

ABSTRACT

Fiction Based on Fact:
Subversions of Power and Propriety in Charles Reade's Matter-of-Fact Romances

Amanda L. Nydegger, Ph.D.

Director: James E. Barcus, Ph.D.

As Charles Reade began to write *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*, he developed a method of research and writing that he would use throughout the remainder of his career. In the *Memoir*, he declares: "The plan I propose to myself in writing stories will, I see, cost me undeniable labor. I propose never to guess where I can know" (198). This obsessive drive to discover and integrate facts into his fiction can be seen in all of his novels, but none so clearly as in the five he subtitled "a matter-of-fact romance."

Since the early 1900s, Reade has been completely excluded from the literary canon, and few critics have devoted any significant attention to his works. His two long matter-of-fact romances, *Hard Cash* and *Never Too Late* have received the bulk of critical study, but these novels are too often relegated to sensation, novel-with-a-purpose, or propagandist fiction without exploring the five matter-of-fact romances together as a whole. This dissertation provides an analysis of all five matter-of-fact romances, treating them as a new genre with its own set of criteria rather than trying to pigeonhole them into traditional genres such as realism or sensation fiction.

Reade uses the matter-of-fact romance to accomplish two distinct objects. First, he creates a woven fabric of intertextuality which he uses to invite readers to engage closely with the text, and through a number of different techniques he encourages the reader to remain in direct contact with his narrative. Secondly, through the self-conscious creation of a new genre at the height of the debate between realism and idealism, Reade subverts conventional nineteenth-century concepts of genre and art. This subversion of genre extends to the content of his matter-of-fact romances where Reade further subverts Victorian concepts of power and propriety. An evaluation of subversions of power in the prison and the asylum, subversions of propriety with regard to women's rights and roles, and psychological subversions of power form the basis of this study.

Fiction Based on Fact:
Subversions of Power and Propriety in Charles Reade's Matter-of-Fact Romances

by

Amanda L. Nydegger, B.A.

A Dissertation

Approved by the Department of English

Dianna M. Vitanza, Ph.D., Chairperson

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved by the Dissertation Committee

James E. Barcus, Ph.D., Chairperson

Dianna M. Vitanza, Ph.D.

Jeffrey S. Hamilton, Ph.D.

Joshua S. King, Ph.D.

Daniel Walden, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School
August 2011

J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

Copyright © 2011 by Amanda L. Nydegger

All rights reserved

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Charles Reade’s Matter-of-Fact Romance	7
Reade’s Place in English Fiction	8
Reade’s Collection and Defense of Fact.....	14
Reade and Realism.....	17
Fact is Not Truth: Critics’ Objections to Reade’s Use of Fact	28
The Romance Component of Reade’s Matter-of-Fact Romance.....	39
Implications of the New Genre: Intertextuality and Technique.....	48
Chapter 3: <i>It Is Never Too Late to Mend</i> : Subversions of Power in the Prisons.....	71
The Birmingham Gaol Inquest Report: Reade’s Matter-of-Fact Sources.....	72
Matter-of-Fact Intertextuality: Following the Paper Trail(s).....	85
The Romance of <i>Never Too Late</i>	92
Subversions of Genre, Subversions of Power: Mid-Victorian Prisons and the Matter-of-Fact Romance at Work in <i>Never Too Late</i>	103
Chapter 4: <i>Hard Cash</i> : Subversions of Power in the Asylums.....	129
The Rise of Psychiatry: Expert Professionals or Bumbling Mad-Doctors?	130
Public Versus Private: The Mid-Victorian Asylum.....	134
The Fletcher Experience and Print Sources: the Cold, <i>Hard</i> Asylum Facts	140

The Argument Continued: Asylum Abuse and Intertextuality	171
Romance in the Asylums: Reade's Purpose for <i>Hard Cash</i>	176
Subversions of Power in the Asylum: Alfred Hardie as Matter-of-Fact Hero	182
Chapter 5: Women and the Matter-of-Fact Romance: Subversions of Victorian Propriety in <i>The Wandering Heir</i> and <i>Singleheart and Doubleface</i>	191
Reade's Matter-of-Fact Romance: A Basis in Fact	193
Reade and Women: The Subversive Power of the Romance	203
Intertextuality and the Woman Question: Reade in Conversation.....	211
Transforming Heroines: Tracing Reade's Views on Women.....	217
The Role of the Victorian Women and the Matter-of-Fact Romance	236
Chapter 6: <i>Jack of All Trades</i> : Psychological Subversions of Power	238
John Lott and Mademoiselle Djek: A Matter-of-Fact.....	241
Accounting for Djek's Reputation in the News	251
<i>Jack of All Trades</i> , Intertextuality, and Romance	257
Man Versus Beast: Psychological Subversions of Power.....	266
An Allegorical Reading of the Matter-of-Fact Romance	275
Chapter 7: Conclusion.....	282
Works Cited	288

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am extremely grateful to Dr. James Barcus for his tireless help through this process. His wisdom, support, and good humor have been indispensable to me. I am also thankful for his willingness to direct my independent study on the sensation novel that led me to discover Charles Reade in the first place and for his encouragement in pursuing Reade as the topic of my dissertation. I am also tremendously grateful to Dr. Joshua King for the time he freely gave in helping me think through my dissertation, engaging me with the material, and mentoring me along the way. It is due in large part to him that I have successfully reached the end of this road. He has my heartfelt gratitude. Finally, I am thankful to my other readers, Dr. Dianna Vitanza, Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton, and Dr. Walden for their willingness to serve on a committee that kept them furiously reading through the middle of the summer and for their helpful insights and suggestions. Their generosity cannot be overemphasized.

In addition to my committee, I have to thank Dr. Laine Scales for her continual support. I am so thankful to have had the opportunity to work with her at Baylor, and she has truly blessed me as a mentor and as a friend. I am also grateful to Dr. Fulton for his guidance throughout my graduate school experience and for the opportunity to work as his research assistant. I had no idea then that my experience culling newspapers for particular articles paralleled the practices of Reade so closely, nor that I would be collecting myriad newspaper articles for my own research one day. Looking back even further, I am particularly thankful for Dr. Patricia Magness, Dr. Ruth Cook, and Dr. Jack Knowles at Milligan College. They had a formative impact on my love for literature, and

their continued interest in my academic career and loving e-mails have been a source of inspiration to me throughout my graduate career. Thanks also go to Baylor's Osofast interlibrary loan staff—particularly Janet Jasek and Laura Sumrall for their tireless efforts to track down books, articles, microfilm, and newspapers, and their patience with me along the way. They are ridiculously amazing. I could not have finished my dissertation without their help and without the resources that the library offers.

Finally, I cannot adequately express my gratitude to my family. My parents have been so loving, encouraging, and full of good advice, and my sister is perfection incarnate. There has never been, nor will there ever be, a better dissertation coach (or a more incredible sister). And most of all, I must thank my husband David who has taken care of everything in our lives that I have let fall, who has hugged me when I've needed hugs and ordered pizza when I've needed pizza, and who has read and reread my dissertation—yep, every page of it—offering suggestions, structure, advice and reassurance. If it weren't for him, my preposition usage would be incorrect eighty-four percent of the time, and my conclusion would be somewhere in chapter two. I have never exaggerated less when I say I could not have done this without him.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In an 1853 journal entry recorded in the *Memoir*,¹ Charles Reade announces, “The plan I propose to myself in writing stories will, I see, cost me undeniable labor. I propose never to guess where I can know” (198). This became the mantra for the rest of his career as he tirelessly collected facts from every source he could find. While most of his novels contain facts, the five novels he subtitled “a matter-of-fact romance” are an elaborate mixture of fact and fiction as Reade sought to create a new genre that was not quite realism and not quite sensationalism. These novels, *It Is Never Too Late to Mend* (1853), *Jack of All Trades* (1857), *Hard Cash* (1863), *The Wandering Heir* (1875), and *Singleheart and Doubleface* (1884), are the subject of this dissertation.

Reade took his fact collection seriously. He spent hours each day reading newspapers, journals, and other print sources, clipping articles, compiling and ordering them, and pasting them into notebooks for later use. Throughout his career, he repeatedly offered to share his sources with those who were interested, and he often sent evidence to his publishers for anyone wanting to check his facts. A result of his herculean search for articles was his unalterable belief that “truth is stranger than fiction.” The facts that he integrated into his matter-of-fact romances were often incredible, but as Reade is quick to point out, they were also always true. Critics who stubbornly refused to believe these facts and who also declined Reade’s offer to check his sources and verify the truth of

¹ Consistently called the *Memoir* by critics, this title refers to Charles Reade and Compton Reade’s volume, *Charles Reade, D.C.L., Dramatists, Novelist, Journalist: A Memoir Compiled Chiefly From His Literary Remains*. I will refer to this work as the *Memoir* throughout this work.

what he wrote enraged Reade. Because of his meticulous efforts, he was cut to the quick when critics accused him of inaccuracy or anachronism. The following letter, written to the *Saturday Review* in response to a negative review in the *Edinburgh Review*,² provides an accurate picture of Reade's pugnacity and his confidence in using facts to create believable fiction:

SATURDAY REVIEW,—You have brains of your own, and good ones. Do not you echo the bray of such a very small ass as the *Edinburgh Review*. Be more just to yourself and to me. Reflect! I must be six times a greater writer than ever lived, ere I could exaggerate suicide, despair, and the horrors that drove young and old to them; or (to vary your own phrase) write “a libel upon hell.” (313)

Always diving into print when a “criticaster” misrepresents him, Reade bombastically directs the *Saturday Review* to ignore the claims of the *Edinburgh Review*. He also implies that his writing is based on facts, being unable himself to exaggerate the pain and suffering about which he writes. And throughout his career, this type of exchange occurred repeatedly as critics derided Reade's fiction and Reade attempted to defend himself against their condemnation.

Reade's five matter-of-fact romances were particularly susceptible to this type of criticism because they are based on events or incidents which seem unbelievable. Particularly in the mid-nineteenth century when realism had taken center stage, a novel that professed to be real but read more like Mary Elizabeth Braddon's sensation fiction was not a welcome literary addition. Critics lambasted Reade's art and decided that though he could portray exciting scenes like a battle with pirates on the open sea or the discovery of gold in an exotic locale of Australia, Reade was not—nor would he ever be—an artist.

² See “The License of Modern Novelists,” *Edinburgh Review*, 106: 215 (July 1857), pp. 124-56.

In this dissertation, I contest that claim, made first by Reade's contemporaries and echoed almost unanimously by modern critics. I argue that Reade's matter-of-fact romances have not been properly evaluated; they have been assessed according to the principles of realism or sensationalism, but they have never been analyzed as a genre unto themselves. Reade subtitled these five novels "matter-of-fact romance" on purpose, and when one abandons the propensity to evaluate them using the incorrect criteria of realism or sensationalism and evaluates them instead as matter-of-fact romances, one discovers many profound truths in Reade's novels and value in his work. This is precisely the type of analysis that I perform in the chapters that follow.

In chapter two, I examine Reade's "place" in literature and look at how nineteenth-century critics and modern critics have categorized his fiction. I then turn to an explanation of his collection of factual incidents and the ways in which he defends them. From there, I provide a comparison of Reade's work with that of the realists, highlighting his sometimes-nemesis, George Eliot. After addressing critics' objections to Reade's use of fact, I point to ways that he both uses and subverts traditional romance tropes. Finally, I show how the presence of intertextuality and Reade's unorthodox textual techniques contribute in essential ways to the matter-of-fact romance genre, and I argue that through his selection of colorful facts and the subsequent creation of the matter-of-fact romance, Reade subverts traditional notions of genre. This subversion extends to the content of his matter-of-fact romances where Reade can address abuses of power and subvert power and Victorian proprieties through his incorporation of fantastic facts and incidents.

In chapter three, I begin my analysis of the specific novels starting with Reade's first matter-of-fact romance, *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*. I first explore Reade's sources for the novel—the Birmingham Gaol inquest report, as reported in a Parliamentary hearing and in the *London Times*. I then explore the intertextuality of the novel, tracing sources and discussing the ways that Reade's novel interacts and converses with Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Next, I examine the romance elements in *Never Too Late*, showing how Reade turns these principles upside down in his matter-of-fact romance. Finally, I address the ways that Reade subverts power in the prison through the actions of Francis Eden and calls his readers to action so that prison reform might take place.

In chapter four, I continue my look at abuses of power—this time as seen in the asylums of *Hard Cash*. I first provide an overview of the rise of psychiatry, emphasizing the tenuous position of the “mad-doctors” in Victorian England. In addition, I address issues concerning and differences between public and private asylums. I then elaborate on Reade's sources for the novel—particularly his own interaction with Edward Fletcher, who was falsely imprisoned in an asylum. I also focus on sources for Reade's portrayal of mad-doctors, proprietors, keepers, and visiting justices. Next, I look at the intertextual nature of *Hard Cash*, evaluating Reade's choice to print an exchange of letters between Dr. Bushnan and himself as well as another article and a suggestion for “additional reading” at the end of the novel. Then, I once again examine the ways that he incorporates romance and how he often subverts traditional tropes to serve his own purposes in the novel. Finally, I provide a reading of *Hard Cash* in which Alfred Hardie subverts authority in the asylum and escapes triumphant. In *Hard Cash*, as in *Never Too*

Late, Reade calls his readers to account, imploring them to get involved and advocate for asylum reform.

In chapter five, I look at Reade's subversions of Victorian propriety as it relates to the role of women and their rights. I begin with an exploration of contemporary newspaper and journal articles that cover issues of cross-dressing, wooing women disguised as males, and bigamy, showing that Reade's final two matter-of-fact romances, *The Wandering Heir* and *Singleheart and Doubleface*, are also built on a foundation of facts. Next, I argue that Reade uses romance tropes to subvert traditionally held Victorian proprieties. I then explore his use of intertextuality and analyze his position in relation to the conversation of John Ruskin and John Stuart Mill. Finally, I trace Reade's portrayal of the matter-of-fact romance woman, contending that as he increasingly supported women's rights and freedoms, his female characters grew increasingly strong and untraditional. I argue that the story of Sarah Mansell, Reade's last matter-of-fact romance heroine, can be read as a parable for the trajectory of women's rights from mid-century to the 1880s.

In my penultimate chapter, I address Reade's second matter-of-fact romance, *Jack of All Trades*. Because it is seemingly unlike any of the other matter-of-fact romances, I choose to address it last of all and use it to analyze the matter-of-fact romance genre as a whole. In this chapter, I trace the history of John Lott and the performing elephant, Djek, as they are described in the newspapers and then as they are described by the narrator, John Lott. I argue that Lott's narrative subverts the lighter, more entertaining narrative of the newspapers while exposing the dark "insider's" knowledge of keeping an elephant. *Jack* is perhaps the most historical of the matter-of-fact romances, and I explore the ways

that Reade incorporates historical documents to create a richly intertextual narrative. I argue that through an analysis of the intertextuality, the romance aspects of the story are also revealed. Next, I contend that this novel explores psychological subversions of power wherein the abusive keeper is paradoxically controlled by the abused elephant. I then turn to an allegorical reading that supplements my arguments concerning abuse of power in *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash*. Finally, I conclude with an allegorical reading in which Reade might be considered the elephant and the reader the keeper, and I trace the allegorical meaning and evaluate the usefulness of such a reading.

My conclusion ends with a call to scholars to engage with Reade's texts. His matter-of-fact romances, in particular, are rich with intertextuality and are important for readers today just as they were for readers in Reade's own lifetime. Indeed, his novels are significant works of fiction that deserve to be taken seriously. I briefly evaluate the ways in which Reade's reader has changed and emphasize the connections between the subversion of genre and the subversion of Victorian power and propriety. Reade's tales, though entertaining, are provocative for the reader—especially the one who is willing to relinquish preconceived ideas of generic correctness and explore the matter-of-fact romance as Reade meant for it to be explored.

CHAPTER TWO

Charles Reade's Matter-of-Fact Romance

But the Radian proofs cannot be so compressed.

(*HC* 3: 366)

In *The Makers of English Fiction*, W. J. Dawson writes:

The position of Charles Reade in English fiction is both curious and anomalous. Fame has dealt grudgingly with him. The voice of criticism, which has been uproarious in praise of many lesser men, has never spoken of him except in accents of qualification and hesitation. That he possessed rare and astonishing powers of intellect; that he brought to all the work of his pen a gigantic diligence in the accumulation of facts; that he was impetuous, generous, sensitive, loveable, pugnacious, beyond the measure of the artistic temperament in its most striking instances of eccentricity; that he exercised an influence on the social movements of his time more direct and powerful than that of any of his contemporaries in fiction, save Dickens; that he was brilliant, versatile, epigrammatic, a master of melodrama, a writer possessing great gifts of invention and imagination, with a power of catching the popular ear as remarkable as that of any writer of his time,—all this is admitted, and yet criticism speaks as though unconvinced of his merits. His fame continues to excite contention. His name is never uttered before the tribunal of the immortals without demur. (164-65)

Over a hundred years have passed, and Dawson's remarks require no alteration. Charles Reade's position is as curious and anomalous now as it was then, since his critics continue to approach him with hesitation and qualifications regarding his merits. In this chapter, I contend that Reade does, indeed, have an important place in English fiction as the creator of the matter-of-fact romance genre. I evaluate the ways in which he has been categorized in the past and suggest that we can gain a new understanding of his works by applying a new set of criteria to them—one that addresses this new genre. I then argue that Reade uses the matter-of-fact romance to accomplish two distinct objectives. First,

he creates a web of intertextuality that links the reader closely to the text, and through a number of different techniques he invites the reader to remain in direct contact with his narrative. Second, through the self-conscious creation of a new genre at the height of the debate between realism and idealism, and by his decision to integrate colorful, sensational facts and incidents into his fiction, Reade subverts conventional nineteenth-century concepts of genre and art. Realism is a genre of the everyday; by incorporating unusual—though true—events into his novels, he undermines the traditional understanding of realism. This subversion of genre extends to the content of his matter-of-fact romances, where Reade subverts Victorian concepts of power and propriety.

Reade's Place in English Fiction

Reade's place in English fiction has been a source of contention ever since he began to publish his novels. Most critics have been strongly divided as to whether Reade fits better within the sensation or novel-with-a-purpose genre, but a variety of other categorizations have been proposed for his novels as well. Other critics are at a complete loss as to how to classify Reade's novels. Unwilling to place him alongside the greats, such as Dickens, Eliot, and Thackeray, yet equally reluctant to class him with the "lesser" novelists, like Ouida, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, and Wilkie Collins, these critics view Reade's place in English fiction as a conundrum. The range of classifications ascribed to Reade demonstrates how varied his works are. Though critics provide evidence for their claims, no single conventional genre is able to fully subsume his works. Reade, however, has provided readers and critics alike with his own classification for five of the novels he wrote; he calls this genre the matter-of-fact romance. In order to understand the matter-of-fact romance, it is first necessary to explore more closely critics' established

designations of Reade's works to discover the ways that those works fit within traditional genres and also how those same genres imperfectly define his works.

Many critics wish to categorize Reade as a sensation novelist—a categorization that Reade did not altogether relish. In his preface to *Hard Cash*, he declares, “This slang term is not quite accurate as applied to me. Without sensation there can be no interest: but my plan is to mix a little character and a little philosophy with the sensational element” (*HC* 1: iii). In some respects, despite his protests, Reade does belong in the category of sensation novelist. In his essay “Wilkie Collins and the Sensation Novel,” Ronald R. Thomas attempts to define the nebulous boundaries of the sensation novel, arguing that it typically centers around money and success, a “menacing secret,” mistaken identity, and class status, while often focusing in part on the professional rise of lawyers and doctors (482-85). While Thomas' delineation is a good place to start, Helen Debenham's even broader definition emphasizes just how much the sensation novel can encompass:

For the most part [sensation novels] entailed complex plots depicting crime, deception, secrets, and their almost inevitable concomitant, detection, with its overtones of spying and betrayal. Murder and attempted murder, arson, fraud and forgery, real and imagined bigamy, impersonations and disguises, illegal incarcerations, inherited and imputed insanity, seduction and betrayal, all abound in sensation novels, along with often exhaustive explorations of the implications for victims and perpetrators alike. (211)

Based on these two descriptions, much of what Reade calls “matter-of-fact romance” falls into the sensation category. His plots encompass many, if not all, of the issues addressed in the definitions above. Moreover, Winifred Hughes adds another layer to the definition of the sensation novel, explaining that authors “had designs on a reader's body as well, appealing directly to the senses and stimulating, according to various reviewers,

such physiological reactions as creeping flesh, shocked nerves, teeth on edge, elevated blood pressure, and even sexual arousal” (260). Here again, Reade’s novels certainly fit. Declarations from reviewers, both positive and negative, demonstrate how physically Reade’s novels affected his readers. Of *Never Too Late*, a reviewer in *The New Quarterly Review* asserts, “Many scenes might be called heart-rending without exaggeration” (“It Is Never” 395). Reviewers of *Hard Cash* have similar reactions: the novel is “a succession of adventures which fairly turn our stomach with ‘sensation’ scenes of the most violent kind” (“Hard Cash” LR 45); *Hard Cash* is full of “horrors which thrill the nerves and curdle the blood” (“Hard Cash” SR 55). Indeed, the scenes “may serve, in the coldest weather, to warm the reader’s blood” (“Hard Cash” LR 45). However, as Reade himself asserts, his novels cannot be categorized so easily. Undoubtedly, he uses many of his episodes for their sensational value, but he also does so for a purpose, thus giving rise to many critics’ categorization of *Hard Cash* as “a novel-with-a-purpose.”¹

Reade was, from first to last, a social reformer. Easily enraged at the injustices with which he came into contact—real or imagined—Reade constantly sought fairness for the afflicted and reformation of the laws through which they had been oppressed. Throughout his career he addressed abuses in prisons and asylums, called for reforms in the law and medical professions, and even wrote against the practice of tight lacing. Undoubtedly, Reade wrote novels with a purpose. Nevertheless, this category also fails to fully encapsulate the genre of Reade’s matter-of-fact romances. While *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash* address institutional abuse—within the prisons and asylums

¹ See, for instance, Dianna Vitanza’s argument in “Charles Reade: A Reevaluation.” See, also, Sheila M. Smith, “Propaganda and Hard Facts in Charles Reade’s Didactic Novels,” p. 135.

respectively—*Jack of All Trades*, *The Wandering Heir*, and *Singleheart and Doubleface* concentrate on issues as diverse as animal cruelty, cross-dressing, and transatlantic bigamy. In other words, Reade’s matter-of-fact romances are not all written to raise awareness about social evils and to advocate for reform. Thus, to categorize all his matter-of-fact romances as novels-with-a-purpose is to oversimplify them, particularly in regard to the latter three—and far lesser known—works.

Most critics place Reade squarely within either the sensation category or the novel with a purpose category. However, a few critics have posited other categorizations for Reade and his works. Emerson Grant Sutcliffe declares, “Charles Reade’s position as the earliest deliberately and thoroughly documentary novelist needs no reiteration” (“Notebooks” 64), and Lewis Haines offers a similar assertion nearly fifteen years later: “Charles Reade holds a place apart by virtue of the pioneer character of his fictional procedure. The first English novelist to make a systematic use of human documents, he has been regarded by certain of his latter-day critics as a kind of forerunner of Émile Zola” (463). Ann Grigsby also supports Reade’s categorization as a documentary novelist, writing, “In the mid-nineteenth century, Reade achieved his greatest success in documentary novels advocating social reform” (“Charles” 141). On the other hand, though Sheila M. Smith categorizes *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash* variously as “novels with a purpose” (135) and as novels belonging to sensation fiction (145), she also affirms that “*It is Never Too Late to Mend* can be described as a propaganda novel” (141). In 1994, Edward Said uniquely placed Reade’s novels within “the genre of adventure-imperialism” (155), and in 2010, Christina L. Krueger simply categorized Reade as a “muck-raking Victorian novelist and playwright” (128). While all of these critics have

legitimate reasons for their categorizations, the present disparity in classification indicates that critics still do not have a satisfactory way of grouping Reade's works.

Other critics are simply at a loss as how best to categorize Reade. Writing soon after Reade's death, Algernon Swinburne praises Reade, even while he must admit that Reade's future status among authors is unsure: "What this rank [Reade's place in literature] may be I certainly do not pretend or aspire to foretell. But that he was at his very best, and that not very rarely, a truly great writer of a truly noble genius, I do not understand how any competent judge of letters could possibly hesitate to affirm" (302). Writing just thirty years later, Michael Sadleir warns, "If no judgment is here attempted of the work of Charles Reade, it is because he refuses to be 'placed,' in the opinion of the present writer. At times he is so fine, so resilient, so impressive; at others, the dullest of pamphleteers, a cramped Meredith in style, a very waxwork among sensationalists" (159). Contemporaneously, W. L. Courtney also wavers: "As a novelist, Charles Reade is not unworthy to be ranked with literary giants such as Thackeray, and Dickens, and George Eliot." But, he continues, Reade "cannot justly be compared with any of them, for his gifts were dissimilar" (152). Elton Smith also concludes his biography of Reade with uncertainty: "Thus, perhaps as aptly as possible, Charles Reade is placed just below the giants and just above the second rank of merely popular writers of the day. He remains in a distinguished but perhaps lonely limbo of his own" (157). Much more recently, Richard Fantina irresolutely acknowledges that "although Reade cannot be described as anti-imperialist, neither can he be convincingly accused of jingoism" (148). Indeed, outside the relatively agreed upon genres of sensationalism and novel-with-a-purpose, critics' categorization of Reade is vacillating and uncertain.

Though critics have tried to categorize Reade's novels in all the ways outlined above, conventional genres are unable to contain all that Reade's novels encompass. Part sensationalist, part realist, part documentary novelist, part propagandist, part muckraker—Reade's novels contain a little bit of everything. It is Reade, therefore, who best describes the type of novel he is writing, and in the case of five of his novels, it requires the creation of a new genre altogether. Reade calls his novels "matter-of-fact romances," a genre that he describes as "fiction built on truths" (*HC* 1: iii). The first published English editions of *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*, *Jack of All Trades*, *Hard Cash*, *The Wandering Heir*, and *Singleheart and Doubleface*, were all subtitled "a matter-of-fact Romance" and are, as Reade claims, based on facts, events, and incidents that he collected from a myriad of sources.² Although these works share characteristics with many different genres, Reade purposefully creates a new form that differs in at least one critical way from the rest: his insistence on having a factual basis for every aspect of his

² Though *The Cloister and the Hearth* is almost always discussed as a matter-of-fact romance, the first and second English editions of the novel were subtitled, "A Tale of the Middle Ages" (Parrish 206). Only in the first American edition was *The Cloister and the Hearth* finally subtitled "A Matter-of-Fact Romance" (209). Since this novel was not originally subtitled "A Matter-of-Fact Romance," and because it is so vastly different than the other five novels that Reade did originally subtitle "A Matter-of-Fact Romance," I have elected not to include *The Cloister and the Hearth* in my analysis.

Jack of All Trades was originally serialized in *Harper's Magazine* from December 1857 to May 1858. In 1858 *Jack of All Trades*, subtitled "a Matter-of-Fact Romance," was published together with *Autobiography of a Thief* under the title *Cream* in England (201, 200). *The Wandering Heir* was originally published in the 1872 Christmas edition of *The Graphic* and subsequently published by Hunter, Rose, and Company of Toronto with the subtitle "A Christmas Story" (240, 239). In 1873 James R. Osgood and Company, Late Ticknor & Fields, and Fields, Osgood, & Co., of Boston published *The Wandering Heir* with no subtitle as did Harper & Brothers, Publishers of New York (240, 241). *The Wandering Heir* was published for the first time in England in 1875 in the same edition as *Trade Malice* and contained the subtitle, "A Matter of Fact Romance" (242). The first American edition of *Singleheart and Doubleface* (1882) was also published without a subtitle, but on page one above the text of the novel, the subtitle "A Matter-of-Fact Romance" is included (260, 261). When the first English edition of *Singleheart and Doubleface* was published in 1884, it contained the subtitle, "A Matter-of-Fact Romance" (261). Both *It Is Never Too Late to Mend* and *Hard Cash* were originally published with the subtitle "A Matter-of-Fact Romance" (183, 211).

I have chosen the five novels Reade subtitled "A Matter-of-Fact Romance" in the first English edition for the subject of this dissertation. All quotations will come from the first English editions of these novels.

novels. He vows, “never to guess where I can know,” which leads him to diligently inundate his novels with verifiable events and incidents from real life (C. L. Reade and Compton Reade 198). Reade was convinced that his calling was to base his fiction on fact for the dual purpose of rousing his readers to action when reform was needed and of highlighting the strangeness of real life.³

Reade’s Collection and Defense of Fact

Reade was an avid collector of facts, and he affirms in his preface to *Hard Cash* that “these truths have been gathered by long, severe, systematic labour, from a multitude of volumes, pamphlets, journals, reports, blue-books, manuscript narratives, letters, and living people, whom I have sought out, examined, and cross-examined, to get at the truth on each main topic I have striven to handle” (*HC* 1: iii). Though he is most well-known for culling print sources for remarkable facts, Reade also personally visited the places about which he wrote. He observed prisons in Durham, Reading, and Oxford to acquire facts for *Never Too Late*, and he visited asylums as he prepared to write *Hard Cash*. Reade also interviewed many people to obtain firsthand accounts of places and events he would later incorporate into his novels. In 1858, Reade learned of a man named Fletcher who had been wrongfully incarcerated in an insane asylum and had just made his escape. Upon examining Fletcher and concluding that he was perfectly sane, Reade adopted his case with passion. He took Fletcher to doctors who also attested to his sanity, presented him with a certificate of sanity, and agreed to testify in court. Reade obtained

³ Sheila M. Smith writes that Reade “evolved a ‘system’, which can be summed up as the use of a great deal of fact and of a little imagination. The novel was not his favorite medium, so it was convenient for him to have a rule-of-thumb to work by. For him a good plot was essential in a novel. He found invention difficult, and his imagination needed a ground plan of facts to work upon, so he made a virtue of necessity and insisted that good fiction is founded on fact” (135). This claim rejects the possibility that Reade self-consciously created the matter-of-fact romance genre for a particular purpose.

representation for Fletcher in court and provided for his needs over the course of the trial. Reade also roused support through the press in a series of letters aimed to let the light of day shine in “Our Dark Places.” Thanks, in large part, to Reade, Fletcher won his case and was awarded an annuity of £100, £50 cash, and damages (Burns 203). This personal connection with Fletcher opened Reade’s eyes to the injustices of the Lunacy Law and the treatment of residents in the insane asylums and provided the impetus for his story, *Hard Cash*.

Though Reade was meticulous in his collection, classification, and assimilation of facts, many critics and readers doubted the authenticity of his stories. He was accused of anachronism, particularly in *The Cloister and the Hearth* and *The Wandering Heir*—an accusation which frustrated and angered him. He exerted great effort in his research and fact gathering so that his novels might be correct in every particular; accusations of inaccuracy inevitably stung him. He was also often charged with gross exaggeration, especially in those of his novels that targeted abuses within the institution, such as *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash*. And as a natural consequence of attacking institutions and those who worked in them, Reade was disparaged by professionals who were offended by his aggressive insistence on generalizing abuses he believed were problematic. Reade tended to portray the entire profession of doctors, or lawyers, or psychologists as culpable, and understandably, many of these professionals wrote contemptuous letters rejecting Reade’s claims and extending outright denials. Furthermore, these letters often challenged Reade to provide proof for his allegations, which, with Reade, was always a mistake.

Reade believed in the power of the press, and when aspersions were cast on his work, he would respond immediately, impetuously, and often belligerently, with a letter to the editor; many times, these letters were suppressed, much to Reade's chagrin. Nevertheless, he heartily defended himself and flaunted his proofs, even going so far as to invite genuinely interested persons to his house to view his sources: "a large portion of this evidence I shall be happy to show at my house to any brother writer who is disinterested, and really cares enough for truth and humanity to walk or ride a mile in pursuit of them" (*HC* 1: iv). His pugnacious self-defense was often castigated by critics of his novels, which, of course, led Reade into additional wars of words in the columns of the papers.

The facts that Reade gathered for his novels have a wide range of purposes. First, portraying a realistic setting was important to Reade. Outdoor scenes must be depicted faithfully with authentic descriptions of the flora and fauna, while indoor scenes must be accurate with regard to clothing, food, and ornamentation. Second, Reade's fact-gathering enabled him to create convincing characters. He visited clergymen to get a sense of how a parson should preach; he studied American dialects so that his American characters would sound genuine; he drew on his varied experiences and acquaintances and modeled his men and women after men and women from real life. Third, Reade wrote about spectacular events for the sensational effects that they produced. Reade was fascinated by stories of bizarre events and strange people and sought ways to include them in his fiction. Through the inclusion of extraordinary fact, Reade sought to show that real life was actually fantastic, and this demonstration of reality subverted the basic tenets of realism. Sometimes a news report would provide the spark for an idea that

comprised a major portion of his novel. For example, an inquest into the suicide of a prisoner at the Birmingham Gaol provided the seed for nearly half the content of *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*. Even secondary events in the novel are based on fact, such as the Henley boat race between Oxford and Cambridge in *Hard Cash*. Finally, Reade hoped drawing from true events and authentic sources would lead his readers to *act*. In *Hard Cash*, for instance, Reade collects instances of abuse from various sources and creates a singly hellish asylum in which Alfred Hardie sees or personally experiences all of the accumulated abuses. He exaggerates, not the facts themselves, but their incidence, in order to incite the public to anger and thus to effect social change. Reade combines his four main purposes for using facts to create compelling matter-of-fact romances.

Although Reade's use of fact in his matter-of-fact romances is of utmost importance, to focus solely on the "matter-of-fact" without any regard to the "romance" would be doing Reade a great injustice. While Reade's fact gathering was vital to what he considered his art, it is important to remember that he did not profess to be a journalist. He did not claim to present facts in the same ways that a newspaper would. His novels, after all, are matter-of-fact *romances*—*fictions* based on fact. Though he prided himself on the accuracy of his facts and believed they were necessary, his novels were ultimately fictional. Many of the objections raised by critics about Reade's work are a result of disregarding the romance component of his novels.

Reade and Realism

While Reade viewed his fastidious use of fact as a contribution to realism, few, if any, critics would be willing to categorize Reade's novels as realist fiction. Writing ten years after Reade's death, William Dean Howells refers to Reade as "a man who stood at

the parting of the ways between realism and romanticism,” and suggests that “if he had been somewhat more of a man he might have been the master of a great school of English realism; but, as it was, he remained content to use the materials of realism to produce the effect of romanticism” (193). This summation of Reade’s art underscores the debate that began around the mid-nineteenth century over realism and its definition, a debate which remains a topic of discussion today.

The realism debate has generated an inordinate amount of criticism as writers and critics from the mid-nineteenth century onward have attempted to define terms and offer parameters for what realism truly is. George Levine asserts, realism “is a word that begs so many questions that it seems, at first, and at second and third thought, almost absurd to try to talk about it as though it were possible to define it adequately or develop a coherent set of statements about it” (187). However, most critics use George Eliot’s theory of realism as a starting place for their discussions. Often considered “a pioneer of literary realism in England,” Eliot was and continues to be cited for her definition and analysis of realism in a series of reviews for the *Westminster Review* and in her novels such as *Adam Bede*, *Daniel Deronda*, and *Middlemarch* (Byerly 106). As many critics have discussed,⁴ Eliot’s theory in which she contends that realism “is not simply an aesthetic goal, [but also] a moral one” has become a foundation for the understanding of realist fiction (Byerly 106). Levine explains, “George Eliot [. . .] made clear that for her, knowing was a moral enterprise. [. . .] She sought to combine knowing and feeling in an art that

⁴ See, for instance, James D. Rust, “The Art of Fiction in George Eliot’s Reviews,” “George Eliot’s Hierarchy of Representation” in *Realism, Representation, and the Arts in Nineteenth-Century Literature* by Alison Byerly, “George Eliot’s Hypothesis of Reality” in George Levine’s *Realism, Ethics and Secularism*, Lyn Pykett, “The Real versus the Ideal,” and Ruth Yeazell, *Art of the Everyday: Dutch Painting and the Realist Novel* for further discussions of Eliot’s theory of realism. See, also, Mary Poovey, “Forgotten Writers, Neglected Histories” for an enlightening overview of the debate over idealism and realism and its ultimate result of solidifying the canon at the expense of writers such as Reade.

recognized, affirmed, and valued the hard unaccommodating actual and fought through the relentless appeals and limits of the self” (9). Because Eliot is traditionally heralded as the accepted standard of realist fiction, her theory of realism is useful for highlighting the ways in which works of the canonical realists differ from Reade’s matter-of-fact romances.

While Eliot is held as the standard of realism and Reade is never given the title of “realist,” their works were nevertheless often compared favorably during their careers; therefore, the similarities between Eliot’s realist fiction and Reade’s matter-of-fact romances bear investigating. As one examines the ways in which Eliot uses realism in her novels, a number of parallel features in Reade’s matter-of-fact romances become evident. In many ways, Eliot’s determination to “[value] life and others ostensibly different, unsympathetic and unappealing” corresponds with Reade’s defense of the truly different, unsympathetic, and unappealing individuals in Victorian society—prisoners and asylum inmates (Levine 9). Alison Byerly describes Eliot’s objective in fiction writing thus: “It is not enough [for her] to paint a pleasing picture; she wants to create characters with *presence*, who will evoke the same feelings as actual human beings” (21). Reade writes for a similar purpose, desirous of creating characters that make people “realize” the events and people that comprise reality. As he writes, “Those black facts [. . .] have been told, and tolerably well told, by many chroniclers. But it is my business, and my art, and my duty, to make you Ladies and Gentlemen *realize* things, which the chronicler presents to you in his dim, and cold, and shadowy way; and so they pass over your mind like idle wind” (C. L. Reade and Compton Reade 244). Further similarities between the works of Eliot and Reade appear when one examines what James D. Rust

describes as Eliot's "artistic credo" of realism. He argues that her credo has four parts: "(1) Art's greatest benefit to men is to widen their sympathies. (2) Art has a moral mission; it must develop moral and spiritual as well as sensuous beauty. (3) Art must minister morality through pleasure, not pain. (4) Art can fulfil its moral and aesthetic purposes only if it tells the truth about life, only if it presents life realistically" (164). If one accepts these as the basic principles of realism, Reade ought also to be considered a realist.⁵ Just as Eliot does, Reade wishes to provide a moral awakening in his readers by widening their sympathies through a presentation of real facts of real life. Here again, however, it is Howells who offers an explanation as to their divergence: Reade "had not the clear, ethical conscience which forced George Eliot to be realistic when probably her artistic prepossessions were romantic" (194).⁶

Eliot and Reade also share some important artistic characteristics. Byerly draws attention to Eliot's use of the dramatic and dialogue in *Daniel Deronda*.⁷ "Conversations between characters," Byerly observes, "especially those between Gwendolen and Grandcourt, contain more straight dialogue and less interspersed commentary than is

⁵ Rust's third factor might be a point of contention for some—Reade's narration of the abuses found in the prisons and asylums are hardly pictures of "pleasure, not pain." Neither, however, can the oppressing fate that tempts Maggie Tulliver into a boat with Stephen Guest in *The Mill on the Floss* nor Adam's anguish at the knowledge that Hetty Sorrell is a fallen woman in *Adam Bede*, for instance, be considered pleasurable.

⁶ Though Howells is right to differentiate between the two authors, his insinuation that Reade lacked a "clear, ethical conscience" is erroneous. It is precisely Reade's conscience that impels him to speak out against social abuses and to call for increased open-mindedness among his readers.

⁷ Interestingly, Walter C. Phillips uses *Daniel Deronda* to argue exactly the opposite point: There were two tendencies in the style of fiction corresponding to the two main ideals of its purpose—that of drawing "real portraits," in Trollope's phrase, and that of presenting strong passions dramatically. The two extremes are George Eliot and Charles Reade. The plain tendency among the realists is to gravitate toward the method of *Daniel Deronda*, let us say, where George Eliot's preoccupation with the mental processes begins to overshadow other considerations; among the dramatic group toward the method of *Peg Woffington*, a novel consisting of the dialogue of a stage piece slightly elaborated. (194-5)

usual in Eliot's earlier novels" (132). Reade's critics often point out these same propensities toward the dramatic and use of dialogue in his works as well. As a lover of the theatre, Reade is well known for his dramatic plots and characters as well as for the prominence of dialogue in his novels.⁸ In both aesthetic purpose and in artistic presentation, Eliot and Reade seem to have produced comparable works.

Though elements of Eliot's and Reade's works can be positively compared, more often the works of these two novelists are vehemently contrasted. Reade was the favorite of the reading public; Eliot was admired by the critics.⁹ Reade was the author of dramatic plot and character; Eliot had a "contemplative, analytic mind and discursive, expansive manner" (Muller, "Documentary" 14). Eliot typified realism; Reade overstated his case through a barrage of facts. The differences seem to overwhelm the similarities. While they do possess similar aims, their methods for bringing those aims to fruition are vastly different. Byerly writes of Eliot:

In order to bring her characters to life, Eliot has to produce in the reader's mind feelings like those generated by real people. She does this by creating portraits that compare the fictional character to a type of person the reader might know. Like the painted portrait that is simultaneously representation and representative of the pictured subject, Eliot's portraits establish an imaginative space where the fictional world and the real world come together. And as with painted portraits, this method of depiction seeks a high degree of control over the viewer/reader response. (121)

⁸ Emerson Grant Sutcliffe has done a great deal of important work on Reade's propensity for the theatre and for its manifestation in his novels. See "The Stage in Reade's Novels," "Plotting in Reade's Novels," "Psychological Presentation in Reade's Novels," and "Unique and Repeated Situations and Themes in Reade's Fiction" for a more in-depth study of Reade's use of the theatre and dialogue in his novels.

⁹ See Muller, "Charles Reade: Two Documentary Novels": "Nevertheless, the reading public, which preferred Reade's epigrammatic style and dramatic instinct to George Eliot's contemplative, analytic mind and discursive, expansive manner, hailed Reade as its favourite; this caused Walter Besant to say in 1882, two years before Reade's death, that if all English-speaking readers were to vote for the best of living novelists, there would be little doubt that they would have chosen him" ("Documentary" 14).

For example, in *Adam Bede*, Eliot describes Arthur Donnithorne in such a way that the reader imagines someone he or she has encountered in real life:

If you want to know more particularly how he looked, call to your remembrance some tawny-whiskered, brown-locked, clear-complexioned young Englishman whom you have met with in a foreign town, and been proud of as a fellow-countryman—well-washed, high-bred, white-handed, yet looking as if he could deliver well from the left shoulder and floor his man: I will not be so much of a tailor as to trouble your imagination with the difference of costume, and insist on the striped waistcoat, long-tailed coat, and low-top boots. (61)

Eliot's technique of describing a character allows the reader to be involved in the descriptive process. She outlines the characters and allows her readers to shade them in with familiar colors. Reade, on the other hand, has in mind very specific people whom he tries to portray to his readers. Instead of describing a type, as Eliot does, Reade describes the precise individual he wishes the reader to see in his or her mind. Therefore, in *Hard Cash*, Reade describes Edward Dodd as having

[. . .] a great calm eye, that was always looking folk full in the face, mildly; his countenance comely and manly, but no more; too square for Apollo; but sufficed for John Bull. [. . .] He was five feet ten; had square shoulders, a deep chest, masculine flank, small foot, high instep. To crown all this, a head, overflowed by ripples of dark brown hair, sat with heroic grace upon his solid white throat, like some glossy falcon new lighted on a Parian column. (*HC* 1: 2)

His sister, Julia, is described as specifically:

Her figure was tall, lithe, and serpentine; her hair the colour of a horse-chestnut fresh from its pod; her ears tiny and shell-like, her eyelashes long and silky; her mouth small when grave, large when smiling; her eyes pure hazel by day, and tinged with a little violet by night. [. . .] Julia's fair features were but the china vessel that brimmed over with the higher loveliness of her soul. Her essential charm was, what shall I say? Transparency. (*HC* 1: 2)

Reade does not give the reader the same freedom that Eliot does when describing character. His descriptions are specific and can only suggest one person to the mind of

the reader—the person that Reade himself describes. In addition, Reade typically identifies his characters even more with their actions than with their physical traits. Edward, for example, “could walk up to a five-barred gate and clear it, alighting on the other side like a fallen feather; could row all day, and then dance all night; could fling a cricket ball a hundred and six yards; had a lathe and tool-box, and would make you [. . .] any [. . .] moveable, useful, or the very reverse. And could not learn his lessons, to save his life” (*HC* 1: 2). The reader, therefore, knows exactly what Edward looks like and how he would react in any particular case, whereas the reader knows what their own familiar version of Arthur Donnithorne looks like and, because of personal experience, perhaps, what he may or may not do. Though Byerly argues Eliot’s method of description claims a high degree of control over the reader, Reade’s approach to description constrains the reader even more. Eliot provides an outline—true to life for each individual reader; Reade presents a portrait already filled in with uncompromising color.

None of their works are more similar than the medieval tales of Reade and Eliot, *The Cloister and the Hearth* and *Romola*, respectively.¹⁰ These two novels and their critical reception typify the foundational difference between Eliot’s (and by extension, the realists’) works of realism and Reade’s matter-of-fact romances. Many critics, and especially Reade himself, believed that Eliot’s idea for *Romola* came from him. In a letter to his housekeeper, Mrs. Seymour, Reade disdainfully refers to Eliot as “Georgy Porgy” and asks, “Is it egotism, or am I right in thinking that this story of the fifteenth

¹⁰ Both novels were medieval stories, the former first published serially as *A Good Fight*, beginning July 1859 in *Once a Week*. The novel was later published in four volumes as *The Cloister and the Hearth* in 1861. Eliot’s *Romola* was first serialized in *Cornhill Magazine* in July 1862 and subsequently published in novel form in 1863.

century has been called into existence by my success with the same epoch?" (C. L. Reade and Compton Reade 302). Over ten years after the original publication of *A Good Fight*, a reviewer from *Once a Week* alleges that Eliot "often borrows ideas from Charles Reade, and sometimes improves them, sometimes bungles them" ("Mr. Charles Reade" 83). One of Eliot's "bungled" borrowings is the idea of a medieval romance. Reade's "faithful imitator" produced *Romola*, an "un-idea-ed" title, whose "narrow canvas" and "faint colors" are a "sure sign imagination is wanting" ("Mr. Charles Reade" 85).

While the *Once a Week* reviewer overstates the case, perhaps (the review concludes with the pronouncement, "By the million readers of the time to come, Reade, Dickens, and Thackeray will be handed down to fame together in every English-speaking country" [87]), he/she does raise an issue that seems to get at the heart of the difference between Eliot's and Reade's styles. "You can find a thousand Romolas in London," writes the reviewer, "because she is drawn from observation, and is quite out of place in a medieval tale. But you cannot find the characters of 'The Cloister and the Hearth,' because they are creations" ("Mr. Charles Reade" 85-86).¹¹ Rust observes that Eliot repeatedly "objects to 'unrealistic' novels whose characters do not behave or speak like real people, and whose problems are not those of real life" (165). Indeed, Eliot is a master of observation and affords her readers the luxury of being guided by gentle suggestions of character that she can describe so well. But her careful observation of humanity occurs squarely within the mid-nineteenth century, not in medieval times. It

¹¹ Walter Besant echoes the sentiment of the *Once a Week* reviewer:

In the man's work we find action, life, movement, surprise, reality. In the woman's work we find languor, tedium, and the talk of nineteenth-century puppets dressed in fifteenth-century clothes. *Romola* is a woman of the present day; *Tito* is a man of the present day; the scholar belongs to us; *Savonarola* is like a hysterical Ritualist preacher; *Tessa* is a modern Italian peasant girl; nothing is mediæval but the names and the costumes. (214)

makes sense that the characters of *Romola* would give the impression of “Victorians disguised in mediæval costume” (Elwin 158). Eliot has studied the forms and faces of nineteenth-century life. Reade, on the other hand, is praised by the *Once a Week* reviewer for his “gallery of such portraits, painted in full colours to the life” (“Mr. Charles Reade” 85). Reade, whose obsessive fact collecting enabled him to write a medieval romance that readers and reviewers alike recognized as historically accurate, immersed himself in the world of his story, and thus, “the quaint Dutch figures live; [. . .] Germany lives; [. . .] the medieval French soldier is alive again [. . .], and Roman men and women live again” (“Mr. Charles Reade” 85). Reade’s characters are not entirely imagined; they are not sketches to be shaded in by the reader’s own palette of experiences. Rather, his characters are based in fact; they are specific people with precise characteristics. Reade is the inflexible artist who fills in his characters with bold colors; Eliot is subtler, partnering with her reader in reflecting the reality of the nineteenth century.

For the realist novelist, the adage that “truth is stranger than fiction” has little place in the pages of the novel. These novelists attempt to reflect the image of the familiar world, a world with which their readers can identify. Thus, Eliot describes character types that her readers will recognize. In *Adam Bede*, she emphasizes her obligation to reflect reality as closely as possible:

Certainly I could [make Mr. Irwine a more spiritual rector], my fair critic, if I were a clever novelist, not obliged to creep servilely after nature and fact, but able to represent things as they never have been and never will be. Then, of course, my characters would be entirely of my own choosing, and I could select the most unexceptionable type of clergyman, and put my own admirable opinions into his mouth on all occasions. But you must have perceived long ago that I have no such lofty vocation, and that I aspire to give no more than a faithful account of men and things as they

have mirrored themselves in my mind. The mirror is doubtless defective; the outlines will sometimes be disturbed; the reflection faint or confused; but I feel as much bound to tell you, as precisely as I can, what that reflection is, as if I were in the witness-box narrating my experience on oath. (175).

Unlike Reade, who describes a very particular parson in *Never Too Late*, Eliot depicts a clergyman to whom the majority of readers can relate. Mr. Irwine is a believable rector, a rector one might have come across in real life, but not necessarily a character founded precisely upon a living, breathing rector known to George Eliot. Similarly, Elizabeth Gaskell subtitled her novel, *Wives and Daughters*, “An Every-Day Story,” and she makes no secret about basing *Cranford* on her own experiences in Knutsford and *North and South* on her encounters in the industrial town of Manchester. However, it is significant that hers is “An Every-Day Story,” not a “Monday-January-13 Story.” In other words, Gaskell paints a realistic picture of life as it is for most of her readers. She uses her own experiences, but broadly—they are the experiences of others as well. Thus, Gaskell’s Margaret Hale might possess some shared characteristics with the author herself as both middle class women moved to industrial towns in the north and attempted to reconcile northern and southern living and thinking. However, Margaret Hale is not Elizabeth Gaskell. Rather, Margaret is a reflection of reality as experienced by most readers. In a letter to Eliot, Trollope emphasizes the importance of everyday experience. He declares, “You know that my novels are not sensational. In Rachel Ray I have attempted to confine myself absolutely to the commonest details of commonplace life among the most ordinary people, allowing myself no incident that would be even remarkable in every day life. I have shorn my fiction of all romance” (238). A true realist, Trollope eschews all sensation or extraordinary incidents, creating an every-day story. Two years later,

Gaskell's own "Every-Day Story" would be published, stressing the value many mid-century Victorian authors placed on commonplace people and events.

Directly opposed to the realists, who desire their readers to be passive observers, Reade seeks to elicit active responses from his readers. Levine emphasizes the importance of observation for the realist:

But for Trollope, the true work of the novel is 'observation,' and the true interest of the writer (and the readers) is in the characters. He argues that it should not matter if the reader knows the whole story. In reading a sensation novel, one is concerned to find out what will happen next, how the mysteries will be resolved, but reading a Trollopean, realist novel, one finds that the pleasure of the experience has little to do with the plot, which can seem an arbitrary authorial imposition on the narrative rather than intrinsic to the life and characters it is representing; the pleasure is just in the interest that develops in the representation of verisimilar objects and characters. (191)

Reade, however, is compelled to do more than observe when writing, and he wants his readers to be more than observers. Rather, due to the factual nature of his stories, his matter-of-fact romances compel readers to react, not simply relate. In his novels that portray abuses, Reade is advocating for reform—he wants his readers to act. However, even in his non-purpose matter-of-fact romances such as *Jack of All Trades* and *Singleheart and Doubleface*, he seeks active reading. He wants the reader to be struck with the facts of the story—the unreality of reality—and react just as he reacted, with interest and wonder.¹² His facts may not be those of the typical Victorian experience, but they represent a Victorian experience. As such, Reade's factual events and incidents undermine the principles of realism. At the same time, the same facts that help subvert

¹² Sutcliffe has observed Reade's propensity to find interesting and sensational facts whose result is the same: "He chose facts which were as violently colored as his own temperament. They were essentially the same kind of facts, after all, whether they enabled him to denounce social injustice or to narrate swift and vivid incident [. . .] But really the incidents in his novels which exemplify these leading ideas are indistinguishable in character from those that are just intrinsically exciting" (583-84).

genre enable Reade to subvert power and propriety in his matter-of-fact romances. His facts are not “normal” or familiar, but they are, nevertheless, verifiable to an interested and diligent reader.

Fact is Not Truth: Critics’ Objections to Reade’s Use of Fact

Many critics, from Reade’s contemporaries to modern scholars, view Reade’s reliance on facts as a blight on his novels. They argue that his reverence for facts causes him to make unfortunate artistic sacrifices. A reviewer from *The Saturday Review* in 1864 observes, “It is where his striking powers of pure fiction are subordinated to a purpose of an ulterior kind that we become conscious of disappointment, and detect the presence of false art” (“Hard Cash” 55). Margaret Oliphant’s 1868 review of Reade’s novels emphasizes the artistic sacrifice Reade makes when he relies too heavily on fact:

To tell the truth, everything that is absurd and unlikely may, and does, happen in everyday life; and it is our own habit, when we meet with an incident in romance which is beyond measure improbable, to conclude at once that it is drawn from an actual model. But still we must add this is not good practice; that fiction is bound to harder laws than fact is, and must consider *vraisemblance* as well as absolute truth. (510)

Like many others, Oliphant insists that facts cannot constitute reality if those facts do not represent reality in the majority of cases.

Reade was adamant that facts represented real life in a way that the imagination alone simply could not. It did not matter to him whether his readers were familiar with the world he presented or not; his fictional world was an authentic representation of the real world, a representation which confirmed and celebrated the fact that truth really is stranger than fiction. Despite Reade’s contentions, however, the issue of art continued to be a factor in evaluating Reade’s abilities as a novelist. In his 1888 literary study, Courtney writes, “Every artist, if he is worthy of the name, raises a problem in art. In

Reade's case, the problem affects the proper balance which should be maintained between 'materials' and 'imagination'" (155). Courtney further explains:

There is no real antithesis between writing on a basis of facts and writing by the pure light of the imagination, for no writer, however imaginative, can construct his work in the airy void. But it *is* a question whether, as in the case of Reade himself, the mass of detail, every part of which can be verified as so much real fact, does not, in some of his books, overpower and overwhelm the imaginative framework. (156)

Though Courtney appreciates Reade's novels and finds his matter-of-fact romances "intensely interesting," he confesses that they are also "overpowered with materials" and, thus, not art (159).

More recently, C. H. Muller addresses this issue in 1971, writing, "It is, however, precisely because Reade succeeded so thoroughly in subordinating his artistic proclivity to his didactic purpose, that he failed to comply with the artistic requisites of the novel; and this necessarily involved an inspirational, as well as an artistic, sacrifice" ("Hard Cash" 7). Muller speaks for many other critics who claim that Reade's method of collecting facts mars his fiction. Almost every critic of Reade admits with Muller that "when he was not concerned with a polemical purpose, [Reade] was a master of 'legitimate' art" ("Hard Cash" 12). Unfortunately, considering that using fact in fiction is, in itself, a sort of polemical purpose,¹³ much of Reade's work is discounted as "false art."

Critics have employed many different metaphors to express the ways Reade falls short in his attempt to create "art." None, perhaps, is more common than the trope that

¹³ In *Trade Malice*, Reade defiantly writes, "But it is written upon the method I have never disowned, and never shall; have always proclaimed, and always shall. On that method—vis., the interweaving of imaginary circumstances with facts gathered impartially from experience, hearsay, and printed records—my most approved works, 'It is Never too Late to Mend,' 'Hard Cash,' 'The Cloister and the Hearth,' etc., have been written, and that openly" (30).

Reade produces his works from the skeletons of facts that he unconvincingly covers in the flesh of imagination. A typical example comes from the *New Quarterly Review* in 1856: “Talking of skeletons, we are reminded of the fact, that the style of Mr. Reade is eminently sketchy—that there is an absence of flesh and blood, if not of sinew, in his narrative: somehow, we usually seem to see only the outside of things, or at least to get only a kind of lateral aspect of them” (“It Is Never” 394). Interestingly, however, Reade himself uses this metaphor of bone and flesh to defend and affirm his practice. In *Love Me Little, Love Me Long*, the prequel to *Hard Cash*, Reade describes David Dodd’s ability to captivate his audience:

And he did not present the bare skeletons of daring acts; those grand morgues, the journals, do that. There lie the dry bones of giant epics waiting Genius’ hand to make them live. He gave them not only the broad outward facts—the bones; but those smaller touches that are the body and soul of a story, true or false, wanting which the deeds of heroes sound an almanac; above all, he gave them glimpses, not only of what men acted, but what they felt [. . .]. (54)

David can enthrall his listeners, not by simply recounting the events of his years as a sailor, but by breathing life into the facts, by arranging them as a story, by adding to those facts characters and settings—by creating, in effect, a matter-of-fact romance. *Put Yourself in His Place*, published ten years later, reveals Reade’s consistent belief that facts must be united with fiction to make them truly effective:

I have taken a few undeniable truths, out of many, and have labored to make my readers realize those appalling facts of the day which most men know, but not one in a thousand comprehends, and not one in a hundred thousand *realizes*, until Fiction—which, whatever you may have been told to the contrary, is the highest, widest, noblest, and greatest of all the arts—comes to his aid, studies, penetrates, digests, the hard facts of chronicles and blue-books, and makes their dry bones live” (317).

Despite his reliance on and reverence for fact, Reade recognizes that facts alone cannot soar into the realms of art. This is where Reade believes that he differs so greatly from

journalists. Assuredly, he acquires much of his inspiration from headlines, personal interest stories, inquiries, and reports, but readers simply absorb these facts without comprehending their implications. E. D., a reviewer for *The Reader*, clearly recognizes and affirms Reade's desire to make his readers *realize* truth. "We doubt," he muses, "whether a novel is in itself the best channel for discussing [abuses in the asylum]; but, on the other hand, a story written with such talent as 'Hard Cash' will bring the question home to thousands who would never have turned their attention to it if it had been presented to them in the form of an essay" (754). Reade's art brings the facts to life; he makes them real to his readers in a way that the newspapers simply cannot. "[T]wo thousand journalists deal, in their leaded type, with Lunacy, Prisons, Trades Unions, Divorce, Murder, Anonyma, and other great facts," he writes, but "five or six masters of Fiction have the judgment and the skill to weave the recorded facts, and published characters, of this great age, into the forms of Art" (R 326). Headlines and news stories are dry and uninspiring, but through his matter-of-fact romances, Reade combines fact and fiction in novel ways that inspire and amaze his readers.

In addition to their objections to Reade's use of fact, contemporary reviewers and modern critics alike attack Reade for "indiscriminately [mingling] fact with fiction," (Muller, "Hard Cash" 11). Muller explains that because Reade linked the two so closely together, "the factual basis of the novel became irrelevant and could not be justified purely as fiction" ("Hard Cash" 11). The *Saturday Review* assures readers that "it would have greatly modified our doubts as to the relevancy of his facts, as well as have enhanced our enjoyment of the other parts of his story, if he had more seriously set himself to draw the line where the matter-of-fact ends and the romancer's art begins"

(“Hard Cash” 56). E. S. Dallas, a renowned critic for the London *Times*, makes a similar statement; because Reade includes so much fact in his novel, it cannot be altogether evaluated “by the standards of fiction” (“Hard Cash” qtd. in Muller 11).

Though reviewers express their inability to review in quantitative words—Reade’s novels cannot be *wholly* evaluated by fictional standards—many reviewers ultimately evaluated Reade’s matter-of-fact romances in exactly the opposite way—entirely by the standards of fact. The reviewer of *Never Too Late* from the *New Quarterly Review* provides a good example: “The value of fiction is in proportion to its approximation to truth; and we apprehend the worth of a novel is seriously impaired by the introduction of descriptive passages utterly at variance with truth” (“It Is Never” 396). The reviewer then goes on to identify several instances where he/she believes Reade has provided faulty description. “Mr. Reade has quite forgotten the sandhills which surround Sydney” and “Now, George was somewhere near Bathurst, one hundred miles in the interior; therefore, how he should by walking *fifty* miles reach the coast does not satisfactorily appear” are two examples (“It Is Never” 396). In reality, this reviewer does have a point. Reade prides himself on his adherence to fact, and describing the scenery of Australia incorrectly is rather problematic. Though Reade interviewed men and women who had been to Australia and also read countless books on the subject, it is possible that, not having ever been to Australia himself, his facts might be erroneous.¹⁴ The *Edinburgh Review*, however, protests on different grounds. This particular reviewer does not discover unanswerable inconsistencies, but rather, exaggerations to make a point. The reviewer concludes:

¹⁴ See Carl R. Woodring, “Charles Reade’s Debt to William Howitt.”

[. . .] we feel bound to warn our readers that the general conclusion which we have drawn from a careful examination of Mr. Reade's book, with the authorities on which it professes to be founded, is, that it hardly contains a single statement of a matter of fact which can be entirely depended upon, though every statement respecting—Gaol, which it contains, is founded upon something mentioned in the Report of the Commissioners who inquired into Birmingham Prison" (Stephen 142).

It seems that because Reade describes his matter-of-fact romances as fiction founded on fact, reviewers expected him to record the world as a journalist might; as can be seen from the reviews above, the exaggeration or alteration of facts for a creative purpose was not condoned.

Modern critics also tend to evaluate Reade's fiction purely on the basis of fact. Sheila Smith lists instances in which Reade's novel diverged from the basic facts of the Birmingham Gaol case: "Josephs has served no previous sentences, and he is not rebuked for bad language. Also in the novel there is the sentimental addition of the starving mother for whom the boy stole. Again, all the cranks in . . . Gaol are non-productive, wasting man's energy [. . .]. But, according to the Report, the cranks in Birmingham Prison were productive" (139-40). Despite these criticisms, Reade correctly describes the mechanical workings of the cranks, and he presents the portrait of a poor, abused boy, which are, indeed, factual incidents found in the *Report*. The jail scenes of *Never Too Late* are based on facts.

In critiquing Reade's novels, critics are not making the fine distinction between erroneous fact and exaggeration of fact. The reviewer for the *New Quarterly Review* draws attention to mistakes Reade made in describing the Australian scenery, but both the *Edinburgh Review* reviewer and Smith dismiss Reade's works because they contain exaggerated fact. Undoubtedly, Reade exaggerates some of the circumstances in his novels, but this is clearly to make his point—an important element of his fiction. He

thinks, for instance, that the cranks are an unproductive form of punishment, and he chooses to criticize them as such. He wants the reader to have as much sympathy for little Josephs as possible, and, thus, Reade makes the boy as inoffensive as he can and writes sentimentally about his mother. The examples highlighted above reveal ways in which Reade's works have been unfairly evaluated on a reverse theory of criticism. Though reviewers were unwilling to engage Reade's novels as true specimens of fiction, they were perfectly happy to dismantle the novels on the sole basis of fact. Entirely forgetting, it seems, that Reade's works were first and foremost novels, critics attack his facts as either incorrect or impossible.

Critics have found further fault with the *amount* of fact in Reade's fictions. The profusion and exaggeration of fact are issues that most affronted critics. "A more serious objection [to Reade's fictional works based on facts]," Muller explains, "was the overstatement of the realism, which in the eyes of Victorian critics exceeded the province of art" (12). Indeed, numerous critics raise objections to Reade's method of overwhelming the reader by sheer accumulation of facts inserted into his novels. Especially in *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash*, critics balk at the number and recurrence of abuses Reade includes. An 1857 reviewer for the *Edinburgh Review* criticizes Reade's excessive use of facts in *Never Too Late*:

Blameable [sic], however, as Mr. Austin's conduct undoubtedly was, it was far from being as bad as Mr. Reade represents it to have been. We have taken the trouble of comparing this novel minutely with the Report and Evidence of the Royal Commission and with the evidence on the trial. The result is highly unfavourable to this romantic mode of following in the track of criminal justice. Most of the cruelties ascribed by Mr. Reade to Lieutenant Austin have some foundation in fact. We have even been able to discover some which have been stated pretty fairly; but he has almost always added just as many incidents as were required in order to make the

difference between unjustifiable severity and the required melodramatic devilishness of character. (Stephen 137-38)

The *Saturday Review* objects to the inventory of abuses in *Hard Cash*, writing, “it is difficult to repress a misgiving as to the fairness of the author in accumulating in a single episode a number of instances of abuse which may possibly have occurred singly here or there, but which are scarcely conceivable, or indeed mutually compatible, in the person of an individual patient” (“Hard Cash” 56). Emerson Grant Sutcliffe echoes this protest:

Though, as Reade pointed out to those who doubted the factual bases of his stories, he had authority for all the incidents questioned, and though he was careful to describe both good and bad prison wardens, and humane and unscrupulous owners of private asylums, his stories yet gave false impressions, in one important respect. No one British jail ever held so many horrors as that in *It is Never too Late to Mend*, and no one British asylum was probably ever so completely and evilly mismanaged as that in *Hard Cash*. And even if exceptions have existed, Reade’s pictures, true in detail, are yet not true as wholes, because they are composite and not typically true. Such exaggeration may make effective propaganda, but it does not make either history or art. (593-94)

Reade’s profusion of fact, multiplied, exaggerated, and proliferated throughout the pages of his novels, further contributes to critics’ refusals to consider his fiction art. Objections to using facts and protests against mixing fact and fiction so casually are bolstered by the overwhelming inundation of fact that Reade includes in his fictions.

