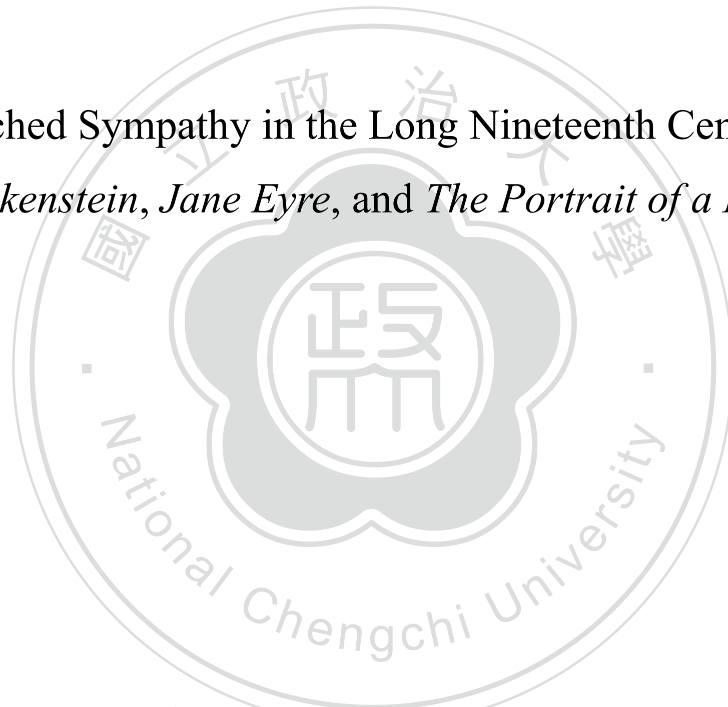
國立政治大學英國語文學系

博士班博士論文

置身事外的當事者：從同理心看十九世紀英美小說



Detached Sympathy in the Long Nineteenth Century: *Frankenstein*, *Jane Eyre*, and *The Portrait of a Lady*

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Detached Sympathy in the Long Nineteenth Century:
Frankenstein, *Jane Eyre*, and *The Portrait of a Lady*

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國立政治大學英國語文學系博士班

博士論文提要

論文名稱：置身事外的當事者

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論文提要內容：

作者認為心理小說透過想像力回應了同理心在十九世紀的發展。這些心理小說，藉由細膩描繪書中主人翁的「共感」(fellow-thinking)，從而重新定義了亞當·斯密（Adam Smith）闡述同理心中對一位「公正的觀察者」(impartial spectator)的功能。這公正的旁觀者可以被視為個人良心的人格化，以一個獨立（儘管是看不見的）人物左右主人翁的想法與判斷。在這些小說中，人物依據對這個公正的旁觀者所作的判斷，改變自己的行為。

在本文討論的三本心理小說中，維克多·弗蘭肯斯坦（Victor Frankenstein）、簡·愛（Jane Eyre）和伊莎貝爾·阿切爾（Isabel Archer）試圖在遭遇的各樣衝突中與自我對話，成為一位公正的旁觀者：然而，弗蘭肯斯坦的逝去源於無法成功地與他的創造物(the Creature)，也就是他的「旁觀者」達成共識。另一方面，儘管簡·愛（Jane Eyre）與羅切斯特（Rochester）身心靈的契合呈現一個臻於完美的同理心，

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但此同理心卻未免顯得過度理想化、不真實，因為若不是藉由文末超自然力量的協助，兩位主人翁無法再次相遇，這種完美的同理也將無法實現。與弗蘭肯斯坦和簡·愛不同，《一位女士的肖像》中的伊莎貝爾在不幸的婚姻中重新審視她的意識，也就是與她「公正的觀察者」的重新對話，從本來身為一位不切實際的夢想家轉變為一位客觀的觀察者，並在苦難中獲得自我救贖。

關鍵字：同理心、共感、公正的觀察者、科學怪人、簡愛、一位女士的肖像

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Abstract

This thesis describes sympathy's development with fiction in the long nineteenth century. It argues that psychological novels respond to sympathy in the theatric imagination through fellow-thinking. Through discussions of psychological novels, this dissertation argues that these novels facilitate characters' fellow-thinking in order to redefine the function of what Adam Smith sees as an "impartial spectator." It seems that, in these novels, characters modify their actions according to their interpretations of the judgements cast by this impartial spectator, an entity which can be considered a separate (albeit unseen) character which functions as a conscience.

In these three psychological novels, Victor Frankenstein, Jane Eyre, and Isabel Archer try to position themselves as this impartial spectator in the conversation or enter into conflict with the other characters, nature, and consciousness: Frankenstein is unable to successfully negotiate his position vis-a-vis a theatric "impartial observer," his creature, and, as a result, dies. Although Jane Eyre's sympathy with Rochester is perfect, this idealized sympathy is nonetheless shadowed by the supernatural voice. Without the help (rather than the hindrance) of this force, this perfect sympathy is impossible. Different from Frankenstein and Jane, Isabel in *The Portrait* is transformed from an absorbed thinker to a more objective observer through her relationship with Osmond. By successfully negotiating her relationship with her conscience, "impartial observer," her accomplishment redeems her from her suffering.

Key words: Sympathy, fellow-thinking, *Frankenstein*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Portrait of a Lady*

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Introduction

This thesis describes the formal engagement with the development of detached sympathy[1] in three important novels of the long nineteenth century. Although Adam Smith's philosophical theories are not my focus in this thesis, his concept of detachment, of an "impartial spectator," serves as a lead into my argument about detached sympathy in three important novels of the long nineteenth century. In Smithian theory, psychological novels respond to sympathy in the theatric imagination through fellow-thinking or thinking along with others, which allows a character to enter into the others' thought processes. Through discussions of psychological novels, I argue that these novels facilitate characters' fellow-thinking in order to redefine the function of what Smith sees as an "impartial spectator." I suggest that, in these novels, characters modify their actions according to their interpretations of the judgements cast by this impartial spectator, "the great judge and arbiter of their conduct" (Smith 115), an entity which can be considered a separate (albeit unseen) character which functions as a conscience. The process of unconsciously (or unwittingly) trying to be as objective as the spectator results in the characters' cognitive decisions. Thus, sympathy in long nineteenth-century fiction is a cognitive act derived from an understanding of meaning, an active transcendence of the self which is most often set in motion by difficulties. The characters' personal suffering is the fertile ground on which this sort of fellow-thinking grows. This fellow-thinking allows them to imagine different scenarios which could result from their behavior, but it does not accommodate the potential for "wrong" scenarios like Isabel's misinterpretation of Osmond's motivations in *The Portrait of a Lady*.

Of the many novels of the long nineteenth century, the three novels on which my thesis focuses stand out to me because I sense a sort of "oddity" that they have in common. In my early readings of these novels, I was deeply moved by the characters of Frankenstein's creature, Jane Eyre, and Isabel Archer, by the afflictions they encountered

[1] Detached sympathy takes place when the sympathizer is looking from a distance, an observer rather than a participant—for example, the sympathy which a reader feels for the characters in a novel. It can also occur among characters and between authors and their characters. Detached sympathy can be *built on* the base of conventional sympathy. Emotional reactions spur "conventional" sympathizers to act. In contrast, rather than immersing themselves in the suffering that they see, detached sympathizers' actions are motivated by rational analysis.

