with ascriptions of power and the revelation that to truly know a masculinity is to see the truths of abuses of power in property, sensibility, social superiority, despotism and the ill-treatment of sons and of women.

Evert Jan van Leeuwen has argued that *Fleetwood*’s various representations of masculinity reveal the destructive effect not conforming to any one of those masculinities has on the individual (118-9). Terming the different masculinities in the text as “male sirens”—figures who tempt Fleetwood into their own style of masculinity either because they want him to conform to their own masculinity or to benefit in some way from him (i.e. Gifford)—van Leeuwen argues that “Ironically, after years of studying and adopting prescribed masculine characters – the student, the man of fashion, the patriarch, the public servant – Fleetwood’s spontaneous character has become that of a monstrous tyrant” (137). It seems as if when the unformed masculine subject encounters a number of masculine templates that reveal themselves, one by one, to be actually unideal, what is the natural mode of masculinity becomes

“monstrous”, the figure of the tyrant that we see across eighteenth-century sentimental literature and the gothic novel. This is a viable reading of masculinity in *Fleetwood*, and one that works especially well in conjunction with readings of eighteenth-century literary masculinities. It will also figure neatly into discourses of criminal masculinity in the later Newgate trend, where criminality seems to not only embody a masculine style in and of itself, but also seems to be the natural result of any masculine subject not pressurised into prescribed gender roles before a certain age.

But Godwin’s novel and the idea of the “new man of feeling” seem a little more complex and sympathetic than this. Fleetwood’s tour of the multiple masculine templates of England and the continent becomes a sort of gendered noise, a process (as explained earlier) that is cyclic and self-constituting rather than linear. This process, which is the major work of the narrative, sorts through Fleetwood’s multiple and overlapping gender identifications. *Fleetwood* can be read as a questioning and undermining of all paternalistic and masculine identifications: there is no “one” dominant masculinity but many, and many of these are unflatteringly flawed by design. This is not a monopolising system of competitive masculinities like that of *Caleb Williams* in which the goal is to destroy the masculine other and emerge victorious; rather, the struggle of understanding and the ache of desiring to identify with the masculine other is the end in and of itself—the “honesty” that unifies masculine functionings in this novel is the honesty of the closed circuit in its eternal desiring and inability to ever operate towards a goal in a linear manner. To say *Fleetwood* ends with the unformed masculine subject becoming “the tyrant” is only half of the truth, as the overall project of the novel has been the process of Fleetwood’s narrating of the experience itself and reflecting on his various identifications and failures. The

novel also ends with too much possibility: the birth of Fleetwood's son presides over the ending, albeit coupled with the colourful and grotesque image of Gifford at the noose.

Masculinity thus remains deeply problematic in Godwin's works. To get a more thorough image of his treatment of gender requires us to probe Fleetwood's style and intentions as narrator rather than Fleetwood as unformed and struggling existential masculine subject. After his "dissipation in France" episodes, Fleetwood the narrator explains why he had to go through them in detail:

Why have I introduced it then? Because it was necessary, to make my subsequent history understood. I have a train of follies, less loathsome, but more tragic, to unfold; which could not have been accounted for, unless it had been previously shown by what causes I, the author, and in some respects the principal sufferer, was rendered what I was....My sensibility was not one atom diminished by my perpetual disappointments. I felt what man ought to be, and I could not prevent the model of what he ought to be from being for ever present to my mind. (116)

Fleetwood offers some final statements regarding the purposes of autobiographical narration: the process involves the good and the bad, mostly the bad, in this case, because these are all necessary aspects of coming to understand what kind of person *and* what kind of narrator he is—not only what he is narrating, but why he is narrating. Fleetwood retrospectively realises that his "sensibility" remained intact during the narrated content (his life story), and this has to do with the novel's subtitle: the new man of feeling. His particular "sensibility" is here straightforwardly described: the pure masculine identification process. He feels what "man ought to be", and that model remains forever present in his narrated material. The impetus driving his narrative as fictional narrator and subjectivity, and the impetus driving Godwin's novel, is the idea of a

masculine subject seeking a pure model of masculinity. This defines the “new man of feeling”, because this describes a particular *sensibility*.

The moral of the story (explicitly related) is both a beginning and an end: “Here then begins the moral of my tale:—I ‘repented’, but I was not ‘made whole’” (216). In it, Fleetwood implies the beginning of relating the moral (which involves painting further “moral” scenes and follies which build and establish his character to the reader afterwards) and a finished idea, a result (he “repented” but was not “made whole”). Similar to *Caleb Williams*, Godwin again figures all masculine identification in dialectics of punishment and repentance. Fleetwood’s punishments might not be as clear as Caleb’s psychic and observatory punishment: the punishment is the lived experience itself, the realisation that learning about one’s own subjectivity involves constant moral blunders and failed identifications with others. The repentance, we assume, is the ending and Fleetwood’s reconciliation with his wife, but also the process of the moral biography itself: the record of one’s errors that operates like a confession.

The true value of Godwin’s configuration of masculinities in these two novels may be best understood through the queer filtering of Edelman and the idea of the *sinthomosexual*.

Edelman writes:

Truth, like queerness, irreducibly linked to the ‘aberrant or atypical,’ to what chafes against ‘normalization,’ finds its value not in a good susceptible to generalization, but only in the stubborn particularity that voids every notion of a general good. The embrace of queer negativity, then, can have no justification if justification requires it to reinforce some positive social value; its value, instead, resides in its challenge to value as defined by the social, and thus in its radical challenge to the very value of the social itself. (6)

All of the masculinities presented by Godwin in these two novels have been queer in the sense that they are certainly aberrant and atypical, causing general breakdowns of gendered and societal logic. The homosocial is nihilistic, as there can be no such thing as homosocial neighbourhood; masculinities are competitive, as all paths towards successful masculine emulation end in destruction and repetition and self-confusion or annexation of the other; and the “man of feeling” is a closed circuit who defines himself by forever feeling “what man ought to be” rather than the crisis of what man really is. “Honesty” is the externally-understood benchmark of masculinity that, upon inspection or observation, actually reveals the true tyranny or monstrosity of the power relation. Godwin’s aesthetic masculinities, and their respective journeys that are implicitly tied to the processes of the synoptic and narrativisation tinged with the criminal, challenge all “social value” of the individual masculinity by positing maleness is that closed circuit/repetition compulsion that defies normality and solidity, instead only able to inhabit its own circuitry.

Fleetwood was not “made whole” because of his particular sensibility, and that typifies the search for the ideal masculinity and his homosocial desire for a perfect identification. Godwin’s “new man of feeling” is a sentimental creature who seeks for a non-existent gender ideal. More hopeful than this conclusion, however, is the idea that the *relation* of lived events—which in this novel includes the detailed and mindful relation of masculine identities and styles other to one’s self—is also what makes up “the new man of feeling” and Fleetwood’s particular masculine style. There is no sense that Fleetwood is a “finished” masculinity, and that is because Godwin’s system of gender identification and construction does not allow for finishing or completion. What it does allow for, however, is the *movement* towards completion, and Fleetwood’s narrative has to speak for itself: it is the long tour and accounting-for of masculine

others. The narrative itself is part of the “repentance” of being a mere tyrant; it involves becoming reflexive of alternative templates of masculinity and a proximity to them—it is a movement towards contemplating and understanding gender, and never a fulfillment. It is always in transition. It is always transition itself. One idea remains: “I know not how other men are constituted; but something of this sort seemed essential to my happiness” (231).

Godwin’s novels open important discourses of masculinity. *Caleb Williams* displays a psychic sublimation of masculinities that involves gendered violence and an obsessive impetus towards observation that imply masculinity is a problematic area in need of revision culturally, socially and psychologically. *Fleetwood*, while arriving at a similar conclusion that all masculine observation and emulation is a stormy and doomed process, has the more constructive overtone that repentance is possible in the form of self-reflective revision and the retention of a desire to understand gendered others.

Whether he is read contextually as novelist of the eighteenth century or the Romantic era, Godwin is an early example of an author who brings discourses of masculinity to the forefront of cultural, social and aesthetic thought. Caleb’s experience in prison and his reduction to street literature more explicitly foreshadow masculinity’s submergence into Victorian concerns of criminality and the Newgate novel’s project of narrative masculinities and criminal biography. The importance of the synopticon will be seen again in Bulwer’s *Paul Clifford* and Ainsworth’s *Jack Sheppard* especially; the idea of the closed-circuitry of masculinity, that of the *sinthomosexual* and the queer *jouissance* of the masculinity defined not movement towards a goal but movement itself, will resound as a perpetual and permanent theme in the novels that follow almost thirty years after the close of *Fleetwood*’s final page.

Chapter 2

2 Towards Criminal-Masculine Glamour: Bulwer's *Paul Clifford* and *Eugene Aram*

Edward Bulwer-Lytton's 1830 novel *Paul Clifford*, accepted in criticism surrounding the Newgate trend as the first of the genre's major representatives (Hollingsworth 66, John vi), follows the life of its protagonist from his birth to his wedded life in the New World. A climactic scene towards the end of the novel highlights the extent to which Paul's name (under his best-loved and most criminally successful alias "Captain Lovett"), his image, and his life narrative have become popularised after his arrest, as with Caleb before him:

The newspapers were not slow in recording the singular capture of the notorious Lovett. The boldness with which he had planned and executed the rescue of his comrades, joined to the suspense in which his wound for some time kept the public, as to his escape from one death by the postern gate of another, caused a very considerable ferment and excitation in the popular mind. . . . not a single one of the robber's adventures was noted for cruelty or bloodshed; many of them betokened rather a hilarious and jovial spirit of mirthful enterprise. It seemed as if he had thought the highway a capital arena for jokes, and only robbed for the sake of venting a redundant affection for jesting. Persons felt it rather a sin to be severe with a man so merry a disposition; and it was especially observable, that not one of the ladies who had been despoiled by the robber could be prevailed on to prosecute: on the contrary, they always talked of the event as one of the most agreeable remembrances in their lives, and seemed to bear a provoking gratitude to the comely offender, rather than resentment. (309)

In this passage Bulwer seems to anticipate the sordid reception of the Newgate novels, precisely lighting on the singular fact that made them morally suspect: the veneration and celebration of criminal figures as principal subjects. Like Caleb's witnessing of his own life reduced to criminal

pamphlet, the scene is similarly metafictional, winking along with the reader as the scene describes the enjoyability of reading the exploits of its own criminal protagonists for the sheer fun of the experience. Unlike *Caleb Williams*, though, the scene lacks the intimacy of first-person narration, instead swerving to a third-person that better captures the reception of the criminal narrative by *the masses* rather than by *the individual*.

Mathiesen calls the 1830s (the decade *Paul Clifford* opened, kickstarting a procession of other Newgate novels and imitators) the “seminal decade” (220) of the development of the synopticon: that is, of systems capable of disseminating criminal news with unprecedented (at this time in history) speed and volume (231). When Bulwer is presciently describing the mass consumerism of the Newgate novel and the Victorian culture of criminal celebrity with this passage, he is also recognising the synopticon and the mass availability of criminal news that, contradictory to Foucault’s thesis, Mathiesen tells us, does not work to cover up the punishment of the criminal but in fact draws popular interest towards it (231). Bulwer, a great admirer of Godwin, had no doubt internalised the synoptic theme implied in *Caleb Williams*, especially when Caleb’s subjectivity and life both real and narrativised in reportage and criminal literature are threatened by the synoptic process. But also in line with Mathiesen’s thinking that the 1830s was the seminal decade for the creation of these synoptic processes, *Paul Clifford* will do away with the brunt of the panoptic and deeply interpersonal paranoia dealt with in Godwin’s influential text, instead opting to write a novel more pure in its representation as social problem novel.

The passage quoted above comes to us at the point in the novel in which Paul has been apprehended by the police for the gunpoint robbery of Lord Mauleverer; Paul’s fate and punishment hang in the balance while the public eagerly awaits trial. The passage examines

another important generic argument of the Newgate novel and the criminal discourses of its Victorian context: the idea that criminals are not all bloodthirsty brutes. There exists the possibility that criminals are in fact “jovial”, their adventures “mirthful” and amiable. In fact, a requisite of many of the Newgate novels is that the hero be gallant and attractive, in many respects; his criminal exploits should generate mass media interest, make good topics for works of fiction (as is the case here), and on top of that, the criminal figure should be personally and sexually attractive (as the remembrances of so many ladies robbed by Paul and his band can attest to in the above).

Bulwer’s positioning of criminal figures as magnetic and charming would generate the famous and critically well-documented Newgate controversy that followed the rip-roaring success of the novels in the marketplace, alongside that other main offender William Ainsworth. So what does it mean to present the criminal subject as “mirthful”, “hilarious” and “comely”? Unlike Caleb before him, the dissemination of Paul’s criminal narrative, truthful or not, is not a certain and looming threat but a cause for mass celebration. The sense that Paul and the members of his band are certain to hang for their crimes—a punishment which does not end up taking place, as *Paul Clifford* becomes a strange example of a Newgate novel in which nobody hangs—nonetheless pervades the novel, but the legacy that hangs about Paul’s public identity is one of bravado and magnetism rather than the shame and personal damnation that hang heavy in the world of *Caleb Williams*.

The synopticon of the 1830s (although this novel takes place in the late eighteenth century, as was common for Newgate fiction) allows for the criminal to become celebrity, but this celebrity is informed by a criminality that has to do with idealised perceptions of masculine glamour: acts and appearances of gallantry, youthful mirthfulness, and attraction to an opposite

heteronormal sex. In this chapter I will explore how and why masculinities are intrinsically tied up with the attraction of the criminal figure, and how masculinities inform ideas of criminality and kinds of persecution, both legal and social, in two Newgate novels of Edward Bulwer-Lytton. Paul and the deuteragonists of his criminal band all represent slightly different but mutually-definitive masculine styles, but at the heart of this novel is what Gary Kelly calls in his comprehensive introduction to a 2008 edition of *Paul Clifford* “the mystery-romance of identity” (xxv). Paul’s birth of dubious origins does not constitute much of the early novel’s focus, but develops heady notes of dramatic irony when readers realise later in the novel that he is in fact the product of lawyer William Brandon’s (his love interest’s uncle) abortive marriage to a woman of low birth—the very man who is appointed judge for Paul’s hanging trial. The emotional reveal comes at the climax in true Victorian novelistic style, but as Kelly argues, much of the novel’s romantic appeal circulates around the *mystery* of Paul’s true identity rather than the *revelation*. This has ramifications not only for the details of the bildungsroman, but for the thematic and gendered representations of his identity as well. In this chapter I will demonstrate how the uncertainties of Paul’s identity necessarily become criminal aliases; the fragmentation of the masculine orphan’s identity in society becomes the dispersal of aliases that rely on his upbringing by criminal literature and his movement towards homosocial ties and emulation of gallant and beautiful masculine appearances that, not at all ironically, lead to criminal masculinities and identities by due course.

This is only one element of the novel’s extreme preoccupation with alternative and transgressive masculinities: the narrative introduces yet another queering of the masculine when it begins to focus on Lucy Brandon and the machinations of her cold and austere uncle William Brandon. Brandon, obsessed with revitalising the lost authority of his brother’s name and estate,

Warlock House, and realising that his daughter has fallen for a young man of uncertain and publically gossiped-about identity, pushes her towards a marriage with his dandiacal and much wealthier companion Lord Mauleverer. Brandon's own botched marriage, I will argue, symbolically informs his impetus towards rectifying his house name and estate in the socially and economically advantageous marriage of his daughter with Mauleverer. The novel also describes him, in great detail, as what Lee Edelman terms the *sinthomosexual*. The romance plot of Paul's identity, which ultimately ties him to the miserly and *sinthomosexual* Brandon, opens an era of Newgate novels where a son's identity is formed with and against their relation to lost, insecure, tyrannical or unknown fathers. Paul's criminality is informed by a drive toward masculine companionship and emulation in acts of gallantry that make up the attraction of the criminal figure in Bulwerian-Newgate discourse; the latter half of the novel works towards rectifying these socially problematic forms of masculinity with a drive towards Paul's voluntary disavowal of his criminal identities in the socially and sexually acceptable marriage with Lucy Brandon, set against the socially problematic drawing of Brandon's *sinthomosexual* and miserly bachelorhood.

I will also examine Bulwer's other famous novel classified in the Newgate genre, 1832's *Eugene Aram*. This novel complicates the magnetic and gallant criminal protagonist figure of *Paul Clifford*: this new protagonist Eugene Aram is an actual historical criminal, and the text poses the question of what we do with a criminal figure whose crime is detected over a decade afterwards—and that criminal is a well-known scholar of established repute. Victorian modes of masculinity are called into question as the novel dives into debate about whether or not an otherwise “good man” with a good reputation can be a criminal; the question fractures very notions of established practices of respectable masculinity. Like *Paul Clifford*, *Eugene Aram*

examines masculine styles and modes of performance, exploring how perceptions of a valid and socially accepted masculinity are defamiliarised (or, hauntingly, perhaps not at all defamiliarised) by criminal acts and past guilt. Also, as in *Paul Clifford*, the plot moves towards a socially productive marriage with an idealised female figure in Madeline Lester, but this union is shattered when Eugene Aram's past crime is investigated and detected by her young cousin Walter. Received as even more controversial than *Paul Clifford* before it, *Eugene Aram* examines the figure of the masculine criminal and homosocial band set against the alternative and singularly independent masculine identity of the scholar, once again demonstrating Bulwer's fascination with characters that can be read as *sinthomosexual*. Conversations about masculinity, masculine identity, male parentage, and the *sinthomosexual* versus the heteronormative are the bases which form the true narratives and ideologies of both *Paul Clifford* and *Eugene Aram*, two of the most seminal texts in the Newgate trend.

Paul, born to a woman of suspect morality who dies when he is only an infant, is left in the care of Dame Lobkins, a sour tavern owner, and Dummie Dunnaker, a well-meaning man of (unsurprisingly) suspect morality who frequents it. Raised by popular criminal literature and the streets of London, he apprentices as editor under the tutelage of MacGrawler in what constitutes a microcosmic satire of editors and reviewers of the period. After this short-lived narrative of occupation, Paul is dazzled by the acquaintance of two other young men, Augustus Tomlinson and "Long" Ned Pepper. He is slowly enculturated by a group of men he, ironically, does not recognise at first as a criminal band, and this in turn operates as a short-lived microcosmic satire of contemporary British politicians and royalty (for a comprehensive breakdown of this novel's political burlesque, see Hollingsworth and Campbell). One night at the opera, Paul spies an elderly gentleman and a beautiful young woman, immediately falling in love with the character

who will be revealed as Lucy Brandon, his wife come the close of the novel. Long Ned, who has instead fallen in love with the sight of the elderly gentleman's gold watch, steals it, leaving a befuddled Paul behind and causing a stir that results in Paul's capture rather than Ned's. Lyn Pykett has noted along with Hollingsworth that *Oliver Twist* is in fact a reworking of many of *Paul Clifford*'s plot points (Pykett 27).

Paul's wrongful incarceration renders complete his enculturation into a criminal underworld; the novel's Godwinian mode, which argues that circumstances and a corrupt legal system are what make the crime *and* the criminal, should be immediately apparent. In prison he again meets Augustus Tomlinson, whose elegant mannerisms and speech persuade him to partner with the man on a career of highway robbery—again proving a Godwinian point that the man wronged by the penal system may be forced into subsequent criminality, or a functioning subculture that necessitates cooperation for the subject's survival. The novel jumps forward several years and Paul is the leader of the band, Tomlinson and Ned his subordinates; the most notorious of Paul's aliases is a certain Captain Lovett. The crew aim to form the economically advantageous marriage of Paul with local rich girl Lucy Brandon by giving Paul the false appearance of being a high-society gentleman, but Paul truly falls in love with her. Lucy's vegetative father dies, leaving her the more independently wealthy; Brandon, her uncle, persuades her to marry Lord Mauleverer, but is frustrated by her insistent attraction to Paul despite the mystery of his birth and social standing. Paul increasingly feels he is duping her, as a man who makes a living on the highway should not wish to marry an innocent; the crew rob Lord Mauleverer, their hideout is discovered by Mauleverer's hired lackeys, and only Paul is caught and apprehended while valiantly making time for his comrades' escape. We learn of Brandon's past, a botched union in marriage to Paul's mother, a woman of low birth; his lost

son's identity is revealed to him by none other than Dummie Dunnaker, who has uncovered the secrets of Paul's mother at Brandon's behest, at the pivotal moment when Brandon is to pass judgment on Paul, his own son, in court. Brandon, in shock, quickly reduces the sentence from hanging to transportation, heads home in a carriage, and is dead upon arrival. Paul promises to return to Lucy after his transportation; he fulfills his promise and the two head to America to live productive lives of honest toil.

Paul's youthful days typify the path towards male identification that I have argued is the heart of Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and *Fleetwood*; the early plots of Newgate novels devote a great deal of stage time to the protagonist's floundering attractions towards the various masculine styles and performances of the same-gendered other (other because the boy protagonist is an as-yet inchoate masculine style), and his attempt(s) at identifying and emulating those styles. Paul's first impression of the philosophical Augustus emphasises the importance of masculine energy coupling with keen fashion sense and learning: "There was an ease, – a spirit, – a life about Mr. Augustus Tomlinson, which captivated the senses of our young hero: then, too, he was exceedingly smartly attired; wore red heels and a bag; had what seemed to Paul quite the air of a 'man of fashion;' and, above all, he spouted the Latin with a remarkable grace!" (31-2) For Paul, who has been raised on stories of Dick Turpin (22) in Dame Lobkins' shady tavern, Augustus' particular brand of masculinity comes like a breath of fresh air: here is a man who conducts himself easily and with spirit, but "then, too" has the dimensions of being well-dressed and educated. Augustus works as a representative of an all-important Victorian idea of the "gentleman", as discussed by James Eli Adams in *Dandies and Desert Saints*. Adams explores how the construction of "the gentleman" is "the most pivotal and contested norm of mid-Victorian masculinity, because it served so effectively as a means of regulating social mobility

and its attendant privileges” (152). Although Adams focuses primarily on the mid and late Victorian eras, after the 1830s context of the advent of the Newgate novel, it should be clear that Augustus represents a masculinity that negotiates boundaries of class: as Adams notes, the masculine style of the gentleman, a man who has self-styled himself through vigorous autodidacticism and an Evangelical program of self-awareness and self-bettering (Adams 13), is also an identity that regulates class in the sense that any man can strive towards this masculine style and self-identification, thus proffering a sense of class mobility. Augustus is certainly representative of this self-aware straddling of class boundaries: in *Paul Clifford* the mark of the highwayman is to be an attractive, energetic, well-dressed and well-mannered gentleman who nonetheless fulfills all the requirements of the gentlemanly gendered style while making a living robbing others and facing the dangers of starvation, vagrancy and the gallows. Augustus’ status as gentleman in the novel is no doubt meant to be comical as these early chapters operate on a great deal of dramatic irony for Paul, who is blinded by Augustus’ showy masculinity and does not realise for some time Augustus’ true profession of highway robbery. Augustus is the first solid indication in the novel of early Victorian masculinity’s ability to test and negotiate the boundaries of class-based gender identification, something that becomes more apparent, for Adams, in the mid to late decades of the era. Adams does note, through Carlyle’s writings on the dandy in *Sartor Resartus*, that early discourse on the Victorian gentleman explores the fear that the mode of “the gentleman” might lead itself towards becoming “a purely social role or status-marker disjoined from any moral substance” (53). There is no doubt that, if one reads Augustus and his overblown, pages-long rhetorical treatises as a dandiacal masculinity rather than a sincere one, then Augustus becomes the morally suspect figure Carlyle fears. Augustus, no doubt, does represent a comical masculinity, just as Paul’s third companion Long Ned represents a sartorially

and corporeally dandiacal masculinity, and the fact of their real profession of robbery marks a gap between their social roles as gentlemen and their socially dangerous lack of “moral substance”. Comical or not, Augustus and Long Ned remain in the text as the primary paths of masculine identification for the yet young and untarnished Paul; their efficacy as style markers on the road to a complete gendered identity for Paul, who reads and receives them as honest friends and companions, is not affected by their comicality or sincerity. Their comicality is also still able to perform a function for Bulwer’s project in the social novel—they exist as identifiers that even rogues can pull off “proper” modes of gentlemanly masculinity regardless of real social status or wealth, and this speaks to the transformative power of masculinities.

In *Paul Clifford*, aspects of the gentlemanly style are peripheral to identifications with a roguish masculinity. We are told that

There was something very engaging about our hero. He was not only good-looking, and frank in aspect, but he had that appearance of briskness and intellect which belong to an embryonic rogue. Mr. Augustus Tomlinson professed the greatest regard for him, – asked him if he could box, – made him put on a pair of gloves, – and, very condescendingly, knocked him down three times successively. (32)

Intellect is the basis of potential for an embryonic rogue and gentleman alike, though performances of gentlemanliness might include flights of rhetoric or Latin quoted with remarkable grace. The point remains that *Paul Clifford* will repeatedly praise the masculine qualities of handsomeness, briskness, energy, intellect, learning and genius as the requisite and definitive qualities of the criminal hero. Augustus’ self-aware learnedness and manipulation/appropriation of high-class gentlemanly qualities professes an awareness of masculine performance and its ability to operate regardless of the real demands of wealth and

class. John Tosh in *A Man's Place* highlights what is another important gendered aspect of Paul and Augustus' first meeting, and that is fist-fighting; Tosh notes how fist-fighting and boxing were "assertive courting practices" (112) in affirming masculinities between low-class men. Paul and Augustus' first meeting is negotiated in terms of both the spouting of Latin, masculine dress and boxing—Augustus "condescendingly" tests Paul's worth by first impressing him with his learning then knocking him down with a punch. Paul's impulse towards emulating this masculine overload is a heady mix of both high and low masculine sensibilities, a tension which marks and defines Bulwer's representations of masculinities in his Newgate novels; masculinities and their construction(s) can exist separately from economical realities, and rely on intersectionally deconstructed conceptions or performances of class. Paul thrills at the idea of forming a masculinity like that of his new companion: "Paul looked, and his heart swelled. 'I may rival,' thought he – those were his very words – 'I may rival, – for the thing, though difficult, is not impossible – Augustus Tomlinson!'" (33)

Long Ned's masculinity, though akin to Tomlinson's in its comicality in displaying a gap between perceived gentlemanliness and actual criminality, is far baser, and much more typically dandiacal in nature, lacking any of the literary learning of Paul (with his short-lived editorial career) and Augustus (with his classics and philosophy). Long Ned's masculinity, if not already described in terms of overextension by moniker alone, spills onto the scene:

[Paul] was suddenly accosted by a gentleman in boots and spurs, having a riding-whip in one hand, and the other hand stuck in the pocket of his inexpressibles. The hat of the gallant was gracefully and carefully put on, so as to derange as little as possible a profusion of dark curls which, steaming with unguents, fell low not only on either side of the face, but on the neck, and even the shoulders of the owner. The face was saturnine and strongly marked, but

handsome and striking. There was a mixture of frippery and sternness of expression...The stature of this personage was remarkably tall, and his figure was stout, muscular, and well-knit. (54)

Long Ned is a picture of virility—exceedingly tall, muscular, whip in one hand, the other stuck down the region of “his inexpressibles”. He is also initially described with a few contraries: face strongly marked but handsome, his expression defined by frippery and sternness. Like Augustus’ mixed masculinity, representing both high and low features of established Victorian masculine modes, Ned is rough and gallant at once. Paul, Augustus and Ned remain the three main characters of the criminal band throughout the novel, but Ned is relegated to smaller actions and fewer scenes compared to the first two men, ultimately becoming a one-note character who best represents the tonality of the masculine rogue: as Augustus comments regarding Ned near the end of the novel, “his neck is made for the rope, and his mind for the Old Bailey. There is no hope for him; yet he is an excellent fellow” (277). The previous sentence encapsulates the figure of Bulwer’s criminal hero—though the gallows await him, he is nonetheless an excellent fellow—a magnetic, attractive and amiable masculinity for readers of the Newgate novel and characters of the Newgate novel alike.

Long Ned’s indiscretion is what also initiates Paul’s life of crime. In one of the novel’s funniest moments, Paul and Ned, staring across at the yet unknown to them Brandon and Lucy at the opera, notice two different things: Paul comments on the beauty of Lucy’s face, while Ned assumes he is talking about the face of Brandon’s gold watch (60). As mentioned previously, Ned steals the watch, and Paul is captured and jailed for the crime. In terms of mere plot structure, and as stated earlier, this moment prefigures Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*. But more than that, it sets up a markedly Newgate theme of the transference of guilt between boys and homosocial

associates. In crime and punishment, it matters little in these novels who is incarcerated as long as there is an incarceration; a male companion of the criminal can serve the punishment just as well as the individual who committed the crime, and the significance of an *individual's* crime versus a *group's* crime is blurred, if not erased. Caleb is made criminal as if by automation from his privileged inspection and detection of Falkland's crime. In Newgate novels, crime, guilt and punishment are transferable properties in which individual agency and subjectivity do not always signify. Likewise this is an operation of criminal masculinity; if Paul wants to attain the masculine style and identity of Augustus, then the identification process extends itself not only to the transference of gendered qualities in the Newgate novel but also the transference of crime, guilt and punishment. One criminal boy can stand in for another in a shared association of crime. If the homosocial group of young criminals emulate and share masculinities or awareness of masculine performances and appearances that rely on magnetism, example, genius, dress, corporeality and handsomeness, then they also must share each other's crime and punishment, revolving in and out as cyphers for each other. In Godwin, this is problematic, but in Bulwer, the associations are positive and construct a functional criminal society of glamour and amiability. Paul becomes a representative of another man's guilt, and is successfully initiated. This is no doubt a symptom of the Victorian fascination with homosocial secret societies, which are part and parcel of secretive and alternative masculinities, as Adams tells us: "the preoccupation with secret societies reflect an ongoing fascination as well as fear—a fear of insurrection answered by a desire for collective intimacy among men" (62). The particular "insurrection" Adams is talking about is an 1838 Parliamentary investigation into Trades Unions that "purported to uncover elaborate machinery of ritual and initiation that made them sound very much like masonic lodges" (62), the implication being that secretive homosociality carries the dual threat of political

insurrection and alternative gender. Adams goes as far as to explore how the increased interest in homosocial secret societies was charged with the fear of transgressive sexualities (62). In the case of *Paul Clifford*, Paul and his criminal band's homosociality promotes a liquid and transitive gender identity that also includes crime and punishment as an inextricable part of its makeup and process(es) of initiation. The secret society is no doubt capable of insurrection and threat in the form of highway robbery; they also must mutually guard and protect each other from detection and hanging, as crime is just as transitive as their masculinities. The mere fact of the Newgate novel and *Paul Clifford* operating on homosocial secret society as plot points also emphasises the operation of ulterior or alternative masculinities—the signal of the homosocial secret society whispers the threat of transgression, as there must be something it guards.

After we fast forward some years to Paul's ascension to the head of the criminal band, he certainly has his work cut out for him: being Captain Lovett, Paul's most successful alias and the one that appears most in the novel, is a big job. How highway robbery relies on the operation of multiple aliases and identities, and how the action of the novel is spread between high and low scenes of Paul appearing at balls in order to court Lucy followed by scenes of picturesquely-drawn carriage robbery, emphasise the requisite fluidity of Paul's criminal *and* socially acceptable identities. Paul began life as a young orphan under the care of Lobkins and Dummie Dunnaker, and had the gentleman-criminal identity thrust upon him by Ned's carelessness and his desire to emulate Augustus' refined demeanour; these are the reasons why Paul is often described at pivotal moments as emerging from shadows, donning masks, and assuming forms under the moonlight. Paul—appearing as Captain Lovett while Augustus and Ned wait for him on a night of a robbery—is described as follows:

The robbers became silent, the sound of distant hoofs was indistinctly heard, and as it came nearer, there was a crash of boughs, as if a hedge had been ridden through; presently the moon gleamed picturesquely on the figure of a horseman, approaching through the copse in the rear of the robbers. Now he was half seen among the sinuosities of the forest-path; now in full sight, now altogether hid; then his horse neighed impatiently; now he again came in sight, and in a moment more, he had joined the pair! The new comer was of a tall and sinewy frame, and in the first bloom of manhood....The horseman's air was erect and bold; a small but coal-black mustachio heightened the resolute expression of his short, curved lip; and from beneath the large hat which overhung his brow, his long locks escaped, and waved darkly in the keen night air. Altogether, horseman and horse exhibited a gallant, and even a chivalrous appearance, which the hour and the scene heightened to a dramatic and romantic effect. (121)

This passage best illuminates the romantic and picturesque aspects of the criminal hero, treated in terms that demand vivid visual detailing that recalls the Romantic novel, Byronic heroism and the rogues and banditti of the eighteenth-century Gothic. What is strange about this passage, but very much characteristic of the many visual descriptions we get of Paul in the novel, is that he is described as if a new character is appearing on the scene, being introduced to readers. This could be because we are getting a description of *Captain Lovett* apart from Paul's bildungsroman that we have been reading up to this point; note how in this scene he is described as "the new comer" and "the stranger" (118) that Augustus and Ned await in the moonlight. At first he is also described in terms of halves and variations: he is "indistinctly heard", "half seen", "now in full sight, now altogether hid", before bursting into picturesque visibility in "the first bloom of manhood". These descriptions emblematised the gendered identification process itself; since this is a bildungsroman, the childhood subjectivity is on a transformative journey as he forms not

only his social identity but his gender identity as well, as we saw earlier in the novel when Paul identifies with and is then initiated into criminal masculinity. But this description and the methodology it describes also emphasise the part of Paul's identity that relies on fluidity and things half-seen, things intimated and things performed. Paul's ability to don successful disguises and aliases is what his success as both a principal highwayman and a participant in the high-class society of balls and gatherings (in order to win Lucy's hand in marriage) depends upon. This is not the only scene or description in which Paul is described as indeterminate: Lucy will register his smile as "undefinable, half-frank, half-latent" (114); an unnamed member of the criminal band discusses Lovett's legacy, extoling: "there is not a stone wall in England that the great Captain Lovett could not creep through, I'll swear!" (295). As with Ainsworth's Jack Sheppard, Paul's slipperiness exists not only in his ability for visual and social shapeshifting, but also the ability to escape actual imprisonment. The Newgate novel's fascination with jailbreaking becomes emblematic of the masculine criminal subject's requisite abilities to shapeshift and perform in multiple ways.

In terms of Paul's masculinity defined by its very ability to transform, this is not to say he is genderless, shapeless; rather, his masculinity relies upon the ability to *appear at will* as fulfilling the requirements of gallant criminal masculine performance, and also to maintain a certain *novelty of appearance*—his appearances must "burst" rather than simply materialise, and these appearances should be received with a certain level of romance and flashiness. He emerges into a patch of moonlight so romantically and picturesquely, hitting the high notes of the trademark Bulwerian masculinity we see again and again in the intense descriptive passages of the novel: sinuous, erect, bold, resolute, gallant, chivalrous, dramatic, romantic, approaching the animalistic in terms of his conflation with the gallantry of the horse in the same scene. Such

bestial masculinity relies on the sinuous perfection of masculine corporeality as much as it does the magnetic and chivalrous energy inherent in the “bloom” of manhood. Paul’s solid appearance in the moonlight after weaving in and out of shadows and halves demonstrates his unique gendered position in the novel as a masculinity that defines itself by its ability to thrive and adapt to difference—differences in the high and low, the social world, the criminal world—and adopt the appearance of one or the other in a way that performs a certain gallantry or pageantry. Kelly maintains that Bulwer’s particular insistence on masculine gallantry and performance stems from an anxiety to balance criticisms of dandyism aimed at his narrative voice:

Bulwer was careful to include scenes of masculine endeavour and high moral and social purpose in *Pelham*, as he would in *Paul Clifford*, to balance the dandiacal elements of the narrative voice. Among these masculine elements were depictions of manly action and ‘low’ life rendered with a combination of grim realism and Gothic melodrama, subsuming the picaresque tradition. (xv)

Kelly further explains that there was a danger of perceived femininity in a career built around writing the kind of novels popular in the circulating libraries of Colburn and Bentley; to dodge this critical reception and perception of his own character as a man, he had to write in an established “Fielding-Scott tradition, with elements of the Byronic” that included

the form of the mystery-romance of identity, scenes of masculine endeavour from elegant crime to elegant courtship, the worldly-wise and witty yet also learned and manifestly well-read narrator, the demonstrations of literary skill and versatility from lyric poetry to literary satire and burlesque, the treatment of topics current in the public sphere still almost entirely reserved for men [...] (xxxiv)

amongst other novelistic and narratorial strategies. Paul's masculine performance is thus authorial as much as it is fictional; in its exuberance, masculine dress and the puffing out of well-built chests lies an appearance/construction of masculinity that is also the author's. Going beyond the fictional representations of masculinity embedded in the text, outside of it lies also a note of masculine theatrics and pageantry, and the anxiety of a male author having to affirm masculinity in the gallantries of the characters he imagines.

Bulwer's ideas of masculinity do not begin and end with Paul's transitive masculinity, Tomlinson's comical high-and-low posturing, and Long Ned's overextended corporeal dandyism; there is yet another element of masculinity in play in the novel, and this has to do with the mystery-romance of identity (Kelly) and the unique character of William Brandon: lawyer, judge, and Paul's true father. As will become especially evident in Dickens' Newgate forms, the melodrama of father-son (and other genetically and occupationally male-male) relations constitutes the major narrative action of the Newgate novel and the juncture at which the most important concerns of Victorian concepts of masculinity play out their crises. Analogous to the female Gothic's concern with the motherless heroine, the Newgate novel is preoccupied with documenting failures of male parentage and the abandonment of dispossessed sons to lives not trapped in a drafty castle but the confusion of open highways and the asphyxiating streets of crowded criminal underworlds and metropolises. There is an overtone of lost patriarchal responsibility playing out across the pages of Newgate novels, and the Newgate novelists want us to notice.

The first pictures we are given of the Brandon estate Warlock House (a term already loaded with gendered connotations of evildoing, transgression and the arcane) have to do with the infirm Joseph Brandon, father to Lucy and brother to William. Joseph is

good-natured, inoffensive, and weak. . . . He was of a family of high antiquity, and formerly of considerable note. For the last four or five generations, however, the proprietors of Warlock House, gradually losing something alike from their acres and their consequence, had left to their descendant no higher rank than that of a small country squire. (102)

Joseph, a character who is indeed inoffensive and ultimately malleable to the will and desires of Lucy in her attraction to the socially undefined Paul, dies halfway through the novel, leaving Lucy in control of the Brandon capital. As the narrator points out, “those fine plans which were to make the Brandons greater than the Brandons ever were before, were to be realized by her own, – own money!” (130), creating the curious case of all the financial power at the center of this novel’s narrative belonging to a woman. In this way, the Newgate inverts the female Gothic’s trouble with heroines being subject to the tyranny of the financial patriarch.

Due to Lucy’s financial agency, which he views as somehow contentious, William Brandon vies for her union with his dandiacally tyrannical friend Lord Mauleverer. Compare William to his late brother Joseph:

William Brandon was. . . esteemed in private life the most honourable, the most moral, even the most austere of men; and his grave and stern repute on this score, joined to the dazzle and eloquence and forensic powers, had baffled in great measure the rancor of party hostility, and obtained for him a character of virtues almost as high and as enviable as that which he had acquired for abilities. (104)

Moral, austere, having that Bulwerian masculine “dazzle” (or prestige) of learning and eloquent power, Brandon defines himself against the ailing, inoffensive, and withered masculinity of his brother, one which was unfit to do anything about the decline of the once grand Warlock House.

In William Brandon's character is also another gendered concern, as voiced by the narrator, and one that might sound familiar:

There was something inscrutable about the man. You felt that you took his character upon trust, and not on your own knowledge. The acquaintance of years would have left you equally dark as to his vices or his virtues. He varied often, yet in each variation he was equally undiscoverable. Was he performing a series of parts, or was it the ordinary changes of a man's true temperament, that you beheld in him? (137)

Like his son Paul, Brandon's identity is configured in terms of variation. Though his "performances" vastly differ from his son's—there is no description of masculine bloom appearing from the shadows in picturesque moonlight, no criminal aliases, no switching between high and low scenes of ballrooms and robberies—Bulwer once again stresses the core idea of alternative masculine identities as lying in "changes". According to the narrator, "a man's true temperament" is to undergo "ordinary changes".

Unlike with Paul, Brandon's inscrutability of character is markedly threatening rather than entertaining, blossoming or energetic. And unlike the cardboard foppish villainy of Mauleverer, Brandon emerges as the text's more complicated villain in a number of problematic maneuverings of narration and plot. Brandon, at many points in the novel, seems to be really sympathetic with Lucy's loss of a father and subsequent isolation in society—which alternates with scenes of Brandon's plotting against her union with Paul and his gothically obsessive preoccupation with reestablishing the standing of Warlock House. Brandon earnestly (and ironically) longs for the son he lost at the same time he holds all the real power of deciding whether Paul lives or dies.

Brandon's configuration as the villain of *Paul Clifford*'s world can be read through the lens of the *sinthomosexual* as defined by Lee Edelman in *No Future*. Combining elements of the Lacanian and Freudian, Edelman describes how the anti-futurist logic of the homosexual intersects with a self-repeating and self-defining *jouissance*:

I am calling *sinthomosexuality*, then, the site where the fantasy of futurism confronts the insistence of a *jouissance* that rends it precisely by *rendering* it in relation to that [death] drive....homosexuality is thought as a threat to the logic of thought itself insofar as it figures the availability of an unthinkable *jouissance* that would put an end to fantasy—and, with it, to futurity—by reducing the assurance of meaning in fantasy's promise of continuity to the meaningless circulation and repetitions of the drive. (38-9)

The “*sinthomosexual*” is thus a figure who denies the “promise of continuity” found in “*sinthomophobic*” cultures that rely on narratives, realistic or imagined, of heterosexual futurity that depends on reproduction and children. *Sinthomosexual* figures and characters are those that reduce feelings of cultural safety or stability in reproductive futurism, and Edelman uses *A Christmas Carol*'s Scrooge as his literary example:

Scrooge may owe his representation to the traditional iconography of the miser as filtered through the lens of a liberal critique of emergent industrial capitalism, but the sins of the counting house count for little in the course of Dickens's text until they are made to account metonymically for the death of that little, little child whose threatened absence from the merry-making of Christmases Yet to Come the jury need not even leave the box in order to find Scrooge guilty as charged of what the indictment would no doubt characterize as “futuricide” by “hum-buggery.” (42)

Scrooge's configuration as *sinthomosexual* has to do not only with his embodiment of a critique of "emergent industrial capitalism"—a figure who exists merely to count and amass money without spending it is also a figure who serves no purpose towards economic or social utilitarianism or growth, and thus is markedly *sinthome*—it also has to do with his metonymic, Edelman tells us, representation of the death of an innocent young boy. Scrooge's aged bachelorhood that refuses to have a social, economical or reproductive use, his "refusal to embrace the genealogical fantasy that braces the social order cannot, as *A Christmas Carol* makes clear, be a matter of public indifference" (44).

Edelman's usage of an early Victorian example of literary *sinthomophobia* is no coincidence, as Bulwer's contemporary (though earlier than *A Christmas Carol*) drawing of William Brandon fits the bill of the same literary type. Brandon's ideas about maintaining the declining Warlock House are caught up in ironic ideas of patriarchy and male lineage, as Brandon frequently plots against Lucy's union with Paul alone in his bedroom: "let me consider what next step I shall take for myself – myself! – ay – only myself! – with me perishes the last male of Brandon. But the light shall not go out under a bushel" (141). Brandon acknowledges that his scheming against the socially and economically disadvantageous marriage of Lucy and Paul is something done *for himself* despite its symbolic functioning as the maintenance of futurity in the Brandon line. Brandon's solitary and selfish desiring to do things only for himself is confused with ideas of patriarchal futurity, and it is certainly not the only example to be found in the text. Lucy's concern for her uncle's health midway through the novel turns into a discussion of fame, posterity, and what a man leaves behind after old age; Lucy argues for the continuance of a man's "fame" in posterity, while Brandon rebukes her:

“Posterity! Can you believe that a man who knows what life is, cares for the penny whistles of grown children after his death? Posterity, Lucy, – no! Posterity is but the same perpetuity of fools and rascals; and even were justice desirable at their hands, they could *not* deal it....Posterity! the word has gulled men enough without *my* adding to their number. I, who loathe the living, can scarcely venerate the unborn.” (253)

Brandon’s misanthropic vitriol directed towards the idea of a man’s legacy and fame being handed down or continued in his children and family is clearly and fiercely anti-reproductive and anti-futuristic. Brandon, successful lawyer (and later, judge), who serves to interrupt the love-based marriage of his wealthy niece, defines a *sinthomosexual* tendency to interrupt the logic of reproductive futurism.