Though critics balk at Reade’s use of fact in his fiction, their protests most often stem from comparing Reade to the realists and coming to the inevitable conclusion that he falls just short of the best realists’ art. Reade considered himself one of the few true artists of the Victorian period,¹⁵ but he also believed that his writing was “new and droll” (Elwin 168). He was not a conformist in any part of his life; he was determined in his

¹⁵ In his defense against accusations of plagiarism in *The Wandering Heir*, Reade writes: “My only crime is this: I have written too well. Invention, labour, research, and, above all, a close condensation, to be found in few other living English novelists, all these qualities combined have produced a strong, yet finite, story, which has fallen like a little thunderbolt among the ‘contes à dormer debout’ of garrulous mediocrity” (18).

principles and stuck to them tenaciously. In *Trade Malice*, Reade declares: “all fiction worth a button is founded on fact,” and this is the system he unwaveringly adopted for all his matter-of-fact romances (17).¹⁶ These matter-of-fact romances were new and droll, and the fusion of fact and fiction bewildered critics who did not know how to react to a new genre—and who, frankly, did not like it. Though Hughes asserts that Reade’s “ultimate artistic failure stems from his inability to invent a new form to contain his unprecedented content,” a few critics have acknowledged that Reade actually does create a new form. In 1870, J. Hain Friswell recognizes Reade’s pioneering work: “He is *sui generis*; he has formed a school of his own, in which he has no pupil” (80). At the height of the debate about realism and idealism, and during the decade of the sensation novel craze beginning with Collins’s *The Woman in White* in 1859, Reade created a new genre, one that contained elements of realism and of sensationalism but was distinctly his with its unique mixture of uncommon facts and romantic qualities. Though she views Reade’s work with some degree of disdain, Sheila Smith also recognizes the difference between Reade’s matter-of-fact romances and those of the sensation novelists: “The ‘sensation novelist’ of the mid-nineteenth century often used facts in this way, but without attempting to justify his practice by evolving a wrong-headed artistic theory, as did Reade” (146). What Smith, like most critics, does not acknowledge is that Reade’s artistic theory is less “wrong-headed” when it is not forced into conformity with the established principles of realism or sensationalism.

¹⁶ *Trade Malice* was published with *The Wandering Heir* in one volume. Despite the fact that *Trade Malice* actually comes first in the title, I will use *TWH* for my citations since my analysis focuses primarily on *The Wandering Heir*. One can find the citation in the Works Cited section under the title *Trade Malice*.

Though critics strongly protest against the amount of fact in Reade's fiction, it is important to note that the use of fact is a common denominator between Reade's works and those of the realist and sensation novelists. Though writers of the latter two genres undoubtedly infuse their texts with less factual raw material, facts are, nevertheless, important for creating a realistic story in all three genres. Levine defines realism as "the commitment to register the external real and then (or at the same time) the interiority that perceives it and distorts or penetrates it" (188). Before an author can introduce interiority, he or she has to create a realistic world which must depend to some extent upon facts. In the quotation above from *Adam Bede*, Eliot admits that she is "obliged to creep servilely after nature and fact;" her realist fiction would not reflect reality without the insertion of facts. "For the realist," writes Levine, "there is a lot at stake in getting it right, in telling the 'truth'" (188). At the same time, the sensation novelists interwove fact into fiction for the purpose of bringing the scandals they chronicled closer to home. Incorporating train schedules, descriptions of modern dress, and references to telegraph messages lessened the distance between the reader and the characters within the story. With regards to fact, both the realists and the sensational novelists shared common ground with Reade.¹⁷

¹⁷ J. S. Bushnan, a doctor for an insane asylum, wrote a letter in response to Reade's portrayal of the asylums in *Hard Cash* in which he strongly objected to Reade's insistence on the factual nature of the potential conspiracies involved in locking up sane men and women. The opening of his letter compares Reade's novel to those of the sensation novelists, emphasizing the more horrific nature of Reade's creation. Though sensation novelists use facts to make their stories seem closer to the reader, the quotation from Bushnan proves that Reade's use of fact was more powerful and affecting:

When a writer of sensation romances makes a heroine push a superfluous husband into a well, or set a house on fire in order to get rid of disagreeable testimony, we smile over the highly-seasoned dish, but do not think it necessary to apply the warning to ourselves, and for the future avoid sitting on the edge of a draw-well, or having any but fire-proof libraries. But when we read, as in the novel "Very Hard Cash," now publishing in *All the Year Round*, that any man may, at any moment, be consigned to a fate which to a sane man would be worse than death, and that not by the single act of any of our Lady Audleys, or other interesting criminals, but as part of a regular organized system, in all

Some Victorian novelists of other genres even maintained the veracity of their facts as Reade did. Dickens famously defended himself against critical attacks after he described Krook as spontaneously combusting in *Bleak House*. He also included an appendix containing a defense of his portrayal of Chancery; in the same appendix, he documented cases of entire inheritances being swallowed up by court costs. In *Our Mutual Friend*, Dickens offers factual precedents for the inheritance that Mr. Boffin eventually receives, and the preface to the Cheap Edition of *Oliver Twist* (1850) contains Dickens's assertion that Jacob's Island is, indeed, a real place. Wilkie Collins, too, uses facts to justify events in his novels. He gives evidence for the successful use of hypnotism to explain Jennings's experiment in *The Moonstone*, physiological authority for Madonna as a deaf mute in *Hide and Seek*, and explanations of occultism in *The Two Destinies* (Phillips 138). Walter Phillips admits that the "reverence of the Dickensians for 'fact' and their insistence upon it [. . .] provides [. . .] unanswerable justification for much that is garish, tasteless, and incredible" (138). Undoubtedly, Dickens and Collins sometimes employ facts for their sensational nature—sensational facts are those that most often require a defense. But facts are also used by mid-century Victorian authors to narrow the distance between fiction and reality, to impel readers to fight against social injustices, and to imagine ways of improving daily life for many fellow Victorians.

Certainly, realism, sensationalism, and the matter-of-fact romance possess some shared features. The commonalities, particularly with regard to usage of fact, help explain why Reade's novels are so difficult to categorize. His stirring plots with their infusion of facts make him seem sensational at times. At other times, his use of facts

compliance with the laws of the land—when we read this, a thrill of terror goes through the public mind. If what Mr. Charles Reade says be possible, who is safe? (*HC* 3: 359)

contributes to “an increase in the realism, even, at moments, the naturalism of his fiction” which seems to situate him within the realism genre (Sutcliffe 584). Nevertheless, Reade’s matter-of-fact romances stand alone as a genre unto themselves. Reade’s insistence on using unusual facts to represent reality, his inextricable integration of fact and fiction, and the sheer volume of facts he includes in his novels are three important elements of his matter-of-fact romances. However, these same three factors most often provoke critics to object to Reade’s art.

The Romance Component of Reade’s Matter-of-Fact Romance

Reade’s use of fact in his matter-of-fact romances receives the majority of attention from critics, and as a result, the assertion that his novels are romances is all too often overlooked. To pair specific, journalistic facts with romance is a fascinating concept, and though Reade uses facts throughout his career, only five of his novels are subtitled “matter-of-fact romance.” His purposeful juxtaposition of fact and romance seems contradictory. And indeed, as Tanya Agathocleous points out, “romance is typically defined in antithesis to the world of facts. Providing a cosmology with a coherent moral framework, the genre creates an idealized, ahistorical fictional space, freed of the experience and ambivalences of everyday life” (123). Reade does not adhere to the principles set forth by Agathocleous at all. Instead of an ideal, Reade provides the particular. Rather than an ahistorical fictional space, Reade gives his readers historical accuracy and truth. In lieu of separation from the experiences and ambivalences of everyday life, Reade binds his readers to the constraints of daily life. Though romance seems to be in utter contrast with fact, Reade draws these opposing ideas together to create his matter-of-fact romances.

Many critics might view Reade's use of fact and romance as too divergent to be effective. It is as though he forces these two disparate concepts together, despite the near impossibility of being reconciled. Northrop Frye highlights the overarching necessity for imagination in romance, "The perennially childlike quality of romance is marked by its extraordinarily persistent nostalgia, its search for some kind of imaginative golden age in time or space" (*Anatomy* 186), and Beer adds, "Romance invokes the past or the socially remote" (2). Reade's pursuit of a "golden age" using current news stories seems problematic. However, Agathocleous points to an enlightening passage from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* that helps to resolve some of the dissonance of Reade's two methods. The exchange involves Sherlock Holmes's reaction to Dr. Watson's case report and sounds remarkably like an echo of critics' objections to the matter-of-fact romances and Reade's subsequent rejoinder. Holmes complains,

"You have attempted to tinge [the case] with romanticism, which produces much the same effect as if you worked a love-story or an elopement into the fifth proposition of Euclid."

"But the romance was there," [Watson] remonstrated, "I could not tamper with the facts." (151)

Just as Watson discovers room for both facts and romance, so, too, does Reade. Fact and romance are not irreconcilable; the one cannot be removed to make way for the other.

They are both present in everyday life. Furthermore, the nineteenth century *is* Reade's golden age. He resoundingly declares,

When we write a story or sing a poem of the great nineteenth century I give you my sacred word of honour there is but one fear—not that our theme will be beneath us, but we miles below it; most of all, that we shall lack the comprehensive vision a man must have from heaven to catch the historical, the poetic, the lasting features of the Titan events that stride so swiftly past IN THIS GIGANTIC AGE" (3: 43).

Reade sees romance in everyday life, and he believes that the author who incorporates the facts of the day in such a way that future generations would read and be awed by them, “would be the greatest writer ever lived: such is the force, weight, and number of the grand topics that lie this day on the world’s face. I say that he who has eyes to see may now see greater and far more poetic things than human eyes have seen since our Lord and his apostles and his miracles left the earth” (3: 43). Reade does not need to look back in time to find an idyllic world; his world, with all its extraordinary features and astonishing progress, forms the basis of nineteenth-century romance.

Disregarding the romance aspect of Reade’s matter-of-fact romances leads critics into further erroneous critiques of his works. Reade is often criticized for repeating character types across novels. Courtney, so positive about much of Reade’s work, negatively responds to Reade’s characterization. “One of the effects,” he writes, “of this partial failure in artistic construction is seen in the monotony of some of Charles Reade’s types” (160). Courtney coins the phrase, “Resourceful Hero” to describe the main character in most of Reade’s works (160-61).¹⁸ The chief characters identified as repetitions include the resourceful hero, the “aiding and abetting Doctor,” the villain, and the parson (161). In addition, Courtney adds the female character type, which he further subdivides into three categories—the “strong, natural girl,” the “domestic innocent,” and “the passionate woman” (164-65). In partial answer, Sutcliffe suggests that Reade’s character types “follow regular patterns for which the stage is no doubt in part responsible” (657). Certainly, Reade’s obsession with the stage contributes to many

¹⁸ Sutcliffe has also written extensively on Reade’s propensity for repeated character types. See “The Stage in Reade’s Novels,” “Plotting in Reade’s Novels,” “Psychological Presentation in Reade’s Novels,” and “Unique and Repeated Situations and Themes in Reade’s Fiction.”

different aspects of his novels.¹⁹ However, that Reade is writing romances is once more significant. As a specific genre, the romance possesses characteristics which Agathocleous outlines as follows: “idealized characters [. . .]; a location represented as both exotic and primitive [. . .]; a sequence of uncanny events [. . .]; and a Manichean structure of good and evil that gleefully shuns the tentative relativism of the late Victorian novel” (123). Frye further unpacks the concept of “idealized characters.” He writes that the “characterization of romance follows its general dialectic structure, which means that subtlety and complexity are not much favored. Characters tend to be either for or against the quest. If they assist it they are idealized as simply gallant or pure; if they obstruct it they are caricatured as simply villainous or cowardly” (195). Though not all of Reade’s characters fall into this binary, Frye’s explanation of the typical romance character helps to better understand Reade’s often disparaged characters. Beer suggests that the idealized romance character also enhances the ways that readers relate to the text. She writes, “By simplifying character the romance removes the idiosyncrasies which set other people apart from us; this allows us to act out through stylized figures the radical impulses of human experience” (9). Reade’s matter-of-fact romances abound with “idealized characters,” but his repetitive character types are the logical result of his placing himself purposefully within the parameters of the romance genre and adhering to the romance’s specialized tropes.

¹⁹ Sutcliffe’s contribution to scholarship on Reade’s interest in the theatre is invaluable, but his analysis of Reade’s character types is generally negative. Besant’s review in *Gentlemen’s Magazine* offers a more positive justification for Reade’s characters:

He is not a painter of scenery nor of houses; he does not care for picturesque ‘bits’ and effects of light unless they help his story; he is a painter of men and women. Therefore, in the space of half a page or thereabouts, he introduces us briefly to the kind of folks we are to meet, and then sets them to talk for themselves. Not a bit of furniture; not an inch of tapestry; no blue china; no cabinets; yet, when all is told and the curtain drops we know the place where the people live better than if we had read pages of description. This is the art of the dramatist. (201)

A similar criticism occurs with regard to repetitious action, and again, it is precisely because critics largely overlook the position from which Reade is writing.²⁰ Sutcliffe does account for genre, at least in part, when evaluating action, or “incidents,” in Reade’s plots. Nevertheless, Sutcliffe focuses more on romance as an explanation for the number of incidents found in Reade’s novels and not necessarily to account for the repetition of his plots and incidents. He writes, “Charles Reade had the romancer’s fondness for startling and rare, even unparalleled incidents, and heaped up thousands of such incidents in his thoroughly documented [sic] notebooks. Yet throughout his fiction he utilized the same formulas and situations over and over again” (221). While Sutcliffe acknowledges the truth that “the essential element of plot in romance is adventure,” he does not make the further connection that the “complete form of the romance is clearly the successful quest, and such a completed form has three main stages”²¹ (Frye, *Anatomy* 186, 187). He protests that Reade uses the “same principal plot, and employed twice, thrice, or oftener” and yet in the next breath admits that the “main scheme of sending a hero away from home” is “*a romantic staple*” (224, my emphasis). Sutcliffe cannot accurately attribute Reade’s use of incident to the romance genre but ignore the more crucial point that the plot trajectory of romance is rather rigid and formulaic. Reade adhered to the romance requirement of a “major adventure” even as he inundated his novels with facts (Frye, *Anatomy* 187).

²⁰ In the *Saturday Review*’s summation of Reade’s novels, the reviewer does acknowledge Reade’s use of romance tropes: “His books are full of love, jealousy, hatred, and the rest of the good old-fashioned emotions; his incidents are the old-fashioned ones of adventure, escapes, dangers, and crimes, out of which romance has always been woven and will always be woven” (“Novels” 180).

²¹ The stages of the quest, according to Frye are “the stage of the perilous journey and the preliminary minor adventures; the crucial struggle, usually some kind of battle in which either the hero or his foe, or both, must die; and the exaltation of the hero” (*Anatomy* 187).

The romance aspect of Reade's matter-of-fact romance genre requires one final observation: even Reade's use of the romance is often unconventional. Though he abides by the romance formula in many particulars, he deviates from standard understandings of romance in that he invariably intersperses thrilling incident in the secondary hero/villain sections of the novels. Frye states, "The central form of romance is dialectical: everything is focussed [sic] on a conflict between the hero and his enemy, and all the reader's values are bound up with the hero," but in Reade's novels, this is not consistently true (*Anatomy* 187). In *Hard Cash*, for example, Alfred Hardie—undisputedly the primary hero—experiences a surfeit of "incidents," but truly romantic adventures and excitement are reserved for Captain David Dodd's trip home on the high seas with his children's £14,000 inheritance in his pocket. Captain Dodd experiences storms, thievery, attempted murder, betrayal, a battle with pirates, and countless other close calls.²² Critics and readers alike are swept up in the ocean scenes, and during those segments of the novel, the reader's emotions are bound up with someone besides the principal hero. Similarly, in *Never Too Late*, the excess of incident lies with the hero, Francis Eden and his evil foe, the prison warden named Mr. Hawes. However, George Fielding and Tom Robinson also experience a number of adventures and excitement in

²² Reade is celebrated by critics for his description of the ocean scenes, and particularly his depiction of the pirate fight. Most initial reviews of Reade's novel praised the pirate scene in *Hard Cash*. Muller quotes the *Press* as writing, "Captain Dodd's fight with the pirates, for example, is admirably told" ("Hard Cash" 14). The *Athenaeum* also approves: "The adventures of the *Agra* on her homeward voyage are told with dramatic force and masterly pathos. There is no episode in Marryat or Cooper, or any sea-novelist we have ever read, which approaches the excellence of this part of Mr. Reade's narrative; and he must have a sluggish temperament who will not as he peruses it, feel his heart continually leaping into his throat ("Hard Cash" 875). And reviewer E.D. writes, "The description of the chase between the *Agra* and the Malay pirates is a piece of writing which no living English author except Mr. Reade could have composed" (754).

Australia.²³ In this case, too, the reader's emotions are engaged, not just with the prison section of the novel, but with George and Tom's Australian experience as well.²⁴ The reader's values are certainly consistently bound up with the good characters in the story, but Reade breaks the rules of romance by providing multiple heroes (or heroines) in which readers invest their emotions; no one hero/ine receives the reader's undivided support.

Reade also subverts the romance genre by writing most mythically when he incorporates the most facts. Frye explains the connection between myth and romance: "The enemy may be an ordinary human being, but the nearer the romance is to myth, the more attributes of divinity will cling to the hero and the more the enemy will take on demonic mythical qualities" (187). None of Reade's matter-of-fact romances demonstrate this mythic depiction so well as *Never Too Late*. There, Eden is saint-like in his desire to rescue the prisoners from persecution by Hawes. Eden is contrasted with Hawes, who is portrayed as a brutal monster. Critics have often drawn attention to the glaring divide between good and evil in Eden and Hawes. The *New Quarterly Review*

²³ The Australia scenes also receive high praise from Reade's critics. A reviewer for *Bentley's Miscellany* writes, for example, "The scenes and events that attend upon Australian life [. . .] are told with a degree of spirit and truthfulness which would lead one to believe that the author must write from practical experience" ("Charles" 294). In a review of *The Hillyars and the Burtons* by Henry Kingsley, Henry James writes, "Mr. Kingsley's descriptions of Australia are very pretty; but they are not half so good as those of Mr. Charles Reade, who, as far as we know, has never visited the country. We mean that they do not give the reader that vivid impression of a particular place which the genius of Mr. Reade contrives to produce" (63). A few critics, including the reviewer for *Once a Week*, found fault with Reade's Australia descriptions, but overall, reactions to the Australia section of *Never Too Late* was overwhelmingly positive.

²⁴ Reade explicitly accounts for this division of the reader's feelings in his novels by likening his stories to two streams that eventually converge into one river. In *Hard Cash*, Reade promises, "'Love' and 'Cash,' the converging branches of this story, will flow together in one stream" (HC 2: 1). Even more plainly in *The Wandering Heir*, Reade sets out the two streams of his story: "the facts of this story compel me to trace, from their tiny sources, two human currents, that I think will bear out my simile. The James Annesley river is set flowing; so now for the Joanna Philippa Chester, and old England" (61). The reader's loyalties are divided by multiple hero-types who play separate roles in the story but ultimately unite at the end.

calls Mr. Eden “a genuine Christian hero and true descendant of the apostles” who “enters into a duel with all the power of darkness” (“It Is Never” 395). Muller describes Hawes as “a grotesque monster of human cruelty” (“Hard Cash” 7). Sheila Smith compares Eden to “a kind of Archangel Michael” and describes the battle between Hawes and Eden as a contest between “devilish brutality and angelic mercy” (140, 141). She further suggests that Hawes’s expulsion from the prison resembles that “account of Michael expelling Lucifer from Heaven” (141). Although Frye states that as romance becomes nearer to myth, the characters are described with more mythic characteristics, Reade turns this component of the romance genre on its head. Reade is working from a verified report of abuses within the Birmingham Gaol, yet he endues both Eden and Hawes with mythologic qualities. Though critics both then and now have easily identified the source of the prison scenes in Reade’s matter-of-fact romance, he imparts to the prison scenes, and in particular the main characters, allegorical characteristics.

Finally, and most importantly, Reade undermines the commonly understood principles of the romance genre by making his matter-of-fact romances local, current, and often focused on a social cause. Beer states that mid-Victorian realists were opposed to romance “because it was not concerned with the actual: social conditions, ordinary people, the common chances of life” (69). Interestingly, though she tries to draw a distinction between realism and romance, she inadvertently seems best to describe Reade’s matter-of-fact romances. Reade, so interested in reforming the prisons, asylums, and the court system, made it a practice of addressing social conditions within the pages of his matter-of-fact romances. He believed that authors as a group—himself included, of course—were making a difference, particularly with regard to social conditions. In

“The Rights and Wrongs of Authors,” he proclaims, “Now, the class ‘authors’ may be said to rain sympathy. [. . .] In the last fifty years legislation and public opinion have purged the nation of many unjust and cruel things; but who began the cure? In most cases it can be traced to the writers’ pen, and his singular power and habit of sympathizing with men whose hard case is not his own” (R 127). Beer adds that romance “does not press home upon us our immediate everyday concerns” (9). Again, Reade subverts this romance principle. He is most concerned about the problems of mid-Victorian England and endeavors as vigorously as possible to make those concerns known and *felt* by his readers. The purging of social evils originates with the author’s advocacy of the people, and the matter-of-fact romance, with its basis in fact, is an ideal vehicle for the fight against social wrongs.

Beer’s use of the word “chances” is also noteworthy. As can be seen from the previously quoted lines from Trollope about his novel, *Rachel Ray*, chances—those unknown and unexpected incidents—had no place among the “commonest details of commonplace life among the most ordinary people” (238). Chances, on the other hand, are what Reade delights in—*extraordinary* events that occur in everyday life. According to reviewer E. D., “A picture of human life ought to be a picture of that life as it appears in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, not in the hundredth,” but Reade understood that, collectively, everyone experiences “common chances” and those chances do, in fact, comprise reality (753). Reade’s incorporation of fact into fiction turned the orthodox meaning of romance on its head. Opposed to the assertion that “romance depends considerably upon a certain set *distance* in the relationship between its audience and its subject-matter,” Reade collapses the distance between his readers and his subject

altogether (Beer 5). Instead of taking his readers to imaginary and/or ideal places, Reade situates them firmly in their own parlors, in their own cities, in their own country, in their own time. For Reade, the matter-of-fact romance is unquestionably concerned with and inextricably bound up in the actual.

Implications of the New Genre: Intertextuality and Technique

Reade's matter-of-fact romances achieve a singular result: readers are held in close contact with the narrative and find it difficult to separate themselves effectively from the story. Reade accomplishes this effect in two ways: first, he weaves a web of intertextuality which attracts the reader, encouraging him/her to explore the layers of fact written within the narrative. Second, he uses a variety of distinctive techniques such as the eschewal of metaphor, quick and extensive dialogue, the interspersion of extremely short chapters, typographical oddities, and the substitution of illustrations for words, to sweep the reader along without permitting him/her to achieve any separation from the text. The close proximity of reader and text and the irresistible way in which the reader is carried along are the two major effects produced by the matter-of-fact romance.

Particularly for Reade's contemporary readers—middle-class Victorians who found Reade's novels so compelling—this use of intertextuality would have been a powerful force. Since Reade uses the incidents and events of the reader's everyday life, he/she can delve into Reade's novels with an acute awareness of how they interconnect with contemporary events, conversations, and issues.

Intertextuality is a natural result of the amount of fact included in Reade's novels. Because he first finds his materials in newspapers, journals, bluebooks, histories, and myriad other sources, and subsequently inserts those incidents and events, often quoted

directly, into his works, he immediately forms a layer of intertextuality in the novels that is bounded entirely in fact. But the richness of the discourses concerning his matter-of-fact romances is far more complicated than this initial layer suggests. Reade's novels are the center of the intertextual web; they sit at the fulcrum of intertextuality's going and coming. Reade's matter-of-fact romances invite readers to look backward to the sources of his facts but also forward to the inevitable conversations, critiques, defenses, and debates that the novels spark.

Reade creates a fabric of intertextuality, and his readers are encouraged to trace his facts to their sources. Facts surround them on all sides. Facts confront them within the novel, and those facts cannot easily be discounted; Reade provides his sources and invites readers to verify his facts. The facts proven, the reader has now twice met the unassailable facts head on. Even as readers finish the novel, they cannot be completely disentangled from the intertextual web. Reviews and critiques that challenge the facts of the story are once more brought to the fore, and Reade's vehement defenses provide yet more sources for the facts presented as well as more facts as additional evidence. Still, after the reviews are read and the criticism dies down, the facts of Reade's novels have a curious way of resurfacing. Reade's choices to publish the volume editions of his matter-of-fact romances in conjunction with long prefaces, appendices, or other works enlarges the web of intertextuality, so that those who read *The Wandering Heir*, published in 1875, for example, are once again referred to *Never Too Late* (1856) and *Hard Cash* (1863). With Reade, intertextuality radiates outward from his novels, encouraging the reader to move both forward and backward in search of and for the confirmation of fact.

Literary theorist, Roland Barthes, provides a helpful way of examining Reade's matter-of-fact romances which more clearly emphasizes their intertextual nature. According to Barthes, intertextuality is a direct result of creating Text within a work. His essay, "From Work to Text," outlines seven main "propositions" that define Text, and most of them deal with the intertextual nature of Text. These propositions "concern method, genres, signs, plurality, filiation, reading and pleasure" (156). According to Barthes, "the text is held in language, only exists in the movement of a discourse. [Text's] constitutive movement is that of cutting across" (157). Thus, Barthes's first proposition, method, involves the text discoursing with other works. Engaging with a text that transverses one or more works is the idea behind method. Genre, Barthes's second proposition, says that Text cannot be classified. Instead, "[w]hat constitutes the Text is [. . .] its subversive force in respect of the old classifications" (157). Barthes's third proposition, the sign, concerns the stipulation that "the Text [is] without closure," a series of "disconnections, overlappings, variations" (159, 158). His fourth proposition is that of the plural. The plural emphasizes intertextuality: "The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text" (160). The fifth of Barthes's propositions is filiation—something a text should be without. He writes that "[a]s for the Text, it reads without the inscription of the Father, [. . . and therefore] can be *broken*" (162). He further explains that the author can play a role in his or her novel, but only as a character, a "*paper-P*" (161). The sixth proposition concerns reading. Reading consists largely of "*playing with the text*" (162). Barthes warns that a text must not be reduced to a certain imitation or representation; instead, readers must engage in "practical collaboration" with a text (163).

Finally, a text must provide pleasure. The pleasure must not be in “consumption,” but rather, it must be “a pleasure without separation” (163, 164). It is helpful to examine Reade’s novels in the context of the work and text debate to discover the implications for his use of intertextuality. Though Reade does not adhere to all seven propositions all of the time, his matter-of-fact romances are undeniably comprised of Text, and the intertextual nature of his novels quickly becomes apparent.

Throughout all of his matter-of-fact romances, Reade creates Texts and then sets them in conversations with each other. Barthes’s description of a text is apt: “the text is a tissue, a woven fabric” (159). He continues, a text is “woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages (what language is not?), antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony” (160). Barthes emphasizes the crossings of texts within a text, looking both at contemporary sources and back to historical references. Tilottama Rajan adds yet another crossing—that of future readers. She writes that there is a horizontal “interchange between the text and contemporaneous writings (not necessarily literary). But in addition the text also functions vertically in relation to previous and future history” (67). Not only does intertextuality operate with regard to other texts of the same time period and of those previous to the time of writing, but intertextuality is also concerned with the future of the text—its future readers, future texts, and the infinite number of future crossings. Barthes writes, “The Text is not a co-existence of meanings but a passage, an overcrossing; thus it answers not to an interpretation, even a liberal one, but to an explosion, a dissemination” (159). Below, I briefly point to the ways that Reade’s creation of Text creates an explosion of intertextuality.

Reade's integration of facts from different sources and mediums serves as a constant reminder that the subject matter of Reade's stories is true. Not only does he use facts directly from legislation stipulating regulations for prisoners and asylum patients, policies for determining insanity, and codes for submitting lawsuits and trying court cases, but he also makes great use of newspapers, peppers his texts with direct quotations, and provides his own footnotes citing other sources or incidents in which similar factual events have occurred. Providing a true discourse between a number of different works, Reade's matter-of-fact romances are certainly concerned with Barthes's first, third, and fourth propositions—method, sign, and the plural, respectively. The reader cannot escape the web of intertextuality that Reade weaves throughout his matter-of-fact romances; he repeatedly reminds the reader that the content of his stories is in conversation with other texts which, in turn, provides the reader with additional facts. As Barthes writes, "the Text requires that one try to abolish (or at the very least to diminish) the distance between writing and reading, in no way by intensifying the projection of the reader into the work but by joining them in a single signifying practice" (162). A Text closes the distance between the reader and the reading, which is precisely what Reade wishes to do. Through his use of a myriad of sources and media, Reade diminishes the space between the reader and the text.

In her monograph, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Julia Kristeva offers a succinct definition of intertextuality in terms of transposition. "Transposition," she writes, is "the *passage from one sign system to another*," and the "term *inter-textuality* denotes this transposition of one (or several) sign system(s) into another" (59-60). In Reade's case, this sort of intertextuality can be seen in his rethinking of form and genre. Reade

refashioned historical documents, news stories, conversations, legal records, and any number of other media for the purpose of creating his matter-of-fact romances. As he wrote to the *Times*, the stories he read within its pages “touched my heart, inflamed my imagination, and [provided] the germ” for many of his matter-of-fact romances (4).

Reade makes generous use of direct quotations from his sources, but he adapts the novels to suit his own purposes. A reader can follow the trail of intertextuality from its origin in a news story or legal document, for instance, to Reade’s reworking of the same topic into the form of a novel.

Reade provides many examples of this transposition in his matter-of-fact romances. He informs the *Times* that an article it ran on the Birmingham Gaol inquest gave him the idea for the prison section of *Never Too Late*. Direct quotations from the inquest reports subsequently appear in the pages of the novel. This novel, vastly different than the inquest report, contains all the raw material found in the newspaper report but is shaped by Reade for the purpose of advocating for reform. The asylum sections of *Hard Cash* are another example of how Reade continually creates intertextuality. Having come face to face with the abuses in the insane asylum by his encounter with the falsely accused Fletcher, Reade first wrote several letters to the newspaper on Fletcher’s behalf in an effort to obtain a fair and timely trial. The series of letters, entitled “Our Dark Places,” later became the foundation for *Hard Cash*. “Our Dark Places” was later compiled as part of *Readiana* and published the year Reade died. Both “Our Dark Places” and *Hard Cash* address the asylum and the problems with the Lunacy Law, but they do so for different purposes. The series of letters to the editor spoke to the specific case of Fletcher vs. Fletcher. *Hard Cash*, on the other hand, was a more general

treatment of insane asylum abuse using specific incidents, including much of Fletcher's actual experience. *The Wandering Heir* is yet another example of how Reade generates intertextuality by using historical documents that chronicle the eighteenth-century Annesley inheritance battle. In addition to documents regarding the court case itself, Reade also makes liberal use of Jonathan Swift's work to create an authentic setting for his eighteenth-century story.

In many cases, the generation of intertextuality continues long after the publication of Reade's novels due to reviews, critics, and Reade's invariable print responses. A critic's mistrust of Reade's facts always infuriated him, and he felt compelled to answer accusations—even spurious ones—in print. As a result, Reade published letters regarding the content of his matter-of-fact romances, usually further explaining his causes and almost invariably citing additional sources. Thus, his letters lead his readers to further sources of information about topics addressed in his novels. This can be seen in his letter to the editor of the Toronto *Daily Globe*. Though the letter to which he is responding is entitled "A Terrible Temptation,"²⁵ Reade writes that the letter is "mainly devoted to reviving stale misrepresentations of my older works," wherein the critic accuses Reade of using "a single case of habitual cruelty [to traduce] a whole system and all the officials, and [doing all he] could to make a great social experiment miscarry" (R 279). Thus, Reade feels free to once again offer his proofs for *Never Too Late*: "That no sanguinary abuses existed, except in one gaol, is a lie" (R 287). He then catalogues the vast number of sources he consulted before writing his novel, concluding with the assertion that he is, "on a small scale, a public benefactor, [who has] modified, not disturbed, the national experiment" (R 288). In the same article, he

²⁵ In reference to Reade's novel, *A Terrible Temptation*, first published in 1871.

declares that since the publication of *Hard Cash*, “fresh evidence has poured in, both public and private” which he then commences to record (R 291). As with all of Reade’s matter-of-fact romances, one can trace the progression of facts from raw material to novel to evaluation and analysis of the content of the novel to additional raw material and outcomes.²⁶ Though critics object to Reade’s facts on the grounds that they do not represent reality for the majority of readers, the facts are clearly distinguishable in each step of Reade’s writing process.²⁷

Reade further encourages the propagation of intertextuality by his publishing decisions. By choosing to pair certain texts together when they are published in volume form, Reade makes strong statements about his works and enmeshes the reader in yet another layer of intertextuality. Rajan writes that “the text itself is always in transit to something else,” and indeed, Reade’s publication choices invariably send the reader to the next (or a previous) text (65). *Never Too Late* is published with direct reference to Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and though he does not append any additional documents to *Never Too Late*, the allusions to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* provides an interesting intertextual conversation. *Jack of All Trades*, *Hard Cash*, and *The Wandering Heir* are all published with additional texts, often containing reprinted letters and further

²⁶ In “Facts Must Be Faced,” Reade also reports what he interprets as the results of his novels. After having written against the purposelessness of the crank as a prison punishment, he informs his readers that the government officials “saw I was right, and abolished the crank [. . .]. They have since conceded to me other points I had demanded” (R 288).

²⁷ Reade’s response to the letter, “A Terrible Temptation” also reveals another instance of intertextuality that is less germane to the present discussion of matter-of-fact romances but is still important to note. The first few pages of his response are spent in defining a number of terms that he has coined over the last several decades. He presents the science of “Literary Zoology” and defines “The Criticaster,” “The Prurient Prude,” “The Sham-Sample Swindler,” and “The True Anonymuncle,” (R 279-81). Not only does he define his terms, but he also provides dates of first usage. The Criticaster is “first pinned on cork by me in 1859” while the Prurient Prude is “First introduced by me to the American public in 1864” (R 279, 280). Though Reade peppers these terms into letters throughout his career, he still invites his readers to check the veracity of his facts and provides them with the means to do so.

commentary on those letters. The only exception to Reade's propagation of intertextuality through publication choices comes with *Singleheart and Doubleface*, and this is simply because it was published posthumously.

Reade publishes the first of his matter-of-fact romances, *Never Too Late*, with direct references to Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.²⁸ Wayne Burns and Sutcliffe argue that Reade's comparison of Legree in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Hawes in *Never Too Late* "suggests that he wished to acknowledge his indebtedness [to Stowe] and thereby increase the effectiveness of his own writing" (343). Reade draws an undeniable comparison between the two novels: "The cases are in a great measure parallel. Prisoners are a tabooed class in England, as are blacks in some few of the United States" (1: 340). He also attributes to Stowe the facility to make people realize—just as Reade himself wishes to make his readers fully understand abuses through his novels.²⁹ The parson, Francis Eden muses, "If she once seizes [Fry's] sympathies by the wonderful power of fiction, she will touch his conscience through his heart" (1: 340). Burns and Sutcliffe further intimate that Stowe's subsequent publication of *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*³⁰ influenced Reade to adopt a similar "documentary technique" (346). Reade incorporates facts into his story and points to a major source of many of those facts right within the pages of the novel. "Not to have read [*Uncle Tom's Cabin*]," he writes, "was like not to have read 'The Times' for a week" (1: 339). To read *Never Too Late* with reference to

²⁸ *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was originally published in 1852.

²⁹ In the preface to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe writes, "The hand of benevolence is everywhere stretched out, searching into abuses, righting wrongs, alleviating distresses, and bringing to the knowledge and sympathies of the world the lowly, the oppressed, and the forgotten" (v). Reade's matter-of-fact romances all seem to echo this sentiment, but none so clearly as *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash*.

³⁰ Published in 1853, *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* provided evidence as to the veracity of Stowe's account of slavery in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Uncle Tom's Cabin reveals ways that Reade might have thought about his novel and the possible effects he wanted to produce. Direct references to the *Times* and to the stories found within also serve to perpetuate the web of intertextuality.

Reade's next matter-of-fact romance, *Jack of All Trades*,³¹ was first published as a volume³² alongside *Autobiography of a Thief* and also demonstrates the intertextual nature of Reade's publication practices. Though the two novels have little in common on first examination, both are first-person narratives describing the extraordinary events of the two narrators' lives. *Autobiography*, the tale that precedes Reade's second matter-of-fact romance, is a short novel in which Tom Robinson narrates the events of his life and explains as well as he can how he ended up in jail.³³ I do not wish to dwell on *Autobiography* since it is not a matter-of-fact romance, but it is important to note that this novel consciously and purposefully refers readers back to Reade's previous publication, *Never Too Late*. Here, intertextuality once again comes into play. A prisoner—similar, perhaps, to one Reade himself might have met as he was doing research for his novel—tells his “strange but true story” (*JAT* 4). The life of the prisoner is of interest; as such, his experience in prison may be interesting as well. Thus, the reader returns to *Never Too Late* and encounters once more (or for the first time) the prominently displayed facts concerning prison abuse. *Autobiography* is not identified as a matter-of-fact romance

³¹ *Jack of All Trades* was originally serialized in *Harper's Magazine* from December 1857 to May 1858.

³² Reade entitled the volume containing both short novels *Cream*. Throughout this work, I will use *JAT* for my citations since my analysis focuses primarily on *Jack*, but one can find the citation in the Works Cited section under the title *Cream*.

³³ *Autobiography of a Thief* is a companion piece to *Never Too Late*. Tom Robinson, one of the main characters in *Never Too Late*, is instructed by the parson, Francis Eden, to write the story of his life and how he came to ——— Gaol. Reade originally intended to publish it within *Never Too Late* but eventually decided against it and published *Autobiography* separately two years later in 1858 (*JAT* 3).

itself, but it is a missing part of a matter-of-fact romance; as such, it not only directs readers back to the larger text of *Never Too Late* but perpetuates intertextuality as the reader continues Tom's "true story." Reade proves Rajan's declaration true: "The text that constructs itself intertextually obviously facilitates its own rereading" (69). Whether the rereading is of the text itself or a companion text, the intertextual nature of Reade's matter-of-fact romances invites and encourages rereading.

Following this matter-of-fact romance fragment is *Jack of All Trades*—the strange story of an elephant, Djek and her keeper. The intertextual nature of this novel comes primarily from two sources. First of all, the story is historically accurate. Mademoiselle Djek performed in England in the late 1820s, and the newspapers chronicled her performances. Secondly, the narrator explains that his goal is to publish his narrative in the newspaper. A "literary gent" tells him to "print [his] troubles" as a gratifying way to "growl wholesale to a hundred thousand of your countrymen (which they do love a bit of a growl)" (*JAT* 70-71). Thus, the story the narrator proposes to tell is of his connection "with one of the most celebrated females of modern times," and he intends to relate the story within the pages of a journal (*JAT* 72). First published in *Harper's Magazine*, the narrator's story seems—and is, in fact—authentic. Though the effects of intertextuality in both *Autobiography* and *Jack of All Trades* are different than in *Never Too Late*, the reader is, nevertheless, surrounded by its presence. The choice to publish these two short novels together creates a conversation between the two first-person narrators, invites the reader to look backwards toward *Never Too Late*, and also encourages the reader to recall the stories he or she has heard of performing elephants in order to evaluate the veracity of the keeper's narrative.

Hard Cash is Reade's next matter-of-fact romance, and he chooses to publish it in volume form with an appendix containing a letter of complaint from J. S. Bushnan, M.D., of Laverstock House Asylum in Salisbury. Reade also includes his reply to Bushnan's letter as well as a second letter to the reader in which he writes, "To this letter I hear Dr. Bushnan has replied *down in the country*" (HC 3: 368). Alongside this follow up, Reade references an article from the *Times* called "Lunatic Asylums and the Lunacy Laws," which he believes "honest inquirers should read" (HC 3: 368). Finally, he appends the following notice:

I request all those persons in various ranks of life,—who by letter or *vivâ voce* have during the last five years told me of sane persons incarcerated or detained in private asylums, and of other abuses—to communicate with me by letter. I also invite fresh communications: and desire it to be known that this great question did not begin with me in the pages of a novel; neither shall it end there: for, where Justice and Humanity are both concerned, there—Dict sans faict À Dieu deplait. (HC 3: 369)

Reade's appendix to the text of *Hard Cash*, full of claims and counterclaims, challenges, results, and requests for more information, is pulsating with intertextuality. Both Bushnan's and Reade's letters are reprinted from the *Daily News* where they originally appeared. Reade's follow up letter occurs at the time of publication, speaking both to his future readers and to those who have previously read the exchange in the pages of the *Daily News*. Finally, the notice, which refers the reader back to the text of *Hard Cash*, also provides the future facts that Reade mentions years later in the letter to the Toronto *Daily Globe* responding to "A Terrible Temptation." Reade's choice to publish *Hard Cash* with an appendix reveals the ways he envisions the texts interacting with each other and how those texts continually expose more facts from new sources.

After *The Wandering Heir* was first printed in the *Graphic* in 1872, Reade was accused of plagiarism from Swift's *The Journal of a Modern Lady*. When *The*

Wandering Heir appeared in volume form in 1875, Reade chose to publish it with *Trade Malice*—a lengthy response to his “criticasters” or detractors. As with the appendix of *Hard Cash*, Reade reprints the particular exchange between two “anonymuncles” and himself in which they accuse and he defends himself against the charge of plagiarism. Thus, the reader is once more confronted with a web of intertextuality. The text of *The Wandering Heir* is before one’s eyes, as is the evidence of plagiarism quoted from Swift’s work. Reade’s response in *Trade Malice* is fascinating—instead of summarily rejecting the accusation of plagiarism, he takes up the challenge to “cite his sources”:

In the present case I will go a little farther, and enable the curious reader to trace my footsteps in many places of this story if he likes; and I not only invite, but even presume to advise, young writers to look closely into my work, and into that method to which I owe so much. It is a method, by adopting which, and labouring hard in it, as I do, many a young novelist might double his value. (31)

He then goes on to list—in incredible detail—all the sources of his story.³⁴ Here is an even more intricate web of intertextuality than Reade provided in *Hard Cash*.

Contemporary letters coupled with sources from the eighteenth century, exchanges which are found in the current newspapers as well as the story of the Annesley inheritance case which, according to Muller, “in the ‘seventies, [Reade] unearthed from back numbers of the *Gentleman’s Magazine*” (“Documentary” 16). Perhaps even more interesting, the historical James Annesley won the inheritance battle but was later proved to be the illegitimate son of a servant woman and subsequently lost his claim. However, Reade,

³⁴ A small portion of his explanation in *Trade Malice* will suffice to demonstrate the detail of his fact citing:

To go into smaller details, the Irish schoolmaster and his “tall talk” are from facts supplied in print by Carleton.

The Irish curses I have used are culled, with great study, from three authors, Carleton, Banim, and Griffin, and selected from an incredible number.

The decayed Irish gentlemen, “the scornful dog who eats dirty puddings,” is fact, taken from ‘A Tour in Ireland,’ published 1740, to be found in the British Museum. (33)

though he assuredly knew the ultimate outcome of the inheritance case chose not to complete the story. “I could tell more about the ‘Wandering Heir;’” Reade writes, “but Fiction is not History, and I claim my rights: even the ‘Iliad’ is but a slice out of Troy’s siege; so surely I may take these marvellous passages of an eventful life, then drop the curtain on the doubtful future” (279). What makes this conclusion so fascinating is that Reade provides in *Trade Malice* the sources necessary for discovering the ending of James Annesley’s life, despite the fact that Reade refuses to tell. The texts speak to and enhance each other, providing at the same time an entirely new layer of intertextuality for the interested reader.

The secondary documents that Reade includes when publishing his novels in volume form provide additional facts for his novels as well as the sources from which the facts are derived. As a result, readers are not only encouraged to remain close to the text, but they are also drawn into a web of intertextuality that provides nearly limitless opportunities for engaging with the discourses of the overlapping texts. As Reade writes in *Autobiography*,

I feign probabilities; I record improbabilities: the former are conjectures, the latter truths: mixed they make a thing not so true as Gospel nor so false as History: viz., Fiction.

When I startle you most, think twice before you disbelieve me. What able deceiver aims at shocking credulity? Distrust rather my oily probabilities. They should be true too if I could make them; but I can’t: they are guesses. (*JAT* 4-5)

When the story appears too over-the-top and the reader tries to metaphorically “check out,” Reade reengages him or her back with yet another fact that cannot be satisfactorily disputed.

The intertextuality Reade employs invites the reader into close proximity with the text, and more importantly, with the facts of which the novel is comprised. From the

second line of the novel's title where Reade advertises a "matter-of-fact romance," to the moment a reader closes the book at "The End," Reade saturates the novel's pages with fact after fact and proof upon proof. Whether those facts concern known abuses or historical truths which add veracity to his story, the reader is constantly bombarded with reminders that those people, events, and actions which seem most like fiction within the novels are actually true.

Though intertextuality is a vital component in keeping the reader engaged with the text, Reade utilizes several other unique methods that encourage the reader to remain in close contact with the text. The first of these methods is Reade's refusal to use metaphor to describe the horrific and terrible parts of his novels. This is in direct contrast to the realists who often try to alleviate the pain associated with the narration of appalling circumstances by using metaphor. Eliot warns that her mirror is sometimes "defective," "faint or confused," though it still reflects reality; however, with such an admission, she allows her readers to step back from her portrayals, to distance themselves or walk away when they believe the reflection of reality is dim or "disturbed." The very way in which metaphors substitute one idea for another often enables a reader to escape the core misery or hideousness being depicted as the language or ideas carry the reader away, even if only for a moment.

Reade, on the other hand, eschews metaphor altogether. Never one to soften misery, horror, or ghastliness, Reade confronts his readers with unadorned evil and abuse from which it is difficult to separate oneself.³⁵ A comparison of the ways in which Dickens and Reade depict abuse will make this point. Though both novelists dealt with

³⁵ E. D. writes that Reade "has a truth to tell which he thinks ought to be told; and we cannot blame him if he tells it in its cruel, crude nakedness. The Augean stables are not to be cleaned out with kid-glove-covered fingers" (754).

major social problems, and overlapped in their concern about prison conditions, their styles of representing social abuses are vastly different. Dickens is an acknowledged master of the art of fiction, one who possesses “undeniable genius and prodigality of power” (Courtney 152). When Dickens depicts a scene of misery or abuse, whether it is in the prison where Mr. Pickwick sees the pain caused by the separation of families and witnesses an old man’s death by consumption in the infirmary or in the rundown slums of Tom-All-Alone’s where Mr. Woodcourt mingles with its poverty, sickness, and death, the reader is swept up in the compelling nature of the description. Dickens frequently paints a metaphorical picture that evokes misery in the reader, but that also enables the reader to experience the travesty in a less personal way.

For example, in *The Pickwick Papers*, when Mr. Pickwick witnesses the death of the old man who dies of consumption after being neglected in the prison for many years, the scene is affecting, but Dickens adds the metaphor of being “discharged” or dismissed from life to alleviate some of the rawness of the scene:

[The old man] folded his hands, and murmuring something more they could not hear, fell into a sleep—only a sleep at first, for they saw him smile.

[The others] whispered together for a little time, and the turnkey, stooping over the pillow, drew hastily back. “He has got his discharge, by G—!” said the man.

He had. But he had grown so like death in life, that they knew not when he died. (563)

The metaphor of being discharged, appropriate here for a man who dies without having received his discharge from the prison, is, in fact, positive. While the reader might be inclined to mourn for this man who did not deserve to die in prison, Dickens also encourages the reader to celebrate the man’s ultimate release. He dies with a smile on his face—so peacefully that the onlookers cannot pinpoint the moment of his death.

Compare the passage above with a passage from *Never Too Late* in which Reade almost brutally describes the death of a wasting man in the prison:

They locked up one dying man at eight o'clock. At midnight the thirst of death came on him. He prayed for a drop of water, but there was none to hear him. Parched and gasping the miserable man got out of bed and groped for his tin mug, but before he could drink the death agony seized him. When they unlocked him in the morning they found him a corpse on the floor with the mug in his hand and the water spilled on the floor. They wrenched the prison property out of its dead hand, and flung the carcass itself upon the bed as if it had been the clay cast of a dog, not the remains of a man. (1: 376-77)

Reade's description of the prisoner's death is harsh, pitiless, and discordant. As Muller discontentedly points out, "These evils are relentlessly exposed to our senses: there are no literary qualities that convey them by suggestion" ("Hard Cash" 11). Indeed, Reade does not soften the narration in any way, and a reader is forced to absorb the glaring reality of this poor man's preventable death. Dickens, it must be said, is not any less disturbed by the terrible prison conditions that he, like Reade, experienced firsthand. Nevertheless, Dickens softens the death scene of his unfortunate prisoner in a way that Reade positively refuses to do. Dickens mitigates the reader's indignation by declining to highlight the full garishness of the prisoner's death. Reade shuns the use of metaphor because he refuses to alleviate the reader's discomfort. He will not, under any circumstances, give up a chance to encourage the reader to feel the pain of the events he describes.

A second technique that Reade uses to keep the reader close to the text is an inordinate amount of dialogue. Of course, many critics attribute this to his obsession with the stage, and it is true that sometimes, his dialogue is even written almost as a script,³⁶ but it is also true that such great amounts of dialogue swiftly propel the story

³⁶ Sutcliffe writes, "Not only Reade's early novels, in which he adapted plays, but almost all the others have pages of pure dialogue, sometimes without the names of speakers, sometimes with the names

along without giving the reader a chance to catch his or her breath or reflect on the story's trajectory. Sutcliffe points to this propensity in Reade: "He is adverse, however, to dialogue [. . .] which does not get on with the story [. . .]. The dramatist's distrust of dialogue that does not advance the action," Sutcliffe continues, "is evident also in frequent overt declarations that he is omitting what was said on this or that occasion" (658). A great deal of narrative and little dialogue provides the opportunity for contemplation and musing, but continuous dialogue does not occasion the same sort of deliberate rumination. Rather, the reader is swept along at a quickened pace, keeping him or her joined to the text.

Other techniques for propelling the reader ahead are his inclusion of pictures in the place of text and his incorporation of extremely short paragraphs. While he does not use illustrations often, he frequently makes use of short chapters. Particularly effective, for example, is the chapter in *Never Too Late* when Josephs, an overworked, underfed, tortured, and hopeless boy of fifteen, commits suicide. Chapter nineteen in its entirety reads:

MIDNIGHT!

Josephs was crouched shivering under the door of his cell, listening.
"All right now. I think they are all asleep; now is the time."

Hawes, Hodges, Jones, Fry, were snoring without a thought of him they had left to pass the live-long night, clothes in a sponge, cradled on a stone.

DORMEZ, MESSIEURS! TOUT EST TRANQUILLE; DORMEZ! (1: 392)

Just as the dialogue drives the reader quickly along, so, too, do the short chapters that Reade intersperses throughout his novels. The short chapters rush the reader on to the next chapter in a way that encourages the reader to remain close to the text.

of speakers in italics, sometimes with linking comments (occasionally in the form of stage directions) which describe delivery and gesture pictorially. [. . .] Reade enjoyed writing dialogue" (657-58). See *Never Too Late*, 3: 221-22 for an example.

Finally, Reade's typographical oddities seize the reader's attention. Sutcliffe states that Reade's typographical propensities have "been described as freakish and Sternean" (661), and Phillips grumbles, "The printer's devil had a more active part to play in [Reade's] style than in that of any of his contemporaries—for he calls where he chooses for large type and for small, for italics, and for illustrations generally thought to be in place only in primers" (212). Phillips points out how important these techniques were to Reade:

[Reade] steadily counted on the singular appearance of his printed page to stimulate attention. It is an excessively broken page, abounding in sentence paragraphs, tricks with the type, and unique childish illustration with recall the vagaries of Sterne and of Dickens. No one knew better the superior attractiveness of the broken page or used it more invariably. It is not merely that the exceptional bulk of Reade's dialogue tends in this direction, nor is it merely that he is studiously brief in exposition and set description. He broke the essential minimum of these into small, readily absorbed fragments, and thus made the printer serve his sensation principles. (211)

Viewing the page like an artist views his canvas, Reade understood the power of interesting typescript, illustrations, and curiously short paragraphs.

In all of these ways, Reade impels the reader forward without allowing him or her any time to step back from the text. At the same time, the techniques Reade uses in his matter-of-fact romances provide an opportunity for Barthes's sixth proposition—reading. The concern of "*play*" and the stipulation that readers must engage in "practical collaboration" with a text are appropriate in this context. Critics provide many possible motives for Reade's implementation of these techniques—Sutcliffe argues it is to convey speech inflections; Phillips contends it is merely sensationalism—but in addition to sweeping the reader along, these short chapters and unusual instances of typography involve the reader, collaborating with the text in new ways as they figure out why Reade

is employing the methods he uses or how exactly he wants the reader to hear the dialogue being delivered.³⁷

Finally, Reade creates a sense of closeness between the reader and the text by using allusions to contemporary events, much as the sensation novelists do in their works, and by a high number of direct addresses to the reader. The reader can hardly distance himself or herself from the text when the author is speaking directly to him or her. In *Hard Cash*, for example, Reade ominously warns, “Pray think of it for yourselves, men and women, if you have not *sworn* never to think over a novel. Think of it for your own sakes; Alfred’s turn to-day, it may be yours to-morrow” (*HC* 2: 289). All of these techniques invite the reader to remain close to the text.

Through his unique writing style with his excess dialogue, short chapters and use of illustrations, allusions to contemporary events, and direct addresses to the readers, Reade successfully closes the distance between the reader and the text. Together with the refusal to use metaphor as a means for softening grotesque or horrible descriptions, the liberal use of facts, and the publication choices that Reade makes, these methods form the basis for his matter-of-fact romances. Not altogether fact, not altogether romance, Reade’s unique genre closes distance and explodes intertextuality for his readers.

Barthes’s second proposition, genre, declares that the Text cannot be classified, and as has been discussed, critics have been hard-pressed to satisfactorily categorize Reade’s novels. His matter-of-fact romances subvert many common assumptions about

³⁷ Barthes alerts readers that “‘Playing’ must be understood here in all its polysemy: [. . .] the reader plays twice over, playing the Text as one plays a game, looking for a practice which re-produces it, but [. . .] also playing the Text in the musical sense of the term. [. . . One must] produce the text, open it out, *set it going*” (162-63).

genre and style in Victorian writing, blending realism, romanticism, and sensationalism in a fascinating way, but also remaining distinct from these genres.

This brings me to Barthes's fifth proposition—filiation, for it is in this proposition that Reade seems to subvert the idea of Text. Though Reade undoubtedly creates intertextuality within and between his matter-of-fact romances, he does not avoid the concern of filiation in his novels. Barthes insists that a Text must read “without the inscription of the Father” (162). In no way can this description classify Reade. Reade writes his matter-of-fact romances with the purpose of affecting his readers, speaking to them from his authorial seat, and directing appropriate action and right thinking. He is the Father of his text; the author is not dead—Reade insists on being present throughout. In his letters to editors in response to criticisms or challenges, he spells out, step by step, his meanings, purposes, and intentions. He does not allow room for interpretation. He heavy-handedly dictates the terms of his novels. Ironically, however, Reade somehow escapes filiation in a certain sense. Though he writhes under the attacks of his critics—particularly the sham attacks—he gives them their say. When responding to the libelous letters of his detractors, he invariably re-quotes the accusations in order to respond to them. Instead of suppressing his opponents' opinions, he reprints them—and then obliterates them. Barthes says that filiation prevents a text from being *broken*. Again, paradoxically, Reade's filiative practices ultimately break the text apart. For instance, when responding to his critics in *Trade Malice*, Reade takes an authoritative stance toward his novel, *The Wandering Heir*. He writes his missive as the all-knowing creator—the Father—of the story. At the very same time, he breaks his story apart, piece by piece, to point to the sources used in each episode. The novel is broken apart by the

Father, and thus, filiation is in some way negated. Barthes asserts that “the Text is always *paradoxical*,” and indeed, this seems to be true (158). Though Reade does not avoid filiation, somehow—paradoxically—he does.

Barthes suggests that the final proposition regarding Text is concerned with pleasure. He is careful to differentiate between the pleasure of “consumption” and “a pleasure without separation” (163-64). Though Reade provides action, adventure, and incident enough to make most readers consumptive, he also provides true pleasure without separation—pleasure in the construction of the text, pleasure in the dialogue, pleasure in being fused together so tightly with the text. Readers must, in some way be able to “*re-write*” a Text for it to fulfill the pleasure requirement, and Reade provides numerous opportunities to do so (163). His texts can be rewritten in the contemporary actions taken against abuses in prisons and asylums—or in the present-day actions against a new generation of social wrongs. His texts can be rewritten in letters to the editor, editorials, articles, and myriad other sources in which the conversations that Reade “cuts across” are continued—long after Reade ceased writing matter-of-fact romances. The pleasure of Reade’s texts stems from their intertextual nature and the ways that they are continually being rewritten, even today.

Because Reade chooses to incorporate unusual, often sensational events and incidents into his novels, critics condemn his attempt at realism. However, because these extraordinary facts are verifiable, Reade is, in some way, a realist. Nevertheless, by choosing to include bizarre incidents rather than the everyday, mundane ones, Reade subverts traditionally held ideas about genre, particularly as it relates to realism. Though Reade presents facts, they do not represent what is familiar or probable in Victorian

society. This idea of unfamiliarity and impossibility can be directly related to the content of Reade's novels. Despite the fact Reade incorporates factual incidents, they are unfamiliar to his middle-class Victorian reader; as a result, Reade can put forward subversive ideas about power and propriety as a suggestion for what Victorian life might possibly be—what is unfamiliar but potentially viable for readers in the nineteenth century. In the next few chapters I look at the important manifestations of facts in fiction, highlighting the intertextuality of the works and explaining the ways in which the separate texts converse with each other. In addition, I point to ways that Reade continues to play with the idea of subversion—not simply in regard to genre but also with regard to Victorian concepts of power and propriety.

CHAPTER THREE

It Is Never Too Late to Mend: Subversions of Power in the Prisons

The gaoler had been out-witted by the priest.

(2: 105)

Reade's matter-of-fact romance is a clear subversion of traditional genre distinctions. Neither quite sensation, nor quite realist, not wholly novel-with-a-purpose, nor yet fully adventure fiction, the matter-of-fact romance encompasses all of these genres at various points while adding the important elements of integrated facts and a backdrop of present-day romance. In his first matter-of-fact romance, *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*, Reade melds contemporary facts with his own imaginative creations in order to subvert traditionally held theories about the prison system. The prison section of *Never Too Late* relates the experiences of a thief named Tom Robinson in ——— Gaol. The governor, Hawes, is cruel and thrives on illegally abusing the inmates of his prison, especially Robinson and a fifteen-year-old boy named Josephs who eventually is driven to commit suicide. Illegal abuses include the punishment jacket, time in the black hole, floggings, starvation, turning the crank, and myriad lesser punishments. Francis Eden takes the place of Mr. Jones as chaplain and determines to put a stop to the abuses taking place. He and Hawes battle for control in the prison, as Hawes's punishments become ever more sadistic and Eden supplicates increasingly higher government officials for redress. Hawes is eventually ousted from power, and Eden humanely restores order throughout the prison. Using the newspaper reports and the government blue books about the infamous inquest at Birmingham Gaol, Reade demonstrates the problem of

power within the prison system, introducing an unassuming and mild-mannered clergyman to subvert the power of the brutal, abusive warden.

In this chapter, I first show how Reade uses contemporary reports to create his matter-of-fact romance, beginning with an explanation of the Birmingham Gaol inquest. I then examine ways that *Never Too Late* incorporates intertextuality as well as how it continues to generate more intertextuality. Next, I provide an analysis of Reade's use of romance in the novel, and I then offer an overview of theories and practices in the Victorian prisons to highlight more effectively how Reade subverts power within his text. Finally, I present a reading of *Never Too Late* in which I argue that Reade undermines established power and traditional prison models, offering what he believes is a more constructive theory and advocating for reform. Mingling historical fact and imaginative invention, *Never Too Late* is a powerful critique of the established prison system and the abuses found therein.

The Birmingham Gaol Inquest Report: Reade's Matter-of-Fact Sources

On August 31, 1853, the London *Times* announced that a "commission appointed by Government to inquire into certain charges of cruel treatment of prisoners in the [Birmingham Gaol]" had commenced the day before ("Birmingham Borough"). This inquest brought to light serious abuses that had been occurring for some time within the walls of the prison. The suicide of a fifteen-year-old boy named Edward Andrews prompted the inquest. Over a period of twelve days, the commissioner, Mr. Welsby, questioned a number of witnesses connected with Birmingham Gaol, including the surgeon, the wardens, the visiting justices responsible for inspecting the prison, and even other prisoners.

Lieutenant Austin, the governor of the jail, was found guilty of introducing

of his own authority [the punishment jacket], not only utterly illegal, but most objectionable from its painful, cruel, and exasperating character, which he practised with a frequency distressing to hear of, for offences often too trivial to call for any severity of punishment at all, and upon offenders quite unfit to be subjected to it,—combining with it also other inflictions and privations, and directing and witnessing their application with a lamentable indifference to human suffering,—until the penal discipline of the gaol became almost a uniform system of the application of pain and terror. (*Report* xxxv)

For the gross abuse of his power, Austin was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

In addition, the surgeon, John Blount “exhibited an utter disregard of his duty, and a gross violation of common humanity” (xxii) and was harshly criticized by the writers of the *Report* for not performing his duty. The only two authorities in the prison that are praised for their treatment of the prisoners in any way are Ambrose Sherwin, the chaplain, and a warder named William Brown.¹

The Birmingham Gaol scandal was highly publicized due to Birmingham churchwarden Joseph Allday’s insistence that a public inquiry take place with the attendance of the press. The *Times* picked up the news story from the *Birmingham Journal* and reported on the inquiry in its entirety. The sensational nature of the abuses being exposed also served to increase the publicity of the scandal. “The disclosures of each day,” records the *Times*, “add some new phrase of cruelty to this revelation of horrors” (“Birmingham” 9). Allday published his edited account of the events leading up to the inquiry and a summary of the inquiry in the aptly titled *Truth is Stranger Than*

¹ The *Report* states, “one in particular, a warder of the name of William Brown, appeared to have exhibited in many cases considerable sympathy with the prisoners under punishment, and to have not unfrequently relaxed its severity, so far as to relive them from the extremity of suffering” (xxxvi).

Fiction.² The far more measured government publication, *Report of the Commissioners* was published in 1854.³ With a keen appreciation for the sensational, Reade read and filed away the series of reports on the Birmingham Gaol with the purpose of someday incorporating the events into a novel. Soon after, he began to write *Never Too Late* with a substantial section of the novel being devoted to the abuses found in the prisons.⁴

Reade incorporates a substantial number of facts and events from the Birmingham Gaol inquiry into *Never Too Late*, legitimating the “matter-of-fact” aspect of his novel.⁵ I wish to examine four ways that he utilizes these sources in the prison section of the novel. First, he includes direct quotations from the *Report* and the *Times* in his novel. Second, his fictional characters often bear similar names to those of the historical personages at Birmingham, creating an irresistible parallel between fact and fiction. Third, he replicates many of the abuses and cruelties reported from the *Times* and within

² Though Allday’s *Proceedings* repeats much of what is in the *Report*, it does contain information on the original town meeting to discuss the alleged abuses within the Birmingham Gaol and the memorial presented to Lord Palmerston requesting an inquiry by the Commissioners. More importantly, perhaps, than the content of the meeting, the memorial, or the inquiry are Allday’s introductory comments—comments with which Reade would have wholeheartedly agreed:

An investigation so important in its character and so extraordinary in its results—disclosing, as it has done, scenes far surpassing anything that has ever appeared in the pages of fiction or romance—will long live, not only in the minds of the public of Birmingham, but of the people of this great and enlightened country—the public press of which has teemed with expressions of those feelings of indignation which the disclosures revealed as having taken place in, alas! our “Gaol of Horrors” have excited throughout the length and breadth of the land. (3)

The dramatic language, the sense of affecting history, and the outraged sensibilities which Allday records are the sort of characteristics that would inflame Reade’s imagination. Allday’s title, *Truth is Stranger Than Fiction*, would also certainly have had a significant impact on Reade.

³ The Commissioners reported their findings on the Birmingham Gaol inquiry during the January 31 – August 12, 1854 Parliamentary session in the House of Commons.

⁴ A comparison of material in the *Times* series of reports and in the House of Commons *Report* clearly demonstrates that Reade used both sources. In this chapter, I quote primarily from the official report published by the House of Commons, but I quote from the *Times* when it is obvious that Reade has used the paper as his source. I also include footnotes to highlight differences between the exchanges reported in the *Times* and those documented in the official government report.

⁵ Though Reade incorporates facts throughout *Never Too Late*, this chapter focuses on the abuses within the prisons. Therefore, I limit my analysis of Reade’s sources to the prison section of the novel.

the Commissioners' *Report*. And finally, he depicts corresponding outcomes for his fictional prisoners and for the prisoners of real life. In these four ways, Reade integrates well-known facts with his own imaginative story in order to make his readers *realize* the horrors that were actually occurring in prisons throughout England.

The first way Reade uses his sources is to incorporate direct quotations from the inquiry *Report* into his novel. Though Reade does not overtly cite the source of his direct quotations, he does hint that he might be quoting from a source. In each case of direct quotation from the Birmingham Gaol inquiry *Report*, Reade uses capital letters, setting apart the quotation from the surrounding text.⁶ He also directly inserts the quotations from the *Report* into *Never Too Late* for a specific rhetorical purpose as he aims to garner sympathy for Josephs, incense the reader against the visiting justices and the ineffectual chaplain, and set the stage for Francis Eden's heroic overthrow of the brutal Hawes.

The first of three direct quotations describes Andrews, the boy who committed suicide. The *Times* states, "According to the admission of the governor, [Andrews'] manner was 'not disrespectful;' the chaplain, Sherwin Ambrose, said he was a 'mild, quiet, docile boy;' and Brown, the warder, admits that he was 'quiet and respectful'" ("Birmingham" 9).⁷ In *Never Too Late*, the inspector, Mr. Williams, asks the chaplain, Mr. Jones about Josephs:

"Do you know a prisoner here called Josephs?"
"Yes sir perfectly well."
"Well now, what is his character may I ask?"
"HE IS A MILD, QUIET, DOCILE LAD." (1: 199)

⁶ Admittedly this is a small gesture, especially considering that Reade frequently uses capital letters to emphasize an important point or cause a sensation. Reade, however, would have considered using direct quotations from the inquiry sensational thereby fitting in with his use of capital letters. Nevertheless, the attribution he gives to his source is trifling at best.

⁷ The direct quotation from Sherwin in the *Report* is, "Not at all; a mild quiet docile sort of boy I found him" (143).

Reade again repeats this phrase after Josephs has committed suicide: “Of these, one, ‘a mild quiet docile boy’ was driven to self-slaughter” (2: 19). Using capital letters the first time, Reade then places the quotation in single quotation marks when he repeats the phrase later in the novel.

The next quotation Reade appropriates concerns the quality of a prisoner’s gruel. In the *Report*, Lieutenant Austin is asked about the prisoner, Gray Ross’s, gruel. “Did you give any directions to Mr. Potter,” Welsby inquires, “to the effect that he should not make the gruel too good for that prisoner?” (255). Later, Welsby interviews the visiting justice, Mr. Luckcock⁸ about the same alleged suggestion:

Have you any recollection of the case of Ross, in which the gruel was reduced?—I have not.