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in the novels, and I was compelled to sympathize with them. But later, as I reread these novels that had once touched me so viscerally, I felt as if my ability to sympathize with the characters had been blocked. In thinking about this feeling more deeply, I found that it seems that there was another voice, an impartial observer, making judgements that were in conflict with my ability to immerse myself in my reading, to simply feel and think with the characters. This experience of what seems to be a sort of split self has propelled me to stop and observe how my sympathy is both elicited and, later, frustrated during my reading. I find that my sympathy with the characters grows stronger when I feel that their thoughts and emotions are clearly revealed to me in the reading process. Conversely, my sympathy is frustrated when I observe that there is another side of the character that is a sort of "dark side," a part of the character's personality which is not as admirable as the character as a whole, and is, initially at least, kept hidden from view. This dark side of the character's personality, then, would seem to maintain the contrast with what excites our sympathy: clear revelation, not just "goodness." For example, Frankenstein's creature is originally presented as good-natured with rich emotions, but he is transformed into a cunning and malicious serial killer after he feels that he has been wronged. In *Jane Eyre*, Jane is willing to sacrifice even her beloved Rochester to abide by her moral standards. Because her passionate willingness to sacrifice extends even to herself and her own happiness, she almost marries St. John in spite of her realization that she could never be happy with him. Isabel is an intelligent woman, but she is easily absorbed in her intellectual theory, a self-inflicted deception, that results in her entering a marital prison in *The Portrait of a Lady*. I wondered how these characters could be so inconsistent. It is as if they are condemned by parts of themselves which exist hidden alongside their more public selves.

I will argue that the characters who succeed in transcending their dilemmas are those who adapt themselves to the objective role of this Smithian impartial observer. This other, antithetical personality is often propelled by strong passion in its search for the darker side of a character's psyche, inhibiting the character from seeing the truth. In these three psychological novels, Frankenstein's Creature, Jane Eyre, and Isabel Archer try to position themselves as this impartial spectator through conversation or by entering into conflict with the other characters, nature, and their own consciousness: The Creature is

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unable to successfully negotiate his position vis-a-vis Smith's impartial observer and, as a result, hunts down both his creator and ultimately, himself. Although Jane Eyre's sympathy with Rochester is perfect, this idealized sympathy is nonetheless shadowed by the supernatural voice. Without the help (rather than the hindrance) of this force, this perfect sympathy is impossible. Different from Frankenstein and Jane, Isabel in *The Portrait* is transformed from an absorbed thinker to a more objective observer through her relationship with Osmond. By successfully negotiating her relationship with her conscience (Smith's "impartial observer"), her accomplishment redeems her from her suffering.

Sympathy is less a merging of the self with another than it is the ability to visualize someone else's actions through imagination and, in doing so, forge a connection with that person. In turn, sympathy enables readers to imagine the incidents that take place, do not take place, or could take place in the novels along with the protagonists. By doing so, the readers' aggressive powers can be regulated. This regulation occurs because these novels illustrate the potentially damaging implications of these incidents. Consequently, sympathy is a way to educate, to regulate impulsive actions by imagining how others make their decisions in certain situations, a voluntary action derived from an understanding of meaning, an active transcendence which is most often set in motion by suffering and sacrifice.

Sympathy takes place within three relationships: author-character, character-character, and reader-character. In the author-character relationship, authors sympathize with their characters in various degrees. In contrast to Shelley's Brontë's personal involvement with their characters, Henry James approaches sympathy from a more detached position. In all the novels, when sympathy is shared between characters, these characters are aspiring to share their feelings, whether they are in pain or in ecstasy.. While the Creature, in despair, fails to achieve shared feelings with Frankenstein, Jane and Rochester are united in harmonious sympathy. An etymological analysis of "sympathy" shows us that "sym" means "same and common," while "path" means "suffering, feeling, pain, emotion, and experience." Thus, the shared feeling, suffering, and experience of pain deepens mutual identification as well as intensifies attachment. In contrast, Frankenstein's resistance to sharing his feelings and identifying with the

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Creature results in hatred and detachment, both emotionally and physically. As for Isabel, one reason that she suffers is that she does not achieve this shared feeling with Osmond, at least, but the readers do achieve it (with her). Thus, this readerly sympathy towards characters is part and parcel of literature's enduring influence on its readers.

By exploring the process that contributes to sympathy in the novels, the function of sympathy, and the ways that readers and characters receive sympathies, I will examine how events in these novels shed light on the minds, personalities, and destinies of their characters. Sometimes, these novels warn of unwanted consequences which can result from not exercising sympathies with their readers. Looking into sympathy as both content and as a structure that requires its readers' engagement, I will ask how sympathy demonstrates the literary changes from the late eighteenth to late nineteenth centuries. How is sympathy plotted, articulated, and aroused in the novel? How do narrations present what goes on inside characters' minds, how they experience and think about the things that happen to them, and how do these inner experiences change them as people in times of hardships?

For purposes of this study, my first consideration will be the relation between sympathy and the rise of the novel as a genre. The eighteenth-century moral philosophers David Hume and Adam Smith bring forward the idea of sympathy; however, until the late eighteenth century, there was no specific genre in which to qualify the phenomenon. The novel is, in John Brewer's words, an art form that expresses sympathy which then contributes to the formation of a "culture of sensibility" in the eighteenth century (23). Brewer maintains that, since sensibility[2]can be defined as "the capacity to feel and exert

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[2]Sensibility is also related to taste, feeling things in a physical way, and to the intensity and degree of sensibility. Edmund Burke, along with David Hume and Adam Smith, was an influential eighteenth-century philosopher. Burke is skeptical of Rousseau's belief in sensibility as a guide to moral action, instead arguing that reliable natural feelings can only derive from the cultivation of institutions (9). Natural taste, therefore, can only come from the "most highly developed individuals" (9). Mere sentiment cannot direct people to goodness. Burke points out that, similar to a "sensory response"—taste on the tongue, for example—navigating us through our moral decisions, we have a natural response to aesthetic judgements. Burke thinks that, in Marjorie Garson's words, "natural feelings, to be reliable, must have the aid of institutions and cultivations" (9). These aesthetic judgements are based on a sort of pleasure-pain derived from natural objects, "the love of pleasure and the fear of pain" (9). Our morals derive, then, from our sensations and sentiments. Hume shares this idea. Similar to our decisions about taste, we make our moral decisions depending on whether we approve or disapprove of a subject (162). We approve things that are virtuous and beautiful, whereas we feel disgusted by things of which we disapprove. Taste and truth are aligned, as Keats points out: "Beauty is truth, truth, beauty."

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sympathy," sympathy helps sentiments to be communicated. Both psychological and emotive communication are fundamental to the social fiber which allows the society to work smoothly (Brewer 22). Thus, in the eighteenth century, sympathy functioned as a standard for personal judgement. The rise of the middle class also contributed to the novel's new focus on the domestic and on ordinary people for whom sympathy is a major subject. The middle class became a major population after the Napoleonic Wars and provided a fertile ground for the novelists' experiment. In the introduction to *The Nineteenth-Century Novel 1820-1880*, John Kucich and Jenny Bourne Taylor write that "[t]he cultural ascendency of the middle-class family also reinforced the popularity of domestic life as the privileged context within which to explore the emotions" (xxiv). With the "growth of benevolent and humanitarian reform movements" (23), sympathy helps to bring people together, simultaneously recognizing each other as group members, which works to the advantage of politics. This belief is tied up with the realm of aesthetics—good artists as well as politicians are those who speak deeply to the hearts of the people.