Towards the end of the novel, Brandon’s physical, and arguably his mental, health begin to decline in a series of descriptions that emphasize his insistence on *the self* in the face of death. Brandon’s rattling, exclamatory soliloquies that fill the later pages of the novel reveal his patriarchal goals: “the House of Brandon restored, my power high in the upward gaze of men; my fame set on a more lasting basis than a skill in the quirks of law, these are *yet* to come, these I will *not* die till I have enjoyed!” (352). Brandon affirms (to himself) that a career-based masculinity—the life he has been leading up to this point, and how the early novel has introduced us to him—are not sufficient reason for esteem in the eyes of other men. Only the reestablishment and maintenance of an arguably outmoded form of masculinity, the patriarchal estate, is acceptable cause for esteem and respect from masculine peers. And of course, this plan is actionable via the marriage of his newly wealthy niece to the foppish (and by extension, traditionally, understandably masculine in an eighteenth-century modality) Lord Mauleverer.

Paul's recent robbery of the Lord is the perfect opportunity to put him on trial and exterminate him from the scene.

The speech also enforces, if not perverts a little, the literary Victorian *sinthomosexual*. Unmarried, professionally successful but estate-obsessed Brandon is bent on the destruction of a younger man; as with Scrooge and Tiny Tim, Victorian culture insists that the figure of the *sinthomosexual* is really threatening for reproductive futurism. Although Brandon's compulsive schemes for continuing Warlock House and trampling Paul underfoot reaffirm his reluctance to die (and arguably deny the death drive), his emphasis on "enjoying" (*jouissance*) the reestablishment of the patriarchal estate while snuffing out another masculine existence that threatens it is not only a monopolising masculinity that aims at the destruction of the masculine other (as embodies the gendered narrative of *Caleb Williams*), it is also a symptom of the *sinthomosexual* who denies futurity and reduces futurist logic to the repetitions of death and stagnation embodied in the outmoded masculine and gendered forms. Brandon looks in the mirror, in the novel's *sinthomosexually* climactic scene, and denies any markings of physical death despite his age: "no sign of infirmity is yet written *here*: the blood flows clear and warm enough, and the cheek looks firm too, and passing full, for one who was always of the lean kind....I feel as if a new lease were granted to the reluctant tenant. Lord Warlock, – the first Baron of Warlock" (354). Brandon's *sinthomosexual* insanity in these final scenes of the novel metaphorically realise his soul and body *as* estate and tenant—his "reluctant" soul is tenant to the property of his body that feels revitalised by his destructive machinations against Paul and the reestablishment of Warlock House. Now that he has set his sights on a patriarchal institution that serves no purpose—it is *only* for himself, he has argued, despite Mauleverer and Lucy, and the affirmation of his place in the esteem of other men—Warlock House can function as self-

serving “enjoyment”. After examining himself in the mirror, which has affirmed he still has time to enjoy all the schemes yet to come, “he strode unconsciously away; folding his arms with that sort of joyous and complacent gesture, which implies the idea of a man hugging himself in silent delight” (354). Brandon’s mad self-embrace symbolically fulfills the functioning of the *sinthomosexual*—a reduction of meaning to self-repeating and socially “unproductive” *jouissance*.

So much for the *sinthomosexual* in the Victorian literary context: after Paul is sentenced to death, Dummie Dunnaker communicates the untimely news that Paul is, in fact, Brandon’s long-lost son. *Sinthomosexuality* is denied by the revelation of reproduction. Brandon reduces his son’s sentence, at the last minute, to transportation; he gets in his carriage to go home and expires before reaching the gate. After serving the transportation sentence, Paul takes Lucy to America where they spend a maudlin future devoted to labour and assisting the poor (378). Reproductive futurism must triumph in the Victorian text, as Edelman tells us, because drawing up such intensely *sinthomosexual* figures is really the insistence that society cannot become complacent with self-serving or independent forms of bachelorhood (Edelman 44). Brandon’s insistence that *jouissance* is “yet to come” (Bulwer 352) and his denial of the death drive is ironic, because once he learns the true identity of his son—his futuristic replacement—he simply expires. The revelation of Paul’s identity as son is the shock of the futuristic meeting the fully *sinthomosexual*, and it is easy to see which triumphs. The fulfillment of Paul’s romance of identity-mystery also clears the inscrutability of masculine style that has so far dominated all of the text’s ideas about masculinity and gendered identity, and this has to do with Lucy Brandon.

If William Brandon represents in the text an alternative and self-serving masculinity that society cannot comfortably abide, then his niece Lucy represents a pure and complete

heteronormalising force in the narrative. After the long grieving period that follows the loss of her father, Joseph Brandon, Lucy ends up feeling stronger, secure in her own identity and character: “My poor father is dead. I can injure no one by my conduct; there is no one on earth to whom I am bound by duty. I am independent, I am rich” (292). Although she previously felt alienated by the loss of her only immediate relative, the text demonstrates that Lucy is, in fact, the only central character not caught in dialectics of indeterminability or flux. Lucy’s money matters, and makes her a target for the (ultimately ineffective) schemings of her *sinthomosexual* uncle who aims to use her as a stepping stone in the reinstatement of the Warlock House patriarchal line; her complete and total agency is also the force that destabilises the power of Paul’s masculine identity as defined by its transmutability and homosocially masculine glamour. Paul’s desire for reformation from his criminal identity (identities), we are reminded at many points in the novel, stems only from his desire for marriage with Lucy: she is “the only person who had ever pierced his soul with a keen sense of his errors, or crimes” (212). Paul at many points explains, in soliloquy, in conversation with Tomlinson and Ned, and eventually in writing to Lucy, that fulfilling his love for Lucy is not possible while he dons the aliases of his highway robberies and their attendant dealings and reliance on the criminally homosocial. Confessing to her via letter what he really is—although the letter never explicitly relates anything about his methods of making a living—Paul highlights the villainy of masculinities that rely on the playing of parts, similarly to how the narrator has described Brandon:

My father is unknown to me as to every one...I have played many parts in life: books and men I have not so neglected, but that I have gleaned at intervals some little knowledge of both. Hence, if I have seemed to you better than I am, you will perceive the cause: circumstances made me soon my own master...NOW is my conduct clear to you? if not, imagine me all that

is villainous – save in one point, where *you* are concerned – and not a shadow of mystery shall remain. (240)

Paul's sense of shame, the guilt inherent in his (perceived) fatherlessness, his gendered modalities of learning (books and men), and his inexpertly articulated criminal circumstance, are activated only when confronted with the perfect and independent Lucy Brandon; the perfection of the heteronormal other suddenly alienates Paul from his own experimentation in masculine alternative, making them seem "villainous". The glorious, empowered, charming, magnetic masculinity embodied by criminal Newgate activity that the text so frequently explores and extols in its early pages is deflated of its agency and viability when Paul considers seriously that marriage to Lucy Brandon and his current sense of selfhood are mutually exclusive forces. Lucy Brandon is right to affirm her own independence because she is independent not only financially but independent as a selfhood and socially effective agency—Brandon's power revolves around securing her capital, and Paul's power is easily abnegated by her complete self-realised social, economical and personal functionability. Bulwer writes a text in which feminine immutability is set up against masculine transmutability and transition. Paul's abandonment of the criminal band is a real anxiety for Tomlinson, who, in a pages-long discussion, highlights its destructive potential for the homosocial group: "now that you have realized sufficient funds for your purpose, you will really desert us, – have you well weighed the *pros* and *cons*? Remember, that nothing is so dangerous to our state as reform; the moment a man grows honest, the gang forsake him; the magistrate misses his fee; the informer peaches; and the recusant hangs" (276). When Tomlinson argues that "nothing is so dangerous to [their] state as reform", he is arguing against the destruction of the criminal masculine state both symbolically and literally. Not only do criminals gone "honest" frequently end up hanging while trying to reinstate themselves in lawful

society, but the operation of Paul's identity as established by the text so far is also what is at stake. While a feeling of inevitable death pervades (mostly in comical figurings of gallows humour) the criminal identity in the novel, to try to struggle against that identity is also to enact that death voluntarily in a *sinthomosexual*-like positioning and filtering through the death drive. The homosocial band relies on the coherence of its masculine members to an agreed-upon "state", and to "reform" is dangerous for everyone involved, just as the men of the criminal bond share and transfer criminal guilt as demonstrated earlier on. When Paul argues for Tomlinson's own reformation, Tomlinson pushes home the mortality of criminality even further: "I am many years older than you. I have lived as a rogue, till I have no other nature than roguery...No: I mistook myself when I talked of separation. I must e'en jog on with my old comrades, and in my old ways, till I jog into the noose hempen – or, melancholy alternative, the noose matrimonial!" (276), Tomlinson comically figures the fate of all criminal identities as lying either in the real noose or the noose of marriage—both concepts that include a masculinity set in notions and self-identifications of roguery and criminal transgression as running a quick course to annihilation. He also positions masculine criminality concretised by the homosocial bond as impossible to break after a certain period.

The text will ultimately prove Tomlinson wrong. As mentioned previously, *Paul Clifford* is an anomaly in the context of the retrospectively-considered Newgate novel as it is a novel where nobody hangs and nobody is executed (perhaps save for Brandon, if symbolically). The text never fulfills the gallows humour-promise of rogues meeting their destined ends, and the death drive that accompanies this narratological impulse—and the idea that all gendered notions founded on roguery and criminality are implicitly participating in the death drive—go unfulfilled by the denouement. Instead, we get a veering towards an idealised reproductive futurism as

enacted and completed by the independent Lucy Brandon. Allan Conrad Christensen in *Edward Bulwer-Lytton: The Fiction of New Regions* explains that the function of female characters in Bulwer's novels is often to make the point that "the eternally incorruptible idea will always endure" (66). The Bulwerian woman "represents more ethical and social values" and "she generally tames the hero's sexuality while also luring him from Faustian and other egoistic and misanthropic indulgences" (218). Peter W. Sinnema, writing on Bulwer's Caxton trilogy of novels, similarly notes that "female characters in Bulwer's domestic fiction are caught up in a system of representational stasis so inflexible that any possibility of their development threatens to undermine the stories about male growth and maturation central to the novels. . . . Men can 'become' simply precisely because women simply 'are'" (193). We can trace similar patterns in this early Newgate novel of Bulwer's; Lucy is decidedly fully-formed and representationally fixed (she has told us that much by declaring her independence in the novel). I would not argue that Paul "becomes" set in contraposition with Lucy's perfection but rather is "undone"—the security of the homosocial band and the criminal identity itself is only disrupted and disavowed when Paul desires to marry Lucy.

This is problematic because Paul's "conversion" to a life of wedded bliss in America at the end of the novel undoes all of the masculine Newgate glamour trumpeted by the early novel and, by easy extension, its readership and critics that focused on the criminal parts of the narrative. The long passage that describes the celebrity culture surrounding Paul's trial read earlier in this chapter self-referentially alludes to criminal enjoyment and focus in popular synoptic narrative, and much of this attraction, as explored earlier, has to do with the performance of masculine gallantry and bravado so evident (no doubt, again, self-referentially) in the long passages that detail Paul's criminal personae and ability. The text's tracking of the

boyhood bildungsroman and identification process in a criminal underworld simultaneously glamorous and Godwinian (young men fall into lives of crime due to circumstance and disadvantage) establishes masculine identities outside of the social and gendered norms of the gentleman, allowing for a celebration of the very *transitiveness* of masculine energy and “bloom”; it also allows for masculinities that challenge and inhabit differences in class (like Tomlinson’s status of “gentleman” embodying high and low masculine performances and styles). The very *jouissance* of masculinities based on criminality—the narrative’s enthusiasm for their development, vigour and the alternative—seems unfortunately undone by Lucy and the text’s “reformatory” conclusion in which Paul *owes* his new life to his wife:

when Clifford raised his eyes, and glanced from *her* tender smile around his happy home and his growing children, or beheld through the very windows of his room, the public benefits he had created, something of pride and gladness glowed on his countenance, and he said, though with glistening eyes and subdued voice, as his looks returned once more to his wife, – “I owe these to thee!” (378)

In the novel’s final scene of reproductive-futuristic fantasy, Paul acknowledges Lucy’s reformatory force. Long Ned lives a life of hiding and Tomlinson heads for the continent; the homosocial band broken, the alternative life for the alternative masculinity at the end of *Paul Clifford* is to hide, vanish, or reform. William Brandon, the ultimate alternative masculinity due to the sin of the *sinthomosexual*, is the text’s real execution. Even Paul’s reformation must take place in a somewhere *other* than England, which suggests, despite the final return to a dominant heteronormative futurism, any final “reformation” of masculinity must be done *elsewhere*, lest it be vanquished. Sinnema’s point maintains that masculine identities in Bulwer are defined against the perfection of the feminine, but at the end of *Paul Clifford*, it feels as if the possibilities for the

development of alternative masculinities must be *undone* before reinstated in the realm of acceptable futurism. Anything else will simply be snuffed out.

In this way, *Paul Clifford* intimates an angelic and domesticising femininity that also gestures backwards to male-reformative narratives in the Richardsonian mode. Bulwer's positioning of criminal homosocial masculine glamour is decidedly against Tosh: in Bulwer the masculinity cannot safely straddle the spheres of the homosocial and the domestic, for the domestic is inherently feminine and inherently normalising. This is also symptomatic, as Edelman has pointed out, of Victorian anxiety for figures like Scrooge: *sinthomosexual* and alternatively masculine figures that fall outside the realm of futuristic understanding. Criminals are also threatening because their lives and survival, as many passages in the novel remind us, are governed by an overwhelming sense of mortality, transgression, and the death drive. Criminal men rely on the safety of the secret society and the homosocial band for solidarity, self-definition and *jouissance*. *Paul Clifford*'s endpoint must politely and publically denounce men who choose to make a living via crime; it must also necessarily destroy the *sinthomosexual* after his aestheticisation. These moral issues—and their attendant discussion of masculinities—again become important in Bulwer's novel *Eugene Aram* that came off the heels of its brother *Paul Clifford*.

First published in 1832, *Eugene Aram* romanticises and fictionalises the life of renowned eighteenth-century murderer Eugene Aram. Bulwer's novel deals with three historical people: Aram, reclusive linguistics scholar tried and hanged for the murder of Daniel Clark in 1759; Daniel Clark ("Clarke" in the novel), neighbour of Aram who disappeared in 1745 under mysterious circumstances; and Richard Houseman, an accomplice to the murder whose report about Aram's involvement reopened investigations of Clark's disappearance (Graff viii). Nancy

Jane Tyson's book-length discussion of the Aram crime and its subsequent literary adaptations and Ann-Barbara Graff's introduction to a 2010 edition of *Eugene Aram* detail the facts versus the fiction surrounding the Aram mythos. In 1758 Houseman "admitted to knowledge of Clark's murder in order to extract himself from another unrelated accusation—blurting out 'This [bone] is no more Dan Clark's bone than it is mine!'—he revealed under further questioning to authorities a second skeleton, unearthed in St. Robert's Cave" (Graff xvi). Bulwer capitalised on the drama of this double-skeleton irony and Houseman's admission, making it one of *Eugene Aram*'s most climactic scenes. Aram, who had abandoned his wife and children shortly after Clark's disappearance, became further implicated when his wife Anna Aram testified to a conspiracy between Aram, Houseman and Clark (xvi). Aram was put on trial, sentenced to death, and hanged August 1759.

Bulwer opens his fictional adaptation of these events prior to the discovery of the mystery skeleton, fourteen years after the murder of Clarke. Aram lives a safe and solitary life of study in Grassdale when the appearance of an unknown figure in the village (Houseman, who has come to Grassdale, we later learn, with his band of highwaymen to sack the village's wealthier inhabitants) causes two local young sisters, Madeline and Ellinor Lester, to seek refuge at the scholar's threshold. The novel then traces the Lester family's fascination with Aram: Rowland Lester, father to Ellinor and Madeline who seeks the company of the renowned scholar; Madeline for her romantic attraction to the Byronic figure of Aram; and dispossessed nephew Walter who is jealous of Madeline's attraction. The critics noted in this chapter unanimously write of these characters as fictional inventions of the Aram biography save Campbell, who in his biography of Bulwer maintains

the historical Aram touched Bulwer in a personal way. In 1829 Bulwer learned that Aram had been engaged occasionally by his grandfather to tutor his daughters at Haydon Hall, Judge Bulwer's home. This discovery led Bulwer to collect local information about Aram. . . . From Burney, Bulwer received details about Aram's connection with the Lester family, material he used almost verbatim in the novel. (44-5)

Campbell's account of the Lester material of the novel being "verbatim" with Bulwer's personal ancestral research of the Aram environs goes against the universal account of the Lesters being the major fictional element of the novel. That said, it is clear that the narrative details surrounding the Lesters is invented, namely Walter Lester's picaresque sideplot with the comical Corporal Bunting: Walter's discovery that his absent father is actually the murdered "Clarke" (as opposed to the real Clark) is certainly fictional. The historical Aram had abandoned his wife and children after Clark's disappearance, and while awaiting execution cited a certain involvement of Clark with his wife as motive (John xxiv). Bulwer recasts Aram as a bachelor scholar.

Bulwer, like many of the Newgate novelists, was sensitive about the text's reception and retailored individual passages of the novel's numerous editions. Graff notes how the most substantial of these revisions occurs in the 1849 edition where Aram's courtroom speech is reworded to make him seem like a more firmly guiltless character and lessen his involvement in the murder (Graff 14); Bulwer wants to make Aram a clear accomplice to the murder rather than *the* murderer. Tyson explains how this was in accordance with early nineteenth-century views of Aram as criminal: "At the time of Aram's death there were few who sympathized with him, and even fewer who believed him innocent. By the century's close, however, his example was serving the cause of liberal reformers opposed to capital punishment, and he had begun to be viewed as something of a martyr" (3). In alignment with this perspective, Aram is a suitable

choice of subject matter for Bulwer's project of the social (and Godwinian) novel in the sense that his sympathetic treatment can be read as emblematic of penal reform and anti-capital punishment sentiment.

Bulwer's various introductions to each edition reflect a multitude of authorial reactions to the text's reception and defenses of its subject matter; the 1832 preface discusses the novel's blending of Romance and Tragedy (5), while the 1840 preface begins to make excuses and apologies for the representation of Aram, explaining how he was a family friend of Bulwer's relatives and was seemingly of good character despite his crimes. Bulwer also separates his new character from those of previous Newgate texts (for by 1840, it was a retrospectively-defined genre): "The guilt of Eugene Aram is not that of a vulgar ruffian: it leads to views and considerations vitally and wholly distinct from those with which profligate knavery or brutal cruelty revolt and displease us in the literature of Newgate and the Hulks" (8). Bulwer continues to be self-aware of his own genre in this period of his career, but Aram is a different type altogether. "Whenever crime appears the aberration and monstrous product of a great intellect," he continues, "or of a nature ordinarily virtuous, it becomes not only the subject for genius, which deals with passions, to describe; but a problem for philosophy, which deals with actions, to investigate and solve" (8). This new novel is a blending of the established Romantic and Tragic modes (of which the Byronic configurations of character and overwrought passages of classical pathos demonstrate, respectively), and in addition the presentation of a philosophical "problem" embedded in the character of Eugene Aram. Bulwer mentions how the idea for the novel sprang from a conversation with Godwin himself:

My regret, therefore, is not that I chose a subject unworthy of elevated fiction, but that such a subject did not occur to some one capable of treating it as it deserves; and I never felt this

more strongly than when the late Mr. Godwin (in conversing with me after the publication of this romance) observed that “he had always thought the story of Eugene Aram peculiarly adapted for fiction, and that he had more than once entertained the notion of making it the foundation of a novel.” (8-9)

Bulwer extols his Godwinian connection once again after politely refuting the idea that an aberrant criminal case is “a subject unworthy of elevated fiction”, which is much in line with the controversies of Newgate novel reception: authors were compelled to defend their subject matter after extended journalistic and critical attack. The 1849 preface (as Graff has noted, the edition with the most edits) takes the firmest stance on his own work, being a strongly-worded vindication of the novel and citing it as one of his best works before explaining and justifying how Aram was merely an accomplice to Houseman’s murder rather than a murderer himself. Graff has traced the development of the prefaces and the edits made to Aram’s speeches as a development that takes a morally dubious figure and gradually makes him more sympathetic as the author further defends his moral and stylistic choices of portraying the criminal. The life of *Eugene Aram* remains one of the best textual examples of the Newgate novel’s identity as defined by its reception, the author reevaluating his own morality in representing the criminal in response to public reception. The evolution of *Eugene Aram* demonstrates the Newgate novel as linchpin of authorial representative power and morality.

The philosophical problem of Eugene Aram is inherently a problem of masculine gender and representation. Adams writes of the scholar and man of letters as part of his theories of Victorian masculinities that have to do with programs of self-regimentation: “By founding the manliness of intellectual labor on self-discipline...male writers laid claim to an ideal whose authority in Victorian culture derived in large part from its apparently egalitarian character. Self-

discipline seemed a virtue open to all” (7). Aram’s “problem” is rooted in an ideal of acceptable manhood: the self-regimented genius, the lonely forest scholar who has isolated himself from society in order to be closer to his intellectual pursuits, is a pronounced and recognisable form and program of Victorian masculinity. Not only this, but Aram’s emblematic appeal as the intellectual “saint” represents egalitarian modes of progress towards individual choice and social mobility (which, Adams has argued and I explored earlier with *Paul Clifford*, is also represented in the figure of the gentleman and his ability to occupy and travel between liminalities of class-based masculine styles). This only becomes a “problem” when we realise he has secreted himself away in a lonely forest not because he wishes to read more, but because he has effectively managed to escape detection from a murder fourteen years earlier. The intersection of acceptable masculine styles of self-representation and self-regimentation—the scholar figure—with the idea of a murderer interrupts social and theoretical certainties of gender. Aram’s “problem” is that he inhabits the scholar and the criminal spaces/identities at once, and the “Tragedy” Bulwer writes surrounding the historical figure is also the tragedy of a masculinity that inhabits two socially incompatible (or unacceptable) styles of masculinity.

An additional facet of the Eugene Aram problem, as with Brandon in *Paul Clifford*, is that he is described in the text as a *sinthomosexual* figure. This is by virtue of his scholarship, illustrated as a kind of hoarding behaviour:

[there were] men not uncommon in the last century, who lived for nothing else than to learn. From store to store, from treasure to treasure, they proceeded in exulting labour, and having accumulated all, they bestowed nought; they were the arch-misers of the wealth of letters. Wrapped in obscurity, in some sheltered nook, remote from the great stir of men, they passed a life at once unprofitable and glorious. (53)

Bulwer participates in the Newgate tendency of historical distancing; Dickens, Ainsworth and Thackeray also choose to set their novels in the eighteenth century as a means of gothicising and aestheticising not only past acts of violence (in the case of Dickens' portrayal of the Gordon Riots in *Barnaby Rudge*, the famous feats of notorious criminal Jack Sheppard in Ainsworth's novel of the same name, and Catherine's murder of her husband in Thackeray's *Catherine*) but also to add a lacquer of the grotesque and scandalous to outmoded forms of masculinity. Bulwer, interestingly enough, writes of the scholar as an outmoded type that does not exist in the context of the Victorian but rather belongs in the natural habitat of the eighteenth century, sheltered from the madding crowd in his pastoral setting of Grassdale. This positioning of incident operates on an element of dramatic irony, of course, because readers immediately can identify the dissonance between the safely described pastoral Grassdale and the reality of its being a site of a gruesome murder from which the protagonist cannot successfully escape. Nonetheless, Bulwer continues to put distance between the scholarly mode of masculinity described here and the current context of the novel's narration; this special *sinthomosexual* scholar type, which hoards "unprofitable" knowledge as "treasure", seems directly complimentary to Edelman's readings of the Victorian literary *sinthomosexual*. Being an "arch-miser"—the ultimate a miser could ever be, the most *complete* miser being the man who accumulates knowledge—Aram "bestowed nought", chose not to *do* anything with that knowledge. Bulwer complicates the accepted mode of the scholar, with his vigourously regimented self-discipline, by exploring the *sinthomosexual* aspects of unproductivity.

Aram is fictionally surrounded by three figures who try to remedy his elected, historically outmoded/gothicised and problematic style of masculinity. Rowland Lester (simply "Lester" in most of the novel) is the first to beg company of the mysterious "wizard" (49) who dwells alone

in the forest: “Do not let us be strangers, Mr. Aram,” said he warmly. ‘It is not often that I press for companionship out of my own circle; but in your company I should find pleasure as well as instruction. Let us break the ice boldly, and at once’” (52). The wizard-scholar figure, an othered form of masculinity (“out of my own circle”, and by virtue of his solitary dwelling) touched by the arcane or the ritualistic—evidenced by the fear of Masonic or secretive masculinities as described above regarding *Paul Clifford*—nevertheless has an appeal for the residents of Grassdale who see the potential for entertainment (“pleasure”) and “instruction” in the befriending. Of the three figures who beg for the dissolution of Aram’s secrecy and antisocial life, Lester’s seems to be the most innocent and least reformatory.

“The Earl of *****”, a character who, despite the name, plays several key roles in the novel, is the most proactive and direct in expressing a reformatory desire towards Aram’s *sinthomosexually* configured identity. Aram makes the acquaintance of the Earl in volume II of the novel, having been acclimated to the social world of Grassdale by Lester and his family; at a gathering of higher-ups at the Earl’s estate, Aram charms the Earl with his Byronic energy and a long discussion of classical authors, leading the Earl to offer Aram a position as his secretary. The Earl’s anti-*sinthomosexual* or reformatory sentiment is immediately apparent: “to choose the living sepulchre of a hermitage—it was wise to *reconcile* yourself to it, but it is not wise to *prefer* it!....What else is it you enjoy yonder, and cannot enjoy with me?” (151). This scene is the text’s most explicit attempt at reforming the socially unproductive reclusive masculinity: the Earl offers not only economically productive employment, but also access to literary fame (which the Earl assures he can secure for Aram’s scholarship), high-class society, and an acceptable and mutually agreeable homosocial bond. Aram refuses the Earl, using a knowledge-for-knowledge’s-sake argument: “Had Homer written his Iliad and then burnt it, would his genius

have been less? The world would have known nothing of him, but would he have been a less extraordinary man on that account?" (149). Aram argues that *sinthomosexuality*, or the arch-miserdom of a scholarship that "bestows nothing", is not a vacuum but a self-regulating sphere of meaning: genius exists by its own intrinsic logic, not by logic that relies on the perception of others, so if Homer had burnt his *Iliad* his genius would not have been diminished. Aram's earlier arguments for learning as a self-regulating site also justify his decision against taking up employment with the Earl:

A little philosophy enables [a man] to bear bodily pain, or the common infirmities of the flesh: by a philosophy somewhat deeper, he can conquer the ordinary reverses of fortune, the dread of shame, and the last calamity of death. But what philosophy could ever thoroughly console him for the ingratitude of a friend, the worthlessness of a child, the death of a mistress? Hence, only when he stands alone, can a man's soul say to Fate, "I defy thee." (139-40)

Philosophy, knowledge and learning are the tools with which independently thinking men can accept and understand destabilising truths of the universe such as fortune, shame and death. However, critical thinking and learning are unable to reconcile a man to the vicissitudes of the homosocial bond, the "worthlessness of a child", or the death of a heterosexual partner. The bottom line is that truths of the *self* are stable and canny while truths of *the other* are chaotic and uncanny. By bearing up and becoming a man of philosophy one can easily understand the universe, and this knowledge is important, worthwhile and self-regulating; it understands its own configurations, its own terms and conditions. Solipsism is useful and achievable as a philosophical goal. In this way, scholarly masculinity is independent and complete in itself, a life and choice conducive to logic and a self-regulated sphere of understanding, at least to Aram at

this point in the novel. All these things are potentially broken by the social, and the specific examples Aram uses point to *sinthomosexuality* and anti-futurism. A child being “worthless” is especially telling, and for Aram, constitutes not only something irreconcilable but damaging to *understanding* itself, which, ironically, illustrates Edelman’s arguments about reproductive futurism by inverting their terms: if reproductive futurism and those who participate in its logic find the idea of the *sinthomosexual* disruptive to meaning-making itself (hence why they are threatening in their *jouissance*), then the *sinthomosexual*, Aram suggests, finds futurism (a child turning out to be “worthless”) to be the breakdown of a logic system that is perfect in and of itself to the *sinthomosexual* subject. The ideas of a bad friend, a “useless” child or the death of a mistress are three things that rupture the certainty and the meaning-making of the independently constructed and intrinsically ordered universe for the recluse scholar, the man of philosophy. The Earl’s colourful attempt to bring Aram into the upper-crust social circle and to turn his capacity for scholarship into something economically, socially and mutually productive for the two men gets denied, and Aram defies a redemption from or remedy to his socially and sexually problematic identity.

The third attempt at a reformation of his problematic identity is less successfully met with resistance, however: Madeline, Lester’s beautiful daughter, proves to be the ultimate forbidden fruit. Like Lucy’s perfect independence and wholeness of being in *Paul Clifford*, the overwhelming innocence of the opposite sex is wholly attractive and irresistible even for the alternative or non-heteronormalised masculinity. Her immediate attraction to Aram in the novel has less to do with his classical learning and eloquence and more to do with his masculine “unfathomability”, set up in similar terms to Lucy’s reactions to Paul and the narrator’s descriptions of his transitiveness:

this recluse scholar—usually so cold and abstracted in mood—assisted and led her into the house: the sympathy he expressed for her pain—the sincerity of his tone—the compassion of his eyes—and as those dark—and to use her own thought—unfathomable orbs bent admiringly and yet so gently upon her, Madeline, even in spite of her pain, felt an indescribable, a delicious thrill at her heart, which in the presence of no one else had she ever experienced before. (47)

Like Lucy, Madeline is representationally perfect in the novel—a fully-formed individuality which is assumed rather than proven, though with Lucy, we see her gradually gain a financial and self-constituting independence over the course of *Paul Clifford*. Madeline’s perfection in *Eugene Aram* is more an agent of dramatic irony; each tender scene drawn between Eugene and Madeline, as in the above, is an exercise in tension as the early Victorian reader no doubt reels at the real-world knowledge that she is being seduced by a murderer whose crime is soon to be detected. At times this dramatic irony approaches the comic, as when Madeline and Ellinor misread Aram at the very beginning of the novel, escaping from the threatening and mysterious Traveller (Houseman) into Aram’s house and asking if his scholarly and reclusive abode is loaded with firearms: “Aram answered briefly, in the affirmative. It was somewhat singular, but the sisters did not then remark it, that a man so peaceable in his pursuits, and seemingly possessed of no valuables that could tempt cupidity, should in that spot, where crime was never heard of, use such habitual precaution” (48). The narrator’s nonchalant tone here explains to us this is a misreading of character by the sisters: why would a gentle recluse scholar type have the “habitual precaution” of loaded firearms amongst his books? Bulwer’s trademark blending of high and low masculine forms—a bookworm with reason to have loaded guns at the ready in his pastoral abode—rears its head once again, and the irony is meant to highlight the complexity and

blended nature of Aram's identity. People take him for the scholarly type while there is an actual intersection of masculine scholarly priesthood (as Aram will call himself the "Priest" of knowledge at the novel's close [419]) and brutish criminality that calls for armed daily precaution.

Madeline and Aram's nascent relationship begins with this narratorial irony coupled with the image of the loaded guns amongst his bookshelves in the "safety" of his scholarly recluse. Madeline and Ellinor gush about Eugene's attractiveness, Madeline exclaiming "Oh, [he is] more than handsome...with that high, pale brow, and those deep, unfathomable eyes" and further noting how "there is something about him that fills one with an indescribable interest" (44). Ellinor performs a particularly grievous and ironic misreading: "There is one peculiarity about his gloom, it never inspires one with distrust...if I had observed him in the same circumstances as that ill-omened traveller, I should have had no apprehension" (44). Ellinor emphasises innate differences between Aram and Houseman, two men who, in fact, share a criminal past beyond either of the sisters' reckoning: if she had encountered Aram as a shady figure wandering about the forests of Grassdale in "ill-omened" activity, as Houseman first appears in the novel some time before being revealed to the reader, then she "should have had no apprehension". Madeline and Ellinor thus attest to the power of masculine identity and reputation: Aram is a renowned scholar in Grassdale, and thus his actions do not speak to what lies beneath his perceived identity as acceptable (scholarly and thus self-regimented) masculinity. Had Aram been skulking the shadows of Grassdale, this is somehow non-threatening; the actions do not mesh with the scholarly identity and do not constitute its breakdown: rather, the identity overrides the action and the possibility for harm or transgression. While both men can be described as mysterious, "unfathomable"—they are virtually strangers to the girls and the villagers—one is unfathomable

in a way that is acceptably attractive via the filter of the Byronic scholar, the other threatening because he does not have the benefit of an established or known masculine style. The contrast is notably ironic because the two men in fact share criminal *action* and identity. That Aram has an identity that can dispel his actions when set against that identity despite sharing the shadiness and threatening wandering unaccountability of Houseman speaks to the power of masculine style for the villagers of Grassdale; Bulwer also illustrates how two men who share the homosocial bond of criminal activity can, situationally, be read in different gendered ways by others and by society, and can arguably transmute or enable/disable alternative masculine roles. Bulwer here also dismantles the novel's set-up question of "Can an accepted scholar also be a criminal?" by illustrating just how easily people misread true intent and action against perceived roles and contextually-informed constructions of identity. Aram is able to communicate the masculine identity of the scholar, the Priest of knowledge, by simply *inhabiting* a secluded study; this inhabitation is enough to delete criminal possibility and alternative masculine identities to that of the wizard-scholar. Houseman seems in direct opposition to this established/enabled identity because at the start of the text he is the "wanderer" figure, the "Traveller" who literally stands at the threshold of Aram's study as Madeline and Ellinor return home through the forest. Houseman's undefined status as "male-at-large" in Grassdale is inherently threatening, while the *real* threat of the criminal is actually an identity *shared* by the two men. In Bulwer, similar masculine identities are operative across situations and spheres of perception-defying difference.

Aram's welcome to the social realm of the Lester family and the heteronormative personal realm of his growing and requited attraction to Madeline are constant sources of tension in the novel, and Aram oscillates gratingly between desiring this inception into the heteronormal

and resisting it. The narrator explains Aram's romantic development in manhood as a sort of perversion of the natural order of the male life cycle:

they who till then have wasted the prodigal fervours of youth upon a sterile soil; who have served Ambition, or, like Aram, devoted their hearts to Wisdom; relax from their ardour, look back on the departed years with regret, and commence, in their manhood, the fiery pleasures and delirious follies which are only pardonable in youth. (74)

There is, then, a sense that what Aram is now experiencing—a late awakening to attraction to the opposite sex as represented in the beautiful and femininely perfect Madeline—is somehow unpardonable and “delirious” folly. The narrator also emphasises the sterility (“sterile soil”) of the scholarly Priest masculine style—Aram's sterility—which is the result of wasting “the prodigal fervours of youth” on study rather than on the commitment to an implied “natural” path of masculine sexuality. There is then no doubt that, at this point, Aram's chosen path of masculine development in career and in life is seen as a perversion or complication of the natural order, a transgression of regular manhood that is, by extension, conducive to the criminal/alternative masculinity.

Aram's growing attraction to Madeline instills in him the fervour of futurity rather than the fervour of philosophical contemplation and study: “Then, if I looked beyond the limited present, all was dim and indistinct. Now, the mist has faded away—the broad future extends before me, calm and bright with the hope which is borrowed from your love!” (95). As with Paul's gradual realisation that a connection with Lucy in marriage is the only remedy to a life of criminality and survival based on the homosocial secret bond, Aram's revelation of Madeline's attraction to him bursts forth in a discourse of reproductive futurism that ablates the circularity of intrinsic *sinthomosexual* philosophical logic: *sinthomosexual* independent logic might be

circular, independent and intrinsically cohesive, but it is also “dim and indistinct” when set against the promise of a heteronormalised and co-dependent future. But in *Eugene Aram* Aram’s thinking is always temporary, transient and oscillating. Only a few scenes after this do we get Aram’s speeches in denying the secretary position offered by the Earl of ***** which insist on the ubiquity of independent philosophy and study as the only preferable personal choice of life trajectory. Shortly after this scene of revenant futurity, Aram and Madeline’s marriage is decided, and the idea of the approaching marriage “filled him with a sort of terror and foreboding of evil. It was as if he were passing beyond the boundary of some law, on which the very tenure of his existence depended” (144). Aram innately realises that his *sinthomosexual* tendencies and these novel ideas of futurity clash; crossing over from one to the other does in fact constitute the makeup of his “existence”, his identity. To be a scholar from which nothing is produced (*sinthomosexual* jouissance) and a husband to a sweet rural lady (socially logical futurism) are mutually-cancelling identities for the male subject and thus constitute Aram’s frequently soliloquised tragic crises of identity and oscillation between which identity is preferable; this constitutes the novel’s central “Tragedy”. Over all of these considerations hangs the spectre of his criminal history, an element of the fictionalised biography that Bulwer carefully does not narrativise in these early volumes of the novel. Instead, they function as dramatic irony that only readers, complicit in the real history of Aram, carry with them throughout the uncomfortable development of Eugene and Madeline’s marriage.

Only when Houseman enters the narrative as Houseman rather than the mysterious and unnamed Traveller does Aram’s criminal history become active in the context of the marriage plot. At this crucial point before Eugene and Madeline’s marriage, Houseman seeks Aram out and gives him a threatening update: Houseman has been making a living in a band of

highwaymen, and their next target is the wealthy inhabitants of peaceful Grassdale. Because Houseman threatens the village on which the futuristic safety of Aram's proposed new identity relies—and also because he threatens to elucidate Aram's criminal history should he decide not to play along with the whims of the highwaymen—things look suddenly bleak for the wizard-scholar. Aram's speech on encountering Houseman in the forest recalls ideas of persecution and competition with the masculine other in *Caleb Williams*:

I cannot live and have my life darkened thus by your presence. Is not the world wide enough for us both? Why haunt each other? what have you to gain from me? Can the thoughts that my sight recalls to you be brighter, or more peaceful, than those which start upon me when I gaze on you? Does not a ghastly air, a charnel breath, hover over us both? Why perversely incur a torture it is so easy to avoid? Leave me—leave these scenes. All earth spreads before you—choose your pursuits, and your resting place elsewhere, but grudge me not this little spot.

(201)

Aram describes the gothicness of the encounter with the masculine other: because Houseman's continued sustenance on criminal activity has now (re)invaded Aram's chosen living space, Aram realises the destructive impetus this alternative and transgressive criminal masculinity has on his projected transformation into a distinctly different masculinity—that of the futuristic heteronormal. As with competing masculine styles in *Godwin* that are always driven to annihilate possibilities for other gendered styles, Aram insists that there is *only room for one* masculinity in any given space or community and pleads for Houseman to go back to wherever he (re)emerged from. What is *more* threatening about the encounter, however, is not that Houseman is entirely other but actually a reminder of Aram's resemblance to and commonality with Houseman's criminality. The “ghastly air” and “charnel breath” that hover about the two

men emerges as a result of a *sameness* rather than a *difference*; when these two men share the same space, their ideas of each other (as Aram explains) are informed by a similarity made revenant and spectral. The successful formation of a new gender identity (the entry into the heteronormal) for Aram depends on an independent space in which there are not competitors or such gothic anchoring of masculine (re)semblance; Aram's major fear is that he and Houseman are one and the same because of their distant albeit shared criminal activity, similarly to how male criminal guilt in the homosocial band is configured as transitive (shared, inconsequential to individual agency and thus passed on) between subjects in *Paul Clifford* and in *Oliver Twist*.

Houseman's response to Aram's pleas is survivalistic: "I have no wish to disturb you, Eugene Aram, but I must live; and in order to live I must obey my companions: if I deserted them, it would be to starve" (201). Houseman's idea runs parallel to that of Augustus in *Paul Clifford*: when Paul decides his future happiness rests in his marriage to Lucy Brandon and the dissolution of his criminal band, Augustus similarly implores that their survival relies on the cohesion of the homosocial criminal band, and to leave it is to accept that he will hang shortly after. Although the terms of Augustus' status as deuteragonist and Houseman's function as villain differ greatly, they remind the Bulwerian protagonist of the same notion: the homosocial criminal band *substantiates* the masculine-gendered subject. The homosocial secret/criminal society ensures the survival of the subject upon identification with its encoded identities, hence the transference and fluidity of guilt that proves a very gothic force for Aram, who currently wishes to "reform" by securing a perfecting heterosexual union with Madeline. To leave or assume a different performance-based identity is not only an actual death but the dissolution of the subject's alternative masculine identity. The sort of gothic Aram encounters here is the reminder that the transgressive criminal identity that once informed his character is inescapable

as soon as the masculine other reappears in the space: the same charnel air of finality hangs around them. Aram cannot fulfill his futuristic goals while the space is inhabited by another of the implicit criminal band/bond. “Why so anxious that I should not breathe the same air as yourself?” asks Houseman; Aram’s response lights upon the death drive: “when you are near me, I feel as if I were with the dead; it is a spectre that I would exercise in ridding me of your presence” (203). As in *Paul Clifford*, survival as a criminal is paired with an acceptance of death, just as Augustus is sure that he and his fellows are sure to hang, and it is only a matter of time rather than a matter of possibility. Unlike *Paul Clifford*, where, uncharacteristic of the Newgate novels it would inform, no character suffers capital punishment, the threat is extremely real in *Eugene Aram*, for readers know what happens (happened) to *him*.

Houseman insists that what Aram did to him in the past is an unforgiveable “affront”, and intimates that sacking Grassdale with his company of highwaymen will complete his revenge (205). Aram responds by giving Houseman a taste of his medicine, reminding him that, should he realise those plans, Houseman will also incriminate himself: “my destruction is your own” (205). Aram further reinforces the notion that men of criminal identity share the same fate and the same destruction, as they are transitive identities fully committed to the homosocial reality of mutual survival. Because following the paths of their distinct masculinities is a movement towards destruction—Aram in his circuitous, unproductive and “dim” scholarship, Houseman in his criminality which ends at the noose—Aram proposes a plan. He will give Madeline’s dowry to Houseman on the promise that the villain flees to the continent and never returns, securing his future peace and safety in Grassdale. Hence the heteronormative force of marriage serves the double function of bringing the wizard-scholar into the socially and sexually acceptable sphere of the futurist, and cleansing/transplanting the gothic past of the criminal to a place other than

Grassdale. Madeline becomes a tool of dual use for reforming two transgressive masculinities, quite unbeknownst to her.