Did you say, or did you hear any magistrate say, that it would be well that such fellows’ gruel should not be made too good?—I never heard the expression until it was reported in this room.⁹ (423)

The issue arises yet again during Welsby’s interview of Mr. Henry Smith.¹⁰ Smith, of course, denies all knowledge of such a suggestion:

[. . .] he did not recollect on any occasion, in reference to a prisoner named Coss,¹¹ having said, “It would be well not to make the gruel so good for him.” He was aware that the remark had been attributed to him, but he found that none of his brother magistrates could recollect it, and he was quite sure that he had never thrown out such a suggestion for the governor to act upon. He never heard of it until the commencement of the present inquiry.¹² (“Birmingham Twelfth” 11)

⁸ The *Times* consistently spells his name Luccock.

⁹ A slight variation of this conversation is reported in the *Times* (“Birmingham Twelfth” 11).

¹⁰ Smith was the chairman of the visiting magistrates in 1850 and again in 1853.

¹¹ Though the official government report records the prisoner’s name as Gray Ross, the *Times* reports his name as Coss.

¹² See, also, the Commissioners’ *Report*, pg. 433:

I am perfectly certain that I never in conversation made an observation of that kind, which was intended as a suggestion to the governor to carry it out after the sentence was

Neither did the magistrate William James recall the suggestion to dilute Ross's gruel; "Certainly not" was all the answer he deigned to give (460).¹³ Welsby's determination to uncover the source of this quotation must have struck a chord with Reade, as must have the number of times the sentence is quoted—particularly in the *Times* report where the inquiry is so compressed. Consequently, Reade inserts the quotation in all capital letters with just a slight alteration. He also increases the import—and cruelty—of the quotation by repeating it in the text and attributing it to visiting justice Mr. Williams:

For the last minute or two [Mr. Williams] had been in the throes of an idea, and now he delivered himself of it.

"It would be well if Josephs' gruel were not made so strong for him."

Mr. Williams was not one of those who often say a great thing, but this deserves immortality, and could I confer immortality this of Williams' should never die! Unlike most of the things we say it does not deserve ever to die:—

"IT WOULD BE WELL IF JOSEPHS' GRUEL WERE NOT MADE SO STRONG FOR HIM!!" (1: 195)

Reade is incensed at the possibility that a visiting justice may have made the suggestion to decrease the quality of a maltreated prisoner's food and further augments the appalling proposal by making Josephs the recipient of the punishment rather than another, lesser known prisoner.

The final quotation concerns the chaplain's objections to the cruelties enacted within the prison—objections he claims were ignored and ridiculed. The *Times* reports

given, and I have inquired of every magistrate present, to the best of my knowledge, and every one has said he never heard me say it. I feel a difficulty whether I might not, in conversation with a gentleman sitting by me, have interposed an observation as to what the man might have deserved, after his sentence was given. (433)

Though many critics condemn Reade for his vitriolic portrayal of the visiting justices in *Never Too Late*, the testimony of the real visiting justices of Birmingham Gaol seems to warrant Reade's depiction. The witnesses constantly alter their stories, deny accusations only to admit them later, and emanate a sense of absolute cluelessness that does not, in any way, inspire confidence.

¹³ The *Times* records a condensed transcript of James's testimony ("Birmingham Last" 11).

the exchange between Welsby and Luckcock in which Welsby sought to determine the truth of the alleged quotation:

Mr. Welsby.—One of Mr. Shewin’s expressions was, that “cold water was thrown upon his remonstrances.”¹⁴

Witness.—I heard the expression, to my great surprise, in this room. (“Birmingham Twelfth” 11)

The report also states that when the magistrate, William James was examined, he assured those attending the inquiry that he “had always spoken kindly to the chaplain, and never in the slightest degree checked, or thrown cold water upon his remonstrances”

(“Birmingham Last” 7). Reade was also taken with this quotation as it appears in the *Times* and the emphasis placed on it in the newspaper report. He thrice uses varying forms of the quotation in *Never Too Late*. The chaplain, Mr. Jones, tries to defend Josephs but is immediately rebuffed by Mr. Hawes. “I have discharged my conscience,” Jones declares. “I have remonstrated against the severities practised on our prisoners. COLD WATER HAS BEEN THROWN ON MY REMONSTRANCES, and I shall therefore interfere no more” (1: 202).

Reade’s subsequent uses of the quotation are almost contemptuous in nature. Mr. Jones’s objection is ineffectual and serves as a pretext for evading his responsibility.

¹⁴ Here I have chosen to quote the *Times* rather than the *Report* because of the repetition of the word “remonstrances.” Reade clearly took the quotation from the newspaper rather than the official government report; “remonstrances” does not appear in the government report at all. Rather, Sherwin declares, “I found that there was such a determination to uphold Lieutenant Austin, *per fas aut nefas*, that cold water was thrown upon almost every effort I made with respect to the prison officers” (288). As Welsby interviews subsequent witnesses in the *Report*, the phrase “cold water” is used, but “remonstrances” never appears.

Thus, Welsby to Luckcock: “His expression upon one occasion was, that cold water was always thrown upon it by the magistrates?—Yes; I heard his evidence to this effect in this room, and I confess I was surprised at the evidence. I had not heard of it” (425); Welsby to Smith: “Have you any recollection of anything to justify what he has stated, that his endeavors to bring this under the notice of the magistrates were discouraged and had cold water thrown upon them?—Not the slightest degree” (436); and James to Welsby: “I am sure that I can, upon my oath, say that I have ever treated the chaplain most kindly, and never in the slightest degree checked any communication to me of any sort or kind, or ever, as he has said, thrown cold water upon anything he could say” (462).

Reade writes, “Now it happened just after the justices had thrown cold water on Mr. Jones’s little expostulation, that Robinson was pinned to the wall, jammed in the waistcoat, and throttled in the collar. [. . .] Mr. Jones was looking gravely at the victim [. . . then] gave a sigh and walked away” (1: 212). Though Jones’s inaction is contemptible, Reade wants to ensure that the reader understands the weak nature of the chaplain. His final use of the quotation makes Jones’s character abundantly clear: “After looking on in silence for a twelvemonth or two he remonstrated against Hawes’s barbarity. He would have done more; he would have stopped it—if it could have been stopped without any trouble. Cold water was thrown on his remonstrance; he cooled directly!” (1: 218). Jones is not an admirable man. He is weak, he is timid, and most of all, he does not choose to stir up any trouble for himself.

A second use Reade makes of his sources is to identify the names of principle participants in the Birmingham Gaol scandal—both prisoners and authorities—and create similar names for his fictional characters. Thus, the boy who commits suicide is named Andrews, and this name Reade converts to Josephs.¹⁵ A deceased prisoner of Birmingham Gaol was named Hodgetts; his name is Hatchetts in Reade’s story. Another prisoner, Taylor at Birmingham Gaol, is Naylor in *Never Too Late*. The head warder at Birmingham Gaol is named Freer; Reade names his head warder Fry. The Birmingham Gaol inspectors were named H. Luccock, William Wills, and Mr. Perry; Mr. Woodcock, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Palmer are the names of Reade’s inspectors. By assigning similar names to several of his characters, Reade invites readers to make comparisons between

¹⁵ While purely conjecture, I suggest that the corresponding names may have been inspired by Henry Fielding’s novel, *Joseph Andrews*. Without offering further proof, Sean Grass has posited the same suggestion (82). Even without the connection to Fielding, however, the names are still similar; both names end in “s,” creating sufficiently unique surnames.

the scandal at Birmingham Gaol and the matter-of-fact romance being played out in *Never Too Late*.

In addition to the direct quotations incorporated into the text and written in capital letters, Reade also uses several other descriptions from the Birmingham Gaol inquiry that have been only slightly modified. In the *Report*, Andrews had been in prison three times—“Once for throwing stones in the street, and another time for taking fruit in an orchard,” and the “last time for stealing four pounds of beef” (142). Josephs’ background is almost identical: “He has been three times in prison; once for throwing stones, once for orchard-robbing, and this time for the beef” (1: 190). Smith describes Austin as “faithful, energetic, and painstaking” while the magistrates of ——— Gaol describe Hawes as an “active, zealous, and deserving officer” in their reports (434; 1: 158). Finally, the exertion needed to turn the crank is “equal to one fourth of the ordinary work of a draught horse [. . .]; no human being, whether adult or juvenile, could continue to perform such an amount of labour of this kind for several consecutive days, especially on the prison diet, without wasting much and suffering greatly” (vii). Reade echoes this assessment and retains the commentary about diet: “It is calculated that four prisoners, on an average crank marked 10 lb., had to exert an aggregate of force equal to one horse; and this exertion was prolonged day after day, far beyond a horse’s power of endurance, and in many cases on a modicum of food so scanty, that no horse ever foaled, so fed, could have drawn an arm-chair a mile” (2: 114).¹⁶ In all of these slight alterations, Reade remains close to his source while eliciting a visceral reaction from his readers.

¹⁶ Though the *Times* includes similar testimony—“he is again placed upon the crank, to do what Mr. Heaton calls ‘the work of a quarter of a horse,’”—the association between over-work and starvation is made much more overt by the government report, demonstrating that Reade also used the *Report* as a source for *Never Too Late*.

Reade's third use of the *Report* and *Times* synopsis concerns creating parallel punishments in *Never Too Late*.¹⁷ First of all, the *Report* lists the following punishments which coincide with those in *Never Too Late*: “depriving the prisoners of their bed and of their gas, [. . .] keeping them from exercise, [. . .] preventing them from attending the chapel,” constraining them in the punishment jacket, dousing them with cold water, forcing them to perform outrageous numbers of revolutions on the cranks, and denying them food (xxviii).¹⁸ More specifically, the cranks require more force to turn than the labels indicate (“Birmingham” 9; 2: 114-15); the punishment jacket is described in almost the same cruel language in the *Report* and in *Never Too Late* (vii-viii; 1: 176, 2: 76); the governor threatens punishments that never come (198; 1: 342, 1: 386, 1: 393); he flogs prisoners over the course of multiple days to inflict psychological damage (230-31; 1: 205-06); and he illegally keeps prisoners past eleven o'clock on the day of their release (xxix; 2: 68). Reade takes these general abuses, as well as many more, and inserts them directly into *Never Too Late*; the abuses he chronicles are firmly grounded in fact.

The final use that Reade makes of his sources is to virtually reproduce the specific experiences of the prisoners from Birmingham Gaol—either partially or wholly—in

¹⁷ The one cruelty Reade describes that is not present in the *Report* is confinement in the black hole—a punishment that Robinson endures on at least two occasions. Birmingham Gaol did not appear to have a black hole, but Austin often made prisoners who had not completed their quota of revolutions on the crank remain in the crank cells until they were done with their work. The evidence from the *Report* indicates that prisoners were forced to turn the crank in the dark and estimate the revolutions as closely as possible without actually knowing how many they had done.

¹⁸ Because of the considerable similarities between the *Report* and Reade's novel, it is interesting to observe which punishments Reade does not include in *Never Too Late*. Reade does not mention the old punishment of making prisoners stand for hours with their faces to the wall, nor does he reference depriving prisoners of the opportunity to see their friends, but the omission of these two punishments can be satisfactorily explained. The first punishment was discontinued when Austin became governor, and the second punishment would, in all likelihood, have made Hawes of *Never Too Late* seem kinder than Reade desired to portray him; disallowing visitation privileges implies that the privilege existed in — Gaol, which it most assuredly did not. More difficult to explain, however, is the utter absence of punishment for female prisoners. Both the *Report* and the *Times* record testimony concerning the abuse of female prisoners, but Reade does not address these abuses at all.

Never Too Late. To take each particular instance in turn would not be possible within the pages of this chapter. Instead, I will point to several obvious examples that will serve as a sample for the whole. Isaac Gettings¹⁹ and William Barnes of Birmingham Gaol are both punished for trivial rule breaking—the first for writing on his can, the latter for accidentally ringing his bell (xxvi, 354). Joram and Gillies of *Never Too Late* are punished for parallel offenses (1: 304, 192). The warden discovers eighteen loaves of bread in Hodgetts' cell, indicating that the prisoner had not eaten for a week; Evans discovers the same number of uneaten loaves in Hatchett's cell in *Never Too Late* (66; 2: 72). Birmingham Gaol prisoner, Edward Plant, requests a change in work because his hand is blistered; ——— Gaol's Joram similarly requests different work because of a blistered hand (xx; 2: 95). Reade's character, Carter, parallels Birmingham Gaol's Samuel Hunt. Both men, mentally unstable, are strapped up in the punishment jacket, and when they refuse to be silent, the warden and surgeon torture the men by repeatedly filling their mouths with salt until they are too parched to yell (207; 1: 370-71). Naylor is the fictional representation of Taylor, both of whom have suffered mental imbalances due to the separate and silent system. As a result, each sees the words, "child of hell" in blazing letters of fire every night in the darkness of his cell (147, 281, 300; 2: 96-97). The wardens on duty torture a prisoner named Scott, first by confining him for an inordinate amount of time in the straightjacket, then by dousing him in cold water, stripping him naked and scrubbing him violently with hard brushes, pulling his hair back "against the grain" and then by returning him to the straightjacket for the remainder of the night (284). In *Never Too Late*, Reade repeats this incident in lurid detail with Robinson as the tortured prisoner (1: 184-87). Finally, Reade parallels in Josephs'

¹⁹ The *Times* prints his name as Gittings.

punishments the punishments that Andrews received in real life. The *Times* succinctly summarizes the tortures Andrews endured:

Nevertheless, the punishments go on, until, irritated by a sense of injustice, famished with hunger, pained and tortured by the jacket and Mr. Freer's universal restorative, cold water, his strength over-taxed by the crank labour, his bed and light taken from him, and over him the threat of further punishment hanging, he rids himself of life as the preferable alternative. Will anybody but the surgeon say that the lad's death was not the direct and necessary result of this aggregation of torture?
("Birmingham" 9)

Throughout the first volume of *Never Too Late*, Josephs undergoes the same tortures and ultimately commits suicide as an escape from the afflictions of — Gaol (1: 387-94).²⁰ The list of parallels between the *Report* and *Never Too Late* is nearly inexhaustible; the examples catalogued above provide only a small number of the incidents in *Never Too Late* that can be traced directly to Reade's matter-of-fact source, the *Report* on the Birmingham Gaol scandal.

Throughout *Never Too Late*, Reade also references rules taken from the *Regulations for Prisons in England and Wales*. Though his allusions to the prison rules are not direct quotations from the official government publication, each prison rule that Eden references in the novel is present in some form in the *Regulations*. In addition, the rule Reade most often quotes, Rule 37, is taken directly from the prison regulations posted at the County Gaol and House of Correction at Reading where Reade did considerable research for the prison section of *Never Too Late*.²¹ Throughout the novel,

²⁰ The writers of the *Report* blame Andrews' suicide on the treatment he received in Birmingham Gaol. The *Report* states, "With respect, then, to the case of Edward Andrews, we are of opinion that, by the order and with the knowledge of the governor, he was punished illegally and cruelly, and was driven thereby to the commission of suicide" (xi).

²¹ Though Eden cites specific, numbered rules when quoting the prison regulations, these numbers do not coincide with either the *Regulations* in full or the "Abstract of the Regulations Relating to the Treatment and Conduct of Convicted Criminal Prisoners." Nevertheless, the rules that Eden quotes are

Eden is most concerned with the illegality of utter silence and lack of community in the prison. Though solitary confinement is mandatory and silence is exactingly enforced, Eden continually points out that silence may not be continually imposed. Inspector Lacy objects, “But solitary confinement is legal” to which Mr. Eden must explain:

“No, it is not: separate confinement, i. e., separation of prisoner from prisoner is legal, but separation of a prisoner from the human race is as illegal as any other mode of homicide. It never was legal in England; it was legal for a short time in the United States, and do you know why it has been made illegal there?”²²

“No, I do not.”

“Because they found that life and reason went out under it like the snuff of a candle.” (2: 70)

Over and over, Eden points out to Hawes, the turnkeys, the surgeon, the visiting justices, and the commissioners that prisoners must be visited four times a day²³ and given the opportunity to have a few minutes of conversation with each visitor (1: 302). He also stresses the importance of the chaplain’s role in determining for each prisoner the kind of

present, in some form, within the *Regulations*. Moreover, the influence of the Reading Gaol posted regulations is obvious. Rule 19 becomes 18 in *Never Too Late*, Rule 36 becomes 30 in the novel, Rule 33 becomes 34, and rule 9 becomes Eden’s Rule 10.

²² McShane and Williams offer a brief explanation of the failure of the Pennsylvania system of solitary confinement that first began in 1817:

[The] Pennsylvania system was noted for its complete separation of inmates from each other. So convinced were the Pennsylvania reformers of the need for radical departure from previous methods that, at the new Western penitentiary at Pittsburgh, there was absolute deprivation of work as well as enforced solitude. The practice of solitary confinement without work, however, was rapidly condemned. It was concluded that solitary confinement without labor engenders poor health without producing any reformatory benefits over and above confinement with labor. An 1829 law was passed requiring convicts at both the Eastern and Western penitentiaries to perform handcraft labor (usually shoemaking) in their solitary confinement cells. (408)

Sieh adds that the “Pennsylvania silent system, while intending to reform the offender, fostered insanity instead” (30).

²³ According to the *Regulations*, the governor, the chaplain, and the subordinate officers are to visit every cell at least once a day, resulting in at least four visits to each prisoner per day (17, 22). Eden echoes these regulations when confronting Hawes with the illegality of his actions in the prison (1: 302).

moral instruction that is needed²⁴ and the right of each prisoner to take as much exercise as is needed to maintain health²⁵ (2: 84, 109). Even after Eden triumphs over Hawes, he continues to reference the prison regulations, posting the rules of the prison in each cell in accordance with the stipulation set forth by the *Regulations* (2: 115-16).²⁶ By referencing the *Prison Regulations* each prison was using during the time that he is writing, Reade integrates another factually grounded source into the prison section of *Never Too Late*.

In *Never Too Late*, Reade utilizes a number of well-known and well-publicized sources to create a fiction based on facts. Much of the prison section is transparently historical, enabling readers to identify sources and confirm the truth of Reade's narrative. In the section that follows, I analyze the ways that Reade's historical sources contribute to the intertextual nature of his novel.

Matter-of-Fact Intertextuality: Following the Paper Trail(s)

The profusion of intertextuality in Reade's matter-of-fact romances encourages readers to engage carefully with his works. *Never Too Late* acts as "a tissue, a woven fabric," to use the words of Roland Barthes (159). Reade incorporates so many facts, figures, statistics, allusions, and quotations into the prison section of his novel that the

²⁴ See Rule 120 of the *Regulations*: "He shall, in addition to the performance of the stated religious services, assemble the prisoners in classes, for general religious instruction" (22). Also, Rule 121: "He shall, at stated times, see every prisoner in private, in order to be able to direct his advice and instruction, with reference to the peculiar character and state of mind of each prisoner, and that under circumstances in which the prisoner is likely to be least reserved, and most open to good influence" (22).

²⁵ According to the *Regulations*, prisoners "shall be permitted to take such exercise in the open air as may be deemed necessary by the medical officer for the preservation of their health" (26).

²⁶ See Rule 39: "He shall cause copies of such of the rules as relate to the treatment and conduct of prisoners (printed in legible characters) to be fixed up in conspicuous parts of the prison, so that every prisoner may have access thereto," and Rule 40: "He shall give to every prisoner, within twenty-four hours after his admission, a printed copy of such of the rules as related to the conduct and treatment of prisoners; and he shall read, or cause to be read, such rules to such prisoners as cannot read; and once every three months he shall repeat the same" (18).

reader is met with some aspect of history on nearly every page. Though Hawes is a monster, the abuses he inflicts on his prisoners are based firmly in fact; a reader cannot dismiss the cruelty and violence of Reade's novel precisely because the horror has happened in real life. Sheila M. Smith argues that "Reade's attempt to arouse hatred against Austin by presenting the facts is defeated, for the modern reader [. . .]. The reader's mind, though perhaps responding to Reade's indignation, questions the facts, suspecting that they may be distorted by the violence of the author's feelings" (141). But the violence enacted in ——— Gaol is not a figment of Reade's imagination, and because he uses so many facts, a dubious reader can easily confirm the truth of his story. Reade's account of the atrocities at ——— Gaol are harrowing primarily because they *are* true. A Victorian reader, especially, would have a difficult time stepping away from the text because the novel itself is a woven intertextual fabric that contains evidence of historical truth on every page.

Reade generates intertextuality in *Never Too Late* by deliberately writing about his matter-of-fact romances as collective projects, attributing to other texts many of his ideas or inspirations and inviting readers actively to confirm the truth in his story. In doing so, Reade encourages others to share the responsibility of the text he produces. He also assumes responsibility for pointing to sources, for highlighting facts, and for ensuring that the reader remains close enough to the text to be affected by its message and to advocate for significant change.

Reade first assigns responsibility to the writers of his sources, and particularly news sources. For example, when readers accused Reade of writing about indecent subject matter, Reade credits the columns of the *Times* with his inspirations:

For 18 years, at least, the journal you conduct so ably has been my preceptor, and the main source of my works—at all events, of the most approved. A noble passage in *The Times* of September 7 or 8, 1853, touched my heart, inflamed my imagination, and was the germ of my first important work, *It is Never Too Late to Mend*. That column,²⁷ a monument of head, heart, and English, stands now dramatized in my pages, and embellishes the work it had inspired. (4)

Certainly, Reade has reworked the dry newspaper announcements of cruel prison abuses, suicide by prison inmates, and irresponsible prison officials, but the facts are there, in black and white, freely offered to the reading public. Reade retools these facts for the rhetorical purpose of impelling his readers to change the abuses being reported, not just to read them.

Readers also have a responsibility when reading Reade's novels. Because Reade is writing his novel in conjunction with other sources, he encourages readers to read *Never Too Late* in conjunction with its sources. In this way, conversations are perpetuated because the reader's work is never completely finished. Reviewers of *Never Too Late* accepted the task of reading the novel as an interaction with other sources and identified intertextual elements therein. Writing about *Never Too Late* at its publication in 1856, the reviewer for the *New Quarterly Review* sets the scene and suggests that the Birmingham Gaol may have been Reade's source. "We are taken to a county jail of the worst kind," writes the reviewer, "where the separate system is carried out with inhuman barbarity under a brute of a governor, and addlepatated and equally severe magistrates. We imagine Birmingham may have been in the writer's mind" ("It Is Never" 395). A reviewer for *Bentley's Miscellany* writing at nearly the same time leaves no room for doubt:

²⁷ See *Times*, "Commission of Inquiry Into the Alleged Abuses in the Birmingham Gaol," September 8, 1853, p. 7.

The sources from whence the fearful and too true pictures of abuses of prison discipline are derived are known to all. The humane but weak theorist, Captain O'Connor; Mr. Williams, the 'Shallow and Slender' justice; the brutal Hawes, the efficient chaplain, are all real personages. It is much to be wished, for the honour of the country we live in, and for the credit of the age, that it were not so. ("Charles" 292)

Even at the original publication of *Never Too Late*, readers perceived the intertextual nature of Reade's work and realized that he was weaving the real people and events of the Birmingham Gaol scandal into his matter-of-fact romance. That they continued to offer surmises about Reade's sources and reference the figures of the scandal themselves as they discussed Reade's novel effectively generated more intertextuality. The newspapers ran the original scandal and inquiry, Reade incorporated those facts into his novel, and then the newspapers and journals reviewed Reade's novel, referencing the facts that they, no doubt, had printed themselves just a few years before. Reading a matter-of-fact romance by Reade is, indeed, an active and demanding endeavor that always takes place in a community of readers and writers.

Though Reade views reading his matter-of-fact romances as an activity in which writers of his sources and readers of his novels are accountable both for and to the text, he also assumes a share of the responsibility as arbiter and interpreter of truth. He provides interested readers with additional facts and sources and makes his original sources as clear as possible. In *Never Too Late*, Reade does this in two specific ways—first, with references to Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and second, with his repeated use of columns in the text to encourage readers to compare sources to determine truth.

In addition to the *Report*, Allday's *Proceedings*, the *Times* synopsis, and the *Prison Regulations*, Reade also includes overt references to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.²⁸ His method for doing so is rhetorical: he seeks to demonstrate that the abuses English prisoners undergo rivals the atrocity of American slavery. "The cases are in a great measure parallel," muses Eden. "Prisoners are a tabooed class in England, as are blacks in some few of the United States. The lady writes better than I can talk. If she once seizes his sympathies by the wonderful power of fiction, she will touch his conscience through his heart" (1: 340). This summation of Stowe's own rhetorical power certainly reveals Reade's desire for his own novel—to touch the consciences of his readers—and intentionally puts *Never Too Late* in conversation with *Uncle Tom*. But Reade's primary purpose is undoubtedly to highlight the similarities of two systems, one of which is condemned in Britain while the other is acknowledged as a tool of reformation for dishonest men and women. Ironically, Hawes and Fry do not recognize the obvious parallels between their treatment of prisoners in ——— Gaol and Legree's treatment of his slaves in *Uncle Tom*; the reader, however immediately perceives the irony of Hawes' sympathy with the slaves moments before he mandates additional cruel punishments for his prisoners (2: 34-36). Indeed, the reviewer for the *New Quarterly Review* is a case in point; writing about *Never Too Late*, the reviewer states, "After these rural scenes comes a far more valuable section, fully equalling any thing in *Uncle Tom* for intensity of interest; exceeding it, we think, in horror, and also, perhaps, in Christian beauty and nobility of sentiment" ("It Is Never" 395). Part of Reade's responsibility as the author is

²⁸ It is interesting to observe that the *Times*' first column in reference to the Birmingham Gaol scandal is directly followed by an article with the headline "An Uncle Tom" ("Birmingham Borough" 7). Though there is no evidence that the juxtaposition of these two short articles influenced Reade to include references to Stowe's novel in *Never Too Late*, it is a coincidence worthy of note.

to underscore the horrific abuses occurring in the mid-Victorian prison. Using *Uncle Tom* as a comparative text, Reade accomplishes this purpose.

The second way that Reade fulfills his responsibility of revealing truth to the reader is through the use of columns in the text of *Never Too Late*. Twice, Reade employs this typesetting trick, the first time when Eden and Lepel compare notes on the prisoners, and the second time when Eden compares Hawes's punishment book to Fry's journal. These two occurrences bookend the prison section of *Never Too Late*, and through them, Reade subtly seems to invite his readers to examine his use of sources while emphasizing the intertextual nature of the matter-of-fact romance. The first time, Eden and Lepel separately interview prisoners and compare their conclusions about the personalities and demeanors of the prisoners they meet. Lepel's findings parallel the opinions of Hawes and Fry—every prisoner is bad-hearted, hopeless, and in need of more punishment. Eden's conclusions, on the other hand, provide a fair evaluation of the prisoners and are greatly at odds with Lepel's conclusions (1: 226-28). The second time Reade uses columns is when he compares Hawes's official punishment book to Fry's personal journal (2: 91-92). The specimen from Fry's notebook is an accurate account of the punishments doled out in the prison whereas the column that displays Hawes' records shows an attenuated version of the atrocities. In *Never Too Late*, Reade asks his readers to actively compare side-by-side documents to ascertain truth.

By twice inserting columns into the prison section of the novel for the purpose of comparison, Reade provides a model for determining truth. Through the use of these columns, Reade reminds his readers that they have a responsibility to the text. Just as the reader must decide between the conclusions of Lepel and Eden and Mr. Lacy must

determine which of the punishment records is more accurate, readers also can embrace the intertextuality of *Never Too Late*, identifying Reade's sources and comparing them to the novel itself. Reade does not want readers to accept his word alone; he invites—even demands—that readers make their own inquiries and come to their own conclusions. Reade writes that Eden “hated intellectual subserviency; he liked people to think for themselves; and to end by thinking with him” (1: 109). The same can be said for Reade. The columns invite comparison, Reade wants his readers to examine other sources responsibly, but he is also fully confident that his readers will “end by thinking with him.”

Intertextuality is an extremely important element in *Never Too Late*. Reade distributes responsibility for his novel between the writers of the sources, the readers, and himself. He points to the newspapers and journals, in particular, as having the lion's share of responsibility. First, they provide Reade with the idea for the prison section of *Never Too Late*, second, they comprise the community of readers who ascertain the truth of Reade's assertions, and third, they continue to generate intertextuality in Reade's novel by endlessly reviewing, analyzing, questioning, and providing a forum for other readers who do the same.

Thus, the reader's job is never completely finished, because the discussion of Reade's novel is never fully ended. Allusions to poor prison conditions years later would inevitably unearth Reade's descriptions of prison abuse in the 1850s. A death or other newsworthy event about a historical personage from Birmingham Gaol would unavoidably reintroduce the occurrences of Reade's ——— Gaol. An allusion to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* would elicit parallels to *Never Too Late* that Reade makes so clear in his

text. *Never Too Late* sits at the center of an intertextual web; sources, allusions, references, facts, and discussions radiate from that central point, forever creating more text and more information. As a result, the modern reader can never fully escape the intertextuality of the novel. Indeed, the intertextuality of *Never Too Late* is nearly limitless; so too, then, is the responsibility of the reader.

The Romance of Never Too Late

I have examined in detail the ways that Reade uses his sources in *Never Too Late* and elaborated on how these matter-of-fact sources contribute to the intertextuality that is clearly present in his novel. I now turn to the romance aspect of the matter-of-fact romance. Admittedly, *Never Too Late* is far more matter-of-fact than romance because Reade makes such generous use of the events and personages connected with the Birmingham Gaol scandal. Nevertheless, Reade incorporates romance in important ways, primary among them being the original creation of Francis Eden. In the paragraphs that follow, I analyze two principal issues to illuminate the elements of romance in *Never Too Late*: first, the reasons that Reade does not denounce the Birmingham Gaol surgeon, Blount, and the previous governor, Captain Maconochie, for their flagrant abuses, and second, what Eden's role in the novel is.

Though Reade closely follows the Birmingham Gaol *Report*, he barely mentions Captain O'Connor, whose story parallels that of Birmingham's Captain Moconochie. Hawes becomes the new governor of — Gaol after the magistrates remove O'Connor from his office. "The magistrates," Reade writes, "had long been looking for an excuse to get rid of him, and avail themselves of the zeal and energy of Hawes" (1: 157). Thus, Reade concludes Captain O'Connor's brief part in the story by writing

There was something melancholy in such a close to O'Connor's public career. Fortune used him hardly. He had been one of the first to improve prisons, yet he was dismissed on this or that pretence, but really because he could not keep pace with the soi-disant improvements of three inexperienced persons. Honorable mention of his name, his doings, and his words, is scattered about various respectable works by respectable men on this subject, yet he ended in something very like discredit. (1: 157)

This contrasts almost irreconcilably with the *Report's* summation of Captain Maconochie's role in Birmingham Gaol which states that all the punishments he used were "unquestionably illegal" (xxviii).²⁹ One such punishment that the authors made sure to emphasize was his practice of whipping, "in the first instance, twelve lashes with a light cat on the breech; if [a prisoner] did not submit upon receiving that punishment, by giving him six lashes more the next day, on the same part of the person, and by repeating this punishment, if it were necessary, until the prisoner became obedient" (xxviii). Captain Maconochie's response—"It cannot permanently injure, I think, and it overcomes their obstinacy"—is fairly calloused, especially when spoken in conjunction with his assertion "I should have insisted upon submission" (230). The committee clearly states their disapproval in the *Report*:

We must record our strong dissent from and disapprobation of such a scheme of punishment. The notion of persevering in the infliction of bodily pain day after day, until by its repetition the "obstinacy" of a prisoner is subdued, and he is coerced into a declaration of submission, appears to us to be opposed to every principle upon which punishments ought to be administered. (xxviii)

Despite the cruelty that Captain Maconochie evidently practiced in the Birmingham Gaol before Lieutenant Austin took over his position, Reade does not vilify Maconochie in

²⁹ Reade veers most widely from the *Report* with regard to Captain Maconochie. In *Never Too Late*, Reade writes, "Books and reports came out which convinced the magistrates that severe punishment of mind and body was the essential object of a gaol, and that it was wrong and chimerical to attempt cures by any other means. Captain O'Connor had been very successful by other means, and could not quite come to this opinion" (1: 156). This is in direct contradiction to the *Report*, which provides evidence—by Captain Maconochie's own testimony—that he was undoubtedly guilty of illegal abuses.

Never Too Late. Rather, he leaves all condemnation for Hawes—Austin’s fictional counterpart.

Even more strangely, Reade does not revile the surgeon of *Never Too Late* like one might expect him to, based on the *Report*’s censure of Blount. Though the commissioners denounce nearly all the Birmingham Gaol authorities, they are particularly critical of the surgeon. Throughout their overview, the committee members continually reproach him for his negligence and inhumanity, and they conclude thus: “And it is most painful to us to be obliged also to say of him, that [. . .] he was habitually unobservant of the duties imposed upon him by law and by the rules of the prison, careless of the complaints of the prisoners who required his aid, and devoid of sympathy with their sufferings” (xxxv).³⁰ Though Reade occasionally makes references to the incompetence of the surgeon in *Never Too Late*, he does not portray him as a calloused brute. In fact, the surgeon has a fairly minimal role in the novel. Again, rather than criticizing the surgeon, Reade is determined to reserve all censure for Hawes alone.

As I discussed in chapter two, the battle between Eden and Hawes is part of what makes *Never Too Late* a matter-of-fact *romance*, albeit an unusual one. Theirs is an epic clash between right and wrong, and Reade endues the two characters with almost mythic qualities. While he was incensed by the abuses occurring in the prison, he also wanted to tell a gripping story that would appall his readers, and most importantly, impel them to fight against the cruelties being enacted. To vilify Captain O’Connor, the surgeon, *and*

³⁰ Blount does not endear himself to the commissioners when he argues with Welsby over word choice rather than simply answering a question about a particular prisoner. When questioned about the cruel manner in which he ignored a prisoner’s assertion that he could not do the hard labor assigned to him, the surgeon “had no recollection whatever of this prisoner, but said he was sure he never made use of the word ‘gammon;’ that ‘he generally used the expression ‘Nonsense, nonsense, you must do your work’” (xx).

Hawes would have been to divide the intensity of evil among three men. Reade chooses instead to centralize the malevolence found in each into the single, monstrous character of Hawes. Through him, Reade can paint in lurid detail the abuses of the prisons, and he gains the added benefit of creating a sensational scene: evil, as embodied by Hawes, stands toe to toe against Eden,³¹ the representation of goodness and sole advocate for justice.

The second issue at hand in this matter-of-fact romance is Eden's role in the novel and whether or not he had a historical equivalent. Obviously, Eden is created as a foil to Hawes—the two of them must do battle for the prisoners in — Gaol. But given that nearly every character in the prison section of the novel is based on a real-life counterpart, it makes sense to explore Eden's antecedent. Many readers believe that Eden's doppelganger is Ambrose Sherwin, the chaplain of Birmingham Gaol. This, however, is not the case. Eden is almost saint-like in his actions towards the prisoners and heroic in his contention against Hawes.³² Sherwin is neither of these.

Though Sherwin was praised for his humane treatment and defense of prisoners, he was also greatly criticized for not speaking out more vehemently on their behalf. In the *Report*, the Committee commends Sherwin for having “laboured assiduously in the discharge of his sacred functions, and his endeavours to instruct the ignorant, and to

³¹ Clearly, Eden's name is significant in this mythic battle between good and evil. Harkening back to the sinlessness of the Garden of Eden, Reade emphasizes Eden's saint-like goodness and purity.

³² Reade's letter to the editor of the *Era* twice equates Eden with St. Paul as he contrasts the heroic actions of Eden and the cowardly inaction of Sherwin:

I went one syllable beyond the sworn evidence, which proves that the Chaplain of Birmingham Gaol had not at a certain remote period of his career [. . .] that courage and self-sacrifice with which a St. Paul or a Francis Eden could have resisted illegal tortures, illegal homicides, compulsory suicides, and other heart-sickening horrors, the daily practices of the most God-abandoned, bible-babbling, and bible-breaking Hell cruelty ever raged in and cowardice connived. (12)

comfort the sick and afflicted, were zealous and unremitting” (xxxvi). At the same time, the Committee expresses regret for the chaplain’s inaction:

[. . .] we think Mr. Sherwin would have acted more commendably, and more in unison with his sacred functions, if he had complied rather with the spirit than with the letter of this rule, and had made it his special care, in spite of all apparent discouragement, that the abuses he witnessed, which were beyond all doubt likely injuriously to affect the minds of the prisoners subjected to them, with their results, should from time to time be brought distinctly to the knowledge and notice of the justices so that upon them might be cast the full responsibility of the continuance of such a state of things; and he might, at all events, have the satisfaction of knowing that he had done his utmost to prevent it. (xxxvi)

This summation of Sherwin’s actions at Birmingham Gaol indicates that Reade intended him to be paralleled by Mr. Jones, Eden’s predecessor as chaplain, rather than by Eden himself. Neither Sherwin nor Jones are cruel-hearted men, but neither are heroic, either. Despite their similarities, even the resemblance between the two men breaks down after a point. Unlike Sherwin who is, in part, affirmed by the commissioners, Jones makes his feeble protest against abuse and then gives up the prison altogether. Throughout *Never Too Late*, his words of support to the prisoners are unconvincing, his sermons are ineffectual, and his presence in the prison is halfhearted at best.

In February and March of 1879, a heated—and rather humorous—exchange took place in the pages of the *Era* in which one Crowndale criticized Reade for contradicting a report that Sherwin was the original for Eden.³³ Crowndale did not accept Reade’s simple denial in which he wrote “Permit me to contradict this. My characters are not direct copies, and, moreover, I never had the honour of knowing the late Mr Sherwin” (6). Rather, in a state of mind that is representative of many Radian critics, Crowndale

³³ All of the letters to the editor of the *Era* are entitled “It’s Never Too Late to Mend.” When citing from this exchange, I will use the date published to differentiate between the letters.

makes the mistake of assuming that every incident in Reade's matter-of-fact romances must be fact because his novel is a "fiction based on fact." He writes,

As most—if not all—of the incidents in the scenes in question are unquestionably founded upon actual occurrences which took place at the Birmingham Borough Gaol (see Blue Book containing Commissioner's Report), and as the Rev. Mr Sherwin was then prison chaplain, and Captain Austin (called "Hawes" in the play)³⁴ the governor, I fail to see how Mr Reade can with reason deny that they are both the originals from which he has taken his first idea of the characters. ("Feb. 16" 7)

What Crowndale, like others, overlooks is that all-important word "romance" that concludes Reade's subtitle. Even without stretching the argument to whether or not Crowndale understands that Reade has created a new genre in *Never Too Late*, he fails to remember that Reade included three chaplains in his novel and that Jones is undoubtedly the closest in nature to Sherwin. Crowndale's entire (extended) argument is unsupported,³⁵ contentious, and positively incorrect. Though Crowndale's letters are

³⁴ Crowndale is referencing Reade's play, *Gold*, that is an adaptation of his novel, *Never Too Late*.

³⁵ Reade is quick to point out that Crowndale has never read *Never Too Late* (12), and Crowndale's references to the play alone seem to make this claim fairly self-evident ("Feb. 16" 12). Though he does mention the Blue Book that Reade used as his source, Crowndale does not point to any specific evidence to back up his claims—a fact that Reade strongly emphasizes in a subsequent letter (12).

In a later letter, Crowndale's argument becomes even more absurd and unsupported. Though Reade has not only stridently denied that Eden is a copy of Sherwin but provided the sources and inspirations for all of the principle characters in *Never Too Late* as well, this is not enough for the belligerent and unreasonable Crowndale. He continues a debate that Reade felt sure was over by writing this illogical passage:

To come to the simple question at issue. Was the Rev. A. Sherwin the original of the Gaol Chaplain in the prison scenes? I say undoubtedly he was; but Mr Reade says he was not, because, as I gather from his long and irrelevant letter, *his* Gaol Chaplain differs in his personal character from the actual Birmingham chaplain [. . .]. Now, I maintain that it is quite immaterial what kind of hearted man Mr Reade intended to, or did, represent. He represented *a* Gaol Chaplain, who, in the prison scenes, acted in almost similar circumstances, and towards certain persons, almost exactly as Mr Sherwin did at the Birmingham Gaol, and I hope that it is not at all to the point his quoting from the Blue Book many things Mr Sherwin did *not* do. The resemblance of character, whether intended or not, or whether close or wide, is immaterial. ("Mar. 2" 12)

Clearly Reade and Coverdale possessed far different concepts of what a fictional character modeled from fact looked like. Coverdale seems to be under the impression that since both men were chaplains, the one was based on the other, while Reade has a far more elaborate understanding of characterization.

quarrelsome and absurd,³⁶ they further illuminate Eden's role in *Never Too Late* and reveal several key features of Reade's matter-of-fact romance.

First, Crowndale's letters help to clarify Eden's role in *Never Too Late*. According to Reade's rebuttals, Eden is similar to Sherwin in title only. After expounding on the evils that Sherwin perpetuated in Birmingham Gaol by his refusal to confront the visiting justices or contact the commissioners, Reade reiterates, "I repeat my solemn assertion that I did not draw the lion-hearted Eden from the chicken-hearted Sherwin" (12). A close comparison of Eden and Sherwin quickly reveals the discrepancies in their characters; Reade creates a chaplain without antecedents because through Eden, he is able to re-imagine the disastrous outcomes of the contemporary prison. Eden is pure romance—through him, Reade can conceive new possibilities for better advocacy in the prison. Sherwin failed at Birmingham; Reade needed to create a character that would succeed in bringing the abuses to light and in castigating the authorities who shut their eyes to abuse, or worse, perpetrated it knowingly. Parson Francis Eden is the true hero—and original creation—of the prison section of *Never Too Late*.³⁷

³⁶ Crowndale concludes his first letter with these mocking words: "I am glad to be able to put Mr. Reade right when he happens to be wrong, because I know he does not like it" ("Feb. 16" 7). This taunting statement highlights Crowndale's truculent nature and explains how Reade was goaded into printing (several) angry rejoinders.

³⁷ If Eden were to resemble any historical figure associated with the Birmingham Gaol scandal, it would undoubtedly be Joseph Allday. Allday's speech to his fellow residents of Birmingham echoes Eden's own determination to expose the abuses in — Gaol:

He concluded a lengthened speech by declaring that he would use every exertion in his power to emancipate the good old town of Birmingham from the foul stigma of the enormities at the gaol. He would first appeal for a full and fair inquiry to the Secretary of State; if that did not succeed, he would appeal to the House of Commons; if not successful there, he would appeal to the House of Lords; and if that did not succeed, he would appeal to the Queen herself. (Loud and continued cheering.) (6)

Crowndale's letters to the editor of the *Era* help to do more than reveal the true nature of Eden in *Never Too Late*, however. They also highlight the distinctions of Reade's newly created genre, the matter-of-fact romance, and exhibit the intertextual nature of the novel. Crowndale demands that Reade disclose his source for Francis Eden. Reade cannot—he can only claim that Eden is a creation of his imagination. However, these adamant challenges from Crowndale impel Reade to go further and provide a catalogue of sources for those of his characters in *Never Too Late* who do have antecedents in real life:³⁸

To save *quidnuncs* the trouble of any more idle speculation on the bases of my work—the character of Robinson, which, according to Mr Crowndale, must have been drawn from one of the prisoners in Birmingham Gaol, is based on the journale [sic] of a thief in Durham Gaol. Lepel is a character drawn from a southern gaol, and close to life. Jones is a mixture, with a touch or two from Sherwin. Hawes is based on Austin. Josephs in the novel is Andrews, but in the play much altered. Jacky was constructed with the assistance of my friend Mr Walker, who gave me incidents, especially his making bags of his coat sleeves. The Fieldings, Susan Merton, Meadows, Levi, Crawley,³⁹ and Eden are pure creatures of imagination. (12)

Reade's attribution of sources and his claims of pure imagination provide a microcosm of the matter-of-fact romance. Part fact, part original fiction, Reade incorporates recognizable personages from real life, but he also includes new characters that enable him to imaginatively revise history, right wrongs, and emphasize the romantic nature of real life. As Allday observed, truth really is stranger than fiction.

Allday's zealous determination to uncover the scandal at Birmingham Gaol, his position in the community as churchwarden, and his compassion for the prisoners undergoing serious abuse all seem to parallel Reade's Eden.

³⁸ He continues this practice of citing his sources in his next matter-of-fact romance, *The Wandering Heir*, after being embroiled in accusations of plagiarism. See *Trade Malice* for his entire list of sources.

³⁹ Jacky, the Fieldings, Susan Merton, Meadows, Levi, and Crawley are all characters outside the prison section of *Never Too Late*.

The exchange of letters in the *Era* also highlights the intertextual nature of Reade's matter-of-fact romance. Written twenty-three years after the publication of *Never Too Late*, these letters would not have been penned at all were it not for the death of Sherwin. Upon his decease, the *Era* inadvertently instigated the entire altercation by mentioning that Sherwin was the original for Eden in Reade's novel. Thus, because Reade's novel is a fiction based on truths—grounded in real life—the incidents and people related to the Birmingham Gaol revive interest in *Never Too Late* even years later. Reade's reply to Crowndale also provides new sources for the facts of *Never Too Late*—the journal of a Durham Gaol prisoner and a chaplain from an unspecified southern gaol are among the sources that come to light through this exchange of letters. The events of both the Birmingham Gaol scandal and of *Never Too Late* are also retold, leading to additional intertextuality between the *Report*, the *Times* synopses, Allday's *Proceedings*, and the novel itself. Forced to demonstrate the ways that Sherwin and Eden differ, Reade again recounts the events of history and of fiction: “One man (Hodgetts) was driven mad [. . .]. Eighteen loaves accumulated in that poor victim's cell unseen by Mr. Sherwin [. . .]. He stood by and saw men and boys strapped against a wall in a jacket of torture [. . .]. He ascertained with his finger that the straps were cutting the flesh, but he was never the man to use his hands to loosen them” (12). He makes additional mention of the *Report*, referencing the censure Sherwin received and declaring, “you will readily believe me when I say that I read every line of the evidence, and that to a man of my temperament the censure passed by the Commissioners on this gentleman seemed far too lenient” (12). Fact and fiction are reiterated as Reade highlights the differences between the chaplain of his imagination and the chaplain of Birmingham Gaol.

But Reade's responses reveal yet another instance of intertextuality. In both rejoinders to Crowndale, Reade makes mention of texts which he invites his readers to compare in their search for the true identity of Eden. First, he sends to the editor of the *Era* the volume of *Never Too Late* in which the three chaplains figure as well as a book with "two admirable portraits of Mr Sherwin, one drawn by himself, and the other drawn in a broader but not less accurate style, by the Royal Commissioners" (12). In his next letter, he again proposes a comparison of documents—this time offering them to a larger collection of readers—confident that the documents will justify his claims that Eden is not a copy of Sherwin:

I have left copies of the Blue Book and the novel at the Princess's Theatre, that my professional friends there may sift the thing if they choose; and, having already submitted copies to yourself last week, I now make it my personal request that you will be good enough to examine the books and pronounce whether I have created one chaplain in a cruel gaol, or two, Jones and Eden; and whether of these two chaplains Eden is drawn from Sherwin either in deed, word, or character. (12)

Reade's request that comparison be made between his chaplain and Sherwin helps to perpetuate the web of intertextuality in *Never Too Late*. By beginning at an exchange between Reade and Crowndale, pursuing one's way back to *Never Too Late*, and even further, to the Birmingham Gaol *Report*, a reader becomes fully engrossed in the intertextual nature of the novel and its surrounding dialogues, even years after the original publication.

Through all of these manifestations of intertextuality, Reade encourages his reader to engage with the text of *Never Too Late*. The first readers easily recognized elements of the Birmingham Gaol scandal in the prison section of *Never Too Late*. And though modern readers do not possess the same level of familiarity with mid-Victorian prison abuses, Reade provides a number of references in the novel to capture a modern

reader's attention. From the quotations written in all capital letters to the columns of text in which Reade invites the reader to make comparisons between one source and another, *Never Too Late* presents a web of intertextual allusions that constantly refer the reader to another source or cause the reader to make additional notes of comparison. In *Never Too Late*, particularly, the historical veracity of the novel is undeniable. Reade's facts are so transparent that historical fact, events, and incidents are immediately recognizable and unassailable. Quotations from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the overt comparison of American slaves and British prisoners further engages the reader with the text, because even if the Birmingham Gaol scandal is not immediately present in a reader's mind, the controversy over slavery and Stowe's novel most likely are. The intertextuality of *Never Too Late* invites readers to remain in close proximity to the text and further discussions continually encourage readers to return to his novel and the sources that inspired it.

The prison section comprises just one part of *Never Too Late*, but that one section encompasses all the characteristics of the matter-of-fact romance. Reade uses historical sources to create fiction based on a firm foundation of fact. At the same time, he creates the valiant chaplain, Eden, who does battle with the brutal warden, Hawes, for the lives of the prisoners. Not modeled on any chaplain from Birmingham Gaol, Eden is a product of Reade's imagination and embodies goodness and justice. He is the hero of the prison, casting out evil and letting in the light of righteousness. Furthermore, instead of dividing responsibility for prison abuse equally between Captain O'Connor, Hawes, and the surgeon, Reade infuses his sources with romance, and attributes all cruelty and brutality to Hawes alone. Thus, Eden and Hawes must contend in an epic contest of good versus evil—a classic symbol of romance. Reade imparts mythic characteristics to both Hawes

and Eden, making the romance even more apparent. However, as I pointed out in chapter two, just as Reade's matter-of-fact romances do not fit squarely within the category of realism, neither do they absolutely belong in the romance genre. Reade's use of romance is untraditional—he brings the imagination to bear on the contemporary world, creating myth where there is most fact, and highlighting the paradoxical reality that truth is stranger than fiction. He subverts typical divisions of genre, creating instead his own matter-of-fact romance.

*Subversions of Genre, Subversions of Power:
Mid-Victorian Prisons and the Matter-of-Fact Romance at Work in Never Too Late*

The matter-of-fact romance subverts traditionally understood concepts of genre, drawing together realism and romance in ways that appear irreconcilable. However, when one examines the types of facts Reade uses and the ways he incorporates them into his fiction, one begins to see that the subversiveness of the matter-of-fact romance really does work to create a new genre, effective in unique ways. Part of its effectiveness is a direct result of its subversiveness. Through Reade's choice to incorporate sensational, extraordinary, *unbelievable* facts, events, and incidents into his novels, Reade upends typically understood ideas of realism. At the same time, these verifiable facts and incidents enable him to subvert power in his novels by providing new ways to consider the concept of power in the nineteenth century. These unfamiliar and seemingly impossible proposals subverted traditionally held ideas of power while offering new ways in which to conceive of the prisons' role in society. As a result, the subversions that Reade employs in creating his matter-of-fact romance overflow into the text of the novels. In the prison section of *Never Too Late*, Reade focuses on the abuse of power in the prisons and uses the unlikely hero, Eden, to subvert the authority of the all-powerful

Hawes. Through this narrative of power subversion, Reade attempts to destabilize the understood role of power in the prison in order to bring about change.

Before addressing the specific ways in which Reade subverts power in *Never Too Late*, however, I provide a brief overview of the theories and practices of the mid-Victorian prison. Through an understanding of the different schools of thought related to prison reform and to the state of the prisons current in the 1850s, the ways in which Reade subverts power in the prison should become even more evident. In doing so, I wish to proceed with caution, taking Richard W. Ireland's warning to heart: "The story of penal history cannot be seen simply as one in which far-sighted reformers overturn atavistic cruelty in favour of stern but kind correction. There is probably no penal historian who would now subscribe to such a monochrome assessment" (8-9). Bearing in mind, then, that the history of prison theory and practice is not a simple transformation from one idea in the eighteenth century to a better idea in the nineteenth century, I address a few key issues regarding the prison system of the mid-Victorian period that will make the work that Reade is doing in *Never Too Late* much clearer.

Mid-Victorian Prison Theory and Practice

Seán McConville writes,

Victorian imprisonment embodied several curious contradictions. Arrive in prison as the result of a minor offense, and you would be treated more severely than had you committed one of the great crimes. Commit a grave offense (short of murder), and you would be punished ostensibly more with an eye to reformation than had you been modest in your crime. (117)

McConville's statement indicates the major change in prison philosophy and the physical manifestations of that change that took place between the middle of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ireland explains that there was "a

penal shift from corporal to carceral measures which began during the beginning of the latter part of the eighteenth century and was completed [. . .] with the integration of local prisons into a national system, with the suppression of geographical autonomy in the administration of justice and punishment” in the nineteenth century (13). As more criminals began to be imprisoned, debates over philosophies of imprisonment and punishment grew, particularly whether to implement the silent system or the separate system.⁴⁰

Both the silent and separate systems originated in America in the nineteenth century; the former began in Auburn, New York, and the latter in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (McGowen 90-91). As reports of the two systems and their results began to be published in England in the 1830s, interest in implementing the systems increased. In 1839, Daniel Nihill points out their misleading appellations as both maintain a strict silence in the prison. “The main difference,” he explains, “is this: under the Silent System the prisoners are collected in masses for work and other purposes, but are forbidden to speak or hold any intercourse: under the Separate System they are precluded from intercourse, by being kept not only in silence, but separation at all times” (38).

Up until the 1830s, many of the English prisons continued to incarcerate prisoners with little organization, and reformers argued that prisoners were able to communicate easily with each other, leading to moral “contagion” or “contamination” and plans for

⁴⁰ Many invaluable books have been written on the state of the Victorian prison and the theories that influenced Victorian penal practice. For more detailed overviews of prison theories and practices, see Richard W. Ireland’s excellent introduction in *A Want of Order and Good Discipline: Rules, Discretion and the Victorian Prison* and Michael Ignatieff’s thorough study in *A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850*. Philip Priestley’s *Victorian Prison Lives* and Michelle Higgs’ *Prison Life in Victorian England* both offer informative overviews of all aspects of the prison and prison life using a plethora of primary sources. And of course, for an important and foundational overview of the philosophy of punishment and the prison, see Michel Foucault’s seminal work, *Discipline and Punish*.

revolts or reunions once released from prison (McGowen 90). Most nineteenth-century reformers believed that mandating complete silence in the prisons would eliminate negative communication between prisoners. However, proponents of the separate system went even further in their attempts to contain contamination; by keeping prisoners separate even during their stints at hard labor and in chapel services, prisoners had no chance at all to communicate. While it was generally agreed upon that silence was a necessary component of imprisonment, there was less concurrence about the use of solitary confinement.

Reformers in the eighteenth century conceived of a “philanthropic prison” in which prisoners were treated humanely and were allowed to interact with each other with some extent of freedom (Semple 314). The concept of solitary confinement was abhorrent to most late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century reformers. William Godwin, writing at the end of the eighteenth century is horrified by the mere thought of solitary confinement, given man’s need for community: “Man is a social animal. How far he is necessarily so will appear, if we consider the sum of advantages resulting from the social, and of which he would be deprived in the solitary state. But, independently of his original structure, he is eminently social by his habits” (753). Writing around the same time, Jeremy Bentham also recoils from the idea of placing prisoners in solitary confinement. Janet Semple explains that though he originally planned his prison with solitary cells, Bentham later became “convinced that solitude was ‘torture in effect’ and should be applied only for short periods, as a punishment not as part of a regular prison regime” (131). Though opposed to the system of solitary confinement, Bentham is more concerned with the prisoners’ mental wellness than with their sociability:

In a state of solitude, infantine superstitions, ghosts, and specters, recur to the imagination. This, of itself, forms a sufficient reason for not prolonging this species of punishment, which may overthrow the powers of the mind, and produce incurable melancholy. [. . .]

This course of punishment, thus consisting of solitude, darkness, and hard diet, is, as has been observed, when embodied, a sort of discipline too violent to be employed, except for short periods: if greatly prolonged it would scarcely fail of producing madness, despair, or more commonly a stupid apathy. (426)

Both Godwin and Bentham typify a “philanthropic” reaction to imprisonment and express horror toward a prolonged sentence of solitary confinement.

By the early nineteenth century, however, the issue of solitary confinement was being lauded as necessary and effective. In an 1828 diary entry, General Dyott,⁴¹ demonstrates the changing views of prison theory:

The spirit of mock benevolence, so much the order of the present day, has found its way into our committee, and pity is to proceed where punishment should predominate. Experience has proved to my mind that nothing but the terror of human suffering can avail to prevent crime, and the fallacious idea of reformation through the medium of moral persuasion must fail. [. . .] My wish was to arrange the cells in such manner that they should be a terror to the inmates by making them truly solitary, lonely, and as inconvenient and irksome as the human mind could bear. (40)

In 1835, the committee appointed to investigate the gaols and prisons of England and Wales declared in their *First Report* that solitary confinement was necessary for prisoners—not for the terror it induced, but for the order it maintained. They determined that “entire separation, except during the Hours of Labour and of Religious Worship and Instruction, is absolutely necessary for preventing Contamination, and for securing a proper System of Prison Discipline” (*First Report* iv).⁴² Gone is the solicitude for the

⁴¹ General William Dyott was active in parliament and played an instrumental role in planning the solitary cells that were to be built in the prison at Stafford in 1828.

⁴² Hawes disregards this mandate, insisting on total solitary confinement. The cranks are placed in solitary cells so that each prisoner “grinds the air” alone. Hawes even removes all congregational responses from the chapel service so that the prisoners neither see each other nor speak a unified word

prisoner's sociability; instead, the avoidance of moral contamination is a chief concern of prison reformers.

The quotation above from Dyott's diary might appear at first glance to be a cruel explanation for his support of the separate system, but his comments reveal a larger issue in Victorian prison philosophy—the debate between punishment and moral rehabilitation of criminals. What was the prison's role in relation to the men and women it imprisoned? Foucault summarizes the prison's role in this way: "In short, penal imprisonment, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, covered both the deprivation of liberty and the technical *transformation* of individuals" (*Discipline* 233, my emphasis). Godwin, writing more than a hundred years before Foucault, is strictly opposed to imprisonment for the purpose of transformation: "Restrain the offender as long as the safety of the community prescribes it, for this is just. Restrain him not an instant from a simple view to his own improvement, for this is contrary to reason and morality" (751). Godwin's late eighteenth-century reaction differs from Reverend John Clay's⁴³ philosophy, which is included in the 1843 Parliamentary *Accounts and Papers* on the condition of English jails:

In considering the very important question of prison discipline, with a view to the adoption of any specific plan, it should perhaps be determined, in the first place, whether to punish for the crime already committed, to deter from the repetition of it, or to reform the culprit, should be the main object. [. . . In] availing ourselves of the best and most likely means of reformation, it is easy to see that the principle of punishment might be lost sight of. [. . .] It is scarcely necessary for me to add, that I consider the reformation of criminals a paramount object in their discipline. (89)

throughout the service: "But Hawes found out that though the men were stabled apart their voices were refractory and mingled in the air, and with their voices their hearts might, who knows? He pointed this out to the justices, who shook their skulls and stopped the men's responses and hymns" (1: 375).

⁴³ John Clay was chaplain at the Preston gaol in Lancashire from 1822-1858 (Higgs 135). He was "the chief local proponent of the separate system, and his writing made him a figure of national importance" (DeLacy 205).

Theorists and reformers argued that through solitary confinement, prisoners would reflect on their wrongs without the distractions and bad influences of other prisoners and come to truly repent of their misdeeds. Repentance, in turn, would inevitably bring about reformation. The Gaol Act of 1823 installed paid chaplains in the prisons for the first time as reformers sought ways in which to produce transformations of prisoners from criminals to repentant men and women who could then be assimilated back into society.

Though most nineteenth-century reformers viewed solitary confinement as necessary and productive for reformation, many began to realize that over time, total lack of communication was harmful to the prisoner's mental state. Pentonville prison, built in 1842 and serving as a model for most new prisons erected in the nineteenth century, adopted the separate system (Ignatieff 3; Priestley 37).⁴⁴ Michael Ignatieff links mandated solitary confinement with insanity: "Every year at Pentonville between five and fifteen men were taken away to the asylum" (9). As authorities began to understand the catastrophic effects that complete solitary confinement could have on a prisoner, they began to reduce the number of months convicts were forced to remain in solitude. "When the prison was opened in 1842," Ignatieff writes, "convicts spent eighteen months in solitude. As the authorities became familiar with its effects, the period in solitude was reduced, first to twelve and then to nine months" (4).⁴⁵ Although the visiting justices and commissioners try to avoid commenting on the issue of insanity as linked with solitary

⁴⁴ Ignatieff writes that "Pentonville represents the culmination of a history of efforts to devise a perfectly rational and reformatory mode of imprisonment" (11).

⁴⁵ Reade emphasizes the mental strain that results from unremitting solitary confinement. Robinson nearly goes mad in the dark cell (1: 261), an unnamed prisoner goes mad in the first week, having "never been in a separate cell before" (2: 63), and Hatchett, being "melancholy mad," stops eating altogether (2: 72-73).

confinement in their reports, the separate system clearly had an unsalutary effect on prisoners' mental health.

In addition to solitude, labor was also considered necessary for the moral rehabilitation of prisoners. These modes of labor could take place communally or individually—most often based on the prison system being employed. The silent system allowed for prisoners to gather and work jointly—usually on the treadmill, whereas the separate system mandated individual cell work—typically making shoes and brushes or turning the crank. Regardless of whether the labor was done singly or in groups, Foucault suggests that economics as well as moral reformation played a role in the necessity of labor, and particularly that of solitary labor:

[. . .] isolation provides a “terrible shock” which, while protecting the prisoner from bad influences, enables him to go into himself and rediscover in the depths of his conscience the voice of good; solitary work would then become not only an apprenticeship, but also an exercise in spiritual conversion; it would rearrange not only the complex of interests proper to *homo oeconomicus*, but also the imperatives of the moral subject. [. . .] Between the crime and the return to right and virtue, the prison would constitute the “space between two worlds” the place for the individual transformation that would restore to the state the subject it had lost. (*Discipline* 122-23)

“But the self-evidences of the prison,” Foucault later adds, “is also based on its role, supposed or demanded, as an apparatus for transforming individuals. [. . .] This double foundation—juridico-economic on the one hand, technico-disciplinary on the other—made the prison seem the most immediate and civilized form of all penalties” (*Discipline* 233). Foucault's point is that prison authorities often attempted to inculcate a sense of fiscal responsibility in their prisoners—teaching them trades, encouraging the strict maintenance of a work schedule, and instilling in them the satisfaction of doing a job well. In short, prison reformers thought that including a work component in prison life

would not only promote intellectual stimulation but would also serve to re-train a prisoner to become a working and beneficial member of society.

Though the concept of labor was viewed as necessary for physical exertion and for reformation, the instruments of hard labor in the prisons were often used to inflict abuse rather than bring about transformation; this, of course, is the use that Hawes makes for his instruments of hard labor. Some prisons really did attempt to better prisoners by teaching them trades, but many prisons implemented machinery for hard labor that was ineffectual and unproductive. Writing at the turn of the twentieth century, Richard Frith Quinton condemns these unproductive forms of labor as cruel, wasteful, and harmful to a prisoner's mental health:

The theory that hard labour, in order that it may be penal, should be at the same time monotonous and uninteresting, is perhaps intelligible, but an idea that seems to have been uppermost in the minds of the legislators who invented it was that it must be unproductive also, in order to impress on the prisoner the fact that he is grinding the wind, and that his labour is in vain. This was a kind of mental discipline that was not likely to have other than an irritating and demoralising influence on the prisoner, while it was causing all the time deplorable waste from an economic point of view. (59-60)

Certainly, these machines were sometimes designed for productive labor—a treadmill that pumped water into the prison or a crank that milled corn, for example. Oftentimes, however, the labor was unproductive in every way. As Quinton states, the purposelessness of the labor is demoralizing for the prisoner, but it is also humiliating to perform hard labor every day, knowing that one's exertion is utterly pointless.

Another major problem with the mid-Victorian prison was the lack of a centralized power. Local wardens possessed almost absolute authority in their prisons. Though the Gaol Act of 1823 “marked a dramatically intensified effort to impose

uniformity throughout the country,” and a “committee of justices⁴⁶ was required to visit jails on a regular basis,” the act “left a wide measure of latitude in the hands of local authorities” (McGowen 89). Thus, a brutal gaoler like Hawes could still discipline and torture with almost limitless freedom. It was not actually until the Prison Act of 1877 that prisons were uniformly placed under the control of the Home Secretary.

Mid-Victorian theorists and reformers certainly had high aspirations for the prison and laudable aims for the rehabilitation of prisoners. Through solitary confinement, where a prisoner could reflect on and repent of his or her wrongs without being contaminated by other prisoners, and through the use of labor, in which prisoners remained healthy and active while learning the value of hard work and the discipline of adhering to a schedule, reformers believed that prisoners truly could be transformed. Unfortunately, these reformatory components of prison life were often abused or employed for the sake of punishment rather than for moral improvement. Instead of discipline and ample time for reflection and regret, for example, Coldbath Fields prisoners were cruelly “subjected to absolute solitude, cold, brutality, and starvation” (Semple 257). Prison officials at Birmingham Borough Gaol were also guilty of abusing power and turning the virtues of the prison into almost inconceivable vices. Thus, in *Never Too Late*, Reade is most anxious to expose and correct these abuses. As Sean Grass points out, “had the champions of Victorian separate discipline only been wise enough to see it, they would have recognized that Reade’s novel attacks only those who, like Hawes and Austin, *abused* the principles of separate discipline. Eden does little

⁴⁶ The visiting justices were chosen as a representation of the Magistrates to visit each prison and make reports. Though they technically possessed a higher degree of power than did the gaolers, often, as Reade makes clear in *Never Too Late*, the visiting justices did not do their jobs adequately and trusted the gaoler’s word rather than investigating matters themselves.

more in this novel than return the prison to its correct and lawful operation as a tool of psychological transformation” (101). While one might dispute Grass’ final analysis, he is certainly correct to point out Reade’s purpose in writing the prison section of *Never Too Late*—it is to expose and rectify abuses in the prison wherein prison officials punish out of cruelty rather than reform according to a prisoner’s needs, conduct, and character.

Reade’s Representation of Prison at — Gaol

In order for Reade to subvert power in the prison, he first needs to create a fictional prison that architecturally and philosophically corresponds to that of the mid-Victorian prison. Just as Pentonville prison serves as the architectural and philosophical prototype for prisons built after 1842, Reade’s prison provides a model for how to subvert abusive power in these institutions. Thus, the beginning of the prison section of *Never Too Late* describes the architecture, cell composition, and philosophy of — Gaol in detail, creating an analogue for the mid-Victorian prison. Only after he provides an accurate architectural design and a foundation of prison philosophy can Reade people his gaol with the abused prisoners and the principal combatants who fight for the power of the prison.

As has already been noted, Reade used many of the actual occurrences from Birmingham Gaol to create the prison section of *Never Too Late*, but as he points out in a letter to the *Literary Gazette*, readers should not equate the atrocities of — Gaol with Birmingham alone. Instead, “characters and incidents taken from other gaols, and the physical description of the building, which is irreconcilable [sic] with Birmingham gaol” ought to serve as hints that Reade is implicating other prisons in his denunciation of abuse as well (405). In fact, he continues by revealing that “five gaols have fitted the cap

on” (405). The prison that Reade creates in *Never Too Late* has similarities to many nineteenth-century prisons, but ultimately, it is an imagined prison using the facts that he had gathered from many prisons—in essence, a matter-of-fact prison.