Thus, sympathy emphasized a moral discourse, so much so that people believed that a good person is one who feels deeply in response to others' misfortunes. Emphasizing compassion for the weak and concern for the poor, the novel flourished as a genre that touches upon subjects that were considered inappropriate in the past—for example, the lower classes, slavery, and women. Concurrent with this recognition that every individual, regardless of social class, deserves respect and sympathy, the novel finally became the most important literary genre in the late eighteenth century. Sympathy, Brewer maintains, is an idea first conceptualized by Hume, and later expanded and consolidated by Adam Smith (21). Hume believes that sympathy is distinct from other emotions because it enables us to communicate with people who are so different from ourselves:

> No quality of human nature is more remarkable, both in itself and in its consequences, than that propensity we have to sympathize with others, and to receive by communication their inclinations and sentiments, however different from, or even contrary to our own. (206)

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Hume points out that imagination enables sympathy. Because we rely solely on our own feelings, sympathy comes most naturally to us through our imagination that shapes our opinions of others. Our ideas about others' situations come to us in the form of a two-part impression: first, a cognitive understanding of the other situation, after which the inner self-communication concretizes the idea into an impression[3]. Hume believes that it is our ability to sympathize with others which allows us, as Rachel Ablow puts it, to "feel like members of a larger social [group]" while at the same time, to maintain our own individuality through recognizing the sentiments felt by others (2). In the same vein, Smith further elaborates that sympathy is a moral construct by which people regulate their behaviors in their interactions with other people.

Nevertheless, in expanding Hume's theory, Adam Smith turns to sympathy's limitations. In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith points out that, although sympathy can unite people who share similar identities and interests, sympathy towards strangers does not come automatically. In other words, people's sympathy is often withheld from those who are different. People prefer to direct their sympathy towards those who are like them. Furthermore, people usually sympathize more easily with others' misfortunes than with their happiness. This attraction to misfortune may exist because people realize they are not immune to similar afflictions. This transference seems to result in a type of imagination which is essential for fellow-feeling. To tackle these limitations, Smith thus emphasizes that the importance of fellow-feeling is its ability to enable people imagining themselves in another's situation. Consequently, it is crucial to overcoming differences.

[3]Hume divides thoughts into impression and idea: whereas perception is any awareness which comes into our minds, impression—forced upon us—imprints those perceptions with the five senses and emotions. Hume believes that our sentimental emotions are cognitive thinking: "Thus all probable reasoning is nothing but a species of sensation. It is not solely in poetry and music, we must follow our taste and sentiment, but likewise in philosophy. When I am convinced of any principle, it is only an idea, which strikes more strongly upon me. When I give the preference to one set of arguments above another, I do nothing but decide from my feeling concerning the superiority of their influence" (69). In fact, reason will find a way to achieve the passion's goal: "[R]eason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions" (169). Rachel Cohon rightly explains that "reason alone cannot move us to action; the impulse to act itself must come from passion." However, sometimes emotions appear to be so calm that they are mistaken for pure reasoning. Johnathan Haidt further clarifies that moral judgement involves gut feelings as moral intuitions (885-886). Expanding on Hume's theory, Immanuel Kant sees this moral intuition, or natural human instinct, as an universal moral principle. Kant explains, as Entrican Wilson and Lara Denis describe, that this "supreme moral principle" is inherent in us and is "revealed through the operations of reason" (30). This universal principle is a law that each of us should follow.

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Smith's viewpoint is an important departure from Hume and other eighteenth-century philosophers in that he considers sympathy to be less an emotion than a thought, a thought which, taking place in the imagination, functions especially as a means of knowing others' feelings through imagining others' emotions as one's own: "[I]t is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what...his sensations [are]. Neither can that faculty [of imagination] help us to this any other way, than by representing to us what would be our own, if we are in his case" (8). Smith emphasizes that sympathy cannot be "selfish" because it must happen between persons, that is, sympathy must take place in a relationship with others: "[Sympathy arises] from an imaginary change of situations with the person chiefly concerned, yet this imaginary change is not supposed to happen to me in my own person and character, but in that of the person with whom I sympathize" (8). According to Smith, when we sympathize with others, we change "persons and characters." However, at the same time that we are engaged in the process of sympathy, we are detached from it, watching it. It is because of this self-awareness that we can use the position of the detached observer to modify our thoughts. The "voice" that we hear—the judgement of our conscience—seems to belong to another person dwelling simultaneously in our minds. Not only do we take the other person as ourselves, but we have a dual perspective. Jonathan Lamb explains that in Smith's theater of sympathy:

> [His] observer and performer [both] have parts to play in the construction of an equilibrium of sentiments that will foster genuine sympathy. Further, this sort of equilibrium can be achieved only if the performer learns to govern his passions and render them congenial to the spectator, who stands by silently to signal his approval when this stage has been reached (65).

Both the spectator and the sympathizer must participate actively in order to produce genuine sympathy. The "performer" is the self, initiating the action while the spectator functions as a conscience. In addition, it is necessary to learn to govern our passions in order to earn the spectator's approval. Only when this approval has been achieved can a genuine sympathy take place.

In this way, sympathy is the action by which one communicates, understands, and so tries to regulate one's negative impulses. Because each person is unique, each person filters this emotional information differently. Thus, sympathy serves as a virtual theater in

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one's imagination, and the purpose of this theater is to allow someone to play out both wanted and unwanted outcomes so that the sympathizer can decide which behavior to act out. This theatric imagination often presents itself in times of suffering because the desire to avoid pain forces people to take action. But often, there is a gap between what the characters play out in their imaginations and what actually happens. Thus, characters trap themselves in trouble when they mistake what is in their imagination for what actually happens. To avoid this scenario is to be an observer, rather than immersing themselves in their thoughts.

With regard to recent studies on sympathy, and its crucial component of fellow-feeling, whereas Rae Greiner examines how the form of Victorian novels elicits sympathy through the imaginations of the characters, Rachel Ablow provides a close reading of sympathy in the Victorian marriage plot. In alignment with Greiner and Ablow, Audrey Jaffe analyzes how sympathy shapes Victorian identities. As for readers' response, Suzanne Keen's important work on Empathy and the Novel looks into how the novel shapes its own readers. Focusing on elements of the novel's form that elicit the characters' sympathetic response, Greiner uses Adam Smith's definition of sympathy as a starting point for her analysis. In this analysis she argues that sympathy is less an emotion than it is a "protraction" which arouses emotion. In her view, it is this conception of sympathy that is central to nineteenth-century realist novels. For Greiner, sympathy is more an action than a thought, an action that elicits emotions rather than an emotion in and of itself. Sympathy qualifies and substantiates realism in the form of imaginative speech. Sympathy is an active creative process (8) which results in fellow-feeling, ultimately contributing to a fictional narrative that is the result of this shared feeling. Looking into the ways that the novel elicits the response of the characters in their fellow-thinking, the sympathetic imaginations, Greiner believes it is plausible to "pry apart [the] thinking and feeling" of sympathy (3): "'Sympathy' is a mechanism of feeling-production, an activity with the capacity to generate feelings ('moral' or otherwise) but not a feeling in its own right and incapable of certifying which feelings result" (293). Along the same lines, Ablow shares the notion that sympathy is a marriage between minds. Rather than being simply an emotion—a "sense" of sympathy—sympathy is a cognitive action of thinking. Thus, sympathy is no longer a moral standard through

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which, if people fulfil certain criteria, they are considered to be virtuous, or sympathetic. Through the abstracted shared feelings which are represented in narrative forms, we produce a reality that is affirmed by the novel's "sympathetic realism."