Aram and Houseman meet at Devil's Crag, a secret cave that adds symbolically and traditionally (in terms of genre) to the gothicness of their criminal encounter, where the narrator feels this is the perfect stage on which to draw out the men's physical differences. Speaking of Houseman, "with his muscular breadth of figure, his hard and rugged features, his weapons, and a certain reckless, bravo air which indescribably marked his attitude and bearing, it was not well possible to imagine a fitter habitant for that grim cave, or one from whom men of peace, like Eugene Aram, might have seemed to derive more reasonable cause of alarm" (240). Houseman will be described as bestial in the final courtroom scene of the novel, and the drawing of his brutish and exaggerated masculine corporeality is set strongly against the "peace[ful]" characteristics and physiognomy of Aram. Houseman conforms to the criminal masculinity frequently drawn in *Paul Clifford*, reminding us especially of Long Ned in his extended corporeality and Paul's "bravo air" which defines a certain inherent masculine genius and attraction. Houseman is also the perfect "habitant for that grim cave", the masculine *type* one would expect to occupy the site of criminal gothicness. Compare with our (anti-)hero: "nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the ruffian form of his companion, and the delicate and chiseled beauty of the Student's features, with their air of mournful intelligence and serene command, and the slender, though nervous symmetry of his frame" (240). The narrator's descriptions here serve to separate the two men; they are physically and thus essentially different, one suited to a rough criminal masculinity and the other suited to the identity of the Student with his "nervous symmetry". This is a strong instance in which Bulwer aims to separate Eugene Aram from identification with murderous liability and guilt, just as his textual revisions

aimed to perform. Aram is not a *complete* Houseman—they are separate identities and gendered performances. Yet, there is still the problem of their mutual destruction. Because criminal masculinity is mutually survivable and transitive, Aram must accomplish an enforced separation from Houseman:

my death would be the destruction of your fortunes. We shall live thus separate and secure from each other; you will have only cause to hope for my safety....why should we destroy one another? At my death-bed I will solemnly swear to respect your secret; why not on your part, I say not swear, but resolve, to respect mine? We cannot love one another; but why hate with a gratuitous and demon vengeance? (243)

The achievable separation of Aram and Houseman, which has to do with using Madeline's dowry to sustain Houseman on the continent, is ideal: the two mutually dependent existences can survive only when separated, effectively "respecting" the secrets of their involvement in the criminal band and their shared murder of Clarke. Aram also enforces the idea that *alternative masculinities are never complimentary*, though through a transitivity that both men remark is particularly and identifiably gothic in its operation, they rely on each other for survival. They cannot "love each other", but an irony lies in their mutual reliance on the guarding of each other's secrets for actual and symbolic survival. Aram's wish is to affect his transfer to another masculine identity, from the wizard-scholar to the husband, without the inevitable destruction of the self that is implied in leaving the criminal band and the abandonment of a transgressive masculinity in the Newgate novel. This, he hopes, can be achieved by separating the masculine other, who really represents and shares his past crimes and past identity, from himself. Even Houseman ponders the mystery of shared/transitive guilt in the criminal homosocial pact: "You are a singular man, and it seems to me a riddle how we could ever have been thus connected; or

how—but we will not rip up the past, it is an ugly sight” (245). Aram is distinct from himself in corporeality and masculine personal identity—Aram is “a singular man”, a *sinthomosexual* masculinity that *should* be self-serving and rupturing to consistencies of the logic of identities. The fact of their connection is “a riddle”, commenting on the gothicness of the criminal band and the transitive homosocial identity of the criminal male subject, a subject that relies on the survival of his companions for the maintenance of the self—a transitiveness that has the charnel air of the death drive (as all transgressive masculine ideas have about them the prescience of the noose) and an aura of mystery. Perhaps *because* Houseman has encountered the contentious *sinthomosexual*, his own ideas of historical selfhood, which lie in resemblance to and connection with a past Aram jarring with the present Aram, is suddenly fraught, entangled with a sense of the alternative that highlights at the same time it questions his own criminal gender and past, and his ability to connect and differentiate one criminal-masculine self from another.

Aram and Houseman’s gothic connection is only one masculinity narrative in *Eugene Aram*; young Walter Lester, orphaned nephew to Rowland Lester and son to the murdered Daniel Clarke (which, as it turns out, was an assumed name), constitutes half of the novel as the chapters switch between Aram’s courtship of Madeline and Walter’s countryside journey to solve the romance of mystery-identity relating to his father. Heather Worthington refers to the Walter narrative as a detective plot, though noting “his detection of Aram’s crime is incidental to his search for his lost father” (64); as we see in Newgate novels, often one man’s revelation of paternity is the detection of another man’s obfuscated criminality or past. The two men’s narratives are set in competition with each other; Walter openly disavows the figure of the *sinthomosexual* scholar, while also feeling envious and threatened by Madeline’s attraction to another man: “What has been the use of those acquirements? Has he benefited mankind by

them?...the mere creature of books—the dry and sterile collector of other men’s learning—no—no. What should I admire in such a machine of literature, except a waste of perseverance?—And Madeline calls him handsome too!” (64) Walter identifies a rupture in masculine configurations or styles: this one kind of masculinity, the wizard-scholar, is “sterile” and unacceptable to the masculine gendered other. It is also a composite gender that relies on the collection “of other men’s learning”, an otherwise unsubstantiated selfhood founded on comparisons and liminalities of otherhood. This masculinity is triply abhorrent to Walter when the opposite sex finds it sexually acceptable or even desirable. As Walter and Aram are increasingly set in competition with each other in a complicating triad—Walter disapproves of Aram’s profession and masculine style, is jealous of his courtship of Madeline, and is actually the son of the man Aram murdered—the chapters switch evenly between the two men, as the narrative internalises their opposition. Graff has noted how the “success” of each of the men comes at the loss of the other: “By juxtaposing their plots, it seems as though the individual success or happiness of one comes at the expense of the other and that Walter’s self-knowledge is directly related to the detection of Eugene’s concealed past” (xviii-xix). Despite the ultimate “success” of Walter at the end of the novel in detecting Aram’s crime (when meanwhile, and ironically, Houseman implicates himself in the discovery of the skeleton and opens the trial), the detection feels like an insult for the Lester family; while thankful that Walter elucidates Aram’s true criminal identity to the family before Madeline’s union with him, Rowland seems entirely regretful of the elucidation, and Madeline quickly grows mad and expires. Walter returns to Grassdale years after Aram’s execution, finding Rowland’s grave and the single home of the sole other survivor of the Lester family, Ellinor; they marry, and the novel ends with Walter’s realisation “that even the criminal is not all evil” (440).

Walter's plot, despite delivering criminal justice and remedying the "social and reproductive threat of Eugene and Madeline" (Graff xviii), is problematised by the ghost of the Lester family's destruction and delivered as Pyrrhic victory. While Walter is juxtaposed with Aram multiple times in the text as an exemplary young masculinity—hearty, hale, handsome, against ideas of "unproductive" masculinity—the detection of his true father and Aram's crime deflates the narrative and sets up the tragic ending Bulwer aimed for with writing in the genre. Walter's side of the narrative, his journey of identity in the son searching for the lost father, is also doubly problematised by its comedy. "What is surprising to modern readers," Graff writes, "and some contemporary ones—Thackeray, for instance, found it entirely misplaced—is that Walter's plot is the site of comic relief" (xix). Walter gets paired with comic character Corporal Bunting as he sets out on the trail of uncovering his father's clouded identity, and the result is entirely picaresque. Pastoral and slapstick, Walter and Bunting serve as a straight-man and buffoon pairing that contrasts with the gravity of the tragic and gloomy Aram chapters, establishing further competition and juxtaposition between the men, this time on a generic level (the picaresque, eighteenth-century criminal mode jars with Bulwer's current Newgate project of Tragedy and Romanticism). Bunting, a self-proclaimed "man of the world" who was once a combat hero (which is thrown into satirical doubt by the comic sketching of his past throughout the novel), is a bumbling picaresque caricature who nonetheless postures himself as capable adult and established masculine identity (soldier) and proper guidepost for the young Walter in their journey, ultimately satirising the masculine identification process itself. Corporal Bunting sports an overblown corporeality, narrated in detail as he struggles to fit into his journeying clothing:

It was not only in its skirts that this wicked coat was deficient; the Corporal, who had within the last few years thriven lustily in the inactive serenity of Grassdale, had outgrown it prodigiously across the chest and girth; nevertheless he managed to button it up. And thus the muscular proportions of the wearer bursting forth in all quarters, gave him the ludicrous appearance of a gigantic schoolboy. (181)

As with Long Ned in *Paul Clifford*, Corporal Bunting represents a comically large and overextended example of the masculine body. The narrator's comment on his "ludicrous appearance of a gigantic schoolboy" is a function of the text's problematic comic treatment of Walter's identity plot and also of the larger concerns of masculine gender explored in *Eugene Aram*. Bunting represents the comic image of a temporally confused male body—aged and overgrown masculine corporeality giving off the image of "a gigantic schoolboy", his clothes struggling to contain him. Walter's quest of discovering his father's identity is paired with this comic image of corporeal, confused masculinity; Walter is trying to discover his own father's identity at the same time he is competing with (and thus trying to undo/destroy) another masculinity, that of Aram, and to add insult to injury, his love interest Madeline finds Aram more attractive than himself. Uncovering his father's identity, its worth to Walter's security of mind and place in a world where he is orphaned and must rely on the charity and good faith of his uncle, also serves the dual purpose of letting Walter emerge as victorious against the social threat of the *sinthomosexual*. But his progress in this journey is marred by the comicality of the picaresque and the image of his travelling companion Bunting; the image of the overgrown schoolboy ultimately mocks Walter's journey of masculine affirmation, multiplying ideas of an already-ripened masculinity or the grotesque comicality of all endeavour of masculine identification. Coupled with the real "defeat" of the Lesters after Walter elucidates the details

surrounding the murder of his father Clarke, the victory (and Walter's journey of masculine self-discovery) feels empty, stripped of its validity and its generic force as "proper" masculinity in the face of tragedy.

So much for Walter's tragic detection of Aram's crime, which will undo the Lester family in a way different from the threat of Aram and Madeline's socially, sexually and legally unacceptable union—yet with similarly catastrophic results for those involved. While Walter and Bunting head towards their inevitable destination of the crime's detection, Aram's plan to remove Houseman from the country by way of Madeline's dowry dissolves: Houseman reveals he has a young daughter, Jane, in England, whom Eugene must make financial arrangements for in addition to Houseman if the continent plan is to work out for all parties. Houseman is extremely matter-of-fact about this small detail that completely derails the plan the two men have made: "were it only for the sake of my child, you might depend upon me now" (246). The brutishly-drawn criminal Houseman turns out to harbour delicate sentiment towards his pretty young daughter, and Houseman's sudden influx of heteronormativity in the text is surprising both in terms for the Bulwerian criminal and the movement of the plot. This sudden heteronormalising factor marks all movement towards the heteronormative as disruptive in *Eugene Aram*: because Aram and Houseman are men in the criminal and gothic bond of mutual reliance (they hold each other's secrets, and thus, the key to the success or failure of each other's futures), they are in competition with each other—they endanger each other because they rely on each other for precarious survival—when they inhabit the same space. The obvious solution is to ship one of the two off to another space (an other space), because, as Godwin demonstrates and Bulwer perpetuates, alternative masculinities are polarising, having a tendency to seek and destroy the gendered other. Unlike in *Caleb Williams*, there is a clean solution. This solution,

however, is disallowed by the intrusion of new information regarding Houseman: the idea that he is a loving father, a sudden participant in the heteronormative and the reproductively futuristic, and thus cannot be shipped off to an alternative space.

While this new information is enough to shatter the two men's continent plan, Jane is later removed from the equation when we learn that she was ailing, and has now died. At this point in the narrative, Walter, who is on the cusp of putting together all the loose threads of Aram's crime and father's murder, visits a Curate and observes Jane's body:

The face of the deceased had not yet suffered the last withering change. Her young countenance was hushed and serene; and, but for the fixedness of the smile, you might have thought the lips moved. So delicate, fair, and gentle were the features, that it was scarcely possible to believe such a scion could spring from such a stock; and it seemed no longer wonderful that a thing so young, so innocent, so lovely, and so early blighted, should have touched that reckless and dark nature which rejected all other invasion of the softer emotions. . . . [Walter], now kneeling beside the corpse of Houseman's child, was son to the man whose murder Houseman had been suspected.—The childless and the fatherless! might there be retribution here? (340)

Walter and Jane are paired together as victims of aberrant masculine forms in *Eugene Aram*: Walter is rendered fatherless by the alternative and competitive masculinity he so hates, but the novel will also reveal to us that Clarke was no paternal scion but rather an abusive and absentee father. Jane has simply withered away, blighted by association with a brutish father who makes a living by highway robbery. They are byproducts of patriarchal miscarriage and criminal/alternative masculinities, and doubly victimised because they represent acceptable and

heteronormal roles that are innocent in juxtaposition with their criminal and transgressive alternatives. And that innocence points to revenge—“might there be retribution here?”

The text’s answer is, however, ultimately *no*, because all movements towards the heteronormalising of gender identities and plot are disallowed or empty in *Eugene Aram*. Walter’s otherwise innocent search of identity is rendered problematically comic, and its results are generically tragic both for his adoptive father figure in Geoffrey Lester and his love interest Madeline, who both expire after the revelation of Aram’s crimes. Walter takes the sister he was never romantically interested in as a sort of narrative consolation years later, though he admits that the moral he has learned from the story is that not all criminals are evil. Likewise, Houseman cannot live happily ever after, funding his young daughter’s future success from the continent, and Aram cannot reform his solitary wizard-scholar identity into the heteronormal, futuristically productive union of marriage to Grassdale’s best candidate. Walter, being a byproduct of these masculinity plots gone terribly wrong, has tried to move towards their resolution by destroying the aberrant/competitive masculinity he hates, but has found that he too, being fatherless, has interrupted a natural or socially productive order, with tragic results.

What *Eugene Aram* accomplishes, or leaves readers with, is the idea that alternative masculinities, or masculinities that exist outside of the socially “safe”, the recognisably and comfortably futurist and heteronormative, are not entirely what they seem, and never entirely evil or to be feared. This is the true lesson Walter, the text’s central unformed masculinity, has learned, and also the lesson readers may learn by how Aram is drawn in the final chapters. This, of course, requires some serious novelistic maneuverings on Bulwer’s part. As Worthington has noted, Bulwer apologises for Aram by inventing a scenario surrounding Clarke involving the rape of an innocent young girl, whom Aram is, by association, avenging by murdering Clarke

(Worthington 64). Aram admits this much through his long final confession in the novel, morally vindicating his criminal act, or at the very least, further transforming Clarke into a villainous figure who deserved his murder.

But this retrospective detail of Aram's life narrative is not the only addition of value Bulwer heaps on his character: Aram's configuration of an independent, calm, brave and collected genius-identity remains pivotal when he is called to the stand: "the remarkable light and beauty of his eye was undimmed as ever, and still the broad expanse of his forehead retained its unwrinkled surface and striking expression of calmness and majesty. High, self-collected, serene, and undaunted, he looked upon the crowd, the scene, the judge, before and around him" (395). The figure of the *sinthomosexual*—the criminal detected—is recalled rather than stifled or overwritten, especially in the context of Aram's failed plan to marry. The glamorous heights of Aram's identity as scholar, that composite gender that Walter found abhorrent in its reliance on the collection of the genius of other men, is called to persuade the crowd of the man's innocence, or at the very least, his status as innocent, or self-realising, individual. The identity that the machinery of Walter's plot and the heteronormalising force of the Lesters so worked to undo is recalled and made revenant by the courtroom scene. More than this, it is made to shine, "serene, and undaunted".

Perhaps Aram's convincing natural masculine beauty and genius would have prevailed, if not for the imposing presence of Houseman that appears in direct juxtaposition to Aram's majesty on the stand:

Houseman was called upon. No one could regard his face without a certain mistrust and inward shudder. In men prone to cruelty, it has generally been remarked, that there is an animal expression strongly prevalent in the countenance. The murderer and the lustful man

are often alike in physical structure....The conviction that his own life was saved, could not prevent remorse at his treachery in accusing his comrade—a sort of confused principle of which villains are the most susceptible, when every other honest sentiment has deserted them (395).

I have significantly truncated the above; the long Houseman passage in the courtroom scene also expounds upon, in excruciating detail, Houseman's bullish physiognomy and corporeality, which combine the animal, the criminal and the lustful in the figure of the masculine criminal or epistemological ideas of the criminal. That Bulwer directly pairs these two masculine performances, on the stand for all to see—one majestic and intellectual, the other animalistic and repugnant—is no coincidence. Bulwer tells us that the two masculinities are nonetheless “confused” principles that acknowledge, once again, the intersection of their guilt, their future, and their crime and punishment. Because Houseman is responsible (thanks to the skeleton fiasco, and in narrative conjunction with Walter's detective work) for the trial, he has accomplished what he originally threatened Aram with: the detection of his crime and the ruination of his attempt to heteronormalise and overwrite his criminal and scholarly masculine identity in the family unit of the Lesters. Despite their differences in masculinity and personal identity, the two men nonetheless are victims to their own intersectionality of a shared gothic past and criminal identity. These masculine identities are “confused” on the stand, and Aram will hang, as everything about his revealed identity is transgressive, legally and socially.

After Aram is pronounced guilty, more and more of his depiction relies on a distinctly Bulwerian sense of masculine genius-glamour, aspects of reserved masculinity, things to be admired:

Aram received his sentence in profound composure. Before he left the bar, he drew himself up to his full height, and looked slowly around the court with that thrilling and almost sublime unmovedness of aspect, which belonged to him alone of all men, and which was rendered yet more impressive by a smile, slight, but eloquent beyond all words—of a soul collected in itself...rather as if he wrapt himself in the independence of a quiet, than the disdain of a despairing, heart! (404).

Even in the midst of the death sentence and the judgment of the onlookers, Aram's quiet, dignified introspection prevails. The text has demonstrated the indelibility of masculine association and inclusive gender-group-based guilt, the permanence of crime on the individual identity and future, but nonetheless, we are left with the *hypnotism* of the male genius, the *bravado* of complete, iconic, transgressive male impressiveness that circulates around itself. Aram's prison confession tells all—how the murder plot against Clarke began as a means to an end, a way for a poor scholarly man to make money so that he might put his knowledge to some sort of use: “*I looked on the deed I was about to commit as a great and solemn sacrifice to Knowledge, whose Priest I was*” (419). But soon after the crime, Aram changes his thinking: “‘Why,’ said I; ‘why flatter myself that I *can* serve—that I can enlighten mankind? Are we fully sure that individual wisdom has ever, in reality, done so? Are we really better because Newton lived, and happier because Bacon thought?’” (423). Tyson has argued that Bulwer's moral is a cautionary tale advising against the utilitarian thinking Aram once deployed (Tyson 74)—what is, perhaps, his real crime: that inhabiting the logic that a human sacrifice in the form of murder, in order to alleviate his poverty and enable his studies, is justifiable. Kalikoff reads Aram as a Byronic type, noting how the tragic shift from utilitarian thinking to a self-serving misanthropy is characteristically attractive: “The reader is repelled by Aram's egotistic sensitivity and pride.

However, as with Byron's heroes, the act of withdrawing from society is simultaneously presented as a courageous and dashing one" (37). Although the details of Aram's crime, his culpability and his erring pride are largely and obviously marginalised by Bulwer's novelistic fictionalisation, I agree with Kalikoff in that the point of Aram's *attractiveness* remains: he has moved from misguided scholar to *sinthomosexual* who produces nothing and cannot be relegated to understandable forms of the social and the reproductive, and these features of Aram's confession and final identity as presented in the text are meant to *alleviate* the gravity of his crimes. Sordid as the novel and its ending may be, Walter's guilty nature at the end of the novel, the inability of the heteronormative to rectify wrongs of gendered and socially alternative identity, and the emphasis on the genius and cynosure of the scholar-criminal all serve to emphasise vestigial possibilities for alternative or other masculinity. The machinery of the anti-*sinthomosexual* plot, unlike with Brandon in *Paul Clifford*, fails in *Eugene Aram* to have the final word. We are left only with the dazzle of Eugene on the stand, the apology of his last confessions, and the tragedy of Madeline following him to the grave.

Paul Clifford's bandage solution to alternative masculinity (or male identities in flux and the performativity of transitive male identity)—Paul and Lucy setting up shop in the New World, and their perfectly charitable life—are unable to rewrite the bravado of the criminal band under picturesque moonlight, just as Aram's plan to banish Houseman, the masculine other to which his future is bound and against which his identity is defined, is never fulfilled. Readers remember what fans of the Captain Lovett escapades remember: "It seemed as if he had thought the highway a capital arena for jokes, and only robbed for the sake of venting a redundant affection for jesting. Persons felt it rather a sin to be severe with a man so merry" (309). Bulwer ends his criminal narratives in ways that Victorian ideas of comfortable society (and sexuality, and gender

identity, and ideation of the family) demand, but the proof remains in the adventure: masculine identities in transition, gendered identities that inhabit enjoyable liminalities, are what we end up vouching for. Furthermore, these texts allow for representation and exploration of *sinthomosexualities*, a laudable undertaking in and of itself. Here are texts in which the operative force of masculinity relies in the glamour achieved by self-circulating programs of masculinity that are not regimented in socially logical programs of discipline or legality. As if the Paul who married Lucy broke away from the fragmented criminal aliases he created himself, we are left with those impressions of mold-breaking masculinities: with the imagery of the moon-soaked bravado emerging from shadows, who lives under the constant threat of his own destruction and the mutual survivability of the criminal band/bond that defines and allows his existence. He is action and he is narrative; the synopticon provides as much. Aram's final self, executed at the gallows, is the self-realising, revenant wizard scholar, recalled to life by the judgment of the court, unable to escape into predictable delineations of the heteronormal, captured by the demands of historicising gothicness that problematise *and* ensure the dependency of alternative masculinities by its connections to others who have ruptured systems of the law, gendered, penal, heteronormal and temporal. Bulwer celebrates these problematic programs of masculinity that challenge an array of disciplines: whatever sense of order understandable and acceptable masculinities must conform to or be destroyed. Instead, Bulwerian masculinities, often glamorous, always attractive, tend to contravene the program.

Chapter 3

3 Surrogacy, Hunger, and the Imperiled Boy: Dickens' *Oliver Twist*

The Newgate novel favours scenes of boyhood reading, and *Oliver Twist* is no exception to this feature of the subgenre. Paul Clifford has his education in the literature of the streets and highway figures. Jack Sheppard (par Ainsworth) will, contemporaneously with Oliver, showcase his criminal reading with the broadsheets and criminal pamphlets that decorate his room. The Newgate novel dramatises these scenes of criminal reading and equates the education in the popular and subversive crime genre with the socioliterary development of the low-class young manhood—and, in the cases of Paul and Oliver, the boy's true "class" is of course problematised by the socioeconomic intersectionalities of the identity-mystery. The Newgate novel reflects upon its own place in contemporary literary discourses of criminality and upon criminal heroes and their place within their societies, legal systems, histories and genres (the gothic, the historical novel, the criminal broadsheet, the folk tale), equating all these with the childhood growth of the class-problematic, or class-intersectional, young male, and his criminal(ised) reading.

Dickens is especially concerned with the effect criminal literature has on the reading mind, as the Preface to the third edition of *Oliver Twist* details. The serial novel appeared from 1837-39, perfectly marking the first year of Victoria's reign. It was written in a period crucial to the height of Newgate literature; both Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* and Thackeray's parodic *Catherine* would appear beginning 1839, and *Barnaby Rudge* would finally emerge from creative purgatory in 1840 (it was originally planned to precede *Oliver Twist*). Dickens was sensitive about *Oliver Twist*'s reception and felt the need to vindicate his depictions of criminality in the Preface to the novel's third edition. Dickens defends himself against the moral

criticism aimed at an undefined but nonetheless critically (and popularly) amalgamated school of authors who appeal to criminality's desirable activities in the fiction of the day. His description also approaches a comical checklisting of features readers might find in the Bulwerian Newgate:

What manner of life is that which is described in [*Oliver Twist*'s] pages, as the every-day existence of a Thief? What charms has it for the young and ill-disposed, what allurements for the most jolter-headed of juveniles? Here are no canterings upon moonlit heaths, no merry-makings in the snugest of all possible caverns, none of the attractions of dress, no embroidery, no lace, no jack-boots, no crimson coats and ruffles, none of the dash and freedom with which "the road" has been, time out of mind, invested. The cold, wet, shelterless midnight streets of London; the foul and frowsy dens, where vice is closely packed and lacks the room to turn; the haunts of hunger and disease, the shabby rags that scarcely hold together: where are the attractions of these things? Have they no lesson, and do they not whisper something beyond the little-regarded warning of a moral precept? (lv)

Why is *Oliver Twist* still footnoted as an example of the Newgate trend when Dickens had done so much to separate his text, as moral example, from other works of criminal literature? Philip Collins puzzles out this problem at length in *Dickens and Crime*, noting how Dickens' association with the Newgate novels was, at its core, perhaps more social than generic. Dickens was an acquaintance of Bulwer's and close friends with Ainsworth, and had even "inserted a footnote in *Sketches by Boz* praising [Ainsworth's 1834 novel] *Rookwood*, but in the 1839 edition he deleted it, having changed his mind on the subject, doubtless because, having been attacked in the reviews along with Ainsworth, he realised how little, in fact, their fictional aims coincided" (258). To add to this critical and moral association, "Cruikshank illustrated both *Oliver Twist* and *Jack Sheppard*, [which] doubtless encouraged the public and the reviewers to

exaggerate the resemblance between the two novels” (258). There is no Bulwerian glamourisation nor Ainsworthian criminal acrobatics in the world of *Oliver Twist*, but Collins simply concludes that “Nevertheless, despite [Dickens’] differences from the ‘Newgate school’, he belonged to it....*Oliver* belongs very much to the late 1830s, and could not have been written at any other time” (261). Neither *Oliver Twist*, nor Oliver himself, as the book explores, could escape identification with the morally suspect criminality of the decade’s unique contexts particularly conducive to the proliferation of criminal literature.

Oliver is accordingly horrified by what he reads of the genre in Dickens’ dramatised scene of the boy at his criminal reading. When Fagin surreptitiously leaves a criminal history in the open for Oliver’s perusal and hopeful inception into Monks’ planned criminal course for the boy, Oliver begins to leaf through the pages:

he soon became intent upon the volume. It was a history of the lives and trials of great criminals; and the pages were soiled and thumbed with use. Here, he read of dreadful crimes that made the blood run cold; of secret murders that had been committed by the lonely wayside: and bodies hidden from the eye of man in deep pits and wells: which would not keep them down, deep as they were, but had yielded them up at last, after many years, and so maddened the murderers with the sight, that in their horror they had confessed their guilt, and yelled for the gibbet to end their agony. Here, too, he read of men who, lying in their beds at dead of night, had been tempted (as they said) and led on, by their own bad thoughts, to such dreadful bloodshed as it made the flesh creep, and the limbs quail, to think of....In a paroxysm of fear, the boy closed the book, and thrust it from him. Then, falling upon his knees, he prayed Heaven to spare him from such deeds; and rather to will that he should die at once, than be reserved for crimes, so fearful and appalling. By degrees, he grew more calm;

and besought, in a low and broken voice, that he might be rescued from his present dangers; and that if any aid were to be raised up for a poor outcast boy who had never known the love of friends or kindred, it might come to him now. (157-8)

The volume as artifact speaks its own instrumentality for the criminal boy-candidate, as its pages are “soiled and thumbed with use”, as will be the fully-initiated criminal boy: thumbed by the use of the criminal band, and soiled by the guilt that the (particularly masculine) criminal history illustrates. Fagin’s book, itself a succinct intersection of popular genre (the gothic narrative complete with agonising psychological paranoia and self-recrimination, the real criminal history in the mode of the *Newgate Calendar*, and, of course, the *Newgate* novel itself), emphasises a particular sort of criminal guilt and othered desire that nonetheless stems from the self; after all, here are criminal men “lying in their beds at dead of night” who “had been tempted (as they said) and led on, by their own bad thoughts, to such dreadful bloodshed”. The language used implicates the criminal self (“their own bad thoughts”) but at the same time is passive or redolent of third-party influence (“tempted”, “led on”). The narrator casts suspicion on the reliability of the criminal account, the criminal speaking his own motive (“as they said”). The criminal, as represented in Fagin’s book, lies at the juncture of self-motivated crimes against humanity and the outside influences that are allowed and suggested. Criminal motivation (the desire of the criminal, his “own bad thoughts”) is placed in a crucible in this microcosmic illustration of criminal literature and its place in boyhood development and criminality. What did the criminal desire? What brought him to such horrific and gothic places? And why does the criminal seem to be both helpless, horrified at his own thoughts, under the influence of nameless external forces, and at the same time rightfully guilty and damnable?

Dickens is sure to describe Oliver as “the boy” here, Oliver serving as metonym for a universalised experience of the criminal boy figure under the initiatory influences of criminality in which literature plays a key and primal role. This is also how Oliver will remain throughout *Oliver Twist*. Dickens is also sure to illustrate what he hopes (as explicitly stated in his Preface) to be true of readers receiving criminal literature: repugnance at and rejection of the real gore and grit of crime. Oliver actually throws the book away from himself, as if the literary object of crime serves to do him immediate influence and harm. He is in a curious position. Despite the warnings of Newgate literature, a genre he refuses to identify with or enjoy as reader, Oliver enjoys participating in the Dodger’s crime disguised as game, the scene of Brownlow’s pickpocketing, as long as he does not recognise the activity as criminal. This is to say that Oliver is an expert (and for Dickens, ideal) reader of crime, but this hermeneutic excellence does nothing to aid in his rescue from or denial of crime’s dangers.

Oliver is a criminal cypher, a nexus through which crime is able, and will try, to inhabit the site which it sees as its rote and birthright: the criminal-reading boy, the class-problematic boy; the helpless boy and the lonely, friendless boy—the boy who reads and recognises his place within the scheme, but does not and cannot act against his own transition into guilty criminal man. Oliver understands (and reels at) the boy-initiating criminal literature because he has sublimated it—he represents it—par excellence of his symbolic and social position within the low-class Victorian underworld (and Newgate-literary context) that relies on the helpless, unconnected boy for its success and operation. What is left for the criminal cypher is merely to call for the aid of the benevolent other. Oliver is not the hero of his own novel, and his place in the web of his own nascent/planned criminality and his absence from many of the novel’s chapters demonstrate this. Anny Sadrin notes, as “a chosen one, Oliver is not free to do evil or,

for that matter, to do right either. He is absent from his destiny” (35). Oliver exists in the criminal narrative, or, more specifically, this particular instance of the Newgate novel, as a passive cypher for which other characters plan harm or aid. In this way, Oliver prefigures the same sort of transparent boyhood figure that Barnaby will also represent, the troubled nexus of criminal potential the boy inhabits, standing at a crossroads where all signs seem to be marked criminal.

Readers should, however, also remember that Oliver is not the text’s only reader. Laura Schattschneider makes an argument for Brownlow’s status as reader as intricately and, for the text’s plotting, integrally tied to Oliver’s character and his fate as orphan: “More than anything else, Brownlow is a careful reader. That this is his role is clear from the outset, when we meet that ‘old gentleman’ deeply absorbed in a book. This absorption makes him a ‘prime plant’ for pick-pockets Charley Bates and the Dodger” (53). Expanding from Schattschneider, who does not consider Oliver’s scene of reading, one can say that *both* Oliver and Brownlow’s status as readers—subversive masculine readers, as Oliver is imperilled criminal candidate and Brownlow is a possibly homosexual bachelor—prime them for entanglement in crime. Male forms of reading are implicated in criminality (or simply some mode of transgression) in *Oliver Twist*, and thus are the hermeneutics of criminality also hermeneutics of transgressive/transgressing male gender. Regarding Brownlow, Schnattschneider continues:

A reader of fiction is abstracted from the events of the world around him but deeply interested in ‘tracing out the intricacies of a complicated plot’ in the book he holds before him.

Moreover, the most ‘true’ of readers is abstracted when it comes to deciphering the reasons for his or her personal response to the text before him, which is what I would argue Brownlow does best with regard to Oliver....Brownlow’s abstraction helps him discover Oliver’s part in

another of his life's narratives: the story of the family of his dead fiancée. Brownlow's reading of Oliver is thus both of the world (he sees a boy in danger of being lost) and sequestered in private recollection (he finds out who Oliver really is, in relation to himself).

(54)

Schnattscheneider links Brownlow's skills as reader to his personal and sentimental interest in being Oliver's benefactor and ultimate family at the novel's end. *Oliver Twist* inscribes forms of male (and criminal) reading as instrumental in navigating the matrix of the novel's male-male relations and mixed families in addition to its metafictional self-reflexion and Dickens' commentary on popular forms of reading. The reading bachelor can save the reading boy, who is passive/transparent (visible, understandable as criminal potential and understanding as criminal potential); the reading bachelor can identify the threads ensnaring the reading/criminal boy-nexus and provide the aid for which the boy has called out.

Oliver Twist positions "the boy" subject to machinations of criminal fate at this passive center. The boy is subject to criminal motives tantamount to desire called into question by the narrator and the narrative itself, desires the text will compulsively inquire about and imagine. Why is the criminal both guilty and influenced by forces outside himself? Why is the criminal boy so helpless? Why is the criminal man so repugnant, and what shapes his evil thoughts? How and why is the female criminal different, and what is her place in potentially rescuing the boy? Why is death posited as the logical end for the guilty criminal male and the innocent boy alike (as Oliver pleads for death to remove him from his inescapable life as criminal)? All these problems have at their center configurations and expressions, clear or mangled, of male desire, and how/why that desire is by its nature transgressive and criminal. For in *Oliver Twist*, boyhood

is an ordeal from which the boy must be saved, or suffer the fate of the criminal by automation of imminent (and immanent) manhood.

Because the boy is readable and reader, the understander and the understood, who can do nothing but watch and feel as he is thrown down proscribed and prognosticated paths of guilt and criminality, the novel follows as a series of these proscriptions, one of the earliest being Fagin's criminal band. His den, a hangout and living quarters for the boys he trains and uses as pickpockets (63-5), is problematised by several different gendered, sexual, religious and literary currents and countercurrents. Before Oliver arrives at the den, on the road he meets the Dodger, that strange little boy in his oversized coats with his flash language. The Dodger seizes his newfound "com-pan-i-on" (57) by the hand, leading Oliver through the suspect streets in which the air was impregnated with filthy odours. There were a good many small shops; but the only stock in trade appeared to be heaps of children, who, even at the time of night, were crawling in and out at the doors, or screaming from the inside...and from several of the doorways, great ill-looking fellows were cautiously emerging: bound, to all appearance, on no very well-disposed or harmless errands. (60)

Children are economised in the marketplace of the streets, and there is no short supply: they spill from the buildings out onto the roads, unable to be contained. "[G]reat ill-looking fellows" also have their run of the filthy streets, and the series of images in the above paragraph uncomfortably conflate the children, the sordid drunkenness of the streets and the cautious, probably criminal men in a melting pot of vice and transgression that allows the possibility of sexual trade of children by men eager to hide their purposes and readily-identifiable (identified by the narrator) guilt. Larry Wolff examines the nature of criminality and vice, and the language surrounding it, within *Oliver Twist*, noting how "The vagueness of vice left room for overlap and identification

between thieves and prostitutes, and allowed for the possibility of child prostitution among the boys” (230). Wolff intimates that part of Fagin’s “joy” (Wolff 233) in selecting Oliver for criminal translation also may have to do with prostitution: “At the same time his banking on Oliver’s looks, when he might ‘pick and choose’ from among the available boys of London, also suggests the possibility of a sexual commerce in boys” (233). As Oliver is led by the hand of his “flash companion” the Dodger, the ultra-complicit criminal boy in the game of criminal conversion in which he is employed, the very streets take on a criminal undertone of prostitution and readable homosexuality.

Our first image of the notorious “fence” is the famous toasting-fork scene, a scene that invites ambivalent readings and interpretations of gender. Fagin is at work simultaneously making dinner and overlooking the laundry for the young soon-to-be criminals:

some sausages were cooking; and standing over them, with a toasting-fork in his hand, was a very old shriveled Jew, whose villainous-looking and repulsive face was obscured by a quantity of matted red hair. He...seemed to be dividing his attention between the frying-pan and a clothes-horse....Several rough beds made of old sacks, were huddled side by side on the floor; and seated round the table were four or five boys: none older than the Dodger: smoking long clay pipes, and drinking spirits, with the air of middle-aged men. (63)

Dickens is insistent on the presence of the toasting-fork in Fagin’s hand, as it appears twice in the passage, and Fagin’s unkempt red hair and proximity to the furnace are undeniably Devilish and anti-Christian in caricature. Deborah Heller argues that the portrayal borrows from extant literary typologies of Jewishness, a portrayal that does not necessarily paint Dickens as wanting to communicate an anti-Semitic message:

Fagin's villainy, as we have seen, gains resonance and added horror from Dickens's insistence on Fagin's Jewishness and Dickens's readiness to exploit the whole compendium of terrifying associations that have clustered around the stereotype of the Jew in the popular imagination from the Middle Ages onward: the Jew as devil (or his close associate), as subhuman monster, as poisoner, as kidnapper, mutilator, murderer of innocent Christian children. . . . This is not to suggest – nor has it ever seriously been suggested – that Dickens was attempting to incite anti-Semitic feeling or to fan the fires of anti-Semitism. Rather, Dickens seems to have been appealing to an anti-Semitism already present in his readers, which he was simply willing to exploit in creating his first major representation of evil in its confrontation with childhood innocence. (49)

Fagin's evil, for Heller, is a "generic" (47) representation of such forms of adult evil visiting the child. Susan Meyer agrees with the estimation of the text's apparent anti-Semitism, concluding: "despite the seeming viciousness of the representation of Jews through Fagin, the antisemitism of the novel does not strike me as very deeply felt. . . . Dickens seems to have been using an available rhetoric, antisemitism, as a vivid and powerful part of the novel's structure" (250). Fagin's devilish Jewishness, when executed as particularly Jewish in nature rather than purely devilish, relies on these interactions with well-worn literary typology.

Thus, so far, it is evident that Fagin is old, a Jew, is mired in the suspect queer criminality of the streets, and is closely associated with an anti-Christian evil aimed at children. Matthew Bieberman examines cultural typologies of Jewish masculinities, and although he does not name Fagin in his study, his idea of the "Jew-Sissy" replacing the "Jew-Devil" in English culture and its literatures falls neatly into place around the Dickens character. Bieberman explores how Victorian typologies of Jewishness often depicted male Jewish characters as effeminate: "the

related ideologies of anti-Semitism and antifeminism, which stand behind the stereotype of the effeminate Jewish male, emerged in the Renaissance but did not fully take shape and gain dominance within the culture until as late as the nineteenth century” (1). The function of the Jewish masculinity that seemed remarkably effeminate in nature was to “enable the proper Christian male to acquire a sense of superiority” (3). Similar to Meyer, Bieberman therefore sees the function of the evil and effeminate Jew as a literary tool with which to ascribe legitimacy to Christian morality and aestheticisation through fictional character. The transition between the kinds of Jewish literary typologies Bieberman names (the Jew-Devil and the Jew-Sissy) is writ large in the character of Fagin: he is the red-haired Jew, toasting-fork in hand, slaving over a fire—while also preparing dinner and doing the laundry. Fagin’s constant repetition of “dear” in the novel, and his fondness for trinkets, further attribute to him feminine-readable traits. Robert D. Butterworth argues that Oliver’s reception in Fagin’s underworld is actually the first instance good things happen to the boy in the novel: he is warm and fed in Fagin’s care, while he is able to enjoy friendly interaction with the other boys (Butterworth 221-2), the idea being that Oliver is treated better by the criminal world than the “parochial” world (223). Although this argument cannot be claimed for the entire novel—Fagin, Sikes and Monks simply intend the good Christian Oliver too much harm, and receive far too grotesque treatments, for this to remain true for long—Fagin’s seeming domestic kindnesses are painted with strokes too colourful to safely ignore here.

Fagin is thus a queered “Jew-Sissy”, a figure at crossroads of anti-Christian meaning and representations of gender. His functions and attentions to the boys in the early novel seem maternal in nature, but Fagin is also an agent of same-gender (masculine) processes of emulation and identification for the boys. Following Godwinian and Bulwerian precedent of criminal

identification being an important part of understandings of the same-gendered other, and vice versa, Fagin extols the importance of male bonding and emulation (which he, of course, is imploring for duplicitous and selfish reasons). After receiving Oliver in the den, Fagin implores of him regarding the other boys: ““Make ‘em your models, my dear. Make ‘em your models,”” said the Jew, tapping the fire-shovel on the hearth to add force to his words; ““do everything they bid you, and take their advice in all matters: especially the Dodger’s, my dear. He’ll be a great man himself; and will make you one too, if you take pattern by him”” (69). Fagin has vested interest in the Newgate novel male/criminal identification process that would see young innocents turn to profitable and exciting lives of crime, all the while becoming “great” men similar to each another. At the table are so many other young boys “with the air of middle-aged men” ready to get into their beds (sacks) after Fagin’s home-cooked meal. Fagin’s den is a site of genderqueer enticement into male models of criminal identification and emulation commonly seen in the Newgate novel at the same time it inhabits female modalities and the queering of children (young boys, possibly prostitutes, who dress and function as middle-aged criminal men). Both maternal and paternal, and certainly evil and anti-Christian in his functioning, Fagin is a fraught and multi-dimensional criminal masculinity who is an integral part of the text’s male-criminal functioning.

Fagin’s cross-functioning as maternal-paternity is symbolically necessitated by a text that also places a vast narrative importance on a series of “replacement” parental surrogacies for Oliver. The maternal surrogates are responses to Oliver’s initial configuration as imperiled boyhood (boyhood, by nature of Dickens’ Newgate novel, being a state of imperilment subjected to the visible and transparent boyhood-in-flux). Meyer links Fagin’s function for the larger text

as related to Agnes' function. The novel's final scene, and Christian message, can only be delivered via the purging of the evil Jew, Meyer argues:

[with Agnes' tomb] Dickens figures a redemptive Christianity through the image of a suffering woman, using a mother's gentle, selfless love for her child, the love at the heart of the home, as an image of Christian mercy. Rose and Oliver are safely restored to families as the novel comes to an end, as Rose is married and Oliver is adopted....in order to arrive at this corrective vision of mercy and benevolence, Dickens needs to exercise the death penalty against the Jew, and, what is more, to represent the Jew, ultimately, as hopelessly damned.

(249)

Agnes, or, more specifically, Agnes' grave, serves as the novel's final image, as Rose and Oliver gaze upon the white tablet bearing her name (440-1). The grave's emptiness, also described in the final sentences, is significant: Oliver has a mother only as a solemn remembrance that serves as circuitry for the novel's symbolic and religious functioning, and despite the previous pages' efforts in describing the familial happinesses the two young people are now able to enjoy, this remembrance of Agnes and the void of her grave finish the novel and crown the special circumstances of Rose and Oliver's supposedly happy frontiers in the mixed-family space.

In fact, the text has been going to great lengths in trying to fill that empty space left behind by Agnes, and it has done so by trying to fashion various mother figures for the imperiled boyhood. Agnes is removed by the text early on, unable to serve as fit mother for the boy. Fagin stands in as a maternal figure, but is caught in the complicated perniciousness of the male identification/socialisation process, not to mention the text's interaction with extant literary typologies of the Jew and the emergent figure of the Jew-Sissy; he also serves a plot function in his role as extension of Monks' to-be-revealed scheming. Nancy is yet another deficient mother

for the boy, despite her gesturings towards maternal feeling and the key roles she plays in saving Oliver from the criminal underworld plotted for him by Monks, Fagin and Sikes. Rose seems like an ideal maternal surrogacy for Oliver, and the text certainly devotes a large section to making her seem this way, but the revelation of her blood relation to Oliver complicates any ultimate maternity the text sets up for her, and her role in Oliver's life is also overwritten by Brownlow in the novel's final passages. Her role as maternal surrogacy for Oliver is additionally overwritten by her place in the novel's final image, looking over Agnes' empty grave as if reinstated as incomplete maternal figure for Oliver by association with the maternal vacuity and solemnity of the pair's tomb-gazing.

The text's trouble with furnishing a "proper" or ideal maternal figure to save the floundering rote-criminal boyhood from his (always) imminent peril, or its reluctance to furnish that figure, speaks to a sexual deviance linking Agnes and Nancy, as Susan Zlotnick argues:

In a complicated move, Dickens endows each woman with the other's identity: he condemns the unwed mother as a sexual outlaw and recuperates the prostitute by transforming her into a seduced maiden in order to emphasize the criminality both women share and the compassion they both deserve. So while *Oliver Twist* evinces enormous sympathy for Agnes as a stray lamb of god, structurally the novel does exactly what the critics of the New Poor Law claimed the reforms did: the text criminalizes the poor, unwed mother by aligning her with Nancy as well as the text's other lawbreakers. (139)

While Dickens is sympathetic with the woman condemned by the strictures of the social and political environment, Agnes and Nancy are nonetheless clearly unable, because of their sexual statuses, to stake a claim to proper or idealised maternal functioning in the text. The two women's shared place in the text appears to make the statement that femininities in *Oliver Twist*

have a sexual onus of purity placed upon them if they are to survive the gendered implications of the sociopolitical context; if Agnes and Nancy are to be “redemptive” (Meyer 249) they must be in need of that redeeming, and for the maternal surrogates of the novel, this is encoded by the terms of the sexual. Linda M. Lewis stresses the importance of Nancy’s textual function as Biblical parallel, writing: “Nancy, contrary to reader expectations, becomes the novel’s greatest example of the Good Samaritan” (25). However, this ascension to Christian example comes at the cost of her suffering the fallen woman’s necessary death, removing her as candidate for familial replacement or surrogate at the novel’s end.