Reade describes the physical layout of ——— Gaol in great detail, allowing both contemporary and modern readers to envision the edifice:

Two round towers flank the principal entrance. On one side of the right-hand tower is a small house constructed in the same style as the grand pile. The castle is massive and grand [. . .].

Between the central towers is a sharp arch, filled by a huge oak door, of the same shape and size, which, for further security or ornament, is closely studded with large diamond-headed nails. [. . .]

Passing into the interior of the vast building, you find yourself in an extensive aisle traversed at right angles by another of similar dimensions, the whole in form of a cross. In the centre of each aisle is an iron staircase, so narrow that two people cannot pass, and so light and open that it merely ornaments, not obstructs, the view of the aisle. These staircases make two springs; the first takes them to the level of two corridors on the first floor. Here there is a horizontal space of about a yard, whence the continuation staircase rises to the second and highest floor. This gives three corridors, all studded with doors opening on small separate apartments, whereof anon. (151-52)

Taking into consideration Reade’s assertion that this description is irreconcilable with Birmingham Gaol, the two prisons that most closely fit his depiction are Berkshire County Jail at Reading, constructed from 1842 – 1844, and Holloway prison, built in 1849. Although Reade’s description is possibly a conflation of these two prisons, the Reading prison seems to coincide fairly closely to Reade’s portrayal. While most prisons built in the 1840s and after were modeled on Pentonville prison,⁴⁷ two differing radial

⁴⁷ Berkshire County Jail at Reading (1842-44), Birmingham Borough Jail (1845-47), and Holloway prison (1849) were all modeled on Pentonville Prison. Reade either visited or researched all three of these prisons during his investigation of prisons for *Never Too Late*. Of course, Reade’s description of ——— Gaol may be a combination of a number of prisons; the interiors, in particular, were similar since they were all modeled off the same prison. See Norman Johnston, *Forms of Constraint*, for more information on the construction of the British prison, pp. 89-98. See, also, Henry Mayhew and John Binny’s *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life* for detailed information on London prisons and a large number of helpful illustrations of those prisons.

constructions were used—“either cruciform or hub-and-spoke” (Johnston 93). The Reading prison was constructed according to the cruciform pattern, while Holloway prison was erected in the hub-and-spoke design. According to Norman Johnston:

Upper cells [at Reading] were joined by balconies that connected at the center and led directly into the chapel. In the center hall originally a small cubicle on the second level allowed the governor to observe the corridors.⁴⁸ Reading Jail became known immediately as the ‘palace-prison’ because of the elaborate array of castellated turrets, gates, and parapets. (94-95)

Holloway is also an “ornate prison building” that looks more like a castle than a prison (Johnston 95). The castle-like appearance of the outside of Holloway prison makes it possible that Reade had Holloway in mind as he wrote *Never Too Late*, but the cruciform structure of Reading jail corresponds in nearly every detail to the inside of — Gaol.

Reade’s accurate descriptions do not end with the architecture of the prison. He continues with a comprehensive account of all the items included in each prisoner’s cell, the appearance of prisoners being forced to wear masks to obscure their identities, and the panoptic construction of the chapel.⁴⁹ Finally, Reade concludes this matter-of-fact section of *Never Too Late* with an account of the changing prison philosophies. “Under the old [school of prison philosophy],” he explains, “gaol was a finishing school of felony and petty larceny. Under the new, it is intended to be a penal hospital for diseased and

⁴⁸ This description further coincides with a scene late in the prison section of *Never Too Late* where Hawes looks down on Robinson from a balcony. Robinson “looked up to Hawes” as he is being led to the dark cell, and he “met [Eden] on the ground-floor” (2: 41). Reade subtly, but adequately, alludes to the multiple levels of the prison.

⁴⁹ See *NTL*, 1: 153-54 for a list of the items found in each cell. See *NTL*, 1: 152-53 for a description of the prison masks. In 1862, Mayhew and Binny describe the mask in nearly the same language that Reade used just a few years earlier: “every one wears a peculiar brown cloth cap, and the peak of this (which is also of cloth) hangs so low down as to cover the face like a mask, the eyes alone of the individual appearing through the two holes cut in the front, and seeming almost like phosphoric lights shining through the sockets of a skull” (141). See *NTL*, 1: 161-62 for a depiction of the chapel. These descriptions of the prison edifice, the interior, the items in each cell, and the uniforms of the prisoners all impel Grass to assert that *Never Too Late* is “the most factual and documentary of Victorian prison novels” (101).

contagious souls” (1: 155). This summation clearly coincides with the moral contamination of interacting prisoners on the one hand and reformation of prisoners on the other hand. Reade then relates the varying uses of the silent and separate systems: “Hence, in some new gaols you may now see the non-separate system; in others, the separate system without silence; in others, the separate and silent system; in others, a mixture of these [. . .]; and these varieties are at the discretion of the magistrates, who settle within the legal limits each gaol’s system” (1: 155). Once he has set the stage for the prison section, Reade begins to describe the philosophy of — Gaol, and it is important to note that he consistently calls it “the separate and silent system” (1: 157). Unwilling to risk misunderstandings, Reade wants to ensure that all readers understand that — Gaol requires both solitary confinement and strict silence for all prisoners. Reade places Tom Robinson under this system, where discipline most often turns to abuse, in order to highlight the abuses that inevitably rise from the separate and silent system. Reade views prison abuse as a pervasive evil in nineteenth-century prisons, and the subversion of power in *Never Too Late* is his answer—and ideally, his cure—to the abuses being enacted.

Exposing Abuse and Subverting Power: Eden Versus Hawes in — Gaol

In *Never Too Late*, Reade offers a close look at the abuses occurring in the Victorian prisons and calls for reform. In this final section, I examine the problem of power in the prison and the ways that power is subverted as Reade appeals for change within the prison system. Throughout the prison scenes, Reade describes, in lurid detail, the punishments and tortures endured by the prisoners under the separate and silent system, hoping, as Richard Fantina claims, “to inspire passion and anger” among his

readers for the abuses the prisoners experience (44). Reade writes, “All the vices of the old jail system are nothing compared with the diabolical effect of solitude on a heart smarting with daily wrongs” (1: 211). Though guilty of crimes outside the prison, the men Hawes attacks are innocent within. The solitary and silent system breaks them down, hardened criminals prior to their residence in Hawes’s jail, but utterly defeated after being subjected to the cruelties of the system.

Muller argues that

Reade was too serious in his treatment of the characters who illustrate his didactic purpose, and so, in *Never too Late to Mend*, the Governor of Birmingham Gaol is a grotesque monster of human cruelty, unmitigated by any stroke of humour from the author’s pen; and the cold-blooded atrocities of the solitary system, like the list of horrors encountered in private insane asylums in *Hard Cash*, plunge the reader into a dreary inferno of factual documentation unlit by any oblique touch of humour. (“Hard Cash” 7)

While Muller is certainly correct in asserting that no element of humor can be found, the effect is purposeful. As Fantina points out, “Reade presents a catalog of horrors as he demonstrates, in merciless detail, how the prisoner’s human identity is stripped away by the assignment of a number instead of a name, by constant surveillance, by sensory deprivation, by meaningless work on the crank, and by constant physical violence or the threat of it” (53). Reade is not concerned with the entertainment value of Tom’s—or any other prisoner’s—horrific experience in prison. Rather, Reade wants to incite his audience to act—to reform the prisons, to do away with the unauthorized instruments of torture, and to be consumed by the outrage that Reade himself experienced when he read of these accounts in the newspapers and visited these “English hells” in person (Charles Reade 405).

The Birmingham Gaol *Report* provides nearly all instances of abuse for the novel. Of course, Reade's descriptions are designed to outrage his readers even more than the dry minutes of the *Report*. Thus, he describes in vivid detail the barbarous way Josephs is confined in the punishment jacket:

A lad about fifteen years of age was pinned against the wall in agony by a leathern belt passed round his shoulders and drawn violently round two staples in the wall. His arms were jammed against his sides by a straight waistcoat fastened with straps behind and those straps drawn with the utmost severity. But this was not all. A high leathern collar a quarter of an inch thick squeezed his throat in its iron grasp. His hair and his clothes were drenched with water which had been thrown in bucketsful over him, and now dripped from him on the floor. His face was white, his lips livid, his eyes were nearly glazed, and his teeth chattered with cold and pain. (1: 176)

Reade employs this appalling description to work on dual levels. The lurid account of Josephs being tortured is sickening in and of itself, but by clearly associating Josephs with the real-life Andrews, Reade intensifies the horrific nature of the abuse being enacted.

He also imagines the psychological torture that thirteen-year-old Gillies must endure when Hawes decides to divide his flogging over the course of two days. Reade adds to the reader's horror by describing the subsequent string of torments that Little Gillies undergoes. Hawes first assigns him an impossible number of revolutions on the crank, then an outrageous number of hours in the punishment jacket with a repetition of the torture the following day. Added to that, Hawes deprives Little Gillies of his usual prison fare and substitutes, instead, bread and water, upon which Reade sardonically observes, "Strange to say, this change of diet did not supply the deficiency; he could not do the infant Hercules his work even on bread and water" (1: 207). Then a deprivation of chapel ("Your soporific was his excitement"), then no bed or light in his cell for fourteen

days, and finally, the second half of his flogging (1: 207). Hawes's sadism is horrible to experience, but his order is law. As the ultimate authority within the prison, no one can question his commands or motives.

Though the punishments are too numerous to address in detail, a summary will suffice. Reade denounces the crank as a lurking "monster" and a "diabolical engine to keep thieves from ever being anything but thieves," demanding of a prisoner "idle toil," intended to add a humiliating meaninglessness to his existence (1: 172, 230, 174). The darkness of the black hole is "the frightful darkness that chilled and crushed the Egyptians, soul and body; [. . .] a darkness that might be felt" (1: 165). The temptation to commit suicide is overwhelming; the unauthorized methods of torture used in the prison serve to break down prisoners until hope is utterly extinguished. Floggings, deprivation of food, impossible numbers of revolutions of the crank, removal of a prisoner's bed, dousing in cold water—these are the typical fare in Hawes's prison, and these are precisely the types of abuses that Reade wishes to expose and abolish from the mid-Victorian prison.

Throughout the prison section of *Never Too Late*, Reade pits Eden against Hawes in a war over the prison and its prisoners. While many critics view Eden's triumph over Hawes as confirmation of Reade's own simplistic naïveté,⁵⁰ Reade actually provides a profound appraisal of the mid-Victorian prison system and implies that a reformer cannot remain inert in the face of grave wrongs. Rather, to effect change, one must act to alter and amend rules, employing intellect and acquiring sympathetic experience along the way. And indeed, much of what Reade condemns through Eden in *Never Too Late* is

⁵⁰ See W. L. Courtney, *Studies, New and Old*, pp. 160-61, and Wayne Burns, *Charles Reade*, 53, 162.

either proved illegal or eventually abolished in later Prison Acts. Thus, Eden can be read as an almost prophetic voice for the prison reforms that would take place at the end of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century.

Though Hawes possesses almost limitless authority, Eden successfully subverts his power and ousts Hawes from the prison. This unlikely conclusion occurs because of Eden's insistence on undergoing similar experiences to those of his parishioners. Through sympathetic experience, Eden remains in touch with the people he serves. His superior intelligence is important, but it is Eden's knowledge acquired by experience that most effectively enables him to subvert Hawes's authority for the good of the terrorized prisoners. Thus, on his first day as the new chaplain, Eden visits each of the prisoners. Reade writes that Eden "spoke little, but seemed observant, and once or twice made a note" (1: 219). Later that evening, he willingly subjects himself to six hours in the dark cell, much to the amazement of the turnkey, Evans. Eden's personal experience in the black hole later enables him to save Tom from insanity after being sent to the black hole for an inordinate length of time. Though Eden has a "secret horror and hatred of the crank," again he forces himself to observe the work so that he might have firsthand knowledge of the crank's effect on the prisoners (1: 230). As he watches prisoners turning their cranks, his horror deepens when he happens to see Tom strapped up in the punishment jacket. Eden is determined to know "what we are doing," and therefore asks Evans to restrain him in the punishment jacket (1: 235). Confounded and discomfited, Evans hesitantly obeys his orders, but when he warns Eden that the collar will "nip" him, Eden caustically reveals his purpose: "Not more than it nips my prisoners. Now strap me to the wall" (1: 235). As with the dark cell, Eden's desire to know what his parishioners

are suffering prompts him to subject himself unnecessarily to pain in the name of “invaluable” knowledge (1: 236).⁵¹ Knowledge-giving experience, great courage, and integrity form Mr. Eden’s substance. These powerful characteristics allow Eden to challenge Hawes’s authority in the prison and emerge victorious.

Eden encourages Evans to submit to the punishment jacket as well, realizing that experience leads to knowledge. Though Evans cannot endure the full thirty minutes of torture, what he does experience is enough. Eden admonishes him, “from this moment, sir, you and I stand on a different footing from others in this gaol. We know what we are doing when we put a prisoner in that thing; the others don’t. The greater the knowledge, the greater the guilt. May we both be kept from the crime of cruelty” (1: 239). Just as Eden foresees, Evans feels increasingly compelled to alleviate the tortures he sees being enacted on innocent prisoners. His “heart had been touched and his understanding wakened”; consequently, his “intelligence was awakened with his humanity” (1: 373). Reade offers a subtle distinction between the two; first, understanding must occur: Evans confesses “I was like a good many more that misuse prisoners. I did’nt [sic] know how cruel I was” (1: 317). Once knowledge is in place, Evans can recognize pain and attempt to prevent it:

A month or two ago the lips of a prisoner turning blue, and his skin twitching, told Evans nothing. He saw these things without seeing them. He was cruel from stupidity—from blockhead to butcher there is but a step. Like the English public, he *realized* nothing where prisoners were concerned. But Mr. Eden had awakened his intelligence, and his heart waked with it naturally. (1: 383)

⁵¹ Later, Eden’s willingness voluntarily to undergo the torture of the black cell and the punishment jacket lends him credibility with Evans and with the inspector, Mr. Lacy. Stunned at Evan’s disclosure that both he and Mr. Eden had spent time in the punishment jacket, Evans responds, “Bless you his reverence is not the one to ask a poor man to stand any pain he daren’t face himself” (2: 79).

Eden insists on equal experience with his prisoners in order to increase his knowledge of how best to serve their needs, and by exposing a personal knowledge of prisoners' wrongs to as many as he can, as he does with Evans, Eden can build his case and ultimately triumph over Hawes.

Reade himself believes that knowledge springs from experience: "Those black facts have been before the public, before ever I handled them; they have been told, and tolerably well told, by many chroniclers. But it is my business, and my art, and my duty, to make you Ladies and Gentlemen *realize* things, which the chronicler presents to you in his dim, and cold, and shadowy way; and so they pass over your mind like idle wind" (C. L. Reade and Compton Reade 244). Reade fully expects his readers to desire experience for the sake of knowledge, and he believes that he can make them *feel* the injustice and pain of the unreformed prison much the same way Evans feels the pain of the punishment jacket. In effect, the novel serves as a type of straightjacket for readers unacquainted with prison life; unable to distance themselves from the text, they experience the pains and torture of the prison as Reade describes the horrors within. With the knowledge they gain from Reade's portrayal of cruelty at ——— Gaol, readers can, like Eden, rise up against prison abuse and advocate for reform.

In addition to undergoing similar experiences to gain knowledge, Eden also insists on interacting with his parishioners. By taking the time to understand each person's psychological makeup, Eden can provide sympathy or compassion as needed. "I read characters," Eden asserts. "[I]t is part of my business" (2: 21). His ability to analyze character is also useful as a way to assign his flock physical tasks that keep them intellectually stimulated and reward them with useful labor (in direct opposition to the

futility of the crank). Eden discovers that Carter enjoys looking at pictures, which “awakened all the intelligence he had” (1: 279). He learns that the depressed Strutt likes playing the fiddle, so Eden brings down his own fiddle for Strutt to play. He gives Robinson pen, ink, and paper to write the story of his life, and he introduces a printing press and various trades into the prison for the prisoners to master. And his scrutiny into the lives of his parishioners works:

Here industry was relished with a gusto inconceivable to those who have never stagnated body and soul in enforced solitude and silence. Here for the time at least were honest converts to anti-theft. He had seen them dull and stupid, brutalized, drifting like inanimate bodies on the heavy waters of the Dead Sea. He had drawn them ashore and put life into them. He had taught their glazed eyes to sparkle with the stimulus of rational and interesting work, and those same eyes rewarded him by beaming on him with pleasure and gratitude whenever he came. (1: 307)

The prisoners love Mr. Eden because he is a good spiritual mentor, but also because he treats them as human beings who should take part in civilized labor rather than in the futile toil of the crank. His insights into the inner workings of his parishioners enable him to discover their needs, and his compassion for their afflictions motivates him to use these insights to improve their conditions.⁵²

⁵² Although modern readers might be tempted to criticize Reade as mawkish for his faith in productive labor as a reformatory tool, it is important to contextualize his comments. Mid-nineteenth-century reformers did view the prison as a means of moral reformation, and labor was seen as transformative activity. When Eden is sick, he becomes delirious and dreams about the ideal prison (1: 357-59). Grass argues that this scene demonstrates Reade’s

great familiarity with a number of mid-century proposals for improving upon reformatory discipline. [. . .] The manufactory attached to Eden’s prison is distinctly Benthamite, while the measures to provide employment beyond the prison walls were already part of the Irish system administered by Sir Walter Crofton and the marks system devised by Maconochie. As for the school, mid-Victorian writers like Mary Carpenter, Frederic Hill, and Dickens had argued for years that education provided the surest means of preventing future crimes. Reade seems to have been aware of all these arguments before he sat to write *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*. (88-89)

Through his actions in the prison (where he has limited freedom) and in his dreams (where he has carte blanche to design the perfect prison), Eden adopts elements of prison theory that have been debated, tested, and shown to be effective. As Foucault notes, “The prison has always formed part of an active field in which projects, improvements, experiments, theoretical statements, personal evidence and investigations have proliferated” (*Discipline* 235).

Eden's quest to put himself in the place of his parishioners is essential, but ultimately he subverts Hawes's authority by adhering to clearly stated rules and demanding that Hawes be brought to account for defying authority. This may seem ironic—that in subjecting oneself to a higher authority, one can undermine the authority of another. It is Eden's meticulous observance of the prison rules despite Hawes's flagrant disregard of them that enables him to subvert Hawes's power.⁵³ Though Hawes exerts his authority and challenges Eden's right to interfere in the government of the prison, he does not wield his power appropriately, and thus, Eden does not respect or acknowledge his authority. Eden subverts Hawes's authority because Hawes governs with an unauthorized form of power while Eden complies with the rules set in place.

Undoubtedly, Hawes abuses his nearly limitless power, fully determined not to lose any battle whatsoever. "He was not," Reade writes, "a man to yield a step to opposition" (1: 240). Though he is free while his prisoners are locked into cells and forced into submission, Hawes still imagines that he is in a battle of wills with his wards. "'I will be master in this gaol!' was the creed of Hawes" (1: 240). This competitive fancy leads Hawes to utterly sadistic punishments against helpless prisoners and a completely mistaken sense that these beaten down men and women still defy him in their defeat: "It shall last till I break you, you obstinate whining dog" (to Josephs, weak, defeated, and pleading for his life) (1: 381); "What! and let him beat me" (referring to Carter, the half-witted lunatic who is near to fainting in pain as he is strapped in the jacket) (1: 370);

⁵³ Reade was criticized for doing "all [he] could to make a great social experiment miscarry," but he staunchly defends himself against this accusation: "I placed before the reader not one government official, but two—the gaoler and the chaplain: the gaoler eternally breaking *the prison rules*, and the chaplain eternally appealing to the prison rules" (R 287). "Now, since the prison rules were the conditions of the national experiment," he reasons, "I clearly supported the national experiment in most particulars" (R 288).

“You did not beat me, you see, after all” (spoken to Robinson, who had been starved, assigned to the crank, strapped in the jacket for an obscene number of hours, flayed from head to foot by brutal scrubbing, and then strapped into the jacket again) (1: 187). Hawes cannot stand to lose even imaginary competitions, and his abuse of the prisoners is worse as a result of this determination for superiority.

Hawes’s battle with Eden, on the other hand, is a legitimate contest for power. Hawes is confident of the visiting justices’ support, and he taunts Eden with a fabulous guarantee: “I’ll promise you one thing—the justices shall sweep you out of the gaol. [. . .] Because they only see with my eyes, and hear with my ears; they would do a great deal more for me than kick out a refractory chaplain” (1: 301). Eyes flashing, Eden responds with his own threat: “I will proceed against [you] by the dog-whip of the criminal law, by the gibbet of the public press, and by every weapon that wit and honesty have ever found to scourge cruelty and theft since civilization dawned upon the earth” (1: 303).⁵⁴ Despite Eden’s warning, however, Hawes remains confident. When the visiting justices arrive, he leads them through the cells, tells them half-truths that they do not bother to confirm, and solidifies his place in their esteem. Indeed, Hawes’s authority is questioned by none but Eden. Though the visiting justices are responsible for holding Hawes accountable, he easily deceives them.

Hawes has the visiting justices in his back pocket, but Eden has called his own witness—a witness who “Eden had the pleasure of seeing [. . .] was [also] prejudiced

⁵⁴ In a letter to the editor of the *Era*, Reade insinuates that Eden’s method of bringing about justice is best. He compares the inaction of Sherwin to Eden’s vigorous defense of justice in the prison: “The laws of that God, whose minister he was, demanded that he should denounce these bloody and lawless deeds to the Visiting Justices first, and if they turned a deaf ear, to the Home Secretary, and if he would not listen, to the public, and this is what we all knew Mr Eden would have done” (12).

against him” (2: 56).⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Eden provides irrefutable physical evidence of Hawes’s abuses. He leads Mr. Lacy through the cells of prisoners who admit to being mistreated. He proves through the testimony of the prisoners and the turnkeys that multiple rules of the prison have been blatantly disregarded. Additionally, he provides a comparison of Fry’s meticulously penned punishment record and the doctored one of Hawes’s. At last, Mr. Lacy is convinced, and the unassailable Hawes stands defeated.

Eden’s intellect and insistence on experience enables him to triumph over Hawes and right the wrongs of the jail. His knowledge of the prisoners and their injuries in conjunction with his determination and energy result in a complete overthrow of Hawes’s authority. Grass emphasizes the importance of experience when writing about Reade’s investigation of the prison system: “Reade’s researches into imprisonment and its effects had taught him that the real story of confinement is private and psychological—is fundamentally about, that is, how a prisoner is either mentally broken or morally reformed by the rigors of solitary confinement” (91). Grass makes it clear that it is only through firsthand experience with prisoners that Reade can write so accurately and insightfully about the conditions of the prison and its prisoners. Eden’s insistence on experience is similar. Only by understanding the tortures that the punishment jacket inflicts can he later point to the telltale signs on a prisoner’s body as proof of abuse. Similarly, only by undergoing the harrowing experience in the black hole can Eden attest to the psychological damage it inflicts on prisoners. Experience enables Eden to

⁵⁵ Eden knows his duty as chaplain of ——— Gaol. He must report abuses to the visiting justices, but he also knows that they have an obligation to listen to his complaints. In both the Birmingham Gaol scandal and in the fictional prison of *Never Too Late*, the visiting justices shirk their duty. Instead of sifting through the information responsibly, they allow Austin/Hawes to summarize the state of the prison without doing any of the investigating themselves. The difference is that Eden reports abuse, appealing to higher and higher authorities as he is ignored whereas Sherwin of Birmingham Gaol allowed Austin’s authority to overpower his sense of duty and right.

communicate the full story of the prison—not the sterilized version that Hawes and the visiting justices would relate or the fictitious version that a threatened prisoner would be compelled to tell, but the veritable truth of one who has the authority to speak and has the experience to speak accurately.

At the same time, Eden does not assume the authority for his own gain. Rather, in subverting Hawes's authority, Eden places himself under the authority of the law. Through Eden's careful adherence to the rules, justice is reinstated in the prison. In allowing the God-fearing clergyman, Francis Eden, to subvert the authority of the zealous but evil Hawes, Reade turns the idea of power on its head. Warden Hawes, determined to triumph, above the law, and with the backing of powerful governmental justices, should not have been defeated so ignominiously by one such as Francis Eden. However, through this unlikely subversion of power, Reade destabilizes the role of power in an effort to bring about change.

Reade's conclusion to *Never Too Late* differs in critical ways from the *Report*. Whereas an inquiry was called at the Birmingham Gaol, here the contest takes place in the prison—Eden's word against Hawes's. Eden conducts his own version of an inquiry, interviewing prisoners and turnkeys, submitting evidence, and asking prisoners to take off their shirts to reveal their scars. Here again, Reade employs romance as the hero takes on the villain though the odds are stacked against him.⁵⁶ Eden has truth on his side, however, and he trusts that the truth will prevail. Ironically, the romance of this epic battle depends, of course, on all the facts from the *Report*, for it is here, as the prisoners

⁵⁶ As noted in chapter two, the romance aspect is unconventional in that Eden and Hawes are endowed with mythic characteristics though their battle occurs in the present day. The juxtaposition of present time with mythical characteristics collapses a typically understood feature of the romance genre.

and turnkeys “give their evidence” that many of the horrors of Birmingham Gaol are revealed in the matter-of-fact romance, *Never Too Late*.

At the culmination of Eden’s subversion of Hawes’s authority, therefore, Reade’s subversion of genre is complete. Full of factual references and historical accuracies, the prison section of *Never Too Late* also contains the immanently original and heroic Eden who does battle with Hawes in a fabulous contest of good versus evil. Critics who disparage Reade’s novel for his use of fact or, conversely (at the same time?), for not being one hundred percent factual miss the point of Reade’s matter-of-fact romance. He begins with a subversion of genre, creating a new hybrid that allows him to write with a specific rhetorical purpose. Using colorful and improbable facts to keep his readers in close proximity to the text, he also incorporates romance qualities that sweep his readers along while inflaming their passions and inciting their outrage against the abuses occurring in the prisons. Through this new type of novel, Reade can subvert the power of a monster by means of a saint—a classic romance trope—using a contemporary setting and characters drawn from real life. These dual subversions, coupled with the inevitable perpetuation of intertextuality, make Reade’s matter-of-fact romance, *Never Too Late*, a complex and significant novel.

CHAPTER FOUR

Hard Cash: Subversions of Power in the Asylums

No answer. No motion. No help. No hope.

(*HC* 2: 289)

Like *Never Too Late*, Reade's third matter-of-fact romance, *Hard Cash*, also addresses institutional abuse. In this novel, Reade sets out to expose and eradicate abuse in the insane asylum. Although the impetus for writing is far different than in his first matter-of-fact romance, Reade still bases his story on a firm foundation of fact. Using a variety of sources, Reade targets ignorant, acquisitive doctors who profess to diagnose and treat insanity, the keepers and proprietors who abuse patients in the insane asylum, and the Visiting Justices and Commissioners who turn a blind eye to the abuses being enacted. Through the heroic Alfred Hardie, Reade subverts the commonly held view that asylums, of necessity, must be places of cruelty, restraint, and dehumanization.

To provide a brief synopsis of the relevant sections of the novel—Alfred Hardie's impecunious father imprisons him in an insane asylum on his wedding day, steals Alfred's inheritance, and uses it to try to save his failing bank. Alfred spends time in three different private asylums, and he experiences firsthand a number of illegal abuses. He persistently attempts to escape, and he bribes keepers, writes letters, and appeals to strangers on his own behalf. During his imprisonment, he successfully exposes illegal abuses at the Silverton Grove House asylum and informs the Commissioners of the abuses occurring in Dr. Wolf's asylum. Meanwhile, David Dodd, father to Alfred's fiancée, Julia, returns home from abroad with his children's inheritance totaling £14,000.

Richard Hardie also steals this cash, causing Dodd to succumb to insanity, which in turn, forces Mrs. Dodd to commit him to an asylum. In a strange turn of events, Dodd and Alfred end up roommates at Drayton House, and when the asylum catches fire, Alfred makes his escape.

In this chapter, I first provide an overview of psychiatry and the mid-Victorian asylum, emphasizing the differences between public and private asylums. Second, I examine Reade's use of sources, how he integrates them to create a matter-of-fact romance, and how this differs from his use of sources in *Never Too Late*. Next, I address the presence of intertextuality in *Hard Cash* and highlight the romance aspects of *Hard Cash*. Finally, I conclude with a reading of *Hard Cash* in which I argue that Reade subverts power in the asylum. My contention is that in subverting this type of power, Reade wishes to emphasize the inherent danger of the relatively unregulated private asylum and to advocate for the establishment of better laws regarding the power of doctors who professed to diagnose and treat psychological maladies. Employing the technique he had already used in *Never Too Late* of mixing fact and fiction, Reade presents a sensational, yet sobering, condemnation of private insane asylums and the doctors who were involved in the growing science of psychology in the mid-nineteenth century.

The Rise of Psychiatry: Expert Professionals or Bumbling Mad-Doctors?

The nineteenth century marked the professionalization of psychiatry in England as doctors sought to find their niche in the medical profession. This “newly consolidating psychiatric profession” took advantage of the rapidly increasing number of insanity cases after 1845 to enhance their “dubious status as a barely legitimate branch of medicine”

(Scull, "Social History" 11; McCandless, "Liberty" 340). Doctors, who called themselves alienists, argued that only a professional could diagnose and treat insanity (Scull, "Social History" 25; McCandless, "Liberty" 341). Unfortunately, insanity was not well understood, and there was not a standard way to treat patients thought to be insane. In fact, most diagnoses were "heavily value laden" as doctors often equated insanity with immorality (Scull, "Social History" 25). As Victorian propriety became increasingly stringent, any sort of nonconformist behavior or acts considered sexual deviant became grounds for a declaration of insanity. Peter McCandless explains, "The Victorian alienists tried to establish themselves as the arbiters of mental normalcy, and in so doing, they showed an alarming tendency to equate sanity with behavioral acceptability. For many doctors, the extent to which an individual deviated from the Victorian social and moral codes, from what we call Victorianism, often became the measurement of his mental state" ("Liberty" 341). As a result, any "person who seriously overstepped the bounds of acceptable conduct [. . .] courted an accusation of madness" ("Liberty" 351). At the same time, doctors used themselves as the "standard of sanity, declaring persons sane or insane according to the 'rightness' of their opinions and thoughts" ("Liberty" 350). And in fact, alienist John Halsam affirmed that basing the sanity of others on one's own was, indeed, the appropriate way to diagnose: "the practitioner's own mind must be the criterion, by which he infers the insanity of any other person" (37).¹ The act of judging the sanity of others by one's own sanity created myriad

¹ Obviously, using oneself as the standard of sanity led to diagnoses that, if they were not so horrific, would be rather humorous. McCandless highlights a number of examples throughout his chapter, "Liberty and Lunacy." Dr. George Burrows claims "maniacs emitted a particular smell, a 'symptom so unerring, that if detected in any person, I should not hesitate to pronounce him insane, even though I had no other proof of it'" ("Liberty" 348). Reverend J. J. Leach was deemed insane because he treated his servants as equals, dined and played cards with them, and sat up with them until the early hours of the morning ("Liberty" 352). And, perhaps most absurd of McCandless' examples, "Dr. Matthew Allen, proprietor of

problems for the alienists, not least of which was that “the doctors themselves frequently differed sharply over the mental state of a particular individual”—a fact that, according to McCandless, “could hardly inspire confidence in their judgment” (“Liberty” 341). Further undermining their desire to prove that diagnosing insanity “required a degree of expertise which only a medical man [. . .] could provide,” these alienists often provided opposing testimony at lunacy inquests (“Liberty” 341). Andrew Scull asserts that psychiatrists “were repeatedly impeached by their own inability to agree on a diagnosis. The embarrassment of having eminent men testify that the same man was both unambiguously mad and unquestionably sane was one the profession felt deeply, but could never adequately resolve” (“Social History” 26).² An article in the *Saturday Review* bears this assessment out: “Almost every great criminal trial proves how little the highest authorities are to be relied on, and how freely they can contradict each other’s opinions” (“Doctors” 105). Thus, the ignorance of alienists, coupled with their determination to be viewed as professionals and their arrogance in often assuming to know more than they did, elicited the suspicions of many Victorians.

The distrust that Victorians felt for the alienists led to great skepticism about the profession, and even more importantly, acute suspicion about unlawful confinement in the asylum. Scull notes that many “citizens were suspicious of the criteria used to assess

High Beach Asylum, told a commission on a Mr. Campbell that one of the symptoms of Campbell’s insanity was that he objected to woolen trousers, and preferred corduroy because they were better for walking” (“Liberty” 350). S.T.B., a correspondent to the *Times*, on September 4, 1858 relates that the “only proof of my friend’s insanity which I could extract from the gentlemen of the asylum was that he believed in the transmigration of souls, a belief which these sages deemed a sufficient excuse for immuring a most sensitive man in the same house with raving madmen” (10). See, also, Scull’s “A Brilliant Career? John Conolly and Victorian Society” p. 229 for an extensive list of Conolly’s determinants for insanity.

² See, also, McCandless, “Liberty and Lunacy”: “Doctors were frequently called upon by both sides to comment on the alleged lunatic’s state of mind, and they often came to remarkably different conclusions. These men placed themselves in a difficult position, for the spectacle of two or more prominent medical men arguing respectively for the sanity and insanity of an individual could hardly increase public confidence in their pronouncements” (“Liberty” 349).

madness and sanity, and less than convinced of many alienists' probity and capacities" ("Introduction" 2). An observation by the *Saturday Review* emphasizes this distrust: "The crotchets of doctors who make lunacy their *specialité* have become notorious" ("Doctors" 105). That the alienists had the authority to commit any person to the asylum they thought was insane was a source of terror for Victorians. The possibility of being improperly committed was, according to the Pennsylvania Board of Commissioners, "next in horror to being buried alive" (qtd. in Scull, "Social History" 24). Two waves of lunacy panics swept over England, once in 1858-59 and again in 1876-77, as fears that sane people could be wrongly incarcerated in asylums grew (Scull, "Social History" 25; McCandless, "Liberty" 339).³

Though the ineptitude of alienists was certainly a cause for alarm, Victorians also suspected much darker proceedings on the part of the doctors; many believed that the "mad-doctors" were "trading in lunacy," that is, conspiring with asylum proprietors to commit citizens who may (or may not) be insane for a fee (Parry-Jones 6).⁴ Doctors were often paid a percentage for each patient they sent to an asylum, producing in Reade a strong belief that "some of the medical professionals were invested in the maintenance of the idea of madness as a source of wealth" (Fantina 69). The threat of wrongful imprisonment, therefore, was particularly terrifying for the middle and upper classes,⁵

³ According to Peter Melville Logan, a third panic occurred in 1829-30 (par. 1).

⁴ Parry-Jones notes that "trade in lunacy" is a "phrase seen, not infrequently, in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature" (6). Scull confirms the existence of such a trade: "Recurrently, those who traded in lunacy faced the charge that their desire for profit led them to acquiesce in such schemes" ("Social History" 24). See also, "Lunatic Asylums and Lunatics," in the *Leeds Mercury*, August 19, 1858 for a contemporary usage of this phrase (2).

⁵ Both McCandless, "Liberty and Lunacy," p. 343 and Scull "The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era," p. 11 argue that the threat of wrongful imprisonment is primarily a danger for the middle and upper classes.

because they often had money to lose by being incarcerated, and thus, were “much more likely victims of wrongful confinement than the poor” (McCandless, “Liberty” 343).

While Scull and McCandless hesitate to lend credence to the conspiracies that sparked the lunacy panics, McCandless, in particular, admits that there “is reason to believe that the public’s anxiety was not entirely groundless” (“Liberty” 340). Nevertheless, both scholars contend that it was “ignorance, arrogance, and narrow-mindedness” on the part of the alienists rather than diabolical scheming that was most at fault in cases of wrongful confinement (McCandless, “Liberty” 347).

Public Versus Private: The Mid-Victorian Asylum

In order to understand why the middle and upper classes were consumed with such panic over wrongful imprisonment in the asylum, it is necessary to examine the types of asylums that were available to the Victorians. According to Danby Fry, there were “Private Lunatics, Pauper Lunatics, and Criminal Lunatics; or, in other words, those who are maintained out of their own property, those who are supported at the public charge, and those who are in the custody of the law” (1).⁶ Private lunatics were housed in private asylums, or licensed houses; pauper lunatics were housed in public asylums or hospitals; and criminal lunatics were most often kept in prison unless they were sick or a danger to other inmates. Because the mid-century debate centered on public and private asylums, I briefly examine these two types below.

⁶ Fry’s *The Lunacy Laws* is an extraordinarily helpful synthesis of the lunacy laws pertaining to how lunatics are certified, where they can be incarcerated, and the responsibilities of the Commissioners in lunacy and the Visiting Justices. The second section provides the detailed laws and amendments. Though this report was published a year after Reade’s *Hard Cash*, the laws and regulations therein would have been familiar to him. Fry’s text simply consolidates the material of the Lunacy law.

William Tuke, a Quaker at the end of the eighteenth century, was horrified by the atrocious conditions in the asylum at York and decided to build a new, more humane asylum, for his Quaker friends.⁷ The York Retreat opened in 1796 with an emphasis on “humane care” rather than a dependence on the instruments of restraint so prevalent at the York asylum (Scull, “Moral Treatment” 105). Tuke laid the foundation for new perceptions of the insane; in particular, reformers began to think of their patients as people: “For them,” Scull writes, “the lunatic was no longer an animal, stripped of all remnants of humanity” (“Moral Treatment” 110). As a result of his new, humane system, Scull calls Tuke “the progenitor of the English version of moral treatment” (“Social History” 6). Tuke’s philosophy on patients and asylums was extremely influential in the nineteenth century.⁸

In addition to treating patients “as much in the manner of a rational being as the state of his mind will possibly allow” (qtd. in Scull, “Moral Treatment” 110), Tuke emphasized the importance of building aesthetically pleasing asylums which were large enough for the patients to walk about and change rooms but not so overcrowded that they could not receive the care they needed. Many public asylums were built on the York Retreat model, aesthetically pleasing with a moderate capacity of around one hundred patients (Scull, “Convenient” 48). However, with the rapidly increasing rate of asylum committals, public asylums grew into monstrous, utilitarian edifices. Colney Hatch

⁷ See Anne Digby’s article, “Changes in the Asylum: The Case of York, 1777-1815, for a comprehensive history of the York Asylum and Tuke’s response.

⁸ In his highly important study of insanity, *Madness and Civilization*, Michel Foucault ascribes to an entirely different interpretation of Tuke’s “philanthropy.” Arguing that through the non-restraint system Tuke made madness a “stifling anguish of responsibility” for the madman, Foucault rejects the claim that Tuke’s York Retreat provided “liberation of the insane, abolition of constraint, and constitution of a human milieu” (247). Instead, Foucault contends that Tuke’s non-restraint system simply restrained the insane in new—and worse—ways.

Lunatic Asylum, which opened in 1851, accommodated over one thousand patients; “its wards and passages taken together were more than six miles long” (Scull, “Convenient” 52). Though Tuke’s vision was admirable and his system extremely successful at the York Retreat, his concept simply could not support the swell of patients in the mid-nineteenth century.

The growing size of the public asylum is a physical testament to the number of mental patients that required treatment in the nineteenth century. With such a large number of patients, doctors could not be expected to see each patient every day. Additionally, the growing number of inmates resulted in overcrowding, both in sleeping quarters and in the day rooms where patients were crammed together to breathe “fresh air.” Furthermore, attendants in these enormous public asylums had far too many patients to look after. Thus, instruments of restraint were used frequently for the sheer purpose of maintaining some aspect of control in the asylum. Attendants were overworked, patients were overlooked, and Tuke’s idyllic concept of the asylum was lost in the scramble to provide enough space for the ever-increasing number of inmates.

Despite the drawbacks associated with the mid-Victorian public asylum, many critics advocated eradicating private asylums altogether and housing all mental patients in public asylums. “Should it be found impossible adequately to inspect and control the private asylums throughout the country,” writes the *Leeds Mercury*, “they ought not to be suffered to exist, and all lunatic patients, of whatever class in life, should be sent to the public county or borough asylums” (“Lunatic” 2). “Publicus,” writing to the editor of the *Times*, agrees: “nothing short of the abolition of private asylums can be considered as a complete remedy” (8). Though private asylums were far smaller, and therefore were

ostensibly more conducive to providing patient care, detractors of private asylums scoffed at the naïveté of someone who believed that inmates were receiving the care they required. Indeed, private asylums were roundly condemned. The *Era* printed an article expressing the majority opinion on private asylums:

The state of the madhouses of this country is a disgrace to the nation and an insult to our humanity. We had hoped that the atrocious disclosures made within the last few years would by this time have worked some remedy in a system so radically vicious and bad, but every day only further convinces us that this hateful ulcer on our humanity is in as rank and pestilent a condition as ever.⁹ (“Madmen” 9)

Even with these unfavorable evaluations of private asylums, proprietors still continued to fill their houses. Many middle- and upper-class men and women believed that the private asylum provided better services for their relatives. A smaller number of patients, more aesthetically pleasing buildings, and the higher prices for admission helped convince wealthier clients that private asylums were preferable to the public asylums that housed a huge number of pauper inmates in cramped quarters.

The private asylums certainly caused the most controversy throughout the mid-nineteenth century. Because private asylums were for-profit businesses, critics believed—with good reason—that proprietors of these asylums would sacrifice patient care to the acquisition of more money (McCandless, “Liberty” 343-44). Nancy Tomes explains, “Unlike public asylums, where securing enough patients was never a critical issue, the success of a private establishment depended directly upon its ability to attract a well-paying clientele that required superior accommodations and an impressive regimen”

⁹ Though the *Era*’s article does not specifically allude to private asylums but uses the more general “madhouses,” the author intimates in other ways that he/she is, in fact, referring specifically to private asylums. Reference to the scandal concerning Mrs. Turner at the private asylum, Acomb House, and a bitter invective regarding the Commissioners’ two visits a year clearly indicates that the author of the article has private asylums in mind.

(123).¹⁰ The proprietors of private asylums had an incentive for keeping their houses completely full; a full house meant a high income. The author of “Private Madhouses,” in the *Liverpool Mercury*, cynically defines the private asylum, “A private madhouse, taken in the abstract, may be described as a prison to which individuals are consigned on the slenderest evidence imaginable, without any sort of trial, and where they are incarcerated for indefinite periods in the custody of gaolers who have a direct pecuniary interest in their detention” (“Private” 2). The pecuniary interest to which the *Mercury* journalist refers had a direct influence on the proprietors’ treatment of their patients. In an effort to save as much money as possible out of the yearly fees of each patient, proprietors would often provide their inmates with mediocre food, unclean rooms, old clothing, and poor living conditions.

Private asylums were also subject to less supervision than the public asylums. Any person who wished to become the proprietor of a private asylum was obliged to request a license, and this license was valid for no longer than thirteen months; it then had to be renewed (Fry 50). Because of the relatively short time that any one proprietor could legally remain licensed without a renewal, the laws were more lax on how often visitations had to take place. The Visiting Justices were obligated to visit a public asylum at least four times a year, but licensed houses “need not be visited more than once in the year, unless the Lord Chancellor shall otherwise direct” (Fry 20). The visits were supposed to be “uncertain in point of time” so that proprietors would not have time to amend their practices before the Justices arrived (Ashley et al. 93). However, according

¹⁰ See, also, Scull, “Social History,” p. 11 and McCandless “Liberty and Lunacy,” p. 343.

to a writer in the London *Times* calling himself “a Physician,” visits were seldom, if ever, a surprise.¹¹ He writes,

[P]eriodical inspection [. . .] should be both frequent and unexpected; that of the magistracy above referred to rarely is unexpected; either from their individual acquaintance and friendship with the proprietors whose neighbors they almost invariably are, or from the correspondence which takes place before each visit, or from horses being hired to convey the doctor and clerk, of which intimation is given to the parties interested, by some means or other these visitations are almost always made known to the proprietor or superintendent; nor are the provincial movements of the commissioners kept so secret as in the metropolitan district; apartments are sometimes bespoke at an hotel in the neighbouring town where the proprietor of the asylum is not unknown, or horses are engaged to meet certain gentlemen at the railways station, who are coming down by such and such a train, and wish to proceed on immediately to ——, which intention and desire is probably conveyed to —— some hours before themselves, in plenty of time to pass round an order among the attendants, servants, and others, “to bustle about and have everything in readiness for inspection;” but, irrespective of foreknowledge, these visits are too seldom. (“Lunatic Asylums” 8)

Even though supervision and inspections were required by law, the Visiting Justices and Commissioners violated the law by providing ample warning of their arrival to asylum proprietors and keepers. By eliminating the element of surprise, the inspectors invited proprietors to present an illusory view of a clean, restraint-free, humane asylum.

As a detractor of the private asylum himself, Reade focuses his critique in *Hard Cash* on this type of asylum. All three asylums in which Alfred is incarcerated are private, as are the four asylums to which Mrs. Dodd commits her husband. Throughout

¹¹ See also, “Madmen and Madhouses” in the *Era*:

What supervision, what wholesome good, what beneficial inspection, can follow a biannual visit, so nicely timed to the day and hour, that the proprietor knows to a minute when to spread lunch for his expected visitors? Under such a polite and courteous system of performing duty it is no difficult matter to hide beneath that specious semblance of outside order and comfort every wrinkle of grief, to smother every sob of anguish, and under the parade of well-kept grounds, flowers, Wardean cases, and scrupulous cleanliness, blot out the memory of dark cells, refractory vaults, and all the mysteries of tyranny and irresponsible power, while the poor lunatic, irretrievably in the grasp of the master, is easily coerced into silence, though his abraded flesh should smart and his wronged heart be breaking over the rigour and malice of his keepers. (“Madmen” 9)

his novel, Reade brings many of the instances of abuse in the private asylum to the fore and calls on his readers to advocate for reforms.¹²

The Fletcher Experience and Print Sources: the Cold, Hard Asylum Facts

Reade's types and uses of sources are noticeably different in *Hard Cash* from his first matter-of-fact romance, *Never Too Late*. First of all, Reade's critique of asylums is drawn, in large part, from his personal interaction with an escaped asylum inmate named Edward Fletcher. Certainly, Reade conducted interviews and personally encountered a number of different prisoners and commissioners in *Never Too Late*, but his experience with Fletcher was far more personal. Indeed, his involvement with the alleged lunatic indelibly colors the asylum sections of *Hard Cash*. In addition, although Reade employed a variety of sources in *Never Too Late*, his use of different versions of the Birmingham Gaol scandal is the most obvious. In chapter three, I examine other sources he may have used, but the account of the scandal, primarily from the *Report*, the *Times*, and Allday's *Proceedings* form the foundation for the prison section of his novel. *Hard Cash*, on the other hand, contains evidence of far more varied sources. Rather than focusing on one event, Reade uses a number of contemporary incidents of asylum abuse to inform his story. In this novel, he does not build the entire asylum section around one account of abuse; instead he integrates elements of all the accounts, focusing more on underlying problems within the asylum than on any one asylum in particular. I devote this section to a look at how Reade's interaction with a falsely imprisoned man named

¹² It is significant that Reade's answer to the problem of abuse in the private asylum is not to commit Alfred or Mr. Dodd to a public asylum. There are many documented cases of equally horrific abuse occurring in the more regulated public asylums. Instead, Reade contends that only through transparent behavior on the part of proprietors and keepers, responsible inspections by the Visiting Justices and the Commissioners, and a willingness to remain vigilant for the possibility of abuse can improvements be made to the state of private asylums. A sincere desire for truth and an attentiveness to the state of the asylum are required by all.

Fletcher informs the asylum section of *Hard Cash*. I then turn to Reade's sources for the four underlying problems of abuse that he addresses in the novel.

Though he was interested in the state of the Victorian asylums and declares in a letter, entitled "Facts Must Be Faced," that the *Times*' "eloquent leader on private asylums [. . .] took root in me, and brought forth its fruit in the second volume of 'Hard Cash'" Reade first became wholly invested in exposing asylum abuse with his introduction to Fletcher (4). In the first of a series of letters to the press, Reade explains that two women approached him with the "tale" that "a sane prisoner had escaped from a private madhouse, had just baffled an attempt to recapture him by violent entry into a dwelling-house, and was now hiding in the suburbs" (R 113).¹³ Upon hearing this strange account, Reade met with and interviewed Fletcher and discovered that he was imprisoned in an asylum because he stood to inherit money that his uncle was trying to protect.¹⁴ Reade took him to two eminent doctors, Dr. James Rutledge and Dr. Samuel Dickson, to certify his sanity, and obtained legal representation for him when the doctors deemed him sane. Finally, Reade wrote a series of letters "To the Gentlemen of the Press" in which he requests that the London presses publish his letters and, thus, let "daylight in" upon Fletcher's case (R 116). Fletcher's attorney explains Fletcher's reason for taking the case to court: "the plaintiff had brought this action in order to show to his friends and the

¹³ At least eight newspapers printed a copy of the letter. On Thursday, August 12, 1858, the *Daily News*, p. 4, and the *Morning Chronicle*, p. 7, also printed the letter. On Friday, August 13, the *Birmingham Daily Post*, p. 1, printed it. The *Belfast News Letter*, p. 3, and the *Leeds Mercury*, p. 8, printed the letter on Saturday, August 14, the *Era*, p. 12, printed it on Sunday, August 15, the *Glasgow Herald*, p. 3, printed on Wednesday, August 18, and the *Hull Packet and East Riding Times*, p. 2, printed the letter on Friday, August 20. In addition, Reade retitled the series of four letters "Our Dark Places" and reprinted them in *Readiana* (R 113-26). I will use page numbers from *Readiana* for all quotations of this series of letters.

¹⁴ The inquest of *Fletcher v. Fletcher* revealed that "the defendant [Fletcher's uncle] had acted *bonâ fidē* for the welfare of his nephew, and with the object of restoring him to a healthy state of mind and body; both of which the defendant, on the testimony of the medical men, believed to be unsound" ("Court" 11).

public that he was a man of sound mind” (“Court” 11). Throughout, Reade willingly contributed lodging, food, and advice and shared Fletcher’s desire to see his name cleared of the imputation of insanity. The jury ruled that Fletcher was sane, and he was awarded an annuity of £100.

Reade’s heavy involvement in Fletcher’s post-asylum experience explains why the historical Fletcher and the fictional Alfred share so many characteristics and experiences. Both men attend Eton and Oxford (“Court of Queen’s Bench” 11; *HC* 1: 11); each man has a sister who also stood to inherit money (“Court of Queen’s Bench” 11; *HC* 1: 13). Both men suffer from debilitating diseases—Fletcher from epileptic fits and Alfred from excruciating headaches, and both men are committed by the signed certificate of an uncle (“Court of Queen’s Bench” 11; *HC* 1:33, 3: 182). Ultimately, both men are imprisoned because they were to inherit sums of money that their families wanted or needed. The alleged conspiracy of Fletcher’s uncle, and Mr. Hardie’s sordid plans to entrap his son Alfred provided a real source of unrest for mid-Victorians. A leader in the *Times* declares, “We believe that in Private Lunatic Asylums there are instances of some persons who have been wrongfully placed in custody by persons interested in putting them to civil death. It is a safe kind of murder,—and murders do happen. Instances of this kind cannot be very numerous, but it is almost beyond doubt that there are some” (“Our Impression” 6). These basic similarities form only a part of the parallels between Fletcher and Alfred.

Though Fletcher and Alfred have similar backgrounds, they also undergo like experiences once entrapped in the asylum. Reade provides both specific details and

broader asylum experiences that Fletcher and Alfred share.¹⁵ First, Reade chooses to incorporate into *Hard Cash* specific details from Fletcher’s hearing concerning his inability to eat. Fletcher testifies that his keepers brought him dinner at two o’clock, but he “declined to eat anything. The reason was,” he explains, “because I could not eat in a place of that kind. The effect of finding myself in a lunatic asylum was to take away my appetite” (“Court of Queen’s Bench” 11). Reade expands this small detail into an entire scene in *Hard Cash*. Alfred is commanded to eat—at two o’clock—and says that he cannot. “Eat! [. . .] of what do you think I am made?” Alfred cries out. “And I am not used to eat at this time” (*HC* 2: 290, 291). Reade uses this scene to emphasize Alfred’s gentlemanly nature and the utter inappropriateness of his being incarcerated in the asylum.

The second parallel between Fletcher’s experience and that of Alfred’s concerns each man’s appeal to the commissioners. In each case, the commissioners refuse to discharge the patient though they are convinced he is sane. Fletcher declares that the commissioners “examined me, and said my memory was remarkably good, and they recommended my putting my affairs into Chancery, but they declined to let me out,” (“Court of Queen’s Bench” 11).¹⁶ Again, Reade expounds upon this circumstance in *Hard Cash*. Dr. Eskill and Mr. Abbott interview Alfred at his second asylum, and though Dr. Eskill believes Alfred is cured “and Mr. Abbot has some doubts whether [he

¹⁵ Fletcher may have had more in-depth conversations with Reade about his experience in the asylum that Reade then incorporated into *Hard Cash*. However, during the inquest, Fletcher narrates very little of his time in the asylum. Rather, the focus of the inquest is centered on how Fletcher was incarcerated in the first place and whether or not he is actually insane. The focus of the inquest makes a comparison of Fletcher’s and Alfred’s time in the asylum difficult.

¹⁶ The law states, “Any two or more of the Commissioners may visit any patient [. . .] in any house licensed by them, and after two visits, with an interval of seven days between them, may order his discharge, if they think fit” (Fry 58). The Commissioners do not take advantage of this law in Fletcher’s case or in Alfred’s.

was] ever positively insane” they refuse to discharge him (*HC* 3: 48). Dr. Eskell explains that “for many reasons they exercise [their power to liberate patients] with prudence and reserve. Besides,” he continues, “it is only fair to those who have signed the order, to give them the graceful office of liberating the patient: it paves the way to reconciliation” (*HC* 3: 48).¹⁷ Reade uses this example to highlight the power of the Commissioners and to underscore their refusal to use the law for good—even when they know that a patient is sane.

Though Fletcher and Reade share a similar background and undergo parallel experiences in the asylum, their stories bear the most resemblance in their respective escapes. As Fletcher narrates during the inquiry, he made his escape from the asylum and was eventually tracked down by his attendant, Sandy. Fletcher fled up the stairs and entered a bedroom at the top of the house. Reade provides additional details in his second letter to the London presses: the keepers entered “a dwelling-house kept by women, and proposed to break open a woman’s chamber-door, till a woman standing on the other side with a cudgel, threatened ‘to split [their] skulls’” (*R* 118). From this bedroom, guarded by Mrs. Cannon, Fletcher escaped through the bedroom window “over the roofs of the houses to Drury-lane,” and from there, eluded his keepers by dressing as a woman (“Court of Queen’s Bench” 11). “Petticoats and bonnet and veil, cuffs and everything, were handed to me. (Laughter.) I went out alone” (“Court of Queen’s Bench” 11). The law states that any escaped lunatic “may be retaken within fourteen

¹⁷ McCandless affirms this assertion, writing, “One common criticism, especially of the commissioners was that when they discovered an apparent case of improper commitment, they were too dilatory and timid in using their power to order the patient’s release. [. . .] To release someone against the wishes of his friends would only convince him that his commitment had been maliciously motivated” (“Dangerous” 91).

days, and again confined under the same order” so Fletcher remained in hiding for two weeks (Fry 117).¹⁸

Although Reade adds a number of sensational details to Alfred’s daring escape, the basic features are the same. Alfred is tracked to the Dodd’s home in London, and when he hears the keeper’s voice, Julia cries out, “Fly! [. . .] fly! up-stairs; the leads¹⁹ (HC 3: 193). Alfred flees to Julia’s bedroom, but there is no Mrs. Cannon to protect him with a cudgel. Instead, Alfred must take matters into his own hands; as he is pursued, he shoots the guard dog through the head, tears the banister from the wall, and bludgeons the keeper in self defense. He then barricades himself in Julia’s room, but when Dr. Wolf and the keepers break down the door, Alfred is gone, having leapt from a height of twenty-five feet onto a wagon full of hay. Ultimately, Julia, Edward, and Dr. Sampson dress Alfred in “a bonnet and cloak,” creating a “handsome brazen-looking trollop six feet high” and smuggle him out of the house “under the very noses of a policeman and a keeper” (HC 3: 211). Thus, Reade’s personal interaction with Fletcher provided him with a foundation for Alfred Hardie. Fletcher’s own experience inspired Reade with details, both specific and general, that he incorporated into *Hard Cash*.

Throughout the novel, Reade uses Fletcher’s experience as a foundation for Alfred, but he turns to other reported incidents of asylum abuse to fill out the asylum section of the novel. In *Hard Cash*, Reade highlights broad problems of asylum abuse that are being discussed and debated at the middle of the century, implements

¹⁸ After fourteen days, the commitment certificate is no longer valid. If a relative wishes to recommit a patient to the asylum, he/she must have the patient reexamined by two doctors and resign the commitment papers (Fry 285).

¹⁹ Julia directs Alfred to the roof of their dwelling. The OED defines leads as “The sheets or strips of lead used to cover a roof; often *collect.* for a lead flat, a lead roof.” Julia believes that if Alfred can make it to the roof, he can escape from his pursuers. Fletcher also flees to the roof and escapes likewise.

corresponding cases into the novel, and then provides commentary on those stated abuses. While his sources are often traceable, they are not as obvious as the Birmingham Gaol sources of *Never Too Late*, and they are far more numerous.²⁰ Because Reade wrote his novel at the height of the second lunacy panic, the newspapers were bursting with stories of abuse, letters to the editor commenting on those abuses, inquests and inquiries related to cases of abuse, debates between doctors, former patients, and asylum proprietors, and observations on (or incensed defenses of) the respective advantages and disadvantages of public and private asylums. Reade uses this barrage of sources to help create an articulate condemnation of private asylums.

Reade focuses on four major aspects of abuse surrounding the private asylum: the doctors who wrongly commit patients, the proprietors who “trade” in lunacy, the keepers who torture their patients, and the inspectors who flout the law by choosing to remain in ignorance. Within these four categories, Reade occasionally uses his sources in yet a different way—by alluding to actual cases in the text, providing footnotes to his own commentary, or stating outright the name of a matter of fact, and therefore scandalous, case of asylum abuse. Reade refers to at least three cases by name or description as contemporary references to support his asylum abuse arguments. These cases are of Mrs. Mary Jane Turner, William Sizemore, and Daniel Dolley. In the following pages, I examine some of the abuses Reade attacks and his sources. Further, I analyze the uses of the three cases mentioned above.

²⁰ Douglas Henneck Bankson’s unpublished dissertation, “Charles Reade’s Manuscript Notecards for *Hard Cash*” provides transcription and analysis for the forty notecards Reade created that include materials for writing *Hard Cash*. Bankson’s transcription of clippings from these notecards supplied invaluable help in discovering and identifying some of the original print sources that Reade incorporated into the novel. As Bankson’s work demonstrates, Reade was meticulous in the inclusion of his own notes as well as related news clippings; Reade often includes the date and/or newspapers from which he acquires his facts.

Above the Law: Malicious and Incompetent Mad-Doctors

Reade's first major complaint is with the "mad-doctors" who commit sane people to the asylum either accidentally, or more alarmingly, on purpose. As Reade researched asylums and the abuses associated with them, he encountered an onslaught of articles and letters in the newspapers and journals condemning the ignorance and illegal practices of medical doctors who evaluated and diagnosed insanity. Echoing the critiques he read, Reade assimilates these sources and his knowledge of the lunacy commitment laws into *Hard Cash* to emphasize the incompetence and illegal practices of the doctors who come to examine Alfred.

Certainly, Reade reiterates the popular sentiment of distrust when he questions the alienists' competence and integrity. On August 18, 1858, the *Times* offers a portentous conclusion to one of its editorials on asylum abuse: "So far it would appear that any unprincipled person whose interest lay that way might bribe a couple of doctors of no consideration in the profession, and the patient is trapped" ("Position" 6). A week and a half later, the *Times* submits another ominous supposition of conspiracy: "Give a sharp lawyer 200*l.* as a fee, the private history of most men, and two or three mad-doctors to back him, and who might not be locked up on one pretext or another?" ("Letters" 8). Even when the doctors are not suspected of malice, critics recognize that incompetence can be just as dangerous. The *Saturday Review* acknowledges, "A mistaken certificate by two professional men is sufficient to consign any one to a prison more terrible than that of the violent criminal" ("Doctors" 104-5). The *Times* also points to the momentous consequence of a doctor's ineptitude and carelessness: "The forms, such as they are, which are required to be fulfilled before any person can be dragged away from his home

and confined in a Lunatic Asylum are complied with in a very careless and perfunctory manner” (“Our Impression” 6). And “a Physician” further substantiates these claims. “Now, it is a fact known to every proprietor and superintendent of a lunatic asylum,” he writes, “that where a medical certificate for the admission of a patient is correctly filled up is the exception rather than the rule” (“Lunatic Asylums” 8). Reade’s immersion in the discussion of private asylums and, more particularly, the harms of incompetent or malicious doctors, greatly influenced the asylums sections of *Hard Cash*.

As has already been mentioned, psychiatry was a new and relatively unfamiliar science,²¹ but the Commissioners on Lunacy had already implemented important laws that related to the practice of identifying and diagnosing insanity. A commitment required “the certificates of two medical men,” each of whom had seen the patient within the past month (Fry 68). Furthermore, the “two medical men who sign the certificates must not be professionally connected” (Fry 69). Most importantly, the “patient must be examined separately by the two medical men; and each must state the facts upon which he has formed his opinion, distinguishing the facts observed by himself from those communicated to him by others” (Fry 69-70). McCandless doubts that most doctors committed patients with malicious intent, writing that it “was just barely credible that the proprietor or superintendent of an asylum, two medical men, and one relative or friend could all be so base as to enter into a plot to deprive someone of his freedom” (“Liberty” 347). However, it was clear that doctors did not always adhere to the stipulated laws, and even worse, they sometimes received a fee from proprietors for sending patients to the

²¹ The *Times* correspondent, “a Physician,” writes that “the profession generally betray great want of practical acquaintance with, if not a positive ignorance of, the subject of insanity” (“Lunatic Asylums” 8).

private asylums.²² Reade sought to expose the abuses of the medical practitioners who could affect their patients, whether through ignorance, incompetence, or in rare cases, pure malice, in such a devastating way.

Reade's newspaper sources are full of accusations and confirmations that the doctors did not adhere to the rules stated above. The examinations of patients were often performed too quickly. "A Physician" asserts that the doctors' "investigations are usually too short and lax" ("Lunatic Asylums" 8). The *Saturday Review* corroborates "a Physician's" claim: "The doctor, too, is probably an eminent man, and has to decree the imprisonment of a dozen other patients before nightfall. There is no time for acquiring any real familiarity with the case, and a man's freedom is disposed of with about as much deliberation as is given to a prescription for colic or dyspepsia" ("Doctors" 105). Interrelated with summary examinations was the doctors' propensity to base diagnoses largely on hearsay. "A Physician" suggests that "the certifiers are apt to be too much influenced by what they hear rather than by what they observe" ("Lunatic Asylums" 8). The *Saturday Review* once more echoes a similar opinion: "A little hearsay about the eccentricities or violence of the patient ekes out the doctor's judgment, and the certificate is signed" ("Doctors" 105). In the famous case of *Hall v. Semple*, Mr. Hall was confined

²² McCandless writes, "Most critics of the commitment law believed that it made wrongful confinement possible by not adequately protecting the civil rights of the alleged lunatic. They considered it scandalous that the law entrusted to 'a chance pair of medical men . . . the power of sending any man or woman to a madhouse.' They regarded the medical certificates required for the confinement of patients as a screen for abuse rather than as a protection against it. Paternoster referred to the certificates as *lettres de cachet*, while Mulock charged that they placed an 'irresponsible power' in the hands of men 'assailable on the side of sordidness.' Both claimed that doctors often received a fee from proprietors to send patients to particular asylums" ("Liberty" 344). See, also, Mulock, *British Lunatic Asylums*, pp. 10-11 and Paternoster, *The Madhouse System*, pp. 11-12. Additionally, Scull details the famous case of Lawrence Ruck in which Conolly was compelled to admit that he had accepted a fee for sending Ruck to Moorcroft House. To make matters worse, Conolly was connected with the asylum, which is another breach of law ("Brilliant" 230-31). See McCandless, "Liberty and Lunacy," p. 345: "The Lunacy Act of 1845 prohibited any medical man interested in or attending a licensed house from signing a certificate for the admission of a patient into that house."

to an asylum because Dr. Semple signed a certificate “falsely and maliciously, and without probable cause” (“Charge” 3). During the course of the commission, Dr. Semple “admitted that he had not made inquiry as to the truth of the statements made by the plaintiff in his interview with him, which he had treated as evidence of the plaintiff’s delusions. Neither had he made any inquiry to verify the statements made by the wife [. . .]. He had no other authority for such incidents [. . .] than the statement of the wife” (“False” 7). Further, even if a doctor did perform an examination not based on hearsay, it was often done indelicately or in a manner so that insanity could be the only diagnosis. The *Saturday Review* explains, “No attempt is made to disguise the object of the visit. Rough and impertinent questions are often asked, and whether the unlucky subject is driven into moroseness or lashed into fury, his demeanour may be regarded as a corroborative proof of his insanity” (“Doctors” 105). Finally, doctors sometimes examined patients together even though it was strictly forbidden by the lunacy laws. In a case that garnered great publicity, Lawrence Ruck sued eminent psychiatrist, John Conolly²³ for wrongful imprisonment. During his testimony, Conolly had to admit that he “had issued his certificate of Ruck’s lunacy after a joint examination with Barnett” (Scull, “Brilliant” 230).

In each case, the newspapers provide Reade with ideas and incidents for the asylums sections of *Hard Cash*. In the two “medical examinations” that eventually wrongfully consign Alfred to the asylum, he is accosted by Dr. Wycherley²⁴ as he is

²³ See Scull, “A Brilliant Career?” for a thorough account of Conolly’s life and career.

²⁴ The common consensus among critics is that Dr. Wycherley of *Hard Cash* is based on the eminent Victorian psychologist, Dr. Connolly. In the final installment of *Very Hard Cash*, published in *All the Year Round*, Dickens appends the following disclaimer in all capital letters:

NOTE: THE STATEMENTS AND OPINIONS OF THIS JOURNAL GENERALLY,
ARE, OF COURSE, TO BE RECEIVED AS THE STATEMENTS AND OPINIONS OF

getting ready to dress for dinner. Dr. Wycherley inquires about Alfred's cephalalgia, insomnia, nightly visions and voices, and his "delusion" of the £14,000 (*HC* 2: 268-69). Of course, in this series of inquiries, Reade exposes the mad-doctors' propensity to base their examinations on hearsay rather than on what they observe in the evaluation. Though Alfred refuses to answer, Wycherley is unflappable; his "curiosity was not of a very ardent kind: for he was one of those who first form an opinion, and then collect the materials of one: and a very little fact goes a long way with such minds" (*HC* 2: 269).