In a similar vein, Jeanne Britton interprets sympathy as a structural feature of the novels; rather than, as Greiner suggests, "eliciting" sympathy from the reader, Britton examines how novels illustrate sympathy as a structural feature, and, as such, sympathy is uniquely positioned to mitigate human difference in the novel (1). In contrast to Hume's view that emotions easily flow from one person to another, making sympathy, in Britton's words, "inevitable," Smith implies that sympathy is, in fact, a shifting in perspective (2) and that, therefore, sympathy is a cognitive process rather than an instinctive emotional shift between people. Britton explains that, for Smith, sympathy is experienced through an intellectual conception of suffering (i.e., through the imagination). Sympathy thus transforms itself from a philosophical model to an element of narrative through the suffering that the characters experience. But Smith's version of sympathy does not allow novels to satisfactorily address the various viewpoints inherent in "acts of narrative transmission." Thus, Britton proposes secondhand narratives, a process in which characters take other characters' emotions as their own. Her term for this process is "vicarious narratives" (3). Building on both Greiner's argument that sympathy is cognitive thinking rather than an emotion, and on Britton's "sympathetic vicariousness", I argue that the function of sympathy is, in fact, founded in rational thinking. Through the imaginative process of fellow-thinking, it is possible for sympathy to control the characters' ardently wished-for, yet potentially damaging, desires, which I will return to when I discuss the Gothic tradition later in this chapter.

The importance of sympathy is magnified as the eighteenth century gives way to the nineteenth. Stephen Arata suggests that, in fact, sympathy is the novel's central theme in the nineteenth century. Considering sympathy as a moral guide, the Victorians believed that an emotional reaction reflected a person's morality. Linking novelists together with physicians (a group becoming increasingly more respected in Victorian Britain), Sally Shuttleworth points out that both groups attempt "to diagnose the moral and social ills of the society" (14). Sympathy is seen as a virtue, a means to arouse the readers' concern for social education, since sympathy allows a person to see others'

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perspectives, to understand their feelings, and to engage in merciful action. For example, Jane Eyre resists the temporary pleasures of adultery, upholding her moral principles as she understands her potential to harm both her and Mr. Rochester's lives. In addition, Brontë attributes the supernatural voice that brings Jane and Mr. Rochester together to the power of nature's sympathy in *Jane Eyre*.

By exploring interior feelings, authors are able to elicit their readers' sympathy. In the introduction to *The Nineteenth-Century Novel 1820-1880*, John Kucich and Jenny Bourne Taylor point out that the novelists fulfill their social responsibility by engaging with social problems through their novels (xix). These novels function as moral compasses which raise social awareness. Influenced by the scientific ethos, novelists are encouraged to adapt "a taste for [a] dispassionate, objective narratorial voice," (xxiv) "a collective self-examination" through which they hold themselves accountable to their readers (xviii). As the novel evolves into a more complicated narrative form, "the emotional expression of a new social order" (xxv) appears. In Rachel Cohon's words, we should look into ideas and beliefs, as well as into their related feelings, emotions, and motivations: "[I]deological analysis—in narrative or elsewhere—is inseparable from a treatment of emotion" (23). This ideology leads to the argument that early nineteenth century novelists often wrote to raise moral awareness of the difficulties that they observed in society.

To understand these nineteenth century novels, we must take these novelists' values into account, as these values often motivated their writing. For example, these novelists encourage self-discipline by showing the defects inherent in a lack of self-control, on the one hand, and the virtue and merits of reason on the other. Kucich and Bourne Taylor explain that those novelists have "a strong social conscience [motivating them]…to examine the underside of social life, and a deep interest in sensibility and sentimentalism" (xxvi). Sympathy is important for the Victorian novelists, for they use sympathy to shape their readers' morality.

Matthew Arnold's introduction to the poetry of Wordsworth embodies this idea. Arnold "commend[s Wordsworth] as a moral poet while warning that Wordsworthians were "apt to praise him for the wrong things," as Reed explains, further stating that what distinguishes the Romantics from the Victorians is that "[the Romantics] founded their

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beliefs in philosophy and the [Victorians'] values rested in morality" (336). John Reed points out that, although poets such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley are fundamentally Romantic, they are to some extent responsible for building the foundation for the eventual shift towards Victorianism. Sympathy is seen in Romantic poetry which prioritizes emotion, imagination, and spontaneity. The emotion, imagination, and spontaneity which characterize Romantic poetry are also important aspects of sympathy. In the "Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*", William Wordsworth famously writes that "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility." As Reed writes imagination is what "the Romantics responded by placing fundamental authority in man himself and suggested that this power extended itself outward to the world at large" (338). Imagination, then, is central to the Romantic view of sympathy, serving as a bridge to the Victorian view of sympathy. While the Romantics use sympathy to create philosophical debate, the Victorians are looking for a moral answer.

Consequently, realism becomes the dominant perspective in nineteenth-century novels by which novelists write to raise moral awareness. Brewer rightly maintains that these novels' realism is a way to engage readers in them (31). The similarities between the mundane, ordinary lives depicted in domestic novels and their readers' lives ensure that readers are more likely to sympathize with the characters in these novels. Realism, as Ian Watt argues, is about everyday life, domestic concerns. Providing a frame for the narration to arouse individual emotions and feelings, novels represent a fundamental order of the domestic sphere. With "minute particulars and large social issues" that "become the foundation of the broad array of forms taken by 'Victorian Realism'" (Kucich and Bourne Taylor xxvii), Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott look into the psychological depths. Austen contributes to the inspiration of "a new self-consciousness about the integrity of narrative form and an unprecedented attention to psychological depth and complexity" (Kucich and Bourne Taylor xxvii). This psychological depth and complexity form a sub-genre in realist novels—psychological novels.

Traditionally known as stories of the "problem novel," psychological novels try to analyze humans and their relations, in addition to seeking to uncover the problem between the self and others (Smith 108). Athena Vettos states that as a flexible term, the

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origin of "psychological novels" remains obscure. It could derive from the historical romance, the sentimental novel, the epistolary novel, or the spiritual autobiography (637). Despite the different versions that more modernist psychological writers[4] framed from their nineteenth-century counterparts, Vettos suggests that both periods shared a "wide-ranging and complex engagement with contemporary psychological issues" (637). She continues by pointing out that recent critical approaches to the psychological novel range from rigorous narratological analyses of the literary presentation of consciousness (Cohn, qtd. in Vettos) to historical and theoretical studies of the close relationships among fiction, psychology, and neurology in different eras (637). This latter approach, in particular, has generated a range of critical analyses of the relationship between fiction and psychology, especially as those relationships played themselves out during the nineteenth century (637).