Furthermore, Nancy inhabits a scale on which the other great femininity of the novel, Rose, rests. Upon meeting with Rose to appeal for Oliver’s safety (the two girls are positioned by the mid-novel as responsible for that safety), Nancy exclaims, ““Oh, oh lady!...if there was more like you, there would be fewer like me,—there would—there would!”” (322). Nancy’s criminality is what separates her from perfectable ladyhood, as she introduces herself as ““the infamous creature you have heard of, who lives among the thieves”” (323), effectively separating herself from Rose’s ladyhood as subhuman (sub-lady) “creature” who lives among “the thieves” who also, somehow, do not describe Nancy as category either. Nancy lives in a criminal space in the novel coloured by the masculine-identificatory and male-dominated, even if that gender category is problematised by Fagin’s queerness and the queerness of the man-child exemplified by the criminal-modeling process Fagin, Monks and Sikes have instituted. Thus does Nancy see herself as abject, included in a criminality she is fractioned from, in part due to her gender as female prostitute and in part due to her desire to become Oliver’s benefactor. She cannot identify with Rose and she feels lessened by the encounter despite her recognition of Rose as similar and effective maternal-saviour candidate.

What is more, Nancy will serve the further function of being an operative part of Sikes' death. As Philip Collins notes, "Sikes's attempt to cheat the gallows has, by poetic justice, been thwarted by his vision of Nancy's accusing eyes, and he becomes his own hangman" (251) in a climactic scene that emphasises the text's most theatrical moment of corporal punishment. Regarding Sikes, the novel's beastly, most brutal masculinity, Nancy is a necessary part of his persecution, if symbolically and psychologically; Nancy becomes the panopticon of Sikes' paranoia, inciting his lawful punishment as Charley Bates pushes his hanging body aside to call for help. Nancy has thus fulfilled her role in saving one boy or another, and her role as maternal surrogacy has accomplished martyrdom but not familial replacement for *the* boy, Oliver.

Contrary to Agnes and Nancy, Rose is a "perfected" (Lewis 32) woman and the character with which the novel makes the longest and greatest gestures toward instating as maternal surrogate and ultimate saviour and guardian for the criminal boy. Unlike Agnes and Nancy, Rose has no sexual plot operating against her in serving as maternal saviour for the boy; indeed, she is a respectable feminine candidate. When Oliver is taken in by the Maylies after suffering a gunshot wound in one of the criminal gang's break-and-entrance schemes, Rose immediately separates him from identification with such criminal company, asking her aunt:

"can you really believe that this delicate boy has been the voluntary associate of the worst outcasts of society?...think how young he is; think that he may never have known a mother's love, or the comfort of a home; and that ill-usage and blows, or the want of bread, may have driven him to herd with men who have forced him to guilt. Aunt, dear aunt, for mercy's sake, think of this, before you let them drag this sick child to prison, which in any case must be the grave of all his chances of amendment." (231)

Rose recognises Oliver's need for assistance immediately. She vouches for his coerced involvement in criminality, and in doing so, recognises the criminal-masculine identification processes that Oliver cannot autonomously reject or survive (he is, as she says, driven "to herd with men who have forced him to guilt"). She names lack of a maternal figure as the primary cause of the criminal-masculine process' opportunism before moving on to socioeconomic causes that speak of Godwinian appeal—note how she also decries the inefficacy of prisons to "amend" criminals. Rose is Oliver's foremost advocate in the novel in terms of recognising the criminal bonding process that aims to corrupt the "delicacy" of the boy; she also recognises the dangers of a carceral process that does nothing to amend the criminal boy, or by association, any criminal.

In all regards, the novel at this midpoint now positions Rose as being Oliver's saviour. He becomes "completely domesticated" (255) by Rose and the Christian, bucolic environs of the Maylie household. Instead of "associating with wretched men" (254), Oliver spends his time studying the Bible, attending church, and going for walks for the Maylies (254-5), and experiences a peaceful domestic/familial space for the first time: "how differently the day was spent, from any way in which he had ever spent it yet" (254). In the sense of the novel's Christian logic and plotting, Rose also serves a Christian function akin to Nancy; instead of serving as Good Samaritan or an extreme selfless sacrifice of the desperate, Rose shepherds Oliver to the Bible and a parochial peace that stands as proper example set against that "parochial" example satirised by the earlier text.

Unfortunately, Rose cannot *ensure* Oliver a place in that peace; Monks and Fagin appear at Oliver's window, and the interminable march of the criminal-masculine continues apace. Unlike Nancy, who is tasked with saving Oliver from physical rather than spiritual harm (Lewis

25), Rose can do nothing to ward the criminal off, instead pointing Oliver towards a path of religious and spiritual safety that nonetheless remains incomplete in its effectual/total rescue of the criminal boy. Under these terms Rose and Nancy offer protections to Oliver that complement each other but fail to meet the multitudinous nature and demands of the criminal boy's imperilment. Agnes, Nancy and Rose nevertheless signal one another in a loop of maternal feeling towards "amendment" of the boy. Agnes is a fallen woman who meets the fallen woman's end a propos the narrative's functioning regarding feminine sexuality; Nancy moves towards plucking Oliver from the path of criminal-male maturation, and signals the very sexual downfall of the mother; Rose offers the spiritual sanctity and healing that the text argues a "lady" can provide, only to end up internalising the solemn remembrance of Agnes' tomb together with Oliver on the novel's final page.

Despite the ultimate failure of Agnes, Nancy and Rose in rescuing the boy and in providing the stable figure of maternity Rose posits as necessary for the amendment of the criminal, the Maylie household and its bucolic surroundings are key in understanding Oliver and how his character functions on a symbolic level. The narrator describes the rural surroundings of the Maylie household:

The memories which peaceful country scenes call up, are not of this world, nor of its thoughts and hopes. Their gentle influence may teach us how to weave fresh garlands for the graves of those we loved: may purify our thoughts, and bear down before it old enmity and hatred; but beneath all this, there lingers, in the least reflective mind, a vague and half-formed consciousness of having held such feelings long before, in some remote and distant time; which calls upon solemn thoughts of distant times to come, and bends down pride and worldliness beneath it. It was a lovely spot to which they repaired Oliver. (253)

The “new existence” (253) Oliver attains while living at the Maylie household is, ironically, stressed again and again as an existence informed by a Wordsworthian remembrance/anamnesis (Gill tells us that Wordsworth was channeling Platonic ideas in his “Ode: Intimations of Immortality” [714]) in which the child is privy to atemporal understandings of life and nature that are subsequently closed in upon by “the prison-house” of adulthood. Oliver might be able to say, in multiple of the novel’s sleeping-scenes, that “The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep” (Wordsworth 28). When Rose first gazes upon Oliver in the sleep-state, his slumber suggests “sudden dim remembrances of scenes that never were” (230), and Oliver represents a theoretical quandary where he is placed as an index for knowledge without learning, existence without time, and life that predates and proceeds life, weaving “fresh garlands for the graves of those we loved” but unable to escape its predominant solemnity (here Oliver’s sleep anticipates his and Rose’s solemn view of Agnes empty tomb at the novel’s end).

The Dickensian Newgate, and indeed those Newgate novels of Bulwer and Ainsworth, illustrate the “Shades” both figurative and literal “of the prison-house” (68) as they “begin to close / Upon the growing Boy” (68-9). Oliver, subject to the masculine-emulatory spaces of urban society that Dickens presents as repetitively Hellish and dangerous—much in accordance to the stings of maturation Wordsworth describes that take the child further and further away from knowledge and the sanctity of pre-existence—is an illustration of the middle space between Boy and Man, the site around which the prison-house closes; the Newgate novel instates actual prison-houses around the boy rather than the figural prisons of Romantic-era imagination. Oliver is blessed with the presentiments of pre-existence that his slumbers offer but he does not, being a living boyhood subject, have access to them, or even to an understanding of what they could mean for him; Dickens stresses this in his Newgate novels, and his intervention is that only the

benevolence of well-meaning adult others—the novel’s many maternal and paternal candidates—can attempt a rescue of the Boy from the Prison-House. For too much of the Boy becoming the Man is already complicated by countercurrents of entrance into life (ultimately harmful) and a mode of confused non- or pre-existence.

These complicated positionings of temporality, existence and memory that Oliver indexes are why the novel is also frequently concerned with subjecting Oliver to states of deep sleep, near-death, mortal harm, the proximity to death, the proximity to life (often figured as familial/domestic bliss and Dickens’ proper model of the parish), and motifs and imagery of zombification and property. In *Oliver Twist* Oliver can never be quite alive or quite dead, and this is first illustrated by his birth, after which “for some time he lay gasping on a little flock mattress, rather unequally poised between this world and the next” (1). His imbalanced entrance into living is further complicated by imbalances of class; as the narrator observes, “he might have been the child of a nobleman or a beggar; it would have been hard for the haughtiest stranger to have assigned him his proper station in society” (3). This class-confusion, of course, plays into the identity-mystery common to Newgate novels, and the later revelations of Oliver’s parentage and class.

Because Oliver is a being of non-status—regularly poised between life and death, a boy of indefinite class—what to do with him becomes a social problem, the mismanagement of which Dickens satirises with his novel. The “board, in council assembled” (15) puts Oliver “To Let”: “the public were once informed that Oliver Twist was again To Let; and that five pounds would be paid to anybody who would take possession of him” (25). The council then considers if it is the proper decision to send Oliver to sea, “the probability being, that the skipper would flog him to death, in a playful mood, some day after dinner; or would knock his brains out with an

iron bar” (25), thus furnishing a solution to the liminal problem Oliver represents in his consistent confusions of existence, temporality and class (his death, after all, would put him on one side of the scale and cure him of his position as boy “To Let”). In these ways the boy is also figured as item in need of employment/possession, figured as property.

Instead of being sent to sea, Oliver is employed by coffinmaker Mr. Sowerberry, and the problem of the boy in quasi-existence is compounded rather than solved. Oliver’s new place of employ is

close and hot; and the atmosphere seemed tainted with the smell of coffins. The recess beneath the counter in which his flock mattress was thrust, looked like a grave....and he wished, as he crept into his narrow bed, that that were his coffin; and that he could be laid in a calm and lasting sleep in the churchyard ground: with the tall grass waving gently above his head: and the sound of the old deep bell to sooth him in his sleep. (32)

Oliver’s apprenticeship at the coffinmaker’s instills a death wish in the boyhood subject, a subject now made to desire one side of Freud’s eros-thanatos scale—the finality of death. Dickens draws the masculine-emulatory space as close and hot and marked by the aspect of death that nonetheless goes unfulfilled, remaining apart from the liminal boundary lines Oliver must inhabit. It is nevertheless important that Oliver keep being subjected to systems and intimations of mortality while he is alive, for this is what it means to be the quasi-living boy who cannot affect change in his narrated life story. Oliver is no highwayman; rather than travelling the possibilities of masculine expressions as a Paul Clifford, Oliver is the line between those possibilities—a transparent nexus of fraught boyhood or early masculinity that cannot save or even express itself as any one state. He can be nothing but “Oliver, more dead than alive” (173),

until transported to the mixed domestic bliss the novel hints at as the particular and ideal solution for the boy.

In *Oliver Twist* Oliver is a passive figure rather than a criminal hero or antihero. He is thrown down vacillating paths of criminality and salvation, and this is a feature of Dickens' Newgate boy-protagonist that will be seen once more with Barnaby. Dickens' Newgate protagonist must be pliable and receptive, for this is the particular role Dickens imagines for the boyhood beset by paths of transgression and particular expressions of masculinity, damnable or laudable. Where Bulwer and Ainsworth show the boy in active and decided paths of criminality—even if those paths are mandated by social, political or other external forces—Dickens extends the processes of boyhood transformation and burgeoning masculinity into novel-length drama where the boy often remains as is he always was, an undecided figure who references only his own unfinished, and eternal, status as boyhood.

The novel's famous "I want some more" scene enforces Oliver's passivity and entangles his lack of election in a web of boyhood hunger and cannibalistic echoes. The narrator describes how, in the workhouse,

The bowls never wanted washing. The boys polished them with their spoons till they shone again; and when they had performed this operation...they would sit staring at the copper, with such eager eyes, as if they could have devoured the very bricks of which it was composed; employing themselves, meanwhile, in sucking their fingers most assiduously, with the view of catching up any stray splashes of gruel that might have been cast thereon. Boys have generally excellent appetites. Oliver Twist and his companions suffered the tortures of slow starvation for three months; at last they got so voracious and wild with hunger, that one boy: who was tall for his age...hinted darkly to his companions, that unless he had another basin of

gruel *per diem*, he was afraid he might some night happen to eat the boy who slept next him, who happened to be a weakly youth of tender age. He had a wild, hungry eye; and they implicitly believed him. A council was held; lots were cast who should walk up to the master after supper that evening, and ask for more; and it fell to Oliver Twist. (11-12)

The markedly gendered hunger (“Boys have generally excellent appetites”, starvation aside) the narrator draws in the scene renders cannibalism believable for the boys of the workhouse. Not only does their lack of sustenance and subsequent hunger translate to imagery of pica (i.e. the desire to eat the inedible) when the boys nearly eat their spoons, but the action of the boys sucking their fingers in starvation initiates a motif of self-eating that will repeat in the text with Grimwig and Monks. What is more important is Oliver’s election, by no will of his own, to mouthpiece for the boys in appealing to the master (“a fat, healthy man” [12] who juxtaposes the starvation of the boys). Oliver becomes the voice and the will of the text’s bizarre gendered system of boyish hunger, pica and plausible cannibalism—against his own will. Agent of boyhood desire without agency, Oliver speaks this desire with no voice of his own, and this, the most enduring of the novel’s scenes, could not encapsulate his position as boyhood nexus more succinctly.

Mr. Grimwig is the character who takes up these themes of autophagia and cannibalism later in the text, his epithetic “I’ll eat my head” ending many of his statements, despite his scant stage time in the narrative proper. His “beef-faced boys” speech in the novel expresses some strange opinions about concepts of boyhood, further suggesting a link between the ongoing motif of cannibalism, hunger and young masculine typology. Grimwig, in a discussion with Brownlow, maintains that there are “only...two sorts of boys. Mealy boys, and beef-faced boys” (107). The men agree that Oliver is, as is to be realistically expected of a starving orphan boy, mealy rather

than beef-faced, and thus more personally acceptable to both men. Grimwig is repulsed by beef-faced boys: “I know a friend who has a beef-faced boy; a fine boy, they call him; with a round head, and red cheeks, and glaring eyes; a horrid boy; with a body and limbs that appear to be swelling out of the seams of his blue clothes; with the voice of a pilot, and the appetite of a world. I know him! The wretch!” (107). Grimwig, whose favoured and repetitive “I’ll eat my head” ironically echoes a comic and aberrant hunger and discourse of the corporeal grotesque or body horror, seems to despise the idea of a voraciousness and corporeality for young boys. If mere *concepts* of boyhood boil down to elements of exclusionary corporealities (for there are only two types of boys, mealy and beef-faced), and the scale slides depending on the boys’ tendency towards impulses of appetite (a disgusting boy is one who eats much and thus adds to his corporeality), and Grimwig’s disgust at these concepts result in the threat of his eating his own head, then Grimwig’s conceptions of boyhood are tangibly ironic, looping and self-constituting, locked in the novel’s grotesque motifs of boyhood hunger, cannibalism, and the body. They also imply that boyhood is defined by *appetites*, and the bodily substance of the boy constitutes his conception by others and his personal and moral character, in addition to the body itself. Even the consideration of these extremes, and debates about ideas of boyhoods, makes Grimwig want to eat his own head. In *Oliver Twist*, to be a boy is to hunger, whether or not one recognises or wills their own hunger.

Monks is the last character to take up the motif of eating and male desire in proportion to a resultant morality and character. He is a complicated and gothic criminal figure who exists before the text—we learn the criminal plot was, originally, at his behest—and yet a figure who, like his half-brother Oliver, is often marginalised by the text’s other criminals and benefactors. It follows that Oliver’s second half, instead of being the passive nexus that is the imperiled boy, is

the pure evil of finished, criminal masculinity. The text's early concerns with cannibalism, male corporeality and eating reappear in Nancy's description of Monks: "His lips are often discoloured and disfigured with the marks of his teeth; for he has desperate fits, and sometimes even bites his hands and covers them with wounds" (374). Monk represents the idea of male self-eating, a figure of wretched masculinity at once transgressive and evil in the terms of the text.

The kernel of the novel's plot revolves around a single gendered portion of the will of Oliver and Monk's shared father, as explained by Brownlow:

The bulk of his property he divided into two equal portions—one for Agnes Fleming, and the other for their child, if it should be born alive and ever come of age. If it were a girl, it was to inherit the money unconditionally; but if a boy, only on the stipulation that in his minority he should never have stained his name with any public act of dishonour, meanness, cowardice, or wrong. (419)

The document's gendered stipulation stresses the onus boys have to *resist* the evils of being born male that will, as the novel's compulsion to throw the boy into criminality demonstrate, continually tempt them towards "dishonour, meanness, cowardice or wrong". Oliver gestures toward becoming another Monks should the criminal band have succeeded, and it seems Mr. Leeford was prescient in putting this in writing.

Monks is filled with a gothic loathing of the fraternal other that echoes *Caleb William's* dynamic of masculine monopolisation or annihilation. He claims his mother "was filled with the impression that a male child had been born, and was alive", saying "I swore to her, if ever it crossed my path, to hunt it down; never to let it rest; to pursue it with the bitterest and most unrelenting animosity; to vent upon it the hatred I deeply felt, and to spit upon the empty vaunt of that insulting will by dragging it, if I could, to the very gallows-foot. She was right" (420).

Even when Brownlow agrees to settle Monks' portion of the inheritance with him, Monks "retired with his portion, to a distant part of the New World; where, having quickly squandered it, he once more fell into his old courses, and, after undergoing a long confinement for some fresh act of fraud and knavery, at length sunk under an attack of his old disorder, and died in prison" (437). Monks anticipates an Oliver that could have grown up, had the temptations of the criminal world proved alluring. The automatic route of wretched, monstrous, and self-effacing masculinity—the evil half-brother who bites own his hands and lips, the half-brother Oliver could have become—lies in incarceration and mortality to the end of *Oliver Twist*.

Monks' function as masculinity in the text is thus simple enough: Dickens uses him as criminal example for boyhood criminal potentiality, and marks him the self-destroying compulsion of the criminal. Monks as a character reminds readers of the motif of eating and systems of sublimated or transgressive masculine desire that, through Monks, are expressed with finished criminality that terminates, rightfully so, with incarceration when it threatens to force the boyhood nexus to its will. Monks also serves as launching board from which to explain Oliver's parentage. But adults are not the only characters who express a transgressive or sublimated form of masculine desiring. Susan Zieger analyses the particular queerness of children in Dickens, relating his use of child characters to Edelman's ideas of reproductive futurism: "Insofar as Dickens's novels repetitively stage the imperilment and rescue of children, they help invent the ethos of reproductive futurism at the heart of the social itself" (142). This feature, she argues, is undeniable, yet Dickens nonetheless also creates queer childhood characters who represent a staging of adult of desires in the softening representational guise of innocent children: "On the one hand, Oliver, the workhouse boys, and the boys of Dotheboys Hall [in *Nicholas Nickleby*] have the appetites of adults that demand satisfaction, and correspond

with their representation as proleptically old and vicious; on the other, the urgency of their needs can be blunted by representing them as young, cute, and non-threatening” (147).

“Master Bates” by nickname alone channels a certain queerness or sexual desire that runs counter to his ultimate function in the novel as the criminal boy to shove Sikes’ dangling corpse away from himself at the window. After the “sudden jerk” and “terrific convulsion of the limbs” that complements Sikes’ hanging death under his own weight, “The murderer swung lifeless against the wall; and the boy, thrusting aside the dangling body which obscured his view, called to the people to come and take him out, for God’s sake” (412). Here the death/ejaculation of the criminal adult body is directly put into contrast with the (non-Oliver) criminal boy realising his own end as that adult corporality/criminality. But if Charley Bates represents an adult sexual desire, his is the most obliquely outfitted for repulsion or reformation. The text here juxtaposes finished male criminality, cohabitant with the spectacle of capital punishment brought on by the self (or Nancy’s ghost), with yet another imperiled boy. Charley Bates is not an Artful Dodger, queerly mimicking his adult/criminal compatriots to the end. He is the child character made most uncomfortable by the gang’s criminality as the novel draws to a climax, and is thus a boy who makes it out of the den unscathed as the brutish Sikes hangs. Bates thus dramatises Oliver’s path and function as imperiled boy in need of rescue on another of the novel’s stages.

The Dodger, on the other hand, remains queered child through and through; his is not a story of reformation under witnessing of the corporeal spectacle/punishment reserved for the adult criminal masculinity. Oliver’s original meeting with the Dodger highlights the criminal-trainee’s confused state of mannish-boyhood:

The boy who addressed...the young wayfarer, was about [Oliver’s] own age: but one of the queerest-looking boys that Oliver had ever seen...he had about him all the airs and manners

of a man....He wore a man's coat, which reached nearly to his heels. He had turned the cuffs back, halfway up his arm, to get his hands out of the sleeves: apparently with the ultimate view of thrusting them into the pockets of his corduroy trousers; for there he kept them. He was, altogether, as roustering and swaggering a young gentleman as ever stood four feet six, or something less, in his bluchers. (57)

The Dodger is the child most accepting of the criminal fate thrust upon the imperiled boy by the London underworld and criminal band. More than simply complicit with his role in being “model” and scout for new boyhood criminal candidates (as demonstrated in his instrumentality finding Oliver on the road in the early novel and leading him to Fagin's den), the Dodger has perfected adult criminal masculinity with his flash speech, pleasure in the criminal act (pickpocketing and converting others to the criminal band), and dress that clashes with his childhood size. He is all too ready to become a finished adult criminal, and when the Dodger is put on trial, his exclamations of indignation cause uproarious laughter in court (355-7) as he plays to the crowd in a grotesque cautionary tale of childhood criminality. A victim of the Dodger's pickpocketing testifies against him, having “remarked a young gentleman in the throng, particularly active in making his way about, and that young gentleman was the prisoner before him” (356). The Dodger is then led away by the jailer, “threatening, till he got to the yard, to make a parliamentary business of it; and then grinning in the officer's face, with great glee and self-approval”. Noah and Master Bates, having witnessed the proceedings, rush back to Fagin to communicate that “the Dodger was doing full justice to his bringing-up, and establishing for himself a glorious reputation” (357) that may make him “stand in the Newgate Calendar” (351). Whereas Oliver is absented from his life narrative—a quasi-existence in need of rescue—the

Dodger tries to make a story for himself in the Newgate Calendar, that famous document responsible for the genesis of the subgenre to which *Oliver Twist* and *Barnaby Rudge* belong.

With Master Bates and the Dodger, Dickens draws complementary examples of boyhood destined for two dichotomised outcomes. Bates is the boy who ends up realising his peril through the bodily, mortal and penal spectacle of the finished masculine criminal while the Dodger is his opposite, the boy who willingly falls into emulation of the masculine criminal through his complicity with the “middle-aged” criminal boyhood identification process. All three boys (Oliver, Bates, Dodger) “enjoy” the criminal role to some extent—Oliver only when he does not recognise the act as crime, Bates only when punishment is invisible—but the Dodger is “particularly active in making his way about” the mimicry of criminal manhood and criminal acts of the underworld, and appears to his victim as “young gentleman”. The criminal boys represent a gradient of criminal-boyhood *jouissance* that marks such *jouissance* as proximity to and skill with the mimicry of masculine adulthood their low society has made available to them. The gradient is not idealised by Dickens but rendered grotesque when readers consider the Dodger’s criminal and masculine-emulatory aptitude leads him only to incarceration, but readers should also remember that, of all the boy characters, the Dodger is the one who experiences “glee and self-approval” (357).

The novel’s masculine-gendered representations of hunger and eating, its explorations of boyhood masculine-emulation and criminal *jouissance*, and its fascination with benevolent bachelors all point to forms of masculine *desire*, queer and transgressive, and male-gendered liminal figures that circulate around the absence and quasi-existence of Oliver as figure of boyhood imperilment. When placed in relation to Oliver, who is a nexus of masculine possibility without an identity, without glee or self-approval, without the ability to help or save himself or

speak any will or desire outside the need of being rescued, these expressions of circulating masculine desire and representations cohere to that role as nexus: Oliver is transparent, and Dickens experiments with the possibilities of masculine *jouissance*, or transgressive desiring, through him without a voice, without an existence. The text regularly exercises possibilities of masculinity, evil or benevolent, and puts them in various levels of proximity and interaction with the boy. So too has the text tested and failed maternal figures, ultimately arguing that no one maternal candidate is capable of saving the boy imperiled.

Peter Brooks' reading of the death drive into the narrativising process—a reading that, fittingly, sees Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* as enacting its own ideas of *eros* and *thanatos*—can explain the “vacillating play” of *Oliver Twist* and its many movements between mortal danger and rescue for the boy:

As a dynamic-energetic model of narrative plot, then, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* gives an image of how ‘life,’ or the *fabula*, is stimulated into the condition of narrative, becomes *sjuzet*: enters into a state of deviance and *detour* (ambition, quest, the pose of a mask) in which it is maintained for a certain time, through an at least minimally complex extravagance, before returning to the quiescence of the non-narratable. The energy generated by deviance, extravagance, excess—an energy which belongs to the textual hero's career and to the readers' expectation, his desire of and for the text—maintains the plot in its movement through the vacillating play of the middle, where repetition as binding works toward the generation of significance, toward recognition and the retrospective illumination which will allow us to grasp the text as total metaphor, but not therefore to discount the metonymies that have led to it. (Brooks 296)

Oliver escapes the hypocrisies and mismanagements of the parochial society and the workhouse only to be employed as apprentice coffin-maker, where he longs for the end of his own career; he escapes the apprenticeship only to be at the mercy of the road, where he is recruited by the Dodger and thrown headlong into the furnace of the criminal band. After his later gunshot wound, he is nearly saved by the Maylies and converted to a Christian domesticity, only to be discovered once more as Fagin and Monks peer through his window. The text vacillates between the boy's damnation as rote-criminal masculinity (as with the Dodger) and the boy's salvation, and this is the activity and extension of the middle as Brooks describes. Ironically, the vacillation and extension of the middle enjoys imbuing the boy with ideas and symbologies of his own death—the text's ultimate end, positing that the struggle through boyhood is also a unique struggle with one's own death, a process that the novel's benefactors, maternal or paternal, ultimately prolong with their attempts at the boy's rescue.

Brooks uses *Great Expectations* as his major example of the vacillating play of narrative, though he also suggests that “[m]ost of the great nineteenth-century novels tell this same tale”:

The most salient device of [*Great Expectations*] “middle” is literally the journey back—from London to Pip's home town—a repeated return to apparent origins which is also a return of the repressed, of what Pip calls “that old spell of my childhood.” It would be interesting to demonstrate that each of Pip's choices in the novel, while consciously life-furthering, forward oriented, in fact leads back, to the insoluble question of origins, to the palindrome of his name, so that the end of the narrative—its “discharge”—appears as the image of a “life” cured of “plot,” as celibate clerk for Clarrikers. (298)

Much of the same can be said of Oliver's career in the novel, though unlike Pip, Oliver is unable to *make choices*. Each Twist of Oliver's fate leads him deeper towards damnation as the criminal

he is supposed to become (due to the crime of being born a boy) or further towards salvation in an anti-criminal domestic/familial space (other than the mortal “familial” space Fagin furnishes for boys). The symbologies and realities of death (Oliver’s work as apprentice coffinmaker and his overseeing of burials, his meeting with Dick, the near-dead boy, his gunshot wound) Oliver encounters throughout the text aim to return him to that origin Freud and Brooks describe—if not the origin (details) of his birth that ultimately absolve him of Monks’ criminal plotting through Brownlow’s unraveling of the riddle, then the sleep-logic of the child, the remembrance of atemporal existences before birth. The novel posits that both forms of the origin (death, anamnesis) are the realm of the boy, systems endured by the boy who is their subject and center.

The novel has also been vacillating between depictions of male desiring criminal and grotesque in nature. These depictions are distinct from the maternal candidates the text tests and abandons, for the last place—or as Brooks puts it, the “discharge”—of the text ends with a prioritising of the homosocial space as represented in Brownlow and Grimwig, the last domestic space to which Oliver is retired. Though Holly Furneaux puts Dickens’ fascination with bachelor families in a futuristic light running counter to Edelman’s logic of the queer interrupting the futuristic logic of the family, she also admits that there is a sense of incompleteness inherent to the figure of the bachelor, in history and in Dickens’ literature:

The now most common sense of bachelor as “an unmarried man (of marriageable age)” has, from its origins, carried an implication of incompleteness. Integral to this common use (and explicit in the rarer application of “bachelor” to “an inexperienced person, a novice”) is a sense of transgression against the imperative to marriage. (68)

That Oliver is left with Brownlow and Grimwig, the former of which a reader-decipherer of male origins through Oliver and the latter a reference to the text’s preoccupation with self-

consumption and male hunger—perhaps the most raw, natural form of desiring—leaves the text open to that male-gendered sense of desiring, incompleteness, a sterile combing of books and deciphering of narrative paths via Brownlow’s forever-education of Oliver—and Grimwig eating his head nearby.

Dickens’ *Newgate*, like Bulwer’s and Ainsworth’s, relies on vacillations and circulation around the theme of transgressive masculine styles with their forms of desiring and what society and/or the law requires or demands of the masculine-gendered person. When Dickens places Oliver and Barnaby, the boyhood figure, in symbolic, social, and mortal forms of imperilment, he makes an argument for the rescue of the boy, not only through the benevolent interdiction of the stranger of surrogate-parental feeling but also through the satirical indictment of social and legal context. Dickens also makes an argument for a transgressive homosocial space totally outside of the criminal in the bachelor-union of Brownlow and Grimwig, though the union itself remains in a shadowy zone of masculine hunger and incompleteness that circles back to the novel’s “I want some more” scene of Oliver as powerless voice for the hungering of all boys. For at the end of the novel Oliver is still a boy left in a homosocial space where the surrogate paternity is non-criminal but nonetheless inhabiting the same systems of transgressive masculine desire the text has been exploring. Instead of adopting out Oliver to the newly wed Rose and Harry, a heteronormal marriage meticulously anticipated by the text, Dickens instead insists upon placing him in the Brownlow surrogate family. The text replaces the transgressive, criminal homosocial space with the transgressive, legal homosocial space, in which Oliver is eternally learning and seems to not have moved on to any decided sense of gendered expression, agency or manhood. Rather, he is an eternal nexus, the eternal passivity that Brownlow reads, the eternal nexus through which incomplete and liminal systems of masculine desiring continue to circulate and be

seen. Dickens does not seek out heteronormative solutions in *Oliver Twist*; instead he seeks to legitimise transgressions of masculine desiring through a nexus that will main transparent and unobstructive. Oliver's final view of Agnes tomb, and the solemn reflections it engenders, represents those "insoluble questions of origins" (Brooks 298), the remembrances of times before and after life, those sentiments beyond life and death which make up the only articulable identity of the Dickensian Newgate hero-boyhood.

Chapter 4

4 Escapes into the Sign: Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*

When William Harrison Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* began its serial run in 1839, there was, initially, little intimation that it would eventually become "by far the most vilified of Newgate novels" (Jacobs and Mourão 18). This Newgate novel, which chronicles the upbringing of adopted brothers Jack Sheppard and Thames Darrell from their infancies to Jack's execution at twenty-two years of age, had elements in common with the concurrent *Oliver Twist* and Ainsworth's previously successful foray into the subgenre with 1834's *Rookwood*. *Jack Sheppard*'s first and second "epochs" illustrate what appears at first glance to be a literary analogue to Hogarth's 1747 series of engravings *Industry and Idleness*: the hale, honest, hardworking Thames representing the young man who grows up reaping the rewards of his industry and fastidiousness at his trade, while Jack, the other side of a binary, falls to the enticements of crime. After this initial positioning of the two young apprentices, the novel escapes its mere resemblance to Hogarth's famous engravings, becoming a complex discussion and depiction of masculine enculturation, excarceral theme, sociopolitical commentary, convoluted melodrama, and a tightrope walk between individual agency and arcane fatalism that may prick the ears of readers familiar with Bulwer's *Eugene Aram*.

Abigail Droge notes that, contrary to common critical belief surrounding *Jack Sheppard*, few reviewers of its early installments in *Bentley's Miscellany* considered the serial objectionable, problematic or scandalous (41). Only when the text was "de-contextualized" (42)—that is, adapted into other forms and considered by criticism—did it become "a promiscuous free radical" (42) in British society. Elizabeth Stearns details these processes and their results:

Soon after *Bentley's Miscellany* began serializing *Jack Sheppard*, playwrights, plagiarizers, and literary hacks recognized that significant profit could be made by reproducing the Sheppard story in forms affordable to the lower classes such as ballads, penny serializations, barely altered plagiarisms, and cheap theatrical adaptations performed at “gaff” theaters. The theatrical portrayals of the Sheppard story caused the most stir because the theatricalizations were perceived as glamorizing Sheppard, rendering his actions appealing to susceptible lower-class audiences. (438)

Droge further explains that these reproductions of the Jack Sheppard narrative are what garnered vitriol from its reviewers and certain reading audiences; the popularity of Ainsworth's serial novelisation triggered a chain of adaptations that threw suspicion on the moral representations at work in these criminal narratives. Stearns adds: “despite the novel's initial reception in the middle-class press as another pleasant and harmless romance, it soon became reviled as a source of inspiration for would-be Jack Sheppards everywhere” (435).

There must have been something in the 1839 air, if not the entire decade of Newgate novels, that made narratives of criminal boyhood feel particularly appropriate for popular consumption and contemporary controversy. Stearns' argument pivots on the legal climate of the period:

In 1837, only two years before *Jack Sheppard* began appearing in *Bentley's Miscellany*, capital punishment had been repealed for all but the most serious crimes. Then in 1839, the same year the novel began causing such a sensation, more extensive powers were granted to the new police force and a wider range of lower-class cultural practices were criminalized. *Jack Sheppard* resonated most strongly with the early-nineteenth-century lower classes just when legislative shifts induced a crisis of legitimacy for the criminal law, as had been the case

in the eighteenth century when the Sheppard phenomenon followed on the heels of the passage of the severe Black Act. (443)

The cultural mimesis responsible for the production and circulation of Jack Sheppard narratives (in all their possible forms—news, story, song, engraving, and more) thus can be said to hinge on instances of changes to legislation and intersections of low-, middle- and upper-class politics; Stearns scorns the inflammatory reviews of the novel made by middle-class literary critics, positioning them as irresponsibly nearsighted: “Victorian middle-class critics failed to recognize that lower-class readers were actively interpreting the Jack Sheppard story in accordance with their perception that the legal changes newly criminalizing aspects of their lives were illegitimate” (436). What seemed to be a mere problem of moral theme and impressionable readership—especially among the low and the male (if young boys read or watch Jack Sheppard narratives of criminal activity, will they pick up the cues and fill the shoes of real criminals?)—was really a problem of legislation and sociopolitical sentiment and response.

The problematisation of such Jack Sheppard narratives approached vindication when the criminal influence of their represented moral themes apparently leaked into real incidents of crime. By far the most famous of the criminal charges surrounding Jack Sheppard popularity is Francois Benjamin Courvoisier’s murder of Lord William Russell on May 5th, 1840 (Stearns 440; Worth 37). Courvoisier reported to have seen both a theatrical adaptation of *Jack Sheppard* and thereafter to have read the Ainsworth text, inspiring his crime. This led Ainsworth to publish a note that he personally had followed up and found no veracity in Courvoisier’s claim of reading his novel; the person (a sheriff at Courvoisier’s execution) to whom Courvoisier confessed, however, published yet another response, saying that the murderer had in fact read the novel (Rumbelow 142, Stearns 440). Less famously, and a year later, an article in the *Morning*

Chronicle reported that two youths had stolen a snuff box from Paul Bedford, an actor playing the role of Blueskin in one of the many theatrical adaptations of *Jack Sheppard* (see “Re-Performance of Jack Sheppard”). As the very fitting title of the article suggests, the Jack Sheppard typology was becoming less of a typology in and of itself, transforming into something else entirely: Newgate narrative rendered real action.

As Worth explores, at that point in time the critical reputation of Ainsworth’s text and the morals it was apparently inspiring in youth became suspect, and its notoriety peaked. John Forster, “by then Dickens’s friend rather than Ainsworth’s” (Worth 37), may have given the novel a scathing review because it was outpacing *Oliver Twist*’s popularity (Carver 7), compounding the novel’s moral controversy with its reputation amongst the literary circle to which Ainsworth belonged. As noted in the previous chapter, Dickens became uncomfortable with his association with *Jack Sheppard*; *Oliver* and *Jack* shared a platform in *Bentley’s Miscellany* and an illustrator in George Cruikshank, not to mention parallels of character typology, theme, and concern with gender: “Each author exposed a susceptible young boy to a criminal environment: Dickens’s protagonist retained his virtue; Ainsworth’s succumbed to temptation” (Worth 37).

After 1840, either in reaction to the thoroughly vilified, most criminally incendiary *Jack* or due to the vicissitudes of popular media taste, the Newgate novel began to wane. In the oft-quoted “Mr. Punch’s Literary Recipes” (1841), an author, “Probably...Thackeray” (Carver 20) has a field day with *Oliver* and *Jack*, boiling them down to constituent parts:

Take a small boy, charity, factory, carpenter’s apprentice, or otherwise, as occasion may serve – stew him well down in vice – garnish largely with oaths and flash songs – boil him in a cauldron of crime and improbabilities. Season equally with good and bad qualities – infuse

petty larceny, affection, benevolence and burglary, honour and housebreaking, amiability and arson – boil all gently. Stew down a mad mother – a gang of robbers – several pistols – a bloody knife. Serve up with a couple of murders – and season with a hanging-match....Alter the ingredients to a beadle and a workhouse – the scenes may be the same, but the whole flavour of vice will be lost, and the boy will turn out a perfect patter – strongly recommended for weak stomachs. (20)

Thackeray perpetuates an overlapping of the two Newgate narratives, the subgeneric amalgamation that had Dickens disassociating himself actively from the subgenre and, as Worth points out, made Ainsworth turn from the Newgate novel to non-criminal historical novels (38). Thackeray betrays some fascinating analyses in his conflation of the two texts; if these novels—and the titular protagonists they inescapably represent—are both “season[ed] equally with good and bad qualities”, “infuse[d]” with both “petty larceny” and “affection”, “honour and housebreaking”, “amiability and arson”, and then gently boiled, the satire’s emergent thesis vouches for the unimportance of opposite themes in a Newgate work. The satire points to the superficial machinery of the Newgate plot, the necessary knives and murders and mad mothers and “hanging-match[es]”, and how this machinery, by virtue of existing, negates the possibility for real literary value and palatability in a text. Moreover, the differences Thackeray notes in *Oliver Twist* at the end of the above—that is, that Dickens’ text loses its “flavour of vice”—intimate a certain social consciousness seen as not present in *Jack Sheppard* but wholly saccharine or suited to more general audiences (“recommended for weak stomachs”) and thus, the satire suggests, equally marginal and pandering to hoi polloi sensibility. Thackeray, one of the major proponents of the Newgate novel’s moral culpability, furthers his point by focusing on the pure and reducible similarities amongst suspect Newgate narratives. What is more, this

diatribe of Thackeray's appeared a year after he had finished another of his attacks on the form, *Catherine: A Story*.

Thackeray's satire and eagerness to reduce and conflate Newgate texts relies on a single thread that must have resonated with public taste of the 1830s, and is also the point of departure between *Oliver* and *Jack*, which he parodies with the above recipe, and his own *Catherine*: the importance of boyhood in both narrative and in real crime. Intersections of boyhoods, narrative and crime become terribly confused at the height of this "Sheppard mania" (Carver 196).

Tongue-in-cheek as it is, the *Punch* recipe for the Newgate stresses that the single most common and definitive thread running between the novels—outside of their moral irresponsibility in turning vice into entertainment—is that these are novels in which "the boy will turn out", the boy is cooked and boiled and turned into the resultant character and text. Thus are problems of boyhood and the formulation and finalisation of a manhood character, persona, gender identity, criminality or even form (if we remember that *Jack* had already leapt into alternate media and actual criminal activity) intricately and implicitly tied up with the morality of criminal literature at the height of Sheppard mania. Though Stearns is more concerned with the socioeconomics at play in the moral furor incited by Jack Sheppard texts, she strikes at a gendered problem when she writes: "Young men were thought to be especially prone to the Sheppard infection, since the guilty parties in the crimes reported often shared characteristics with him such as being an apprentice, having a proclivity for spending time in low haunts, behaving particularly unrepentantly when charged with a crime, or simply being young and male" (439). Thus does Stearns identify an issue tied not only to the politics of class but also to problematisations of young manhood in the context of the Sheppard mania, without further exploration of this gendered side of the issue.

Jack Sheppard narratives exercise the propensity of the excarceral: what Linebaugh describes as a countercurrent to carcerality in criminal narratives, scenes in which escapes are made, the prison conquered, the protagonist active, deft and capable (*The London Hanged* 23, 30). Writing about the historical Sheppard, Linebaugh calls him “a master of escape whose imaginative daring was at least as great as the bold vision of the creators of the workhouse. His dazzling feats were to provide an example of resourcefulness and freedom to the London weavers and labouring poor that answered the slavish designs of the workhouse” (13-4). In this sense, there is a kernel in *Jack* opposite to the workhouse sociopolitics of *Oliver*. As with Stearns, Linebaugh stresses the political and socioeconomic resonances in Jack as person, legend, and narrative hero:

Sheppard had become a hero, to be used for bitter political satire or to be admired for tenacity and indomitability....Almost as a figure of sport, he attained an ‘individual fame’ that united ‘the mob’....The ‘mob’ that followed Sheppard’s escapes was both an audience (for the ballads, the papers, the book-makers) and a constellation of a world working class. (38)

Droge, who moves from Linebaugh’s eighteenth-century focus towards analyses of Victorian reception of the Sheppard legend, reminds readers that “Jack Sheppard was not born within the pages of *Bentley’s*: his appearance there was already a re-contextualization, not just of a criminal’s life but of the ghostwritten autobiographies and Newgate calendars that had surrounded his legacy since the eighteenth century” (44). And as that *Morning Chronicle* article had it—that the young men who robbed an actor in the name of Jack Sheppard is a “Re-Performance”—the figure of Jack Sheppard himself as legend, hero, as typology, is already excarceral by nature, historical, socioeconomic, really criminal, really moral, novelistic, theatric, multimedia—all these things at once. The typology of “Jack Sheppard” itself is primarily

excarceral and instructive/mimetic (up for “re-performance”), and the ideas that *Jack Sheppard* represents were re- and de-contextualized, signalling intersections and confusions of form and representation.

Thus, when the importance of boyhood and representations of masculine gender form the root similarity between Newgate texts and the primary moral concerns of reviewers and re-performing young criminals themselves, this gendered interest intersects with an excarcerality, thematic and cultural, so inherent in the Jack Sheppard mythos as to be indistinguishable from its many constituent parts and long history. Sheppard narratives were problematic for a specific gendered demographic—the “Sheppard infection” to which young men and working-class boys were considered “especially prone” (Stearns 439; also see Jacobs and Mourão 32-3)—and thus the transitivity of crime and criminal narratives, their especial tendency to excarcerate themselves from the bounds of history and media forms, to break the bounds of fiction into the realm of real crime, is read by critics, historians, and public masses and audiences as being the special problem, crime and confusion not only of the Jack Sheppard legend/type but also that of the young male. For critics and audiences of the 1830s and into the 1840s, the pure excarcerality of the Jack Sheppard type was a problem indexing, portraying, problematising, blurring, influencing, and to an extent producing the idea of the young male reader-criminal. The Sheppard mania and its attendant literary and theoretical politics was one in which the moral and criminal status of all young male readers was, by path of commonality at the root of these individual interpretive and multimedia problems, now at stake.