ITS CONDUCTOR. BUT THIS IS NOT SO, IN THE CASE OF A WORK OF FICTION FIRST PUBLISHED IN THESE PAGES AS A SERIAL STORY, WITH THE NAME OF AN EMINENT WRITER ATTACHED TO IT. WHEN ONE OF MY LITERARY BROTHERS DOES ME THE HONOUR TO UNDERTAKE SUCH A TASK, I HOPE THAT HE EXECUTES IT ON HIS OWN PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, AND FOR THE SUSTAINMENT OF HIS OWN REPUTATION: AND I DO NOT CONSIDER MYSELF AT LIBERTY TO EXERCISE THAT CONTROL OVER HIS TEXT WHICH I CLAIM AS TO OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS.
(419)

Most critics believe that this disclaimer was added because Dickens felt it damaged the reputation of his friend Conolly and that it offered a negative portrayal of the Lunacy Commissioners, of whom Dickens's good friend and biographer, John Forster was one. See Richard A. Hunter and Ida Macalpine, "Dickens and Conolly" for more information on this subject. See also Andrew Scull, "A Brilliant Career?": Connolly's "transparent rationalizations and the convenient fit between his beliefs and his self-interest were later savagely burlesqued in Charles Reade's scandalous bestseller, *Hard Cash*, where Conolly appears in thinly disguised form as the bumbling Dr. Wycherley" (230). A small number of critics, however, have called attention to Wycherley's similarity to another distinguished doctor, Dr. Forbes Winslow, particularly with regard to both doctors' obsession over Hamlet's madness. See Judith R. Walkowitz, "Science and Séance," p. 16, Wayne Burns, *Charles Reade*, p. 212, and Susan Walsh, "Arithmetic of Bedlam!," p. 33. See, also, Douglas Henneck Bankson, "Charles Reade's Manuscript Notecards for *Hard Cash*." Here, Bankson notes that "A book on insanity by Dr. Forbes Winslow was noted 35 times," indicating Reade's interest in both Winslow's science and his style (v).

Either way, critics are in agreement that Reade's portrayal is patently unflattering. I argue, however, that Reade's depiction is not nearly as negative as most critics assert. Dr. Wycherley cares for his patients, avoids instruments of restraint, ensures the food in his asylum is good and the rooms clean, helps Alfred study for his Oxford exams, agrees to post an advertisement for him, and eventually signs a certificate of sanity for Alfred.

Certainly, Reade slips in a few barbs: Wycherley almost never speaks "plain English;" Reade describes him instead as "the oleaginous one" (*HC* 2: 269). Also, Wycherley is so engrossed in psychology that he ascribes almost anything to insanity. Though Alfred speaks entirely lucidly to the Commissioners, Wycherley concludes, "However, gentlemen, you have heard him: now judge for yourselves whether anybody can be as clever as he is, without the presence of more or less abnormal excitement of the organs of intelligence" (*HC* 3: 46). And finally, Reade represents Wycherley as afflicted with his own monomania—a certainty that Hamlet was mad. When Alfred argues against his assertion, Wycherley is "furious" and "burst out of the anti-spasmodic or round-about style, and called Alfred a d—d ungrateful, insolent puppy, [. . .] and, finally, to the young man's horror, fell down in a fit of an epileptic character, grinding his teeth and foaming at the mouth" (*HC* 3: 56). Nevertheless, Reade's overall picture of Wycherley is one of a good-hearted and well-meaning doctor who cares for the inmates, adheres to the non-restraint system, and genuinely wishes to heal his patients.

Soon, Alfred loses his patience and threatens the doctor. Reade writes that Dr. Wycherley “made to the door, opened it, and said in considerable excitement to some one outside, ‘Excited! – Very!’” (*HC 2: 270*). Another doctor, who “had evidently been lurking in the passage” entered next, already influenced by Wycherley’s concluding assessment: “He fluttered in with pale cheek and apprehensive body, saying hurriedly, ‘Now, my *dear sir, be calm: pray be calm*’” (*HC 2: 270*). In this scene, Reade highlights the brevity of the examinations—neither doctor was with Alfred for even close to the required fifteen minutes. Also, though the doctors did not *technically* examine Alfred together, Wycherley’s evaluation undoubtedly colors Speers’ own judgment. Reade shows how doctors can follow the letter of the law while flouting the spirit of the law. Finally, Reade accurately depicts the way in which examining doctors would rile a patient and then declare him insane. Wycherley, a man Alfred “scarcely knew by name” (*HC 2: 268*), presumes to ask Alfred questions of the most personal nature without preamble or explanation, and then a second strange man enters with the same questions in addition to an infuriating appeal that Alfred remain calm despite this outrageous intrusion on his privacy.

Reade also criticizes the cruelty of medical ignorance and malpractice inside the asylum. Though a medical practitioner was considered by many a necessary component of the asylum, the professional body of doctors did not instill confidence in the public. The ignorance they exhibited in diagnosing insanity could not but lead to questions about their methods of treatment inside the asylum. Foucault views the doctor of a nineteenth-century asylum a charade. He asserts that Tuke and Pinel “did not introduce science, but a personality, whose powers borrowed from science only their disguise, or at most their

justification” (*Madness* 271). This assertion parallels *Times* correspondent X.Y.Z.’s argument that even when an asylum professes to operate under the non-restraint system, the doctor serves as a new, cruel form of restraint. He writes,

What, then, do the faculty substitute for mechanical restraint? Medical treatment, forsooth! This is a large question, and I will even say a dangerous one, where there is no other authority than the medical men? What does this mean? What! Ask poor Mrs. Turner. Ask many a poor victim who has had to undergo this treatment. It means seclusion in dark rooms for hours together, than which I can conceive nothing more horrible to a weak, timid, and disorganized mind. It means blistering, weekly or fortnightly, which is but an infliction of bodily suffering, and, in the majority of cases, of no benefit whatever to the mental state of the patient. It means shower baths, given in numerous instances to patients because they are troublesome or excited, and in some cases because they refuse to work. It means—but I forbear. (5)

There was much debate over whether the physician in residence should be a medical doctor or simply one who zealously desired to make the patients as comfortable and healthy as possible. Many argued that “none but medical men be proprietors of [licensed] houses,” giving further credence to the perceived importance of the doctor within—and in charge of—the asylum (D.W.G. 9). However, critics like X.Y.Z. ask “what there is in the experience [the doctor] gathers at the College or at the Hall which gives him any superiority over the other gentlemen of equal or superior talents, but who may not have had the inestimable advantage of being examined in chymistry [sic] or anatomy” (5). Because of such questionable practices outside the asylum, many Victorians were suspicious of the proceedings inside.

Reade shares the suspicion of asylum doctors, and within *Hard Cash*, critiques their ineptitude and irresponsibility. The doctors at Silverton Grove House and Drayton House give the keepers drugs for patients without examining them first. Most of the time, these drugs have a negative effect on the patients, which Reade argues results in the

continued mental instability of asylum inmates. Again, when Alfred is secretly slipped morphia his first evening at Drayton House, Reade bitterly expostulates, “morphia, the accursed drug with which these dark men in these dark places coax the reason away out of the head by degrees, or with a potent dose stupefy the victim, then act surprise, alarm; and make his stupor the ground for applying medical treatment to the doomed wretch” (*HC* 3: 69). These doctors, invested with nearly limitless authority, abuse their station and their high calling by prescribing inappropriately, without research or knowledge. Regardless of whether they are acting in ignorance or in malice, these medical practitioners presented a serious problem of abuse in the asylum.

The “Trade in Lunacy”: Greedy Proprietors of Private Asylums

While there was some doubt among critics about whether doctors were incompetent or simply malicious, the overwhelming perception people had of private asylum proprietors was that they were greedy, avaricious monsters. Notorious cases, such as Mrs. Turner’s wrongful imprisonment and cruel treatment at Acomb House, helped cultivate this view.²⁵ Reade was inculcated with these sorts of reports, and he certainly imbibed the public’s disapprobation of proprietors in private institutions. A few correspondents of the papers sought to remind readers that some private asylum proprietors were, in fact, caring and compassionate people who greatly benefited their patients, and it is important to note that Reade positively portrays one of his three asylum

²⁵ A brief overview of Mrs. Turner’s case is as follows: She began to believe that her husband was unfaithful. She was paranoid whenever he was out of her sight; he requested a separation, he referred his wife to Dr. Redhead, and husband and wife commenced living apart. After their separation, Mrs. Turner began to think her husband was trying to poison her. Independently of Mr. Turner, Dr. Redhead had Mrs. Turner admitted to Acomb House Private Asylum. She was brutally abused, verbally and physically, by the proprietor, Mr. Metcalfe. She twice effected escape, but was tracked down both times. Mr. Metcalfe dragged her out of her bed in the lodgings she had secured in York and took her back to the asylum after her second escape in a state of shameful undress (“Commission” 5).

proprietors. However, the predominant feeling was that proprietors were nothing more than “moneygrubbing asylum keepers” (McCandless, “Liberty” 344). This assessment stemmed from two central beliefs: first, that the proprietors chose proprietorship from a strictly business point of view, and second, that proprietors did not discharge patients as soon as they were cured, but rather detained them in order to continue collecting fees for their maintenance.

Detractors of private asylum proprietors argued that charging high fees for middle- and upper-class patients was the sole reason that they chose their line of work. An article in the *Times* states, “Now, the keeper of a small Asylum is necessarily a needy man. It is a kind of business upon which no man would enter but for great pecuniary pressure. The presence in his establishment of a few patients more or less is to him a matter of life or death” (“Our Impression” 6). In another editorial, the *Times* declares, “There are many, there are very many, of the superintendents of these private establishments who have adopted the calling just as a man might take up any other branch of trade which promised good profits and quick returns. They are the keepers of boarding-houses where the lodgers are helpless and entirely at their mercy” (“Letters” 8). Clearly, cynics viewed the profession of a private asylum proprietor as nothing more than a vulgar business decision. Most proprietors, critics argued, cared far more about money than about curing patients.

Proprietors were also denounced for detaining inmates after they had been cured. Since the number of patients in a licensed house directly correlated with the amount of money a proprietor earned, critics reasoned that proprietors were averse to relinquishing the high fees that each patient necessarily generated. “A Physician” fears that “patients

[are] being detained too long after recovery” (“Lunatic Asylums” 8), and the *Times* writes that patients “are mere commercial speculations for the benefit of the proprietors” (“Position” 6). S.T.B.’s wrongly imprisoned friend uses a monetary metaphor for his imprisonment: “I am not confined here because I am mad, but because Dr. A. keeps racehorses.’ The observation,” S.T.B. explains, “was anything but irrational, for it simply meant that, as the doctor indulged in this expensive fancy, he could not afford to lose a patient who paid him 500*l* a year” (10). Even those critics who give proprietors the benefit of the doubt recognize the potential danger of the present proprietary system. An editorial in the *Times* offers a sagacious observation: “It is not good to keep a man’s interest and duty in perpetual antagonism” (“Letters” 8). Proprietors of private asylums were generally denounced for their unsavory intentions, and even those who defended good proprietors recognized the problems with the system.

Reade uses this cloud of opinions and news reports as the basis of his portrayal of the three proprietors in *Hard Cash*. The first proprietor, Mr. Baker of Silverton Grove House, is “a full-blown pawnbroker of Silverton town,” whose “trade lay in catching, and keeping, and stinting, as many lodgers, sane or insane, as he could hold” (*HC* 2: 302). Baker does not care for his patients in the least. He is often absent, defers responsibility to the doctor, relies on instruments of restraint, and employs brutal keepers. But he, like proprietors in so many of the contemporary reports, detains patients once they have been cured (an unlikely scenario in his asylum) and fills his house to overflowing in order to gain as much income as possible. The second proprietor, Dr. Wycherley is a genuinely good-hearted man whose chief fault is in his certainty that everything is a sign of insanity. The *Morning Post*’s description of Conolly, upon whom Wycherley was

possibly modeled, is apt for Wycherley as well: “Dr. Conolly appears to have devoted his attention so exclusively to . . . mental disease that . . . he can apparently no longer distinguish where absolute madness begins and moral and legal responsibility ceases. There are very few of our fellow subjects, we suspect, who could get from Dr. Conolly a certificate of perfect sanity” (qtd. in Scull, “Brilliant” 228). While Reade is far kinder to Wycherley than to any other proprietor in his novel, his portrayal of the psychologist underscores the mid-Victorian obsession with and misunderstanding of lunacy. The third proprietor, Dr. Wolf, is a thoroughgoing moneygrubber. He takes a huge risk in admitting David Dodd to his asylum since Alfred already resides there and might be recognized by Mrs. or Julia Dodd, but “I can’t turn money away on a chance,” he explains (*HC* 3: 83). Further, Wolfe cannot resist a good bargain, and when Alfred bribes him with £1,000, Wolf very nearly takes the deal (*HC* 3: 126). In addition to acquiring money, Wolf is extremely thrifty. Reade explains how Wolf employs “The Sub-letting Swindle,” whereby he squeezes every penny out of a weak-minded, but sane, patient-turned-servant to ultimately realize a profit.²⁶ Reade briefly describes another proprietor,

²⁶ See *Hard Cash*, pp. 3: 74-75 for full details of “THE SUB-LETTING SWINDLE”:

1. The Honourable Fynes Beverley, Anglo-French committee, or crown tenant, sub-let soft Francis for 300*l.* a year, pocketed 300*l.*, and washed his hands of Frank.

2. Mr. Heselden, the sub-tenant, sub-let the Softy of high degree for 150*l.*, pocketed the surplus, and washed his hands of him.

3. The 150*l.* man sub-let him to Dr. Wolf at 60*l.* a year, pouched the surplus, and washed his hands of him.

And now what on earth was left for poor Dr. Wolf to do? Could he sub-embezzle a Highlander’s breeks? Could he subtract more than her skin from off the singed cat? Could he peel the core of a rotten apple? Could he pare a grated cheese rind? Could he flay a skinned flint? Could he fleece a hog after Satan had shaved it as clean as a bantam’s egg?

Let no man dare to limit genius; least of all the genius of extortion.

Dr. Wolf screwed comparatively more out of young Frank than did any of the preceding screws. He turned him into a servant of all work and half starved him; money profit 45*l.* out of the 60*l.*, or three-fourths, whereas the others had only bagged one-half. But by this means he got a good servant without the wages, and on half a servant’s food, clearing 22*l.* and 12*l.* in these two items.

Mrs. Ellis, who is “gifted with that household virtue,” economy (*HC* 3: 80). She “kept too few servants, and, sure consequence in a madhouse, too many strait-jackets, hobbles, muffs, leg-locks, body-belts, &c. &c. Hence half her patients were frequently kept out of harm’s way by cruel restraints administered not out of hearty cruelty, but female parsimony” (*HC* 3: 80). Scull’s research corroborates Reade’s description of cruel stinginess: “To be sure, some of the treatment meted out to lunatics in private madhouses was the natural product of an unregulated free market in madness—the consequence of the unchecked cupidity of the least scrupulous, of the incentives to half starve and neglect pauper inmates, of the temptation to rely on force as the least troublesome form of control” (“Moral Treatment” 107). By immersing himself in the newspaper and journal articles of the time—and particularly the lively debates about proprietors that were taking place in the columns of the *Times*—Reade is able to create three different proprietors who exhibit distinctive attributes of private asylum proprietors. Though he includes one relatively positive proprietor, Reade’s overall representation is damning.

Keeper Cruelty: The Abuses Wrought By Asylum Attendants

Although the debates surrounding public and private asylums focuses least on the specific evils of attendants or “keepers” in the asylum, Reade centers the asylum section of *Hard Cash* on the abuses enacted by keepers. These abuses are not often detailed in letters to the editor or in editorials that the newspapers and journals print, but the papers are full of inquests and commissions on the mistreatment of patients. Headlines like “Shocking Treatment of a Lunatic” (5) and “False Imprisonment in an Asylum” (4) are splashed across the pages of major print sources, and provide Reade with many of the

ideas he needed to write the asylum section.²⁷ Asylum keepers are guilty of two different types of abuse: physical and psychological. These abuses, inextricably bound up in one another, can be found detailed in the commissions and inquiries throughout the papers and journals, but Reade assimilates them all into one place to emphasize the need for asylum reform.

Reported physical abuses in the asylum include the use of violent force, binding patients in chains and strait waistcoats, crowding them into inadequate spaces, depriving them of food and clothes, and allowing them to live in filth and among vermin. The *Times* runs a report in which an anonymous sufferer in a private asylum claims to have been “treated with the greatest cruelty, strapped down to a bed with broad bands of webbing, and kept there till it was supposed he was dying” (“Position” 6). The outcome of the man’s treatment is sickening: “My back, from lying in one constrained posture, was a mass of ulcerated and sloughing sores; my right hand was swollen enormously, and useless; and two fingers on the left hand were permanently contracted, and the joints destroyed. I also lost several front teeth” (“Position” 6). Mrs. Turner testifies that “bodily torture [was] inflicted upon her at various times” and she was confined “in small, dark rooms for as long as 15 hours, during which she was denied the offices of nature” (“Evidence” 7). The *Saturday Review* is dismayed by the existence of private asylums “where the principle of soothing patients by gentleness and indulgence has not supplanted the brutality which was formerly the recognised treatment of actual or supposed lunatics”

²⁷ See *Lloyd’s Weekly Newspaper*, November 8, 1857, p. 5 and *Glasgow Herald*, December 9, 1862, pg. 4. Other sensational headlines ranging from 1858 through 1869 include: “Commission of Lunacy.—Extraordinary Inquiry,” *Morning Post*, May 24, 1858, p. 2; “The Crime of Lunacy,” *Morning Chronicle*, August 17, 1858, p. 4; “Alleged Ill-Treatment of a Lunatic,” *Daily News*, April 8, 1861, p. 2; “Shocking Brutality By a Keeper Towards a Patient in Hanwell,” *Morning Chronicle*, Jan 2, 1862, p. 6; “Suspicious Death in a Lunatic Asylum,” *Western Mail*, November 1, 1869, p.3

(“Doctors” 104). Editorials in the *Times* and the *Era*, among others, call for the end of such abuses.²⁸

Stories of brutal beatings and other physical mistreatment are common in the 1850s and 1860s. One that Reade finds utterly appalling is the keeper’s trick of walking up and down a patient’s chest and legs on his knees. Reade explains the effect of such an action:

Every art has its secrets: the attendants in such madhouses as this have been for years possessed of one they are too modest to reveal to justices, commissioners, or the public: the art of breaking a man’s ribs, or breast-bone, or both, without bruising him externally. [. . .] Mr. Cooper and his fellows do their work with the knee-joint: it is round, and leaves no bruise. They subdue the patient by walking up and down him on their knees. If they don’t jump on him, as well as promenade him, the man’s spirit is often the only thing broken; if they do, the man is apt to be broken bodily as well as mentally. (*HC 2: 328*)

At the end of his explanation, Reade then offers specific, contemporary proof for his claim: “Thus died Mr. Sizer in 1854, and two others quite recently” (*HC 2: 328*). This is one of the three times that Reade explicitly cites an incident in the asylum section of *Hard Cash*.

The *post mortem* examination of William Sizer’s body, as reported in the *Daily News*, revealed four broken ribs on each side as well as a broken breast bone (“Inquest” 2). Significantly, the verdict of the inquest was that “William Sizer died from the effect of a serious injury he received, but how or by what means the same was inflicted, there is no evidence to prove; and the jury consider there is some mystery in the case” (“Inquest” 2). Though every witness claimed ignorance regarding Sizer’s injury, the jury recognized that something was not quite right with the testimony. Reade is certain that the key lies

²⁸ See “Madmen and Madhouses,” in the *Era*, August 29, 1858, p. 9 and “The position of a lunatic,” in the *Times*, August 19, 1858, p. 6.

in the practices of cruel keepers. The *Daily News* reports that Samuel May, an inmate at Colney Hatch County Lunatic Asylum also died of injuries sustained to the ribs. The verdict, as reported in the *Standard* in 1861, sounds eerily similar to that of Sizer's in 1854: "the deceased [. . .] died from exhaustion, accelerated by fractured ribs, but how those injuries were produced there was not sufficient evidence before [the jury] to prove" ("Alleged" 7). In another incident, also at Colney Hatch Asylum, William Swift died after eleven of his ribs and his breast bone were broken ("Alleged Manslaughter" 7). Though two other inmates testified that the keepers took Swift into a padded cell and kicked him to death, both Daniel Fletcher Tyerman²⁹ and Dr. William Tucker³⁰ assured the court that kicking was not likely the cause of death. According to the *Morning Post*, Tucker testifies, "He might have sustained severe internal injury without any external marks of violence being visible. I believe it is possible that the ribs might have been fractured without such marks; but I fancy not from kicks or blows" ("Alleged" 3). If Reade is correct and this incident is one of the "two others quite recently," Swift's death might be a result of keepers walking on him behind the closed doors of the padded cell. Even if this is not the instance to which Reade refers, however, the brutality of the keepers cannot be denied.³¹

The second allusion Reade makes to an historical event is the death of sixty-five-year-old Daniel Dolley of Surrey Lunatic Asylum. Mr. Snape, the resident surgeon, ordered the keepers to "administer a shower-bath" of thirty minutes' duration ("Grand"

²⁹ The *Daily News* describes Tyerman as "a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, and attached as medical officer to the asylum at Colney Hatch" ("Alleged Manslaughter" 7).

³⁰ According to the *Morning Post*, Dr. Tucker is "a physician, and a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, and [is] junior medical attendant on the male side at Colney Hatch" ("Alleged" 3).

³¹ Reade is certain that Swift dies as a result of being walked upon. See his article, "How Lunatics' Ribs Get Broken," *Pall Mall Gazette*, January 20, 1870 p. 6.

458). The article, “Grand Jury Powers,” informs readers that “Evidence on the part of the prosecution further proved, that no patient had ever before been kept in a shower-bath so long as thirty minutes” (“Grand” 458). Snape further instructed the keepers to give Dolley a “good dose” of antimonial emetic after he was taken out of the bath (“Grand” 458). The *Morning Chronicle* reports that Dolley was actually “kept in the bath for twenty-eight minutes, and in about fifteen or sixteen minutes after, as near as could be calculated, he was dead” (“Charge” 3). Engineers estimated that around six hundred gallons of forty-five degree water fell on Dolley’s head (“Grand” 458). Without mentioning names, Reade includes all the details of this appalling case in *Hard Cash*. The patient is “a man between sixty and seventy,” and the doctor orders

[. . .] a cold shower-bath of unparalleled duration; half an hour. To be followed by an unprecedented dose of tartar emetic. [. . .] The water was down to forty-five degrees Fahrenheit. [. . .] For eight-and-twenty mortal minutes the poor old man stood in this vertical coffin under this cold cascade. Six hundred gallons of icy water [. . .] were discharged upon his devoted head and doomed body. (*HC* 3: 81-82)

Dr. Diamond, surgeon for the female wing, assisted at the post mortem examination, and upon seeing the body exclaimed, “it was like a piece of alabaster” (“Grand” 459). Just as he did in *Never Too Late*, Reade integrates a direct quotation. He uses Diamond’s words, printing the quotation in all capital letters: “to use the words of a medical eye-witness, it was ‘A PIECE OF ALABASTER’” (*HC* 3: 82). Appalled by the cruelty and negligence of the surgeon—and the keepers who followed his orders—Reade uses this historical event to highlight the sickening abuses in the asylum.

In addition to physical abuse, keepers psychologically abuse their patients to keep them under control. Insulting their patients, treating them with indignity, dressing them in old, unfashionable clothes, and regarding them more like animals than people all fall

under this category of abuse. The commission of lunacy on Mrs. Turner reveals that “indecent language and offensive epithets [were] repeatedly applied to her by Mr. Metcalfe” (“Evidence” 7). “A Physician” addresses the psychological import of proper clothes: “Clothing is also often much neglected by their friends. [. . .] To be well dressed is a powerful provocative of self-respect—one very great *desideratum* in the moral treatment of the insane” (“Lunatic Asylums” 8). Finally, the very nature of physical and psychological abuse in its many forms necessarily leads to keepers treating their patients like animals. The *Era* observes:

The men to whose charge the helpless lunatic is confided are too often more fit to tend wild beasts than human beings. Too many of them, under a specious exterior, are heartless and depraved bullies, insensible to every dictate of pity, and callous to all appeals of respect and decency, and that as their interest prompts their cupidity impels them to make their habitations mere menageries where the last beam of intelligence and virtue is crushed out under the heel of a brutal despotism. (“Madmen” 9)

Completely disregarding the experiment at York Retreat in which Tuke had demonstrated “that the insane could be managed without what were now seen as harshness and cruelty,” these keepers continue to dehumanize and abuse asylum inmates as a matter of course (Scull, “Moral Treatment” 111).

Reade uses specific details from the material he has collected to describe the physical abuses of keepers in *Hard Cash*. In a scene that echoes that of the anonymous sufferer in the *Times*, the keepers roughly “manacled [Alfred’s] ankles together with an iron hobble, and then strapped them to the bed-posts, and fastened his body down by broad bands of ticking with leathern straps at the ends; and so left him more helpless than a swaddled infant” (*HC* 2: 286-87). In David Dodd’s first asylum, Mrs. Dodd discovers “one [patient] in a restraint chair, two hobbled like asses, two chained like dogs, and two in straight-waistcoats, and fastened to beds by webbing and straps” (*HC* 3: 81). A search

for illegal instruments of restraint at Silverton Grove House reveals “a receptacle about six inches deep, five feet long, and three broad, filled with chains, iron belts, wrist locks, muffles, and screw-locked hobbles, &c.; a regular Inquisition” (*HC* 2: 321).

Unconcerned with the physical pain and damage these instruments of restraint cause, keepers continue to constrain patients in them, whether out of cruelty, neglect, or laziness.

In addition to instruments of restraint, the keepers in *Hard Cash* physically abuse their patients. After shackling Alfred to his bed using both the handcuffs and a strait-waistcoat, the keeper, Cooper, walks up and down Alfred’s chest and legs on his knees. In the female wing, the keeperesses “tanked” their patients: “For the least offence, or out of mere wantonness, they would drag a patient stark naked across the yard, and thrust her bodily under water again and again, keeping her down till almost gone with suffocation, and dismissing her more dead than alive [. . .] to get warm again in the cold (*HC* 3: 67). Furthermore, “these keeperesses, with diabolical insolence and cruelty, would bathe twenty patients in this tank, and then make them drink that foul water for their meals” (*HC* 3: 67). The catalogue of physical abuses is horrifying, particularly because the new system of non-restraint and humane care, proven so effective by Tuke and his followers, was entirely flouted by these cruel keepers.

Though Reade devotes a significant portion of the asylum section of *Hard Cash* to physical abuse, he also incorporates a number of different psychological abuses into the narrative. Insults and coarse language are common at Silverton Grove House and Drayton House. The keeperesses “vilify [their patients] with degrading and savage names” and send them away “with obscene and insulting comments ringing in [their] ears

(*HC* 3: 66, 67). Though Reade refers specifically to the keeperesses, contemporary readers would no doubt have Mr. Metcalfe's cruel and abusive language toward Mrs. Turner in mind as they read. The keepers also treat their patients with every imaginable indignity. They make Alfred undress in front of them, Cooper cavalierly removes a patient from the dinner table with "ignominy and fracas," and the keeperesses torture and humiliate their patients with "cruelty and wild caprice" (*HC* 2: 292, 299, 3: 66). In addition, Alfred reveals that "the attendants wash [patients] too much like Hansom cabs, strip them naked, and mop them on the flag-stones, then fling on their clothes without drying them" (*HC* 2: 318). Adding to the indignities keepers heap on their patients are the ill-fitting and out-of-date clothes they must wear, which "keeps the bump of self-esteem down, especially in women, and so co-operates with many other little arrangements to perpetuate the lodger" (*HC* 2: 309). Here Reade directly echoes "A Physician's" lament about the dress of asylum patients. Through insults and indignities, the keepers dehumanize their patients, treating them more like animals than like people.³² Keepers drive patients through the asylum "like a flock of animals" and herd them into the dining room at mealtime (*HC* 2: 298). Even the name "keeper" suggests the idea of a person training or caring for an animal rather than a human being.

As he mentions in the *Memoir*, Reade wants to make people *realize* how horrible the abuses are, something they cannot do as easily when reading the long and tedious

³² Sutcliffe suggests that Reade sees a close connection between men and animals in his works, and certainly, "Reade was prone to visualize and depict human beings in terms of animal resemblances" (537). However, his analysis, that "if men are like animals, their thoughts and feelings must have a narrow range" cannot easily be reconciled with Reade's condemnation of dehumanization in *Hard Cash* (541). Sutcliffe argues that Reade has a "conception of human beings as creatures of instinct," which is, at times, a legitimate claim, but in *Hard Cash* and even in *Never Too Late*, Reade shows the problems of treating men and women like animals and praises Alfred for his just and humane treatment of those around him. In the asylum section, in particular, Reade indicates that the disparity between man and animal is great and that treating human beings as animals is mentally traumatic.

newspaper reports (C. L. Reade and Compton Reade 244). In Reade's fourth and final letter to the London presses, he writes that "some people are so stupid, they can realise nothing that they have not got in their hands, their mouths or their bellies" (R 125). Though the newspaper reports are positively cringe-worthy in their examinations of abuse, they are nothing compared to Reade's fictional account of asylum abuse. Through Alfred's experiences in three private asylums, Reade paints an overwhelming picture of horror that the newspaper commissions simply cannot.

Willful Blindness: Visiting Justices and the Commissioners of Lunacy

The Visiting Justices and Commissioners receive a great deal of attention in the press. Participants in the asylum debate of the late 1850s and early 1860s argued over whether or not (and if so, how much) the Visiting Justices and Commissioners were at fault for the present state of the private asylums. Though they were required to inspect each asylum two to four times per year, those inspections were often cursory, and as has already been discussed, rarely a surprise. The evils of the Visiting Justices and Commissioners were twofold. They often performed lazy inspections of the licensed houses, trusting appearances rather than seeking truth, and even when they discovered abuses, the penalties they meted out to proprietors and keepers were often too lenient and slow to be enforced. Some critics of the asylum system defended the inspectors—or at least, did not blame them. A leader in the *Times* declares, "We are not disposed to join in the cry against the Lunacy Commissioners. With all the energy and industry they can bring to bear upon the discharge of their most arduous duties, what can they hope to accomplish?" ("Our Impression" 6). Another *Times* journalist views the Commissioners' task as too arduous: "How can the Commissioners in Lunacy keep an eye in any effective

manner upon all these private establishments, even with the assistance of the Visiting Justices, as far as the provinces are concerned? Giving them credit for doing their very best, such superintendence as they could bestow would not be much worth” (“Letters” 8). Just one month before, however, the *Times* printed an editorial questioning the abilities of the same Lunacy Commissioners: “But do these gentlemen do their duty?” they ask. “If this were so, how could such a case as this one of Mrs. TURNER possibly have occurred? [. . .] Again, we say, what can our staff of lunacy officers be about that such an occurrence as this is possible? If it took place in one instance, why not in countless others?” (“Commission” 5). Obviously, the job of the Visiting Justices and Commissioners was a divisive topic.

Indeed, the task of the Justice and Commissioners was a demanding one. The law states that

[. . .] it is incumbent upon [the Commissioners] to inspect the whole of the premises; to see every patient; to ascertain whether any patient is under restraint, and if so, why; to inspect the orders of admission and medical certificates, and in certain cases [. . .] the licence, as well as the books required to be kept and other documents. They are also to inquire as to the [. . .] occupations or amusements of the patients; the system of treatment, and other matters. (Fry 57)

The *Further Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy* emphasizes these responsibilities in even more detail:

To ascertain that the patient is duly confined; that he has medical aid, fit attendance, and proper comforts during his confinement; that he is provided with employment and amusement; that his food is good and his place of residence healthy, clean, and well ventilated, and in good order; that he himself is not ill-treated, neglected, or improperly restrained; and, finally, that he is liberated when fit for liberation, are among the duties imposed upon the various Visitors, and, concurrently with them, upon this Commission. (61)

In light of the abuses already described above, the Justices and Commissioners can hardly be said to have succeeded. The *Era* clearly insinuates that they have failed: “Can any one doubt that, had the Commissioners performed their duty, as every monition of humanity and justice should have urged them to do, such disgraceful scenes as have been disclosed, and others hourly taking place in secret, could have happened, or at least become the rule and too often the practice?” (“Madmen” 9). And indeed, comparing the list of their responsibilities with the litany of abuses that are reported in the newspaper, the *Era*’s observation seems accurate.

The most vociferous complaint against the Visiting Justices and Commissioners is that their inspections are not nearly scrupulous or comprehensive enough. Like the Justices of *Never Too Late*, inspectors of the asylums interviewed patients in the presence of the proprietor or doctor. S.T.B. notes the proprietors’ unwillingness to leave a patient alone with a visitor, let alone with a Visiting Justice (10). Indeed, it is at this point that Reade makes his third deliberate reference to contemporary asylum abuse. Just as the newspapers are using Mrs. Turner’s experience to question the Visiting Justices’ performance, so, too, does Reade comment on this issue: “Thus, in later days, certain Commissioners of Lunacy inspecting Accommod [sic] House, extracted nothing from Mrs. Turner, but that she was happy and comfortable under the benignant sway of Metcalf [sic] the mild—there present. It was only by a miracle the public learned the truth; and miracles are rare” (*HC 2*: 314).³³ The *Era*, for this very reason, advocates for “an unrestrained communication between commissioner and patient,” without, of course, the interfering presence of the proprietor or keeper (“Madmen” 9). In addition, the Visiting

³³ Even Reade’s phrasing faintly echoes the sentiments of the papers and journals. The *Saturday Review* observes, “It is only now and then, by a happy accident, that light breaks in upon the horrible seclusion of these private mad-houses” (“Doctors” 104).

Justices take the proprietor's words and actions at face value. Though the *Further Report* explains that "it is most important to the Patients that every Proprietor and Superintendent should always be kept in expectation of a visit, and should thus be compelled to maintain his Establishment and its inmates in such a state of cleanliness and comfort, as to exempt him from the probability of censure," the inspectors rarely, if ever, surprise the proprietors (93). Thus, the inspectors perform a double disservice to asylum inmates by first giving the proprietor time to "clean up his act," and then by believing him when he claims that he has.

The Visiting Justices are obligated to make sure a patient has "proper comforts," "is provided with employment," and "not ill-treated," but numerous reports indicate that the inspectors did not usually perform these duties. Though the law states that "[l]etters written by patients to the Commissioners, or Visitors, are to be forwarded unopened; and if written to other persons, are likewise to be forwarded" (Fry 79), neither the letters of S.T.B.'s friend nor Mrs. Turner's letters were sent to the post office (10; "Not" 9). While S.T.B.'s friend had access to writing materials, Mrs. Turner "was not even permitted to have the use of pen, ink, and paper, that she might make her wretched situation known" ("Not" 9). Of course, the inspectors were not aware of these deprivations. In *Hard Cash*, Alfred's letters are intercepted, and like S.T.B.'s friend, Alfred must bribe a servant to take his letter clandestinely to the post office for him (*HC* 3: 46). Eventually, Alfred's writing utensils are also taken away (*HC* 3: 96).

Reade emphasizes the willful blindness of the inspectors through a number of examples. Though the inspectors dutifully visit the asylums, they fail to notice that the rooms and beds are filthy and full of vermin; that "the meat is tough and often putrid, the

bread stale, the butter rancid, and vegetables stinted;” that the use of instruments for restraint is excessive; and that the sincere attempt to cure patients with mental illness is utterly absent (*HC 2: 318*). They also do their inspections in the presence of the proprietors, leading Reade to fume:

[T]he mad people all declared they were very kindly treated: the reason they were so unanimous was this; they knew by experience that, if they told the truth, the justices could not at once remedy their discomforts, whereas the keepers, the very moment the justices left the house, would knock them down, beat them, shake them, strait-jacket them, and starve them: and the doctor, less merciful, would doctor them. So they shook in their shoes, and vowed they were very comfortable in Silverton Grove. (*HC 2: 313*)

Even when the Visiting Justices and Commissioners discover abuses, their sentences are lenient, and they cannot always be enforced right away. Thus, the *Times* reports that the Commissioners grant an abusive proprietor “a licence provisionally for the limited period of four months only, and that the renewal will depend upon the condition and management of his establishment being entirely satisfactory in the meantime” (“Position” 6). Reade uses this example with Mr. Baker at Silverton Grove House. After the inspectors discover the myriad abuses occurring in the asylum, Reade writes that “the upshot was they reprimanded Baker and the attendants severely, and told him his licence should never be renewed, unless at their next visit the whole asylum was reformed” (*HC 2: 322*). Despite the fact that the inspectors of Silverton Grove House discover Baker has broken almost every law written for a licensed house, they are content to simply reprimand him.

To be sure, some critics exonerated the Visiting Justices and Commissioners, pointing to the surfeit of asylums and the multitude of cruelties that occur in most private asylums as excuses for their ineptitude. However, most detractors roundly condemned

the inspectors for their willful blindness to the atrocities being enacted in the private asylums every day. Allowing themselves to be led through the asylum by the proprietor, refusing to listen sympathetically to patients who had complaints, content with a surface examination of beds, food, and living conditions, and satisfied with the absence of instruments of restraint *in plain sight*, the Visiting Justices and Commissioners in no way satisfied the requirement of their duties. Reade had no patience for the blindness of the inspectors and denounces their credulous incompetence.

The Argument Continued: Asylum Abuse and Intertextuality

Hard Cash, written at the end of the second lunacy panic, incorporates numerous contemporary sources from newspapers and journals. Strident criticisms of mad-doctors, private asylum proprietors, cruel keepers, and muddleheaded inspectors pervaded British culture. Mr. Sizer's broken ribs, Mr. Dolley's tragic shower-bath death, Mrs. Turner's wrongful imprisonment and cruel treatment, and Mr. Fletcher's improper confinement and sensational escape added fuel to the fire and enflamed the indignation of a paranoid public. Reade integrates both the general buzz surrounding the abuses in private asylums and the specific, sensational cases that caused so much debate. Just like Reade's other matter-of-fact romances, however, the issues raised in *Hard Cash* continued to be of great importance long after the lunacy panic faded. In this section, I look at four aspects of intertextuality. First, Reade's use of sources to help the reader remain close to the text; second, his continuation of the asylum discussion in the triple-decker publication of *Hard Cash*; third, his addition of sources in a letter to the Toronto *Daily Globe* dated October 1871; and finally, with a view towards Reade's use of romance, his reinvention of the asylum issue through a series of different texts.

In *Hard Cash*, Reade incorporates a large number of sources but does so subtly.³⁴ He does not stick to one medium for his sources, nor does he express loyalty to a solitary paper or journal. Rather, the asylum section of *Hard Cash* is built on the pervading ideas of mid-century England. Talk of private and public asylums was in the air; the atrocities that took place at Acomb House, Hanwell, and Colney Hatch and proposals for reform were topics of conversation as critics attempted to assign blame and make improvements. Reade adopts incidents, examples of abuse, and general sentiments about the asylum situation and broadly assimilates them into his novel. He argues that doctors are incompetent, proprietors are pawnbrokers, and keepers are cruel, and then provides a profusion of examples to support his claims. But just when a reader comes to the conclusion that Reade's novel is simply a string of exaggerations—after all, his sources for this matter-of-fact romance are not as transparent as those for *Never Too Late*—the reader is confronted head on with matters of fact: Mr. Sizer died after his ribs were mysteriously broken; Mr. Dolley died after being subjected to a mercilessly long shower-bath; Mrs. Turner was treated cruelly, and Fletcher falsely imprisoned. Like staccato

³⁴ Although his sources are used more generally to provide a foundation for the asylum section of *Hard Cash*, Reade clearly identifies his sources in his preface. His most explicit definition of the matter-of-fact romance, Reade emphasizes that *Hard Cash* is, without a doubt, based on fact.

“HARD CASH” [. . .] is a matter-of-fact Romance; that is, a fiction built on truths: and these truths have been gathered by long, severe, systematic, labor, from a multitude of volumes, pamphlets, journals, reports, blue-books, manuscript narratives, letters, and living people, whom I have sought out, examined and cross-examined, to get at the truth on each main topic I have striven to handle.

The madhouse scenes have been picked out by certain disinterested gentlemen who keep private asylums, and periodicals to puff them; and have been met with bold denials of public facts and with timid personalities, and a little easy cant about Sensation Novelists. But in reality those passages have been written on the same system as the nautical, legal, and other scenes. The best evidence has been ransacked; and a large portion of this evidence I shall be happy to show at my house to any brother writer who is disinterested, and really cares enough for truth and humanity to walk or ride a mile in pursuit of them.

Meantime I will append to this work the challenge flung down to me in the “Daily News” by the proprietor of a private asylum; with my reply in the same respectable journal. (*HC* iii-iv)

notes, these distinct and startling incidents powerfully underscore Reade's argument and encourage the reader to reengage with the text—a text that continually demonstrates its own veracity. Reade discourages the reader from surfacing from the story or distancing him/herself from the abuses he catalogues.³⁵

Another facet of intertextuality present in *Hard Cash* is Reade's choice to publish letters, replies, articles, and citations with his novel in an index.³⁶ Thus, even on a first reading, a reader encounters a new hoard of sources just as the novel ends. In essence, Reade provides a "For Further Reading" section, referring the reader to helpful articles, responding to an impertinent letter from an asylum proprietor, and perhaps most interesting of all, requesting even more information about asylums:

I request all those persons in various ranks of life,—who by letter or *vivâ voce* have during the last five years told me of sane persons incarcerated or detained in private asylums, and of other abuses—to communicate with me by letter. I also invite fresh communications: and desire it to be known that this great question did not begin with me in the pages of a novel; neither shall it end there: for, where Justice and Humanity are both concerned, there—*Dicit sans faict À Dieu deplait.* (*HC* 3: 369)

Reade appeals to his readers for a reciprocal intertextuality. He has provided a profusion of facts in the text and has included even more in the appendix. He asks that his readers supply him with sources in return. In addition, Reade makes his position within the web of intertextuality explicit: *Hard Cash* sits at the center as facts radiate outward in all

³⁵ The intertextuality of Reade's works can be illustrated by the judgment of two reviewers. The first, from the *London Review*, writes, "We believe that his virtuous indignation is wasted upon a state of things which has long been done away with in this country; and that, with the governmental supervision of all asylums, both public and private, and with the regulations which are not stringently enforced, there is no possibility of the habitual practice of such abuses as he describes. [. . .] He does not vouch for the incidents which it relates; nor do we believe that he can prove them to have really taken place, even in isolated cases, at any period within the memory of this generation" ("Hard Cash" 45). In an assertion directly opposed, the *Spectator* reviewer asserts, "Mr. Reade affirms that every detail he has given can be proved, and, indeed, that he has sufficient evidence in his own hands; and we can well believe him" ("Hard Cash" 2920). This ongoing debate, continually inviting the reader to reengage in the discourse of asylum abuse, first with the text and then with the evidence, is part of what makes Reade's matter-of-fact romance unique.

³⁶ See chapter two of this work, p. 59 for a further discussion of *Hard Cash* and intertextuality.

directions. Even after the final words were penned, Reade knew his work was not finished. He envisioned his matter-of-fact romance interacting with other texts, informing new ideas, and generating innumerable new discussions about asylums and the treatment of insanity.

A third aspect of intertextuality occurs when Reade responds to the letter of an anonymous critic in October 1871. The letter, written to the Toronto *Daily Globe*, is “headed ‘A Terrible Temptation,’ yet mainly devoted to reviving stale misrepresentations of [his] older works” (R 279). This “anonymuncle” accuses Reade of “paint[ing] all asylums as abodes of cruelty” (R 290). Reade altogether denies this claim, insisting that “the whole [depiction of asylums] rested on a mass of *legal evidence*—Bluebooks, pamphlets, newspapers, private letters, diaries of alleged lunatics, reports of tried cases” (R 290). Interestingly this letter, written eight years after the publication of *Hard Cash*, includes an even more varied list of sources than did the preface to the novel. But Reade is just getting started. Far from simply inventorying the *types* of sources he compiled for writing the novel, Reade takes this opportunity to cite new *facts* as well; his appeal to readers, included in the index of *Hard Cash*, has evidently worked, “for fresh evidence has poured in, both public and private” (R 291). Reade then goes on to list a number of new improper confinement cases³⁷ as well as new cases of physical abuse in the asylum, particularly with regard to breaking patients’ ribs,³⁸ and he also references a letter he

³⁷ See “A Manx Gentleman Kidnapped,” *Leeds Mercury*, August 29, 1871, p. 6 for more information on Reade’s reference to the “Manx drunkard” who was tricked into an asylum (R 291). See “False Imprisonment in an Asylum,” *Glasgow Herald*, December 9-11, 1862, pp. 4, 7, 2 for more information on Reade’s reference to the sensational case of Hall v. Semple whereby Hall was committed to an asylum on the faulty certificate of Dr. Semple.

³⁸ See “Suspicious Death in a Lunatic Asylum,” *Western Mail*, November 1, 1869, p. 3 and “The death of another patient,” *Times*, April 5, 1870, p. 9 for more information about two of the three cases of broken ribs at Hanwell Asylum that Reade references in his letter. “The doctor,” Reade writes, “has told

wrote to the *Pall Mall Gazette* about this very subject.³⁹ This letter, he claims, provided information which helped indict two keepers for killing a patient by walking on him at Lancaster Asylum.⁴⁰ Through this letter to the *Globe* (which also contains facts and sources on a number of his other novels), Reade perpetuates intertextuality, directing readers to new sources while revising old ones.

Adding another layer of intertextuality, Reade initially sent his response to the *Daily Globe* in 1871, but it was suppressed. He finally publishes it in *Readiana* in 1882. The purpose of the volume, according to the preface, is to print his “personal convictions on various subjects” (*R iii*). Thus, Reade’s letter, originally a simple response to an anonymous critic, becomes a testament to and an example of his “honest and lasting convictions” (*R iii*). Through this letter, Reade continues to weave his web of intertextuality, and once the reader becomes interested, the abuses of the asylum are difficult to forget. With references to historical events and people, print sources, and yet another request to continue bringing new information to Reade, the potential for new facts is nearly endless.

One final aspect of intertextuality must be addressed here. Reade’s research and writing on asylums undergoes several significant transformations over the course of his career. The sources that he acquires are woven into other sources, and those sources are

the coroner that the science he professes does not enable him to say positively that all these ribs were not broken by the man slipping down in a room; and I say that, if medicine was a science, it would possess the statistics of falls; which statistics are at present confined to my notebooks, and these reveal, that in mere tumbles, men break the projecting bones before they break the ribs” (*R 291-92*).

³⁹ See “How Lunatics’ Ribs Get Broken,” *Pall Mall Gazette*, January 20, 1870, p. 6.

⁴⁰ See “The Manslaughter Case at the Lancaster Lunatic Asylum,” *Lancaster Gazette*, March 5, 1870, p. 4. Again, Reade applies facts to the case: “The doctors puzzled a bit over his broken ribs, and conjectured that nine ribs were broken by pressure on the breast-bone; which is simply idiotic [. . .] For once, thank God, we nailed these miscreants, and they got seven years’ penal servitude” (*R 292*).

woven into still more. By the publication of *Hard Cash*, Reade's asylum sources alone had undergone at least three transformations. As he mentions in his preface to *Hard Cash* and in his suppressed letter to the *Daily Globe*, Reade began his work with a "mass" of documentary evidence. He met Fletcher while he was still collecting evidence, and their relationship added a new dimension to his research. The first incarnation of the asylum information, then, was the evidence that Reade had to assimilate in some meaningful way. When Fletcher's enemies continued to postpone his trial by underhanded methods, Reade was compelled to write a series of letters to the London presses asking them to help him shine a light into the darkness of a corrupt court system. As I have already mentioned, those letters detail Fletcher's history and his thwarted attempts to defend his sanity in court. The letters succeeded, Fletcher got his trial, and Reade got another inquest report to add to his mass of sources. From the letters and the inquiry, Reade created the matter-of-fact romance, *Hard Cash*. In many ways, this reinvention of Reade's asylum sources leads the reader back to the primary discussion on intertextuality concerning the ways that he integrates his sources. However, it also leads the reader forward to a discussion about the ways that Reade uses romance in *Hard Cash*.

Romance in the Asylums: Reade's Purpose for Hard Cash

Though much of the romance of *Hard Cash* is outside the bounds of the asylum section, there are still elements of romance present.⁴¹ First and foremost, Reade incorporates romance simply by once more revising his asylums sources for the purposes

⁴¹ Much of the romance of *Hard Cash* comes from the first section of the novel in which Reade narrates Captain David Dodd's trip home aboard the *Agra*. Dodd is returning home with his children's £14,000 inheritance. Reade recounts the numerous adventures that Dodd—and his hard cash—meet on the way. He encounters storms, a pirate fight, thieves and murderers, a shipwreck, a mainland attack, the loss and rediscovery of the money, a number of wonderfully wrought characters, including the American renaissance man named Joshua Fullalove and the exasperating-turned-compliant Mrs. Beresford.

of his fictional story. Indeed, the intertextual nature of Reade's sources as they evolve from one form to another is fascinating. A hodgepodge of facts becomes a plea for justice, which in turn, becomes a harrowing tale of entrapment. The second iteration of these sources, in which Reade transforms loosely related facts into a series of current-event letters to the press, provides the basis for a discussion about romance in the asylum section.

Reade's letters to the press were intended to publicly shame the defendants of *Fletcher v. Fletcher* for evading court dates and delaying the trial. At the same time, Reade used this series of letters as a major platform from which to publicize Fletcher's wrongs and to draw attention to the abuses of private asylums. Reade's success in procuring a fair and public trial for Fletcher is a tribute to his passion for justice, his knowledge of the law, and his foundation of asylum facts.

It is something of a paradox, however, that Reade has such faith in the publicity and efficacy of the press. Over the course of his life, he wrote an inordinate number of letters to the editor, responses to critiques, and pleas for change. And obviously, the letters he wrote on behalf of Fletcher fall into these categories. At the same time, Reade's fiction is full of direct addresses to the reader that underscore his belief that newspapers do not have the same power as fiction. "These statistics," Reade writes, "have been long before the world, and are dead figures to the Skimmer of things, but tell a dark tale to the Reader of things" (*HC* 3: 73). Reports, inquiries, editorials, leaders, and letters cannot make a reader understand, truly *feel*, the import of a situation in the same way that fiction can. Thus, though Reade writes letters and effects much change through them, it is vital to understand that Reade does not believe that fact alone can profoundly

and unalterably change a person. Only through the combination of fact and fiction, where fact lays the foundation and fiction lures the reader in and hooks him/her, can radical transformation occur.

The very nature, then, of Reade's intentional revision of a mass of facts into a coherent and vigorous petition on behalf of a wrongfully imprisoned man and then *again* into a powerful exposé on the abuses that pervade the private asylums is in itself a romance—a continual retelling of a story with increasing elements of fiction. In *Trade Malice*, Reade writes, "To sum up—Fiction is the art of weaving fact with invention (56). In its third iteration, Reade infuses his collection of heterogeneous facts with elements of romance, transforming them from a series of letters about an unfamiliar man, to a tale that personally affects each one of his readers. Reade warns: "Pray think of it for yourselves, men and women, if you have not sworn never to think over a novel. Think of it for your own sakes; Alfred's turn to-day, it may be yours to-morrow" (*HC 2*: 289). Reade incorporates romance elements into the novel which are lacking in his series of letters on behalf of Fletcher, and as a result, invites the reader to become a character in the drama. Gillian Beer contends that romance "depends considerably upon a certain set *distance* in the relationship between its audience and its subject-matter" (5), but Reade employs romance to do the exact opposite. Reade collapses the distance between the reader and the text, declaring ominously that the reader could just as easily be in Alfred's place—and someday might be. Through Reade's decision to restate the facts of asylum abuse in a fictional environment, he gathers together elements of romance and implements them into the story, creating a matter-of-fact romance, which perfectly

balances fact to emphasize truth, and fiction to engage the reader and keep him/her in close contact with the text.

Though I address only a small portion of the novel, romance can still be identified in the asylum section. In fact, Reade uses fairly typical romance tropes in the asylum section of *Hard Cash*. Northrop Frye writes, “The corresponding pattern in romance is the story of the hero who goes through a series of adventures and combats in which he always wins” (*Secular* 67). Generally, this description is true of Alfred’s experience. Lured away and entrapped in an asylum on his wedding day, he must employ all his intellect and will to try to effect his escape and return to the woman he loves. Eventually Alfred does succeed in escaping and is finally reunited with Julia. Throughout, Alfred encounters cruel proprietors and keepers, incompetent and arrogant doctors, and a host of patients, some of whom he befriends. His adventures are, on the whole, unpleasant ones, but he remains indomitable in his resolution to escape.

Part of the romance of the asylum section, therefore, is in getting the reader interested in the story. Reade weaves a fictional tale that makes the reader shudder with horror on Alfred’s behalf, pine with Julia for Alfred’s return, and inveigh against the ruthlessness of Alfred’s father. The reader is completely invested in Alfred’s experiences, and “all the reader’s values are bound up with the hero” (Frye, *Anatomy* 187). This is a fundamental quality of romance—a story that thrills the reader so much so that he/she cannot bear to stop reading.

The asylum section of *Hard Cash* also provides a second major romance trope. Frye suggests that the “complete form of the romance is clearly the successful quest, and such a completed form has three main stages” (*Anatomy* 186, 187). This is especially

clear in the asylum section of *Hard Cash*. Alfred is committed to three different asylums. Though Reade uses the three asylums to highlight different kinds of abuses perpetrated by different participants in the asylum, that Alfred must navigate three asylums is unquestionably bound up with the tropes of romance. In addition, Alfred is thrice interviewed by the Visiting Justices or Commissioners without any positive result. Further, he fails to escape three times—once from each asylum. Reade’s many uses of the number three in the asylums section help to emphasize Alfred’s experience as romance.

However typical Reade’s portrayal of romance might be through Alfred, it is worth noting that Alfred is, in many ways, more complex than Francis Eden of *Never Too Late*. Though both novels are concerned with institutional abuse, Reade depicts Eden and Alfred in different ways. As I discuss in chapter three, Eden is an almost mythic character, a saint, who undermines the brutality of the demonic Hawes. According to Frye, “the nearer romance is to myth, the more attributes of divinity will cling to the hero and the more the enemy will take on demonic mythical qualities” (*Anatomy* 187). In *Hard Cash*, Reade moderates the romance trope, withdrawing from the almost mythical nature of *Never Too Late*, to a more restrained narrative. As a result, Alfred is a far more moderate—and in many ways, a more believable—character. Like Eden, Alfred possesses intelligence and compassion, but Alfred does not enter the asylum willingly, and he fervently desires to escape. He has not come to right the wrongs of the patients and expose the abuses of the keepers and proprietors. In fact, Alfred is not at all interested in the other inmates of the asylum upon his arrival and actually requests to eat dinner with Mrs. Archbold rather than associate with the patients (*HC* 2: 298). Alfred is

not a saint. He fights with his keepers, he breaks every rule he can to try to escape, and the motivations for all his actions are driven by thoughts of himself and Julia rather than for the other patients in the asylum. Nevertheless, as Alfred is forced to admit that his time in the asylum might be protracted, he meets and befriends several of the more “moderate patients” whom he helps in small difficulties (*HC* 3: 65). Unlike Eden who must actively seek the experiences of his parishioners, Alfred is unwillingly subjected to the same treatments as the other patients. The results, however, are the same. Both discover the abuses in their respective institutions and, willingly or unwillingly, must heroically expose and eradicate them.

Although the romance of the asylum section is fairly typical, the subversion of genre occurs when one looks at the novel as a whole. As I mentioned in chapter two, Reade’s novels do not have a single hero. In *Hard Cash*, Captain David Dodd is undoubtedly the hero of the first part of the novel as he sails the *Agra* home amidst a number of adventures and potential dangers. Alfred is the uncontested hero of the asylum section. However, once Alfred has been consigned to the asylum, Edward Dodd emerges as a third hero of the novel. It is Edward who steps up and takes responsibility for his mother and sister, makes the decisions of the household, and heroically keeps the family together when financial difficulties threaten to tear them apart. Finally, Edward heroically rescues a man from a fire and becomes a firefighter thereafter (*HC* 3: 23-24). In the climactic scene of the novel, a fire breaks out in Drayton House Asylum, and Alfred and Mr. Dodd are trapped on the third floor. Edward’s dangerous and daring efforts at last result in their rescue. And so, just like in *Never Too Late*, Reade offers multiple heroes—each of whom is likeable, deserving, and necessary to the story. By

dividing a reader's loyalties between multiple heroes and by giving each hero a "series of adventures" in which to triumph, Reade subverts the major tenets of romanticism, creating instead a matter-of-fact romance.

Subversions of Power in the Asylum: Alfred Hardie as Matter-of-Fact Hero

Just as in *Never Too Late*, Reade saw a problem with abuses in the asylum and set out to expose them. Certainly, he was not alone. As has been demonstrated, abuse in the private asylums was a hot topic at the end of the 1850s and early 1860s, and many were desirous of providing a safer place for the patients who could not defend themselves against cruelty. Although Tuke's system of non-restraint and humane care had been widely adopted, many asylums either had not implemented these principals or had slipped back into old practices through a combination of greed, laziness, and ineptitude. Also, some in the public asylums argued that the sheer number of inmates made Tuke's system impractical. Nevertheless, Scull shows that Tuke's system, regardless of size or cure rate, provided the definition for success: "the response of the asylum superintendents on both sides of the Atlantic was gradually to redefine success in more limited terms: comfort, cleanliness, and freedom from the more obvious forms of physical mistreatment, rather than the often unattainable goal of cure" ("Social History" 14). By the mid-nineteenth century, abuses such as those Reade writes about in *Hard Cash*—and that were being reported in the news every day—were unacceptable; Reade's Silverton Grove House and Drayton House failed in every particular to meet with the now widely held definition of success.

Throughout the asylum section of *Hard Cash*, Alfred challenges abuses in the asylums where he is imprisoned. He successfully subverts the power of cruel keepers

and proprietors by adopting an attitude of compassion and humanity for the poor patients surrounding him. He refuses to embrace the practice of dehumanization which he sees being performed all around him by the keepers, the doctors, and the proprietor. Instead, he inadvertently puts the guiding principles of Tuke's system into practice. In so doing, Alfred is able to use the power of the keepers and proprietors to protect those they would normally abuse. Though considered insane, Alfred's actions transform him into an authority figure in the asylum. As with Francis Eden in *Never Too Late*, many critics believe Reade's characterization of Alfred borders on naïve impracticality. Alfred, they argue, is simply Reade's "Resourceful Hero" at work in yet another novel on social wrongs.⁴² While Alfred is certainly heroic, his actions have a firm foundation in asylum practices and theories of the nineteenth century. Through Alfred, Reade demonstrates that a system of compassion, empathy, and humane treatment always undermines the more primitive treatment of the insane that reigned prior to the middle of the eighteenth century.

Alfred earns his place as an authority figure in all three asylums because he refuses to adopt the predominating asylum practice of dehumanizing patients. Despite the fact that he is trapped in an asylum by the cruel machinations of his father, he expresses genuine compassion for those truly insane patients surrounding him. Though Alfred's own situation fills him with horror, he smiles "kindly but sadly" on the other patients (*HC 2*: 294). In an effort to retain his sanity after arriving at his third asylum, Drayton House, Alfred forces himself to focus on those around him rather than his own appalling situation. Reade writes that "he invited the confidences of the quieter mad

⁴² See W. L. Courtney, *Studies, New and Old*, pp. 160-61, C. H. Muller, "Charles Reade's 'Hard Cash,'" p. 12, and Wayne Burns, *Charles Reade*, 53, 162 in particular.

people, and established a little court, and heard their grievances, and by impartial decisions and good humour won the regard of the moderate patients and of the attendants, all but three” (*HC* 3: 65). Though Alfred does not have the power to shackle inmates, his sanity puts him, in some ways, on the same level as the keepers. By choosing to treat patients kindly rather than cruelly, Alfred gains their trust and undermines the authority of the keepers.

Writing to the *Times*, “a Physician” describes the duties of the medical superintendent of the private asylum. He

[. . .] is the intimate friend and companion of his patients, joining them in their meals, their recreations, amusements, and employments, entering into familiar conversation with them, and so constantly with them that he becomes acquainted with their inmost thoughts and feelings, witnesses their almost every action, and makes himself so thoroughly master of their characters and dispositions that, if a man of tact and superior intellect, he soon acquires great moral influence over them. (“Lunatic Asylums” 8)

The description “a Physician” gives describes no one better than Alfred. Neither the Silverton Grove House nor the Drayton House doctors live in residence. The proprietors are greedy, heartless men who never interact with patients, and the keepers have been brutalized by their own ongoing brutal treatment of patients.⁴³ Alfred adopts the duties of the doctor, thus stepping into a role of authority, and just as “a Physician” predicts, Alfred soon acquired great moral influence over his little “court.”

Alfred’s humanity is present in his treatment of the proprietors and keepers as well. Though he cannot win the esteem of Baker or Wolf, Dr. Wycherley adopts Alfred as his “pet maniac” and helps him to study for his exams at Oxford (*HC* 3: 37). He is

⁴³ Foucault accounts for this brutalization by arguing that the keeper cannot have any relationship with the patient: “The asylum [. . .] organized that guilt [. . .] as a non-reciprocal relation to the keeper; it organized it for the man of reason as an awareness of the Other” (*Madness* 247). By the very nature of making a madman accountable for his madness, Foucault argues, he becomes different and relationally inaccessible to the keeper whose job it is to impose moral responsibility.

respectful to the head matron, Mrs. Archbold, and he defends his keeper, Cooper, after he walks on Alfred's chest and legs by pointing out that "The fault lies with those villains Baker and Bailey. Cooper is only a servant you know, and obeys orders" (*HC* 2: 331-32).⁴⁴ His actions raise him in the esteem of not only the patients but the keepers as well. Reade writes, "And so it was, that justice handcuffed, strait-jacketed, blistered, and impartial, sent from its bed of torture a beam through Cooper's tough hide to his inner heart" (*HC* 2: 333). For the remainder of his time at Silverton Grove House, Cooper is loyal to Alfred because of his empathetic defense. Indeed, Alfred's empathy and integrity radically alter his relationship, not just with Cooper but with almost all his keepers.

Alfred's interactions with and subsequent treatment of others is a serious subversion of power within the asylum. To successfully equalize a relationship in an environment where one person must of necessity hold power over another immediately breaks down that power structure. For Alfred and his keepers to come to an understanding is impressive, but for Dr. Wycherley, the very proprietor of the asylum, to treat Alfred as an equal and friend, eliminates power altogether. The same can be said for Alfred's relationship with Mrs. Archbold. That the head keeperess listens ardently to all that Alfred says and takes her hints from him in the management of the asylum gives Alfred power even as he undermines hers. His refusal to dehumanize those with whom

⁴⁴ Muller has argued that "this lucid algebraic argumentation is clearly out of place; it is designed to elicit the reader's sympathy and respect for the Resourceful Hero, and to do so Reade has forced his material in order to fit an argument into the novel which was conceived long before the situation was realised" ("Hard Cash" "Hard" 12). Muller's argument here is erroneous. Alfred, from first to last, is the reasonable, justice-loving Oxford man. When Alfred takes himself out of the boat race at the beginning of *Hard Cash*, he offers a similar display of reason, despite his debilitating headache, to those questioning his decision not to row (*HC* 1: 34-35). Again, in Dr. Wycherley's asylum, Alfred engages in a battle of intelligence with Dr. Wycherley, even though he is fighting against the despair of ever escaping the asylum. Alfred's character is consistent throughout the novel; in spite of distressing and painful circumstances, he retains his love of justice and never hesitates to demonstrate his superior reason.

he comes into contact serves to underscore the theory of humane asylum practices while demonstrating the complete inefficacy of a system based on cruelty and abuse of power.

Because Alfred approaches everyone with a degree of respect rather than brutality, he is able to use the power of asylum authorities to protect abused inmates. When he discovers the merciless abuses being enacted on the female patients, he is outraged at the cruelty exhibited, and “seized the only chance of redress; he ran panting with indignation to Mrs. Archbold” (*HC* 3: 67-68). Because Alfred has cultivated a attitude of respect toward Mrs. Archbold, she is willing to consent to his petitions on behalf of the other patients. In this case, she immediately takes steps to stop the brutality occurring within the female ward. Though she does not care at all for the patients, at Alfred’s request she reinstates order and justice in the female wing. Undoubtedly, Mrs. Archbold acts kindly to the female patients because she is in love with Alfred—indeed her love for a maniac is a subversion in itself—but her feelings for Alfred do not affect the amount of power she wields in the asylum. The point is, she is head keeperess, the power is hers to exercise, and she makes the final decision. Alfred must ask her to interfere in the female wing, but ultimately, the decision to protect is her own.

Though Alfred uses the power of the asylum authorities effectively, he also appeals to the higher authority of the Visiting Justices and Commissioners on a number of occasions, both on the behalf of his fellow patients and of himself. At Silverton Grove House, he reveals the instruments of torture and restraint hidden so hurriedly. After this, the inspector realizes that he has not seen the true state of the asylum, and the Justices “went now upon the true method, in which all these dark places ought to be inspected. They did not believe a word; they suspected everything; they examined patients apart,

detected cruelty filth and vermin under philanthropic phrases and clean linen” (*HC 2*: 322). At Drayton House, Alfred encounters a doddering old Justice alone in the courtyard who believes Alfred is a sane keeper. Alfred is able to make a note in Dr. Terry’s notebook to the effect that Alfred’s case should be looked into. Thus, Alfred is twice able to manipulate the power of a higher authority when the local asylum authority cannot work on behalf of himself or the other patients.

Incredibly, however, Alfred does not simply use the power of others for good, but he *becomes* an authority figure in the asylum. He is considered by all to be “the new redresser of grievances” (*HC 3*: 67). As a result, Nurse Eliza comes to Alfred (rather than her supervisor, the doctor, or the proprietor) with news of the cruelties in the female ward. Though he is confined in the asylum as a certified lunatic, Eliza views Alfred as an authority figure with the power to right wrongs. Even more astonishing, Mrs. Archbold acknowledges Alfred’s authority and requests that he come to her when he observes abuses so that she can “be the agent of [his] humanity” (*HC 3*: 71). And Reade writes that when Alfred “let too long elapse without appealing to her, she would ask his advice about the welfare of this or that patient” in the asylum (*HC 3*: 71). Though she does this to connect herself more closely to Alfred, she relinquishes her power to Alfred and is content to be the enforcer of his authority in the asylum. Alfred’s humanity infiltrates the asylum, and as he continues to treat everyone with respect, deference, and solicitude, he subverts the dehumanizing forces at work around him.