Psychological novels of this time period show that, in spite of this conception of sympathy as a moral guide, nineteenth-century realist novels nonetheless retain darker elements of the Gothic. Although for the Victorians, sympathy is related to morality, I suggest that, rather than simply reflecting morality without action, sympathy is a process by which we can actively understand humanity's dark side. Sympathy allows characters to control their dark sides through suffering and restraining negative impulses. The Gothic inheritance of these novels ensures that a false sympathy can be manifested.

The Gothic's emphasis on the imagination also provides novelists with a means to limit this sort of "artificial" sympathy. This limitation can be seen when characters use their imaginations as a means to assimilate and therefore repudiate any sympathy which is not based in truth. The three novels I study all have supernatural elements—Frankenstein's creature, the supernatural voice in Jane's head, and the ghost in Gardencourt in *The Portrait*—which manifest the unconscious emotions buried deep in various characters' psyches. Thus, to understand the remnant of the Gothic tradition in the psychological novels, it is imperative to look into the development of the Gothic genre itself.

[4]In a broader definition, psychological novels are associated with nineteenth-century literary movements such as psychological realism and with twentieth-century literary modernism. It is also connected to stream-of-consciousness novels and with narrative techniques such as free indirect discourse and the interior monologue.

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In contrast to nineteenth-century psychological novels, which are more ambiguous about both villainous characters and supernatural elements, eighteenth century Gothic novels focus on tangible monsters or other frightening creatures—"the supernatural, innocent maidens in distress, and devilish villains" (Smith 43). In these three novels, the Gothic elements are not presented as completely treacherous, but they are presented as things that the psyche either leaves out or has been oblivious to. The Gothic elements manifest themselves when people fail to regulate the darker sides of themselves. As a result, then, this long-suppressed and ignored energy will transform into a potentially disastrous power.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, rapid changes in industrialization, the increasing extent of scientific knowledge, numerous wars, and a decline in religious beliefs resulted in a much more anxious society. Concomitantly, the novel's growing number of sub-genres shows that the novel was beginning to solidify as a genre. Those sub-genres—including the sensational, the Gothic, and realist novels—are novelistic experiments to test out the potential and limitations of literary expression. Gothic novels appear to function as a means of expressing these cultural anxieties. The extreme sensationalism of the Gothic derives from an overflow of sentiment that attempts to revolt against eighteenth century neoclassicism—a coldness due to an over-emphasis on scientific reasoning—but which ends in a nihilistic excess of emotion. Considering that the Gothic novel seems to have been born of a suppressed anxiety, it is not surprising that the Gothic element which most often appears in these novels is the supernatural. The supernatural is a manifestation of this emotional unease since anxiety, like other emotions, is difficult to define, at least in any sort of universal sense.

The readers of early Gothic novels were attracted to such fiction as a means of rebelling against the emphasis on rationality and order that dominated much of the eighteenth century. These novels often exploited the irrational and inexplicable. Considering the way that the novel evolves into the nineteenth century, Melissa Pennell points out that "the term 'gothic' was applied to any fiction that inspires terror or horror, even those not set during the Middle Ages. Such narratives continued to incorporate the supernatural, the irrational, suspense, a sense of foreboding, and an atmosphere of gloom" (50). E. J. Clery claims that in the Gothic "the meaning of the text is inseparable

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from its affect, its impact on the reader, the feelings of fear, suspense, curiosity and sympathy which it attempts to arouse," a meaning that works in the "machinery of the supernatural" (70). Supernatural elements in Gothic novels help characters to escape from undesirable situations and thus, provide readers a break from mundane, everyday life, a life in which, as Robert Hume writes, "[because] realism is not the desired object—and it is not in the Gothic novel—supernaturalism seems a valid enough device for removing the narrative from the realm of the everyday" (284). These novels' integration of the Gothic elements as a way to retain the inexplicable depicts a more precise picture of the human psyche.

Gothic elements in the realist/psychological novel represent the "dark side" that must be tamed by Smith's spectator. When readers of these novels I consider enact a conversation with the unknown—their darker sides—they assimilate a potentially undesirable outcome, a warning of what might happen were they to submit themselves to their wishes. Since they are able to satisfy their inappropriate desires in their imaginations, these desires do not infringe upon their "real" lives. Sympathy, then, serves a means of both controlling and eliminating desires, while the novel is a vehicle through which they can play out their potentially destructive desires. This high regard for rational thought is clearly displayed in Victorian realist novels, which attempt to corral the dark impulses of the Gothic. Sympathy thus shows its great importance in that, rather than being a moral guide, it is a tool that enables a conversation with the unknown.

Even though sympathy can potentially be used as a form of moral guidance, characters are reluctant to align themselves with the negative. It follows, then, that they fail to regulate the disastrous emotions. Those darker sides become more powerful because of the characters' ignorance and reluctance to face them. The nineteenth-century novelists in this study express that it is better to acknowledge these elements which are beyond one's recognition than to eliminate them. Often, the representative of the treacherous or of the dark side is not entirely evil. That is not to say that they are less harmful, but the harm that they cause is due to the hero(ine)'s ignorance, his/her inability to take care of the matter, a circumstance which allows the bad to become worse.

This extreme sensitivity then takes the form of Gothic elements, seen most often when characters are pushed to a breaking point in their sufferings. As Clery observes,

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suffering as an inevitable element in human experience, and therefore he considers the Gothic to be most obvious when characters suffer: "The Gothic achieves its strongest and most typical effects through spectacle, yes, but it is specifically a spectacle of suffering (designed to arouse 'fear, suspense, curiosity and sympathy') rendered in highly visual, even pictorial terms" (70). Consequently, Gothic is the genre that allows people to make sense of pain. Manifesting the horror facilitates the process by which they can harness their anxiety because it concretizes their fear—the anxiety which has hitherto been held only in their imaginations.

When sympathy creates a context within which characters in these novels can visualize potentially undesirable outcomes, they can make more rational decisions. Lamb bolsters my argument by suggesting that sympathy is an active action, motivated by passion: "[Sympathy] assigns to passion an active virtue" (3). Lamb explains that sympathy cannot be merely understood in terms of values, thoughts, or beliefs, but rather that sympathy is comprised of both action and passion (3). In other words, Lamb argues that sympathy allows passion an active role. For him, then, sympathy is an active, conscious process. Because it is conscious, it implies that the sympathizer must, at least to an extent, remain detached or outside the process, paving the way for the existence of this "other voice" in the character's imagination. As a result, then, sympathy becomes a psychological conversation between the public aspects of the characters' psyches and the impartial spectator—i.e., the parts of themselves which allow the characters to detach themselves from their circumstances so that they can consider their situations objectively. Laura Hinton explains this concept by pointing out that Isabel has the dual role of a "present-absent sympathetic spectator" (311) who is both a character and a detached observer of herself. This dual role ensures that she can assume a more neutral, less emotionally charged perspective in her internal discussions.

This conversation with pain helps make a space for the Gothic reminiscence, which keeps the disastrous energy at bay and ensures that the realist novel can maintain its general framework of order and morality. The Gothic shows a pessimistic view of what Robert Hume calls "unresolvable moral and emotional ambiguity" (290) by representing these ambiguities in the image of evil monsters which will be eliminated. Hume states that Gothic writers, tainted with a pessimistic worldview that was "confined to the limits

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of reason," did not share the realists' optimism. Instead, Gothic writers considered that men have "no faith in the ability" to "transcend or transform it [discontent with everyday world] imaginatively" (289). Thus, sympathy becomes an important way to understand the function of the darker side of realism. Sympathy helps harness the excessive energy by allowing characters to have conversations with their inner selves.