We can find all these ideas at play in Ainsworth’s specific *Jack Sheppard* and the many problems and formations of masculine identity it presents. The easiest thread to trace regarding the novel’s interest in masculinities is that which Thackeray, Linebaugh and Stearns all identify,

and that is the figure of the apprentice. Figures of apprenticeship were of special interest in criminal literature; Philip Rawlings argues that eighteenth-century criminal biographies and the literature and politics surrounding them were often encoded examples of workplace regulation aimed namely at employers (4) and the unruliness of the apprentices and lower-class individuals they were tasked with regulating. In this body of literature, apprentices “were an easily identifiable group with a reputation for disorder, and to some extent the difficulties with them symbolized more general concerns about the breakdown of the hierarchical social order” (21-2). This could not be truer regarding Dickens’ *Barnaby Rudge*, where that caricature of disobedience Sim Tappertit rails at the benevolent, milquetoast employment of his master Gabriel Varden, thus representing all the malcontent vanity of the young criminal-apprentice. The historically real apprentice Jack Sheppard, and Ainsworth’s fictional Thames Darrell who works by his side, display a meeting of fact and fiction in both history and Newgate dialectics of masculinity particular and relevant to the social figure of the apprentice; history had provided theatrical evidence of the malcontent apprentice and their tendency towards crime and the excarceral in Jack Sheppard, and Newgate literature in the particular instances of *Jack Sheppard* and *Barnaby Rudge* sought to explore the gendered and socioeconomic layers behind this role by placing the early action of both novels in the workshop.

Jack Sheppard is a novel in three “epochs”: 1703, at which point Jack is an infant; this epoch hints at the mysterious circumstances surrounding Jack and Thames’ parentage. Thames’ father, pursued by the villanous Sir Rowland and the pernicious Jonathan Wild, disappears into the Thames; the babe—narrowly escaping a watery grave by intervention of the benevolent carpenter Mr. Wood—gains his namesake, and Mr. Wood adopts him. Meanwhile, Mrs. Sheppard, a fallen woman whose husband Tom died at the gallows, is also dogged by Wild’s

mysterious and self-interested machinations; her baby, Jack, is left under the care of Mr. Wood. Epoch the Second, 1715, follows Jack at thirteen years of age. The young Thames is a hearty example of capable apprenticeship while Jack falls to natural petty disobedience under the watch of Mr. Wood and the shrewish, comic adulterer Mrs. Wood. The Woods' daughter, Winifred, is in love with Thames; Jack, enamoured with the girl, claims his devious inclinations stem from her lack of attention towards him. Wild, who all the while is plotting with Sir Rowland, bears an undying grudge towards Jack's father, and swears that he will see Jack meet his father's end. Jack, through the background planning of Wild, is initiated in Kettleby's criminal ring, to the horror of Mrs. Sheppard; there Jack meets Edgeworth Bess and Poll Maggot, though Ainsworth confuses the historical women, rendering Bess coquettishly feminine and Maggot athletically masculine when in reality the reverse was more likely (Jacobs and Mourão 228). Jack also befriends Blueskin, his faithful criminal accomplice and confidant. Epoch the Third, 1724, follows Jack at his death-year of twenty-two, the celebrated and notorious jail-breaker of eighteenth-century legend. The novel slowly reveals that Sir Rowland, whose deceased sister gave birth to Thames under ignoble circumstances, wants Thames dead because he is set to inherit the fortune Rowland covets; Rowland's deal with the unpredictable Wild sours when Wild gets greedy and murders him. As fate would have it, Mrs. Sheppard is also a forgotten sister of Rowland, making Jack and Thames cousins, unbeknownst to the adopted brothers; Wild loved Mrs. Sheppard during youth, and birthed his grudge when she chose Jack's father over him: thus does Wild seek to take the boys' fortunes, force a marriage to Mrs. Sheppard, and fulfill a past romantic grudge by seeing Jack hanged and Thames murdered (he will only accomplish the former). These plot elements are set against a foreground of multitudinous action-packed escapes by Jack, aided by the amicable Bess, Maggot and Blueskin. Mrs.

Sheppard expires from madness; racked by the sense that he is the cause of his mother's death, the famous Jack attends her funeral, where Wild apprehends him a final time, and Jack hangs in the final scene. A short description assures readers that Wild got his just desserts not long after Jack's execution; Thames marries Winifred and enjoys his inheritance, no longer subject to the schemes of Wild and his uncle Rowland.

The novel's working title was *Thames Darrell* (Carver 173); its formative stage probably envisioned a greater focus on the fictional brother rather than the historical Jack Sheppard who would become its ultimate protagonist. The published novel instead decides, through the first epoch and the initial staging of the second, to put both adopted, apprenticed sons on either side of a scale. When Mrs. Sheppard begs Mr. Wood to raise her son to the best of his ability, his promise is conditional: "of all crafts, I say, to be an honest man is the master-craft. As long as your son observes that precept I'll befriend him, but no longer" (56). The situation of Jack and Thames' adoption into the apprenticeship of Mr. Wood differs in this first epoch; due partly to his mother's reputation and his father's death at the gibbet, Jack has upon him that automatic onus of criminal masculinity so prevalent in the Newgate novel, that prospect and probability that he should become something other than the "honest man". On the other hand, Mr. Wood saves Thames from a melodramatic death, and despite the bizarre circumstances of the babe's father just having fallen into the gulf, Thames is immediately accepted into the blended family: "thou art not wholly friendless and deserted; for I myself will be a father to thee!" (112).

Mr. Wood's statement of conditional adoption posits that masculinity and craftsmanship/occupational status are integral parts of a whole, not only in terms of the practical professional upbringing and the socioeconomic processes of the middle class but also the symbolically-informed processes of manhood and masculine respectability, all of which are

conflated and introduced as a primary theme of the novel. What *Oliver Twist* reveals only at the end of the narrative *Jack Sheppard* stipulates right away: that is, Monks' plot to usurp Oliver's inheritance operates on a gendered clause in the will that Oliver will only inherit if he grows up a good boy, while *Jack* introduces this theme of the boy's personal and financial success in Mr. Wood's adoption. Jack and Thames' opposite positions occupy two sides of a scale: Thames is already an example of acceptable or perfect boyhood, a candidate of sublime surrogacy, while Jack has something to prove in being tasked with adopting abstinence from crime and the masculine betterment synonymous with commitment to middle-class trade and craftsmanship. When the action of the novel jumps ahead to 1715, the narrator reminds us that, in addition to the maturation process of the apprenticeship, the particulars of the historical moment contribute to early masculinisation of the boy: "Boys, at the time of which we write, were attired like men of their own day" (119). Jack specifically "seemed to possess a penetration and cunning beyond his years—to hide a man's judgment under a boy's mask" (120). The narrator is writing in a historical moment where apprenticeship and the origin stories of criminals are not merely conducive to questions and positionings of the socioeconomic, but also masculine gender and how its processes are conducive to the criminal life turned narrative. In this particular illustration, the history and position of the apprentice erases boundaries between boy and man. The apprentice as both socioeconomic reality and narrative topic lend themselves to representations of masculine growth, and, simultaneously, criminality. As the narrator taxonomises Jack's physiognomy in the long passages typical of Newgate novels describing the criminal face and body, the narrator concludes:

[Jack's] physiognomy resembled one of those vagabond heads which Murillo delighted to paint, and for which Guzman d'Alfarache, Lazarillo de Tormes, or Estevanillo Gonzalez

might have sat:—faces that almost make one in love with roguery they seem so full of vivacity and enjoyment. There was all the knavery, and more than all the drollery of a Spanish picaroon in the laughing eyes of the English apprentice. (121)

This is not the first or the last time in the text Jack will be related to *illustration* or *imagery*—actual painting and depictions of the rogue typology, both historical and actively unfolding in the narrative itself. More pressing in this passage is the final sentence, which allows the possibility of “the English apprentice” implying Jack specifically, Jack implying the figure of “the English apprentice”, and both Jack and “the English apprentice” being indexes of representational criminalities/roguery. As Rawlings reminds us, the apprentice (as typology, political index of breakdown and unrest, as historical fact) is a figure crucial to the subject matter, the readership and the reception of criminal biographies and narratives (4; 17; 21-22), in addition to Ainsworth’s fascination with the imagistic archives and representations of the criminal and the processes of masculinisation that these topics naturally include and imply.

This thread of pictorial discourse continues when the narrator directly contrasts the two apprentices’ physiognomies:

Though a few months younger than his companion Jack Sheppard, [Thames] was half a head taller, and much more robustly formed. The two friends contrasted strikingly with each other. In Darrell’s open features, frankness and honour were written in legible characters; while in Jack’s physiognomy, cunning and knavery were as strongly imprinted. In all other respects they differed as materially. Jack could hardly be accounted as good-looking: Thames, on the contrary, was one of the handsomest boys possible. (128).

Firstly, the passage stresses iconography in understanding differences between boyhood types. The benevolent and frank qualities of Thames’ face are “written in legible characters”; Jack’s

overall criminality is “strongly imprinted”. Understandings of differences in masculine characteristics operate on a basis on materiality—the differences signifying “materially” in their frames and heights, their facial features, and additionally on images of the tangible printed word and (for Jack) the painted figure. Systems of the iconographic, the aesthetic, and the printed word will come to further importance in understanding Jack’s destiny and how he arrives there; furthermore, in a long scene contrasting the boys’ preferred reading materials, Thames reads Protestant manuals and patriot “ditties” while Jack enjoys the flash songs and Newgate accounts typical to the Newgate novel protagonist (161). The main idea is that iconography and materiality, whether in the forms of the male body and face rendered meaningful/readable sign via physiognomy, criminal portraiture, or the printed word, confer differences between boyhood developmental identities and the promise of the eventual manhood(s). Furthermore, these are in addition to the nationalistic idea of the English apprentice and all the social meanings already implicit in the apprentice as political and social specificity.

Secondly, the narrator’s contention that Jack “could hardly be accounted as good-looking” will clash with, or at least complicate, the novel’s later insistence in describing Jack’s popularity with women. Descriptions of female spectatorship in the mob will occur surrounding Jack’s final escape into the countryside, in addition to the implicitly sexual attentions of both Bess and Maggot throughout the novel; Jack’s criminal attractiveness, despite an apparent lack of conformity to more easily understandable masculine attractiveness in the mode of Thames, precedes the bestial/criminal masculinity of Hugh in *Barnaby Rudge*, who is figured as perfect picturesque subject in complicated intersections of beauty and the brute. For now, the narrator is content with separating kinds of male appearance and corporeality into a pair. The long expository passages surrounding the boys’ differences in shape, handsomeness and personality

emerges as a thread common to the Newgate novel: Falkland and Tyrell's (*Caleb Williams*) competitive masculine binary sets the stage for their feud and the novel's action, including Falkland's invasive supervision of Caleb's life; *Paul Clifford*'s Paul, Augustus and Long Ned all differ corporeally, and the differences resonate with their individual personality types and "kinds" of criminal roguery; *Eugene Aram*'s Eugene and Walter are different as night and day, the one an alienated representation of non-productive, arcane, cloistered masculinity, the other a hale son uncovering the secrets of the father and the sins of the criminal masculine other; *Oliver Twist*'s Oliver is set in contrast with the terrible and legendary "mealy-faced boys". For Mr. Wood, the benevolent surrogate father figure of the novel, Thames' configuration of personality, physiognomy and body promises an idealised manhood: "'You're a noble-hearted little fellow, Thames,' rejoined Wood, casting a look of pride and affection on his adopted son, whose head he gently patted; 'and give promise of a glorious manhood'" (128). So much for Jack, whose physiognomy condemns him to pictorial knavery by rote, and lack of (Thamesian) handsomeness means Winifred, the ultimate symbol of the heteronormative conjugal reward at narrative's end, favours Thames over him. The novel engages in a constant debate of criminal determination: is Jack's general insouciance at this point in the novel a result of predetermined physiognomy, the prognostications of the sins of the father, the pictorial indexes of criminality that naturally determine him, or is Jack's criminal petulance his own fault, a result of his own poor personal choices and a refusal to flower under the benevolence of the professional surrogate father? The novel does not enter into Godwinian discourses of law and its formation of the criminal, at least not in any Bulwerian or Dickensian capacity, but the sense of Jack's predestination for criminality versus a cheeky eye for the enjoyment of crime are always palpable.

To further complicate this divide in criminal destiny versus voluntary participation in crime, the novel sets up types of masculinity—the industrious apprentice versus the idle—then refuses to make them binary or competitive, despite the boys’ feud over Winifred, a feud soon forgotten later in the novel. As Winifred remarks: “‘It’s strange you should like Jack so much dear Thames. He doesn’t resemble you at all’” (134), as if to say the default mode of differences in boyhood types is a natural, unquestionable current towards hatred and distinctions of volatile otherness. Strangely enough, Winifred’s sentiment echoes the models of competitive masculinities demonstrated by the Newgate novels preceding *Jack Sheppard*. Thames explains that Jack’s differences from himself are “‘The very reason why I like him, Winny. If he *did* resemble me, I shouldn’t care about him. And, whatever you may think, I assure you Jack’s a downright good-natured fellow’” (134).

Jack and Thames refuse to compete, instead opting to become complimentary surrogate-brother figures (and in actuality, cousins) whose cooperation with each other is key to baffling the progress of the destructive Wild and the meddling uncle Rowland who both seek to usurp the boys’ rightful fortunes. This cooperative relationship diverges from a typical pattern of competitive male identities and understandings of gendered types, proffering instead the idea of congenial brotherhood no matter the real familial relation or bodily differences with the masculine other. When the young men realise later in the novel just how much of a threat Wild poses to their survival, the survival of the masculine gendered other relies on the cunning of each side of the masculine pair set up by the text, rather than their competition and destruction.

Brooke Fortune performs an in-depth reading of Jack and Thames’ modes of masculinity, arguing that the two are completely in contrast, and represent two different historical literary representations of masculinity: namely, Thames represents mid-century Muscular Christianity as

derived from Charles Kingsley's movement and Thomas Hughes' 1857 text *Tom Brown's School Days* (2), while Jack represents the idea of imperial/"eternal boy" (27). Fortune invokes Bradley Deane's idea of the imperial boy, which in turn has to do with what Deane calls "play-ethic", a set of ideals that "prized the ostensibly natural impulses of boys and sought to preserve them rather than force them to submit to the external order of moral maturity" (Deane 692). The imperial boy "does not so much grow into manhood as strive constantly for a better manhood than one's rivals" (700). Deane and Fortune note how this masculine-gendered system appears in late nineteenth-century narratives such as *Treasure Island* and *Peter Pan*; both pirates and boys raised in an intensely imperial society are subject to the same rules governing behaviour in which competition is key to success, not the moral maturity and conduct of the mid-century Muscular Christian boy: "this mode of masculinity significantly contrasts with the [Muscular Christian] masculine narrative of the mid-century, which stressed a journey to maturation and subsequent goodness, a goal to which a boy could aspire, whereas in many boyhood narratives of the late century...boyhood is itself the goal" (11).

Fortune reads Jack as a prototype of this alternative view of boyhood development in the imperial setting, and Thames as representative of ideas of Muscular Christianity, even though *Jack Sheppard* "was published about a decade before Kingsley's ideas were solidified" (19). Though her readings call for a more relaxed view of specific timeline developments and texts codifying boyhood and masculine-gendered representations, her ideas light on important differences between the two apprentices: it is plain to see that Thames relies on a moralistic, actually corporeal idea of growing into a "promise" of glorious manhood, while Jack's masculinity diverges from his: a small-framed, not very attractive, not very obedient but very acrobatic, very excarceral, and very irreverent boyhood that does not promise masculine glory

(Mr. Wood implies as much) and moralistic endeavour. Thus does Fortune read Jack as the “eternal boy”: Jack does not subscribe to an onus of moralistic behaviour to grow into manhood; rather, his natural abilities of escape mean he is able to succeed in the crime-ridden metropolis of his imperial context. In other words, his boyish attributes and skilled disobedience are useful and important in the historical moment, and will inform his manhood with a mode of stasis rather than behavioural and muscular growth. Fortune reads Thames’ as a failed manhood in the lens of the novel, since he arguably encounters much more trouble, both bodily and mental, throughout the criminal narrative than Jack does, and is often utterly useless in unravelling the identity-mystery of the plot: “Despite Thames’s presumed physical prowess and moral uprightness, he is completely incapable of navigating the treacherous goings-on of London’s underworld, an environment divorced from moral regulation and governed by competition” (19). Jack is cast as the hero, and “the eternal boy triumphs, not in spite of, but because of his boyish attributes” (27).

Jack’s death at the end of the narrative can in fact be a triumph for the eternal boy, since the after-narrative of Jack’s legacy as real and fictional criminal type forever inscribe remembrance of his boyish abilities at incarceration. Death itself may be the final incarceration, informing forever a narrative of the criminal events that preceded it. I believe that this idea of the criminal narrative often being contingent on the legendary end of the criminal life, the rendering of the death drive or Thanatic force necessary to ensure the after-life of the described/lived criminal events (Erotic, that is, lived experience, the desire to keep escaping), is inherent in most Newgate narratives. These are narratives driven by an end-point of the protagonist’s death at the gibbet, which in turn inform the narrative interest, the legend, of their existence. Jack will, in this way, forever remain the skinny twenty-two year old, the eternal figure of excarceral ability and joy.

On the other hand, Jack's abilities and masculinity in the text, I believe it is important to realise in spite of some of Fortune's argument, do not necessarily override or negate Thames'. Ainsworth may necessarily be paying lip service to a mid-century Victorian zeitgeist of the industrious, Muscular Christian man being victorious in the realm of the heteronormative and the socioeconomic when Thames enjoys the boys' inheritance and Winifred's hand in marriage—two things Jack wanted. But there is no sense in the novel that Thames personally enjoys or desires Jack's death, or that Jack ever sees Thames as repugnant or other, and the novel stresses the boys' cooperation in the long period of Jack unravelling his identity-mystery alongside Thames, who also has moments of being instrumental in that unravelling. Jack can call out "in the voice of Thames Darrell" (311) to fool his uncle; part of the instrumentality of dismantling Rowland's plot has to do with the identities of the young men being, in some small part, fluid and exchangeable despite ideas of their heterogeneity explored by the text. Thames is first apprehended for Jack's crime of stealing his father's portrait, a plot device common to *Paul Clifford* and *Oliver Twist* that symbolically implies the sharing of criminal guilt between boys/young men. Even the antagonistic plot threads of the novel, namely Wild's obsession with seeing Jack dead, and Rowland's obsession with seeing Thames dead, parallel each other: "Jack Sheppard is to me what Thames Darrell is to you—an object of hatred" (235), says Wild. Of course, the young men's genetic history is more intimately wrapped up and mutual than even they realise until later in the novel. Ainsworth demonstrates that characteristic differences between masculine styles are not necessarily significant; set against facts of genetic history and the discovery of true parentage, they can share only similar truths and meanings. Masculine identities and modes of attaining manhoods are not competitive or monopolising, either, but rather rely on using the individual skills and attributes of each to the mutual benefit of a

brotherhood of masculinities and successes against the gothic manipulation of the paternal secret. *Jack Sheppard's* conceptualisations of masculinities are not free of problematised elements, though. Stressing the importance of masculine adolescents banding together in symbiosis for survival also necessitates and delineates the evils of such peculiar and villainised adulthoods as the uncanny Wild's and the fortune-hunting uncle Rowland's. As mentioned previously, the text also places a regular emphasis on the tension of destiny versus free will and election, particularly, if not exclusively, when it comes to Jack.

Jack represents a microcosmic discussion of what it means to be born a son under a criminal father, and Ainsworth often explores the concept under the term "destiny". The first articulation of the text's concern with destiny is, not surprisingly, imagerial, genetic and physiognomic in nature. Mr. Wood, on seeing Jack as a baby, shouts, "Lord help him! he's the very image of his father" (54). Mrs. Sheppard's answering speech hits on many paternal and filial themes common to Newgate novels:

"That likeness is the chief cause of my misery," replied the widow, shuddering. "Were it not for that, he would indeed be a blessing and comfort to me....when I look upon that innocent face, and see how like he is to his father,—when I think of that father's shameful ending, and recollect how free from guilt *he* once was,—at such times, Mr. Wood, despair will come over me; and, dear as this babe is to me, far dearer than my own wretched life, which I would lay down for him any minute, I have prayed to Heaven to remove him, rather than he should grow up to be a man, and be exposed to his father's temptations." (54)

Jack's status as *image* rather than child is common to his status as *index* or *representational aesthetic* in the text, a theme the text constantly rehearses in its many descriptions of signs, scrawlings, and paintings, in addition to, as Buckley explores, the text's Cruikshank illustration.

Particular to this moment in the narrative, Jack emerges as paternal index: “the very image of his father”. Because the babe visually indexes the father—a father who met a criminal end, despite the vagaries of his actual guilt (“recollect how free from guilt *he* once was”)—the child shares the gothicness of criminal termination and, by extension, mortality and concepts of destiny itself, a concretisation that nullifies agency and election of alternative personality or individual destination other than capital punishment. This boils down to Jack’s *face*; because his physiognomy signifies the father, Mrs. Sheppard can read no meaning into Jack’s existence and pending adulthood other than criminality. Mrs. Sheppard also posits that the masculine coming-of-age is an automatic temptation, for the son, towards the sins of the father. For the son born under *in absentia* criminal fatherhood, marked by the important and qualifying visual signification of physiognomic resemblance, there is no free will or election of personality or individual action in this moment of the text; it would be better, indeed, for Jack to simply be “remove[d]” than to bear the masculine fruit of rote criminality. Mr. Wood tenders the bizarre reply: “Marriage and hanging go by destiny” (54).

As if his mother and Mr. Wood being in horror at his certain criminal termination were not enough, poor Jack has further condemning evidence written upon his body in the form of “a black mole under the child’s right ear, shaped like a coffin, which is a bad sign; and a deep line just above the middle of the left thumb, meeting round about in the form of a noose, which is a worse” (55). In addition to the semblance they share with the gothic trope, these marks prefigure Barnaby Rudge’s apparently blood-stained birthmark and inform a certain commonality of the guilt of the father writing itself upon the body of the son: criminal narratives of this period emphasise the transfer of crime and guilt not only between same-gendered young men of criminal bands/bonds, but also the father and the son. Jack and Barnaby are likely to choose

criminality because of their genetic history and the inescapable “destiny” of the physiognomic criminal infancy.

To multiply the layers of convoluted destiny surrounding Jack, Ainsworth adds an element of the arcane and the superstitious when Mrs. Sheppard tells of the (probably fictional, Jacobs and Mourão maintain) Dutch conjuror who foretold Tom Sheppard’s capital punishment:

“Van Galgebok...He’s the famous Dutch conjuror who foretold King William’s accident and death, last February but one, a month before either event happened, and gave out that another prince over the water would soon enjoy his own again; for which he was committed to Newgate, and whipped at the cart’s tail. He went by another name then,—Rykhart Scherprechter I think he called himself. His fellow-prisoners nickname him the gallows-provider, from a habit he had of picking out all those who were destined to the gibbet. He was never known to err, and was as much dreaded as the gaol-fever in consequence. He singled out my poor husband from a crowd of other felons; and you know how right he was in that case, sir.” (55)

Readers, given the verisimilitude of Jack’s physiognomy and real criminal fate, may accept this story of criminal prognostication as narrative fact; there is little probable doubt in the realm of the text so far if Jack’s coffin-shaped mole and noose-shaped thumb loop can become real bodily and visual signifiers of criminal fate and destination. If this is so, the fate of the son, or the male child here, is determinable by visual indices *and* by prognostication. Barnaby is sure to participate in the criminal chaos exhibited by his father and Thames is sure to live up to his masculine “promise” of glory, and thus are sons readable and prognosable. This includes everything from the simplest processes of physiognomy (reading the family face) to the most gothic and astral predictions of conjurers. Sons, especially criminal infants, are texts in and of

themselves; when Mrs. Sheppard and Mr. Wood read the “bad signs” written all over Jack they gothicise and problematise that reading with the additional elements of the arcane and the superstitious, loading masculine predetermination with stains of the unnatural and the other, elements heaped on top of an already heady death drive (it would be better for the criminal infant to die than to achieve the destiny of manhood). Both the family face and conjuration are reliable and probable metrics of understanding boyhood predestinations; the systems and imageries that govern masculine futures, then, are at home in the realm of “destiny”.

Jack in particular inhabits a readerly double-bind apart from the fictional Barnaby: the reader already knows Jack (historically) has and (fictionally) will fulfill his destiny, barring unlikely and wanton authorial deviation from the facts of the titular hero’s end of finding the noose of his father’s legacy; the destiny inscribed on Jack’s body is, hermeneutically, properly signifying and valid in historical past and narrative future. Yet, the text will still insist on dramatising Jack’s many excarceral flights, the extenuating circumstances surrounding his criminality in the evil machinations of Wild and Rowland, the poor socioeconomic circumstances and mental health of his mother, and Winifred’s prioritising of Thames’ more acceptably industrious and handsome mode of masculinity. In these regards the text makes an argument for the *life* of the historically and the fictionally guilty, it constantly extends the middling feeling of possibility of flight from predestination for the criminal protagonist, and it enjoys something of a pure kernel of the excarceral or *jouissance*. There are many extenuating circumstances and explanations surrounding Jack that cast him in a sympathetic light, though these are not as extreme as the political messages conveyed by Godwinian, Bulwerian or Dickensian fictional example. Ainsworth’s sympathy for the criminal protagonist extends itself

in the exarceral gifts of life extension, and also into areas far more aesthetic, semiotic, and representational.

To best examine how and what these representational areas are, and how they operate and to what ends, one should first unpack Ainsworth's construction of Jonathan Wild. This construction falls into fascinatingly theatrical and complex representations of semiosis, the uncanny, and the curation of the criminal artifact. Like Jack, Wild's criminality is first inscribed on his body; unlike Jack, these inscriptions are the marks of his dubious dealings in thief-taking rather than a prognosticated criminal future (because Wild has already achieved manhood, after all). As Wild says to Rowland,

"I have had a good many desperate engagements in my time, and have generally come off victorious. I bear the marks of some of them about me still," he continued, taking off his wig, and laying bare a bald skull, covered with cicatrices and plates of silver. "This gash," he added, pointing to one of the larger scars, "was a wipe from the hanger of Tom Thurland, whom I apprehended for the murder of Mrs. Knap. This wedge of silver," pointing to another, "which would mend a coffee-pot, serves to stop up a breach made by Will Cothurst, who robbed Mr. Hearl on Hounslow-Heath. I secured the dog after he had wounded me. This fracture was the handiwork of Jack Parrot (otherwise called Jack the Grinder), who broke into the palace of the Bishop of Norwich....Not a scar but has its history." (179-80)

Wild explains his physical scars as aftermarks of victory in thief-taking; those scars index criminals Wild has fought with, speaking to particular instances of success in his career and the incarceration of the criminals that dealt the wounds in the first place. Wild views these injuries as indicators of particular criminals and as being sites of historicity and a certain professional vainglory: "Thus, you see, I've never hesitated, and never *shall* hesitate to expose my life where

anything is to be gained. My profession has hardened me” (180). Wild’s profession has in a sense *become* his body: his corporeal scarring renders him a walking, living collection of his career and criminal carcerality. Wild explains these professional victories to Rowland not in terms of mental memory but physical trauma—wounds that speak and signify, specifically in terms of historical, and thus temporal, indexing. The names that pour forth from Wild’s exploration of his scars work as a criminal register that mimics the formative importance of such actual criminal calendars to the genre of the Newgate novel, and Wild’s status as walking index of carceral narrative bestows on him a remarkable potency as antagonist and persuasive, uncanny force in *Jack Sheppard*.

The image of the wedge of silver set in Wild’s head, which “would mend a coffee-pot”, concretely and pseudo-absurdly links Wild to the material; that the silver “serves to stop up a breach” registers a theme of liminal trauma and the idea that the criminal (Will Cothurst in this particular example) may access a *something* inside Wild’s head, brains or otherwise, since the corporeal in *Jack Sheppard* is a proper vehicle for hermeneutics of criminality and carcerality. Wild represents, specifically, the artifact: that instance of the material having historical meaning, the layer between signifier and signified, the sign itself.

Ainsworth’s illustration of Wild’s office, which Jacobs and Mourão note is probably close to his historical office and warehouse in Old Bailey, further compounds Wild’s links to the criminal archive and the curation of carceral artifact. The novel reinstates its interest in the sign when the inscription of Wild’s name in brass precedes the archive proper: “the formidable name—inscribed in large letters on its bright brass-plate—of JONATHAN WILD” (238). This sign introduces readers to the villain’s office before following through with the cataloguing of its archived content. Wild stakes ownership and personal identification with the criminal archive—

in big bold letters at that; his name exists as both personal connection to the criminal archive *and* as sign itself, the idea of a name made physical index, the plate that precedes, introduces, and points towards the archive. As Rowland enters the office, he

imagined he must have stumbled upon a museum of rarities, there were so many glass cases, so many open cabinets, ranged against the walls...a closer inspection made him recoil from them in disgust. In the one he approached was gathered together a vast assortment of weapons, each of which, as appeared from the ticket attached to it, had been used as an instrument of destruction. On this side was a razor with which a son had murdered his father....Every gibbet at Tyburn and Hounslow appeared to have been plundered of its charnel spoil to enrich the adjoining cabinet, so well was it stored with skulls and bones, all purporting to be the relics of highwaymen famous in their day....All of these interesting objects were carefully arranged, classed, and, as we have said, labeled by the thieftaker. (239)

Wild collects and taxonomises carceral artifacts, positioning his career in thieftaking in both historical moments and physical products collectible and displayable for the present and for archival posterity. Rowland focalises this particular scene, and his disgust at the collection marks this process of criminal archiving as object, inherently unnatural or gothic. This occurs because Rowland reads the human meaning into the objects gathered (the “tickets” that relate the criminal artifacts to personal specificity). Wild has “plundered” the “charnel spoil” of what appears to be “Every gibbet at Tyburn and Hounslow”, and in so doing has materialised (made material) the real viscera of “highwaymen famous in their day”: the skeletons of the criminals he has taken here straddle the boundary of Wild rendering them “relics” and Rowland’s disgust at their corporeal historicity as body parts and human signification, putting Wild’s office archive into a liminal realm of temporality and bodily versus reliquary meaning. And because Wild has

registered ownership to all that has followed in this scene, he exists in connection to the ability to collect, process and display, and to render the criminal material. As a matter of fact, Wild's very real, very historical plunderings of the Newgate sites so pivotal to the Newgate novel and its narratives makes him criminal archaeologist both real and figurative, yet another liminal intersection inhabited by the (real/historical) man.

We can say that Wild has the *mal d'archive*: as a character he displays and embodies a repetitive function towards the archivization (Derrida 91) of the criminal and the liminalities and intersectionalities of body, history, humanity and legality. To extend a Freudian and Derridean reading of the death drive into what Wild represents offers some incongruities: as Derrida explains, it is the nature of the death drive to be anarchivic (10) and self-effacing despite its apparent promotion of the repetitive drives that inform the desire to archive. Archivism and archaeology are not to be confused, Derrida says, though such confusion is logical:

there is an incessant tension here between the archive and archaeology. They will always be close the one to the other, resembling each other, hardly discernible in their co-implication, and yet radically incompatible....The archaeologist has already succeeded in making the archive no longer serve in any function. It *comes to efface itself*, it becomes transparent or unessential so as to let the *origin* present itself in person. Live, without mediation and without delay. (92-3)

Wild is more archaeologist than archivist if this track of Derrida's thinking is closely followed. Rowland expresses such disgust—registers such an *impression* of an origin, and this is because the criminal artifacts stored in Wild's office speak of their intersectionalities so plainly as to be ticketed with their meanings by the thief-taker, loaded with easily referencing signs. The razor plainly speaks of patricide, important to the masculine-gender depictions of the Newgate novel,

because it is so tagged and indexed by Wild himself. The skulls of highwaymen “famous in their day”, icons of Newgate-literary masculinities, transparently reference historical moments of legality and personal action turned criminal legend or folktale at the same time their mere physicality, or fact of human biology, combined with a moment of violence, of thief-taking, indicate these intersections by being tagged and archived bones on display. Wild himself, that human combination of scar tissue and silver that would mend a coffee-pot, embodies these meanings that his collections express: the plain-speaking of criminal archaeology and its anthropological and legal confusions that are less confusing than one may think, but are certainly abject. And this abjection arises because Rowland, as viewer of the collection, has such easy access to these origins. Rowland and Wild—evil uncle and spurned lover of the protagonist’s mother—conspire in complications of these archival impulses that are part of the novel’s antagonistic machinery to the detriment of the criminal-hero figure of Jack and his adoptive brother Thames.

An emphasis on the catalogue’s relation to *destruction* nevertheless remains; the narrator gives us this much when describing the weapons in the collection. These items are inextricably tied to death, not to mention the criminal skeletons, once live men who met their deaths at the gallows, or by more direct means at Wild’s hand. An impression that Wild’s archivism—more specifically archaeology, since it is in alignment with Derrida’s distinctions about the subject—interacts with, or is spurred by a destruction and repetition in line with the death drive, remains, and this is to be expected as these drives are, as Derrida says, in a constant tension of resemblance and “co-implication” despite being ultimately incompatible. It should be said, then, that the impetus towards destruction embodied by Wild’s criminal archaeology is not towards self-effacement, the death drive or any sort of suicidal impulse but towards the destruction of the

masculine other so theatricalised by the Newgate novel. Returning to his discussion of Freud and archaeology, Derrida notes how the process of excavation “says something of a *jouissance*” (93). This idea, which applies so well to the figure of the *sinthomosexual*, applies additionally to Wild when we consider his particular archive fever on the archaeological side of things: it is not informed by a movement towards self-effacement or the mortality of the self, but rather his victory in placing criminal others in the archive, capturing and mastering, understanding the criminal other and displaying and “ticketing” their complete and identifiable intersectionalities of personhood, materiality, historicity, legality and corporeality. Wild is not partial to any one representation or modality of being, for he is pastiche manifest: man and material, historical person and literary character, thief-taker who uses crime to catch the criminal. He is an utter embracement of the intersectionalities that Newgate novels, or more generally speaking the historical novel, discuss.

Wild’s complex representational form is the most potent and threatening force the characters of *Jack Sheppard* face, and the novel posits that criminal archaeology—the combination of intersections of personhood, criminality, materiality et al—is inseparable from movements towards the destruction of the criminal, or, at its deepest level, the transfer of the criminal *person* into one of the other taxonomic categories of criminality represented in Wild and his office collections (history, narrative, object, skeleton). The literary exposition of Wild’s office serves to function as the threat of his potential power over the characters, namely Jack, Thames and Mrs. Sheppard: it would be a wise goal to avoid suffering the fate of being just another ticketed artefact in Wild’s grotesque museum, and although these three characters are not privy to the “museum” scene, the threat informs a certain dramatic irony in the narrative. Though Wild’s archaeological drives are absolutely inseparable from his efficacy as villain and literary

construction, and I see a great deal of the *sinthomosexual jouissance* and self-service in Wild, I would stress that Wild has motives in addition to that archaeological *jouissance* and its components; the later revelations of the novel that explain his unrequited love for Mrs. Sheppard, and his plan not only to get revenge on Jack's father through the destruction of the son but also to obtain the profits of stealing Jack and Thames' rightful inheritances from Rowland (whom he will murder) make up a multifaceted series of motivations that inform the man's extreme danger and potency. He is not entirely unmotivated, though he certainly enjoys the excavation involved in plunging the gallows under a repetitive and profiteering drive.

Namely, Wild is the holder of the *genetic secret*, or *genetic history* in the novel. Wild's uncanny conniving that certainly precedes the opening of the text's action places him in a privileged space of knowing the lives and histories of those around him and those he wishes to squash underfoot in his self-serving, ironic criminality and repetitions of the archaeological drive. Lauren Gillingham notes that "*Jack Sheppard* is characterized, first and foremost, by a persistent interest in the transmission and contingency of inheritances in all forms: genetic, financial, and cultural" (890). I believe Gillingham could not be more correct in positing that genetic, financial and cultural transmission of inheritances are indeed "first and foremost" in *Jack Sheppard's* themes. This is also the key to unlocking Wild's pure and uncanny *potency* as villain and character in the novel. Because this is a novel about the "contingency of inheritances in all forms", and because so much of the Newgate novel, and many eighteenth-century and Victorian "titular-character" novels (*Tom Jones*, *Paul Clifford*, *Oliver Twist*), depend upon the revelation of the hero's "true" parentage, it follows that the master villain is one who is privy to these secrets, he who holds genetic information and divulges it at his will, manipulating it

towards self-serving and pernicious goals. In *Jack Sheppard*, genetic history itself is used as a weapon.

Keys are used literally and symbolically to highlight a connection to the paternal secret. Natalie Schroeder reads the importance of keys in *Jack Sheppard*, bridging the gap between this novel and the soon-to-follow *Barnaby Rudge*:

Keys play a part in both [Jack Sheppard's and Simon Tappertit's] rebellions against their masters. In *Jack Sheppard* the thief-taker Jonathan Wild finds the key that Jack's father had stolen from Mr. Wood; and, years later, Wild, planning to seduce Jack to a life of crime, asks him to see if the key fits his master's lock. Dickens's foolish Simon Tappertit makes his own key so that he can freely leave Varden's home to attend nocturnal meetings. (28)

Wild's possession of Tom Sheppard's key concretises his relation to the unlocking of the genetic (particularly the paternal) secret, in the form of a material symbol. Wild holds a tangible object loaded with paternal identity-mystery for the protagonist and manipulates that symbol so that Jack may be pushed towards a life of crime. The device perfectly emblematises this common, foundational narrative thread of the Newgate novel: the criminal manipulation of the boy by the uncanny villain who relates or knows the secret of the father. Newgate novels often render these systems of the paternal-filial as archetypal or symbolic, informing a base-level script that speaks to the pure essence of the masculine plot to this particular branching of the historical novel.

Wild pushes Jack towards a life of crime not out of pure *jouissance*, though his criminal efficacy, or rather victory as a memorable literary construction, certainly can be seen to stem from that important aspect of his character. Readers and critics should be reminded that Wild feels as if he had a future wife stolen from him by Jack's father, furnishing much of his motivation as antagonist. Wild explains as much directly to Mrs. Sheppard late in the novel:

“I loved you...and struck by your appearance, which seemed above your station, inquired into your history, and found you had been stolen by a gipsy in Lancashire. I proceeded to Manchester, to investigate the matter further, and when there ascertained, beyond a doubt, that you were the eldest daughter of Sir Montacute Trenchard. This discovery made, I hastened back to London to offer you my hand, but found you had married in the mean time a smock-faced, smooth-tongued carpenter named Sheppard. The important secret remained locked in my breast, but I resolved to be avenged. I swore I would bring your husband to the gallows...and I also swore that if you had a son he should share the same fate as his father.”

(431)

Ainsworth invents this fiction of Wild’s character to serve the ends of melodrama and to provide a more tangible personal reason for Wild’s uncanny hostility towards Jack. Critics such as Worth choose to view Wild as completely “unmotivated” (98) and thus more incomprehensibly evil. These two ideas about Wild’s character (his romantic revenge and his seemingly incomprehensible evil) are not incompatible. Wild’s thief-taking, at least, is informed by a pure and effective closed circuit; the fabricated personal reasons for his stalking of Jack are informed by heteronormative competition and the Newgate novel’s typical interest in masculine-gendered combatants seeking the destruction or the obscuration of the younger masculinity (I would say *inchoate*, or *unformed*, but by this point in the novel Jack is certainly a self-defined excarcerated manhood) via submersion in criminality. But the very uncanny quality of Wild’s extreme potency—his preternatural access to the genetic secret, the grotesqueness of his archaeological impulses, his willing submersion into the very criminality he carcerates in its various modalities—relies on both this closed-circuit expertise of *jouissance*, the skill sets it seems to imply in *Jack Sheppard* and his access to the secrets of the father and the subsequent desire to

ruin the mother and destroy the son. Jonathan Wild is the ultimate scorned man: the heteronormative satisfaction that was denied to him is what ends up fuelling the impulse towards the genetic secret and his particular brand of *mal d'archive*. In *Jack Sheppard* the denial of past heteronormative desire necessitates the potencies of criminal archaeology; here they are not mutually-cancelling ideas but rather a pattern of growth in villainous typology. Wild's confession of sorts to Mrs. Sheppard explains this pattern quite plainly: Wild ascertained the "important secret" of Mrs. Sheppard's genetic history as a personal prerequisite to marriage, only to find himself beaten to Mrs. Sheppard's hand by another man. The heteronormative denial informs the drive towards destruction of the son, and this destruction will be facilitated by more manipulation of the genetic secret (Wild's particular skill). That Wild "locks" such secrets in his breast stresses the man's functionality as repository entity, and Wild goes on to become the criminal-archaeologist described by the earlier novel.

Thus is *Jack Sheppard* obscurely and gothically informed by patterns of the heteronormative, the paternal secret as malleable and bargainable information, and the revenge-desire towards destruction of the young male other, who in this particular instance represents the corporeal and genetic repetition of the masculine competitor. The destruction of the masculine competitor—echoed only in Jack Sheppard, for Wild has successfully seen Jack's father hanged before the opening of the novel—necessitates Wild's skill in the potency of the archaeological impulse and the *jouissance* so indistinguishable from destruction, those skill sets that enable and encourage Wild's access to genetic information and the actual skills of thief-taking.

Readers, again, must not forget that a bulk of Wild's threat to Jack comes in the form of his plan to kidnap, or in Wild's mind, reclaim Mrs. Sheppard. In this way, the text enacts not only the gothic operation of the manipulatable paternal secret, but also a surprisingly visible

Freudian drama of desiring for the mother—not a desiring held in competition with the father, in this case, but in competition with the uncanny holder of the paternal secret, he who is privy to all the information of the genetic history of the son and he who *killed* the father.

Mrs. Sheppard is one of the novel's major characters, although she is sometimes easily forgotten in the sweeping exarcerceral gymnastics of the novel's plot and protagonist. She feels particular horror at Jack's initiation into Kettleby's criminal underworld, and believes she can actively put an end to its process at a few points in the novel's drama. This is important, as Jack's shift into criminality is also configured in the terms of certain rites of passage into adulthood. When Mrs. Sheppard bursts into Kettleby's hideout to single-handedly extricate Jack from Wild's plans, she finds him in the following besotted state:

There sat Jack, evidently in the last stage of intoxication, with his collar opened, his dress disarranged, a pipe in his mouth, a bowl of punch and a half-emptied rummer before him,—there he sat, receiving and returning, or rather attempting to return,—for he was almost past consciousness,—the blandishments of a couple of females, one of whom had passed her arm round his neck. (227)

The “couple of females”, Edgeworth Bess and Poll Maggot, seem instantaneously interested in the teenaged Jack, and this is the first of many instances in which the narrator presses Jack's sexual desirability in the eyes of women. Blueskin stands by, “plying” Jack with further libations and encouraging the women's attentions towards the young man (228); nor is “Jack by any means the only stripling in the room. Not far from him was a knot of lads drinking, swearing, and playing at dice as eagerly and as skillfully as any of the older hands” (228). What Dickens would blush at in describing boys' and young men's inception into immoral criminal behaviour Ainsworth unfolds in the matter of a couple of pages; Jack's inception into a certain criminal

realm is already in progress by the time readers witness the scene focalised by a horrified Mrs. Sheppard watching her son. As if providing a visual register for the adolescence of those gambling boys, the narrator follows with a small criminal catalogue: “Next to the receiver was a gang of housebreakers, laughing over their exploits, and planning fresh depredations; and next to the housebreakers came two gallant-looking gentlemen in long periwigs and riding-dresses, and equipped in all other respects for the road, with a roast fowl and a bottle of wine before them” (228). Mrs. Sheppard’s spectatorship of the criminal panorama becomes a microcosmic enacting of male adolescence in the Newgate novel. She watches in distress at her son’s criminal inception, which here involves intoxication, the sexual attentions of the opposite sex, gambling and fraternising with “professional” superiors. In order to produce the finished, gallant highwayman type so beloved in criminal literature, one begins by getting the boy drunk, introduced to the sexual fame that apparently accompanies criminality, involved in gambling, and set in an institution that oversees these processes amongst other “striplings”. The stripling becomes the receiver, who becomes the housebreaker, who becomes the accomplished highwayman in his long periwig and riding-dress. The scene operates as Newgate narrative visual key, unfolding the evolution of the stripling turned to criminality.