Alfred’s adoption of the weak-minded but not insane Francis Beverly is another demonstration of Alfred’s authority within the asylum. He soon discovers that Beverly is not insane “and to everybody’s amazement, especially Frank’s, remonstrated gently but

resolutely and eloquently, and soon convinced the majority, sane and insane, that a creature so meek and useful merited especial kindness, not cruelty” (*HC 3: 76*). Reade points out that one keeper in particular “was a warm convert to this view,” revealing once again Alfred’s power to sway opinions and stand out as an authority figure in the asylum (*HC 3: 76*). Even two keepers that Alfred cannot befriend are afraid of his influence and “did not care to defy [the changed tide of opinion] openly” (*HC 3: 76*). Although Alfred is a *certified maniac*, even the two vilest keepers in Drayton House are afraid of overstepping his authority within the asylum.

Further highlighting his power over the employees in the asylum are Alfred’s attempts to bribe his keepers and nurses. Although they have the upper hand and can easily convince the Visiting Justices of a sane man’s insanity, most defer to the power of money above all. Alfred discovers this truth early and takes advantage. By offering money to the authority figures in the asylum, Alfred effectually becomes an authority figure himself. His bribes serve to elevate him to a place of power; those who are in a position to control Alfred are now being controlled by Alfred’s will. His money gives him power as it diminishes the authority of those above him.

The authority of the asylum, despite its best efforts cannot keep the sane man within its clutches. His tenacity of purpose, his ingenuity, and his determination enable him to fight through horror, depression, and crushing defeat. His humane treatment of the asylum patients and his respectful treatment of the asylum staff make his subversions of authority possible. Alfred becomes an authority within the asylum, meting out justice, protecting the unprotected, and uncovering the wrongs that have been concealed from the visiting justices. Through bribes, undaunted fortitude, and strength of purpose, Alfred

finally subverts authority by escaping a power that should be inescapable. Reade highlights the horrors of the asylum and underscores the ways in which these horrors must be eradicated. His depiction of the subversion of power within the institution effectively showcases the weakness of the contemporary asylum and demonstrates instead right action and appropriate treatment.

Richard Fantina commends Reade for his emphasis on the need for humane treatment in the asylum: “his work serves a compelling social purpose by identifying and challenging the dehumanizing characteristics of these institutions” (51). Certainly, Reade’s efforts to find and expose contemporary asylum abuse cannot be overstated. His tireless search for and assimilation of sources in *Hard Cash* provide a powerful foundation of appalling facts on which to base his story. But Reade’s work serves more than just a social purpose; through it, he demonstrates his mastery of the matter-of-fact romance genre.

Incorporating his facts far more subtly than in *Never Too Late*, Reade nevertheless makes them just transparent enough that his readers, drawn into the story, must acknowledge that they are reading contemporary fact—that the abuses in the asylums in *Hard Cash* are the abuses in the asylums in York and in London and in Lancaster and in Liverpool. Reade accurately describes the charade that critics of the private asylums had been attacking for years. Through his fictional account in which the reader is bound up in whether Alfred will regain his liberty or not, the abuses committed in the asylum produce a visceral and negative reaction from the reader. At the same time, Reade creates a world of romance, thrilling to the reader, in which the hero must overcome insurmountable odds in order to return to his lost love. This combination of

romantic incident in a contemporary, factual setting makes *Hard Cash* a compelling story in which Reade subverts traditionally held concepts of asylum control and advocates for a return to and a reevaluation of Tuke's humane treatment of patients for the mid-Victorian asylum.

Considering Foucault's negative interpretation of Tuke's system in *Madness and Civilization*, my conclusion might pose a problem for some readers. Foucault claims that the "legends of Pinel and Tuke transmit mythical values, which nineteenth-century psychiatry would accept as obvious in nature" (*Madness* 243). Whether or not Tuke's Retreat is a legend with mythical values is not directly relevant to my argument. Admittedly, Tuke's vision for the York retreat proved to be impractical by the mid-nineteenth century. Nevertheless, it is rather a reevaluation that Reade calls for—understanding the principles behind Tuke's system and implementing them in new, more effective ways. Foucault suggests that "Madness is childhood," meaning the "insane are transformed into minors" (*Madness* 252). This is not Alfred's approach in his interactions with other patients. Rather, as I point out in my analysis, Alfred treats everyone with respect, from the proprietor to the patient who sits next to him at dinner. Reade recognized the difficulties inherent in the management of an effective asylum; it would have been impossible not to with the vocal debate that permeated the British journals in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Nevertheless, he believes—and rightly, as Tuke demonstrated at York—that cruelty, brutality, restraint, torture, and myriad other abuses will not cure a patient. Through Alfred, Reade argues that compassion and a humane approach are a necessary place to start.

CHAPTER FIVE

Women and the Matter-of-Fact Romance: Subversions of Victorian Propriety in *The Wandering Heir* and *Singleheart and Doubleface*

Oh! 'twill be sweet to have my freedom, and not to be checked at every word, because I am a she.

(71)

But her love remained as invincible as his vice.

(27)

In my previous two chapters, I weighted my analysis of Reade's matter-of-fact romances toward the matter-of-fact. I discussed Reade's use of romance, but my primary focus was on Reade's transparent incorporation of fact as he sought to provide a solution for the problem of abuse in mid-Victorian institutions. In this chapter, I wish to rebalance the scales, so to speak, by emphasizing the ways in which Reade employs romance in his matter-of-fact romance, particularly with regard to his treatment of women. Beginning with a broad overview of Reade's use of general facts—inevitably the foundation of his new genre—I then turn to Reade's use of romance in two of his lesser-known novels, *The Wandering Heir* and *Singleheart and Doubleface*. Next, I analyze Reade's incorporation of intertextuality, particularly as it relates to the ongoing debate about women's rights and the role of women in society. Finally, I trace the transformation of Reade's matter-of-fact romance heroines from his earliest matter-of-fact romance to his final one. Throughout, I argue that Reade uses the matter-of-fact romance genre to subvert widely held Victorian proprieties concerning the perception of women and their conventional roles in society.

Because *The Wandering Heir* and *Singleheart and Doubleface* contain unorthodox heroines, I have chosen to combine my analysis of Reade's treatment of these women into one chapter. In *The Wandering Heir* Reade relates the history of the eighteenth-century personage, James Annesley, who was cheated out of his inheritance and sent to America as an indentured servant. At the same time, Joanna Philippa Chester¹ is raised by her uncle in England but flees after her cousin proposes to her and she rejects him. She travels to London, purchases a suit of sailor's clothes, indentures herself as a servant and book-keeper, and lives happily in Delaware disguised as a young man named Philip. There she meets and befriends James, and when James gets into trouble with his master, Philippa determines to help him flee the plantation and return to England. This she does with bravery and fortitude. On the voyage home, Philippa reveals herself—as a woman—to James and they confess their mutual love. They then travel to Ireland where James engages in a legal battle with his uncle to reclaim his inheritance. Naturally, James and Philippa marry and Reade concludes with the hopeful observation that Philippa is James' "best chance of enduring happiness" (279).²

In *Singleheart and Doubleface*, Joseph Pinder courts Sarah Brent, but she does not return his love. Instead, she falls in love with and marries James Mansell, who by degrees falls into drunkenness, loses work, eventually abandons her, sails to America, and, unbeknownst to Sarah, marries Elizabeth Haynes. Throughout these trials, Sarah remains unwaveringly faithful, and when James returns one day to steal money from his

¹ For the remainder of this chapter, I will refer to Joanna Philippa Chester as Philippa; as she tells the parson, "An't please you, call me Philippa. I like that name best" (66).

² *The Wandering Heir* was published with *Trade Malice* in one volume. *Trade Malice* actually comes first in the title, but in this chapter, I will use *TWH* for my citations since my analysis focuses primarily on *The Wandering Heir*. One can find the citation in the Works Cited section under the title *Trade Malice*.

own wife's safe, Sarah decides she and their daughter, Lucy, should return with James to America. When they arrive at the port, James abandons them again, taking all the money with him. Sarah and Lucy wander around the city and eventually end up at Elizabeth Haynes's house, and she invites them to spend the night. Eventually James appears—drunk—at Elizabeth's house, and Sarah apprehends the whole truth. After he and Elizabeth are asleep, Sarah steals into their room, takes back the money James stole from her, and she and Lucy take the first ship back to England. Sarah leaves a letter for Elizabeth revealing the truth about James, and as the steamer leaves the port, Sarah shows herself on deck to James, waving the money and indicating that she knows what he has done. Sarah floats away triumphant, cash in hand, with her daughter and a heart free to marry Joseph.

Reade's Matter-of-Fact Romance: A Basis in Fact

While Reade's sources for his women in these novels are not as overt as his sources for abuses in the prisons and asylums, it is necessary to keep in mind that both novels are matter-of-fact romances—fictions based on facts. Although he provides the reader with general sources for all of his matter-of-fact romances—blue books, journals, newspapers, etc.—he does not provide a summary of the particular sources he uses for the women, nor does he include obvious hints within the text alluding to specific cases he is thinking of when he writes.

This does not mean, however, that Reade leaves out sources altogether. As I have noted in chapter two, Reade's novels are multifaceted, and he incorporates facts in each section of his novel. While sources for his heroines are not explicit, sources for the James Annesley inheritance battle in *The Wandering Heir* and all the background for

creating an eighteenth-century story are. After being accused by two anonymous critics³ of plagiarizing from Jonathan Swift's poem, *Journal of a Modern Lady*, Reade publishes *The Wandering Heir* in volume form along with an extended sixty-three page treatise he calls *Trade Malice* in 1875. In this supplement to *The Wandering Heir*, Reade catalogs his sources for the novel and defends himself against the accusation of plagiarism. He divides his sources into three "strata of facts" beginning with the major, story-shaping sources, including the Annesley trial reports, and concludes his list with sources for the smallest details of his story, including an eighteenth-century dressmaker's bill (31). Listing his sources, he explains, "I found the truth I wanted in 'The Book of Costume, or Annals of Fashion,' by a Lady of Rank" (37). "How Dublin gentlemen lived," he continues, "I got from 'Barrington's Memoirs,' 'Ireland Sixty Years Ago,' etc.; and how a Dublin lady passed her time, I got from Swift's photographic verses" (38). Reade ends his long and detailed inventory of sources by concluding, "If I could have raised three ladies of Dublin from the dead, I would not have troubled Swift. But I can't raise the dead any more than Mr. Home can,⁴ and I have no personal experience of the year 1730, so I took the only remaining source of truth, and interwove printed, but reliable, fact, with my figment" (38). These facts form the basis for much of the historically accurate James Annesley section of *The Wandering Heir*.

³ Reade quickly discovered "one hand in the two letters, and thought them an abuse of the Anonymous" (10). He later found that the writers, "C. F." and "Cœcilius" were Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer Collins (23), and as he expected, they did, indeed, write "two letters together, and issued them under different signatures, and made the public believe that [Reade] had been guilty of wholesale fraud, and that two patterns of honesty had detected it, each without assistance from the other" (24).

⁴ Daniel Dunglas Home was a nineteenth-century medium who became famous in America and England for performing séances and communicating with spirits. See Jane Burton's biography, *Heyday of a Wizard*, and Home's own autobiography, *Incidents in My Life* for more information.

For the Philippa half of the novel, one must look more carefully into Reade's sources. Though Reade asserts that he invented the Philippa storyline, she is created, like all Reade's characters, out of a foundation of fact. In the first place, Reade acknowledges in *Trade Malice* that the "uncle beating his niece, her flight to foreign parts, and his apprehension on a charge of murder, is a recorded fact" (34). These facts derive from a chap-book⁵ entitled *The New West-Country Garland, in Five Parts* in which an orphan flees from her uncle to the West Indies, returning to save his life after he has been wrongly accused of murdering her and condemned to die. This chap-book provides the origins for Philippa, but as Reade states in *Trade Malice*, he invents the majority of her story. In addition to these specific sources, Reade's story is influenced by his research into the issues of cross-dressing and androgyny. An essay from a manuscript, which was published posthumously in the *English Review* in 1911, provides evidence of Reade's purposeful investigation of facts about androgynous women.⁶ He writes, "Between the years 1858-62, *i.e.*, about the date when I first began to collect from real life material for the drama, instances of androgynism occurred, or were brought to light, with unusual

⁵ According to the OED, a chap-book is "A modern name applied by book-collectors and others to specimens of the popular literature which was formerly circulated by itinerant dealers or chapmen, consisting chiefly of small pamphlets of popular tales, ballads, tracts, etc."

⁶ This essay, "Androgynism; or, Woman Playing at Man," was published in three parts by the *English Review*. Reade discovered an interesting case of cross-dressing, and actually interviewed the heroine, Kate Tozer, before she died. The essay is divided thus: in part one, Reade introduces the impetus for writing the story and the basic introduction of the characters, Tom Coombe and Kate Tozer. Kate marries Tom though she does not love him, and they do not have a happy marriage. Part two of the essay chronicles Kate's dissatisfaction, their destitution because Tom cannot find work and Kate's decision to dress as a boy and pretend to be Tom's son, Fred. Fred falls in love with Nelly Smith and Nelly falls in love with Fred. Worried about being detected in his disguise, Fred convinces Nelly to run away with him and Tom. Part three describes the concern Nelly's parents feel upon not hearing from her and Nelly's father's attempt to track Tom and Fred down. Fred is exposed as Kate, Nelly is devastated, and Kate is put on trial and eventually dies of a broken heart.

frequency, and I devoted a folio of 250 leaves to tabulating them” (11).⁷ His research provided a foundation on which to build Philippa’s character.

The newspaper stories provided Reade with a large number of sources on cross-dressing and androgyny. Throughout the nineteenth century, the newspapers chronicled numerous instances of women discovered dressing as men. A woman’s disguise was often discovered when she was arrested and compelled to submit to the “ordinary examination through which all prisoners pass” (“An Amazon” 10).⁸ In fact, Augustine Baudonin (1859), Mary Anne Walker (1868), and Mary Hanniwell (1875) were discovered by police investigators who suspected they were females.⁹ Vern and Bonnie Bullough suggest that a woman’s death also often revealed her disguise: “How many women lived as men can never be known with certainty, but their numbers were numerous; from 1850 on, local newspapers often reported the death of men who turned out to be women” (158).¹⁰ Dekker and van de Pol suggest that a third scenario for

⁷ It should be noted here that while Reade claims his research on androgynism occurred between the years 1858 and 1862, these were not the only years from which he gathered incidents. Reade constantly researched issues that interested him and did so as he prepared to write *The Wandering Heir*. In addition, Reade dutifully researched back issues of newspapers and journals to discover more evidence for his stories. In fact, it was in one of these “historical” searches that he stumbled upon the idea for *The Wandering Heir*. C. H. Muller notes that “in the ‘seventies, [Reade] unearthed from back numbers of the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, the history of the wrongs and triumphs of James Annesley” (“Documentary” 16).

⁸ According to the Index of the *Report Relative to the System of Prison Discipline*, “all prisoners on admission be placed in a reception cell, that they be strictly searched, [. . .] but in no case shall any prisoner of any class whatever be searched in the presence of any other prisoner” (Crawford et al. 18).

⁹ See “An extraordinary case of a girl,” *Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post*, p.6, “At the Thames Police Court,” *Times*, p. 12, and “An Amazon” *Times*, p. 10 for the full reports on these women.

¹⁰ Bullough and Bullough’s claim is at direct variance with Dekker and van de Pol’s, who assert, “Then, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the number of cases dwindles sharply and the phenomenon disappears as suddenly as it had appeared” (9). This might be explained, in part, by Dekker and van de Pol’s focus on female transvestism in the Netherlands, but their introduction indicates that England was another source for their research: “However, only in England did we find a quantity of cases comparable with Holland” (1). My own research in nineteenth-century newspapers and journals supports the position of Bullough and Bullough and of Reade who claim that instances of cross-dressing still occurred in nineteenth-century England.

possible discovery occurred when a woman became sick or wounded (21). Mary Anne Walker's repeated attempts at disguising herself as a man led to discovery in this way as well.¹¹ The *Cheshire Observer* reports that she "was taken ill, and her sex was discovered by her landlady" ("Adventures" 2). Dekker and van de Pol also postulate that though many women were "caught" dressing as men, countless others probably made it through their entire lives undetected (3). As can be seen, Philippa's decision to disguise herself as a boy is firmly established in a tradition of fact.

The newspapers and journals also provide a number of reasons why women chose to dress as men. First and foremost, these women believed they were more likely to obtain work dressed as men. The Mines and Collieries Act of 1842 made it unlawful "for any Owner of any Mine or Colliery whatsoever to employ any Female Person within any Mine or Colliery, or permit any Female Person to work or be therein" (*Statutes* 451). In 1845, however, the *Times* reported that Hannah Hatharington died in a fall to the bottom of a coal-pit where she was employed. The article states, "She had worn men's clothes for the last 12 months," and adds, "Other women were employed in the pit, and they also wore men's clothes" ("Women" 7). Because British law made it illegal for women to work in the mines, they dressed as men to obtain wages for their families. In addition to working in the mines, the newspapers report several other occupations that women undertook. Mary Hanniwell "worked as a 'cabman' for three years in London, and subsequently for six years in Liverpool" ("An Amazon" 10), Emma Rosa Brown "had been a steward on board ship" ("Death" 6), Augustine Baudonin "had frequently been in place in respectable houses as 'odd boy'" ("An Extraordinary" 6), and Mary Anne

¹¹ Mary Ann Walker's disguise was discovered at least five times during her life. See "Adventures of a Female Barman," *Cheshire Observer*, p. 2 for her complete history.

Walker, most famous for her stint as a barman, was also employed as a messenger, a booking clerk, an engine-cleaner, and a porter (“Adventures” 2).¹² Many of these women claimed the greater employment opportunities for men as their inducement to masquerade as men. Augustine Baudonin “said she had observed that men got their living easier than women” and according to Reade, Kate Coombe defiantly declared, “Women’s labour is shamefully underpaid. To get fair wages, I put on the breeches. That I was not found by inferior work shows that to refuse me a man’s wage because I wore a petticoat was a real injustice” (211). Obtaining gainful employment was certainly a major cause for women to dress as men.

Women throughout the nineteenth century gave other reasons for disguising themselves as men. Some women followed their lover or husband into battle or overseas. Dekker and van de Pol cite numerous examples of women who disguised themselves for such reasons (25). In his research, Reade discovers a woman who “served long as a sailor; her excuse being a sickly husband” (11). And the *Manchester Times* reports that a Mrs. Ross followed her fiancé to America, discovered him wounded in the woods, and saved his life, all the while being “unsuspected by him, having dyed her skin with lime and bark; and keeping to a man’s habit” (“Love” 3). Other women disguised themselves in order to woo another woman. Mary Anne Walker “had once courted a young woman and promised her marriage” (“At the Thames” 12), and Sarah Baker was brought to court with her “husband,” whom the *Daily Mail* reports “was dressed in full male costume [. . .]. Her hair, dark, was cut short, and parted at the side,” and whose “‘make-up’ was

¹² In a rather humorous evaluation of Walker’s life, the *Cheshire Observer* writes, “Drunkenness and theft are rather serious accusations to labour under; but even dishonest Amazons must have their due, and it is admitted that Mary Anne Walker, if she swears like a trooper, drinks like a fish, and smokes like a limekiln, can work like a coalheaver [sic]. She was always very industrious” (“Adventures” 2).

decidedly good” (“Police” 7). In Reade’s “Androgynism,” Kate Coombe finds “herself, pants and all, laid siege to by sweet simplicity [in Nelly Smith],” and “[a]fter a few weeks of what is technically known as keeping company,” Nelly not only loved Fred [Kate]; Fred also loved Nelly” (20). Anna Maria Wilkins combines desire for work and attraction for a woman in her unusual story. Separated from her husband in 1840, she began to dress like a man and became a day labourer where “she actually worked in the fields, and occasionally guided the ploughshare” (“Extraordinary” 5). Later, she became the “man-servant” of a gentleman and “attracted the attention of her master’s housemaid” (“Extraordinary” 5). The *Times* reports that “they were actually married, and lived together as man and wife” until the housemaid “tired of her female husband and married a real man” (“Extraordinary” 5).¹³ Finally, many women dressed as men simply for a “lark.” The *Dundee Courier and Argus* runs an article entitled “Two Young Women Larking It In Men’s Clothes.” Having pled guilty and paid their 10s. fines, the two women “were followed along the street, amidst the laughter and cheers of a large crowd, in which they themselves heartily joined” (“Two” 2). The necessity of gainful employment, the desire to remain near one’s lover or husband, the attraction to another woman, or, more simply, the merriment derived from dressing in such a way provided incentives for women to dress as men. The Philippa storyline of *The Wandering Heir* is certainly derived primarily from Reade’s imagination. Nevertheless, the underlying issues involved—disguising herself as a man and her reasons for doing so—are firmly grounded in fact.

¹³ Anna Maria Wilkins eventually heard that her husband remarried and so reassumed her woman’s clothes, reported her husband as a bigamist, and prosecuted him in court.

The Matter-of-Fact Problem of Bigamy in Singleheart and Doubleface

Singleheart and Doubleface was published posthumously and therefore contains far less information about Reade's sources and methods. The novel does not include a preface, an introduction, or an afterward, and it is the only one of Reade's five matter-of-fact romances that was not published in volume form with additional documents related to the content of the novel.¹⁴ Nevertheless, Reade did subtitle the novel "a matter-of-fact romance," and indeed, *Singleheart and Doubleface* contains many similarities to his other matter-of-fact romances. First and foremost among those similarities is that *Singleheart and Doubleface* has its basis in fact.¹⁵

While the topic of cross-dressing dominates the middle section of *The Wandering Heir*, bigamy is the key feature of *Singleheart and Doubleface*. Jeanne Fahnestock attributes the rise of the bigamy plot to the sensational trial of William Charles Yelverton

¹⁴ Or, as in the case of *Never Too Late*, in conversation with another text—Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

¹⁵ In possibly the most overt reference to fact, Reade writes, "Tinned meats, soups, and fruits were just then fighting for entrance into the stomach of the prejudiced Briton. Joseph prevailed on the sisters to taste these, and select the good ones. They very soon found that amongst the trash there were some comestible treasures, such as the Boston baked beans, Australian beef briskets, and an American ox-tail soup; also, the pears of one firm in Delaware, and the peaches of another" (103). This seemingly incidental reference highlights Reade's knowledge of the ongoing debate concerning illegal adulteration practices in England. In 1860, Parliament enacted the Adulteration of Food and Drink Act which states that "the practice of adulterating articles of food and drink for sale, in fraud of Her Majesty's subjects, and to the great hurt of their health, requires to be repressed by more effectual laws than those which are now in force for that purpose" (*Practical* 186). This continued to be a debate into the 1870s and 1880s, because as Judith Flanders points out, "It was only in 1860 that a Food Adulteration Bill became law, and it was ignored almost entirely until 1872, when regulatory inspections and stiff penalties made enforcement possible" (281).

As canned goods became safer for public consumption, they also became more popular. Flanders notes that "Canned meat began to arrive in bulk from Australia; beans were canned for the first time in 1880" (281). Andrea Broomfield adds that "by the 1880s, *Cassell's Book of the Household* advised women who might have a desire to do their own preserving to think again: 'In a vast majority of cases it will be considered wiser to buy preserves ready made and use them sparingly, than to purchase the fruit and sugar and have the trouble of making them'" (138). Reade's inclusion of this seemingly insignificant detail was, in reality, an important issue. Sarah's choice to stock the shelves of her store with canned goods demonstrates that she is aware of the trends in purchasing goods, but she is also a conscientious trader. Unwilling to sell goods that are not of good quality, she and her sister Deborah taste many different types and choose the best ones, ensuring that their goods are superior and without adulteration.

and Maria Theresa Longworth in 1861 (50).¹⁶ She argues that “bigamy would have remained one of the stock of occasionally used conventions [. . .] had not a real-life sensational case brought it from the ranks of the far-fetched and improbable to the pages of every newspaper” (50). While the Yelverton/Longworth scandal was certainly a key event of the day, other incidences of bigamy appeared frequently in the newspapers. Fahnestock writes, “According to figures given by the Scottish lawyer James Anderson, Q.C. to the Royal Commission investigating the marriage laws in 1866, 884 cases of bigamy were tried in England between 1853 and 1863, and 110 in Scotland over the same period” (57-58). Many of the bigamy cases are coupled with abuse, as in the case of Joseph Mortimer (1846), Charles Alexander Tucker (1858), and Robert Dalby (1871).¹⁷ Like James Mansell, other bigamists are reported as emigrating to America or Australia. The trial of *Palmer v. Palmer* parallels Reade’s story in a number of ways, as Palmer tries to acquire his wife’s money, takes her with him to America, and later abandons her (“Palmer” 11). Olive Anderson’s article, “Emigrating in Mid-Victorian England,” describes a number of bigamy cases, but she warns that hers is not a complete picture. Pointing out that “[o]nly petitions that raised a significant legal point were covered in the Divorce Court reports; and magistrates’ hearings went wholly unrecorded,” Anderson acknowledges that the number of “broken marriages [. . .] associated with emigration [. . .] is impossible to tell” (105).

¹⁶ See Jeanne Fahnestock, “Bigamy: The Rise and Fall of a Convention” for a more detailed account of *Thelwall v. Yelverton* trial and for a thorough analysis of the bigamy plot in 1860s sensation novels.

¹⁷ See “Central Criminal Court, Monday, June 22,” *Times*, p. 8, “Borromeo the Bigamist,” *Morning Chronicle*, p. 6, and “A Man with Four Wives,” *Liverpool Mercury*, p. 8 for more details.

Fahnestock argues that regardless of the actual number of bigamy cases, the practice of bigamy owes a great deal to the “confused state of the marriage laws” in nineteenth-century England (48). The Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 increased the ease by which a woman could obtain a separation or divorce from her husband, but the laws continued to be obscure, and a public trial was not a palatable option for many Victorian women.¹⁸ An 1860 *Times* editorial states:

No questions can have a greater interest for the public than those which deal with their matrimonial relations. The extraordinary attention which is paid to the proceedings of the Divorce Court, though partly due to the novelty of the procedure, is chiefly caused by a belief that the establishment of this Court has worked some great change in the Marriage Law, and consequently in the social life of this country. (“No Questions” 8)

Though the Divorce Court certainly effected a great change, the “extraordinary attention” that it receives is something that many wished to avoid. A public airing of one’s wrongs at the hand of a spouse was certainly not ideal. Nevertheless, as the editorial observes, “The Divorce Court is useful and necessary; the evil lies in looking to it for a succession of exciting narratives; and when the public gets rid of this propensity the Court will do its business with cavil from no one” (“No Questions” 8). Interestingly, though Sarah Mansell opposes the idea of entering “a public court” to request a divorce from James as something improper and humiliating, it is the very publicity of the court that Reade used to gather his sources. Indeed, though he seeks “exciting narratives” for his fiction based on fact, he simultaneously emphasizes the evil of public curiosity in such sensitive situations.

The issues of cross-dressing and bigamy play a principal part in *The Wandering Heir* and *Singleheart and Doubleface*. Though Reade does not employ a single source as

¹⁸ Undoubtedly, cases of female bigamists exist, but they are less frequent.

in *Never Too Late* or even quote from specific sources within the text as in *Hard Cash*, these two matter-of-fact romances are still undoubtedly based on fact. Through newspapers and journals, blue-books concerning the new Divorce and Matrimonial laws, and the deluge of fictional narratives on the topic of bigamy in the 1860s, Reade was surrounded with material for his novels. In *Philippa and Sarah*, Reade incorporates the romance aspect of his matter-of-fact romances, but the experiences of these women are still rooted in fact.

Reade and Women: The Subversive Power of the Romance

In *The Secular Scripture*, Northrop Frye writes,

The long-standing association between the words imagination and fancy may suggest that the imaginative, by itself, tends to be fantastic or fanciful. But actually, what the imagination, left to itself, produces is the rigidly conventionalized. In folktales, plot-themes and motifs are predictable enough to be counted and indexed; improvised drama, from *commedia dell'arte* to guerrilla theater, is based on formulas with a minimum of variables. [. . .] They are formulaic, and the formulaic unit, or phrase or story, is the cornerstone of the creative imagination, the simplest form of what I call an archetype. (*Secular* 36)

Frye's observation—that the imagination produces banal and repetitive “units”—directly supports Reade's assertion in “Androgynism” that truth is stranger than fiction (12).

Indeed, this is precisely the reason that Reade combines fact with fiction; a compelling story requires both. The matter-of-fact romance repeatedly turns romance conventions upside down, and Reade's stories are anything but formulaic. Frye's assertion illuminates part of the reason that Reade's novels are so unbelievable but at the same time must be believed; he infuses the incidents of his fancy with true events from reality. As such, Reade's matter-of-fact romances are not archetypes at all but rather allusions to archetypes which effectively reveal new truths.

Throughout the nineteenth century, newspapers and journals echoed the aphorism, “truth is stranger than fiction” again and again as they related true events and incidents that seemed impossible. A *Times* editorial declares, “We constantly repeat, but without ever really believing it, that truth is stranger than fiction” just before elaborating on a truly horrific murder of a boy by his schoolmaster (“These Summer” 9). The same sentiment is declared concerning a case of theft and cross-dressing: Just before reflecting that “truth is stranger than fiction,” the *Times* declares that “Altogether, the case was one of the most strange that ever came before the Court” (“Middlesex” 9). The *Times* reports the result of a bigamy trial in much the same language: “Mr. Elliott was engaged for some time in the investigation of one of the most singular cases that have ever, perhaps, been brought under a judicial inquiry, and the extraordinary circumstances disclosed in the course of the inquiry fully verify the fact that ‘truth is stranger than fiction’” (“Police” 9). Hundreds more articles contained the phrase throughout Reade’s career, a large number of which directly related to bigamy and cross-dressing. These two subjects, infiltrating news sources, combined with the agitation for increased rights for women and the Divorce and Matrimonial laws provided a foundation of fact upon which Reade could build his fiction. As he wrote *The Wandering Heir* and *Singleheart and Doubleface*, he began with this factual foundation in cross-dressing and bigamy respectively and then added conventional romance tropes to his stories in order to demonstrate that truth really is stranger than fiction.

As I show in chapter two, Reade’s use of romance is often highly irregular, for in the creation of a matter-of-fact romance, Reade subverts traditional expectations of genre for both romance and realism. Nevertheless, when focusing primarily on the romance

Reade employs, one sees that much of it can be easily categorized as conventional romance. Frye's analysis of romance is a useful place to begin in a study of Philippa's and Sarah's experiences. First of all, Reade declares that Philippa is complete invention: "In the three books I have now named [with sources for the trial between James Annesley and his uncle] lies half a plot. But only invention, of equal power with the facts, could make it a whole plot. Therefore I invented Philippa, and all her business, and the whole sexual interest of the story" (32). Reade's claim that Philippa is completely invented, and particularly his emphasis on "the whole sexual interest of the story," indicates that he uses Philippa as a primary romance element in the story. The James Annesley court case is an historical event, but the fictional Philippa is a figment of Reade's imagination and therefore full of the romance tropes that Frye writes about in *The Secular Scripture*.

It is necessary, therefore, to take a closer look at Philippa's role in *The Wandering Heir* and determine how she embodies the romance aspect of Reade's matter-of-fact romance. Frye explains that "the theme of a heroine exposed to a sacrificial situation by a foolish or inattentive father has run all through fiction" (*Secular* 81). Though Philippa's father is dead, the principle set forth by Frye seems to apply to her. Her uncle, who is her caretaker, is certainly foolish, trying to foist his son on Philippa and furiously berating Philippa when she refuses to marry. Though her uncle ought to have her best interests at heart, he succumbs to greediness and desires to keep Philippa—and the jewels she inherits from her mother—in the family. In addition, Frye writes that "Secrecy, including disguise, is a necessary part of the heroine's tactics, partly because she is so often in a position where the hero must be convinced that he is acting on his own initiative" (*Secular* 74). Here again, this applies to Philippa. From the moment she

escapes her uncle's house, she disguises herself as a young man. When she meets James in America, she continues to masquerade as a man so that she can retain her position as bookkeeper and also befriend James. It must be noted, however, that though Reade does adhere to the principles of romance in general, here he offers a slight subversion. James never acts on his own initiative. In fact, Reade reveals that James is "pathetically docile and grateful" (102) and always "did as he was bid" (160). When he proposes to try to escape from the plantation by himself, Philippa (as Philip) scoffs:

"Why, thou coxcomb," said he, "dost thou really think thou art fit to go to a new master, without me at thy back? Come James," added he patronisingly, "you are a good, worthy young man, but you know you are somewhat of a milksop. You are not fit to go alone. You cannot beat the men, nor flatter the women. I can do both, especially make fools of the women, and turn 'em to butter with my tongue; and I know not how it is," continued he, assuming now an air of philosophical meditation, "but custom governs us strangely; once get into the habit of taking care of a child, or a dog, or a James Annesley, or any foolish, helpless sort of a pet, and in truth, you get so used to it, you can't let it go alone; you still come clucking after it, like a hen after her duckling." (130-31)

James defers to Philippa's every command and even tells her, "You are my master, and I own it" (162). Philippa disguises herself, but not necessarily in order to convince James to act on his own initiative. Further complicating the scenario is the fact that Philippa's disguise transforms her into a young man. James's deferral is, in some ways, more conventional because he believes he is following the directions of another man.

Reade's use of the romance trope of disguise provides an additional complication that affects a reader's understanding of *The Wandering Heir*. Because Reade begins the novel with two chapters devoted to James and ends the novel with James's inheritance battle, the reader is inclined to assume that James is "the wandering heir." He is stripped of his titles and land, he is treacherously sent to America as an indentured servant, and he is trapped into staying once he arrives in America. His goal is to return to Ireland and to

reclaim his lands, but he is effectually prevented from doing so. James is, indeed, a wandering heir. However, Reade's characterization of James as a weak-willed, docile creature does not easily coincide with the traditional conception of a hero. Undoubtedly, if James is the wandering heir, he must also be the hero, but he is certainly a non-traditional hero at best. Philippa, on the other hand, embodies all the characteristics of a hero. She is quick-witted, resourceful, observant, courageous, and willing to stand up to any challenge. In addition, she, too, is an heiress. By disguising herself in men's clothes, however, she effectively becomes an heir—a wandering heir. By choosing to make James a non-traditional hero and to imbue Philippa with masculine, heroic qualities, Reade subverts the reader's understanding of who the hero is, making it possible for the wandering heir to refer to both James and Philippa and implicitly suggesting that Philippa alone might be the wandering heir. By revising the romance trope, Reade upends the reader's expectations for the novel, enabling the audacious Philippa to take center stage in the narrative.

In addition to secrecy and disguise, Frye adds, "This device of the heroine's being both slave and free has had an amazing vitality in romantic comedy, and persists almost unchanged at least through the eighteenth century" (*Secular* 75). In *Philippa*, the reader sees exactly this situation being enacted. Philippa masquerades as a man and remains disguised after she decides to rescue James from servitude in America. In addition, Philippa truly is both slave and free; she has indentured herself to an American farmer, but she has money, friends, and connections in England that could release her from bondage at any moment. Clearly, Reade is taking advantage of romantic tropes as he

conceives Philippa's adventures, but at the same time, he reserves some right to undermine those tropes in order to create the subversive matter-of-fact romance genre.

Finally, I must return for a moment to the chap-book that inspired Reade with Philippa's origin. Though the orphan of *The New West-Country Garland* is an heiress who possesses jewels and runs away from her uncle, she does not dress in men's clothing. She is tricked by gypsies into traveling to the West Indies, and she must be rescued by a man she bribes with her inheritance and marriage to return her to England: "Three thousand pounds on you I will freely bestow, / And if unto England you will me convey, / And make me your bride, then enjoy me you may" (*New* 6). Reade revises this story enormously, making it almost unrecognizable except for the beginning. In *The Wandering Heir*, Philippa purposefully dresses in men's clothes, deliberately indentures herself as a bookkeeper, and resolutely determines to rescue James. Philippa does not exhibit helplessness or weakness at any point. Indeed, in this instance, Reade perfectly models the practice he set forth for writing in *Trade Malice*, "interweaving [. . .] imaginary circumstances with facts gathered impartially from experience, hearsay, and printed records" to create the matter-of-fact romance (30).

The use of romance in *Singleheart and Doubleface* is similar. The story, founded on numerous reports of bigamy and the bewildering truth that "the wives of drunkards excel all others in devotion," contains, at the same time, a number of romance tropes ("Androgynism" Reade 202). First, although Frye's analysis mainly concerns unmarried heroines, he does address married women briefly: "She may of course be married, as she is in the *Odyssey* or in Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*, but there her loyalty to her husband puts her symbolically in the same situation. Virginity or married loyalty is her normal

state during the endurance, suffering, suspense, and terror which precede her real life after the story” (*Secular* 80). In this passage, Frye perfectly describes Sarah. Her state is, indeed, married loyalty, and the suffering and endurance she undergoes is incalculable. Frye continues, “The comic side [. . .] often takes the form of a triumph of a slave or maltreated heroine, or other figure associated with physical weakness. With the rise of the romantic ethos, heroism comes increasingly to be thought of in terms of suffering, endurance, and patience, which can coexist with such weakness, whatever other kinds of strength it may require” (*Secular* 88). Reade also implements this principle of romance. Sarah does suffer and endures her lot with great patience, but ultimately, she triumphs. When taken with an additional claim of Frye’s, however, that “A heroine may meet disaster through being betrayed or deserted by her lover,” the reader recognizes that Reade is once again twisting this tenet of romance to satisfy his own matter-of-fact romance genre (*Secular* 92). Sarah believes she meets with disaster when James deserts her, but in truth, his desertion allows her to tap into her unused strength. James’s betrayal is the best thing that can happen to Sarah; she is confronted head on with her husband’s infidelity and loathsomeness, and she finally realizes the truth. She is the heroine, and she is betrayed, but she meets with triumph and happiness rather than disaster and sorrow.

In a letter to the editor of the *Times* in 1883, sensation novelist, Ouida, writes, “To many of us, to myself, I confess, among the number, the world seems a marvellous union of tragedy and comedy, which run side by side like twin children” (3). Asserting that “‘truth is stranger than fiction’ is found at every turn in the world,” she continues:

I cannot suppose that my own experiences can be wholly exceptional ones, yet I have known very handsome people, I have known very fine

characters, I have also known some very wicked ones, and I have also known many circumstances so romantic that were they described in fiction, they would be ridiculed as exaggerated and impossible; in real life there are coincidences so startling, mysteries so singular, destinies so strange, that no wise novelist could venture to portray them for fear of making his work appear too *bizarre* and too melodramatic. (3)

Reade does not possess the same concern as his fellow novelist did, and thus, is perhaps, not a “wise” novelist. Nevertheless, his collections of print sources confirmed his conviction that life presents the truly wild and unbelievable incidents that grip readers. To this, he added elements of romance, tweaking them to suit his purposes as he fashioned his matter-of-fact romances. In *The Wandering Heir* and *Singleheart and Doubleface*, in particular, Reade melds true stories of cross-dressing and bigamy with imagined women to create compelling stories.

At the same time, Reade’s incorporation of romance tropes is altered, undermining in important ways the function of romance in each story. The romance tropes are not conventional; they are modified in order to subvert traditionally held views of women. Philippa is a cross-dressing woman, but her interactions with James are full of homosexual undertones, and her quick mind and heroic actions coupled with her keen observation and sensitive nature suggest that Reade is endorsing a form of androgyny that would have been unacceptable to many Victorian readers. Similarly, Sarah is undoubtedly the heroine of *Singleheart and Doubleface*, but again, Reade undermines the traditional romantic tropes associated with her triumph. Although betrayal is negative in the romance genre, James’s betrayal of Sarah is the best thing that could happen to her. In the same way, her triumph over suffering and endurance do not lead her back to James with increased love; on the contrary, her triumph leads her to reject James outright. In *The Wandering Heir* and *Singleheart and Doubleface*, Reade integrates romance tropes

that he has adapted specifically for his matter-of-fact romance genre. Combined with a foundation in fact, Reade creates compelling narratives that successfully subvert traditionally held views of women, suggesting instead new ways to think about women and new proposals for the role of women in society.

Intertextuality and the Woman Question: Reade in Conversation

Reade's heroines grow increasingly complex throughout his matter-of-fact romances. Reade, unlike Dickens,¹⁹ drew on contemporary conversations and debates in order to create current heroines to whom the reader could relate. Thus, as the question of women's rights was increasingly discussed in newspapers, journals, and in the parlor, Reade took note and revised his heroines accordingly. I have argued in chapter two that a distinguishing characteristic of the matter-of-fact romance genre is its intertextual nature. Readers are caught up in the conversations that the text has with other texts; even as readers attempt to distance themselves from the matter-of-fact romance, they are continually drawn back in by additional connections and further conversations. Reade makes part of *The Wandering Heir's* intertextuality perfectly clear with the decision to publish the novel with *Trade Malice*—a scrupulous record of his sources pertaining to the Annesley inheritance battle—most of which is peripheral to my argument in this chapter about Reade's treatment of women. At the same time, as I have previously stated,

¹⁹ Though like Dickens in so many ways, Reade's portrayal of women greatly differs from that of his self-proclaimed master who chose to depict far more conventional female characters. Agnes Wickfield, Florence Dombey, and Esther Summerson are just a few of the "angels" that Dickens creates. Kate Millet writes, "It is one of the more disheartening flaws in [Dickens's] work that nearly all the 'serious' women in Dicken's [sic] fiction, with the exception of Nancy and a handful of her criminal sisters, are insipid goodies carved from the same soap as Ruskin's Queens" (122). While I argue elsewhere that Dickens complicates his heroine in *Bella Wilfer*, Millet is, by and large, correct in her evaluation of Dickens's heroines. Dickens rarely moves outside the accepted conventions of the Victorian woman. See Catherine Golden's article, "Late-Twentieth-Century Readers in Search of a Dickensian Heroine" for a more detailed discussion of Dickens's treatment of women.

Singleheart and Doubleface is the most difficult of his novels for which to ascertain sources because it was published after his death and was therefore never printed in conjunction with another work. Stepping away from the specific novels, however, I argue that part of the intertextuality of Reade's matter-of-fact romances—all of them as they pertain to women—is his attention to the ongoing conversation about the changing role of women in society.

The role of women in mid-Victorian England was greatly influenced by Coventry Patmore's poem, *The Angel in the House* (1845-62). This "domestic epic," as Anne Hogan and Andrew Bradstock explain, represents the "Victorian feminine ideal of angelic virtue"—a virtue that "embodied sexual purity and a strong sense of Christian morality, placing women in a secondary role to men" (1). Much has been written on the Angel in the House and her role in Victorian society; in fact, the question Hogan and Bradstock ask—"has she not by now been done to death?"—is apt (1). One need only do a cursory search for Victorian women and the Angel in the House to see just how much scholarship has been focused on this subject in the last ten years alone. For the purposes of this discussion, I use Martha Vicinus' definition of the Angel or, as she describes her, "The Perfect Victorian Lady." Vicinus writes, "The perfect wife was an active participant in the family, fulfilling a number of vital tasks, the first of which was childbearing," and who "combined total sexual innocence, conspicuous consumption and the worship of the family hearth" (ix). In essence, she "became the woman who kept to her family, centering all her life on keeping the house clean, the children well disciplined and her daughters chaste" (xiv). A tall order for any woman, good as she might be. While scholarship of the last four decades has shown that many men and women

attempted to subvert the Angel in the nineteenth century, she still remains the uncontested representative of Victorian feminine propriety, particularly within the middle-class.

As the century progressed, women became increasingly insistent on defying the Angel in the House stereotype and advancing ideas of female liberation. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, newspapers and journals were full of debates over a woman's role, her rights, and the opportunities afforded her.²⁰ Kate Millet argues that the escalating debate about the Victorian woman's rights and role is encompassed by John Ruskin and John Stuart Mill (122).²¹ Millet claims that "While the Victorian period is the first in history to face the issue of patriarchy and the condition of women under its rule, it does so in a bewildering variety of ways: courageously and intelligently as in Mill and Engles; half-heartedly as in the tepid criticism of the novelists who describe it; with bland disingenuousness as in Ruskin; or with turbulent ambivalence as in the poets Tennyson, Rossetti, Swinburne, and Wilde" (122). She suggests that Ruskin and Mill, in particular, typify the divide in Victorian society, for indeed, these two thinkers, both sincerely interested in the rights of women, arrive at vastly different answers to the question of the woman's role. Throughout the woman debate, Reade continually moves closer and closer to the side of Mill and advocacy for greater freedom for women.

In 1865, John Ruskin published *Sesame and Lilies*, a compilation of three lectures, the second of which is entitled "Of Queens' Gardens." In this lecture, Ruskin outlines his views of a woman's role in society—a place he sees as primarily in the domestic sphere. Ruskin argues that men and women are completely different, that "they

²⁰ See, for instance, W. E. Aytoun, "The Rights of Women," *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine*, pp. 183- 201, and Louisa Shore, "The Emancipation of Women," *Westminster Review*, pp. 138-74.

²¹ For her full discussion, see Millet's insightful essay, "The Debate Over Women: Ruskin vs. Mill" in *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*, ed. Margaret Vicinus.

are in nothing alike, and the happiness and perfection of both depend on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give” (67). Using the common terminology of “separate spheres,” so popular in the Victorian period, Ruskin continues:

Now their separate characters are briefly these. The man’s power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest, wherever war is just, wherever conquest necessary. But the woman’s power is for rule, not for battle,—and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision. She sees the qualities of things, their claims and their places. [. . .] By her office, and place, she is protected from all danger and temptation. The man, in his rough work in open world, must encounter all peril and trial:—to him, therefore, the failure, the offense, the inevitable error: often he must be wounded, or subdued, often misled, and always *hardened*. But he guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, no temptation, no cause of error or offence. This is the true nature of home—it is the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division. (115-16)

Ruskin sees the roles of men and women as completely separate; while men are to do their work in the world, women are to stay at home, making the domestic hearth a place of almost mythic peace and tranquility. At the same time, men have the ability (and responsibility) to protect their wives from the evil forces—the terror, doubt, and division—of the outside world.

Mill provides a vastly different view in his essay, *The Subjection of Women*, written in 1861 and published in 1869. Rather than regarding men and women as completely separate entities, Mill declares that no one actually knows the differences between the natures of men and women. He argues, “What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing—the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others” (38-39). Instead of fitting women into an “artificial” categorization of “angel” or “keeper of the household Peace” or any other

designation, Mill asserts that “the principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other” (1). Mill argues in direct opposition to Ruskin who views the roles of men and women as strictly divided.

It is with this conversation that Reade engages in his matter-of-fact romances. Susan Merton of *Never Too Late* is a heroine whom Ruskin could appreciate. She is nearly always described in domestic settings; she is seen variously visiting the poor, tending to her flowers, filling a pipe for Eden, preparing his room, taking care of his clothes, sewing on his buttons, churning butter, baking bread, and plying her needle. In addition, Susan is often associated with or called angel: “pitying angel,” “peace-making angel,” “relieving angel,” “lovely as an angel” (1: 39, 40, 105, 3: 258). Susan would be the heroine to acquiesce to Ruskin’s suggestion that “a man ought to know any language or science he learns, thoroughly, while a woman ought to know the same language, or science, only so far as may enable her to sympathize in her husband’s pleasures, and in those of his best friends” (123). Mill, on the other hand, objects to this angelic disposition which is always serving others:

All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others. All the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women, and all the current sentimentalities that it is their nature, to live for others; to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections. And by their affections are meant the only ones they are allowed to have—those to the men with whom they are connected, or to the children who constitute an additional and indefeasible tie between them and a man. (27)

As the debate grew more pronounced in the 1860s, Reade began to take heed, situating himself slightly on the side of women who desired a larger sphere than the domestic one. Julia Dodd thrives when she is in action, and her strength is highlighted when she is most engaged. Her impetuosity leads her to reject the domestic and to admire “manly” characteristics (*HC* 1: 54). At the same time, she recognizes the abilities that women possess, and tiring of all the Ruskin-like male doctors who believe they know her symptoms better than she does,²² requests that Mrs. Dodd take her to a doctress (*HC* 1: 76). Though Julia is submissive and yielding enough that W. L. Courtney classes her with the “domestic innocents,” Reade has begun to step into the women’s right question with stronger heroines.

With the publications of Ruskin and Mill in the 1860s and an increasingly voluble debate about the role of women in the 1870s, it is not surprising to see a continuing shift in Reade’s matter-of-fact romance heroines. As part of a community of actors and actresses in addition to his unashamed cohabitation with actress-turned-housekeeper, Mrs. Laura Seymour, Reade was an advocate of strong women. Though the *Saturday Review* accuses him of creating “silly” women, Reade creates far more courageous, dominating, quick-witted, and intelligent female characters than many of his contemporaries (“Four” 220). Philippa and Sarah are of this cast, and in their own ways demonstrate Reade’s continuing advocacy on behalf of women.

With his female characters, Philippa and Sarah, Reade places himself in the middle of the conversation about women’s rights avoiding, in Millet’s phrase, the “half-heartedly [. . .] tepid criticism” with which most novelists address the issues confronting

²² When Julia denies the symptoms Dr. Short attributes to her, he “looked a little surprised; his female patients rarely contradicted him. Was it for them to disown things he was so good as to assign them?” (*HC* 1: 70-71).

Victorian women. Indeed, in *Philippa*, Reade supports Mill who asserts “any woman, who succeeds in an open profession, proves by that very fact that she is qualified for it” (97). Though *Philippa* must masquerade as a man to receive the opportunity to prove her capability, she ultimately does so. Sarah, too, is a heroine who eventually transforms into the type of woman to whom Mill refers. Her rejection of her husband, her courage to return to England without a protector, and her determination to support her daughter, both with the money she takes back from James and with the earnings from her store, are a testament to her true strength. Though Ruskin would have Sarah meet with her poorer neighbors, “coaxing and tempting them into tidy and pretty ways, and pleading for well-folded table-clothes, however coarse, for a flower or two out of the garden to strew on them” (xi), Mill recognizes and asserts that there is more to woman than these trivial actions. *The Wandering Heir*, in particular, and *Singleheart and Doubleface*, more broadly, are intertextual in nature. Reade provides many of his sources, allowing readers to look backwards to previous iterations of his material. However, the ongoing conversation about women’s rights permeates the fabric of Reade’s matter-of-fact romances and encourages readers to look forward to ensuing conversations about women’s roles and the ways those roles have been transformed. Though *Philippa* and Sarah are the two strongest heroines Reade creates, an analysis of all four matter-of-fact romance heroines within the context of this late-Victorian conversation shows their increasingly progressive trajectory.

Transforming Heroines: Tracing Reade’s Views on Women

Reade’s depiction of women in his matter-of-fact romances aligns well with the continuing advancement of female liberation over the course of the nineteenth century.

With the exception of *Jack of All Trades*, which does not contain a heroine at all, Reade continually refashions his heroines to reflect changes and advances in the debate over women's rights. From his first matter-of-fact romance heroine, Susan Merton, in 1856 to his last matter-of-fact romance heroine, Sarah Mansell, in 1884, Reade demonstrates his awareness of and his support for the women's movement.²³ In the pages that follow, I wish to offer an overview of the transformation Reade's matter-of-fact romance heroine undergoes. I briefly address Susan Merton and Julia Dodd as their portrayals parallel the angel most closely. I evaluate Philippa Chester and Sarah Mansell in much more depth as their characters serve to radically undermine Victorian proprieties.

Susan Merton: A True Victorian Angel?

At the height of Patmore's influence, Reade writes his first matter-of-fact romance, *Never Too Late*, in which Susan Merton is the heroine. She is a typical angel character, and Reade's description of her would surely have resonated with his mid-century readers: "The class of women (a very large one) to which she belongs comes into

²³ Emerson Grant Sutcliffe's article, "Fœmina Vera in Charles Reade's Novels," provides a strong analysis of nearly all Reade's heroines. He claims, "The natural result of gathering such materials under the head of fœmina vera is the tendency to think of women not as individuals, but as a race. This race, as I shall presently demonstrate, is divided in the novels into types; but all these types share the common attributes of true woman" (1263). Despite his in-depth examination and classification of Reade's women, however, Sutcliffe almost completely ignores the four matter-of-fact romance heroines. He, like Courtney, classes Susan with the "ingénues, who [. . .] remain merely geese" (1267), and he provides an overview for Philippa. Nevertheless, Susan is mentioned in passing, and on Philippa he provides almost no commentary except to say that "Even in a historical romance, this epicene feature really does not do. Art and abnormal sexual psychology may have been mated by Proust, but it is reasonably safe to say that transvestism is unacceptable artistically outside farce, Shakespeare, and the pantomime" (1271). This quick and dismissive judgment indicates that Sutcliffe has missed the point of Philippa in *The Wandering Heir*. That he makes no reference to Julia or to Sarah at all further suggests that Sutcliffe misunderstands Reade's purpose for his matter-of-fact romance heroines.

By excluding a significant examination of the matter-of-fact romance heroines, Sutcliffe inadvertently reveals that there must be some connection between them. If none of these heroines fall into the "types" that Sutcliffe provides, they must exist outside what Sutcliffe sees as the "race" of women Reade creates. Indeed, Sutcliffe comes closest to the truth when he muses, "Reade seems to have based this part of his plot on the too great strangeness of truth" (1271). These matter-of-fact romance heroines have their foundation in fact, and together they represent the transition from Angel to New Woman.

the world to make others happy. Susan is skilful at this and very successful. She makes everybody happy round her, ‘and that is *so* pleasant.’ She makes the man she loves happy, and that is delightful. [. . .] These average women,” Reade concludes, “are not the spice of fiction, but they are the salt of real life” (3: 344). It is important to note, however, that though Susan’s character corresponds with the angel stereotype, Reade recognizes her insipidness and even offers a mild criticism of her. He writes, “My reader shall laugh at her; my unfriendly critic shall sneer at her. As a heroine of a novel she deserves it” (3: 344). Though Reade adheres to the widely held views of women in 1856, he does so reluctantly. Susan is a character who satisfies his readers, but on the very last page of the novel, Reade subtly intimates that perhaps Susan ought rather be considered something of a joke. Even as Reade appears to affirm the mid-nineteenth century angel convention, he undermines it in his last words.

Julia Dodd: Strength in Action

Reade’s next heroine, Julia Dodd, hails from his 1863 matter-of-fact romance, *Hard Cash*.²⁴ With her, Reade begins to move away from the angel stereotype, but does not quite abandon it. Instead, he makes Julia a mix of masculine vigor and passive femininity. Strong-willed and competitive, Julia cannot stand to be beaten or outdone. She is dejected after her brother’s team loses a boat race and dismayed that Mrs. Dodd and Edward do not seem to share her despondency. She complains, “Well, my Lady Placid, and Mr. Imperturbable, I am glad neither of your equanimities is disturbed; but defeat is a Bitter Pill to me” (*HC* 1: 26). When Edward fails his logic exam at Oxford,

²⁴ I skip to a discussion of Julia Dodd and *Hard Cash* because Reade does not include a human heroine in his second matter-of-fact romance, *Jack of All Trades*, published in 1858. Instead, the “heroine” is Djek, a performing female elephant. I address this rather anomalous matter-of-fact romance at length in the next chapter.

Julia determines to learn the material and teach it to him, defiantly asserting “A girl can learn anything she chooses to learn” (*HC* 1: 62). Julia’s passionate impetuosity sets her apart from her predecessor, Susan. However, Julia is not all strength and determination. After Alfred disappears on their wedding day, Reade writes that “a pensive languor took the place of her lovely impetuosity” (*HC* 3: 29). Though at times, “a burst of her old fire” would shine through, Julia’s very nature was changed with Alfred’s apparent betrayal (*HC* 3: 29).

It is, perhaps, this change in Julia’s character that causes Courtney to classify her, along with Susan Merton, as one of Reade’s “domestic innocents—sweet, simple, lovable girls, without much strength, except when love transports them out of themselves” (164). This weakness-except-through-love classification, however, simply does not describe Julia. She is full of strength which is inevitably manifested through action. When confronted with a difficulty, it is in her nature to rise to the occasion and conquer. When the family income is severely reduced, Julia demands of Edward, “Begin with me. What can I do?” and when he suggests she paint, she “painted zealously” in order to do her part for the family (*HC* 3: 15, 22). When Mrs. Dodd determines to take a message from a poor soul in the asylum to the Commissioners, “it was Julia flying down to her, all glowing and sparkling with her old impetuosity, that had seemed dead for ever. ‘No, no,’ she cried, panting with generous emotion; ‘it is to me it was sent. I am torn from him I love, and by some treachery I dare say: and I have suffered [. . .]. Give it *me*, oh pray, pray, pray give it *me*. *I’ll* take it to Whitehall’” (*HC* 3: 119). Indeed, as Reade observes, Julia “was one of those who rise with the occasion” (*HC* 3: 223). Julia’s torpor is the result of slighted love, and though she “droops” through much of the novel, Reade

provides his readers with a valid reason for the change in her character. That it is a character change is clear; Julia is a woman of action, impetuosity, irony, and humor. Her strength is manifested through action, and while she exemplifies the “domestic innocent” throughout the middle section of the novel, Reade’s continual emphasis on her unusual languor underscores how different her true character really is.

Joanna Philippa Chester: The Clothes Make the Man?

In Philippa, the heroine of the 1872 matter-of-fact romance, *The Wandering Heir*, Reade further complicates his portrayal of women. Through Philippa’s independent nature and disgust of being a girl, her decision to disguise herself as a man and her choice to work for her livelihood, Reade reveals a woman completely at odds with W. E. Aytoun’s description of woman in his 1862 essay “The Rights of Woman”: “The proper destiny of woman is to be married and to bear children; to regulate the affairs of the household; and to be an aid and companion to her husband” (190). Not only does Philippa flout the mid-century concepts of womanhood, but she discovers that dressing in men’s clothes is both empowering and enjoyable. Furthermore, Philippa’s determination to rescue James completes the picture of a new woman who cannot be subjugated because of her sex. Though Reade’s subversions of propriety would have been serious enough at this juncture, he effectively undermines propriety in two additional ways, which I discuss at the end of this section: through the inclusion of homosexual overtones and an explicit espousal of androgyny.

Beginning with a description of Philippa’s childhood, Reade emphasizes her abhorrence to all the proper activities of girls, and demonstrates her audacious, vigorous, and masculine nature. He writes:

She was, at this time, a most daring girl, and she always played with the boys, and picked up their ways, and, by superior intelligence, became their leader. From them she learned to look down on her own sex; and the women, in return, called her a Tomboy and a witch: indeed, there was something witch-like in her agility, her unbounded daring, and her great keen grey eyes. (63-64)

Her audacity can be further seen by her actions after she learns to paint: “every roadside barndoor within distance presented a caricature, in chalk, of the farmer who owned it, and often of his wife and family, into the bargain” (70). Philippa hates being a girl and at fourteen begs the parson, “‘Grant me a favour,’ said she, ‘because I love you. Have me made a boy’” (71). When he objects, she answers ingenuously, “‘Why,’ said she, ‘twill not cost much, ‘tis but the price of a coat and waistcoat and breeches, instead of these things,’ slapping her petticoats contemptuously; ‘and then I *am* a boy. [. . . N]ay, to be sure, there’s my hair; but I can soon cut that’” (71). Philippa rejects all outer attributes that “make her” a girl. Even after she is grown up and become shy, she is still a determined, independent woman with masculine qualities. Silas tells his father that she “hits like a horse kicking,” and Philippa laments that she, like Silas cannot “be a man, and carve your own way to fortune!” (80, 82). She eschews femininity, admiring instead the adventures and exploits that men are able to undergo and execrating the woman’s role of dependence, propriety, and restraint.

If this had been all, Reade would have effectively challenged the prevailing views of the day. However, Reade presses the views of his readers even further, causing Philippa to steal her mother’s jewels, flee her uncle’s house, dress in a seaman’s holiday dress, and sail for America. Vicinus asserts, “Only the exceptionally fortunate and courageous might succeed through emigration, but societies offering assisted passage for women of good character were small and ineffectual” (xii). She does not even consider

the possibility of a woman making the voyage dressed as a man. The courage necessary to sail as a woman would have been increased exponentially by the stress of sailing in the guise of a man. “We should not underestimate the pressure,” Dekker and van de Pol caution, “these women in men’s clothing permanently experienced” (24). Philippa’s decision to emigrate to America is remarkable; it becomes astonishing when she does so alone and in men’s clothes. By 1870, newspapers were running stories about women like Mary Robertson Dundee and Elizabeth Guthrie who dressed in men’s clothes as a “lark” (“Two” 2), but Philippa’s decision initially resembles much more closely those women who dress as men out of necessity.

As Philippa makes her way to America, Reade upends even the assumption that she must dress as a man solely for her own safety and need. She finds that dressing in men’s clothing is empowering.²⁵ As soon as she has put on her seaman’s outfit, “her native courage revived, and she was ready to dance for joy” (89). Later, she regretfully observes, “Methinks my disposition is changed, since I put off my boy’s attire: and the worst of it is all my courage hath oozed away” (186).²⁶ And when, near the end of the narrative, she desires to be frank with James, “she had a riding-dress made so masculine, that she could speak her mind more freely in it” (227).²⁷ Furthermore, though Philippa

²⁵ See Ruth Robbins, *Literary Feminisms*, and Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* for informative discussions concerning the concepts of sex and gender.

²⁶ She later makes a similar remark about the way her clothes imbue her with confidence and courage. When her uncle refuses to take her to Dublin, she appears before him as Philip and says, “Now, Uncle, [. . .] how is it to be? Will you go to Dublin with Philippa, that is a poor timid creature, afraid of men and mice and everything, or shall Philip go alone? Philip, that fears nought, and feels like Alexander the Great at this moment; the Lord be praised for doublet and hose” (234). Philippa derives great satisfaction and self-assurance from her clothes, though it should be noted her uncle took her to Dublin as Philippa, not Philip.

²⁷ The concept of performativity has been much discussed in feminist criticism of the past few decades, and Ruth Robbins offers a helpful explanation for Philippa’s feeling of empowerment in her man’s clothes. “But because clothes are provisional—you take them off as well as put them on, you wear

flees her uncle's house, her situation is not so dire that indenturing herself to an American landowner is absolutely necessary. Instead, Reade makes it clear that Philippa chooses to do so as a sort of experiment: "she agreed to indent as servant and book-keeper, and see whether it would suit her; she thought it was no use being idle in man's clothes; indeed, she had too much energy" (91). Philippa feels empowered in her new clothes and believes that she is up for any challenge. She possesses her mother's jewels which would have served her for money, and she had enough intelligence to settle successfully in London. However, she chooses instead to take the daring trip to America to "see" whether a man's profession in men's clothing in a completely new environment "would

different clothes for different occasions—the identity they mark, including the gender of that identity, is also provisional" (211). Judith Butler adds that "acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, as *performative* in the sense that essence of identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means" (136). In donning male clothing, Philippa, in some way, also dons the gender of that identity, and can later slip it back off again with her doublet and hose.

Performativity also encompasses the way one carries oneself in one's clothes. Dekker and van de Pol write, "There are innumerable differences between men and women, for example, in language, mimicry, gestures, carriage, so a change of gender involves more than simply dressing in man's clothing" (17). Reade is keenly aware of the performative nature of Philippa's actions, and even draws attention to the ways in which she fails to thoroughly adopt the role she plays. James derides her, "Why, 'tis like a girl, to be afear'd of a cat. But indeed you are more like a girl than a boy, in many things. You hate women more than is natural, and you turn your toes out in walking; and you carry your hand so oddly when you walk" (161-62). Reade's attention to detail (probably from his extensive interaction with the theatre) and his emphasis on Philippa's failure to perfectly perform her role supports later studies of the feminist theory of performativity.

Reade is not the only one to confirm the need for studying these issues. In 1929, the *Sunday Dispatch* ran a story on Valerie Arkell-Smith, also known as Colonel Barker, who dressed like a man and served in the army. Her reaction to wearing men's clothes closely echoes Philippa's own observations: "trousers make a wonderful difference in the outlook on life. I know that dressed as a man I did not, as I do now I am wearing skirts again, feel hopeless and helpless. Today when the whole world knows my secret I feel more a man than a woman. I want to up and do those things that men do to earn a living rather than to spend my days as a friendless woman" (qtd. in Bullough and Bullough 162). And though the author of the 1873 article "Men's Clothes" in *Judy* disparages women for dressing as men, she can sympathize with the attraction: "There are surely few women alive," she writes, "who have not, sometime or other, wished they had been born men. Perhaps, therefore, the next best thing to being actually a man, is to dress up like one" ("Men's" 243). Robbins writes, "Gender can be a kind of clothing, a disguise—what [Luce] Irigaray calls a masquerade, a performance, in which appearance masks 'reality' and one cannot tell clearly precisely what one has seen" (210). For the women who desire to pass themselves off as men, dressing in men's clothing and intentionally performing obscures reality, indeed.

suit her.” Indeed, Philippa seems to unite necessity and “larking it” in a unique and rather sensational way.

In the second half of *The Wandering Heir*, Reade demonstrates through his treatment of Philippa that sex should not be the determining factor in what a person is or is not capable of doing. Bram Dijkstra argues that “Woman was forced to gather into herself all humanist qualities, all sweetness and light, all softness and compassion; she became the passive component in a dualism which allowed the male to arrogate to himself all active, aggressive (and hence economically progressive and lucrative), qualities of personality” (63-64). Reade, however, does not pigeonhole Philippa into this traditionally accepted (and expected) view. Though Philippa is a woman, she is the one who takes control after James gets into trouble with his master. Her decision to “go, and take James Annesley with her” demonstrates her independent strength and indomitable resolution (160). Philippa, in proposing the plan to James (who is still unaware that she is a woman), offers her credentials: “I shall command the expedition; I, who, by your leave, possess the two capital gifts of a commander, which are forecast, and courage; forecast, by which I do foresee all possible accidents, and provide for them; and courage, whereby I overcome and trample under foot those petty dangers that scare a mere ordinary man like thee” (160-61). Philippa is sure of her abilities, concocting plans, taking the lead, and becoming irritated when James does anything without her permission (“Oh! why will you do things without asking me?” [*TWH* 173]). She does not defer to James, though he is the man. She does not accept that her position as a woman is inferior to James’s. Rather, she seizes every opportunity afforded to her, substantiating Reade’s assertion that “her cunning was equal to her resolution” (87), and “[h]is wit [. . .] proved

equal to [the difficult game he had to play]” (172). Philippa, dressed as a man, doing men’s work, fully empowered and thoroughly enjoying herself, chooses to rescue James, once again undertaking the man’s role as she employs all her wits and wiles to get herself and James back to England.