In my first chapter on *Frankenstein*, I examine how this early Gothic novel integrates a pathological psyche with mystery and suspense to create a concrete being, Frankenstein's creature. Maggie Kilgour states that *Frankenstein* is a Gothic novel, not because there is a monster, but because the novel "demonizes its own creation" (190). Shelley addresses the possibility of evil when sympathy is twisted to serve the wrong motivation—in the Creature's case, sympathy is subsumed by his rage to hurt the innocent. Thus, passion intensifies the motivation behind his pursuit of his goal. For the Creature, his goal, what motivates him, is the desire to be accepted. Sympathy is a cognitive process which characters use to achieve their goals. It also motivates imagination and fellow-thinking. John Brewer, in his "Sentiment and Sensibility," illustrates that during the eighteenth century people gradually arrived at the consensus that body and mind are intertwined. Similar to the human body, a natural system, like a society or economy, that shall be governed and managed with regulation, consisting of correlated organs of a collective sympathy (24-25), *Frankenstein*'s different phases of narration point to the anxiety that is in need of sympathy for understanding. Frankenstein runs into trouble because he thinks that he must grant the Creature's desire after sympathizing with him. Later, Frankenstein regrets his decision. This decision leads to disaster because his sympathy is propelled by a surge of strong feeling that is temporary.

Instead of a more permanent, intellectually motivated reason, a surge of temporary, strong emotion is behind Frankenstein's sympathy for the Creature. It is this surge of sympathetic emotion which causes Frankenstein to be moved by the Creature's tale and—albeit unconsciously—endorse the Creature's behavior. Lee E. Heller points out that *Frankenstein* addresses the force of human nature, along with its possibilities and limitations which concerned nineteenth-century people. In *Frankenstein*, Shelley stresses the importance of sympathy by emphasizing Frankenstein's communication with his split self—the Creature— and by sympathizing with the Creature. At first sight, Shelley

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demonstrates faith in sympathy, seeing it as a moral virtue that elicits good behavior. But Shelley soon casts doubt on sympathy's reliability, raising the question of whether the Creature uses sympathy as a tool to manipulate Frankenstein into creating a female for him. Sympathy is unreliable because it can be a whimsical feeling which results in a behavior that one regrets later.

In my chapter on *Jane Eyre*, I argue that Charlotte Brontë seeks to exult the value of sympathy, which is shown most perfectly in the final unification between Rochester and Jane. To sympathize is to share, feel, and agree with each other. Thus, Jane and Rochester's wholesome unification is a full sympathy, a harmonious "perfect concord," both in body and mind. This complete unity between two individuals is the best expression of sympathy, a theme on which the entire novel is built. However, sympathy is not acquired easily; it is a long process. Brontë has various characters approach sympathy through different stages. Ultimately, she finds that sympathy is incomplete unless it includes natural sympathy, which refers to sympathy with human natures and with nature more broadly.

In comparison to Shelley's sympathy, sympathy in *Jane Eyre* is also illustrated in the form of two definitive sensibilities at war with each other. However, Brontë's concern is with discovering the perfect sympathy, although she is well aware of how malevolent sympathy can turn when it is misguided. The supernatural voice inside Jane's head blurs the line between external and internal sympathy. Brontë's explication of sympathy is valuable to Victorianists because Brontë provides insight into the way that Victorians conceived of the sympathetic connection between humans and nature.

At other times, however, sympathy seems to be anything but a present quality as she shows in her depiction of the unsympathetic townspeople, St. John, Mr. Lowood, and the Reeds. Brontë sees sympathy as a force which, if Jane is not careful, can blind her to the implications of her decisions. Jane's false sympathy for St. John almost causes her to betray herself. Nevertheless, Brontë still maintains her optimistic view of sympathy, as she ends the novel with Jane's and Rochester's perfect concord, an ideal sympathy. Whereas Shelley casts doubt on the Creature's sincerity, Brontë complicates sympathy in that she adds the question of agency. Brontë develops this idea of a nature that is very closely aligned with humanity, as opposed to a much more believable nature that is

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essentially oblivious to humans, one that in no way prioritizes them. Brontë shows that the natural world helps these who, in critical times, share its essence. Brontë's version of sympathy is illustrated by the natural world, which reflects the psyche of those characters who share its nature.

My last chapter echoes the former chapter by addressing the reworking of Brontë's perfect sympathy in *The Portrait of a Lady*. In the first half of *The Portrait*, Henry James shows the traditional marriage plot in which a woman searches for an ideal marital partner with whom she can achieve perfect sympathy. In this sense, Henry James' *Portrait* is not so different from *Jane Eyre*. Like Jane and Rochester, Isabel and Osmond appear to have achieved perfect sympathy in the beginning of their relationship, where each one's nature, temperament, and judgement is in perfect accord with the other's. But soon James reveals that this perfect sympathy is faulty, for its foundation is built on false theories about each other, theories of who each wants the other to be, rather than who the person really is.

My dissertation reveals that at the end of the nineteenth century, the way that novelists portrayed sympathy changed. Rather than focusing on the need to educate their readers about moral feeling, Henry James, along with other late Victorian novelists like Thomas Hardy, began to prioritize the treatment of reality. In other words, they began to "[treat] fictional characters as if they were real people" (Pennell 138). Contrary to eighteenth-century belief—if someone felt sympathetic towards others, they believed that this emotion illustrated their virtue—in the late nineteenth century, people realized that behavior is not necessarily an accurate reflection of internal thoughts; in fact, it is possible to separate the two. In *The Portrait*, James argues strongly for this concept.

Sympathy's presentation in sensibility, language, and physiognomy increase its tension with each of these factors, and it becomes more ambiguous and complex across the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century, people believed that physical feeling was more communicative than language. Sympathy was based on the belief that outward expressions reflect inward emotions. As a result, it was possible for people to feel with others who show their sentiments through their physiognomy. But towards the end of the nineteenth century, people lost faith in the mere presentation of the exterior emotion, for rather than a demonstration of true feeling, they began to believe in the possibility that

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emotions are a performance, or mannerisms.

One of the important requirements for sympathy is that it reciprocate others' feelings, but rather than reflecting how a character feels in his physiognomy, the character can conceal his true thoughts. He can separate what he thinks and what he shows without his physiognomy necessarily being in accord with his facial and bodily expression. From a character like Frankenstein, with perfect emotional transparency which is hard to find in reality, to Jane and Rochester's intense reading of and constant examination of their physiognomies, and then to the manipulation and artificial performance of the masters of sympathy Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond, characters can perform sympathy without actually feeling sympathetic. Sympathy, thus, rather than a genuine sensibility, becomes an artificial performance which can be perfected and manipulated by mere behavior. Significantly, however, sympathy's importance does not diminish. On the contrary, a deeper understanding of sympathy's complexity in real life allows those novelists to portray this depth in the form of the novel's ambiguity.