Set apart, momentarily, from the obvious criminal intentions staged by Wild here and the criminal panorama of the striplings and the highwaymen, what Mrs. Sheppard witnesses is not only the typical criminal enculturative process for young men so often dramatised by Newgate literature, but also the young man’s inception into generically adult activities. Drinking, sex and gambling are activities reasonably and legally enjoyed by men entering adulthood (albeit perhaps not as early as the transgressive criminal gang encourages), and part of the shock registered by Mrs. Sheppard is the shock of the mother seeing a son enter *general* adult rites of passage. Jack’s

enculturation into criminality, staged by the maniacal Wild, is also the enculturation of the boy into manhood. Thus is the shock double for the figure of the mother as embodied by Mrs. Sheppard. The novel begins to entangle masculine and criminal rites of passage and maturation with Freudian narratives of transgressing against or wronging the mother, to whom the son, the narrative will ultimately claim, should return. Jack develops a particular preoccupation with his mother, especially during the prison escapes of the late novel; as Jack says, making an escape, ““Every brick I take out...brings me nearer my mother”” (414). The literal dismantling of the physical, carceral holdings affected by Jack’s carcerality become the figural return to proximity with the mother, the end goal of incarceration. His mother once again supplies a reason to continue with his harrowing escape from Newgate, as Jack experiences aural hallucinations in the Newgate Chapel: “So perfect was the illusion, that he could almost fancy he heard the solemn voice of the ordinary warning him that his race was nearly run, and imploring him to prepare for eternity. From this perturbed state he was roused by thoughts of his mother, and fancying he heard her gentle voice urging him on to fresh exertion, he started up” (417). Jack’s insecurity at his ability to continue his harrowing carceral flights, again and again, and the intimation that his gaolers will one day soon successfully affect his preparation “for eternity”—i.e. Jack’s presentiments of criminal mortality and termination of the male criminal narrative at the noose—are put to rest via hallucinations of the mother. Thus does the figure of the mother supply the criminal with the opposite of the death drive, a reminder of the importance of survival and a revitalisation of the energies. Mrs. Sheppard’s anguished attempts at removing Jack from his original inception into criminal occupation are thus also attempts at removing the son from natural movements towards maturity itself, processes, criminal or otherwise, mired in a sense of mortality and the dangers of the revelation of the paternal secret. The growth of the son is the

experience and exhaustion of living in repetitions of incarceration and excarceration put in motion by the impulses of the uncanny masculine other, but also a sort of typical state for the adolescence of the male subject, the submersion into areas considered abhorrent and dangerous by the mother. In *Jack Sheppard* in particular, to desire escape from criminality is to intimate a return to the mother. This explains why Jack feels increasingly guilty for his mother's insanity in the second half of the novel, and why the novel dramatises Wild's final capture of Jack at Mrs. Sheppard's funeral. Mrs. Sheppard's death is the final nail in the coffin for Jack: there is no longer a maternal eros keeping the man alive; her death is the ultimate fulfillment of Wild's paternally informed, carceral motivations. The text's Freudian narrative threads link motherhood with erotic, generative reasons for survival, while the paternal is gothicised, archival, pernicious and destructive, a movement towards the noose. Mrs. Sheppard's mortal absence immediately places Jack in the role of "prisoner" for a final time; no more escapes can be made.

Though the text, like its contemporary *Oliver Twist*, reveals discourses and representations of the father and the son to be fraught with the death drive, criminality and transgression, these discourses do not manage to obviate or erase the text's long celebration of the excarceral identity Jack masters. If the text's configuration of the paternal secret, the obsessional criminal archive and the predestined mortality of the son are all impressions of death at the noose—or, perhaps *in spite* of these configurations—then the text's emphasis on the excarceral body and the acrobatic/contortionist escape are the saving grace of the young masculine gendered subject, a grace celebrated not against movements towards death but additionally, as component in counterpoint with notes of Newgate fatalism.

This is apparent in two different ways. Jack is simply a wonderful and capable escape artist, the ultimate folk legend representative, as both Linebaugh and Hansen discuss, of

excarceration (as Jack says, “‘It’s almost worth while being sent to prison to have the pleasure of escaping’” [284]). Jack’s particular skills in excarceration make him a unique masculine subject for the Newgate novel, beginning on a basic corporeal level, for his general *smallness* of size is what is celebrated as effectively excarceral and ideal for the aestheticised criminal subject in Ainsworth’s novel. Of course, Jack is set in contrast with fellow apprentice, surrogate brother and real cousin Thames (as if these connections alone are not enough to emphasise the complications of male relationships in *Jack Sheppard*), who represents modes of “muscular” masculinity subordinated rather than prioritised by the text’s depiction of alternative masculinities for the young apprentice/male subject. Additionally, the text’s repetitive impulse to show again and again the criminal’s escape from carceral bondage lays bare an emphasis on the escape rather than the condemnation of the masculine subject its early discussions of prognosticated filial death imply; excarcerality is the crowd pleaser when it comes to narrative entertainment, and speaks to the endurance of Jack Sheppard as literary type.

The text offers a figurative escape from the apparent fatalism of masculinity and the perniciousness of the paternal secret by placing an emphasis on the durability, primacy and afterlife of acts of inscription and the sign. The text’s insistence on pictorial representation, not merely in the published illustrations, but also in literary scenes of inscription, scrawlings, drawings, carvings and painting, reinforces visual indices and representational forms as a major theme and afterlife for the dead criminal and folk here.

One of the novel’s earliest scenes introduces the primacy of visual forms of signification; the walls of Mrs. Sheppard’s Old Mint abode are “scored all over with grotesque designs, the chief of which represented the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar. The rest were hieroglyphic

characters, executed in red chalk and charcoal” (52). Nebuchadnezzar is not the only resident of the ramshackle pictorial catalogues of the Old Mint dwelling, for

Over the chimney-piece was pasted a handbill, purporting to be ‘*The last Dying Speech and Confession of TOM SHEPPARD, the Notorious Housebreaker, who suffered at Tyburn on the 25th of February, 1703.*’ This placard was adorned with a rude wood-cut, representing the unhappy malefactor at the place of execution. (53)

The handbill and wood-cut serve as narrative exposition, proffering a crime and a temporally-specific death for Jack’s father and Mrs. Sheppard’s late husband, characters who are, of course, yet being introduced and fleshed out. These quick little indices also encapsulate the aesthetic functioning of criminal biography with which the text will ultimately finish: Jack’s father exists in the narrative primarily as a complete reduction to handbill, a “rude wood-cut” that depicts the execution itself, and the particular historicity of time and place. This is to say that the process of “biographising” a criminal relies on narrativisation only secondarily, while the sign—the physical artifact, that which can be catalogue or archived—is the thing given primacy, the most important element of the criminal life, and the thing into which the criminal is ultimately transformed. The “rudeness” of the wood-cut emphasises that this is not always a pristine or artistic process; it is a fact, a stark transformation, the plain-speaking of the representational.

And these representations become increasingly bizarre:

Beneath these prints, a cluster of hobnails, driven into the wall, formed certain letters, which, if properly deciphered, produced the words, ‘*Paul Groves, cobbler,*’ and under the name, traced in charcoal, appeared the following record of the poor fellow’s fate, ‘*Hung himsel in this rum for luv off licker,*’ accompanied by a graphic sketch of the unhappy suicide dangling from a beam. (53)

The Old Mint abode in which Mrs. Sheppard seeks asylum is now decidedly gothic: it is imbued with legacies of crime and death that haunt the atmosphere, not in tone or in spirit but in pictorial modalities that call to be “properly deciphered” and are “rude” in their obviousness, their undeniable existence as persistent texts. The novel’s major themes and intersections of historicity, the archive, paternity, fatalism and the death drive are all represented in this initial scene where their primary mode of communication is the graphic before these themes are dealt with in longer individual explorations. We should also remember how the very first scene of adolescent Jack in the novel sees the young man irreverently carving his initials into the beams of Mr. Wood’s workshop (123); the more active, more fully formed, more focalised Jack introduces himself in the novel through the graphic inscription of his name on the walls. Meanwhile, Thames has plastered hale and hearty Protestant anthems on his half of the boys’ shared bedroom’s walls, enforcing his depiction of a certain young Muscular Christian masculinity, while Jack has posted, predictably to readers familiar with Newgate heroes, all manner of flash songs and accounts of hangings (161). These forms of communication choose to signify so much of the ideas essential to the text’s configurations and explorations of masculinities, and their proliferation here begs an explicit connection to those graphic and visual modalities as the primary and most important methods of their signification.

Fast-forwarding to the late novel, which returns to this graphic modality of the criminal and the masculine as aesthetic, we find a particularly extravagant moment of intertextuality, historicity and fictional biography when it introduces Thornhill, Gay, Hogarth and Figg as characters. Sir James Thornhill visits, ““By desire of his Majesty”” (402) says Jack’s gaoler, to sketch Jack in the carceral climate; Gay, Hogarth and Mr. Figg (a famed “prize-fighter”) join the visit. Jacobs and Mourão agree that in reality only Thornhill and Mr. Figg visited Jack, while

Hogarth and Gay were whims of Ainsworth's Newgate imagination, instated to reinforce a generic link between both the text's earlier Hogarthian *Industry and Idleness* connection and that foundational work of criminal literature (Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*), which Ainsworth here, perhaps with tongue in cheek, posits was written after Gay's first-hand encounter with "Jack's narrative" (408).

The significance of these figures visiting Jack features yet another proliferation of interpretative and creative modes that stem from the inspiration provided by the infamous criminal folk hero and the aesthetic forms into which he is compelled and transformed. When he first hears the men coming in, Jack rails at his own transformation into the pictorial: "to be taken thus, in these disgraceful bonds...to be held up as a sight for ever!" (402). Jack is aware that the men aim to take his picture, and thus "[hold him] up as a sight" for a potentially royal audience; Jack's own notoriety at this point in time warrants aesthetic remembrance, and the idea is uncomfortable under the terms of Jack's current carceral ignominy. However, the warm and lively conversation the four men entertain, and what they end up discussing, seem to ease Jack's opinion as the scene unfolds.

Additionally, the four men represent not only differing modes of aesthetic signification and posterity; their appearance and discussion also remark upon modalities of masculinity, especially in consideration of the renowned Mr. Figg:

The rear of the party was brought up by a large, powerfully-built man, with a bluff, honest, but rugged countenance, slashed with many a cut and scar, and stamped with that surly, sturdy, bull-dog-like look, which an Englishman always delights to contemplate, because he conceived it to be characteristic of his countrymen. This formidable person, who was no other than the renowned Figg, the 'Atlas of the sword,' as he is termed by Captain Godfrey, had

removed his hat and ‘skull covering,’ and was wiping the heat from his bepatched and close-shaven pate. His shirt also was unbuttoned, and disclosed a neck like that of an ox, and a chest which might have served as a model for a Hercules. (403-4)

Readers of Godwin’s *Caleb Williams* may recognise an echo of Tyrell in the way Mr. Figg is described, “as a model for a Hercules”; the scene’s equivocation of masculinity with a bestial form of national typology will also oddly resonate with narratorial description of Hugh in the upcoming *Barnaby Rudge*. The mode of masculinity here is muscular—not in a specific Christian, Thames-like way, but corporeally, bestially muscular, with a certain note of ignorance to observation, as the man merely takes off his hat and wipes sweat off his pate. The particular tone of the description, as noted above, is bestial but nationalistic in representation—both ox- and “bull-dog-like”, Mr. Figg represents a nationally acceptable and comfortable masculinity, one no doubt valuable due to these qualities, if not, as the narrator’s note of sarcasm sounds, a little simpleminded. These indications of animality in *Jack Sheppard* do not work against Figg’s favour or equate the masculine with the bestial under pejorative terms; Figg speaks charmingly and politely, as it will turn out, and, as the narrator will note during Jack’s execution, the “stout prize-fighter” will end up weeping the most out of any of Jack’s spectators (477). Figg, as momentary as his appearance in the text is, flags a need for thinking about representations of masculinity in the text; in this scene in which Jack is about to be turned into permanent pictorial representation, Figg’s entrance forges a bond between ideas of aesthetic representations and masculine-gendered representations, for the prize-fighter himself is aestheticised by the description, and made *a model* for a Hercules, an “Atlas of the sword”, a subject countrymen love to contemplate as acceptable embodiment of masculine representation.

The particular function Figg serves as signifier of aesthetics and its junction with gender is one of contrast with Jack. Gay's surprise at seeing Jack in the flesh—or rather, Jack's flesh—are no coincidence: “‘Odd's life!’ cried Gay, in astonishment; ‘is this slight-made stripling Jack Sheppard? Why, I expected to see a man six foot high at the least, and as broad across the shoulders as our friend Figg. This is a mere boy’” (405). Both Gay and the text, by placing such an emphasis on Figg's brand of masculinity to the scene of Jack's intertextual and biographical aestheticisation, force a bodily gendered distinction between Figg and Jack; Figg operates as primacy affect for a preconceived, *proper* male subject serving as aesthetic model, while Jack offsets and complicates the model by virtue of his apparent lack of corporeality. Additionally, Figg considers the way in which Jack complicates perception of boy and man, a complication at the very heart of Newgate concern.

Hogarth disagrees with Gay's masculine-corporeal preconceptions of the criminal type: “He's just the man *I* expected to see,” observed Hogarth, who, having arranged everything to Thornhill's satisfaction, had turned to look at the prisoner, and was now, with his chin upon his wrist, and his elbow supported by the other hand, bending his keen grey eyes upon him, “just the man! Look at the light, lithe figure,—all muscle and activity, with not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon it.” (405)

The narrator has up to this point in the novel stressed at many junctures the importance of Jack's smallness in the act of incarceration and criminal performativity; Hogarth is able to see this functionality and utilitarianism of male corporeality and criminal success. Not ironically, Hogarth is also able to “see” this while “arranging” Jack for Thornhill's picture; criminality and masculine corporeality (and its significations) are thus things made understandable by the process of aesthetic arrangement and set in particular contrast to alternative models of masculine

representation (as embodied in Mr. Figg). Fighting, as an increasingly socially-acceptable but low-class form of masculine-gendered self-affirmation in the Victorian era (Tosh 112), here contrasts the surprising corporeal smallness of the infamous but “all muscle and activity” masculine efficacy of the criminal hero. Both masculine subjects are nonetheless proper “models” of masculine and visual aesthetics. Gay can now see what Hogarth means: “‘The very face,’ exclaimed Gay, advancing to look at it;—‘with all the escapes written in it’” (407). Gay will throw literary representation into the mix when he realises that writing, too, is aesthetic sign: and those escapes are “written” on Jack, who once did the inscribing.

His picture taken by the Thornhill crew, Sheppard is prepared to make his final escape, and does so. His excarceral journey into the countryside, driven by the increasing guilt he feels for the fate of his mother, reveals a detailed procession of signs indicating his full transition into narrative and modalities of representation. He hears a hawker “crying a penny-history of his escapes” (441) while a crowd of jostling women line up to buy copies. He gets a rural smith to remove his irons—the visibility of the shackles an important thing to be rid of—and the smith grimly comments upon Jack’s inevitable execution: “‘I’ll go to Tyburn to see you. But I’ll never part with your irons’” (444). Jack runs by someone performing a ballad about his excarceral adventures before finally arriving at the church grounds where his mother is to be buried:

He had now gained the high road. The villagers were thronging to church. Rounding the corner of a garden wall, he came upon his former place of imprisonment. Some rustic hand had written upon the door ‘JACK SHEPPARD’S CAGE;’ and upon the wall was affixed a large placard describing his person, and offering a reward for his capture. Muffling up his face, Jack turned away; but he had not proceeded many steps when he heard a man reading aloud an account of his escapes from a newspaper. (446)

Jack's bizarre progress through the countryside to his mother's funeral heaps increasing evidence that the fate of the criminal is to be rendered *cultural artifact* or simply *aesthetic form*—and this is no simple equation to narrative, for Jack's dissemination is inscribed on the cage he once inhabited, in the singing voice of the man decrying his ballad, and in the irons the smith insists on keeping forever. For the smith, in particular, the physical signifier of the irons precede the death of the man itself: “I'll go to Tyburn to see you. *But* I'll never part with your irons,” (emphasis mine) the man says, as if the two sentences refute each other: just because he will see Jack hang does not mean he will part with the irons. The irons will not lose their primacy of signification, will *never* lose their primacy of signification. The irons admit the culture of merchandising surrounding famous criminal deaths in the Victorian context, a time in which there was a public eager to buy an inch of the rope used to hang famous criminals. Physical artifacts, infused with social, legal and anthropological meaning, are important and valid signifiers of the criminal life, far more important than any biological or personal reality; so too are the aesthetic forms that spring to life from the idea of the criminal and these intersections of historicity and archaeology. Bills and songs and irons and paintings and cages and signs, all systems of representation, here decry their permanence and efficacy at the end of Jack's journey. Unlike Caleb or even Oliver, Jack is not particularly riled by these workings of the synopticon, narrativisation and criminal archaeology; for Jack, what matters is the Freudian sense of guilt at his mother's madness and death and displacement by the father-killing, mother-loving, uncanny Wild.

Matthew Buckley has beautifully and closely examined the operation of the pictorial, the narrative and multimedia in *Jack Sheppard*, but draws largely pejorative conclusions about them:

it becomes evident that [*Jack Sheppard's* scenes] trace their own emergent space of confinement. Not a carceral space in the literal sense, but a space in which identity itself becomes increasingly constrained, and confined, by print culture. . . . From the psychomachia of the Newgate scenes, a world generated and governed by the solitary gaze, Sheppard emerges into a world in which his social identity is inescapable, imposed by the gaze of all who recognize in him the figure of the criminal celebrity. The mechanism of that recognition. . . is here unveiled as a mechanism of surveillance, a nightmarish extension of the gaze of the law. (459)

Buckley's conclusions see Jack as ultimate prisoner of these operations of print culture and popular knowledge, his identity somehow confined or destroyed by the dissemination of his identity into consumable forms. I believe that Jack is not made aware or resistant enough of these strange proceedings of material culture and forms to establish the argument that they are just another of the forms of carcerality out to ensnare or destroy him. These forms have no doubt been present, even down to the paternal-criminal prognostication of Jack's coffin-shaped birthmark, in a destructive manner, but we must not forget Jack's primary concern at the end of the novel is with his mother rather than himself or any refutation of the narrative/print culture that has spread throughout his countryside pilgrimage. Indeed, Jack is hanged and the last image of the novel is the inscription on his grave—merely “JACK SHEPPARD” (481), accompanied by a Cruikshank illustration of the very same.

The total concession made to the sign and the representation throughout *Jack Sheppard* does not renounce or obviate Jack's identity; it is not another expression of the carceral but rather the ultimate expression of the excarceral, for Jack's existence has effectively escaped from the living into the aesthetic and the representational forms of song, grave, chapbook, picture, and

novel. Ainsworth demonstrates that these forms are valid and canny; they are meaningful routes for the remembrance and the discussion of themes of paternity, masculinity, criminality and fatalism. The “inescapability” of Jack’s social identity posited by Buckley would be damaging only if that identity were railed against by Jack; rather, *Jack Sheppard* is a text that celebrates the *jouissance* of the excarceral, and the famously excarceral is what Jack’s identity has become. The dissemination of that idea through popular synoptic forces is not the cause but the effect of that identity. Nor is it the law that renders Jack dead, but the efficacy of the paternal secret as embodied and perverted by Wild. Nonetheless, Jack’s escape into the representational, into the sign, into the irons loaded with meaning, circumvents Wild’s efficacy by inhabiting that same archaeological efficacy so prioritised and valued by Wild. Jack’s execution, his own death, is rendered meaningless in the face of the artifact; the meaning of the artifact, the artifact as signifier of the actual criminal life, is what remains in *Jack Sheppard*; the name of Jack Sheppard as written on the grave, the inscription itself, is only meaningless if we strip the inscription of what it signifies, and *Jack Sheppard* proves that the entrapment of the paternal secret, the son born with the coffin-shaped mark destined to fill his father’s shoes, can make the ultimate escape from his fate, an escape beyond biology itself, an escape into the purest of aesthetic and representational permanence.

Chapter 5

5 Male Essence and the Firing of the Prison Walls: Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge*

Charles Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge* (1841) appeared after *Oliver Twist* and *Jack Sheppard*, and in many ways this is fitting, with *Rudge* marking an ending of sorts to the Newgate trend and the subgenre's major novels. David Parker in *The Doughty Street Novels* explains that Dickens referred to *Rudge* in planning as his "first novel" (181), and it would have been the first to be issued in the expensive three-volume format; Dickens planned at the time to abandon serial publication afterwards. Parker argues that "*Barnaby Rudge* is less coherent and less successful than any of the other Doughty Street novels" (182), an opinion that, as this chapter and a number of the critics it will engage with demonstrate, has been and is being regularly reexamined in Dickens criticism. Parker concludes that *Barnaby Rudge* is a text without a "main theme" (195), an "empty" (212) novel that is nonetheless an experiment in "narrative games" (195) played by the narrator's withholding, flaunting of, and ignorance (feigned or otherwise) of pieces of authoritative information. For Parker, these narrative games, while not substituting for the novel's lack of a theme (212), constitute the novel's major analytical worth.

Many critics who pay attention to this lesser-read and lesser-loved Dickens novel, as this chapter will detail, have lighted upon the novel's undeniable interest in the dynamics of father-son relationships. With this point Parker disagrees, stating that the novel's "preoccupation with fathers and sons scarcely amounts to a theme. The coverage of the topic is too thin, too scattered. There is so much else" (187). While I agree with the sentiment that there is so much else to *Barnaby Rudge*, much of this "else" is inextricably tied to the illustration of the father-son relationship and, in true Newgate novel fashion, depictions of errant, multiple and alternative masculinities. Dickens departs from *Oliver Twist*'s grimy illustrations of contemporary London

for the historical context of the Gordon Riots of 1780. But just as *Oliver Twist*'s subtitle of *The Parish Boy's Progress* misdirects readers from many of the novel's other themes, so too does *Barnaby Rudge*'s subtitle *A Tale of the Riots of Eighty* veer away from the novel's true concerns. George Gordon and his fiendish secretary Gashford do not appear until the novel's middle, and the riots constitute the novel's long climax well after the halfway mark. Instead, what we have with the novel's first half—Myron Magnet terms the novel's split, and its dramatically different themes and concerns, as “Part I” and “Part II” in *Dickens and the Social Order* (5-6)—is the exploration of domestic and rural spaces, spaces that have the initial, superficial appearance of the idyll but soon give way to the ruptures in paternal-filial relationships that make up the text's main theme.

Part I takes a leisurely pace, unfurling slow-building portraits of several family (or family-functioning) groups. There is the Maypole Inn, where sleepy, curmudgeonly innkeeper John Willet verbally abuses his son Joe to the audience of the Maypole regulars; the Golden Key, where benevolent locksmith Gabriel Varden humours his overzealously Protestant wife, beautiful and vapid daughter Dolly and troublingly disobedient apprentice Simon (“Sim”) Tappertit; the feuding Geoffrey Haredale and John Chester, two old rivals whose star-crossed relations (Emma, Haredale's niece, and Edward, Chester's son) are kept apart out of familial bitterness; and the outliers Mary Rudge, the titular Barnaby, and his friends Hugh (hostler at the Maypole) and Grip (a raven). The novel opens with the Maypole regulars discussing the novel's arcane murder-mystery plot, which is the murder of Haredale's brother Reuben by Rudge (Senior) many years before. This itinerant subplot simmers so longly and languidly in the background of the text that it may appear confusing and unimportant to readers shortly after its partial exposition at the novel's beginning. What is more important is not the subplot itself but

the gothic tone the novel's opening mystery establishes, as the Maypole regulars discuss the old ghost story around the fire, in the earshot of Rudge himself, who has stopped at the inn while barreling through the open highways of the night on horseback. Also important about this mystery: despite the reader not discovering the concrete identity of the mysterious traveller until much later in the narrative, the mystery nonetheless foregrounds Rudge's criminality, the sins of the father baring much in way of the central themes of gothic masculinities and conceptualisations of the blighted son (in the form of Barnaby).

Part I of the novel, with all of its slow-building depictions of these individual domestic spaces, each uniquely broken and dysfunctional, primarily works to establish not only a nostalgic historical milieu of the eighteenth century (the Maypole a primary site of playfully funny caricaturing of a bygone age) but also the novel's main theme: the careful examination, even to the point of social dissection, of different kinds of sons unhappy with different kinds of fathers. They are too numerous and varied in nature to be ignored or dismissed as critically unimportant.

These relationships are so prolific, a considerable amount of summary work may be useful. Willet's son Joe, a well-meaning and dutiful young man hopelessly infatuated with Varden's daughter Dolly, is regularly mocked and infantilised in front of the Maypole regulars—an all-male middle-aged cast who bear witness to Willet's regular misestimation of his son's character and helpfulness at the Maypole. Willet, a bloated, absent-minded man who regularly misunderstands and misinterprets information and speaks to topics after they have lapsed from the conversation, is a comical figure at the same time he is effectively tyrannical to his young son. The sonless Varden, cowed by a household run by his argumentative wife Martha, her conniving housemaid Miggs and superficial daughter Dolly, instead has a stand-in son figure in the villainous Sim Tappertit, an apprentice at Varden's locksmithing workshop who sees tyranny

where there is none. Sim believes Varden to be deceitfully opportunistic and malignant when the man is truly the kindest figure of the benevolent father the text has—no doubt an ironic theme that communicates yet another disruption in effective father-son relationships, down to the level of dysfunctioning surrogacy (apprentice and master).

John Chester, a thoroughly selfish and vindictive gentleman who represents stereotypes of the eighteenth-century fop, lives out an eternal youth rivalry with Geoffrey Haredale by making sure his son Edward has no hope of marrying Emma Haredale, thus presenting a domestic scene framed not only by masculine rivalries that have roots in a disagreement in masculine styles as in the Godwinian mode (Chester and Haredale were schoolmates divided by their respective Protestant and Catholic views, their differences in size, dress, mannerisms and personalities) but also the interference of the single father in the sexual and social fulfillment of marriage and the heteronormativity of their offspring. The long-suffering Mary raises her son Barnaby, a “simpleton” rendered socially and symbolically fatherless by Rudge’s crime and disappearance. Last but certainly not least is Hugh, hostler at the Maypole—a bestially-described lout who becomes Barnaby’s best friend and male role model in the novel, and instrumental in the riots to come.

Dickens proffers *Barnaby Rudge*’s moral lesson in the 1841 Preface: “That what we falsely call a religious cry is easily raised by men who have no religion, and who in their daily practice set at nought the commonest principles of right and wrong; that it is begotten of intolerance and persecution; that it is senseless, besotted, inveterate, and unmerciful” (3).

Dickens is concerned with the kind of anarchic senselessness to be found in religious and social upheaval. However, Dickens’ almost monomaniacal concern in the text with the vast milieu of character relationships lies firstly with the depiction of father-son relationships, complete with

their included alternatives of surrogacy, apprenticeship, single fatherhood and absent fathers. These ideas are related and configured in the same kind of anarchy Dickens is concerned with in his moralistic Preface. To me, it seems problematic that Dickens' demonstration of man's senseless persecution and the loss of simple moral principles begins by multiplying pictures of aberrant fatherhoods and disenfranchised sons. To arrive at the above moral, a message that is not only Dickens' project in completing his first historical novel but also a humanistic message against the politics of religious schism, Chartism, and bloodthirsty mob violence, first involves the necessary domestic groundwork on which to build such themes, and in the case of *Barnaby Rudge* all considerations of religion, politics, and the creation of the historical novel rely on the teetering foundation of the father-son relationship. This relationship lies at home, the domestic space, the occupational space, and even the psychic/symbolic space of the gothic bloodstain upon Barnaby's skin. The masculine informs the very simplest element of each social and moral idea the novel has to offer.

I do not believe that this gendered foundation upon which all the novel's additional themes and theories rest is coincidence, meaningless, empty or done senselessly—though, the idea of *senselessness* itself, as written in the Preface, does tie into the novel's themes and its conceptions of both violence and masculinities. The novel's ideas about masculinities share common elements with those I have argued appear in *Oliver Twist*: masculinity, for Dickens, is an onus, something heavy and violent and terrible. To be a boyhood subject is to navigate complicated, criminally-encoded masculine-gendered desiring and identities at the same time one navigates the actual labyrinth of London's streets and organised crime.

In *Barnaby Rudge* the trajectory of the boyhood (or young masculine) subject is, initially, difficult to track. This is partly because *Barnaby Rudge* offers individual son/boyhood

subjectivities in obscene proliferation. In terms of sons alone we have Barnaby, Joe, Edward, Sim (surrogate son in the sense that apprenticeship offers) and Hugh (another surrogate to occupational life at the Maypole). We have the fathers Rudge, Willet, Chester, Haredale, and Varden. These proliferations themselves, numerous as they are, seek to emphasise a pattern of father-son dynamics, establishing the text's major concern before its exploration of history and politics, and that pattern is one of *tyranny*: the state of father-son relationships in ruination. No matter what differences are detected in the text's repetition of father-son relations, the difference usually leads back to this theme of discontent, either on the side of the father, the side of the son, or, in most cases, both at once. *Barnaby Rudge* communicates a clear idea here: father-son relationships are commonly dysfunctional and destructive.

Barnaby Rudge's depictions of masculine familial relations can be considered on a further level: that is, in the Dickensian Newgate, a common element of masculine gender and masculine gendered relationships is that they are determined by *chaos* and the force of the *senseless*, the same senselessness embodied by the text's famous emblem of the mob. The masculine subject is also often described in terms of the *energetic*; images of the bottled-up, the stoppered, and the fermenting are recurrent in the text, and this is usually in relation to the text's sons or the text's deviant outliers (if we may consider the mob itself, together with Hugh, one of the text's masculine outliers: the end result of stoppered energy, the ultimate expression of energetic eruption). And because masculinities are often stoppered *energy* or *forces*, they are *elemental*: fermenting liquids, stripped of figurative relationships, are merely elemental; the mob uses fire to destroy the city, meaning the mob's destructive agency lies in the elemental; when Rudge Sr. disappears into the highways of the night at the novel's beginning, the darkness and pelting rain that accompany his arrival and departure are, in fact, elemental. In *Barnaby Rudge*

there is a looping and self-constituting dialectic that posits masculinity as chaos, and chaos as energy, and energy as elemental, the elements are natural, and the natural is the trope of masculinity. These positions can be reversed or replaced with one another without rupturing the logic: masculinity is elemental, nature is chaos, and so on. Following these ideas of masculine gender, it should not come as any surprise when men are described as bestial in text, as when the rugged Hugh represents the “natural man”. Masculinity in the text is “natural” in the terms that nature is destructive, unpredictable, energetic and often times gothic and uncanny. It follows that the text’s depictions of criminal activity, focused mostly on the Gordon Riots and the destruction of Newgate prison near the end of the novel, are inherent parts of the text’s ruling themes of masculine energy, destruction, and the natural chaos of father-son relationships. Jon Mee sees the text’s explorations of “the natural” as borrowed by Dickens from Carlyle’s ideas of Chartism: “*Barnaby Rudge* seems more interested in exploring Carlyle’s idea of a transhistorical and universal conflict between unconscious forces of order and anarchy” (xi). The idea of Chartism as a violent and “universal conflict”, a kind of impulsive feeling or energy (as Carlyle writes, “the bitter discontent grown fierce and mad, the wrong condition therefore or the wrong disposition, of the Working Classes” [119]), explains why so many critics have chosen to explore Chartism as a major feature of *Barnaby Rudge*. Here, I will channel Mee’s interpretation of Carlyle’s idea of the “fury” of Chartism to explain the elemental forces of the text’s major concern with masculinities and familial relationships, which in turn are emblemised in the mob and the tearing down of Newgate prison, the ultimate symbol of the Newgate novel in this final of the critically major Newgate novels.

Exploring Simon Tappertit is a good starting point for an understanding of the ways masculinities are represented by Dickens in *Barnaby Rudge*. Not only do the text’s images of

masculinities as “bottled up” begin with Sim in the early novel, he also represents the position of the alternative/surrogate son figure, and young men in roles of apprenticeship and professional dependencies and upbringings. Sim also happens to head an underground (literal and figurative) group of apprentices who are planning future vengeance on their respective masters in what plays out in Newgate novel modes of rakish masculinity (Dickens’ parodic nod to eighteenth-century literatures, perhaps) and a recurrent tendency towards gallows-humour that reinforces ideas of the death drive common to Newgate novel masculinities. Sim, as simpering, toxic and comic as he is, nonetheless acts as a central nexus of the novel’s major representations of Dickensian Newgate masculinities. Sim is

an old-fashioned, thin-faced, sleek-haired, sharp-nosed, small-eyed little fellow, very little more than five feet high, and thoroughly convinced in his own mind that he was above the middle size; rather tall, in fact, than otherwise. Of his figure, which was well enough formed, though somewhat of the leanest, he entertained the highest admiration; and with his legs, which, in knee-breeches, were perfect curiosities of littleness, he was enraptured to a degree amounting to enthusiasm. (43)

Corporeally tiny, Sim is irrationally convinced he is tall. He is “enraptured” with his figure and little legs, a point of vanity Dickens plays to great comedic effect throughout the text (and, lest we forget, Sim’s blackly comic fate is to be trampled by the riots he helped instigate, crushing his legs beyond healing). A keyword in this passage that details Sim’s corporeal self-love is “enthusiasm”, which captures the text’s concern with violence and *energy* as represented in the masculine characters. Besides the meaning of the word still current, the OED (through Johnson) mentions an eighteenth-century usage of “enthusiasm” to describe overzealous religiosity, an “ill-regulated or misdirected” (OED) passion. As we will see, *Barnaby Rudge* loves following

paths of “misdirected” masculine flow, and “ill-regulated” energies and passions that lead to destruction of the self (as with Sim’s trampling in the crowd) or of others. Parker points out that the text is full of “fantasists” (200) who “deceive themselves with their narratives” (201), naming Sim, with his deluded self-image, as only one of the text’s delusional characters. Varden’s quip that Sim takes his cues from “the ‘Prentice’s Guide to the Gallows” (43) is salient: Varden recognises Sim’s wandering down a violent path marked with, if not hanging, another form of bodily punishment as the errant apprentice’s just desserts.

The description of Sim moves to cover his particular “spiritual essence”:

It may be inferred from these premises, that in the small body of Mr. Tappertit there was locked up an ambitious and aspiring soul. As certain liquors, confined in casks too cramped in their dimensions, will ferment, and fret, and chafe in their imprisonment, so the spiritual essence or soul of Mr. Tappertit would sometimes fume within that precious cask, his body, until, with great foam and froth and splutter, it would force a vent, and carry all before it. (44)

Sim’s remarkably passionate and zealous soul is tied inextricably to his body here: because the dimensions of “that precious cask, his body” are “cramped”, this translates to a particularly effervescent, fermented soul that threatens to “force a vent, and carry all before it”. The “great foam and froth and splutter” of Sim’s fermented soul are ejaculatory and readable as sexually masculine in this regard; the image, on another front, is also alcoholic, a motif we will see reflected in passages relating to Varden below. Sim’s soul is as liquor, fermented for too long in an oversmall cask; the potentiality of Sim’s violence, which is what the text is establishing in this passage, is tied particularly to a young man with an oversmall body deluded and enthusiastic about its beauty and largesse. This delusional energy (through the process of fermentation) will “force a vent, and carry all before it”. It will become an elemental force, translated into a liquid

that threatens a flood, an equally elemental and natural image of unpredictable destruction. When this will happen is uncertain, which adds to the threat of Sim's planned (and unreasonably motivated) rebellion against his master, and the unpredictability of masculine elements and agency.

That "Toby" is described immediately after these descriptions of Sim's body and soul cannot be coincidence, for it carries with it the motif of masculine "froth" and the strongly male-gendered motif of alcohol and liquid, this time in relation to the locksmith Gabriel Varden: "There was also a goodly jug of well-browned clay, fashioned into the form of an old gentleman, not by any means unlike the locksmith, atop whose bald head was a fine white froth answering to his wig, indicative, beyond dispute, of sparkling home-brewed ale" (45). Varden, the text's only depiction of benevolence in paternity, is rendered so homely and domestic that a copy of himself is to be found upon the table from which he and his family eat and drink: Toby, the jug which holds the "sparkling home-brewed ale", a fetish of paternal-domestic goodness. Unlike his apprentice, Gabriel's earthenware self-representation is not stoppered, cramped, or sure to froth and splutter in a suddenly vented flood. The ale, home-brewed and completely domestic, is contained openly, "sparkling", set upon the table while Varden and Dolly sit down to eat. That Gabriel can peacefully drink from his own fetish of domestic masculinity not only establishes the central note of his gendered role in the novel, it also posits the possibility of self-contained and self-regulating masculinity that the rest of the male-gendered characters in the novel so sorely lack or deny. However, Gabriel's lack of a biological son is pointed, and his surrogate son in the professional master-apprentice relationship is horrifically self-deluded, self-destroying, and carries with him all the potential of elemental destruction (coupled with the imagery of brewery, ejaculation and natural disaster) and the death drive that the young apprentice willfully follows.

Even in this early father-son relationship in the novel, benevolent self-regulation, the regulation of the surrogate son and familial peace, are all disallowed, and masculinity tends only towards the destructive and the natural.

As a locksmith's apprentice, Sim has the ability to make doubles of keys (69). He does so to allow himself transit in and out of all the workshop's (and house's) locked doors under cover of darkness, sneaking off to his secret-society meetings of malcontent apprentices. Sim thus has transitivity in two spheres: the domestic world of the Varden household, where he is unhappy with Dolly's ignorance of his excellent looks and Varden's mastery over him, which he unjustly perceives as tyrannical and abusive, and the arcane sphere of the masculine secret society. Sim does not, or rather chooses not, to mesh with the domestic sphere provided to him, and this signals the masculine tendency in the text towards iconoclasm and the rupturing of extant constructions of family, society and economy in relation to the young male subject. As Magnet explains in *Dickens and the Social Order*,

The case of Gabriel Varden and Sim Tappertit vividly illustrates, with appropriate emotional detail, what is meant by saying that in the pre-industrial world an apprentice's master stood him in place of a father....Not only does an apprentice engage himself to total obedience to his master, but also his freedom is limited by little leisure, scanty pocket money, and the provisions of his indentures which ban drinking and gambling and forbid him all sexual relationships, including marriage. (61)

While Magnet seems much more sympathetic here towards the character of Sim—I would argue that Sim's disobedience towards Varden is positioned in the text as comically unreasonable (though certainly, as I will explore, symbolically and historically really threatening)—Magnet nonetheless details the important limitations that were included and assumed in the father-son

surrogacy of apprenticeship. Sim's freedom and independence as an individual are limited by the relationship. In Part II, the text will specifically explore Sim's sexual frustration in being unable to woo Varden's daughter, a frustration that will turn to kidnapping and the threat of sexual violence.

Sim's alternative sphere, the one he lords over, is Dickens' comic illustration of criminal and masonic underworlds. The narrator describes the immediate shift in Sim's demeanour when travelling between the spheres: "Clear of the locksmith's house, Sim Tappertit laid aside his cautious manner, and assuming in its stead that of a ruffling, swaggering, roving blade, who would rather kill a man than otherwise, and him too if needful, made the best of his way along the darkened streets" (70). In the workshop and the sphere of the domestic, or perhaps the sphere of the economic/professional (the master-apprentice relationship), Sim is cowed, feeling a need for cautious conduct. In the sphere of the criminal, or the malcontent ready to rupture his bonds for something other, something alternative, he is a "ruffling, swaggering" blade. This mode, which is conducive to showy forms of masculine criminal identities found in the Bulwerian novel, manipulates the spheres: Tappertit changes his walk and his demeanour when travelling between the two. This mode is also markedly illegal and mortal, carrying with it a tone of murder and even self-murder. Note how "the darkened streets" are the place where this shift in masculine role takes place: the darkened street, just like the dark and stormy highways Rudge occupies in the shadowy passages of Part I, is always the place of transition for the masculine subject. They must occupy a darkness that connects spheres and distinct gendered roles; only these connective spaces are conducive to the effectuation of transitive masculine identities. Bundled to these operations are a sense of the competitive (murder of the masculine other) and a ridiculous or senseless violence that extends itself to suicide.

A “rude effigy of the bottle swung to and fro like some gibbeted malefactor” (70), demarcating the hideout of apprentices. This image once again continues the narrator’s favoured motifs of young men’s fates as potential criminals who are planting the seeds of the Gordon Riots with liquids and a certain alcoholic/stoppered masculinity. The hideout itself is practically a gothic grotto (71) in which mushrooms grow and a throne of skulls awaits Tappertit’s undersized form. The scenes of the hideout parody masonic and cryptic brotherhoods, a threat that, as I have explored in earlier chapters, nonetheless feels palpable in not only the Newgate novels but other fictional and non-fictional Victorian discourses of masculinity, as they denote politically charged ideas of partisan and economic insurrection and also potentially sexual and gendered insurrection. Once seated, Sim muses on criminal/masculine greatness and fluidity:

“If I had been born a corsair or a pirate, a brigand, gen-teel highwayman or patriot—and they’re the same thing,” thought Mr. Tappertit, musing among the nine-pins, “I should have been all right. But to drag out a ignoble existence unbeknown to mankind in general—patience! I will be famous yet. A voice within me keeps whispering Greatness. I shall burst out one of these days, and when I do, what power can keep me down? I feel my soul getting into my head at the idea.” (77)

Sim notes different genres of gendered criminality and forms of disobedience—pirate, brigand, highwayman, patriot—and thinks himself quite clever for conflating them. The typology of the “gen-teel highwayman” (smacking of *Paul Clifford*), and other criminal types, nonetheless feels salient in the context of a Newgate novel on the tail end of the subgenre’s heyday (and a subgenre, Dickens indicated with the Third Preface to *Oliver Twist*, he did not associate himself with but nonetheless felt a need to vociferously separate from). Sim needs to mention how he would do just as well if he were to inhabit these alternative, criminally masculine

roles/typologies. After all, a genteel highwayman has to rely on his skill to occupy and straddle different socio-economic spheres in addition to spheres of alternative masculine styles and conceptualisations, just as Sim does travelling inside and outside the spheres of apprenticeship and criminal insurrection/masonic occultism. But his position is worse: Sim is occupying the role of the *apprentice*, an utterly abject role without a trace of fame, power or nobility, and a role that includes all the limitations on individual freedom Magnet has explored. Sim comically glorifies literary typologies of criminal masculinity while still legitimising the historically real threats of the Gordon Riots; the text draws a link between criminal identities, the transitivity (defined by movements between the same-gendered or the alternatively-gendered) of masculine identities and socio-economic power struggles, and British memory of real historical violence. The passage drives home, once again, the idea of Sim's delusional sense of size and the potential to "burst out one of these days", "his soul getting into [his] head at the idea". The language is charged with gendered sexual punning (we are reminded of "Master Bates" in *Oliver Twist*) and an idea of spiritual zealotry or enthusiasm that rely on a tangible, overwhelming body-soul link. Sim is so enthusiastic because he has a too big spirit in a too small body; he is so discontent because he is unhappy with his gendered occupational role and inability to fit into established domestic and economic systems of gender; he is masculine because he has the ability to burst into a flood of destruction and naturalised violence, if only the time would be ripe.