The impropriety of Philippa’s choice to masquerade as a young man can be illustrated by a brief examination of cross-dressing in the theatre. Jane W. Stedman observes, “Women, of course, continued to play girls required by the plot to assume male disguise. Yet these characters were less frequent in Victorian than in Elizabethan drama, [. . .] perhaps because a serious heroine’s turning to male dress would suggest a certain indelicacy to audiences who associated ladylikeness with virtue” (21). A Victorian audience’s unwillingness to see an actress dressing in men’s clothes is significant because the stage provided a far more uninhibited environment than that of general society. Audiences were more forgiving of questionable or inappropriate behavior on stage because it was fantasy rather than real life. The fact that audiences considered women dressed in men’s clothes as an indelicate act, therefore, demonstrates the taboo nature of cross-dressing. A woman’s choice to don male attire was not condoned in society; the public believed women who chose to wear men’s clothes flouted virtue and did not adhere to appropriately ladylike action. In his portrayal of Philippa, therefore, Reade completely undermines traditionally espoused views of women, their role, and their place in society, clearly aligning himself with those women who had begun to agitate for increased rights and the freedom to break out of the conventional roles of wife and mother.

Through Philippa, Reade subverts Victorian proprieties in two additional ways, first, by including homosexual overtones throughout the middle section of the novel, and second, by overtly advocating androgyny. Reade reveals that over time “a tender friendship, and loyal partisanship, that belongs to youth” arises between Philippa and James—a natural result of the amount of time they spend together (112). However, for the unsuspecting reader who does not yet realize that Philip is Philippa in disguise, the friendship between Philippa (as Philip) and James contains homosexual overtones.²⁸ Philip’s effusion of praise for James’s hair: “I’d never despond, if I had such hair as that, instead of my black stuff” (108); Philip crying in sympathy at James’s sad history (113); Philip clinging, “sobbing and trembling, to [James’s] arm” (136); Philip’s admiration for James: “Oh! how grand, and strong, and brave, and beautiful you were” (136); and Philip’s misery “at being supplanted in James’s heart” (150). Even if the reader recognizes Philip as Philippa, however, James’s actions would shock a decorous Victorian reader. James “took Philip in his arms, and was going to kiss him heartily: but the boy panted, and put up both his hands” (113). Again, James cries, “let me kiss thee;”

²⁸ A careful reader might be able to discover that the spirited Philip *is* the audacious Philippa, but Reade does not make this association obvious. In fact, he does his best to conceal this information through his method of storytelling. At the beginning of the novel, Reade describes James’ history and narrates his journey to America. Then, in a plain shift, Reade introduces Philippa. At the beginning of chapter three, Reade writes, “Two little rivers meet, and run to the sea, as naturally as if they had always meant to unite; yet, go to their sources in the hills, how wide apart! [. . .] And so it is with many human lives: the facts of this story compel me to trace, from their tiny sources, two human currents, that I think will bear out my simile. The James Annesley river is set flowing; so now for the Joanna Philippa Chester, and old England” (61). Chapter four returns to the story of James—unhappy, depressed, imprisoned, and enslaved. He is traded to another master and introduced to a fellow servant whom Reade introduces as an entirely new character:

This Philip was a black-eyed youth, as sharp as a needle, who kept all the accounts, and sometimes rode on business. He flattered the mistress finely, and had got the length of her shoe, as the saying is. The master valued him on other grounds: he was saucy, but honest, and kept the books, though rather complicated, with marvellous precision and neatness. Thus valued on both sides, Philip, who by the by was older than he looked, gave himself considerable airs. (106)

Thus, Reade effectively cloaks Philippa’s identity, allowing her, by this time, not to just masquerade as a young man, but describing her as an entirely new character.

and he rushed at him to embrace him: but Philip caught up the inkstand in a moment, and threatened him” (129). Later, James protects Philip from the master Jedediah’s blows with soothing assurance, “Nay, be not alarmed, sweet Philip,” (136). Through Philippa’s decision to dress as a man, Reade is able to include a number of incidents in *The Wandering Heir* that upset Victorian propriety and scandalized Victorian readers. Though these scenes are mitigated somewhat when the reader discovers that Philip is a woman, Reade effectively subverts notions of propriety in nineteenth-century England.

In addition to subverting Victorian propriety through the inclusion of insinuations of a homosexual relationship, Reade also espouses the concept of androgyny.²⁹ In her men’s clothing, Philippa demonstrates strength of character, organization and a propensity for bookkeeping work, excellent leadership skills, and wit to guide her through any difficulty. When she wishes to return home, she shifts fluidly from young man to woman, employing her feminine wiles to astonish the captain with her beauty and to garner sympathy from him with her words and tears. Philippa’s overly-exaggerated speech does not fool the reader, but it does fool the Admiral: “I’m afear’d to be drowned,” she fawns, “if I go in any other ship but the one you do command. Oh, Admiral! you are too brave to deny the weak and helpless in their trouble” (174). It is with this dual persona that she eventually confesses the truth to James—a persona that James accepts and encourages. “Oh, Philippa,” he exclaims, “you saved me from despair, you saved me from servitude: I never could love another now you are a woman;

²⁹ In his interesting article on “The Androgyne in Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature,” Bram Dijkstra summarizes a fairly typical argument put forward by J.-K. Huysmans: “for the artists of the period the revival of the concept of the androgyne was a gesture of defiance toward the dominant values of their social environment” (62). Diane Long Hoeveler adds, “the ideology of androgyny, at least in its ideal construction, contradicted the new celebration of the feminine as domestic idol” (5). As Reade traced his matter-of-fact romance heroine through four decades, he always stayed at the cusp of social defiance; his heroines offer a nod to traditional conceptions of a woman’s role, but they simultaneously subvert Victorian proprieties in important and startling ways.

be my bosom friend still, but by a dearer title; be my sweetheart, my darling, my wife” (189). James asks that Philippa retain the characteristics that made them loyal friends and yet embody the characteristics that enable her to be his wife. And in the most telling passage, Reade shows how Philippa truly did act both parts—masculine and feminine—in perfect harmony, effectively balancing the two roles for the best result:

She was Philip one moment, all vivacity and cheerfulness; Philippa the next, all tenderness; and neither out of place. Her resolution, with her wit, and her tenderness, attacked his despondency with so many weapons, and such minute pertinacity, that at last she drove the dark cloud away, and the man plucked up heart again to fight his enemies, and love his sweetheart as she deserved. (227)

In Philippa, Reade portrays a new kind of woman who can navigate the stresses of the masculine while retaining her feminine characteristics.³⁰ Though she begins her adventure as a woman in men’s clothing, her experiences enable her to embrace *all* of her fundamental characteristics without having the masculine ones stifled by convention. She is bold, adventurous, and intelligent, and she can be those things in her men’s clothing. However, she is also tender, sympathetic, and sensitive; she is able freely to cultivate these characteristics as well. In *The Wandering Heir*, Reade portrays a forward-thinking heroine who does not submit to the strictures of the Victorian gender code. Through her, Reade endorses the efforts of women who sought more freedoms for themselves and less constraint concerning their roles. Philippa presents both a subversion

³⁰ See Sharon Aronofsky Weltman, *Ruskin’s Mythic Queen: Gender Subversion in Victorian Culture* for a discussion on the ways in which androgyny empowers women. She writes:

[W]e find that nineteenth-century authors and artists use the myth of androgyny not only to feminize the masculine, but also to empower the feminine. When critics complain that androgyny in literature usually allows male characters the freedom to be more traditionally feminine, without offering to female characters the corresponding freedom to be more masculine, they either reject or overlook the myriad phallic women in literature and art that can be defined as androgynous. (79)

of Victorian propriety and an affirmation of the work women were doing to acquire more liberty.

Sarah Mansell: A Parable for the Women's Rights Movement

Sarah Mansell is the heroine of Reade's final matter-of-fact romance, *Singleheart and Doubleface*. Though Reade initially seems to regress to a heroine that competes with Susan Merton in angelic submissiveness, he actually makes Sarah's character the most complicated of his matter-of-fact romance heroines. At the beginning of the novel, Reade highlights Sarah's potentially angelic qualities, but throughout, he provides hints that Sarah is not inherently an angel. The reader sees flashes of her strength as the novel progresses, and when Sarah accompanies James to America and then rejects him, her strength can be seen in full force. In the telling of this story, moreover, Reade accomplishes a secondary purpose. He creates a sort of parable wherein Sarah represents the transformation of the angel from the mid-nineteenth century to the New Woman nearing the end of the century. In this "direct, homely and outspoken" story, as the reviewer for the *Westminster Review* phrases it, Reade subtly offers his support for the women's right movement and intimates that though women have always possessed inherent strength, the time has come for revealing that strength once and for all ("Belles" 622).

At first glance, it appears that Reade reverts to the mid-Victorian angel in his portrayal of Sarah. She is "as true as steel" to her drunk, sponging, good-for-nothing husband, James (26). She pleads with her sister and Joseph Pinder, "Do not make me choose between my husband and you; you know which I *must* choose" (135). Her devotion to James is underscored again and again throughout the novel. For example,

when she decides to accompany James to America, she declares, “A wife’s home is by her husband’s side” (143). When James gives Sarah an order, Reade writes that she “obeyed the man, who was evidently her master” (11), and when her sister suggests she chose the wrong man, Sarah snaps, “I wouldn’t give my James’s little finger, drunk or sober, for a thousand Joseph Pinders” (34). Furthermore, when Sarah discovers that James has been stealing from her safe in order to support his drinking habit, she submits once more to his will, allowing him to take her money, as it is legally his: “Yes, James, you are the master. It was all a mistake; we had no idea” (95). And when he abandons her and flees to America, she waits patiently, convinced that he will return for his family. Sarah truly seems to adhere to the precept published in Aytoun’s essay: “The husband must appear, at all events nominally, as the head” (191), and her staunch commitment to James appears submissive and subservient.

Upon closer observation, however, Reade reveals flashes of strength in Sarah that begin to undermine the reader’s original perception that she is nothing more than a mid-Victorian angel. Though Sarah must often bring James home from the public-house, withstanding the “jeers [of the other drunks] and [James’s] drunken anger for an hour or two,” she refrains from complaining about her trials to her daughter or her friends (65). Sarah realizes that her “life was to be a battle” but she still refuses to request help from Deborah or Joseph (46). This independence, Reade observes, “indicates [. . .] the depth of her character” (28). Horrified when James exposes their daughter, Lucy, to his drunkenness, she “caught up her child with the strength of a lioness” and hurriedly left the room (40). In addition, Sarah works hard for her family when James will not. She taught herself “to write like a clerk, to keep her father’s books, to remember the price of

every article in the shop, to serve the customers when required, and to read for her own pleasure and instruction,” and when her father died, she took over the shop and continually increased her business (1-2). Writing in 1862, Aytoun declares that the “functions of the wife [. . .] ought to be exclusively domestic” and that the “husband is emphatically the breadwinner—the person whose duty it is to find the means of maintenance for the family” (190). This, however, is not at all the case in the Mansell family. James succumbs to drunkenness, and Sarah alone is responsible for providing an income for her family. Though Sarah remains loyal to James, she reveals her strength of character in numerous ways as she seeks to undergo her battle against a drunk husband alone while caring for her child and providing for her family.

Sarah’s inherent strength is increasingly brought to light as the novel progresses. Her determination to prove James’s fidelity toward her enables Sarah to make decisions that only a strong, confident, resolute woman could make. When Deborah expresses concerns that James is only after Sarah’s money, she replies, “If I thought that, I’d tear him from my heart, though I tore the heart out of my body. Perhaps you think because I’m single-hearted and loving, that I am all weakness. You don’t know me, then. When I do turn, I turn to stone” (108-9). Sarah plainly indicates that she will not accept less than James’s unreserved faithfulness and love. Deborah’s subsequent fear, that James has a mistress in America, gives Sarah pause. Though her heart is docile enough to believe that James loves her for more than her money, she cannot countenance the thought of competing with another woman for James’s affection. Unwilling to give up James again, she decides “with iron firmness,” to accompany him to America (138). She avows, “I could not love, and doubt, and live. I’ll put [James’s fidelity] to the test” (138)(142).

This is the moment of conversion, as Sarah relinquishes passive subservience. Reade declares, “From that hour she took the lead” (142). No longer willing to trust blindly to James’s assertions, Sarah puts him to the test. She upends her life, abandoning friends, her store, and the comfort of home in order to determine the depth of James’s devotion to her.

Sarah’s strength is revealed in its full light once they arrive in New York. She and Lucy are once more abandoned by James, as he seeks alcohol and the arms of his American wife. After Sarah and Lucy find themselves in the home of Elizabeth Haynes and Sarah hears James’s exultant voice assuring Elizabeth he brought her the money he promised, Sarah’s single-hearted commitment to James is utterly destroyed: “‘Villain—drunkard—thief and traitor,’ said she to herself. ‘All this time everybody knew him but me. I’ve shed my last tear for him. I’ve turned against him. I’m a stone’” (171). In that moment, Sarah tears James out of her heart, just as she promised Deborah she would do. And in that moment, Sarah effects a plan of which a Dickensian angel could not conceive. Refusing to leave her savings with James and his wife, she creeps into their room, steals James’s waistcoat, cuts out the money that has been hidden inside the lining, sews back up the stitches, returns the waistcoat to their room, and pauses, watching the two of them sleep. Reade writes, “The resolute woman who looked on stood there to be cured or die. Her flesh crawled and quivered at first, but she stood and clinched her teeth, and deliberately burned this sight into her heart, that she might never forget it, nor, by forgetting, be induced to forgive it” (173). Just as she promised, her heart is stone. But Sarah’s plan continues; she leaves a note for Elizabeth revealing James’s treachery, takes

a berth for herself and Lucy on the next ship leaving for England, and then, at the last moment, her face “solemn, grave, and powerful” (191), she reveals herself to James:

A woman, who had caught sight of James Mansell, but hidden herself till then, rushed along the deck to the poop, followed by a girl. She whipped a packet of notes out of her bosom, and brandished them high in the air to him, then drew her child’s head to her waist.

That is what she did. But how can words convey the grandeur of those impassioned gestures, the swiftness of their sequence, and the tale that towering figure and those flaming eyes told to the villain and fool who had possessed her, plagued her for years, and hit upon the only way to lose her. (196-97)

Sarah Mansell defends her husband, protects her child, travels to America under dubious circumstances to prove her husband’s loyalty, discovers his betrayal instead, and returns to England with notes in hand. At the beginning of the novel, Sarah appears to be one of the old Victorian angels. Ultimately, however, Reade reveals a fierce, though loyal, woman who protects her loved ones and does so in ways unthinkable to the mid-Victorian woman.

In her 1874 article, Shore reveals the changing conception of women’s roles:

But [true grace, beauty, and sweetness] can hardly exist—at least, hardly last—without a certain strength and elevation of character. True sweetness means strength, not servility, not indiscriminating devotion (beautiful and commendable in a dog we allow, but not quite an adequate expression of womanly affection), not characterless goodnature [sic], not the near liveliness of youth, nor silliness. (161-62)

Ten years later, with the publication of *Singleheart and Doubleface*, Reade seems to defy all the parameters Shore sets forth for a true woman. Initially, Sarah exhibits little strength and much servility and characterless good nature. Ultimately, however, she rejects these characteristics. As she stands impressively on the deck of the ship waving the stolen money in James’s direction, Reade makes it clear that this is no ordinary woman. He has provided hints of Sarah’s strength throughout the novel, but he reveals it

in full force with Sarah's actions at Elizabeth's house and on the ship. In his last matter-of-fact romance, Reade sets the stage for the ultimate subversion of Victorian views of women. For those who have yet to embrace the tenets of emancipation, and there are many, Sarah is a strong-willed woman who undermines James's plan to live in a bigamous relationship with two women in the same city. For the women who have devoted their lives to emancipation, however, the reaction is a different one. Disgusted by Sarah's almost dog-like servility, these women resent a reversion to the angelic woman of the mid-century, and they are surprised and pleased by her transformation at the end of the novel. Reade introduces a seemingly weak-willed woman—a woman who would not impress many of his readers. But in the end, true strength emerges as Reade reveals Sarah's transformation in a powerful and dramatic way.

Reade's portrayal of Sarah is deliberate and well-timed for publication in 1884. While Reade superficially tells the story of Sarah and James Mansell, he also subtly narrates the far more wide-ranging narrative of women's progress over the course of his own career. Sarah's inherent strength is obscured by her devotion to James and her willingness to act the part of domestic angel. However, as Reade shows, Sarah possesses strength that she increasingly learns to exercise. Reade parallels the conventional views of women at mid-century with Sarah's subservient attitude and as the narrative progresses, uses Sarah to reveal the continuing changes in women battling for their rights. Sarah's transformation into a strong woman coincides with the transformation of the Angel in the House to the New Woman at the the *fin de siècle*.³¹ Thus, Reade's portrayal

³¹ Frye writes "But the prestige of 'realism' in the nineteenth century reflected the prevailing fashions of that culture, nearly all of which emphasized some form of correspondence, the paralleling of mental structures with something in the outer world. It was an age of representational painting and realistic fiction, and of analogical, or, as I generally call it, allegorical criticism, approaching works of literature as

of Sarah in *Singleheart and Doubleface* elicited powerful responses from all readers. Because he slowly reveals Sarah's true strength over the course of the novel, readers experienced conflicting reactions. For those advocating for equality between men and women, the novel commences with the unpromising portrayal of a passive wife who must embrace and employ her strength by the novel's end. For those indifferent to or against extending women's rights, *Singleheart and Doubleface* provides a shocking turn of events near the end of the novel as Sarah finally reveals the strength she has been struggling to release throughout.

The Role of the Victorian Woman and the Matter-of-Fact Romance

Reade's matter-of-fact romances are difficult to categorize because they include so many different elements—sensation, romance, novel-with-a-purpose, adventure fiction, historical—any number of components that all unite to create this genre. In the previous two chapters, I focus primarily on the ways in which *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash* are considered matter-of-fact romances from the perspective of subversions of institutional abuse. In this chapter, I have broadened my analysis to encompass the ways in which Reade creates heroines that participate in the ongoing debate about women's rights and a woman's role in Victorian society. Beginning with Reade's earliest matter-of-fact romance and progressing to his final, posthumous work, one can see a radical transformation in the women he portrays. This transformation occurs as a direct result of the type of genre Reade creates.

historical or psychological documents" (*Secular* 45). This provides an interesting contrast with Reade's use of romance in *Singleheart and Doubleface*. If, as I argue, Reade is providing an allegory for the transition of women's rights from mid-century to the publication of the novel in 1884, this demonstrates another instance of the integration of romance and realism that comprises his matter-of-fact romance.

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, the debate about women's rights continued to increase in strength as more women—and men—advocated for increased freedom for women. This dispute over the appropriate role of women in Victorian society permeated contemporary newspapers, journals, novels, essays, and philosophical treatises. As Reade culled his print sources, he would have gathered an increasingly numerous collection of opinions and viewpoints concerning this issue. In addition, women were simply more courageous and outspoken in their actions as the century progressed. More women dressed as men for fun; an increasing number of women wooed and secretly wed other women in their men's clothes. Women became more independent and confident, owning their own stores, making their own decisions, rejecting the assumptions that they must marry in order to be whole human beings. As stories of women's greater liberties cropped up in the newspapers and journals, Reade would have also had access to—and been engrossed by—them. Reade's heroines developed as the Victorian woman progressed. Undoubtedly, Reade supported these changes and advocated on behalf of women; this is why his heroine could evolve where the heroines of other fiction writers remained stagnantly angelic. It is precisely because Reade immersed himself in the contemporary topics of his day that his heroine had a chance to unleash her inner strength. Reade's matter-of-fact romance heroines are founded on fact, enriched with romance, and presented to Victorian readers and readers of today as a palpable illustration of the Victorian woman's incredible transformation.

CHAPTER SIX

Jack of All Trades: Psychological Subversions of Power

Spare the pitchfork—spoil the elephant.

(247)

I have chosen to address Reade's second matter-of-fact romance, *Jack of All Trades*, last because it is the most difficult of the five to evaluate. Vastly different from the other four, *Jack* is the history of a man's commercial successes and failures, capped by the singular experience of working with and subsequently owning a performing elephant named Mademoiselle Djek.¹ Encouraged by a "literary gent" who is familiar with his "horrible story," John Lott agrees to chronicle his own life, using his various occupations as benchmarks (70).² First, he built and repaired fiddles; next he became a woodpainter, a rocket-man,³ a rocket-master,⁴ an amateur actor, a sham violinist,⁵ a dresser of actors, a dresser of supers,⁶ and last but not least, an odd-jobs man at the

¹ Djek's name is spelled a number of different ways in various print sources—Djek, Djeck, D'Jeck, Dgek. I retain Reade's spelling, "Djek," except when quoting from other sources.

² *Jack of All Trades* was published with *Autobiography of a Thief* in one volume entitled *Cream*. Throughout this chapter, I will use *JAT* for my citations since my analysis focuses on *Jack*, but one can find the citation in the Works Cited section under the title *Cream*.

³ John's designation for one who sets off fireworks.

⁴ John's term for the one who builds fireworks.

⁵ In a humorous scene, John accepts the position of second-violin in Mr. Yates's entertainment at the Adelphi theatre called "At Home." John, however, cannot actually play the violin, and so through the course of many performances, he keeps two bows—one that he uses for tuning, and a "well soaped" bow that he uses for the performance; a "greasy bow" slides inaudibly across the strings (124). John fakes his way through every performance, with a "diligent face and [. . .] shaking his right wrist like Viotti" (125).

⁶ Supernumerary; according to the OED, an "extra;" a term used in theatre and cinematography.

theatre.⁷ John narrates these occupations and his invariable failure in the first fifty pages of the novel and then comes to the real purpose of his story: his connection with Djek, “one of the most celebrated females of modern times” (72). This connection, he writes, “coloured all [his] life, or the cream of it” (128). His experiences with Djek occupy the remainder of the narrative.

Even after the narrative settles into the description of John’s adventures with Djek, the novel is still difficult to evaluate. Picaresque in nature, this matter-of-fact romance has hardly the same trajectory as the others. There is no double story that eventually comes together as a single narrative.⁸ There seems to be no social purpose to this novel on the surface; Reade neither advocates for institutional reform nor questions Victorian conventions, particularly as they concern women. Furthermore, *Jack* is the only matter-of-fact romance that is narrated by a character in the story, and because of this, *Jack* contains far less dialogue than any of the other matter-of-fact romances. Indeed, at first glance, the novel does not appear to parallel the other four matter-of-fact romances in any significant way.

Though *Jack* differs in prominent ways from the other four novels, Reade does place it within the matter-of-fact romance genre on purpose. As one begins to study the novel more carefully, one realizes that *Jack* is, without a doubt, a fiction based on facts. *Jack* actually appears to be the most historically-based novel with each page full of true-life incidents that can be verified through the newspaper reports detailing Djek’s comings

⁷ Obviously, these varied occupations give rise to the title of the story, *Jack of All Trades*.

⁸ *Never Too Late* contains the prison section and the Australia section; *Hard Cash*, the “Love” stream and the “Cash” stream; *The Wandering Heir* includes the James Annesley story and the Joanna Philippa Chester story; and *Singleheart and Doubleface* is comprised of the England marriage and the American marriage.

and goings.⁹ Because there are so many historical facts, *Jack* even seems to blur the line between biography and fiction. However, a close examination of the novel and the historical facts on which *Jack* is based reveals the ways in which Reade infuses the narrative with romance.

Although *Jack* is actually Reade's second matter-of-fact romance, I have chosen to address it in my last chapter because it provides a cohesive understanding of subversions which is, in some ways, missing from the other four novels. I have addressed subversiveness in the other four matter-of-fact romances as it pertains to particular elements such as power in the institution or Victorian propriety, but *Jack* examines subversiveness as a whole, revealing subversions of truth within the newspaper reports, subversions of power between Lott and Djek—both physical and psychological—and subversions of control as it relates to the author and reader of the text. In this chapter, therefore, I first trace the historical journey of Djek through reports found in newspapers and journals, emphasizing Djek's fame and the interest of the public in her whereabouts and actions. Next, I demonstrate Reade's incorporation of historical sources into his novel and show that he actually reveals a subversion of the newspaper reports detailing Djek and her keepers. Through this analysis, the intertextual nature of *Jack* is made clear. After demonstrating the presence of and accounting for intertextuality, I consider the subversiveness of the matter-of-fact romance, arguing that *Jack* should be read as an allegory for psychological subversions of power. Finally, I conclude with an allegorical analysis of the relationship between the reader and Reade.

⁹ That *Jack* appears the most historical of the matter-of-fact romances is due in large part to the fact that there is only one storyline. Instead of incorporating facts and romance within separate "streams," all facts and romance fall within the experience of a single character.

John Lott and Mademoiselle Djek: A Matter-of-Fact

Jack of All Trades was published in 1858 together with *Autobiography of a Thief* under the title *Cream*.¹⁰ In *Jack*, Reade reveals the truth about elephants and their keepers as it has been revealed to him by his acquaintance, John Lott. Lott, known primarily as “one of the most skillful ‘forgers’ of old instruments that the world has ever known” (Payne 306), serves as the hero of *Jack* and is Djek’s final owner and keeper before she is killed in Geneva. Though Lott was an important violin maker, most biographers skip over the more “colorful” parts of his life, including his early attempts to earn a livelihood and his numerous years working with and subsequently owning Djek. Instead, these biographers simply reference Reade’s *Jack* as a source for more information about the rest of Lott’s life.¹¹ In this chapter, I do the opposite—I provide references for Lott’s career as a violin maker and focus solely on his interaction with the elephant Djek.

¹⁰ Interestingly, though the title page announces that *Cream* “contains *Jack of All Trades: A Matter-of-Fact Romance*, and the *Autobiography of a Thief*,” the body of *Autobiography* is actually printed first (1). Thus, *Jack of All Trades* follows *Autobiography* and concludes the volume, *Cream*. This ordering is significant because it places *Autobiography* closer to *Never Too Late*, of which it forms a part. Once the final tale of *Never Too Late* has been related (in the form of the narrative, *Autobiography*), Reade commences his second matter-of-fact romance, *Jack*. *Autobiography* is not given the subtitle, “a matter-of-fact romance.” The *Times* reviewer remarks of the novel’s title, “doubtless Mr. Reade’s philosophy could offer some reason [for using the title *Cream*] which uninstructed we are unable to discover for ourselves” (“*Cream*” 6).

¹¹ John Lott appears to be a fairly obscure figure except within the community of violin makers. It seems that Reade has written the most comprehensive narrative of Lott’s life. Because they are writing biographical notes for dictionaries about instruments and musicians, Payne and Fleming skip over parts of Lott’s life not related to his violin-making. Nevertheless, it is curious that they do not add any more about Lott’s colorful life. Fleming succinctly writes that Lott is the “hero of Charles Reade’s Romance, ‘Jack of All Trades’” (89), and Payne notes briefly that “John Lott was immortalised by Charles Reade in his word [sic] *Jack of All Trades*” (306).

Though George Hart and Hugh Reginald Haweis are also concerned with biography of instrument makers, both men include more extended accounts of Lott’s life and relationship with Reade. Hart writes: His career was both chequered and curious, sufficiently so indeed, to cause our eminent novelist, Charles Reade, to make it the subject of “Jack of All Trades: a Matter-of-Fact Romance.” Jack Lott (as he was familiarly styled) therefore shares with Jacob Stainer the honour of having supplied subject-matter for writers of fiction. It must, however, be said that whilst Dr. Schuler’s “Jacob Stainer” is mainly pure fiction, “Jack of all Trades” is rightly entitled “a matter-of-fact romance.” I have many times heard John Lott relate the

That Lott was not well-known is evidenced by the review of *Cream* in the London *Times*. The reviewer writes,

Mr. Reade [. . .] sets himself to record what we conceive to be some real experiences in the byways of life. His “Jack of all Trades” must have some foundation in facts, for it is too circumstantial and singular a story to be altogether imaginary, and it also mentions some well-known names which Mr. Reade, we should think, would not have introduced without adequate warranty. (“Cream” 6)

Lott’s personal history is not famous enough for the reviewer to recognize immediately, but Reade’s inclusion of famous personalities such as Mr. Yates,¹² Franconi,¹³ Huguét,¹⁴ Wombwell,¹⁵ and Djek herself suggests to the reviewer that Reade must be incorporating facts of some sort into his novel. Interestingly, the reviewer also seems to espouse the belief that Reade insists upon throughout his whole career—that truth is stranger than fiction. While the well-known individuals help to emphasize the veracity of Reade’s tale, the very singularity of the tale serves as proof that it must be true.

Lott’s historical significance is surpassed by the legendary elephant he tended. In the early nineteenth century, menageries began to gain popularity in England. George Wombwell’s menagerie was, according to Kurt Koenigsberger, “[t]he most successful,” and he remained proprietor “from 1805 until his death in 1850” (50). Koenigsberger emphasizes the importance and success of Wombwell’s menagerie, writing, “a number of

chief incidents so graphically described by Charles Reade. He was certainly a man of singular ability, and his talents were strangely varied. (310-11)

Haweis adds, “A romantic interest must always attach itself to this fine maker [John Lott] on account of his early Bohmeian life, recorded by Charles Reade in a memoir called ‘Jack of All Trades.’ Haweis informs his readers that “Charles Reade [. . .] knew Lott intimately,” and that “[i]t was only after the loss of Djek that John Lott came again to London and took up the fiddle trade, which he had learned in boyhood” (219).

¹² Yates was an actor and manager of the Adelphi Theatre in London.

¹³ Franconi was the proprietor of a famous Parisian circus.

¹⁴ Huguét owned Djek and subsequently sold her to Lott.

¹⁵ Wombwell was founder and proprietor of the famous menagerie in England.

shorter-lived outfits such as Atkins' and Hilton's ran distant seconds to Wombwell" (50).

In elaborating on the popular menageries that began to crop up in England, John S.

Clarke lists a number of animals that were part of such traveling shows, including lions, tigers, leopards, jaguars, bison, antelopes, and elephants (82-83). As the menagerie increased in popularity, so, too, did the elephant. Koenigsberger observes,

The spectacle of the elephant across the variants of the menagerie consistently took an orientalist cast, whether the animal's presentation was essentially static, with a caged animal available for casual viewing; dynamic, with an elephant as part of a scripted theatrical production; or interactive, with the elephant giving rides, shaking hands with its trunk, or waving handkerchiefs to ladies. The elephant was employed in performances representing North Africa, the Middle East, and India, and it became a kind of synecdoche or stand-in for those exotic and difficult-to-imagine places. (66-67)

That the elephant became a powerful representation for exotic places only served to increase its popularity and heighten the interest of an already curious public. The elephant was a lucrative investment for its proprietor because it was a stand-alone performer, eliminating the need for an elaborate menagerie. Koenigsberger writes, "by the end of the decade the London theaters began to mount oriental spectacles, such as the Adelphi's *The Elephant of Siam* in 1829, around the central presence of the elephant. These signal successes sparked a rage for performing elephants across England in the 1830s" (68). The starring role of *The Elephant of Siam* was for none other than Mademoiselle Djek.

Djek was well known throughout Great Britain, Ireland, America, and the continent. Performing from the end of the 1820s through 1837, her fame coincided with the performing elephant craze that was sweeping England. Her debut at the Adelphi Theatre in London was tremendously admired, and her subsequent provincial tour also proved a lucrative and popular success. It is not a surprise, therefore, that the newspapers

and journals would track Djek's every move. Reports in newspapers as diverse as London's *Morning Post*, Dublin's *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, Edinburgh's *Caledonian Mercury*, and Maryland's *Baltimore Patriot* carried stories on the comings and goings of the famous performing elephant. In the pages that follow, I examine Djek's history from the standpoint of the newspapers, tracing her course through England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, America, France, Germany, Bavaria, Prussia, and Switzerland, and I use newspaper reports to establish her popularity despite several attacks she made on her keepers or those associated with her. I then retrace Djek's course using the narrative in *Jack*.¹⁶ Based on the evidence of John Lott, Reade reveals Djek's hidden behavior, which is sinister and threatening, and discloses the ways in which her keepers and proprietors conceal the truth of her brutality. By comparing the newspaper reports to the matter-of-fact romance, I argue that Reade's "insider" narrative subverts the accounts of Djek found in the newspapers. Through *Jack*, Reade argues that those associated with Djek subverted the truth of her character so successfully that the newspapers became the dupes of the proprietors.

Fiction in Fact: Djek's History in the News

In *Jack*, Reade writes, "In the month of April 1828, Mr. Yates, theatrical manager, [. . .] went over to Paris and engaged Mademoiselle Djek" (128). While the novel seems to indicate that a short time passed between Yates's negotiation and Djek's performance, newspaper records show that nearly eight months elapse before Djek

¹⁶ Throughout, I use the eminent naturalist and surgeon Francois Mayor's history of Djek, entitled *Miss Djeck* for supporting historical evidence. Mayor was familiar with Lott and Djek, and he was the surgeon who put Djek to death in Geneva after she was deemed too dangerous. Lott refers to Mayor as "Dr. Mayo" who he befriended as he tried to convince the authorities of Geneva to admit him and Djek within the city limits (258).

undertakes her first performance.¹⁷ On December 4, 1829, Djek made her debut at the Adelphi Theatre in *The Elephant of Siam* (Great 2), and the *Morning Post* proclaims, “The Burletta was eminently successful, and the House was crowded in every part” (“Adelphi” 3). According to the *Hampshire Advertiser*, *The Elephant of Siam* ran through the entire season at the Adelphi, closing successfully on April 10, 1830, at which point Yates took Djek on a provincial tour (“Adelphi” 3).¹⁸ Throughout the months of Djek’s performances at the Adelphi Theatre, Yates advertised sedulously in the newspapers, and Djek performed for a packed house every night.

Even after Djek’s run ended in London, the newspapers and journals were still interested in her whereabouts. Throughout 1830, amusing stories continued to appear about Djek’s travels and behavior. The *Morning Post* prints a whimsical story in which Djek wandered out of her enclosure one Sunday morning and into a chapel full of worshipers (“Royal” 4), and the *Times* reports that the toll-gatekeeper at Ashburn “was saluted by a friendly bow from the stupendous quadruped” (“On the Night” 3). When Yates sent Djek to perform in America, the newspapers traced her voyage across the sea. At the beginning of November, the *Morning Post* announces her departure, writing that on “Saturday morning, at four o’clock” Djek “embarked on board the *Ontario*” (“Departure” 3). The report adds that “An immense concourse of persons were assembled in boats on the Thames to witness *Mademoiselle’s* departure” (“Departure” 3). In December, the *Morning Post* reports, “Mademoiselle D’Jeck, the celebrated Adelphi

¹⁷ The narrator is aware of the gaps in the story. He writes dejectedly, “All through, I spare the reader much, though I dare say he doesn’t see it” (227).

¹⁸ Francois Mayor observes that Yates engaged Djek for the winter season, which coincides with an opening in December and the close of the season in April: “M. Yates, propriétaire du theater Adelphi de Londres, vint engager pour l’hiver cette nouvelle actrice, qui passa en Angleterre où elle donna plusieurs représentations du *Roi de Siam*” (8).

elephant, was obliged to be thrown overboard in a storm on her passage to America” (“Mademoiselle D’Jeck” 3), which *Freeman’s Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* (via the *Intelligence*) refutes a little more than a week later: “We can contradict from the best authority, the report that the elephant was thrown overboard during a storm, in order to lighten the ship [. . .]. No news of the kind has reached Lloyd’s, where she was insured, nor has Mr. Yates any fact of this kind” (“Mademoiselle” 3). The *Baltimore Patriot* announces Djek’s return trip to England on July 6, 1831 (“Celebrated” 4). Indeed, this “celebrated” elephant held the interest of English readers long after she ceased to perform in the Adelphi Theatre.

Djek’s fame was not due solely to her performances, however. She also gained notoriety for attacking her keepers and those associated with her. On December 31, 1829, *Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post* reports that Djek took “Mr. Yates by her trunk, and raising him aloft, dashed him at the next moment to the ground, with so much force as to render necessary copious bleeding on the part of the sufferer” (“Elephant” 4). Later the next year, *Jackson’s Oxford Journal* reports that at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Djek “seized [her keeper, M. Baptiste] Bernard with her trunk, [. . .] and dashed the unfortunate Bernard on the ground and killed him” (“Dreadful” 2).¹⁹ Despite these reports, however, Djek continued to be admired and beloved.

After her return from America, Djek was taken to the continent for a lengthy tour, including stints in France, Bavaria, Prussia, and Switzerland. While in Geneva, her

¹⁹ In the first week and a half of September, 1830, *The Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, *Freeman’s Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, *Bristol Mercury*, *Hull Packet and Humber Mercury*, and *Liverpool Mercury* all ran similar stories about the death of Bernard Baptiste. His death is also mentioned in passing in *Newcastle Magazine*’s October 1830 article, “The Elephant” (466). Days later, more reports began to circulate about the inquest concerning Bernard’s death, which were included in newspapers such as the *Newcastle Courant*, *Caledonian Mercury*, *Morning Post*, *Belfast News-Letter*, and the *Bury and Norwich Post*.

behavior became so unpredictable that the authorities of the city demanded that she be put to death. Here the newspaper reports differ dramatically. The *Morning Post* writes, “The celebrated elephant Miss Djeck [. . .] was shot, on the 27th instant. at Geneva, her manners having lately diverged from the strict rules of propriety, and it being found impossible to reclaim her” (“Death” 6). The *Bristol Mercury* reports, “on account of her extreme violence, her keepers had been obliged to shut [Djek] up in a ditch of our city [to be] put to death this morning by cannon shot” (“Letter” 1). The *New Bedford Mercury* informs its readers, “Mademoiselle Djeck, the celebrated elephant, after a protracted illness at Geneva, was purchased by a Doctor Mayor, who killed her with a ball fired from a four pounder, to the great distress of the inhabitants” (“Mademoiselle” 1). The *Bristol Mercury* and the *New Bedford Mercury* do report the same outcome for Djek’s carcass: “The flesh of Miss Djeck was promptly bought up by our gourmands at the ordinary price of butcher’s meat” (“Letter” 1). Despite this one similarity, however, the varying reports concerning the end of Djek’s life reveal that the newspapers were not fully aware of the situation in Geneva, and more broadly, the reason for Djek’s ultimate demise.

Fact in Fiction: Djek’s History According to Reade

Reade’s record of Djek’s history is far darker than that conveyed by the newspapers and journals of the late 1820s and 1830s, though nearly all the main facts of Djek’s life can be substantiated through a comparison of *Jack*, Mayor’s *Miss Djeck*, and contemporary news reports. Lott’s²⁰ first evaluation of Djek is as follows:

²⁰ *Jack* complicates the narrative structure of the matter-of-fact romance. For the first and only time, Reade uses a character as narrator in the novel. Because the character, John Lott, is based on the real-life man, the narration in the novel is even more complicated. Reade is not using a documented biography

“Mademoiselle Djek was an elephant of great size, and unparalleled sagacity. She had been for some time performing in a play at Franconi’s and created a great sensation in Paris” (128). She was engaged by Yates “at a salary of £40 a-week and her grub” (129).²¹ Lott next describes Djek’s arrival “at the stage-door in Maiden Lane” where “all traffic [was] interrupted except what could pass under her belly” because she was too large to enter the stage-door (129, 130).²² At first, Lott is as gleeful as the newspapers with Djek and her performances. Since he works for the elephant, he reaps the benefits of her popularity. However, as the papers reported, Djek soon injured Mr. Yates. Lott relates that Yates “lay in bed six weeks with [his injury]” (144). Lott emphasizes that Yates’s recovery took a month and a half; this indicates a far more serious injury than the one lightly reported in *Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post* wherein Yates “sustained no lasting injury” (“Elephant” 4).

After the first attack, Lott becomes more leery of the elephant. Though Djek’s reputation continues to increase, Lott darkly hints that “her popularity was destined to receive a shock as far as we little ones behind the curtain were concerned” (143). In quick succession, Pippin is knocked down by Djek, who “bored two frightful holes in his skull” with her teeth (143), and then at “Liverpool she laid hold of Bernard and would

by Lott to write *Jack*; rather, he incorporates facts into *Jack* from conversations with Lott and the newspapers he collects from the 1820s and 1830s. In my analysis going forward, I will refer to Lott as the fictional narrator of the events of *Jack*. When I evaluate the novel and its subversive characteristics, I will refer to Reade as the author of the novel.

²¹ In a humorous article, the *Morning Post* indicates that the fee for engaging Djek was to be “Four thousand francs per month (160*l.*)” (“Theatrical” 4). The reported monthly fee coincides with the imposed £40 per week salary mentioned in *Jack*.

²² *Trewman’s Flying Post* corroborates: “her ladyship could not enter the Theatre until [a] great part of the stage-door entrance was removed” (“Friday” 1).

have settled his hash, but Elliot came between them” (146). At Morpeth, Djek attacks

Lott:

I was awoke by a shout and a crunching, and felt myself dropping into the straw out of the elephant’s mouth. [. . .] I rolled out of the straw giving tongue a good one, and ran out of the shed. I had no sooner got to the inn than I felt a sickening pain in my shoulder and fainted away.

Her huge tooth had gone into my shoulder like a wedge. It was myself I had heard being crunched. (156-57)

While Lott is in the inn, Djek attacks Mr. Huguet’s servant, Baptiste, and Lott surmises that she must have “struck him with her trunk, perhaps more than once,—his breastbones were broken to chips, and every time he breathed, which by God’s mercy was not many minutes, the man’s whole chest frame puffed out like a bladder with the action of his lungs—it was too horrible to look at” (159). Lott describes Djek’s attack on a baker in London (199-200), an actor in Paris (205-6), Monsieur Huguet in Donchery (228-30), and a clergyman in Geneva (257-58).²³ He also narrates Djek’s murder of Pippin, who had already been attacked once. Lott recalls, “all in a moment, without reason or warning of any sort, she spun round between us on one heel like a thing turning on a pivot, and strode back like lightening at Pippin. [. . . She] was upon him and struck him down with her trunk and trampled upon him, she then wheeled round and trudged back as if she had merely stopped to brush off a fly, or pick up a stone” (215-16). With the great number of attacks and murders that he witnesses, it is no wonder that Lott mistrusts Djek, calling her “butcheress” (161), “the cunningest, most treacherous, and blood-thirsty beast that ever played the butcher among mankind” (164), “murderess” (217), and “four-legged hussey”

²³ Mayor reports that “Miss Djeck, depuis 1814 jusqu’à sa mort, a blessé 13 personnes de manière à les obliger à garder le lit, et tué trois de ses cornacs” (5). This tally differs slightly from Lott’s: Lott lists eight who were injured and two who died, though Mayor’s list of injuries commences with Djek’s first attack in 1814, and Lott does not encounter Djek until 1829. The three keepers Mayor notes that Djek kills are Baptiste, Albertario (called Pippen in *Jack*), and Elliot. Elliot does not die from injuries in *Jack* but rather from drunkenness.

(227). These appellations are certainly different than those of the papers; the “celebrated actress” (“On the Night” 3), “an animal of so much sagacity” (“Elephant” 470), and the “fascinating [. . .] elephant” (“Friday” 1) are among the many designations given to Djek.

Despite Lott’s antipathy toward Djek, he is forced to purchase her for twenty thousand francs from Monsieur Huguet after Djek attacks him. Lott writes, “he had me in a fix and used his power” (231). In the few pages remaining of the narrative, Lott describes his success in showing Djek to a curious public in Bavaria and in Prussia and his ultimate undoing when Djek attacks the clergyman at Geneva. Lott recollects, “We raised the clergyman and carried him home, and in half an hour a mob was before the door and stones as big as your fists thrown in at the windows: this however was stopped by the authorities. But the next day my lady was arrested and walked off to the fortress and there confined” (258). Lott remonstrates with the authorities and goes to trial on Djek’s behalf, but “Two days after the trial, out came the sentence—Death!” (261). He describes the scene as the authorities placed a cannon at the gate, waited for Djek to come into a good position, and then the “gunner took the opportunity—applied his linstock and fired” (263).²⁴ Just as the papers reported, Lott then sold the elephant meat “at four sous per pound for about £40 sterling” (264). And thus, the story of Lott’s experience with the celebrated performing elephant, Djek, comes to an end.

²⁴ Mayor’s account of Djek’s death is much more detailed than that of Lott’s description in *Jack*. As the surgeon in charge of killing Djek, Mayor assures his readers that he tried to kill Djek as humanely as possible. He did not want to use a cannon to kill her because of the violence of that manner of death. He also wanted to avoid using poison so that the meat might possibly be sold “pour procurer quelque dédommagement à son dernier maître” (12). Mayor eventually decided on shooting the elephant with a rifle in the head at “la plus vulnérable pour atteindre le cerveau” as the quickest and most painless way of death (13). However, though the two most skillful riflemen shot Djek, she did not die immediately. Thus, Mayor decided to put Djek out of her misery by shooting her through the heart with a cannon at which point she died.

Accounting for Djek's Reputation in the News

The differences between the newspaper reports and Lott's narrative are plain; the papers record Djek's exploits while Lott primarily describes her attacks and murders. Throughout *Jack*, Reade works to subvert the sympathetic view that the newspapers adopted with regard to Djek. Through Lott's narration, Reade reveals that Djek's owners and keepers vigilantly conceal her true character from the public, obscuring her violence by transferring pity from the dead or injured keepers to the elephant. In addition, Reade emphasizes the strict secrecy surrounding the way in which keepers control Djek. As Lott divulges in his narrative, the key to the keeper's power over Djek is in the use of a pitchfork to stab her into submission. This gruesome form of control and punishment, however, is carefully concealed from a public so fond of the celebrated elephant. Through these two types of suppression, the proprietors and keepers are able to create a persona for Djek so that the public cannot detect her true nature. Only when these two forms of concealment are exposed does the public call for the killing of Djek. *Jack* offers a behind-the-scenes look at keeping an elephant and reveals what happens when the secrets of the proprietors are unraveled before the public.

Throughout *Jack*, Reade argues that the proprietors subvert truth. Huguet, Yates, Djek's keepers, and even Lott, were forced to obscure Djek's brutal behavior in order to continue turning a profit. An elephant had been put to death in Geneva in 1820 after he could no longer be controlled by his keeper, Mademoiselle Garnier, and once Djek's violent tendencies were known, the public would have demanded her death. Therefore, each one associated with Djek continually misrepresents truth. Before Lott became aware of Djek's aggression, he asked her owner, Monsieur Huguet, why she would have

turned on Mr. Yates. Huguet tells Lott “that Djek had miscalculated her strength, that she wanted to caress so kind a manager who was always feeding and courting her, and had embraced him too warmly” (143). After Bernard is nearly killed, he leaves Djek’s company and warns Lott to be on his guard:

We old hands have all got our orders to say she is a duck. Ah, you have found that out of yourself. Well now, as I have done with her, I will tell you a part of her character, for I know her well. Once she injures you she can never forgive you. So long as she has never hurt you there’s a fair chance she never will. I have been about her for years,²⁵ and she never molested me till yesterday. But—if she once attacks a man, that man’s death-warrant is signed—I can’t altogether account for it: but trust my experience it is so.

It is clear in this confession that Bernard would have kept the secret of Djek’s character to himself if he had not chosen to leave the service of the elephant. Keeping Djek’s behavior a secret is absolutely crucial for the prosperity of the keepers. Thus, in Huguet’s explanation to Lott, the reader sees how he misrepresents the case to put Djek in the best light—both to his employed keeper and to the public at large—and in Bernard’s explanation, one realizes that positive misrepresentation is an enforced requirement for working closely with Djek. However, the natural consequence of positively misrepresenting Djek’s behavior is an almost invariable necessity to vilify the keepers. If the public believes the keepers abuse the “docile,” “innocent,” and “celebrated” animal, they inevitably sympathize with the elephant against the keeper.

As Lott shows, the proprietors continually impose upon the public to garner sympathy for the elephant. Lying about the actions of the mauled or deceased keeper enables Djek to maintain a pristine reputation. After Baptiste is killed by Djek, Huguet

²⁵ Mayor writes that Djek turns on Bernard and attacks him after having a good relationship with him for five years: “à Liverpool, elle maltraita de nouveau son cornac Bernard qu’elle ne voulut plus souffrir auprès d’elle, malgré une intimité de cinq ans” (8).

directs Yates to “Tell them he used her cruel [. . .] I have brought her off with that before now” (160). And sure enough, during the inquest, “two or three persons deposed on oath that the deceased had ill used her more than once in France, in particular that he had run a pitchfork into her two years ago, that he had been remonstrated with but in vain” (161). When news of Baptiste’s alleged cruelties spread, the tide turned against him, and Djek was perceived as a forbearing creature who had forgiven the man for two years.

A comparison of the report of Baptiste’s death as narrated by *Jack* and by the newspapers shows that the accounts are at odds. Reade’s matter-of-fact romance subverts the story detailed by the papers, and his narrative underscores his argument that proprietors misrepresent Djek’s character at the expense of Baptiste’s. The newspapers accepted the tale of Baptiste’s villainy, telling a radically different story than Lott’s. The *Newcastle Courant* suitably demonstrates the difference in narratives:

This man, in a state of intoxication, 3 years ago, stabbed the trunk of the noble beast with a pitch fork, and otherwise ill-used her, and there has never been any cordiality between them since. The owner wished Baptiste to leave his service; but could not easily get rid of him. Miss D’Jeck always regarded him with cross looks, [and finally had the opportunity to kill him]. Having gratified her long cherished revenge, she appears to have resumed her good temper, and obliging deportment; and performs her part every night as correctly as any other actor or actress on the stage. (“At the Latter” 4)

In this report, the newspaper has clearly created a story in which Djek is the heroine and Baptiste is the villain. Not only is Baptiste accused of stabbing her with a pitchfork, but he is said to be drunk as well, casting a further slur on his already sullied reputation. Perhaps even more fascinating is how effectively the keepers spin the story after it has been printed, despite the fact that a number of people actually saw Baptiste’s body. The *Bristol Mercury* prints the same report of Baptiste’s death with this amendment: “The

above story has gone the round of the papers. The truth, we understand, is, it was a stranger who lost his life through going too near. He was crushed against a wall, and died on the next day. No other person was hurt” (“Mademoiselle” 3). Just as Bernard kept the secret of Djek’s true character, the keepers and proprietors continue to cover up her brutality.

According to Lott, a similar lie is told of Pippin after he is killed to protect Djek’s reputation. At the inquest held in La Palisse, “M. Huguet attended and told the old story; said the man had been cruel to her and she had put up with it as long as she could. Verdict—‘Served him right,’—and so we lied over our poor friend’s murdered body” (217). The *Standard*’s report of this incident reveals an acceptance of the story Huguet creates, vilifying the supposedly abusive keeper: “The owner having observed in the eyes of [. . .] d’Jeck, that it harboured some ill-humour against one of the leaders who had ill-treated it some days before, warned him of his fears, and recommended him not to accompany the caravan. This the leader did not attend to, but on the contrary affected to be more severe than usual toward the beast” (“Death” 2). The proprietors continually turn public opinion against the keepers in favor of Djek without regard to the treachery they commit towards the injured and deceased keepers.

Though Lott is disgusted by the lies that he is forced to tell in his apprenticeship to Djek, once he becomes her sole proprietor, he begins to tell them willingly. Lott’s advertisements assert the lie, claiming that Djek “has been eleven years in his possession, during which time she has never once forgotten herself and executes with obedient zeal whatever he bids her” (241), and he also tells the public that “she is harmless as a chicken” (257). Lott even compels those in his employ to perpetuate the falsehoods

concerning Djek's behavior. At each new place she performs, a man in green and gold livery enters first, announcing "her grandeur, her intelligence, and above all her dove-like disposition" (235-36), and Lott's lawyer declares, "The animal I believe is unconscious of her great strength and has committed a fatal error rather than a crime" (259). The lies concerning Djek are perpetuated up until the very time of her sentence, and finally the revelation of these lies condemn Djek to death. The prosecutor accuses Lott "of false representations, of calling a demon a duck" (259-60), and with the further evidence from France that "this elephant has been always wounding and killing men up and down Europe these twenty years," Djek is condemned (260).

The second lie perpetuated on the public with regard to Djek is the way she is controlled by her keepers. For a long time, Lott is mystified by Elliot's sway over Djek. He continually spies on the two of them, trying to ascertain the secret to Elliot's power. One day in an American town, Lott stumbled upon the secret: "I don't know how it was, something stopped me, and I looked cautiously in instead, and I saw Tom Elliot walking into her with a pitchfork—she trembling like a schoolboy with her head in a corner—and the blood streaming from her sides" (176). The pitchfork is the answer Lott has been looking for; as he writes later, "I had got what the French call the riddle-key of Mademoiselle Djek and that key was 'steel!'" (189). Throughout the remainder of the narrative, Lott liberally uses the pitchfork to enforce his will over Djek. He is convinced that without this threat, Djek would have capriciously killed him any number of times. Indeed, Bernard's warning—that once Djek hurts a man, she will not rest until she has killed him—now applies to Lott as well. Thus, when she knocks the breath out of his body with her trunk, he declares to Pippin, "my death-warrant is drawn up, and if I don't

strike it will be signed” (192). Using the pitchfork, Lott becomes Djek’s master, taking over the responsibilities when Elliot becomes too drunk to do his job competently. Lott comes to the conclusion that elephants “are your servants by fear, or they are your masters,” and as a result, his mantra becomes “Spare the pitchfork—spoil the elephant” (247). The key to power is force, and Lott stabs the elephant into submission.

As one compares Lott’s account of Djek with the accounts found in the newspaper, one sees how differently the narratives read. Reade subverts the assumption that Djek is a harmless animal and contends that the proprietors and keepers keep the secret of Djek’s murderous tendencies. The newspapers report that Djek is a “duck,” though the keepers know she is a “demon.” Even when Djek is reported to have attacked or killed someone, the papers almost inevitably take the elephant’s side.²⁶ This, Reade insists, is primarily due to the proprietors’ and keepers’ lies and the ways in which they go to extreme lengths to protect the reputation of the beasts that contribute to their livelihood. Lott declares:

There is a fixed opinion among men that an elephant is a good kind creature; the opinion is fed by the proprietors of elephants, who must nurse the notion or lose their customers, and so a set tale is always ready to clear the guilty and criminate the sufferer; and this tale is greedily swallowed by the public. You will hear and read many such tales in the papers before you die. Every such tale is a lie. (162)

In an 1855 article in the *Times*, one sees the truth of Lott’s assertion. A keeper was reportedly attacked by an elephant and severely injured. The *Times* muses on the elephant’s propensity to attacks of fury, but the writer states at the conclusion of the article that he/she has been in contact with the injured man who “denies that he was at all

²⁶ Two cases in which this is not the case come from the *Theatrical Observer* which hopes that the death of Baptiste, “will put an end to such disgusting and dangerous exhibitions” (“Mr. Garzoni” 1), and the *Age*, which observes after reporting on Djek’s murder of her keeper, “These tame elephants are positively dangerous” (“Miss” 6).

attacked, and says it was purely accidental” (“Elephants” 9). Unwilling to jeopardize the animals, Reade argues, proprietors and keepers paint an idyllic picture of a docile elephant and a loving keeper. This act is so well maintained that newspapers are deceived into printing a fiction that is completely at odds with the true character of the elephant and the actual ways in which the elephant is subdued. The keeper can only remain in control of Djek by secretly stabbing her with a pitchfork, but the exposure, or even accusation, of abuse by pitchfork turns the public against the keepers. Ironically, Djek’s true nature can only be concealed by revealing a keeper’s use of the pitchfork and pretending it is an anomaly rather than a daily practice. Djek’s violence is continually masked, and proprietors paradoxically subvert truth by openly attributing violence to the keepers.

Jack of All Trades, *Intertextuality*, and *Romance*

Because the novel is so rooted in historical events, the intertextuality in *Jack* is clear. One can trace Djek’s route through England, Ireland, Scotland and into America using British newspapers and easily compare the reports with Lott’s narrative in *Jack*, seeing the ways Reade incorporated historical fact into his fiction. Using Mayor’s history for substantiating details, the story of Djek’s fame (or notoriety, depending on whose account one reads) comes into clear focus. Though I have woven together newspaper reports and the events from *Jack* in the section above to demonstrate how Reade used his sources to create a matter-of-fact romance, I wish to discuss in greater detail the implications of *Jack*’s intertextuality, particularly as it relates to Reade’s incorporation of facts, the contemporary reviews of *Cream*, and the enduring fame of Djek. In this section, I evaluate Reade’s integration of the inquest report on Baptiste’s death, arguing

that Reade complicates his use of intertextuality more than in any of his other matter-of-fact romances. In addition, I show how Reade attributes contemporary facts to the historical Djek to keep the reader engaged in the story. I then examine how reviewers of *Cream* contribute to the novel's intertextuality and argue that *Jack* continues to generate intertextuality as texts interact with each other. Finally, I examine the ways in which intertextuality can reveal the romance within the text using Yates's historical and fictional speeches at the Adelphi theatre. Through this analysis of intertextuality and romance, a reader can better understand Reade's subversive purposes for writing this seemingly anomalous novel.

Reade's use of sources in *Jack* works on two levels—the first, as I have already discussed, is to subvert the newspaper narrative of the late 1820s and 1830s. Reade seeks to do away with the “fixed opinion among men that an elephant is a good kind creature” and to expose the elephant as the “most treacherous, and blood-thirsty beast that ever played the butcher among mankind” (162, 164). At the same time, however, he uses his sources to create a historically accurate account of Mademoiselle Djek and Lott's experiences with her. He does this in a number of ways, but perhaps the most obvious is his incorporation of the actual report from the inquest of Bernard Baptiste as printed in the *Morning Post*.²⁷ What is fascinating about Reade's decision to include the entire

²⁷ In true Radian fashion, I append both the report from *Jack* and the newspaper report from the *Morning Post* so that the reader can compare the documents. Aside from minor discrepancies in punctuation, the reports are nearly identical. I have underlined the small differences in wording—the most significant being that Reade's Baptiste dies in a few hours while the historical Baptiste dies the next day:

document is that he does so in a consciously historical way. In the middle of his narrative, Lott interrupts himself and returns the reader to the present day. “How curiously things happen!” he philosophizes. “Last year *i.e.*, more than twenty years after this event, my little girl went for a pound of butter to Newport Street” (162). Right at the center of the novel, Lott reminds his reader that his adventures with Djek occurred more than twenty years ago. He continues by integrating a twenty-year-old document into the text, “a scrap of very old newspaper,” brought home by his daughter as the wrapper for the butter (162). Coincidentally, the paper contains the inquest report on his friend, Baptiste. Lott initially stows the scrap away in his desk but removes it as he relates this part of his narrative: “it lies before me now, and I am copying it” (163). Reade deliberately incorporates the history of Baptiste’s death into his matter-of-fact romance.

While Reade’s other matter-of-fact romances incorporate historical documents, their purposes are not as complex as that of the inquest report in *Jack*. In *Never Too Late*, for example, Josephs is a “mild, quiet, docile lad” (1: 199). This quotation comes from the inquest report of the Birmingham Gaol, but it is applied to a character in the text with

Jack of All Trades

An inquest was held at the Phoenix Inn Morpeth, on the 27th ultimo, on view of the body of an Italian named Baptiste Bernard, who was one of the attendants on the female elephant which lately performed at the Adelphi. It appeared from the evidence that the man had stabbed the elephant in the trunk with a pitchfork about two years ago while in a state of intoxication, and that on the Tuesday previous to the inquest, the animal caught hold of him with her trunk and did him so much injury that he died in a few hours. Verdict died from the wounds and bruises received from the trunk of an elephant. Deodand 5s.

Morning Post

An inquest was held at the Phoenix Inn, Morpeth, on the 27th ult., on the view of the body of an Italian, named *Baptiste Bernard*, who was one of the attendants on the female elephant which lately performed at the Adelphi. It appeared from the evidence, that the man had stabbed the elephant in the trunk with a pitchfork, about two years ago, when in a state of intoxication, and that on the Tuesday evening previous to the inquest, the animal caught hold of him with her trunk, and did him so much injury that he died on the succeeding day. Verdict—‘Died from wounds and bruises received from the trunk of an elephant.’—Deodand, 5s.

a subtle salute to its origins. In *Hard Cash*, Reade uses sources more similarly to the use of sources in *Jack*. He references Mrs. Turner and Mr. Sizer and even quotes the doctor's evaluation of Mr. Dolley—he looked like “a piece of alabaster” (*HC* 3: 82). In both cases, however, Reade uses secondary sources, in the first instance to draw a parallel between his fictional character and the historical Andrews, and in the second, to repeat the story of an abused asylum inmate. His use of the document in *Jack* is even more complex. Incorporating a primary historical document into his fictional text, Reade emphasizes the historicity of Djek's career—and his narrative—while also making the document a historical document of a fictional character's experience. The intertextuality of this specific inquest report creates a compelling coincidence and affecting story on a fictional level while highlighting the conflicting newspaper narrative and historical event on a factual level.

In *Jack*, Reade infuses Lott's historical experience with contemporary events by integrating details into the story which occur after the death of Djek. A small example occurs when a tavern keeper charges Lott for expenses that he had agreed not to charge. Lott refuses to pay and the tavern keeper confines Djek and company within the gates of his property until Lott pays the bill. Lott warns the tavern keeper three times to release them, and then Djek walks straight through the gates as if they were paper. Lott scoffs, “Door and bolts indeed—to a lady that had stepped through a brick wall before that day, an English brick wall” (254). In 1855, the *Times* reports that an elephant from Edmond's collection which was exhibiting in London broke through the brick wall separating the coach house from the main house's kitchen. “On examining the wall,” the article concludes, “it was found that nearly a square yard of brickwork immediately behind the

kitchen stove had been completely displaced” (“Vagaries” 8). By using minor events concerning elephants from a nearly contemporary setting (the article was published three years before *Jack*), readers—who may not be familiar with Djek—would have a stronger connection to the topic about which Reade is writing. Emerson Grant Sutcliffe writes that Reade “chose facts which were as violently colored as his own temperament” (583). While many critics see this as a negative attribute, these hand-picked facts contribute to the intertextuality of his novels in essential ways.

Another example of Reade’s integration of contemporary news reports into *Jack* concerns his treatment of Elliot. Lott’s only characterization of Elliot is as a drunk. He subtitles his “portrait” of Elliot “A MAN TURNED BRUTE,” and describes his face as that “of a walking corpse. This came,” Lott explains, “of ten years’ brandy and brute” (151). Though he was, perhaps, a drunkard in real life, none of the papers allude to Elliot’s drinking problem. A “colorful” story from the *Times* in 1855, however, describes a keeper, “doubtless in a state of considerable intoxication” who lies down in the straw with the elephant and is nearly trampled to death (“Elephants” 9). Reade’s character Elliot parallels the keeper described in the *Times*; Elliot is constantly in a state of “considerable intoxication,” and he sleeps with the elephant every night. Furthermore, Reade entirely elides the information that the newspapers do print about Elliot. The historical Elliot was actually mauled by Djek in his attempt to rescue Baptiste. *Jackson’s Oxford Journal* reports, “The enraged animal then attacked Tom, who, luckily, escaped, but not before his leg was dreadfully lacerated” (“Dreadful” 2). Mayor explains the outcome of this injury: “Elliot, qui vint pour délivrer son compagnon, fut saisi par elle, renversé, foulé aux pieds, et eut le mollet emporté; il ne se rétablit point, fut toujours

languissant, et mourut en 1832 à l'hospice Dubois, à Paris, des suites de ses blessures” (8-9). Historically, Elliot was not only attacked (which he never is in *Jack*) but was hurt so badly that he later died of his injuries. Reade alters Elliot's ruin; he still dies at the Hospital Dubois, but it is on account of his alcoholism (219). Though Reade's revision of Elliot's character and his ultimate demise may seem insignificant, it actually serves an important function in the novel. Throughout *Jack*, Reade deals with the question of power. If Elliot were not portrayed as a drunk, Lott would not have had the opportunity to usurp his role as Djek's keeper. If Elliot had died of an injury sustained by an attack, Lott would not have looked up to Elliot in the same way, knowing that he, too, was susceptible to attack. It is only because Elliot is unassailable that Lott obsesses day and night about a way to befriend Djek as Elliot has done, and it is only through Elliot's drunkenness that Lott can finally seize control over Djek and attempt to subjugate her on his own terms. Thus, Reade's seemingly small modifications of the historical Elliot play a significant role in the fictional narrative.

As with Reade's other matter-of-fact romances, the intertextual nature of *Jack* invites a reader to move backward from the text, identifying sources for the novel and ascertaining Reade's purposes for melding fact and fiction in such a unique way. Indeed, the reader is constantly bombarded with elements that *might* be true, and he/she comes face to face with the facts that inundate the novel, sifting what is fiction and discovering what is fact. The reviewers of *Cream* serve as good—and bad—models of this type of active, engaged reading. I have already quoted the *Times* reviewer who believed that *Jack* must have some basis in fact. A reviewer for the *Bristol Mercury* has a similar reaction: “Mr. Charles Reade, in his new work ‘Cream,’ gives a long and apparently

authentic account of this celebrated animal which made her appearance in Bristol about 26 years ago, and here, as elsewhere, was enthusiastically received” (“Mademoiselle” 4). Here the reviewer recognizes that Reade’s novel is based on fact; furthermore, the writer provides details about the historical Djek’s career. The reviewer for *Saturday Review* is clearly less engaged and far more hostile towards Reade’s novel:

“I feign probabilities, I record improbabilities.” If this is Mr. Reade’s general principle, we should say that by far the greater part of *Jack of All Trades* is a plain record of matters of fact. The general view of the character of elephants, on which the tale is founded, has probably sprung from some single instance of ferocity, produced by maltreatment or over-confinement, and turned into a universal law by those powers of multiplication which the author of *It Is Never Too Late to Mend* is so apt to substitute for the more legitimate exercise of invention. (“Cream” 351)

Despite this reviewer’s sarcasm, he/she still unwittingly contributes to the intertextuality of *Jack*. This is just the type of review that infuriated Reade—a blind accusation based on a hunch rather than on facts. Even when other reviewers are unsure about the amount of fact found in *Jack*, they assure readers that the events within the matter-of-fact romance must certainly be founded upon facts. This reviewer, on the other hand, rejects the possibility that Reade writes a generally factual story. The challenge, that Reade has probably used one instance of an elephant’s brutality to write his whole novel, necessitates an investigation of Reade’s sources to discover the truth. Furthermore, this antagonistic review surely impelled people to discuss what they knew of elephants, their memories of Djek herself (if they were old enough), and the stories of elephant violence that had been reported since Djek’s career was ended. Interestingly, the reviewer inadvertently accepts Reade’s overarching thesis—that truth is stranger than fiction. The reviewer wishes to invoke sarcasm—if improbabilities are reality, Reade’s improbable

fiction must be real—but though the reviewer intends this comment as a jab at Reade, it was really an affirmation of his most contested assertion.