James further expands this suspicion on the work of sympathy. James' examination of sympathy is perhaps the most complex, as he explores sympathy's limitations in addition to its potential for good. James turns the excess of the emotions, sentiments, into a more regulated form of consciousness. For him, sympathy is a much more conscious process, something akin to forming our intellectual beliefs. From its earliest construction as something which requires that a character choose between good and evil, sympathy ultimately diffuses itself into a stream of consciousness in a character's mind. James showed how an individual is made concrete in the novel by portraying a character's map of consciousness, therefore paving the way for the "stream-of-consciousness" technique of the twentieth century. Patrick Parrinder states that "[The novel] can inform and lead into new places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness, and it can lead our sympathy away in recoil from things gone dead." Parrinder maintains that, as opposed to George Eliot's[5] belief in the importance of the novel as an art form in and of itself, James regards

[5]George Eliot pioneers in minimizing the author's role in the story. In the novel's early days, eighteenth-century novelists like Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, and Laurence Sterne often included lengthy commentaries from the narrator. It can be argued that this sort of continuous interference makes the narrator almost a character in the novel. I exclude Eliot's novels from my analysis for the reason that her sympathy is mainly in the context of others; the individual is not her primary focus.

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the novel as an important art form because of the way that it raises consciousness of the characters' experience, but it does not address the nature of experience itself.

Making the novel as a genre real—that is, realism—is James' idea of the novel's aestheticism. For Eliot, sympathy extends from a character to society at large, while for James, sympathy is much more internal to the character (135-136). Parrinder argues that as opposed to George Eliot's sympathy which sees novels and art is important (in relation to sympathy as an extension of experience and relationship), instead, James regards the novel as an important art form in the way that it arouses consciousness in the characters' respective experience, but not the nature of experience itself: "it is their consciousness of their situations which is artistically important, and not the nature of the situations themselves" (138). In a similar line, Wayne Booth maintains that morality will manifest itself when the novelist, James, achieves aestheticism in his work. Achieving this realism requires that the reader's imagination align with the character—in other words, fellow-thinking. Thus, Booth believes that authors have the responsibility to make their readers think along with the character's action, for every action is a result of his moral judgment: "When human actions are formed to make an artwork, the form that is made can never be divorced from the human meanings, including the moral judgments, that are implicit whenever human beings act." Booth suggests that, for Henry James, a successful novelist "makes his readers" through the communication of the novel.

Resonating with Booth, Brewer suggests that since sympathy mainly works through storytelling, novels allow readers to transcend their own lives and experience other worlds (29). Thus, sentimental storytelling unites the reader, author, and character all in one sympathetic strata (29). James leads his readers to territory that they have never been to, where a new meaning and order is derived. The feelings revealed through the transport of sentimental reading create an intimate "desire to [establish] a sympathetic relationship with the person responsible for exciting their sympathy" (34)—the author. Thus, in addition to feeling sympathy for the characters, the readers will also feel sympathy with the author. Brewer continues to explain that bounded by sympathy, readers are more eager to participate in the lives of the characters, and that of their creator, the author[6]. That is when the author's opinions, as well as his or her private life,

[6]The author can also be intertwined with her novel. Mary Shelley first published *Frankenstein* in 1818.

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matter to readers. On the other hand, successfully making his readers' eyes open, the author, in return, finds his reward in forming his readers into his peers: "[I]f he makes them well—that is, makes them see what they have never seen before, moves them into a new order of perception and experience altogether—he finds his reward in the peers he has created" (Booth, 397-398). The authors have more power in choosing their own readers by forming the character that accords with their tastes. In this manner, the novel becomes a platform on which an ongoing communication takes place (397).

Between the eighteenth century and the twentieth, the idea of sympathy has become less material and social and more psychological. The conception of sympathy moves from a moral concept, a sentiment that shows one's virtue, to an active cognition–thinking along with others. Representations of sympathy in these novels change from the very tangible image of Frankenstein's creature to Jane's internal voices to the very consciously constructed monologue in Isabel's mind. The three novels in this study illustrate the change in how psychological novels of the nineteenth century view the idea of sympathy: from the earliest idea (in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*) of sympathy as a moral guide to the active process of cognition that sympathy becomes in Henry James' *The Portrait,* and from the reification of actual monsters and supernatural elements to a more subtle and abstract heightened imagination of the psyche; from suppressing the hostile self that turns monstrous and destructive to regulating it by allowing it to move from the subconscious to the surface. Sympathy, thus, moves from an external morality to an internal conversation in the psyche.

This thesis examines the ways in which these novels transform the definition of sympathy. The three novels each show their concern with sympathy from a different perspective. Although it is hard to pin down the novel's origin, the novel in the long

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Clumsy as the transitions between *Frankenstein*'s narrations seem to be, the multiple narrations are nonetheless like neuroses connected in a psyche. Intertwined by different narrations as one character brings out the other character, *Frankenstein*, in the same way that Frankenstein creates a creature, is a creation itself. In Charlotte Gordon's fascinating biography of Mary Shelley, she states that Shelley, pregnant while finishing her first draft of the novel, calls the book her "offspring" or "progeny" (375). Gordon further points out that there is a relation between Shelley's own birthday and the novel she creates:

> The tale begins December 11, 17—, and ends in September 17—. (Although Mary did not provide the exact year, Walton sights the creature on Monday, July 31, and July 31 fell on a Monday in 1797.) Mary Wollstonecraft conceived in early December 1796, gave birth to [her daughter] Mary on August 30, 1797, and died on September 10, 1797. (375)

For Shelley, the novel, her brain child is dear as her biological child.

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nineteenth century always aims to form and enable a subject to become an individual. This project will contribute to the understanding of Victorian studies as a field by revisiting the Victorians' subjectivity and individual relationships in a narratorial structure[7]. Considering each novel through its specific characteristics, I show that each author depicts its characters' psyches in relation to nature, space, and temporality. This emphasis on a character's psyche shows the importance of an individual, for it is in an individual's own consciousness that the internal conversation takes place. I see that each character's psyche stands for his/her own world, a microcosm of the novel with individual experiences, characteristics, and concerns.

The issues that these three novels consider can be whittled down to individual fundamental moral questions: the tensions between an individual and society, between social mores and individual sensibilities, tensions that the characters in these novels try to resolve through sympathy. An example of this sort of conflict is the question of whether Frankenstein should make the Creature a female companion. On the one hand, he wants to compensate the Creature for his wrongdoing, to protect his own family from retaliation, and to fulfil his promise, but on the other hand, he is afraid of endangering the world with the Creatures' future offspring. For Jane, a parallel conflict is the question of whether to live "in sin" or leave Mr. Rochester. The situation is complicated further by the fact that she has never felt so loved by anyone else. For Isabel, this type of conflict is resolved by her decision to return to her marital prison rather than eloping with Goodwood. Those decisions are all made in response to ethical questions, conflicts between these characters' personal desires and their consciences.

Sympathy, thus, under those circumstances, is a useful tool as they ponder the possibilities of both sides without having to put themselves in precarious positions. Sympathy is a way of calculating the stakes before reaching the final decision. Sympathy catalyzes the characters' epiphanies in their pain and vulnerability. It often results in the interplay between disillusionment and enlightenment, between pain and epiphany, a moment which significantly contributes to the characters' personal development. These

[7]Like the characters in and readers of novels of the long nineteenth century, scholars also need to become emotionally involved in their subject matter since, as John Kucich points out, "thinking and reading with integrity demands that we continue to be both self-conscious and self-critical about our own efforts at 'sympathetic understanding'" (20).