When *will* the time be ripe? The riots themselves will not occur until Part II, more than halfway into the novel, and this is because so much of the *threat* inherent in alternative, criminal and malcontent masculinities lies in the unpredictability of timing: whenever the flood manages to burst its confines is when the destruction will be wreaked. Hugh, a hostler at the Maypole, enters the text by embodying this idea of dormant masculine energy and potentiality. The long

passage that describes his form once again comes with the Maypole regulars as an audience, attesting to the text's positioning of masculinities as often (or necessarily) before an audience of male peers or others, who are witnesses and judges of its qualities, just as poor Joe is unjustly humiliated time and time again in front of the regulars of his father's business. Hugh slumbers at the Maypole:

The light that fell upon his slumbering form, showed it in all its muscular and handsome proportions. It was that of a young man, of a hale athletic figure, and a giant's strength, whose sunburnt face and swarthy throat, overgrown with jet black hair, might have served a painter for a model. Loosely attired, in the coarsest and roughest garb, with scraps of straw and hay—his usual bed—clinging here and there, and mingling with his uncombed locks, he had fallen asleep in a posture as careless as his dress. The negligence and disorder of the whole man, with something fierce and sullen in his features, gave him a picturesque appearance, that attracted the regards even of the Maypole customers who knew him well, and caused Long Parkes to say that Hugh looked more like a poaching rascal to-night than ever he had seen him yet. (96-7)

As the regards of the Maypole customers are “attracted” to Hugh, despite having viewed him many times before, the narrator reinforces and elevates the gaze of the masculine peer to the aesthetic height of viewing a painting or objet d’art. Hugh has “a picturesque appearance” that “might have served a painter for a model” in a way that evokes antique Herculean masculine beauty (this echoes how Tyrell is described in *Caleb Williams*, not to mention Jack's portrait-taking scene in *Jack Sheppard*) and pastoral ruggedness (“with scraps of straw and hay” clinging to him). Something about Hugh's sleeping form is so striking that here, in this particular moment at the Maypole, it becomes novel, demanding new gazes and new attention while readers are

given the sense that Hugh is earthen and commonplace, the familiar hostler at the Inn. The metafictional possibility exists that the narrator is aware this is Hugh's first appearance *to the reader*, and Hugh is rendered particularly picturesque because it is the current task of the narrator to present a visual. Another possibility rests in the thematic tendency of masculinities and their representations; Hugh's particular brand of slumbering, athletic, muscular, antique and rural aesthetics make themselves important and new in the eyes of the masculine audience.

Aspects of the description juxtapose. For one, Hugh is described in the terms of the wild and the unkempt. He is physically commanding, careless, with all the strength of a giant, but nonetheless subject to examination from the reader and the Maypole regulars, and this carries an implicit agency or power. Michael Greaney contends that sleep-watching in *Barnaby Rudge* inhabits a master-servant dynamic (3); if we agree with Greaney, Hugh is the servant to this relationship, the marginalised party subject to examination and thus losing a portion of its agency or freedom. Greaney writes: "Aestheticized in his sleep as a 'picturesque' figure safe for popular consumption, Hugh offers a pleasingly harmless spectacle for the Maypole regulars, for whom the dozing stable-hand is nothing more than a reassuringly familiar local character, a somnolent creature of the farmyard" (14). This is in accordance with how characters will view Hugh in the rest of the novel, in addition to the narrator's constant equation of Hugh with the bestial and the animal world (his bed of hay, here, enforcing that theme for the first time). As a corporeally strong, unkempt, "rascal" type masculinity, Hugh is *acceptable*, even desirable, as aesthetic object and masculine body for the observation of the masculine audience. All these picturesque features of Hugh's sleeping entrance upon the text make Hugh look "more like a poaching rascal to-night" than ever before.

Contrary to this aestheticised acceptability, a certain threat, or energized potential, still lies dormant within Hugh, and I would maintain he is not marginal: sleeping giants, after all, must be met with careful and soundless footfall. As picturesque and aestheticised, fit for popular consumption, recognisably classical, rural, and powerfully masculine Hugh appears, the conception of the sleeping giant functions as a potent symbol of destructive, sudden waking. Greaney asks: “why would a novel of riot find so much time to contemplate the spectacle of sleep? One ready answer to this question is that sleep is the opposite of riot....Modernity in *Barnaby Rudge* is apprehended as a violent awakening from an almost prehistoric slumber into a generalized insomnia of which the Gordon Riots...are but one marker” (5). Because Hugh will be one of the most active members of the riots in the later novel, the narrator positions him as sleeping power, an undisturbed anarchy and potentiality that the regulars of the Maypole, in their application of agency against Hugh in the master relationship of the aestheticizing gaze, have made a grave and foolish mistake: he is not a sleeping ox, but a giant capable of much destruction. “The negligence and disorder of the whole man” are not to be rendered harmless; they must be taken for what they are at the plain level of true *disorder*, that which refuses the logical and takes delight in destruction, a theme inextricably linked to the masculine in Dickens’ two Newgate novels.

Nevertheless, the Maypole regulars are not wrong or entirely misguided in their estimation of Hugh, I would argue, and this is because their conception of the man (and the description of the narrator) are more ambivalent than the aestheticising process admits. Hugh represents classical power, bestial and rural abandon and primitiveness, masculine corporeality and athleticism, and anarchical disorder and the agency of destructive potentiality, the riots yet to awake. And the narrator tells us, twice in the above passage, that these things are what are fit for

the artist's contemplation, these things are what make up *the picturesque* and the desire to consume. The image of the sleeping hostler straddles the rural and the classical, the civilised and the bestial, the harmless and the destructive; perhaps it is this dramatic tension that justifies "the picturesque" for the narrator. The picture ends with Long Parkes' comment that all this has made Hugh the ultimate "poaching rascal", and the comment is ambivalent in tone. If a poaching rascal is picturesque, not only fit but ideal (as I believe the narrator wants us to believe here) for consumption by the masculine audience of peers, then surely "poaching rascal" is a loving usage, complimenting, in a gentle way, the idea of the errant or criminal masculinity. It may be that the tendency of the aestheticising male audience in *Barnaby Rudge* is towards loving subjugation: Hugh is fit for depiction only when sleeping. But the symbol of the sleeping giant still hovers over all, and the Gordon Riots loom over the text. Hugh is a "rascal" in terms of violent political and legal realities, and a giant that will awaken.

Hugh stands out as the text's most problematised and aestheticised masculinity. His entrance in the text as a completely insensible subject assures that Hugh's aesthetic nature precedes his personality or active, cognizant self. His slumber also prioritises his body: he is a form with wild hair sprawled in a careless position, bits of hay sticking to him, before he is a *person* or *subjectivity* at all. Both Hugh's body and its reception by the panel of masculine peers precede Hugh the subject, and this emblemises Hugh as the text's ultimate study in primal masculine forms (here is the masculine subject, or body; here is its reception as aesthetic object). Hugh is thus the purest aesthetic representation of masculinity itself in the text, so the narrator makes sure to encode in it the text's most recurrent readings of masculine forms: those of disorder, commanding bestial corporeality, and the unpredictability of nature's destructive energies. As Willet comments about Hugh after this scene, "He's not often in the house, you

know. He's more at ease with horses than men. I look upon him as an animal myself.... That chap, I was a saying, though he has all his faculties about him, somewheres or another, bottled up and corked down, has no more imagination than Barnaby has" (98). Willet, ironically without active command of the faculties himself, equates Barnaby with Hugh, their faculties "bottled up and corked down" somewhere within themselves, lacking "imagination". Readers should also draw immediate parallels with the same motifs used to describe Sim, likewise described by the narrator in terms of the bottled up and the stoppered. The image carries with it a pure visual sense of potential with capped limits, foreshadowing Hugh's destructive potential in the future political events of the novel.

Willet also equates Hugh with the bestial. He is a man "more at ease with horses than men", to the point that Willet "look[s] upon him as an animal". Hugh thus inhabits a tension that contrasts man and animal, adding to this "natural", inchoate bodily masculinity that is nonetheless aesthetic and properly, even rightfully "artistic" in the text. This drawing up of Hugh's masculinity easily coincides with early Victorian discourses of masculinities and the junctures of their representations. In *Victorian Masculinities*, Sussman details how

the early Victorians defined maleness as the possession of an innate, distinctively male energy that, in contrast to Freud, they did not represent as necessarily sexualized, but as an inchoate force that could be expressed in a variety of ways, only one of which is sexual. This interior energy was consistently imagined or fantasized in a metaphoric of fluid, suggestively seminal, and in an imagery of flame. The point of problematization for manhood or what the Victorian middle-class termed 'manliness' was situated in developing what Foucault calls 'practices of the self' for properly regulating or managing this internal, natural energy,

‘technologies of the self’ that were consistently identified with the technologies of an industrializing society obsessed with harnessing the natural energy of water and fire. (10-1)

Barnaby Rudge is a text obsessed with the elements of water and fire, and how these relate to the various masculinities it imagines. It is also a text that positions the potentiality of male subjectivity and alternative (or even merely special, notable, consumable) masculinities as those that are “inchoate force”, “interior energy” set in the imagery of the elemental. These elements are potentially destructive because they threaten to be unstoppable and unleashed upon the world without the aid of these, as Foucault notes, practices of the self; characters such as the bestial Hugh, the delusional Sim and the simpleton Barnaby are unaccountable and uncontrollable young masculine subjects who are situated at junctures of problematic Victorian conceptions of natural maleness. The problem lies in how, according to Sussman, Foucault and no doubt James Eli Adams, these masculinities would not actually fit into a bourgeois idea of Victorian “manliness” because they lack the programs of self-discipline necessary to becoming acceptable and socially productive masculine gender identities. If this is the case, *Barnaby Rudge* is a text that dramatises the absolute anarchy of the “metaphorics of fluid” and the “imagery of flame”, those “distinctively male” energies that Dickens presents as primordially destructive but somehow aesthetically acceptable and preferable. Hugh is the perfect crossroads at which intersections of innate maleness and the attention and aestheticisation of the gendered other meet. Bestial but still a man, destructive but asleep, roguish but ideal, Hugh exists as a perfect emblem of the dramatic aesthetic problem of Newgate males. Taken together, the problematic young men of *Barnaby Rudge* illustrate problematic maleness in the context of Victorian gender discourses, rendering them something outside the constrained or the regulated: alternative.

Joe Willet (son of John Willet) and Edward Chester (son of John Chester) are the two non-criminal young men depicted by the text. They are coupled in ways beyond their fathers' shared given name and similar forms of abuse, and are cut off from the major action of Part II as Joe, tired of his father's verbal abuse, turns soldier and is sent to America. Edward, likewise unable to withstand Sir John Chester's scheme of having him marry into money so that they may live an even more comfortable life than they currently enjoy, disappears from the narrative at the end of Part I. The end of the novel's first Part, in which Dickens has stationed all the sons and young men in positions of rebellion or absence, marks the gendered and familial hinge on which the novel pivots. George Gordon and the horrors of the riots then begin to move as the novel jumps forward five years.

Although their rebellion is not of a political or criminal nature like the other youths of the novel, Joe and Edward are thematically grouped with Barnaby, Hugh, and Simon in the sense that they are all young discontents placed in situations of familial duress thanks to the sins of the father. They are all forced, on differing levels, into modes of transgression. Unlike Hugh and Simon, I would argue, Joe and Edward are idealised templates of young and frustrated masculinity in the sense that they are the pair who will reap the rewards of heteronormative plotting at the end of the novel. Joe will finally manage to catch Dolly's eye, after she has been through the terrible ordeal of being kidnapped and nearly raped by Hugh and Sim, causing her to disavow her coquettish ways. Emma, having been deeply in love with Edward from the start of the novel, will finally be allowed to marry him once Haredale has settled his personal score with Chester. Because these two inoffensive, mild-mannered young men are the only masculine subjects to meet the rewards of marriage rather than the threat of the prison and the gallows, they are privileged but not entirely distanced from the novel's additional depictions of masculinities;

after all, they will not escape the tyranny of the father or the bodily danger of escaping the familial bond unharmed.

Joe is a man dogged by infantilisation. Readers are introduced to him as “a broad-shouldered strapping young fellow of twenty, whom it pleased his father still to consider a little boy, and to treat accordingly” (15). Later in the novel, when Joe escapes the Maypole to become a soldier, Willet advertises him as a lost child (to the great confusion of civilians), illuminating his cognitive dissonance in regards to his son’s real age and development. We are told “The proper time’s no time” (17) for Joe to speak. Joe is frustrated in all areas of his life, bullied into overwork by his father, his abuse played to an audience of Maypole regulars, and unable to win the favours of his romantic interest Dolly. All this tempers Joe with the text’s thematic concern of masculinity about to burst its bounds into necessitated violent rebellion. The narrator expands upon the further theme of masculine audience so essential to the novel’s Maypole scenes:

As great men are often urged on to the abuse of power (when they need urging, which is not often), by their flatterers and dependents, so old John was impelled to these exercises of authority by the applause and admiration of his Maypole cronies, who, in the intervals of their nightly pipes and pots, would shake their heads and say that Mr. Willet was a father of the good old English sort; that there were no new-fangled notions or modern ways in him; that he put them in mind of what their fathers were when they were boys...Then they would condescendingly tell Joe to understand that it was all for his good, and he would be thankful for it one day...In short, between old John and old John’s friends, there never was an unfortunate young fellow so bullied, badgered, worried, fretted, and brow-beaten; so constantly beset, or made so tired of his life, as poor Joe Willet. (243)

The narrator parodies “great men” by placing the comically delusional and mentally absent Willet in their place, nonetheless proving that the politics of tyranny easily lend themselves to the smallest familial unit of landlord father and worker son. Not only does the Maypole audience act as the aestheticisers of Hugh’s slumber, they also support the efficacy of Willet’s tyranny as visited upon the innocent and victimised Joe. Willet’s brand of brow-beating is, for the Maypole “cronies”, reminiscent of a nostalgic brand of English patriarchy that the narrator plays to sarcastic effect. Both this idea of a nostalgic, tyrannical fathering style and the reinforcement of a set of old cronies acting as an outdated patriarchal system exacerbate gaps in father-son government and symbiosis. The narrator illustrates the degradation of the exchange and promotes the valourisation of the son via long-suffering.

But the son will not suffer forever. Joe explodes, attacking one of the laughing Maypole cronies: “‘I have done it now,’ said Joe, as he sat down upon his bedstead and wiped his heated face. ‘I knew it would come at last. The Maypole and I must part company. I’m a roving vagabond’” (246). Joe’s outburst is arguably the first masculine *explosion* of the text, the first young man to ferment to such a point that the cork pops. Even Joe seems to acknowledge this metaphoric action in his speech: “I knew it would come at last”. Joe seems to remove the agency or election of the rebellion against the father. The rebellion came of its own accord, a moving object unable to be stopped in its tracks. Joe also acknowledges the position of a masculine subject who has been removed from the marginalised but socially promotable status of the obedient and brow-beaten worker-son: “I’m a roving vagabond”. To be ejected from a socially acceptable masculine position such as son is here an automated and involuntarily process that nonetheless results in submersion in a liminal identity such as vagrancy, an identity tinged with the criminal. Joe decides becoming a soldier is the only viable option now available to him, and

just as the Newgate novel often does with the liminalised masculinity, absents him from the current space by making him leave for America and effectively removing him from the novel until his return at the end.

Joe loses an arm while serving in Savannah. The entirety of that action takes place off stage, and he returns missing the limb. Joe's return is first hinted at after Barnaby's initial arrest when he singles Joe out in a group of young men outside the prison doors:

The other man had his back towards the dungeon, and Barnaby could only see his form. To judge from that, he was a gallant, manly, handsome fellow, but he had lost his left arm...It was probably this circumstance which gave him an interest beyond any that his companion could boast of, and attracted Barnaby's attention. (465)

Like Hugh, Joe's form, reintroduced to the novel and reader, precede his identity or person. Once again *Barnaby Rudge* is preoccupied with masculine *forms*; Barnaby can see only the young man's *form* from the cell, and what is most striking to the simple young man is the form's missing limb. Joe remains a "gallant, manly, handsome fellow" upon his return, "*but* he had lost his left arm" (emphasis mine). If Joe is a template of innocent, victimised, well-meaning young manhood forced into new status of violent action as soldier, then to be an innocent and ideal template of gallant masculinity is to be forced into incompleteness and bodily harm. Despite the "but", Barnaby is still attracted to Joe as aesthetic form: his missing limb earns him "an interest beyond any that his companion could boast of", appealing to Barnaby's attention. Because Barnaby is young masculinity/boyhood in its purest form (as the text will demonstrate), his attraction to Joe here is important and emblematic of the larger concerns of marginal, maimed but aesthetically prioritised and idealised masculinity in the text. Despite the "but", Joe's masculinity and gallantry as masculine form is not reduced but *othered* from the usual, and in

that othering heightened to Barnaby, who is a grey-area manhood, a boyhood trapped in mental and corporeal stasis due to his status as overgrown man or simpleton. Once Joe returns and the novel moves from the action of the riots to the quiet denouement, Joe wins Dolly's affections through his earnest trials and suffering, a martyred template of young masculinity that weathered the necessities of rebellion and masculine alternative. This rebellion is signalled by his physical form in the missing arm.

Edward Chester matches Joe in many ways. They are childhood friends, and are absented from the text at the same time, each forced into rebellion from their tyrannical Johns at the same juncture. Edward is also romantically frustrated. He cannot marry Emma Haredale due to his father and Geoffrey Haredale's religious and longstanding personal differences. Unlike Joe, Edward was raised under ideas of wealth and gentlemanly breeding. Petitioning his father to allow him to marry Emma, Edward reflects:

"The idea of wealth has been familiarised to me from my cradle. I have been taught to look upon those means, by which men raise themselves to riches and distinction, as being beyond my heeding, and beneath my care. I have been, as the phrase is, liberally educated, and am fit for nothing. I find myself at last wholly dependent upon you, with no resource but in your favour. In this momentous question of my life we do not, and it would seem we never can, agree...If I seem to speak too plainly now, it is, believe me father, in the hope that there may be a franker spirit, a worthier reliance, and a kinder confidence between us in time to come."

(128-9)

Edward represents, in many instances in the novel, an expressed desire for openness of discourse, "a franker spirit, a worthier reliance, and a kinder confidence" between the positions of father and son in the politics of the family unit. He is able to calmly debate his stance with his

foppish and pretentious father, often representing an ironically inverted voice of measured reason in the father-to-son dialectic: “‘Father,’ said the young man, stopping at length before him, ‘we must not trifle in this matter. We must not deceive each other, or ourselves. Let me pursue the manly open part I wish to take, and do not repel me by this unkind indifference’” (128). For Edward, to be “manly” is to have an “open part” in discourse with the father figure; he is pitted against the conniving, insufferably self-serving and effectively tyrannical Sir John Chester, the text’s most uncanny and abusive patriarch, who in turn represents dishonesty and manipulation in discourse—the total opposite of his son:

“A son, Ned, unless he is old enough to be a companion—that is to say, unless he is some two or three and twenty—is not the kind of thing to have about one. He is a restraint upon his father, his father is a restraint upon him, and they make each other mutually uncomfortable....I candidly tell you, my dear boy, that if you had been awkward and overgrown, I should have exported you to some distant part of the world....I found you a handsome, prepossessing, elegant fellow, and I threw you into the society I can still command. Having done that, my dear fellow, I consider that I have provided for you in life, and rely on your doing something to provide for me in return.” (131)

Dickens lampoons the idea of father-son relationships as being financially beneficial or usurious; Chester, having “thrown” his son into proper education and society, has done all he can for Edward, and expects returns on his investment by assuring Edward marries money: “All men are fortune-hunters, are they not?....Yes. You *are* one; and you would be nothing else, my dear Ned, if you were the greatest courtier, lawyer, legislator, prelate, or merchant, in existence” (131). Chester disbars any possibility of middle-class masculine profession for his son, instead extolling the primacy of all gentlemen as fortune-hunters. Chester also disbars the possibility of egalitarian

politics or power in a father-son relationship, saying that fathers and sons cannot exist symbiotically unless the son can enter into a fortune via the virtue of being “thrown” into the best society the father can “command” (fathers and sons “make each other mutually uncomfortable”).

Chester also forces a despotic foppishness onto his son, and this is Chester’s primary brand of outdated eighteenth-century masculinity. Thankfully for Edward, he grew up to be a “handsome, prepossessing, elegant fellow”, no doubt in the tradition of his father, who is seen countless times in the bedroom, at breakfast, at his toilet and adjusting his outfit, making a case for sartorial masculinity that somehow manages to be effectively tyrannical for the characters of *Barnaby Rudge*. Edward counters his father’s dependent, appearance-based brand of masculinity by expressing the desire for open and frank discourse that constitutes an opposite *manliness*; after realising his father will not budge from his fortune-hunting opinions, Edward feels *forced* to rebel. There comes a point when Chester, so removed from the father-son dynamic, recoils from the word “father” itself: ““for heaven’s sake don’t call me by that obsolete and ancient name. Have some regard for delicacy. Am I grey, or wrinkled, do I go on crutches, have I lost my teeth, that you adopt such a mode of address? Good God, how very coarse!””, while Edward replies: ““I was about to speak to you from my heart, sir...in the confidence which should subsist between us”” (258). Chester’s disgust at the idea of fitting naturally in a father-son relationship is rendered grotesque (accompanied with images of merely physical and bodily aging, no doubt the limits by which Chester regards fatherhood) while Edward continues to vouch for speaking from the heart and “in the confidence which should subsist” between father and son. This is Edward’s threshold of rebellion: “it is sad when a son, proffering him his love and duty in their best and truest sense, finds himself repelled at every turn, and forced to disobey” (261). Chester avows

this narrative and gendered trajectory of the son's necessary rebellion/transgression when he naturalises Edward's inability to accept his own brand of masculine "gentility" (i.e. education and a preparation for a life of fortune-hunting): "If you intend to mar my plans for your establishment in life, and the preservation of that gentility and becoming pride, which our family have so long sustained—if, in short, you are resolved to take your own course, you must take it, and my curse with it. I am very sorry, but there's really no alternative" (261).

Both Joe and Edward are templates of ideal, youthful "manliness" privileged by the text. One is presented as martyr, needing to pass a rite of bodily harm/modification and the injustices of the world to escape the infantilising force of an absentmindedly tyrannical father. The other speaks against outmoded forms of foppish and gothicised/grotesque masculinity, proffering an argument for the movement towards an "open", "manly" discourse between father and son and the "confidence which should subsist" in the family unit. Joe's transgression as son becomes corporeal and occupational (the danger of turning soldier—a masculine trade for dispossessed men by default) while Edward's remains dialectic and moral in nature, forming multi-dimensional paradigms for the exploration of masculinities in the text. These are the masculine paths that get rewarded at the end of the narrative with the prize of the heteronormative union and movement towards futurity. However, Dickens does not completely separate these paths of individual masculinity from being othered: he presents all triumphant paths of rebellious masculinity as actually *alternative* and *rebellious*, and these rebellions are *necessitated* rather than voluntary. As Chester says to Edward, "there's really no alternative" to the alternative. Masculinities are not elective, but forces which seem to have minds of their own that act upon the masculine subject, a common theme within both *Oliver Twist* and *Barnaby Rudge*. The narrative of the "son", the being or idea that is "son" itself becomes a primordial or essential

narrative in the novel, a path that by its very nature and simplest conception inculcates ruptures, turnings away, transportations and reversals of patriarchal, familial, historical, legal and societal currents.

By far the most horrific depiction of a masculine style within *Barnaby Rudge* is Sir John Chester, and this is problematic considering the character's outlandish foppishness, characterisation that would so easily lend itself to comicality in any eighteenth-century drama or comedy of manners. Instead, Chester manages to be the singularly most actually threatening, manipulative and effective tyrant in the novel: he casually dismisses Edward from the (paltry as it is) familial bond of father and son when Edward refuses to marry for money, maintains a lifelong personal and religious feud with Geoffrey Haredale, and manipulates the plot's political action from the background via Hugh, who is, we later learn, Chester's natural son. These tangled threads, all of which have to do with Chester's effectively tyrannical, self-interested and isolationist mode of masculinity, point to the fact that these secret modes of family and patriarchal management are gothicised, operating behind the front lines of the riot and behind the veils of socially acceptable progeny and domesticity. While not fully *sinthomosexual*—Chester has not one but *two* sons, split between divides of class and social (and narrative) visibility—Chester seems ready to destroy the functioning of father-son bonds and the operations of future familial units in dismissing Edward as his son and disallowing Emma's marriage due to a maniacal and undying grudge with Geoffrey Haredale. In these ways, Chester's destructive foppishness manages to ruin the happiness of many of the novel's characters in increasingly arcane and remote methods, presenting his foppish, moneyed, "gentlemanly" brand of masculinity as particularly gothic and problematic.

Our first introduction to the Haredale-Chester feud begins in terms of physicality reminiscent of the Falkland-Tyrell feud in *Caleb Williams*. Disparities between builds and appearances are the basis from which the narrator begins to spin the tale of their feud:

With no great disparity between them in point of years, they were, in every other respect, as unlike and far removed from each other as two men could well be. [Chester] was soft-spoken, delicately made, precise, and elegant; [Haredale], a burly square-built man, negligently dressed, rough and abrupt in manner, stern, and, in his present mood, forbidding in both look and speech....[Haredale], indeed, appeared bent on showing by his every tone and gesture his determined opposition and hostility to the man he had come to meet. The guest who received him, on the other hand, seemed to feel that the contrast between them was all in his favour, and to derive a quiet exultation from it which put him more at ease than ever. (101)

We will learn further reasons for why the two men are “as unlike and far removed from each other as two men could well be”, namely the political, legal and social ruptures between Protestantism and Catholicism surrounding the novel’s historical context, themes around which the novel’s social message circulates and the main message Dickens clearly expresses in the novel’s 1841 Preface (3). These political and religious differences are strangely absent from the narration of the two men’s feuding in the novel, although the relegation of these differences to subtext no doubt would have affected historical readerly receptions of their antagonism, if only on a symbolic level. At the onset we have a feud motivated only by discrepancies of physical size, appearance, manner and demeanour; in the confines of this scene, these components are enough to constitute the things that could make two men “as far removed from each other” as is possible. Also of importance is how Chester himself “seemed to feel that the contrast between them was all in his favour”. Already these personal differences in corporeality and manner,

which remove types of men from each other, are a viable source of continued antagonism from which Chester derives “a quiet exultation”. Chester’s brand of villainy enjoys differences in personal styles of masculinity: the further removed the fop is from the bull, the more joy Chester derives from the feud.

Narrative explanation of their religious differences in the text are downplayed, I argue, by a much firmer and more visible discrepancy and disagreement of these masculine styles. Readers are thrown into the Chester-Haredale feud *in medias res* after many decades, and no full reason is ever given for the feud in the novel, other than a single sentence of the text in which Chester hints at a school-age rivalry and love triangle (241). The critical idea that Chester and Haredale represent the social dynamics of the religious intolerance that so permeate the novel’s messages is true but also ignores the personal, gendered and potentially sexual facets of the two characters’ feuding. The fundamental difference between the two men primarily exists, both in and out of subtextual readings, as a difference between two irreconcilably competing masculinities.

As mentioned previously, the chapters in which Chester appears usually depict him at his toilet, seated or reading at a sofa, or in bed. These scenes of leisure exude luxury and idleness and add to the character’s oddly and tangibly threatening sense of ease and calm, just as how Haredale’s stubborn difference set Chester at ease (101). Like Brandon in *Paul Clifford*, Chester is also connected with mirrors, aestheticism and self-viewing, “stopping now and then to glance at himself in a mirror, or survey a picture through his glass, with the air of a connoisseur” (132). Reading a copy of Lord Chesterfield’s letters, he “was dressing, as it seemed, by easy stages, and having performed half the journey was taking a long rest. Completely attired as to his legs and feet in the trimmest fashion of the day, he had yet the remainder of his toilet to perform” (186). This state of always being in the midst of leisure, reading, and dressing whenever we open on

Chester in the novel lend an effeminacy to the character that instates a certain sense of the outmoded eighteenth-century fop, adding a layer of gothic revulsion to Chester, perhaps especially for Victorian readers reading the novel for indices of eighteenth-century nostalgia. Sedgwick's idea in *Epistemology of the Closet* that, during the Victorian phases of homosexual panic, the Gothic hero underwent a transformation into "the bachelor hero", is particularly of use here in reading Chester: "In Victorian fiction it is perhaps the figure of the urban bachelor...who personifies the most deflationary tonal contrast to the eschatological harrowings and epistemological doublings of the paranoid Gothic. Where the Gothic hero had been solipsistic, the bachelor hero is selfish. Where the Gothic hero had raged, the bachelor hero bitches" (189). These bachelor heroes, Sedgwick says, are often minor characters (189) in their respective novels, but absorb something, despite the tonal contrast, of what the masculine-paranoid double-binds and competitiveness of the older Gothic heroes represented:

the urgency and violence with which [Gothic paranoid] plots reformed large, straggly, economically miscellaneous families such as the Frankensteins in the ideologically hypostatized image of the tight oedipal family....a residue of two potent male figures locked in an epistemologically indissoluble clench of will and desire—through these means, the paranoid Gothic powerfully signified, at the very moment of crystallization of the modern, capitalism-marked oedipal family, the inextricability from that formation of a strangling double bind in male homosocial constitution. (187)

Although the Gothic hero rages and the bachelor hero "bitches", the latter is the Victorian transformation of the romantic and eighteenth-century former. This explains why Chester's particular foppish, self-concerned, anti-paternal, cosmetic masculinity and bachelorhood nonetheless are really threatening and destructive—in a way, panicking—to the masculine

formations, sons, and other figures of the novel. The “residue” of Chester and Haredale’s ancient, revenant feud comes to do harm to the current generation, and the bachelor retains something of the gothic in his functioning in *Barnaby Rudge*.

Chester, though a petty, luxuriating fop, knows these qualities to be true of himself and uses them to affect his personal schemes—for this is the scene in which he has scheduled a meeting with Hugh in his very bedroom (and at this early point, neither of the men know they are father and son). Realising that current political unrest may be warped in a direction injurious to the Catholic Haredale, Chester manipulates Hugh as his informant and go-between in street-level planning of rebellious activity. Chester lets his relaxed, sartorial silence leave an indelible first impression on the bestial hostler:

Everything contributed to this effect. [Hugh’s] own rough speech, contrasted with the soft persuasive accents of the other; his rude bearing, and Mr. Chester’s polished manner; the disorder and negligence of his ragged dress, and the elegant attire he saw before him; with all the unaccustomed luxuries and comforts of the room, and the silence that gave him leisure to observe these things, and feel how ill at ease they made him; all these influences, which have too often some effect on tutored minds and become an almost resistless power when brought to bear on such a mind as his, quelled Hugh completely. (189)

Luxury tames the beast. Chester’s brand of opulent, authoritarian masculinity is planned to work mastery over Hugh and “quell” him into the subservience required of Chester’s desired personal and political manipulation. Hugh also displays a self-reflexivity regarding the wholly relegating powers of Chester’s appearances and mannerisms, experiencing “mingled terror, indignation, and surprise” (192) at how ensnared he is by the man. Once again, the meeting of two masculinities, one refined, the other rough, is a process tintured not only by a curious master-

slave dynamic that is almost imperial in nature, but also destruction: as the narrator describes, “Hugh’s submission was complete. He dreaded [Chester] beyond description; and felt that accident and artifice had spun a web around him, which at a touch from such a master-hand as his, would bind him to the gallows” (193). Hugh’s meeting with a masculinity so different from his own—physically, sartorially, in speech and manner—leaves the impression that he shall die, and so often this is a major theme of contrasting masculinities in the Newgate novel. Dickens adds to this the dimension of the father-son relationship, as Hugh here is, ironically, not only encountering the monopolising and competitive masculine other but also his biological father. There is something mutually destructive, a working of the death drive at play in all father-son relationships in *Barnaby Rudge*.

Chester’s feud with Haredale is also mired in gendered, competitive/destructive monopolisation. Chester soliloquises as much:

“A deplorably constituted creature, that rugged person,” he said, as he walked along the street; “he is an atrocity that carries its own punishment along with it—a bear that gnaws himself. And here is one of the inestimable advantages of having a perfect command over one’s inclinations. I have been tempted in these two short interviews, to draw upon that fellow, fifty times. Five men in six would have yielded to the impulse. By suppressing mine, I wound him deeper and more keenly than if I were the best swordsman in all Europe, and he the worst.

You are the wise man’s very last resource,” he said, tapping the hilt of his weapon. (216)

Chester’s estimation of Haredale as “an atrocity that carries its own punishment” and “a bear that gnaws himself” is interesting insofar as it is unexplained; he could be referring to Haredale’s gothic connection to his brother’s (Reuben Haredale’s) murder by Rudge Sr., the criminal plot that hangs at the edges of the novel’s action. In this sense Haredale is rendered “an atrocity” that

“gnaws himself” (we are reminded of *Oliver*’s Grimwig and that text’s fascination of forms of male eating) because of his reserved and shadowy character in the novel’s first part, cut off from all family but his niece Emma, whom he shields from the Chester family by denying her the choice of marriage. Haredale is conservative and stubborn but proves to be the most tractable of the awful fathers in the text, ultimately seeing the error in his brooding ways and becoming more liberal in the management of his niece and a helping hand to the novel’s more innocent characters. What remains forever intractable, however, is his feud with Chester. The two will duel to the death at the novel’s end, Haredale killing Chester before spending the rest of his days in a monastery (a Catholically esoteric brotherhood in and of itself, outside the margins of the text). This climax of the feud presents a fulfillment of competitive masculinities at the text’s end: the monopolising tendency of competitive masculinities has its demands filled when the blood price is paid. A second reading of the image of “a bear that gnaws itself” is that the image typifies the exact sort of competitive feud Chester delights in with Haredale and one that ultimately spells his own death/destruction in the monopoly of competitive masculinities. Chester draws delight (a kind of *jouissance*) from extending the feud as long as possible, as he explains in the above, while also acknowledging that the sword at his side will be used eventually at the termination of the feud. In the same way that Hugh senses his own mortality in his father’s manipulative relationship, Chester acknowledges the death drive inherent in (what he sees as) enjoyable masculine competition, a competition that, for Dickens’ project of the historical novel, reviews eighteenth-century politics of both religion and gender made gothic (exaggerated, potent, seemingly abysmal) through the lens of murder and outdated feuds of gendered style.

Rudge (senior) is effectively as tyrannical as Chester, but in ways that feel generically familiar for readers set in comparison with typologies of the gothic novel and the figure of the highwayman. Dickens manipulates the excesses of the eighteenth-century fop with Chester and the sartorial masculinity to potent effect when the type becomes really socially destructive, marring familial harmony and the ability of the son (the young masculine gendered subject) to elect individual paths of social success and identity; the uncanny agency of the silly fop, or the bachelor hero, therefore becomes gothic, a masculine type of the past that Dickens reveals as having a surprising potency and destruction outside of the merely satirical and luxurious.

On another literary and eighteenth-century level, that of gothic banditti, Dickens introduces Rudge, the text's mysterious absentee father cloaked in the trappings of a murder-mystery. The novel opens long after Rudge's murder of Reuben Haredale, and the Maypole regulars recount the ghost story (as they call it) of Rudge's life. Their details are all incorrect: they believe Rudge, Reuben Haredale's steward twenty-two years before the start of the novel's timeline (24), to have been one of the victims of the murderer, Reuben's new gardener. The murderer stole a large amount of money from the house, and Rudge's body, identified solely by his clothing, was discovered in a nearby pond shortly after the discovery of Reuben's stabbed corpse in the house. The novel later reveals that Rudge simply switched the gardener's clothing with his own after the murder, dumping the body in the water, and therefore framing the gardener; Rudge then disappears, abandoning the pregnant Mary and the son he did not yet know.

Rudge reappears at the novel's start, unnamed, though no doubt savvy readers will make the melodramatic connection between the silent highway stranger listening in on the ghost story told by the Maypole regulars. Revenant corpse and revenant father, Rudge is the ultimate symbol

of the gothic of terrible fatherhood; he will now proceed to torment Mary at intervals, demanding money from her in dark-and-stormy night visitations at the threshold of their home, a criminal reversal of child support in which the father demands regular payments from the household. The Maypole crew take Rudge for a highwayman (15), making a joke about his sartorial failure to live up to the image (“Do you suppose highwaymen don’t dress handsomer than that?” [15]). The quip, as momentary as it may be, pinpoints sartorial conceptions as essential to the typology of the highwayman, at the same time that it participates in the very literary modes of the highwayman/gothic/ghost story that is unfolding on the stormy night: this stranger must be a highwayman considering the singular context of the stranger-enters-a-bar at night. Dickens is well aware of the typology he interfaces with in his own creation of Rudge, firmly placing Rudge in a tradition of gothic banditti and strangers that fit the eighteenth-century context of his historical project and also that of the contemporaneous literary typologies of the Newgate novel. This near-metafictional awareness of typology is cemented when Rudge is fed his own life story turned into fictionalised ghost tale to send shivers up the spines of tavern-goers, simply remarking “A strange story!” (24) before disappearing once more into the night. The reader is given everything they need to know about Rudge’s character and its place in a literary tradition that serves both its eighteenth-century origins and the demands of popular Newgate fiction.

But Rudge serves a larger, more distinct function outside the mere tyrannies of the criminal gothic father. Because the demands of Newgate criminality in a Bulwerian mode—or maybe the demands of the literary highwayman/bandit type at large—Rudge emerges from and disappears into that very night. We are told that the

roads even within twelve miles of London were at that time ill paved, seldom repaired, and very badly made...the rider could scarcely see beyond the animal's head, or further on either side than his own arm would have extended. At that time, too, all the roads in the neighbourhood of the metropolis were infested by footpads or highwaymen. (26)

The narrator has given readers reasonable historical context to believe this stranger at the Maypole is a highwayman; the nighttime environs of the Maypole are dangerous to traverse, not only on a criminal and historical level (these were dangerous times) but also on the level of the elemental (the dark of night). Rudge's flight from the Maypole is accompanied by a long discussion of elemental masculinity that encapsulates much of the novel's treatment of gendered representations particular to Dickens' Newgate:

There are times when, the elements being in unusual commotion, those who are bent on daring enterprises, or agitated by great thoughts whether of good or evil, feel a mysterious sympathy with the tumult of nature and are roused into corresponding violence. In the midst of thunder, lightning, and storm, many tremendous deeds have been committed; men self-possessed before, have given a sudden loose to passions they could no longer control. The demons of wrath and despair have striven to emulate those who ride the whirlwind and direct the storm; and man, lashed into madness with the roaring winds and boiling waters, has become for the time as wild and merciless as the elements themselves. (27)

As Sussman has written about Victorian conceptions of maleness, this passage explores the idea of essential, uncontrollable masculinities tied to symbols, processes and hermeneutics of tempestuous nature and the elements. Victorian "manliness" relied on programs of discipline that regulated these impulses of innate maleness, and Dickens enters exactly into this discourse, explaining how the throes of nature work to undo "men self-possessed" by accessing this very

core of actual maleness. Rudge is the character most tied to a conscious discussion of how a male “madness” exists defined by the chaos and passions of destructive nature and elemental energy. This is why he exists at first on the margins of the narrative, haunting Mary and Barnaby, unnamed, riding in and out of stormy weather and the crumbling byways of the night: he is uncontrollable male energy at its most elemental and its most horrible; he is maleness in its purest form—a tyrant father and criminal. Dickens’ *Newgate* once again makes an argument for the purest, most stripped-down, most essential forms of masculinity as those that have to do with criminality and madness but are nonetheless tied to expressions of nature and the primal.

Dickens’ canvas of masculinities has covered the criminal-apprentice, the aesthetic subject/natural man Hugh, the heteronormative passengers of masculine rite Joe and Edward, the bachelor-tyrant Chester and the elemental highwayman Rudge. Our titular Barnaby, the symbolic nexus of the text, who was born “upon the very day the deed [of Reuben’s murder] was known” (51), has his father’s true criminal guilt inscribed upon his flesh, bearing “upon his wrist what seemed a smear of blood but half washed out”. Thus is the son so concretely and visibly connected to the sins of the father in *Barnaby Rudge*. Barnaby constitutes a focal point for templates or representations of masculinities in the text in that he is described in ways that render him the *blankest* and therefore most *essential* masculinity, especially if readers weigh him against the tyrannically civilised Chester (as Michael Hollington captures, “Chester is an eighteenth-century ‘gentleman’ representing culture against nature” [106]). We are told of “Barnaby’s pale face, strangely lighted up by something which was *not* intellect” (37); Barnaby’s dress is “tawdry”, “ornamental” and “motley” (38), linking Barnaby to the modalities of the fool and the ability to draw out and reflect the qualities of other central characters. Barnaby’s *tabula*

rasa masculinity will highlight the unnatural and contrived qualities of tyrannical and alternative masculinities by virtue of contrast.

Barnaby's pet raven Grip, who is in the habit of mimicking words and "drawing corks", recalls the text's core concerns with the unbottling of stormy elements, both in terms of discontented young masculinities and the political turbulence the text will narrate. Varden remarks that Barnaby and Grip are "strange companions" as the "bird has all the wit" (62), a role reversal in which the innocence (or silence) of nature is visited upon the man and the intelligence (albeit nonsensical and repetitively mimicked) of civilisation passed to the animal. As Barnaby says about Grip, "He calls me, and makes me go where he will. He goes on before, and I follow. He's the master, and I'm the man" (62). Barnaby, despite having an "absence of soul" (38), also has certain talents in the eyes of others. Varden says "Barnaby's a jewel...and comes and goes with ease where we who think ourselves much wiser would make but a poor hand of it" (52). Willet employs Barnaby as occasional messenger, commenting, "He's for ever here one hour, and there the next....Sometimes he walks, and sometimes runs. He's known along the road by everybody, and sometimes comes here in a car or chaise, and sometimes riding double. He comes and goes, through wind, rain, snow, and hail, and on the darkest nights. Nothing hurts *him*" (90). Despite Barnaby's "terrible" (38) absence of soul and intellect, his face is nonetheless "lighted up by *something*" (37, emphasis mine); Barnaby's ability to morph through the elements, travel at ease, and be known by everybody recall the transformative, adaptive and liminal (running on byways) essence that constitutes masculine genius in the Bulwerian Newgate. Barnaby mirrors the abilities attached to the highwayman/criminal father: he is a master of "the road", riding where he will, even on "the darkest nights", reminding us of the very dark highways taken by Rudge at the novel's onset. There is certainly a major difference

separating him and the gothic criminal, however: Barnaby is known by everybody where the travel of the highwayman/criminal must be performed under cover of darkness, unfathomable, unknowable. Barnaby can go with open ease where others cannot, Varden remarks, and Willet notes his imperviousness (“Nothing hurts *him*”). Barnaby is linked to the elements. He has the ability to travel despite “wind, rain, snow, and hail”. Barnaby’s ambivalence of character exists in that he is uncannily *lacking* in so many compartments of humane civilisation and character (no intellect, no soul, the narrator has said) and so unreservedly admired by the people around him for these unique abilities of transitivity and genius where others cannot compete. Despite being othered from requirements of the fully human, especially by a narrator who believes Barnaby to be “terrible”, Barnaby is nonetheless endowed with these skills of transitivity—the same skills often possessed by criminal masculinities only made safe and acceptable by the innocence of nature and that certain light that exists in the man in stasis, adult in form but child in intellect and action: a man on a threshold existing between nature and civilisation.

Barnaby has such talents, but is nevertheless dogged by the stain of the criminal father and the gothic Grip who perverts the order of the natural and the civilised. Although I argue that Barnaby and Hugh are sympathetic characters set to task by a world eager to see them conform to recognised modes of criminality (and criminal masculinities), their characters remain ambivalent in the sense that their adaptability for criminality and masculine alterities can see them falling on either side of the spectrum, and indeed this constitutes much of the narrative tension in *Barnaby Rudge* just as *Oliver Twist* enjoys the drama of the “innocent” resisting corruption. Magnet performs such a reading when he argues,

The first part of the novel differentiates civilized man from two representative examples of aggressive, dangerous, not-fully-human ‘natural’ man, suggesting that the civilized man has—

and the natural man lacks—an internal faculty of civilization modern readers will see as analogous to Freud’s superego. This faculty civilized man develops through his relationship with his father. That relationship, never experienced by the novel’s two natural men, has as its content primarily the oppression of the son by the father, which, rendering the son civilized, simultaneously makes him unhappy and unfree. (5)

Young men, subjects forming ideas of the adult self based on gendered familial relationships, are in a double-bind in *Barnaby Rudge*: conform to the rule of the father and be forever infantilised, as Joe is by his father who actually describes and perceives his adult son as a boy, and Edward who cannot make the social and sexual choice of marriage for himself; lack a father, and fall into the criminality and “danger” of the “natural man”. Magnet makes a strong argument for Barnaby and Hugh being “aggressive” and “dangerous”, which I believe to be true only in the context of the mob, a creature unto itself which should be analysed apart from the individual characters of Barnaby and Hugh. Nevertheless, Magnet lights on the core distinction that sets Barnaby and Hugh apart from the other masculinities of the text. Dickens demonstrates that “civilised” masculinities are bound in tyranny, and the young man developing a sense of place in the father-son bond signs a social and gendered contract that agrees to the terms and conditions of the despot and the loss of individual sexual and gendered freedom of his own choosing. On the other hand, we have the fatherless “natural man”, who is soulless, without intellect, bestial, transitive, adaptable, and who follows an ultimate trajectory that is necessarily criminal.