Though the reader must look backwards to discover Reade's sources for *Jack*, he/she discovers that the matter-of-fact romance continues to generate intertextuality going forward as well. In choosing to write a story about Djek, Reade selected a subject that continued to be referenced in England throughout the nineteenth century. As performing elephants remained a staple for entertaining in the London theatres and on provincial tours, the references to Mademoiselle Djek were numerous. For example, in 1839, the *Charter* writes that an unnamed elephant "is the most docile of the sort ever exhibited, surpassing even the far-famed Mademoiselle Djeck, in some particulars" ("Adelphi" 613). In 1866, the *Morning Post* reports that an elephant was put to death and recalls "the famous elephant, Maddlle. Djeck, who about 30 years ago appeared in a grand eastern piece at the Adelphi, under Yates, was afterwards tried in Switzerland by a municipal body (we think at Geneva) for killing a man, and sentenced to death" ("Execution" 3). At the same time, stories about elephants often called to mind Reade's novel specifically rather than the historical Djek. This is the case in *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* when a keeper is killed by an elephant. After reporting that the elephant evidently held a grudge against the man, the article states, "In his volume called 'Cream,' Charles Reade has shown us the treachery and vindictiveness of Mdlle. Djeck," summarizing Reade's story for the edification of its readers ("Inquest" 6). With the sale of another famous elephant, Jumbo, to P. T. Barnum in 1882, memories of Djek were once more brought to the surface.²⁸ *Judy* recaps Reade's *Jack* as "several

²⁸ The famous elephant Jumbo became an inmate at the London Zoo and was wildly popular. P. T. Barnum desired to buy Jumbo, and was initially refused by the London Zoo, but after an offer of

correspondents have written to ask for some more particulars” about the elephant, Djek. (“Mademoiselle” 132). The fame of Djek, immortalized in Reade’s *Jack*, leads to increasing textual references as the century progresses.

At the same time, the reader’s confrontation of fact in fiction serves effectively to highlight the romance that runs throughout the novel.²⁹ For example, Lott relates Yates’s speech to the audience when Djek is first introduced at the Adelphi theatre. Since he “remember[s] his discourse as well as if it was yesterday,” Lott quotes a moderate amount of the oration (132). While some parts of the speech are humorous, it is, for the most part, a serious discourse elaborating on the sagacity, power, and theatrical talent of Mademoiselle Djek. The London newspapers present a far different speech. Yates evidently recited a prologue before the play commenced.³⁰ While *Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post*, the *Newcastle Courant*, and the *Aberdeen Journal* only mention highlights from the amusing prologue, the *Morning Post*, *Liverpool Mercury*, and *The Great Siam*

£10,000, the zoo accepted. The people of London were furious that Jumbo was to be sold and shipped to America. Schoolchildren wrote letters of protest, the newspaper printed numerous articles railing against the sale, and the *Daily Telegraph* even asked Barnum how much it would cost for him to cancel the sale. Jumbo was sent to Barnum in America on March 25, 1882. See J. Morewood-Dowsett, “Supplement: Elephant Past and Present, pp. 24-25 for more information about Jumbo’s sale and death in America.

²⁹ In this matter-of-fact romance, more than any other, Reade’s idea of romance pertains to the act of inventing. Of course, the hero must fight his way through a number of trying circumstances in order to survive—it seems as though he is always down to his last two or threepence—but the novel is more picaresque than romance.

³⁰ Although it is possible that Yates spoke the words written by Reade previous to the performance, it is unlikely. According to *Jack*, once Yates had finished his speech, he “bowed with intense gratitude to the audience for the attention they had honoured him with, retired to the prompter’s side, and, as he reached it, the act drop flew up and the play began” (133). The historical prologue, on the other hand, began the play. Lott later explains that “Mr. Yates shortened his introductory address, and used to make it a brief, neat, and, I think, elegant eulogy of her gentleness and affectionate disposition; her talent ‘the public are here to judge for themselves,’ said Mr. Yates, and exit P. S.” (138). Nowhere does Lott mention a rhyming, hilarious, pun-filled speech by Yates. I argue, therefore, that this prologue supplies part of the romance or fiction in Reade’s matter-of-fact romance—that in writing a new speech for Yates in *Jack*, Reade can put his agenda to work more effectively.

Elephant print the prologue in its entirety.³¹ By first determining that the speech Lott “remembers” is fictional and subsequently recognizing that Yates’s historical prologue contains none of the gravity present in Yates’s fictional speech, a reader effectively uncovers part of Reade’s agenda in *Jack*. Reade invents Yates’s fictional introduction of Djek so that he can undermine the claim that “the intelligence and affectionate disposition she will display on these boards as an actress are merely her own private and domestic qualities” (133). Even at Djek’s initial introduction, Reade is attempting to subvert the newspaper narrative of Djek’s career.

Reade’s decision to write a matter-of-fact romance based on the elephant ensures that references to elephants—and particularly to mad or violent ones—inevitably harken back to his novel. Once there, the reader is constantly bombarded with potential facts that take him/her even farther back in time to the historical career of Djek. At the same time, as Reade reveals those aspects of the novel that are not fact, the reader sees more clearly what Reade is trying to accomplish in his matter-of-fact romance. A mixture of fact and fiction, Reade subverts the newspaper narrative, proposing instead his own version of the facts. Using a subversive new genre, Reade undermines the popular history of Djek by exposing the dark side of the elephant. As I show below, Reade integrates additional psychological subversions of power in the battle between Lott and Djek for control.

Man Versus Beast: Psychological Subversions of Power

I have discussed the ways in which *Jack* provides a subversive counter-narration to the newspaper account of Djek’s career, and I have evaluated the presence of

³¹ See “Prologue,” *Morning Post*, December 7, 1829, p. 3, “The Elephants,” *Liverpool Mercury*, February 12, 1830, p. 4, and *The Great Siam Elephant*, pp. 4-5 for the full *Elephant of Siam* prologue.

intertextuality in *Jack*. I now turn to an analysis of psychological subversions of power. Although Lott discovers that the key to controlling Djek is “steel,” the question throughout *Jack* is, who really is in control? At times, the narrative seems to indicate that Djek holds the power over her keepers. At other times, Lott clearly believes he has the upper hand. In this penultimate section, I argue that though Lott believes he has Djek in his power, it is actually Djek that controls Lott through unremitting fear.

Lott’s fears stem from three main sources. First, he is terrified that Djek will kill an innocent bystander even as he lies about her being the meekest of animals. He would not be able to use the old pitchfork excuse that had vilified so many of Djek’s former keepers, and the elephant would inevitably be put to death. The responsibility for his audience’s safety and his powerlessness to tell the truth about Djek weighs heavily on his mind. His second fear is that his use of the pitchfork against Djek may be discovered. This discovery would lead to two damaging results. First of all, the public might turn against Lott, interpreting his use of the pitchfork as abuse and siding with the docile Djek against the cruel keeper. Conversely, the revelation of Lott’s manner of controlling the elephant might lead to recognition of Djek’s true dangerous character, in which case the public would call for her death. His third fear is wrapped up in the second; he is worried that Djek’s nature will be revealed and he will lose his source of income. This fear increases as Lott’s investment in the elephant increases. Over the course of years, Lott becomes less and less willing for the public to discover the real character of Djek because he is dependent on her for his livelihood. Furthermore, after Lott purchases Djek from Huguet, he is deeply in debt. Lott relies on showing the elephant at least until he can recoup the cost of purchasing her. Though Lott contends that he is subjugator, controller,

and master of Djek through physical force, the fear that Djek elicits by her unpredictable violence consumes Lott, giving Djek the upper hand in their relationship.

Djek's power over Lott continually increases as he invests more time and money into the elephant, though even at his introduction to her, Lott is fascinated by Djek. He is delighted by her ability to act, and he is taken in by Yates's opening speech about the merits of the elephant. Lott desires to get to know Djek and her keeper Elliot better, but Elliot bars everyone but Yates from visiting Djek and does not accept friendship with any of the other workers in the theatre. Possessing an inquisitive nature, Lott is not pleased with Elliot's unyielding secrecy. The more time he spends around the elephant, the more he desires to sound the depths of the relationship between her and Elliot. "I will bottom this," he vows, "if I die for it" (155). At the same time, Lott is not yet utterly in the elephant's power. He recognizes her cruelty and capriciousness, and he resents the fact that he is a slave to such a brutal beast. He calls her a "wholesale murderess" who "must shed—much—— more—— blood" before she dies (168, 170). Though Lott is obsessed with discovering Elliot's secret to controlling Djek, he has not been so taken in as to be blind to her faults—or worse, so invested in her as to fear revealing them. Paradoxically, while Lott feels powerless in her presence, Djek cannot bring him fully under her power.

Over the course of the next eleven years, Lott goes from nondescript elephant hand to chief keeper to sole proprietor of Djek. He does this first through an investment of time and a patient attention to the relationship between Elliot and Djek. Early on in his career, Lott is attacked by Djek, despite having courted her favor for months. He laments:

I crept along thoroughly crestfallen. Months and months I had watched and spied and tried to pluck out the heart of this Tom Elliot's mystery. I

had failed—months and months I had tried to gain some influence over Djek. I had failed—but for Elliot it was clear I should not live a single day within reach of her trunk, this brute was my superior. I was compelled to look up to him, and I *did look up to him*.

As I tramped sulkily along my smarting shoulder reminded me that in elephant, as in everything else I had tried, I was Jack, not master. (165)

Still unable to sound the mystery of Elliot's control over Djek, Lott does not stand a chance of assuming that authority himself. While he is dejected by this realization, he escapes the control of Djek for a little while longer. Though he was attacked, Lott is angry and not desirous of hiding the source of his injury. In just a little while longer, the fear that Djek inspires in Lott will silence any desire he has to reveal her violence as he realizes that she is his sole livelihood.

After Lott discovers the secret to controlling Djek, he is able to step into a role of greater authority over her, and one day, he actually usurps Elliot's role as head keeper. Elliot is too drunk to drive Djek to the next town, and so Lott takes it upon himself to get her to her engagement. Armed with "a rod of steel sharpened at the end," Lott summons Djek "in the most harsh and brutal voice [he] could command" (187-88). She follows him out of her enclosure and begins walking with him down the street. Lott is alert for any potential dangerous behavior from Djek, and when she tries to curl her trunk around him in a friendly manner, when she slows down along the road, or when she "began to frisk in her awful clumsy way," Lott stabs her violently with the pitchfork. "By these means," he declares, "I rose from mademoiselle's slave to be her friend and companion" (190). It is in this moment, when Lott first assumes full control over Djek, that Djek actually gains control of Lott's mind. Her power continues to increase, but this is the first instance where Djek inspires Lott with real terror concerning her violence and unpredictability. He cannot rest or relax for a moment. He must constantly match wits

with the elephant, interpreting her behavior as indicators of violence and punishing her accordingly. Under the guise of power, Lott masks his anxiety, but his confession reveals the truth: “If Djek had known how my heart was beating she would have killed me then and there; but, observing no hesitation on my part, she took it all as a matter of course and walked with me like a lamb” (188). Lott considers his performance a triumph; Djek does not detect his fear, and so he retains control. What he does not realize is that Djek holds the power as a volatile unknown that Lott must continually attempt to manage. Djek does not have to misbehave to prove she is in control. The fear of her aggressive capriciousness is what holds Lott ever more tightly in her power.

The moment that Lott becomes Djek’s sole owner, the elephant assumes full control over her keeper. As head keeper, Lott is terrified lest Djek in her fury injure someone else. As owner, Lott’s fear increases exponentially. He is bowed down by the probability that Djek will attack and kill someone, the danger of the public discovering his method of controlling her, and the subsequent inevitability of losing his livelihood should either of the first two fears be realized. Lott’s obsessive thoughts have evolved from discovering the secret of Elliot and Djek’s relationship to keeping the secret of his own relationship with Djek as assiduously as possible. Though he tells his readers, “the moment I became her sole guardian I had sworn on my knees she should never kill another man” (226), he adds even more pressure to himself by not being honest about Djek’s true nature. He has willingly taken charge of a ticking time bomb; Djek’s unpredictability consumes Lott’s mind, subjugating him with fears for the future and demanding constant vigilance in the present: “judge whether I had to look sharp after her to keep the biped from perjury and the quadruped from murder” (226). He is haunted by

potential danger, and the reader detects the intensity in his watchfulness: “Having now the sole responsibility, I watched her as you would a powder-magazine lighted by gas” (219). Later, when he displays Djek for the king’s children, he is nearly beside himself with fear. He admits,

All I know is that while these little Louis Philippes were coaxing her, and feeding her, and cutting about her and sliding down her, and I was a telling them she was a duck, the perspiration was running down my back one moment and cold shivers the next, and I thanked Heaven devoutly when the young gents went back to their papa and mamma and no broken bones. (220)

The fear of Djek’s violence, coupled with his obligation to repeatedly highlight her positive attributes, her docile nature, and her love for people, continually put a strain on Lott under which he nearly buckles. Djek is his master, for Lott is consumed by fear.

Throughout his tenure as Djek’s keeper and owner, Lott always acts with “steel in hand” (191). He keeps his source of power—the pitchfork—constantly within view, because he knows that without this source of punishment and control, his “friend and companion” would kill him. Even so, Lott feels triumphant in his power over Djek. Now possessing the secret of the pitchfork, Lott narrates Djek’s trembling fear with evident satisfaction. He variously describes her as “trembling like a schoolboy with her head in a corner” (176), “trembl[ing] all over like a leaf” (193), and “trembl[ing] from head to foot” (229) as he approaches her with the iron rod. After being attacked by Djek a second time and subsequently having “filled her as full of holes as a cloved orange,” Lott grimly states, “I walked out of her shambles her master” (193). Gone now is the cant about being a friend and companion to the elephant. Lott has assumed the role of master, and it is in this guise that he narrates the remainder of his experience with Djek. As has already been seen, however, he is not master. Though Lott is much less secretive

about his use of the pitchfork than Elliot had been before him, Lott knew it was bad for business to reveal his source of power. After the numerous occurrences in which Djek was acquitted of murder because she was stabbed with a pitchfork, Lott understands that the public would be quick to turn against him if his gory actions were revealed. And if for once the public could be persuaded not to pity the elephant, this was even worse for Lott. The pitchfork, liberally used for the subjugation of the violent animal, would indicate the true nature of Djek, and she would be put to death. Lott lives in constant fear, then, of both Djek's violence and his own—the revelation of either secret would be his undoing.

The financial burden of being Djek's owner is a further stressor in Lott's life. His need to turn a profit, coupled with his concern for the safety of himself and his audience put him securely in the elephant's power. Lott explains that he purchased Djek "for 20,000 francs, to be paid by instalments [sic]" and that "she ate a thousand francs a week or nearly" (231). Because she is the only livelihood that he possesses, in addition to the fact that he is now deeply in debt, it is essential that Djek's performances continue to draw in a paying crowd. Lott must therefore create an environment by which to wow his audience. As Koenigsberger writes, the elephant is a sign of "oriental pomp, luxury, and excess," and while Djek is certainly the principal performer, much more goes into putting on a successful show (36). Lott enhances the opulence exhibited by the elephant with men in green and gold livery who announce Djek's arrival hours before the entire company processes into town. The procession itself is lavish: a cavalcade of more men in livery, showy horses, keepers, workers to paste up the posters, and Djek herself, massive, impressive, and always "bringing up the rear" (236). The overhead for such a

production, in addition to Djek's upkeep, necessitated a consistently successful show, and this could happen only if Djek continued to attract public curiosity and admiration. Lott depends entirely on Djek for the money he earns, and he is incessantly haunted by fears that she will betray her true character to a watchful public.

The revelation of Djek's true nature is ultimately Lott's undoing, just as he had feared for years that it would be. His lies trap him, giving Djek the final power. A clergyman at Geneva comes to her enclosure each day in an attempt to befriend her. Lott explains with evident misery, "I used to beg him not to go so close to her; on this his answer was, 'Why you say she is harmless as a chicken,' so then I had no more to say" (257). Lott is stuck between revealing Djek's violence and suffering the clergyman to come to potential harm. It is telling that right up to the end he chooses to conceal Djek's brutality rather than to warn the clergyman of his impending danger outright. Thus, in one moment, with "a snort of rage, and a cry of terror" Djek destroys the life that Lott has worked for eleven years to attain (257). She lifts the minister in her trunk, throws him to the ground, breaks two of his ribs, and enrages the city of Geneva against her. In this act, Djek asserts her authority over Lott for a final time, showing him that he cannot keep her true disposition a secret if she chooses to reveal it. For years, she holds him inflexibly in her power, and while he deludes himself into thinking he can control Djek with his rod of steel, he is crushed and overcome by constant fear and dread of what she might do.

Interestingly, Lott is not even fully released from Djek's power after she is shot at close range by a cannon. He confesses, "In one moment I forgot all her faults. [. . .] I mourned over her, right or wrong, and have never been the same man since that shot was fired" (263-64). The psychological control that Djek has held over Lott for so many

years cannot be easily relinquished. In her death, Lott continues to conceal her true nature—this time from himself—as he tries to convince himself as in the early days that she was his “companion and friend.” Though he possessed the pitchfork and could make Djek tremble like a leaf, she was not under his control. Rather, through his unceasing fear of the violence Djek could accomplish and the consequential loss of his livelihood, Lott remained, throughout his tenure as Djek’s keeper, her slave rather than her master.

Without understanding the implications for himself, Lott declares, “Almost all you have ever heard about the full grown elephant’s character is a pack of falsities. They are your servants by fear, or they are your masters” (247). Lott means, of course, that if the elephant is threatened and coerced through physical force into fearing the keeper, it will remain docile; conversely, if it is not stabbed into submission, it will run wild, mauling and killing innocent bystanders. The problem with his confident statement is that Djek continues to injure and kill those around her even though she is physically punished. Lott’s hypothesis about “servants by fear” does not hold up—as far as it concerns Djek. On the other hand, Lott fails to grasp that fear—the keeper’s fear—makes the elephant master. Lott is hampered by fear; he cannot liberate himself from the constant dread of Djek’s next outburst.

Even as Lott comes into contact with other keepers, he is blind to his own psychological entrapment. During a stint with Michelet’s menagerie, Lott watches Michelet’s interaction with his animals and observes, “Besides that general quickness and decision, which is necessary with wild animals, I noticed that he was always on the look out for mischief, and always punished it before it came” (209). The keeper of wild animals is always on the offensive. His mind constantly warns him of potential danger,

and he must continually neutralize situations that only exist in his mind. Similarly, Lott might believe that he controls the elephant through use of force and punishment, but Djek controls him as the relentless fear that she will hurt someone resounds unceasingly in Lott's mind. Blindly, Lott continues to regard himself in a position of power over Djek, and he interprets the keeper's aggressive strategy as yet another verification of his own control.

Regardless of the precautions that Elliot and Lott take, Djek attacks or kills an appalling number of people. In spite of her known brutality, however, the keepers and proprietors still insist on diligently concealing her true nature. Lott's changing descriptions of Djek as he becomes more responsible for her go far in confirming her uncontested power over him. He no longer refers to her as a "murderess," and he describes her attack on one of the actors as "one of her mistakes" (206). Thus, it can be seen that though Djek is repeatedly punished with stabs from the pitchfork, it is she who is really in control. Each day, Lott runs the risk of injury or death, and worse, so does his audience, but he proliferates the lie in order that Djek may appear as attractive to the public as possible. She must be docile, intelligent, and talented, and even if she is not, it is Lott's job to make her appear so. His need for money causes him to put his life and the lives of others in danger even while his dread of Djek continues to increase.

An Allegorical Reading of the Matter-of-Fact Romance

Throughout his life, Reade was interested in and fond of animals. According to Malcolm Elwin, Reade "seems never to have been without a dog and defied the college regulations by importing his pets into his Magdalen rooms" (51). General J. Meredith Read writes that Reade was "passionately fond of dumb animals" ("Writing" 157). In the

Memoir, Compton Reade asserts that Reade's lodgings near Leicester Square were "alive with squirrels, who bolted up the curtains, and seemed to enjoy themselves as in their native beech-woods at Ipsden" (145), and elsewhere, he claims that Reade "had a brace of hares and two gazelles" and "a number of Belgian rabbits" ("Pets" 406). Reade even titles one of his collections *Good Stories of Man and Other Animals* and includes a number of heroic and intelligent animals in his novels.³² That he would write a story in which the main character, for all intents and purposes, is an animal is not surprising. What *is* surprising is that he portrayed her, not as a heroine, but as a villainess.

Throughout this work, I have argued that Reade's matter-of-fact romance is a new, subversive genre that does not function in the same way as traditional genres such as realism, sensationalism, or romance. As Reade integrates colorful facts and fiction in new, improbable ways, the subversive nature of the genre spills over into the content of the novels. I have looked at subversions of power in the prison and asylum, I have discussed subversions of Victorian propriety, and finally, I have analyzed psychological subversions of power. In this final section, I contend that as Reade's facts collide with the romance elements in *Jack*, the novel provides an allegorical reading for abuse of power, particularly as it relates to *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash*. In examining Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet*, Tanya Agathocleous observes, "As the romance form of the Utah section meets the realist form of the London section, events begin to take on an allegorical aura" (129). Similarly, one can observe an "allegorical aura" in *Jack* as well. When the keeper is made to represent those who abuse power and

³² Carlos, George Fielding's dog that accompanies him to Australia, is one such example. In "Man's Life Saved by Fowls, and Woman's By a Pig," Reade lists a number of instances of animals saving the lives of humans, including an ape, a crocodile, horses, dogs, and fish. See *Good Stories*, pp. 219-20 for full details.

Djek is made to represent those who are abused by power, the implications are clear: the misuse or abuse of power destabilizes the hierarchy of power, wherein the oppressor becomes the (psychologically) oppressed.

Just as Lott is unconsciously controlled by fear of Djek, other abusive authorities are unsuspectingly controlled by the fear of those they abuse. This is the case for Hawes of —— Gaol, Mr. Baker of Silverton Grove House, and Dr. Wolf of Drayton House. To a lesser extent, this truth also applies to the abusive male and female keepers at Drayton House. Even without understanding their actions, they continue to pile abuse on their inmates and patients, quelling any potential for revolt by increased punishment. Like Lott, these jailors and keepers also try to anticipate misbehaviors in their wards and punish those actions before they are committed. Forever trying to predict an uprising, the jailors and keepers in *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash* parallel Lott who repeatedly stabs Djek without provocation.

At the same time, the jailors and keepers must conceal their abuses. Hawes keeps an inaccurate punishment book, and the asylum keepers are always on the watch for the arrival of the visiting justices. The instruments of abuse—the punishment jacket, chains, and straitjackets—are hidden from the sight of the inspectors for fear that the inspectors might chastise or discipline the jailor or the proprietor of the asylum. They fear the exposure of their own abuse, knowing that with exposure will come public and governmental interference and change. Just as Lott knows that his use of the pitchfork to punish Djek will not be accepted by the public, the jailors and keepers know that their abuses, if known, would not be condoned. Reade suggests that when human beings treat their fellow creatures as less than human, they end up being controlled by their dual fears

that those they abuse will eventually lash out violently or, conversely, that their own abuses will be exposed. They are controlled by those they abuse as their constant fears consume them. Lott was not aware that the fear of Djek was the driving force in all his decisions, and Hawes, Baker, Wolf, and the cruel keepers of Drayton House would never admit that their inmates held the upper hand. However, as Reade demonstrates, the abuse of power leads to psychological oppression through fear of outright rebellion on the part of the oppressed or the exposure of the oppressor's gross abuse of power.

Jack can also be read as an allegory in which the elephant represents Reade and Lott represents the reader both during Reade's career and today. Based on my analysis above, if the elephant Djek represents Reade, Reade must be considered the entity truly in control while the reader, as represented by Lott, might believe he/she holds the power but, in reality, does not. In the first place, Reade, like Djek, becomes enraged against those who abuse him, and he does not easily forget an insult. The newspapers, both British and American, are peppered with letters from Reade defending himself against his detractors, offering proofs for his claims, and arguing for his own accuracy over the assertions of "criticasters and anonymuncles" (R 279-81). Elwin writes,

Whenever he published a novel or produced a play and an unfortunate critic ventured to suggest the exaggeration or to doubt the probability of an incident or a character, Reade dived into his cherished notebooks and concocted a bombastic epistle, triumphantly demonstrating that his fiction was founded on actual facts. This practice earned him the hatred and fear of Fleet Street, accustomed as it was to philosophical authors who lay down under its playful switches. In the words of one journalist of the day, he was "a literary fusee. You have only to touch him and he goes off." (116-17)

Even more of Reade's letters were never printed, having been suppressed by editors.³³ Reade further communicates his displeasure with critics through the documents he chooses to print with his novels. I have discussed, in particular, *Trade Malice*, appended to *The Wandering Heir*, and the exchange of letters between Reade and Dr. Bushnan, appended to *Hard Cash*. After his scrupulous, painstaking work in researching his novels, Reade could not countenance being accused of inaccuracy and demonstrated his resentment in headlong letters to the press. Like Djek, Reade does not forget an affront, and when the time is right, he tramples his critics underfoot. Reade hated the stabs and prods of the public; in a letter to W. F. Tillotson, Reade writes, "I am [. . .] very happy to talk to you about anything but novels. The public is an ass, and does not understand mine. So I am not in the humour to waste time, and labour, and skill" (Elwin 332). However, though these injuries might make him tremble for a short time, he reemerges stronger and more determined to make an impact on his readers than ever.

Despite Reade's pugnacious tendency to dive into print, the reader believes him/herself to hold the power in the relationship. The reader possesses the novel and can believe or disbelieve the printed words at will. The reader can open and close the book whenever he/she wishes and can choose to read or not read the novel presented by the author. Just like Lott, however, Reade exerts power over a reader's mind. Once the words are read, they are difficult to forget, and once the reader encounters Reade's unique and powerful matter-of-fact romance, he/she is compelled to explore Reade's purposes for writing. The intertextual nature of the matter-of-fact romance is a web, constantly encouraging the reader to return to the text to confront the truths that Reade

³³ See, for instance, "A Terrible Temptation," pp. 279-94 and "A Suppressed Letter," pp. 295-98 in *Readiana*.

presents. The atrocities of the prison, the horrors of the asylum, and the radical espousal of women's freedoms are just a few of the facts that Reade emphasizes again and again in order to make his point—in order to bring about change. The reader's best attempts to suppress the reality of these facts is doomed to fail as Reade takes hold of the reader's mind and makes him/her see—realize—the truths he prints. In the same way that Lott lives in constant dread of Djek's next rebellion, the reader is haunted by the images that Reade presents. Even when the novel comes to an end, Reade's powerful portrayals remain indelibly printed on the reader's mind.

Finally, though *Jack* does not end happily, I contend that Reade subtly proposes an alternative, and that alternative is: honestly reveal the true nature of the beast. If the proprietors and keepers had been forthcoming about Djek's violent tendencies, many lives could have been spared, and much wrong could have been prevented. It was because of the dishonesty of those who came before Lott that he found himself confronted with a mystery he longed to solve and latterly, with an elephant he did not know how to control. If Lott had been honest with himself and with others earlier, his career as an elephant keeper would have been at an end, but eleven years of his life would not have been wasted. In the same way, Reade desires that the readers of his matter-of-fact romances honestly assess the stories they are reading and figure out how to change their trajectory going forward. In *Hard Cash*, he writes, "These statistics have been long before the world, and are dead figures to the Skimmer of things, but tell a dark tale to the Reader of things" (*HC* 3: 73). Instead of readers striving to conceal the truth of Reade's tales under a false pretence—that he is sensational or uninventive or wrong-headed or merely exaggerative—Reade asks that readers relinquish their falsely assumed power and

take for themselves instead the power of truth. Cease to be Lotts, Reade cries—mere Skimmers who do not recognize or will not admit truth. Instead, Reade calls his readers to face truth bravely and honestly, to effect change, to see things, in effect, as a *Reader*. After all, if Djek is the allegorical representation of Reade, his final act is to reveal the truth in his own way and on his own terms.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

Throughout this work, I have examined how Reade uses his innovative matter-of-fact romance to subvert power and propriety in the nineteenth century. From prisons to asylums to women's issues to animal cruelty and the psychological power of the abused over the abuser, I have shown Reade's novels to be far more complex and purposeful than many critics have recognized. Throughout, I have used newspapers, journal articles, blue books, reviews, and a number of other historical resources to recreate Reade's world—or the world about which he was writing—and to verify the facts he incorporated into his novels. This process has revealed the intertextual nature of Reade's five matter-of-fact romances and shown how the integration of fact and fiction weaves a web with which he invites his readers to engage. Reade's matter-of-fact romances are compelling stories where elements of realism and sensationalism collide, stories that contain mundane facts, heart-pounding adventures, propaganda-like calls for reform, unbelievable incidents, heroic characters on quests, and everything in between. On the surface, *It Is Never Too Late to Mend*, *Jack of All Trades*, *Hard Cash*, *The Wandering Heir*, and *Singleheart and Doubleface* seem to contain a hodgepodge of traditional genres compressed into a single novel. However, upon closer examination, one discovers that through his choice to implement improbable or downright unbelievable facts, Reade subverts conventional genres to create the matter-of-fact romance, and each of these novels blends fact and fiction in such a way to make a purposeful statement about the world in which Reade lives. Whether he is writing about contemporary events, such as

the abuses in prisons and asylums, or the increasing trend of transatlantic bigamy, or about historical events like the Annesley inheritance battle or the celebrated performing elephant, Djek, Reade's novels provide valuable insights to the reader, both about nineteenth-century Victorian England and about the contemporary world.

The purposeful ways Reade incorporates colorful facts into his fiction—whether through direct quotations, parallel stories, allusions to contemporary events, revisions of newspaper articles, or references to laws—form a web of intertextuality that encircles the reader and invites him/her to remain close to the text. Reade's adherence to the adage that "truth is stranger than fiction" might cause some of his readers to doubt his narrative, but at the moments when readers are most likely not to believe, Reade provides unassailable facts to prove his claims and to draw the reader back into the text. Furthermore, Reade's liberal inclusion of dialogue, his often unorthodox paragraph sizes, and his typographical tricks further engage and connect the reader to the text. At the same time, Reade integrates romance, combining romance elements with facts in ways that Northrop Frye, Gillian Beer, and Tanya Agathocleous intimate cannot be (or have not been) done. Reade subverts traditionally understood distinctions in genre, combining unfamiliar facts and sensational fiction to form the matter-of-fact romance. And it is essential that the novels to which he gave the subtitle "matter-of-fact romance" be evaluated on those terms. Critics have attempted to analyze Reade's novels—particularly *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash*—without taking into consideration the subtitle, and their assessments typically conclude with an observation that Reade's fiction is not good because it does not fit within the criteria of a particular genre.

In this study, I have argued that the richness and insightfulness of Reade's narrative style are revealed when one evaluates his matter-of-fact romances appropriately. I have shown that his subversion of understood notions of genre extends to the content of the matter-of-fact romances themselves through the inclusion of unfamiliar facts and that through them, Reade criticizes the abuse of power within the prison and the asylum, and surrounding the issue of who determines a woman's role and right in society. He undermines authority in each case, enabling the weak or unlikely hero (or heroine) to subvert the power of the stronger force and to reveal the possibility of better, more responsible use of power.

As I have mentioned on numerous occasions, I have addressed only a small fraction of the contents of these novels. Indeed, I have dwelt much in *Never Too Late* and *Hard Cash* on the prison and asylums scenes, despite the fact that the prison and asylum sections are where most of the scholarship on Reade has focused. Because Reade liked to create a dual storyline in which two streams flowed into one, a significant portion of the narrative of *Never Too Late* takes place in Australia and a considerable amount of the *Hard Cash* narrative is wrapped up in David Dodd's adventure home with his children's inheritance. As for *Jack of All Trades*, I have completely skipped over the first half of his story in which he narrates his other experiences prior to becoming an elephant keeper, and I have not at all addressed the James Annesley section—particularly the court case—of *The Wandering Heir*. Furthermore, I have neglected the scenes in *Singleheart and Doubleface* in which Joseph Pinder and Deborah Brent play a role, and I have not adequately addressed Sarah's role as sole (and brilliantly successful) shopkeeper despite her husband's initial ability to earn money for their family before he succumbs to

drunkenness. Little to no critical study has been given to the latter three novels. Finally, I have addressed portions only of the five novels; Reade wrote over seventeen novels, a number of plays, and countless papers, pamphlets, essays, and letters. There is still much work to do.

Richard Fantina concludes his recent study of Reade with these words:

More recently, literary studies has seen expansion of critical attention to cultural and historical context. New generations of scholars have rediscovered the work of many noncanonical authors. The study of literature no longer appears to be the province of specialists whose work often appeared to have little relevance to everyday reality.

In light of current trends in criticism and theory, Reade's work can now be usefully examined. His novels, more than most others, are historical documents in themselves as they are based on contemporary contestations over mores and power. The work of Charles Reade presents an important opportunity for the critical recovery of a major Victorian author. (164)

While Fantina is correct—the time is ripe for reintroducing Reade to the literary conversation—I contend that as scholars, our purpose can be—must be—broader than a reclamation of Reade based simply on the fact that he wrote historically accurate novels. His creation of the matter-of-fact romance genre provides ample opportunity for study, particularly in response to the competing forms of realism and sensationalism. In addition, the intertextual nature of Reade's matter-of-fact romances makes these novels a valuable starting place as one traces allusions, facts, and quotations backward to their sources and forward to newly generated conversations, contexts, and ideas.

At the same time, Fantina reveals an irony about Reade's readers. In the nineteenth century, Reade won popularity with the public—those who enjoyed his novels for the adventures, sensation, and integration of unbelievable facts which engaged them in discourses about contemporary issues. Despite critics' displeasure with Reade's novels and their inability to recognize the importance of the matter-of-fact romance, the

middle-class Victorian reader happily engaged with Reade's novels and was genuinely affected by his call to action, particular with regard to reforms in the prisons and the asylums. A century and a half later, however, the readership of the matter-of-fact romance has shifted significantly. As we seek to understand more about the Victorian period through Reade's matter-of-fact romance, keeping Fantina's call to recover this obscure Victorian writer in mind, we recognize that Reade's readers are now the critics rather than the public. Though the public once admired Reade as an important nineteenth-century author, it is now the critic's job to recover and preserve his works. The search for intertextuality in his novels, the engagement with the multiple discourses each text generates, and the analyses of new and insightful genres are all the work of the academic. Of course, the sensational nature of the matter-of-fact romances, with their adventures, mistaken identities, evil villains, loveable heroes, and continuous action provide these novels with the means to interest a reading public, but the truth is that Reade's works have entered the smaller sphere of the critic.

With the increasing availability of online resources and documents, Reade's novels take on even more importance as scholars are able to determine the exact contemporary settings that led Reade to write about the issues he did and explore the implications of those issues in today's society. In his response to a letter written in the *Toronto Globe*, Reade attacks his critics who accuse him of plagiarism, and he humorously writes of the value and necessity for integrating facts in fiction:

It could be proved in a court of law that Shakspeare [sic] founded his fictions on fact, wherever he could get hold of fact. Fact is that writer's idol. It was his misfortune to live in an age when the supplies of fact were miserably meager. Could he be resuscitated, and a copy of the *Toronto Globe* handed him at the edge of the grave, he would fall on his knees, and thank God for that marvel, a newspaper, and for the rich vein or ore,

whose value to the theatre he would soon show us, to our utter amazement. Living in that barren age, he did his best. (*R* 285)

About Reade we might say something similar—that if he could be resuscitated, he would be rendered speechless by the electronic resources we have at our fingertips. However, Reade, too, did his best. And his best is actually a pretty incredible feat. He culled his facts from every imaginable source, and further study is necessary to reveal the extent to which his novels are intertextual. As we learn more about the nineteenth century through old records, newspapers, journal articles, and miscellaneous other texts, we will see how intricately Reade's fictions are woven with facts. At the same time, we will discover through Reade's novels more about the nineteenth century. The way Reade set to work, never guessing where he could know, collecting facts from completely heterogeneous sources, and presenting his attitudes on writing, craft, and artistry in treatises, letters to the editor, and miscellaneous documents that we now have access to will lead to new discoveries and insights so long as we learn to evaluate his novels on his own terms rather than forcing them into existing genres. Despite claims to the contrary, Reade demonstrates true creativity in the invention of the matter-of-fact romance. That these five novels were written over the course of his life suggests that his other novels contain important elements that have yet to be unearthed. His works provide the sources; we must now do the work.

WORKS CITED

- Accounts and Papers: Sessional Papers Printed by Order of the House of Lords or Presented by Royal Command in the Session 1843*. London. 1843. Print.
- “Adelphi.” *Charter* 20 Oct. 1839: 613. Print.
- “The Adelphi Closed a Most Successful Season.” *Hampshire Advertiser and Royal Yacht Club Gazette* 10 Apr. 1830: 3. Print.
- “Adelphi Theatre.” *Morning Post* 4 Dec. 1829: 3. Print.
- “Adventures of the Female Barman.” *Cheshire Observer* 23 Nov. 1867: 2. Print.
- Agathocleous, Tanya. *Urban Realism and the Cosmopolitan Imagination in the Nineteenth Century: Visible City, Invisible World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2011. Print.
- Allday, Joseph. *Truth Is Stranger Than Fiction: True Account of the Proceedings Leading to and a Full & Authentic Report of, the Searching Inquiry by Her Majesty’s Commissioners, into the Horrible System of Discipline Practised at the Borough Gaol of Birmingham*. Birmingham: John Tonks, 1853. Print.
- “Alleged Ill-Treatment of a Lunatic.” *Daily News* 8 Apr. 1861: 2. Print.
- “The Alleged Ill-Treatment of a Lunatic.” *Standard* 15 Apr. 1861: 7. Print.
- “The Alleged Manslaughter at Colney Hatch.” *Morning Post* 8 Aug. 1860: 3. Print.
- “Alleged Manslaughter By Keepers at Colney Hatch.” *Daily News* 7 Aug. 1860: 7. Print.
- “An Amazon.” *Times* 15 Feb. 1875: 10. Print.
- “An Extraordinary Case of a Girl.” *Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post* 15 Dec. 1859: 6. Print.
- Anderson, Olive. “Emigration and Marriage Break-Up in Mid-Victorian England.” *The Economic History Review* 50.1 (1997): 104-109. Print.
- Ashley et al. *Further Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, to the Lord Chancellor: Presented to Both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty*. London: Shaw and Sons, 1847. Print.

- “At the Latter End of Last Week.” *Newcastle Courant* 4 Sept. 1830: 4. Print.
- “At the Thames Police Court.” *Times* 31 Mar. 1868: 12. Print.
- Aytoun, W. E. “The Rights of Woman.” *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine* 92.526 (1862): 183-201. Print.
- Bankson, Douglas Henneck. “Charles Reade’s Manuscript Notecards for Hard Cash.” Diss. U of Washington, 1954. Print.
- Barthes, Roland. *Image-Music-Text*. London: Fontana Press, 1993. Print.
- Beer, Gillian. *The Romance*. London: Methuen, 1970. Print.
- “Belles Lettres.” *Westminster Review* 122.244 (1884): 601-23. Print.
- Bentham, Jeremy. *Works of Jeremy Bentham*. Ed. Sir John Bowring. London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., 1838. Print.
- Besant, Walter. “Charles Reade’s Novels.” *Gentleman’s Magazine* 253.1820 (1882): 198-214. Print.
- “Birmingham Borough Gaol.” *Times* 31 Aug. 1853: 7. Print.
- . *Times* 12 Sept. 1853: 9+. Print.
- “Birmingham Borough Gaol: Last Day of the Inquiry.” *Times* 14 Sept. 1853: 7. Print.
- “Birmingham Borough Gaol: Twelfth Day’s Inquiry.” *Times* 13 Sept. 1853: 11. Print.
- “Borromeo the Bigamist.” *Morning Chronicle* 23 Aug. 1858: 6. Print.
- Broomfield, Andrea. *Food and Cooking in Victorian England: A History*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007. Print.
- Bullough, Vern L, and Bonnie Bullough. *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1993. Print.
- Burns, Wayne. *Charles Reade: A Study in Victorian Authorship*. New York, NY: Bookman, 1961. Print.
- Burns, Wayne and Emerson Grant Sutcliffe. “Uncle Tom and Charles Reade.” *American Literature* 17.4 (1946): 334-347. Print.
- Burton, Jean. *Heyday of a Wizard: Daniel Home, the Medium*. London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1948. Print.

- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990. Print.
- Byerly, Alison. *Realism, Representation, and the Arts in Nineteenth-Century Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006. Print.
- “The Celebrated Elephant Mademoiselle D’Jeck.” *Baltimore Patriot* 6 July 1831: 2. Print.
- “Central Criminal Court, Monday, June 22.” *Times* 23 June 1846: 8. Print.
- “Charge of Illegal Confinement in an Asylum.” *Dundee Courier & Argus* 10 Dec. 1862: 3. Print.
- “Charge of Manslaughter Against a Surgeon.” *Morning Chronicle* 17 June 1856: 3. Print.
- “Charles Reade’s ‘It Is Never Too Late to Mend.’” *Bentley’s Miscellany* 40 (1856): 292-96. Print.
- Clarke, John S. *Circus Parade*. Yorkshire, England: Jeremy Mills Publishing, 1936. Print.
- “Commission of Lunacy.” *Times* 27 July 1858: 5. Print.
- “Commission of Lunacy.--Extraordinary Inquiry.” *Morning Post* 24 May 1858: 2. Print.
- “Court of Queen’s Bench, Guildhall, July 7: Fletcher V. Fletcher.” *Times* 8 July 1859: 11. Print.
- “Court of Queen’s Bench, Guildhall, July 8: Fletcher V. Fletcher.” *Times* 9 July 1859: 11. Print.
- Courtney, W. L. *Studies New and Old*. London: Chapman and Hall, 1888. Print.
- Crawford, William et al. *Report Relative to the System of Prison Discipline, &c., by the Inspectors of Prisons: Presented to Both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty*. London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1843. Print.
- “Cream.” *Times* 26 May 1858: 6. Print.
- . *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 5.127 (1858): 351-52. Print.
- “The Crime of Lunacy.” *Morning Chronicle* 17 Aug. 1858: 4. Print.

- Crowndale. "It Is Never Too Late to Mend." *Era* 2 Mar. 1879: 12. Print.
- . "It's Never Too Late to Mend." *Era* 16 Feb. 1879: 7. Print.
- D., E. "Mr. Reade's 'Hard Cash'." *The Reader* 2.52 (1863): 753-4. Print.
- D.W.G. "Lunatic Asylums." *Times* 23 Aug. 1858: 9. Print.
- Dawson, William James. *The Makers of English Fiction*. New York: F.H. Revell Co., 1905. Print.
- DeLacy, Margaret. *Prison Reform in Lancashire, 1700-1850: A Study in Local Administration*. Manchester, England: Manchester UP, 1986. Print.
- "Death by An Elephant--Mdlle. D'Jeck." *Standard* 16 Jan. 1833: 2. Print.
- "The Death of Another Patient." *Times* 4 Apr. 1870: 9. Print.
- "Death of Miss Djeck." *Morning Post* 4 July 1837: 6. Print.
- "Death of a Strange Character." *Newcastle Courant* 24 Feb. 1871: 6. Print.
- Debenham, Helen. "The Victorian Sensation Novel." *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Ed. William Baker and Kenneth Womack. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2002. 209-22. Print.
- Dekker, Rudolf and Lotte C. van de Pol. *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989. Print.
- "Departure of the Elephant from England." *Morning Post* 1 Nov. 1830 : 3. Print.
- Dickens, Charles. *The Pickwick Papers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Print.
- Dijkstra, Bram. "The Androgyne in Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature." *Comparative Literature* 26.1 (1974) : 62-73. Print.
- "Doctors and Madhouses." *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 6.144 (1858): 104-5. Print.
- Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. *A Study in Scarlet and The Sign of the Four*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1904. Print.
- "Dreadful Occurrence." *Jackson's Oxford Journal* 4 Sept. 1830 : 2. Print.

- Dyott, William. *Dyott's Diary, 1781-1845: A Selection from the Journal of William Dyott, Sometime General in the British Army and Aide-de-Camp to His Majesty King George III*. Ed. Reginald Welbury Jeffery. London: Archibald Constable and Co., Ltd., 1907. Print.
- "The Elephant." *Newcastle Magazine* 9.10 (1830): 466-71. Print.
- "The Elephant, at the Adelphi," *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post* 31 Dec. 1829: 4. Print.
- "The Elephants." *Liverpool Mercury* 12 Feb. 1830: 4. Print.
- "Elephants and Their Keepers." *Times* 20 Apr. 1855 : 9. Print.
- Eliot, George. *Adam Bede*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. Print.
- Elwin, Malcolm. *Charles Reade, a Biography*. London: J. Cape, 1931. Print.
- "Evidence of Mrs. Turner." *Liverpool Mercury* 3 Aug. 1858: 7. Print.
- "Execution of an Elephant." *Morning Post* 6 July 1866: 3. Print.
- "Extraordinary Case of Bigamy." *Times* 25 Mar. 1850: 5. Print.
- Fahnestock, Jeanne. "Bigamy: The Rise and Fall of a Convention." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 36.1 (1981): 47-71. Print.
- "False Imprisonment in an Asylum." *Glasgow Herald* 10 Dec. 1862: 7. Print.
- . *Glasgow Herald* 9 Dec. 1862: 4. Print.
- Fantina, Richard. *Victorian Sensational Fiction: The Daring Work of Charles Reade*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Print.
- First Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords Appointed to Inquire Into the Present State of the Several Gaols and Houses of Correction in England and Wales; With the Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix*. London, 1836. Print.
- Flanders, Judith. *Inside the Victorian Home: A Portrait of Domestic Life in Victorian England*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003. Print.
- Fleming, James M. *The Fiddle Fancier's Guide: A Manual of Information Regarding Violins, Violas, Basses and Bows of Classical and Modern Times, Together With Biographical Notices and Portraits of the Most Famous Performers on These Instruments*. London: Haynes, Foucher & Co., 1892. Print.

- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979. Print.
- . *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1965. Print.
- “Four Novels.” *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 58.1503 (1884): 220-21. Print.
- Friswell, J. Hain. *Modern Men of Letters Honestly Criticised*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1870. Print.
- Fry, Danby P., ed. *The Lunacy Acts: Containing All the Statutes Relating to Private Lunatics, Pauper Lunatics, Criminal Lunatics, Commissions of Lunacy, Public and Private Asylums, and the Commissioners in Lunacy, With an Introductory Commentary, Notes to the Statutes, Including References to Decided Cases, and a Copious Index*. London: Knight, 1864. Print.
- Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1957. Print.
- . *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance*. Harvard UP, 1976. Print.
- Godwin, William. *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice: And Its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness*. London: Printed for G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1793. Print.
- Golden, Catherine J. “Late-Twentieth-Century Readers in Search of a Dickensian Heroine: Angels, Fallen Sisters, and Eccentric Women.” *Modern Language Studies* 30.2 (2000): 5-19. Print.
- “Grand Jury Powers.” *Household Words* 15.373 (1857): 457-63. Print.
- Grass, Sean. *The Self in the Cell: Narrating the Victorian Prisoner*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Print.
- Great Britain. *The Practical Statutes of the Session 1860; (23 & 24 Victoria), With Introductions, Notes, Tables of Statutes Repealed and Subjects Altered, Lists of Local and Personal and Private Acts, and A Copious Index*. Ed. William Paterson. London: John Crockford, 1860. Print.
- . *The Statutes of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland*. Ed. N. Simons, George E. Eyre, and Andrew Spottiswoode, 1842. Print.

The Great Siam Elephant, at the Adelphi Theatre; With the Programme of the Piece in Which She Acts the Principal Character and the Humorous Prologue Delivered by Mr. Yates, to Which Is Added The Natural History of the Elephant, With Many Curious Adecdotes [sic]. London: Cowie and Strange, 1830. Print.

Grigsby, Ann. "Charles Reade's Hard Cash: Lunacy Reform Through Sensationalism." *Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian Fiction* 25 (1996): 141-158. Print.

Haines, Lewis F. "Reade, Mill, and Zola: A Study of the Character and Intention of Charles Reade's Realistic Method." *Studies in Philology* 40 (1943): 463-480. Print.

"Hard Cash." *London Review of Politics, Society, Literature, Art, and Science* 8.184 (1864): 45. Print.

---. *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 17.428 (1864): 55-56. Print.

---. *London Review of Politics, Society, Literature, Art, and Science* 8.184 (1864): 45. Print.

---. *Spectator* 36.1852 (1863): 2919-20. Print.

Hart, George. *The Violin: Its Famous Makers and Their Imitators.* London: Dulau and Co., 1884. Print.

Haslam, John. *Observations on Madness and Melancholy: Including Practical Remarks on Those Diseases; Together With Cases: And an Account of the Morbid Appearances on Dissection.* 2nd ed. London: J. Callow, 1809. Print.

Haweis, Hugh Reginald. *Old Violins.* London: George Redway, 1898. Print.

Higgs, Michelle. *Prison Life in Victorian England.* Stroud, England: Tempus, 2007. Print.

Hoeveler, Diane Long. *Romantic Androgyny: The Women Within.* University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1990. Print.

Hogan, Anne and Andrew Bradstock. "Introduction." *Women of Faith in Victorian Culture: Reassessing the Angel in the House.* Ed. Anne Hogan and Andrew Bradstock. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. 1-5. Print.

Home, Daniel Dunglas. *Incidents in My Life.* Secaucus, N.J.: University Books, 1973. Print.

Howells, William Dean. *My Literary Passions.* New York: Harper, 1895. Print.

- Hughes, Winifred. "The Sensation Novel." *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Ed. Patrick Brantlinger and William Thesing. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005. 260-78. Print.
- Ignatieff, Michael. *A Just Measure of Pain : The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978. Print.
- "In Our Impression of Yesterday." *Times* 24 Aug. 1858 : 6. Print.
- "Inquest at Thorpe Lunatic Asylum." *Daily News* 13 Nov. 1854 : 2. Print.
- "The Inquest on the Body of the Poor Parrot-keeper." *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* 21 May 1879: 6. Print.
- Ireland, Richard. *"A Want of Order and Good Discipline": Rules, Discretion and the Victorian Prison*. Cardiff: U of Wales P, 2007. Print.
- "It Is Never Too Late to Mend. A Matter-of-fact Romance." *New Quarterly Review* 5.20 (1856): 394-98. Print.
- James, Henry. *Notes and Reviews: A Series of Twenty-five Papers Hitherto Unpublished in Book Form*. Ed. Pierre de Chaignon la Rose. Cambridge, MA: Dunster House, 1921. Print.
- Johnston, Norman Bruce. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. Chicago: U of Illinois P, 2000. Print.
- Koenigsberger, Kurt. *The Novel and the Menagerie: Totality, Englishness, and Empire*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2007. Print.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Revolution in Poetic Language*. New York: Columbia UP, 1984. Print.
- Krueger, Christine L. *Reading for the Law: British Literary History and Gender Advocacy*. Charlottesville, Va.: U of Virginia P, 2010. Print.
- "A Letter from Geneva." *Bristol Mercury* 8 July 1837: 1. Print.
- "The Letters Which We Daily Receive." *Times* 28 Aug. 1858: 8. Print.
- Levine, George Lewis. *Realism, Ethics and Secularism: Essays on Victorian Literature and Science*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2008. Print.
- Logan, Peter Melville. "Imitations of Insanity and Victorian Medical Aesthetics." *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net* 49 (2008): n. pag. Print.
- "Love to the Last." *Manchester Times* 10 Nov. 1860: 3. Print.

- “Lunatic Asylums and Lunatics.” *Leeds Mercury* 19 Aug. 1858: 2. Print.
- “Lunatic Asylums and the Lunacy Laws.” *Times* 19 Aug. 1858: 8+. Print.
- “Mademoiselle Djeck, the Celebrated Elephant.” *New-Bedford Mercury* 25 Aug. 1837 : 1. Print.
- “Mademoiselle Djek.” *Judy, or the London Serio-comic Journal* (1882): 132. Print.
- “Mademoiselle Djek, the Performing Elephant.” *Bristol Mercury* 26 June 1858: 4. Print.
- “Mademoiselle D’ Jeck, the Sagacious Elephant,” *Bristol Mercury* 7 Sept. 1830: 3. Print.
- “Mademoiselle D’Jeck.” *Freeman’s Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* 16 Dec. 1830: 3. Print.
- “Mademoiselle D’Jeck, the Celebrated Adelphi Elephant.” *Morning Post* 7 Dec. 1830: 3. Print.
- “Madmen and Madhouses.” *Era* 29 Aug. 1858: 9. Print.
- “A Man With Four Wives.” *Liverpool Mercury* 18 Feb. 1871: 8. Print.
- “The Manslaughter Case at the Lancaster Lunatic Asylum.” *The Lancaster Gazette* 5 Mar. 1870: 4. Print.
- “A Manx Gentleman Kidnapped.” *Leeds Mercury* 29 Aug. 1871: 6. Print.
- Mayhew, Henry and John Binny. *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life*. Griffin, Bohn, and Company, 1862. Print.
- Mayor, François. *Miss Djeck*. Genève, 1837. Print.
- McCandless, Peter. “Dangerous to Themselves and Others: The Victorian Debate over the Prevention of Wrongful Confinement.” *The Journal of British Studies* 23.1 (1983): 84-104. Print.
- . “Liberty and Lunacy: The Victorians and Wrongful Confinement.” *Journal of Social History* 11.3 (1978): 366-386. Print.
- McConville, Seán. “The Victorian Prison: England, 1865 - 1965.” *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*. Ed. Norval Morris and David J. Rothman. New York: Oxford UP, 1995. 117-50. Print.

- McGowen, Randall. "The Well-Ordered Prison: England, 1780-1865." *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*. Ed. Norval Morris and David J. Rothman. New York: Oxford UP, 1995. 71-99. Print.
- McShane, Marilyn D. and Franklin P. Williams. *Encyclopedia of American Prisons*. Taylor & Francis, 1996. Print.
- "Middlesex Sessions, Dec. 17." *Times* 18 Dec. 1861: 9. Print.
- Mill, John Stuart. *The Subjection of Women*. London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1869. Print.
- Millett, Kate. "The Debate over Women: Ruskin Vs. Mill." *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*. Ed. Martha Vicinus. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1972. 121-39. Print.
- "Miss Djeck, Has, We Hear," *Age* 5 Sept. 1830: 6. Print.
- Morewood-Dowsett, J. "Supplement: Elephant Past and Present." *Journal of the Royal African Society* 38.152 (1939): 3-40. Print.
- "Mr. Charles Reade." *Once a Week* 9.212 (1872): 80-7. Print.
- "Mr. Charles Reade's Novels." *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 54.1397 (1882): 180-1. Print.
- "A Mr. Garzoni Has Addressed a Letter." *Theatrical Observer* 7 Sept. 1830: 1. Print.
- Muller, C. H. "Charles Reade: Two Documentary Novels." *Unisa English Studies: Journal of the Department of English* 13.2 (1975): 14-23. Print.
- . "Charles Reade's 'Hard Cash'." *Unisa English Studies: Journal of the Department of English* 9.2 (1971): 7-20. Print.
- The New West Country Garland, In Five Parts: Being a Remarkable Account of a Young Orphan's Ramble into a Foreign Country; Occasioned by Her Uncle Striking Her When She Came to Visit Him; Also, the Many Difficulties the Uncle Underwent till She Was Found, He Being Suspected of Murdering Her, Together with Several Other Things as Well Entertaining as They Are True*. N.p.: n.p., 1796. Print.
- Nihill, Daniel. *Prison Discipline In Its Relations to Society and Individuals: As Deterring From Crime, and as Conducive to Personal Reformation*. London: J. Hatchard, 1839. Print.
- "No Questions Can Have a Greater Interest for the Public." *Times* 19 Jan. 1860: 8. Print.

- “Not so Many Years Ago.” *Times* 28 July 1858: 9. Print.
- Oliphant, Margaret. “Charles Reade’s Novels.” *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine* 106.648 (1869): 488-514. Print.
- “On Friday Morning Mr. Yates,” *Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post* 3 Dec. 1829: 1. Print.
- “On the Night of Wednesday Last.” *Times* 6 Oct. 1830: 3. Print.
- Ouida. “Romance and Realism.” *Times* 12 Oct. 1883: 3-4. Print.
- “Palmer V. Palmer.” *Times* 1 July 1859: 11. Print.
- Parrish, Morris Longstreth. *Wilkie Collins and Charles Reade*. New York: B. Franklin, 1968. Print.
- Parry-Jones, William Llywelyn. *The Trade in Lunacy: A Study of Private Madhouses in England in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1972. Print.
- Payne, Edward John. “Violin Family.” *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Ed. Sir George Grove, John Alexander Fuller Maitland, and E. Heron-Allen. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911. 285-314. Print.
- “The Pets of Authors.” *All the Year Round* 36.867 (1885): 402-8. Print.
- Phillips, Walter Clarke. *Dickens, Reade, and Collins: Sensation Novelists*. New York: Garland Publishers, 1979. Print.
- “Police.” *Times* 6 Nov. 1857: 9. Print.
- “The Police Courts: Worship-Street.” *Daily News* 6 Jan. 1871: 7. Print.
- Poovey, Mary. “Forgotten Writers, Neglected Histories: Charles Reade and the Nineteenth-Century Transformation of the British Literary Field.” *ELH* 71.2 (2004): 433-453. Print.
- “The Position of a Lunatic.” *Times* 19 Aug. 1858: 6. Print.
- Priestley, Philip. *Victorian Prison Lives: English Prison Biography, 1830-1914*. London: Methuen, 1985. Print.
- “Private Madhouses.” *Liverpool Mercury* 17 Aug. 1858: 2. Print.
- “Prologue.” *Morning Post* 7 Dec. 1829: 3. Print.

- Publicus. "Private Lunatic Asylums." *Times* 27 Aug. 1858: 8. Print.
- Pykett, Lyn. "The Real Versus the Ideal: Theories of Fiction in Periodicals, 1850-1870." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 15.2 (1982): 63-74. Print.
- Quinton, Richard Frith. *Crime and Criminals, 1876-1910*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910. Print.
- Rajan, Tilottama. "Intertextuality and the Subject of Reading/Writing." *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*. Ed. Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein. Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1991. 61-74. Print.
- Reade, Charles. "Androgynism; or, Woman Playing at Man." *English Review* (Aug. 1911): 10-12. Print.
- . "Androgynism: Woman Playing at Man." *English Review* (Aug. 1911): 13-29. Print.
- . "Androgynism; or, Woman Playing at Man." *English Review* 9 (1911): 191-212. Print.
- . *Cream. Contains Jack of All Trades: A Matter-of-Fact Romance, and the Autobiography of a Thief*. London: Trübner & Co., 1858. Print.
- . "Facts Must Be Faced." *Times* 31 Aug. 1871: 4. Print.
- . *Good Stories*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1884. Print.
- . *Hard Cash: A Matter-of-Fact Romance*. London: Sampson Low, Son, & Marston, 1863. Print.
- . "How Lunatics' Ribs Get Broken." *Pall Mall Gazette* 20 Jan. 1870: 6. Print.
- . "It Is Never Too Late to Mend." *Literary Gazette* 22 Oct. 1859: 405. Print.
- . *It Is Never Too Late to Mend: A Matter of Fact Romance*. London: Richard Bentley, 1856. Print.
- . "It's Never Too Late To Mend." *Era* 23 Mar. 1879: 12. Print.
- . "It's Never Too Late To Mend." *Era* 9 Feb. 1879: 6. Print.
- . "It's Never Too Late To Mend." *Era* 23 Feb. 1879: 12. Print.
- . "It's Never Too Late To Mend." *Era* 9 Mar. 1879: 12. Print.

- . *Love Me Little, Love Me Long*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859. Print.
- . "Private Madhouses." *Leeds Mercury* 14 Aug. 1858: 8. Print.
- . "Private Madhouses." *Hull Packet and East Riding Times* 20 Aug. 1858: 2. Print.
- . "Private Madhouses, No. I." *Daily News* 12 Aug. 1858: 4. Print.
- . "Private Madhouses, No. I." *Morning Chronicle* 12 Aug. 1858: 7. Print.
- . "Private Madhouses, No. I." *Birmingham Daily Post* 13 Aug. 1858: 1. Print.
- . "Private Madhouses, No. I." *Belfast News-Letter* 14 Aug. 1858: 3. Print.
- . "Private Madhouses, No. I." *Era* 15 Aug. 1858: 12. Print.
- . "Private Madhouses--Extraordinary Story." *Glasgow Herald* 18 Aug. 1858: 3. Print.
- . *Put Yourself in His Place*. Boston: Fields, Osgood, & Co., 1870. Print.
- . *Readiana: Comments on Current Events*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1883. Print.
- . *Singleheart and Doubleface: A Matter-of-Fact Romance*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1884. Print.
- . *Trade Malice: A Personal Narrative; and The Wandering Heir: A Matter of Fact Romance*. London: Samuel French, 1875. Print.
- . "Very Hard Cash." *All the Year Round* 10.244 (1863): 409-19. Print.
- Reade, Charles L, and Compton Reade. *Charles Reade, D.C.L., Dramatist, Novelist, Journalist: A Memoir Compiled Chiefly from His Literary Remains*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1887. Print.
- Reeve, Henry, and James Fitzjames Stephen. "The License of Modern Novelists." *Edinburgh Review* 106.215 (1857): 124-56. Print.
- "The Royal Elephant." *Morning Post* 2 Sept. 1830: 4. Print.
- Ruskin, John. *Sesame and Lilies: Three Lectures, Delivered in 1864 and 1868*. New York: James B. Millar and Co., 1884. Print.
- Rust, James D. "The Art of Fiction in George Eliot's Reviews." *The Review of English Studies* 7.26 (1956): 164-172. Print.

- S.T.B. "Private Lunatic Asylums." *Times* 4 Sept. 1858: 10. Print.
- Sadleir, Michael. *Excursions in Victorian Bibliography*. London: Chaundy & Cox, 1922. Print.
- Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage, 1994. Print.
- Scull, Andrew. "A Brilliant Career? John Conolly and Victorian Psychiatry." *Victorian Studies* 27.2 (1984): 203-235. Print.
- . "A Convenient Place to Get Rid of Inconvenient People: The Victorian Lunatic Asylum." *Buildings and Society: Essays on the Social Development of the Built Environment*. Ed. Anthony D. King. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980. 37-60. Print.
- . "Introduction." *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era*. Ed. Andrew Scull. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1981. 1-4. Print.
- . "Moral Treatment Reconsidered: Some Sociological Comments on an Episode in the History of British Psychiatry." *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era*. Ed. Andrew Scull. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1981. 105-18. Print.
- . "The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era." *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era*. Ed. Andrew Scull. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1981. 5-32. Print.
- Semple, Janet. *Bentham's Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. Print.
- "Shocking Brutality By a Keeper Towards a Patient in Hanwell Lunatic Asylum." *Morning Chronicle* 2 Jan. 1862: 6. Print.
- "Shocking Treatment of a Lunatic." *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* 8 Nov. 1857: 5. Print.
- Shore, Louisa. "The Emancipation of Women." *Westminster Review* 46.1 (1874): 137-74. Print.
- Sieh, Edward Wallace. *Community Corrections and Human Dignity*. Jones and Bartlett Learning, 2006. Print.
- Smith, Elton Edward. *Charles Reade*. Boston: Twayne, 1976. Print.

- Smith, Sheila M. "Propaganda and Hard Facts in Charles Reade's Didactic Novels: A Study of *It Is Never Too Late to Mend* and *Hard Cash*." *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 4 (1960): 135-149. Print.
- Stedman, Jane W. "From Dame to Woman: W. S. Gilbert and Theatrical Transvestism." *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*. Ed. Martha Vicinus. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1972. 20-37. Print.
- Stephen, James Fitzjames. "The License of Modern Novelists." *Edinburgh Review* 106.215 (1857): 124-55. Print.
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. New York: Signet Classics, 1966. Print.
- "Suspicious Death in a Lunatic Asylum." *Western Mail* 1 Nov. 1869: 3. Print.
- Sutcliffe, Emerson Grant. "Charles Reade's Notebooks." *Studies in Philology* 27.1 (1930): 64-109. Print.
- . "Fact, Realism, and Morality in Reade's Fiction." *Studies in Philology* 41.4 (1944): 582-598. Print.
- . "Foemina Vera in Charles Reade's Novels." *PMLA* 46.4 (1931): 1260-1279. Print.
- . "Plotting in Reade's Novels." *PMLA* 47.3 (1932): 834-863. Print.
- . "Psychological Presentation in Reade's Novels." *Studies in Philology* 38.3 (1941): 521-542. Print.
- . "The Stage in Reade's Novels." *Studies in Philology* 27.4 (1930): 654-688. Print.
- . "Unique and Repeated Situations and Themes in Reade's Fiction." *PMLA* 60.1 (1945): 221-230. Print.
- Swinburne, Algernon Charles. *Miscellanies*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1886. Print.
- "Theatrical Miscellany." *Morning Post* 25 Nov. 1829: 4. Print.
- "These Summer Assizes Have Already Produced." *Times* 24 July 1860: 9. Print.
- Thomas, Ronald R. "Wilkie Collins and the Sensation Novel." *The Columbia History of the British Novel*. Ed. John Richetti et al. Columbia UP, 1994. 479-507. Print.
- Tomes, Nancy J. "A Generous Confidence: Thomas Story Kirkbride's Philosophy of Asylum Construction and Management." *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era*. Ed. Andrew T Scull. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1981. 121-43. Print.

- Trollope, Anthony. *The Letters of Anthony Trollope: Volume One, 1835-1870*. Ed. N. John Hall. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1983. Print.
- “Two Young Women Larking It In Men’s Clothes.” *Dundee Courier and Argus* 12 May 1870: 2. Print.
- “Vagaries of an Elephant.” *Times* 6 Apr. 1855: 8. Print.
- Vicinus, Martha. “Introduction: The Perfect Victorian Lady.” *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*. Ed. Martha Vicinus. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1972. vii-xv. Print.
- Vitanza, Dianna. “Charles Reade: A Revaluation.” Diss. Northern Illinois U, 1977. Print.
- Walkowitz, Judith R. “Science and the Seance: Transgressions of Gender and Genre in Late Victorian London.” *Representations* 22 (1988): 3-29. Print.
- Walsh, Susan. “Arithmetic of Bedlam!‘: Markets and Manhood in Charles Reade’s ‘Hard Cash.’” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 63.1 (2008): 1-40. Print.
- Welsby, W. N., W. J. Williams, and William Baly. *Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Condition and Treatment of the Prisoners Confined in Birmingham Borough Prison, and the Conduct, Management, and Together with the Minutes of Evidence*. London: G.E. Eyre and W. Spottiswoode, 1854. Print.
- Weltman, Sharon Aronofsky. *Ruskin’s Mythic Queen : Gender Subversion in Victorian Culture*. Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1998. Print.
- “Women in Coal Mines.” *Times* 11 Feb. 1845: 7. Print.
- Woodring, Carl R. “Charles Reade’s Debt to William Howitt.” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 5.1 (1950): 39-46. Print.
- “Writing of Charles Reade.” *American Reformer* 2.10 (1884): 157. Print.
- X.Y.Z. “Lunatic Asylums.” *Times* 25 Aug. 1858: 5. Print.
- Yeazell, Ruth Bernard. *Art of the Everyday: Dutch Painting and the Realist Novel*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 2008. Print.