Barnaby’s *tabula rasa* nature, that is, his light without soul or intellect, his mental and physical intersections between boy and man that manage to inhabit both and neither categories, his transitive skill and adaptability, is what informs his service as the text’s index of masculine potentiality and primacy, and because this potential is adaptable it is also ambivalent (an ability

to blow in any direction, to inhabit either end of a scale). This is why Barnaby is so sensitive to the text's conceptualisation of the mob. Barnaby foreshadows the text's ideas about mob formation and psychology when he stares at roils of smoke headed up the Maypole chimney, and says to Willet, "'Why do they tread so closely on each other's heels, and why are they always in a hurry—which is what you blame me for, when I only take pattern by these busy folk about me. More of 'em! catching to each other's skirts; and as fast as they go, others come! What a merry dance it is! I would that Grip and I could frisk like that!'" (95). Barnaby lights upon many of Dickens' ideas and fears of the mob: the uncanny multiplication of numbers, the crowding upon one another, the inherent self-destruction, the frenetic energy, and most of all, the tendency of the susceptible young man to "take pattern by" such destructive collective activity. Additionally, the mob is ironically codified in the natural imagery of fire and smoke. Magnet would explain that this is the logical progression of Dickens' argument about social order in *Barnaby Rudge*. People enter the social contract to avoid the violence of the "natural man" only to find that civilisation itself can enable and entail violence:

for not only does social life entail upon every individual a quantum of unhappiness which is *caused* by the process of civilization, but also the necessary *public* authority erected by men to guarantee the social contract has an inherent tendency to resolve itself into nothing more than the violence at its disposal. It thus perpetually presents the threat of becoming as savage as the savagery it was instituted to civilize. (5-6)

When epistemologies of mob action become apparent in the movement of natural processes such as rising tendrils of smoke, this is because the symbol has entered a loop that removes it from the natural, placing it in the terms of the "civilised" that enable organised social rebellion that in turn revisits the threat of destruction posed by the processes of nature. Barnaby reads the mob in

nature, and Dickens' message is that both "civilisation" and the natural state of man contain potential for breakdown into violence, perhaps to the level of an anarchic failure of logic and society, or an uncontrollable transitivity that denotes all. This scene also prefigures Barnaby's movement from the state of the *tabula rasa* unhewn masculinity into corruptible member of the mob, the violence of the Gordon Riots, and criminal status akin to his father.

Barnaby's adoption into the mob formation surrounding the eventual Riots is informed by dialectics of entering manhood. After the narrative's five-year gap, in which Mary has removed herself to a countryside cottage in an attempt to escape her husband's detection, Rudge, through the employment of sinister blind man Stagg, threatens Barnaby's criminal inception as a means by which to extort her: "I may say, out of doors, [Rudge] has that regard for you that I believe, even if you disappointed him now, he would consent to take charge of your son, and to make a man of him....He is a likely lad...for many purposes" (366-7). Barnaby's uncertain but impending adoption by the father, should she not continue to provide money, is tied to an idea that Barnaby will truly fulfill the potentiality of the gothic bloodstain marring his flesh, falling into the same line of work and the same identity as the father. This is, of course, codified in the terms of being "made a man" and being "a likely lad" "for many purposes". Rudge (through Stagg) takes advantage of Barnaby's nature as *tabula rasa*, the ambivalent nature malleable to the whims of civilised/mob/criminal action and forced application or "purposes"; in other words, Rudge becomes just another Chester or Willet, seeing the son as a means to an end rather than an independent, self-constituting subjectivity or identity. Barnaby's passage into such purposes also constitutes his entry into manhood. That a blind man mediates father and son, and the transitions into a criminal manhood, symbolises the abysmal transaction of the father-son dynamic.

When Mary woefully encounters George Gordon himself at the edge of a mob as the Riots begin, Gordon implores Barnaby to take the blue cockade and join the cause, and this descent into the madness of the mob and its criminal activity is once again codified in the terms of masculine coming-of-age. Over the noise, Mary tries to explain that her son is “afflicted” and cannot join the protest. Gordon is offended, taking her to mean that the protesters and his cause are what are “mad”. “Leave the young man to his choice;” he implores, “he’s old enough to make it, and to snap your apron-strings” (383). Types of madness get confused and conflated in the misunderstanding, all filtered through the noise of the mob. This removes Gordon from being able to read Barnaby’s mental state: he sees a full-grown man able to join the cause, unaware of Barnaby’s mental abilities, while Mary maintains Barnaby’s childlike innocence, just as many of the text’s delusional fathers wish of their adult sons. Because Barnaby inhabits this crux of boyhood-to-manhood and natural-ambivalence-to-civilised-violence, he is appropriate for the transition into criminal mob behaviour, the entrance into such posited as the choice of adult masculine subject and the abandonment of the mother. Criminal figures have easy access to the inchoate masculine subject in Dickens’ Newgate novels, and perceive that access to be a natural right. Barnaby typifies such comings-of-age, inhabiting the very center of the transition: by all appearances a man ready to make his choice, but in reality, an inchoate masculinity susceptible to either side of each scale represented: boyhood/manhood, nature/civilisation, sanity/affliction. The noise of the mob makes it impossible for individuals to read the inchoate male figure, as Barnaby is now unreadable, either transitioning or not transitioning into a recognisable adult male agency.

When Barnaby follows Gordon’s lead into the Riots, he is reunited with Hugh after the narrative’s five-year interval and taken into Sim’s gang of “The Brotherhood of the United Bull-

Dogs” (390). Hugh, who shares a “ferocious friendship” (423) with Barnaby, constantly promotes him as symbol and treasure of the riots: “[My division] hasn’t in it a better, nor a nimbler, nor a more active man, than Barnaby Rudge” (388). The characters surrounding the context of the riots are particular in pointing out Barnaby’s status as “man” at this point in the novel; hangman Dennis disparages Barnaby for asking where his mother disappeared to in the clamour of the crowds (391), insisting on a dislocation of the boy from the mother and from the familial bond itself, vouching instead for a “brotherhood” relying on criminal intentions and smacking of the mortality Dennis represents by virtue of his occupation. For the text’s two “natural men” Barnaby and Hugh, the realisation of a criminal mob mentality acts as a sealing of fraternal closeness and homosocial bonding. Hugh says:

“That’s the old stout Barnaby, that I have climbed and leaped with many and many a day—I knew I was not mistaken in Barnaby.—Don’t you see man,” he added in a whisper, as he slipped to the other side of Dennis, “that the lad’s a natural, and can be got to do anything, if you take him the right way. Letting alone the fun he is, he’s worth a dozen men, in earnest, as you’d find if you tried a fall with him.” (392)

Barnaby’s worth once again comes in malleability and being put towards an application, and Hugh believes his physical potential for violence to be “worth a dozen men”. Enamored with the actual flag rather than the cause it represents, Barnaby becomes the standard-bearer for the division, and Hugh exclaims ““Why, Barnaby’s the greatest man of all the pack! His flag’s the largest of the lot, the brightest too. There’s nothing in the show, like Barnaby”” (390). Barnaby thus becomes the symbol for the mob, the flash and the performance of the political spectacle, and “the greatest man of all the pack”. Barnaby’s promotion from force of unhewn nature personhood to realised rebellious and criminal symbol is informed by dialectics of passage into

manhood. Not only is his physical potential for violence that of twelve men, he serves as symbol of the Brotherhood of the United Bull-Dogs. In Dickens' *Newgate*, the throes of criminality, as persuasive and pernicious as they may be, are informed by the transition of inchoate boyhoods to decided, "great" masculinities, that have at their core the element of serviceability to criminal applications and symbols—and these concepts and applications are often decided externally and forced upon the subject. The natural man can now participate in an all-new form of threatening violence, and that is the eruption of civilisation itself, embodied by the terror of the mob.

Dickens' descriptions of the mob are some of the novel's most famous passages, and considering they encapsulate the novel's most social problems economically, it is easy to see why. *Newgate* readers may see political links between Godwin, Bulwer and Dickens in *Barnaby Rudge's* narration of the mob:

Through this vast throng, sprinkled doubtless here and there with honest zealots, but composed for the most part of the very scum and refuse of London, whose growth was fostered by bad criminal laws, bad prison regulations, and the worst conceivable police....The mob raged and roared, like a mad monster as it was, unceasingly, and each new outrage served to swell its fury. (393)

Dickens' animosity towards mob rebellion and violent protest emphasises the socio-economic problems of such forms. Much like with *Barnaby's* flag, the mob has lost its symbolic or meaningful function as the protesters care not for the politics of the mob but rather the mere energy and ferocity of its execution. The mob itself takes precedence over reasoning for the mob. Godwinian politics here explain that legal and penal systems have created the materials for the mob and the horrors of the Gordon Riots coupled with remembrances, perhaps, of the French Revolution that anticipate *A Tale of Two Cities*.

The narrator also adds bestial dimensions to the mob; it is a monster swollen with outrage, so it should be no wonder that the novel's most bestial masculinity, Hugh, plays one of the most instrumental roles in its activity. The narrator engages with that favourite motif of roaring, uncontainable liquids:

A mob is usually a creature of very mysterious existence, particularly in a large city. Where it comes from or whither it goes, few men can tell. Assembling and dispersing with equal suddenness, it is as difficult to follow to its various sources as the sea itself; nor does the parallel stop here, for the ocean is not more fickle and uncertain, more terrible when roused, more unreasonable, or more cruel. (413-4)

Sussman's estimation of Victorian masculinities having to do with the fear of being unable to contain such naturally potent, essential malenesses witnesses a climax taken in connection with the Dickensian mob: now that all these violent criminals, members of various gangs, and mere enthusiastic outliers have gathered, the innate power of pure "maleness" is at its height; Sim is no longer a stoppered liquid, nor is Hugh's bestial energy lying dormant. Criminal activity becomes the ultimate expression of a masculine liquid energy and destructive force, and this is easily paired with Magnet's idea that Dickens is here expressing the idea that the same untamed power of the natural man is equaled when the costs of civilisation become stringent and suffocating to the individuals from whom it demands obedience. The result is that the innate "maleness" that regimented forms of Victorian masculinity fit to control is transient (can pass from its innate natural forms into forms enabled or necessitated by rigid civilisation, such as legal and penal symbols and the mob that forms to destroy them) and mutable. The description reads like an illustration of eighteenth-century gothic masculinities/tyrannical masculinities in that the sea of destructive criminal energy is "terrible when roused", "unreasonable", and "more

cruel” than the sea. Hugh seeks to destroy the place of his former employ, the Maypole Inn, in what becomes a drawn-out scene of lavish destruction, crowned by the absolutely drowning presence of men: “the bar...changed all at once into a bear-garden...nothing quiet, nothing private: men everywhere—above, below, overhead, in the bedrooms, in the kitchen, in the yard, in the stables—clambering in at windows when there were doors wide open....more men still—more, more, more” (433). As Willet dumbly watches the destruction of his home and livelihood unfold while tied to a chair, the dismantling of the Maypole functions as the dismantling of the paternal institution (when Hugh and the men destroy the Maypole, they also destroy the site of Joe’s infantilisation) and the dysfunctional father-son bond. This is achieved through the bodily multiplication of men (figured as bears) and the forceful opening of the “quiet” domestic and professional family space into a public (“nothing private”) one, filled, uncannily, to the brim with male bodies for which the narrator struggles to account. Systems of the father-son bond that in Part I included the capitulation of individual gendered identity and choice for the son are met with the violent outpouring of male bodies, an enormously and ridiculously corporeal reality that ends in the explosion of the paternal space and the violence involved in rendering the private public.

Another reference to uncontainable maleness and the violence of the young man in the face of the patriarch being a process that moves from the private to the public comes in Sim’s address to Dolly Varden. Readers were reminded, before the destruction of the Maypole, that an additional reason for Hugh and Sim’s participation in the riots is the “carrying off a woman in the bustle” (417)—Gabriel’s coy daughter Dolly, who up to this point has denied the advances of both Hugh and Sim. The organisation of the mob thus not only has to do with essential, natural maleness reaching its ultimate uncontainable form but also the aggressive sexual election of

heretofore denied male sexualities. Hugh and Sim kidnap both Dolly and Emma (who simply happens to be there at the time) in a scene where the narrator seems to share Hugh and Sim's salaciousness: "Dolly—beautiful, bewitching, captivating little Dolly—her hair dishevelled, her dress torn, her dark eyelashes wet with tears, her bosom heaving—her face, now pale with fear, now crimsoned with indignation—her whole self a hundred times more beautiful in this heightened aspect than ever she had been before" (472). The unleashing of the mob parallels the unleashing of violent male sexual agency, and here, the narrator is complicit in the idea that Dolly's vulnerability in being kidnapped (the two men no doubt mean to ravish her) heightens her sexual desirability and magnetism. As Hugh says, "'don't be quiet, pretty mistress—make a noise—do—and I shall like it all the better'" (474). Opting for a less aggressive route, Sim explains to Dolly his social transition from apprentice to free man:

"You meet in me, Miss V.," said Simon, laying his hand upon his breast, "not a 'prentice, not a workman, not a slave, not the victim of your father's tyrannical behaviour, but the leader of a great people, the captain of a noble band, in which these gentlemen are, as I may say, corporals and serjeants. You behold in me, not a private individual, but a public character."
(477)

As criminal as the personal and professional career choices of Simon Tappertit have turned out to be, he nonetheless articulates the kernel of young male trajectories of choice and individuality in *Barnaby Rudge*: they have found solidarity in criminal brotherhood, validation in organisational bonding, agency in the destruction of the tyrannical "father" and the movement from a "private" locus of identity to the "public". All the tyranny of outmoded patriarchies, and thus masculinities, have existed in the private spaces of domestic mismanagement, and the father-son bond in *Barnaby Rudge* is tailored to annul individual formations of masculine gender

identities, occupations and sexualities, so it is the natural trajectory of male energy, when finally expelled from its too-small container, to move from the private space to the public space of the political, the criminal, the sexually violent. Essential maleness is truly terrible when the checks of the social, the familial and the legal are no longer effective, but the liberation is somehow also incredibly *necessary*. The transition is more than symbolic. The ability of the son, the orphan and the apprentice to elect individual masculinities moves from motifs of stoppered fluids to real destruction of property, violating even the fiscal rights of the individual. Barnaby holds a gaudy flag, and believes only in the reality of the flag instead of the symbol; Hugh and Sim gain access to Dolly's body; a torrent of men flood and destroy the Maypole. Natural maleness has escaped the symbol and moved to the real, and its agency is criminal action.

The mob's crowning act is, of course, to destroy the ultimate symbol of the Newgate novel: its titular prison. It is here that the father and son face each other, finally, in the same captivity. Barnaby, discovered by the authorities whilst guarding the gang's base of operations, is sent to Newgate; Barnaby and Rudge Sr. end up in the same cell:

For the sense of loneliness [Rudge Sr.] had, he might have been in the jail for a year. Made eager by the hope of companionship, he quickened his pace, and hastened to meet the man half way—

What was this! His son!

They stood face to face, staring at each other. He shrinking and cowed, despite himself; Barnaby struggling with his imperfect memory, and wondering where he had seen that face, before. He was not uncertain long, for suddenly he laid hands upon him, and striving to bear him to the ground, cried:

“Ah! I know! You are the robber!”

He said nothing in reply at first, but held down his head, and struggled with him silently. Finding the younger man too strong for him, he raised his face, looked close into his eyes, and said,

“I am your father.” (498-9)

The Newgate novel remains captivated by such “I am your father” scenes in which the connection of father and son constitutes a revelation—a convention, perhaps, inherited from the gothic novel that delights in perversions of the familial that reveal truths of society, economy and sexuality. The Newgate novel picks up on the convention when the revelation of the familial bond gains its potency from the fact that the power the father harbours is criminal and socially aberrant. Dickens’ abiding message thus far in the text has been that nearly all forms of paternity involve the morally bankrupt, the self-serving, the economically inverted and the sexually repressive; it is up to nature and an essential/elemental primordial “maleness” to break the chains and the perverse politics of such expressions of paternal power.

The true tragedy of the scene is the father’s encounter with the son in occupation of the same corruption of power, the criminal identity. The son has had to partake of the same aberrancy in society in order to undo the private and oppressive institutions of the father, leaving them in occupancy, ironically, of the same symbolic cell and illegal agency. But Rudge is really not so kind as to reconcile with his son or treat with him; he is cowed because he recognises his own criminality reflected in his son, and this is a shock to the system. Additionally, Barnaby does not recognise his father, having seen him only as the highway criminal such as the early novel signals; thus the status of criminal precedes the status of the father in *Barnaby Rudge*, in which sons, orphans and apprentices alike recognise the abuses of power inherent in the father figure, and there is no possibility for organic or symbiotic familial relationships. Barnaby

remains inchoate masculinity in its purest expression here. He struggles with “his imperfect memory”, his inability to grasp realities of society and familial politics; instead, he lights upon a clearer truth of the nature of his father’s agency. This liminally-informed masculinity, caught in transitions between nature and society, boyhood and manhood, private and public, overpowers the patriarch, Rudge “[f]inding the younger man too strong for him” (489).

The story of masculinities so far in *Barnaby Rudge*: the private oppressive spaces of the outmoded father have been dismantled by the movement of natural, dispossessed, inherent, and unhewn young masculinities into a public space that ironically participates in the same powers the fathers use to oppress, and thus do Barnaby and Rudge Sr. find themselves occupying the same cell, the same carceral space that always attends masculine power. But the mob, the unleashed sea of men upon men, still seek to destroy all systems of checks and balances in an anarchical flood, especially those powers of the penal system represented in Newgate itself. The novel’s climax arrives when the doors of Newgate come down and the prison is partially destroyed by fire, allowing the mob to free prisoners. An instance of pervasive irony comes in the form of Hugh applying to Varden, that most benign and harmless of the text’s fathers, to open the doors of the prison for the men, as Varden was the one who fashioned its locks (506). Thus does the fatherless criminal seek a final voluntary altruism from the patriarch, who literally has fashioned the locks that hold alternative criminal powers in check. Varden stalwartly refuses to aid in the release of Newgate’s criminals, and all fathers in the text continue to deny the progress of the *new* masculine, elemental maleness unleashed, as it is the function of the father to check such novel, younger male force. But this is no matter; the mob simply fires the doors, in the text’s most cathartic moment:

Now, now, the door was down. Now they came rushing through the jail, calling to each other in the vaulted passages; clashing the iron gates dividing yard from yard; beating at the doors of cells and wards; wrenching off bolts and locks and bars; tearing down the doorposts to get men out; endeavouring to drag them by main force through gaps and windows where a child could scarcely pass; whooping and yelling without a moment's rest; and running through the heat and flames as if they were cased in metal. By their legs, their arms, the hair upon their heads, they dragged the prisoners out. (518)

The mob dismantles Newgate much in the same way they have dismantled the Maypole—a torrent prizing the corporeal, and pure violent force that comes in the form of the bodily male as the narrator emphasises again and again the act of men freeing the prisoners by “their legs, their arms, the hair upon their heads”. Sons and fathers are reunited in sentimental scenes coloured by danger both bodily and legal and a certain narratorial ambivalence (the narrator tells us that not all prisoners necessarily wished to be freed [535]). The element of fire is more instrumental in this destruction, and the Newgate liberators are figured as having an immunity to their own elemental destruction, “as if they were cased in metal”. Essential masculine force has here reached its apex in *Barnaby Rudge*, as the checks of the patriarch, the law, and the social contract itself are blown apart by the unleashed and pooled power of the fatherless, the criminal, the outcast, the apprentice, the nascent, and the liminal.

Central to *Barnaby Rudge*'s insistence on these energies and discourses of masculinity is the text's concern with Linebaugh's idea of excarceration from *The London Hanged* (see *Jack Sheppard* and chapter 4). *Barnaby Rudge* has been arguing, in its many multiplications of father-son dynamics, the paths of unformed masculinities, criminalities and alternative/nonconforming forms of gendered identity and occupation that all such strictures or power dynamics that form

these relationships are *things to be freed*, if not things to be destroyed. The ultimate power of the male subject, the young and marginalised male subject especially—and this power is also extremely uncanny—is what is primal and essential, what is unformed or yet to be formed or in refusal of formation (and this is why Barnaby himself sits atop this text, its namesake, representing the pure blank template of unformed masculine identity). Forms of identification (or *sinthom*-like non-identification) that are the result of refusing to conform or the inability to conform to these identifications that unflinchingly seek to marginalise all beneath them, *Barnaby Rudge* argues, participate in criminal or abusive master-slave or father-son power dynamics, whether or not these dynamics are *legally* criminal; the result is the most marginalised of these power struggles are made to melt into the mass of the *essentially male* that seeks to *excarcerate* both itself and the other. The members of the mob wildly drag prisoners through the wreckage, and it “was said that they meant to throw the gates of Bedlam open, and let all the madmen loose” (535). The threat of the mob continues beyond Newgate’s destruction and London watches and wonders when the anarchy will come to an end; *Barnaby Rudge* triumphs in the excarceration of all masculine forms, threatening to truly see “all the madmen” of the world set on the streets to do as they will. Read as one of the last Newgate novels, *Barnaby Rudge* is a deliciously fitting end to worlds of criminals, hangmen, judges, highwaymen and masculinities jailed and put on trial: problems and representations of alternative and non-conforming masculine genders are best in need of annihilation and a return to something much simpler, much more primal, and much more elemental, albeit uncanny and wholly destructive. For now, let every man roam the byways and paths of the urban conflagration.

After the destruction of Newgate, Barnaby is not completely unchanged. Living wildly in the fields with his father for some time,

He had no consciousness, God help him, of having done wrong, nor had he any new perception of the merits of the cause in which he had been engaged, or those of the men who advocated it; but he was full of cares now, and regrets, and dismal recollections, and wishes (quite unknown to him before) that this or that event had never happened, and that the sorrow and suffering of so many people had been spared. And now he began to think how happy they would be—his father, mother, he, and Hugh—if they rambled away together, and lived in some lonely place. (550)

As is the case in much of Dickens, a plea for familial and domestic peace and normality is made once the destruction has run its course. This does not constitute a “return” to familial or domestic peace, for *Barnaby Rudge*'s thesis has ever been that no such peace, wholeness or normality has existed in the familial space. From page one, there have only been fractured scenes, unhappy sons, abusive and missing fathers. What Barnaby dreams of is a functional blended family complete with matriarch and patriarch and biological and adopted son, an example heretofore unrepresented in the text.

Barnaby will only partially get his wish. His father still sees him as “a creature who had sprung into existence from his victim’s blood. He could not bear his look, his voice, his touch” (551). Barnaby’s gothicness inferred by his father’s crimes proves to be inexorable, and Rudge’s attempts to escape the gallows prove short-lived when he is recaptured. Hugh, Barnaby, and Dennis the hangman are also recaptured and sentenced to hang; Dennis goes to his death in all the cowardly paroxysms of his ironic end, while Hugh makes a heart-rending speech about his friendship with Barnaby before hanging. Varden endeavours to delay Barnaby’s execution, and is ultimately successful in winning him a pardon for his activity in the riots. Joe repairs the Maypole with his new wife Dolly and children in tow, and Mary and Barnaby live on its property

in pastoral peace with Grip and Hugh's dog, the tamed bestial symbol surviving the untamed bestial man. The domestic scene that ends the novel is one that favours the fatherless and the widow, albeit in comfortable symbiosis with Joe and family and all their animal companions: "[Barnaby] lived with his mother on the Maypole farm, tending the poultry and the cattle, working in a garden of his own, and helping everywhere. He was known to every bird and beast about the place, and had a name for every one. Never was there a lighter-hearted husbandman" (660). If there is comfort to be found in Dickens' final representation of Newgate masculinities, it is to be found in this idea of man as "husbandman" living in the ultimate conception of the blended family: a family that includes not only humankind but animals in which there is a welcome confusion of posterity and power (Hugh's dog survives him; Joe seems to be a replacement father figure, but we are reminded enough times that he is without an arm—something essentially corporeal about him missing, a permanent mark of his rites of passage as masculine subject that necessarily leave the subject maimed and transfigured). Though Barnaby remains an old man, an image of Grip concludes the novel: "when Barnaby was grey, [Grip] has very probably gone on talking to the present time" (661). Nature speaks, and man lives in the peace of husbandry. The text's only vision of a family at peace comes with this idea that transgresses the borders of nature and civilisation, no doubt making an argument for that "natural man" at his best when in a state of aestheticised dormancy, as we saw Hugh at the beginning of the text.

Dickens' vision of Newgate masculinities in *Barnaby Rudge* relies on deconstructing all ascriptions of power on societal, legal, occupational and personal formations of masculine gendered relationships, and this is demonstrated as bombastically as possible, exploding the walls of Newgate itself. As in *Oliver Twist*, the trajectories of all boyhood emulation are

inherently problematic, prone to fall into automatised programs of criminality and alternative/criminal male desiring. So too are all male bonds in *Barnaby Rudge* similarly flawed and automatically abusive. Dickens at least leaves us with a hopeful if uncanny sense that the innate primacy of essential maleness, what some Victorians so railed against and desired to form into programs of acceptable gentlemanliness, has in it a core of the aesthetically natural and peaceful, a return to nature, a slumber amongst the dogs it so easily represents and relates to. This peace comes at the cost of masculinity at its worst: the dissolution of the mob and the torrential incarceration of all elemental maleness, a pooling of everything it means to be *male*, the explosion of the agencies of the father and the tyrant by the participation in that naturally abusive power. Essential masculinity is terrible, and is destructive, and is to be feared; but at its base, and existing as its default state, is gentle slumber, as Dickens prioritises the figure of the husbandman, a figure on the margins, at peace positioned atop the borders of boyhood and manhood, nature and civilisation. Dickens' favoured conceptions of masculinity lie not in programs of power or mutually-defining relations, dynamics, or poles; they exist on a threshold that aims to touch something completely *essential* about maleness, and return to it, to dissolve into the very chaos of its constituent elements with this final of the major Newgate novels.

Coda

Considering Foucault and Considering the Death Drive

Michel Foucault, in *Discipline & Punish*, speaks at length about criminal literature and the criminal-heroes it depicts. He reads the criminal-hero figure as “reversible”, a site of ideological political contention:

The condemned man found himself transformed into a hero by the sheer extent of his widely advertised crimes, and sometimes the affirmation of his belated repentance. Against the law, against the rich, the powerful, the magistrates, the constabulary of the watch, against taxes and their collectors, he appeared to have waged a struggle with which one all too easily identified. The proclamation of these crimes blew up to epic proportions the tiny struggle that passed unperceived in everyday life. If the condemned man was shown to be repentant, accepting the verdict, asking both God and man for forgiveness for his crimes, it was as if he had come through some process of purification: he died, in his own way, like a saint. But indomitability was an alternative claim to greatness: by not giving in under torture, he gave proof of a strength that no power had succeeded in bending...Black hero or reconciled criminal, defender of the true right or an indomitable force, the criminal of the broadsheets, pamphlets, almanacs and adventure stories brought with him, beneath the apparent morality of the example not to be followed, a whole memory of struggles and confrontations...The criminal has been almost entirely transformed into a positive hero. There were those for whom glory and abomination were not dissociated, but coexisted in a reversible figure. Perhaps we should see this literature of crime, which proliferated around a few exemplary figures, neither as a spontaneous form of ‘popular expression’, nor as a concerted programme of propaganda and moralization from above; it was a locus in which two investments of penal

practice met – a sort of battleground around the crime, its punishment and its memory. If these accounts were allowed to be printed and circulated, it was because they were expected to have the effect of an ideological control – the printing and the distribution of these almanacs, broadsheets, etc. was in principle subject to strict control. But if these true stories of everyday history were received so avidly, if they formed part of the basic reading of the lower classes, it was because people found in them not only memories, but also precedents; the interest of ‘curiosity’ is also a political interest. Thus these texts may be read as two-sided discourses, in the facts that they relate, in the effects they give to these facts and in the glory they confer on those ‘illustrious’ criminals, and no doubt in the very words they use. (67-8)

Foucault’s reading of the “reversible” criminal hero “for whom glory and abomination were not dissociated” is predictably reducible to tension inhabiting forms of politicised ideological control; it has not been the place of the preceding study to delve with great detail into the politics behind the creation and publication of the Newgate novels, though the morality behind their creation and readership, and the critical concern that these novels would create adult criminals out of their boyhood readers, could certainly be read as a form of politico-ideological control surrounding the site of the Newgate novel. Even the individual texts’ divided politics regarding expressions of criminal masculine gender—whether the alternative, excarceral masculinity is a glamorous ideal or a destructive, socially toxic reality—inhabit a discourse of Newgate novel politics decidedly “two-sided” in nature.

Newgate critics, Victorian theorists, and criminologists have at times discounted or complicated Foucauldian thinking. Mathiesen, for one, has pointed out the synoptic nature of the “sheer extent of his [the criminal-hero’s] widely advertised crimes” Foucault discusses, considering how this “sheer extent” does not necessarily obfuscate the punishment the criminal

receives but may indeed have the opposite effect of widely disseminating and making available thinking about and witness to the entire process of crime and punishment (Mathiesen 231).

Adams argues that Foucauldian paradigms do not explain the entire case of Victorian ascriptions of gender identity, writing: “Victorian men are ‘marked’ not simply by medico-juridical regulation of the body, but by assignments of gendered identity that circulate outside that discourse, and are shaped through comparatively occasional, informal, even haphazard rhetorical engagements” (4). Peter Hutchings, thinking in the terms of the criminological, writes:

Against Michel Foucault’s account of the shift from a spectacular régime of sovereignty – in which law functions visibly through its effects upon the condemned’s body, to the disciplinary régime, in which law functions invisibly through its effect upon the prisoner’s subjectivity – can be counterposed an account of the massive production of a highly public image of the law through narratives of criminality. The law’s spectacle alters from public, physical performance to public, imaginative engagement: a scenario which complicates, rather than disputes, Foucault’s thesis. (1-2)

Gatrell contends that “Foucault...utterly discounted a humanitarian history of evolving penal policy. Even as punishment is ostensibly humanized, power and control remain what punishment is about” (15), though he concedes that Foucauldian theories nonetheless fit into the changing penal policies the 1832 Reform Act and 1868’s abolishment of public execution:

If harsh bodily punishment was further curtailed in the 1830s (execution rates collapsing then) and if public executions were abolished in 1868, it was arguably because the state’s consolidation and bureaucratic competence rendered symbolic displays of might even less necessary than hitherto—and less intelligible as well. (16)

Excarceral theory itself, via Linebaugh and through Hansen, is by nature against Foucauldian foci on the “punishment” facet of criminality itself: “If confinement isolates and discriminates, excarceration causes or reveals connections between people and places that authorities and ideologies try to keep separate” (Hansen 93). Worthington reads Paul Clifford as an anti-Foucauldian figure, writing:

In a movement away from what Foucault suggests was the eighteenth-century ‘procedure of heroization,’ whereby the crime ensures the criminal’s fame, Paul’s heroism lies rather in his reformation. In Paul’s case, this must perforce take place in the colonial margin to which he is transported; the unreformed system in the eighteenth-century England depicted in the text can only punish the crime, not reform the criminal individual. (60)

And finally, Mee, considering the chaotic motif of eyes, the mob and the gaze in *Barnaby Rudge*, writes: “Eyes are indeed everywhere, looking people over and trying to control them, but often unable to make sense of what they see,” (xx) admitting the fallibility of the judicial control and panoptic supervision.

From all these examples it is possible, if not necessary, to conclude that critics view the Newgate novel and its creative, political and ideological contexts as complicating Foucault, complicating the panopticon, and complicating the forms of penal and legal control exerted upon the individual and the participants of early Victorian culture and the (historical and imagined) eighteenth century. As in Hutchings’ assertion, I argue it is important that we view Newgate literature and its contexts as not necessarily disputing Foucauldian paradigms but complicating them, and requiring a second look.

There exists a kernel of Foucauldian thinking that is boundlessly useful in understanding the criminal-hero, and that is the idea of moral dissociation that he seems to embody. In the

criminal literature Foucault discusses—and the Newgate novel—the hero’s “glory and abomination” are not mutually exclusive but rather, as Foucault says, a two-sided discourse that inhabits the same site (the criminal-hero). The criminal-hero is “reversible”, and this extends to all the messages about masculine gender the Newgate novel debates. Gentleman and highwayman, human and animal, noble and orphan, inmate and escape artist, father and son, master and apprentice, heteronormal and *sinthomosexual*—all these currents of masculinity that the Newgate novel worries over have gone to show that the virtue of their multiplication, intersection and symbiosis is the alternative, transgressive and excarceral centre masculinities inhabit. The historical downfall of the Newgate novel was the moral vitriol and contention it encountered, vitriol that did not accept that masculinities can inhabit non-regimented, non-controlled systems of selfhood and gendering. The Newgate novel embodied a profusion of ostensibly anti-masculine pluralities of masculinity; near-countless “styles” of masculinity that inhabited and moved between ends of scales and acceptable typologies of the male-gendered self in the gentleman, the scholar, and those well-controlled, disciplined, elected practices of manhood. Behind every door whispered the transgression of the cloistered criminal in his criminal band, the boundless transgressive benevolence of the bachelor, the uncontainable, deliciously publishable feat of the man cheating his prison. Newgate novels are aware of the judicial control exerted by the law, the society, even the self as represented in the criminal narratives they must face. Nonetheless, the man emerges victorious when he resists and escapes these definitions and controls. In these ways, Foucauldian paradigms are necessary in understanding the operation and function of the texts themselves, their popular dissemination, and the reversibility and predominance of the criminal-hero. They are also necessary in understanding the critical strain of somewhat anti-Foucauldian readings, which agree that the end

goals and effects of the subgenre lead away from those readings in the numerous ways glossed above.

Additionally, the Newgate novel reinstates spectacularisations of crime and of masculinities in ways that deny the Foucauldian transition away from eighteenth-century spectacles of bodily punishment and penal practice. Understandings of gender operate on long-winded description and consideration of the male body and dress; the Newgate novel practices physiognomy with gluttonous abandon, and reads constant ramifications of male-gendered style through the body. Not only this, but Newgate novels reinstate the threat and spectacle of capital punishment, albeit inconstantly (only *Eugene Aram*, *Oliver Twist*, *Jack Sheppard*, *Barnaby Rudge*, and as I will consider below, *Catherine*) fulfill penal promises of the noose, and this not always done on-page, or to primary characters/criminal-heroes. The Newgate novel performs this reinstitution of spectacularised, seemingly outmoded forms of punishment in its intractable foray into every facet of male-gendered consideration. The body of the criminal (and his outfit) could simply not be left out of the picture for their potentialities of gendered understandings of the multiplicity of male styles taking place in and out of the recognition of the liminalities of the carceral (regimented) and the excarceral (transgressive).

Nor could the threat of capital punishment be written out of the novels. These punishments to the body—namely, in the space of the specific novels, hanging—occur variably, sometimes hidden from sight, sometimes shortly explained, and at other times (we remember the cataclysmic images of Sikes' body hanging from the chimney) left dangling in plain sight for readerly contemplation. I have noted, with some regularity in the preceding chapters, that Newgate novels are novels of the death drive; the threat of the noose, of execution, hangs over

the head of every criminal protagonist, to the point in which the threat of criminal termination (capital punishment) furnishes the central tension, or prevailing tone, of every Newgate novel.

This tension is of two types, though the effect and relevancy of the death drive remains the same for every criminal protagonist. Firstly, the threat of execution, the completion/realisation/reinstitution of the penal bodily spectacle, can be uncertain for the reader. This happens in the novels in which the criminals are entirely fictional (*Caleb Williams*, *Paul Clifford*, *Oliver Twist*, *Barnaby Rudge*). There are intersections—for instance, George Gordon in *Barnaby Rudge* is not fictional, and one could, of course, make the argument that *every* Newgate criminal is fictional, rendered fiction by the creator. But it remains that the reader of a Newgate novel sourced not in a direct criminal biography of the *Calendar* or one of its variants does not know whether or not the penal threat of the novel's tone and subject matter will be fulfilled. Secondly, there are the Newgate novels that deal directly with historical criminal biography (*Eugene Aram*, *Jack Sheppard*). The fulfillment and the promise of the penal spectacle is known to the reader before they open the novel; whether or not Aram and Sheppard will hang is not a question in the tonality of these novels, and thus does the emphasis rest on how these criminals will be portrayed and aestheticised. These novels function on dramatic irony as the reader knows the penal “destination” of the criminal protagonist; the threat of the penal spectacle is anticipatory and assured, compared to anticipatory and uncertain in the Newgate novels dealing with fictional protagonists whose fates are solely in the hands of their creators.

These two kinds of penal narratives evident in Newgate novels differ by those tonal degrees, but in general, both kinds also lead to revelation that the Newgate novel hinges on anticipation and the tension of fulfillment/unfulfillment of the penal spectacle and the death of the protagonist. Tension and tone in the Newgate novel operates on the tension and tone created

by bodily criminal punishment. This is why I have noted at several junctures why and how the Newgate novel is concerned with symbols and images of death, to the point that boyhoods are caught in the process of the death drive. The criminal-transgressive character/masculinity is one, by the virtue of Newgate plot/narrative tension and Brooks' contention that narrative itself enacts repetition compulsion and the death drive, automatically coloured by a more-or-less assured foray into that final country. The Newgate novel constantly envisions masculinities that are alternative/other, masculinities that explode regulations of politics and society and desiring, yet also ubiquitously colours these experiments with the taint of the noose. This is to say that masculinity, the main discussion of the Newgate novel, has within it the program of its own narrative death, and the question of whether or not this is freeing or ablative remains consistently open.

As Gatrell writes of the changing penal landscape, "the old punishments were simply losing their meaning. As scientific rationalism made it clear that death was the last imaginable punishment, aggravations of the death penalty came to look cruelly superfluous" (16). The Newgate novel emerges at a critical time in which people and politicians were actively rethinking and rewriting penal policy, but the "old punishments" are not necessarily losing their meaning in these fictionalised spaces but rather taking on codifications of narratology, the death drive and the fate of the masculine-gendered subject. If "death was the last imaginable punishment" of Victorian scientific rationalism, then so too is it the last imaginable path of the criminal narrative itself: the criminal-protagonist's death at the noose provides all the narratological urgency palpable in the tonality and pure storytelling of the Newgate novel. That the Newgate novel furnishes two kinds, two outcomes, of the punishment, fulfillment or escape,

is enough to pinpoint how focalised these novels are around this inconceivable, rational worst-case-scenario of the mortal end.

The death drive informs both the narratological functioning of the Newgate novel and the functioning of its protagonists' "lives", and Newgate novels reinstate the theatricality/spectacularisation of those drives because, as the novels demonstrate, those drives are part and parcel of the masculine-gendered psychic and social experiences: psychic in the form of images and narrative, social in the form of the legal and social struggles male-gendered subjects in Newgate novels deal with that are all informed by a sense of imminent execution and mortality.

Perhaps no other Newgate novel is more direct and aware of this theatricality of the criminal subject's narrative path towards destruction than Thackeray's *Catherine*, which is also a logical connection as it was the function of the novel to be as reflexive upon the Newgate subgenre as it could possibly be. *Catherine*'s narrator constantly refers to the action of the novel's plot as a play, commenting, for instance, in the novel's time gap halfway through: "Thus, then, we have settled all scores....All these things having passed between the acts, dingaring-a-dingaring-a-dingledingleding, the drop draws up, and the next act begins. By the way, the play *ends* with a drop; but that is neither here nor there" (68). Thackeray comically decides to kill *everyone* who witnesses Catherine's execution at the end of the novel, rather than remaining content with the foreshadowed executions of the protagonist and the ruffians who goaded her into her life of crime, for at the end, "the Irish chaplain" sits on the spectators' scaffolding, overloading it, at which point it collapses, apparently killing everyone; "and so the slate is clean, and the sponge has wiped away all the figures that have been inscribed in our story," (129) the narrator says. But his bombastic parody of Newgate bloodlust does not end there; he then

outlines, in list form, all the “Grand Tableau[s]” which “might go nicely into one plate”, including “The Way to the Scaffold!”, “CATHERINE BURNING AT THE STAKE! BILLINGS HANGED IN THE BACKGROUND!! THE THREE SCREAMS OF THE VICTIM!!! *The Executioner dashes her brains out with a billet*” (130). The effect is humour, but in these instances Thackeray also highlights the theatrical grand guignol of the kind of Newgate novels he so detested and wrote against with the parody. The end of *Catherine* also indexes the *visual* component of the Newgate novel, with its plates and their inscriptions of the scenes, a visual nature extremely important to the themes of *Jack Sheppard*, which Thackeray singles out as the single most violent of the Newgate novels: “And what came of *Oliver Twist*? The public wanted something more extravagant still, more sympathy for thieves, and so *Jack Sheppard* makes his appearance” (132). Thackeray’s problem with the theatricality of the Newgate form inhabits two dimensions. He has a problem with the visceral, visual (in imagery and in actual illustration) violence the novels can be seen to glorify, but he also reveals, in the final pages, his contention with the *literally* theatrical component of these Newgate narratives: “All these heroes stepped from the novel on to the stage; and the whole London public, from peers to chimney-sweeps, were interested about a set of ruffians whose occupations are thievery, murder, and prostitution” (132). Newgate narratives, written or staged, do not seek to hide violence, do not seek to hide the punishment of the criminal; they display them in garish colour: “The Curtain falls to slow Music. God save the Queen! No money returned” (130). For moral contenders against the Newgate novel, the major threat lay in their tendency towards the theatrical, figurative and literal; Thackeray also understands the tendency of these novels to rely on imminent execution of their characters—of the operation of the plot(s) being a mere pathway to the “drop”.

The individual novels of the Newgate trend, as I have examined, inhabit and display the death drives in different ways. For instance, in the seminal *Paul Clifford*, the defeat of the *sinthomosexual* Brandon (his mere expiration in the carriage after learning that he has a son, and thus can no longer exist) allows for “the substitution for death, of transportation *for life*” (368). Paul is cleared of the death-markings of the inchoate, transgressing masculinity by his entrance into heteronormative marriage with Lucy in the new world, a space entirely foreign and new, outside of the Newgate narrative which *must* operate on the death drive’s narrativised theatricality (as Thackeray has handily pointed out with his parody). In *Eugene Aram*, on the other hand, the historical criminal cannot win the saving grace of the heteronormative; once a *sinthomosexual* scholar, always a *sinthomosexual* scholar, and a murderer besides. He hangs, and all his philosophising upon life, death and suffering seem rendered complete. The temptation of the heteronormative is illusory, and the narrative completes the tension of the death drive. In *Oliver Twist*, the “pilgrim” boyhood is subject to so many cyphers of criminal-male desiring, caught in so many forms of the coffin. In *Jack Sheppard*, the criminal-apprentice-boy can escape his path to the gallows by inscribing himself on the world and living as those signs that were his life; in *Barnaby Rudge*, destruction itself reinstates masculinities as primal energies, allowing them to flow back into their natural elemental forms of fire and fizzle.

All the many individual masculinities of the Newgate novel resist what was an emergent sense of “proper”, “manly” masculinity, that is, those masculinities defined by discipline, regulation, “gentlemanliness”, and in these ways they disrupt masculine social viability. Newgate novels present the struggle of queer masculinities that disrupt a multitude of powers and orders: social, familial, occupational, and most prominently, legal. Because they do this, they are also loaded with the death drive; the death of the queer masculinity, and the death that colours the

very narratological property of the Newgate novel, is the natural extension of masculinity in these novels.

This is liberating. In Freudian terms, the death drive is repetition; Newgate novels' repetition of the death drive inherent in expressions and depictions of masculine gender exercises a profusion of alternatives to rigid, disciplined proscriptions of masculinity. The death inherent in masculine gendering is a path that inscribes its own practice, its own *jouissance* and rupturing of futuristic logic—that which is the “constancy” of the “inarticulable surplus” (Edelman 9). The reversibility of the criminal-hero is one of death-expected life, or narrativisations in envisioning forms of masculine expression beyond society, beyond the law, beyond the acceptably masculine, beyond the criminal, and beyond the criminal life. And if Jack Sheppard's fate is to be believed, there is always that which is outside death. The afterlife of the alternative masculinity as criminal, transgressive legacy. Inscription within its own terms. The emblem of the criminally masculine. The masculine freedom the criminal posits repeats and repeats, and the death drive is what enables the Newgate novel's central drama and exercise of criminal-masculine deaths and freedoms.

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