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characters refuse to degrade themselves; rather, they turn detrimental circumstances into opportunities for personal redemption.

This thesis highlights the importance of sympathy from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century –i.e., as it opens up new ways of understanding the entire "long nineteenth century" of literary England by connecting psychological discourses to developments in the novel. I consider how they construct the narrations by eliciting sympathy from both the characters and the readers. Sympathy opens a conversation that pushes deeper into the human psyche and bridges the gap between the inner and the outer psyche. Sympathy asserts itself at the moments when characters encounter self-doubt, when things go awry in their lives. Because sympathy forces characters to ask questions of themselves, and, sometimes, even forces them into conflict with their own ideas and thoughts, it allows the novel to plumb the depth of the problem, the subject matter.

The novel's strength as a genre is in its abstraction. This abstraction reconciles fiction with reality in the way that it allows us to stretch our imaginations and to test ideas without making decisions which could negatively impact our own real lives. Novels often seem truer than reality because they are a condensed accumulation of many incidents in people's lives. Consequently, we often tend to identify with the characters, while at the same time coming up with various interpretations of their experiences. Now, even more than at other times, novels are worth our attention because our imaginations are a crucial means by which we can sympathize with each other. I see this sympathy as serving an important role in combating contemporary social divisions.

To sympathize is to make an active decision to understand another person in fellow thinking, although to understand does not imply either agreement or endorsement of their behavior. To sympathize is to acknowledge that people perceive the world differently; to "sympathize" from a vantage point of moral superiority cannot work because this sort of superiority cannot recognize different viewpoints. Since people tend to perceive sympathy through a moral framework, we constantly run the risk of sympathizing only with people whom we favor and whose beliefs we share. This "solidarity" can lead to tribalism. People see the world differently because of individual temperaments. Thus, we often feel contempt, rage, and confusion towards people who are different than we are.

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These emotions manifest themselves in a desire to exclude people who do not share our beliefs—in other words, tribalism.

Sympathy is an active choice, rather than an action motivated solely by emotion. If we allow sympathy to be a completely emotional act, it will be impossible for us to sympathize with people whom we (either consciously or unconsciously) judge to be unworthy of our sympathy. Often, people rush to judgement before truly understanding the whole picture. To sympathize with someone does not guarantee endorsement of the other's behavior. For example, Frankenstein realizes that if he allows himself to think along with the Creature—to experience this sort of fellow-feeling—he might inadvertently find himself endorsing the Creature's behavior. Even the idea of unconsciously thinking along with the Creature repulses him. Thinking concurrently does not necessarily mean that both people are in agreement because thinking along with someone is different from agreeing. It is possible to disagree with someone even after sympathizing with him. People often tend to consider sympathy through a moral framework. Sympathy is in some ways similar to the suspension of disbelief that is required in reading a novel; it asks that readers put all thoughts of themselves aside in order to enter into others' fellow thinking, to understand them. But to sympathize is not necessarily a virtue, for it might—potentially—only be strengthening the readers' personal ideologies.

The process of sympathizing is difficult because it requires us to overcome the discomfort we feel when we acknowledge beliefs or ideas with which we disagree. This discomfort results, then, in anxiety, an anxiety rooted in the realization that the "other side" could potentially be right. Thus, people have to give up what they already believe, and to admit that they are wrong. Consequently, refusing to sympathize is the easiest way to avoid insecurity and effort. I believe literature holds the power to speak directly to our innermost feelings. My goal is to consider the wisdom of these specific nineteenth-century novelists not because they propose easy answers, but because they raise questions instead. This thesis aims to provide ways of encountering these textual concerns as a reflection of our own lives.

What makes the characters great is their willingness to take action and, thus, to be transformed. The higher power that this transformation provides makes these characters

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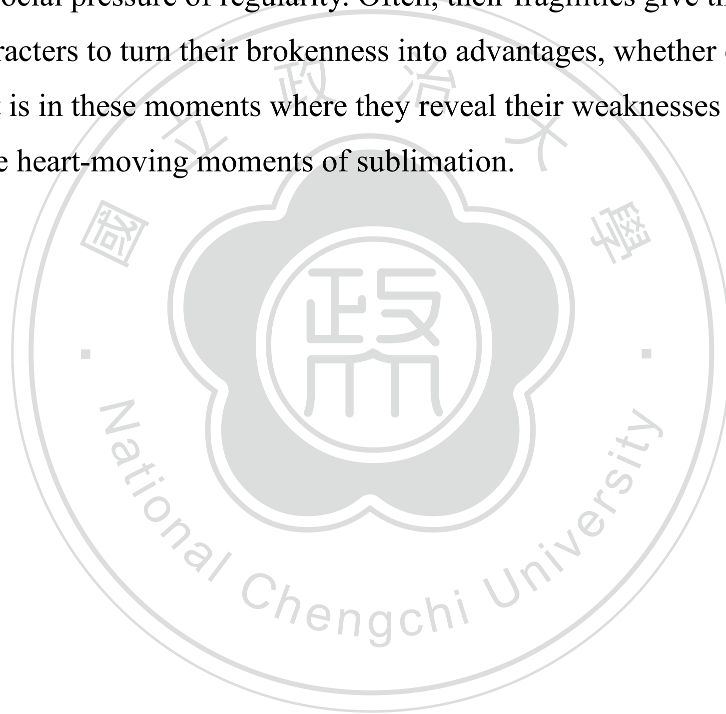
stronger and more powerful, if not more impactful, people. It turns out that regardless of their flaws, these characters strive to live up to a higher principle by willingly taking responsibility for the potential consequences of their behavior. Embracing this type of accountability ensures that good will eventually counter the bad. Victor Frankenstein, Jane Eyre, and Isabel Archer are all characters who try to do the "right thing." Regardless of whether they succeed or fail, their choosing to do the right thing indicates that, on the other hand, bad choices do exist—choices which they do not take. It is only after the realization of one's vulnerability that one has sympathy to know how to hurt or not hurt others. Nevertheless, they avoid disaster through regulation, either from self-directed morality, or the social pressure of regularity. Often, their fragilities give them strength; it allows these characters to turn their brokenness into advantages, whether consciously or unconsciously. It is in these moments where they reveal their weaknesses that sympathy is in motion—the heart-moving moments of sublimation.



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CHAPTER 1

Mapping *Frankenstein's* Psychology: Passion, Sympathy, and Moral Regulation in Romantic Subjectivity

In *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley constructs a map not just of the principal characters, Victor Frankenstein and the Creature, but of Romantic subjectivity more broadly. In her attempt to delineate the contours of powerful emotion, how they are interrelated and form hierarchical structures in the mind, and how these structures ultimately allow either effective or destructive strategies for interacting in the social world, Shelley provides an important instance of the formation of Romantic subjectivity, as well as foreshadowing its later developments in the Victorian period. Shelley's demonstration of how the self is constructed pivots on the relationship between Frankenstein and the Creature. Frankenstein is ashamed of the Creature—a projection of his own inchoate self—and rejects him, but this rejection is, of course, self-destructive. A more effective method for Frankenstein to accomplish harmonious self-formation is to open a dialogue with the Creature, which requires courage, responsibility, and—most importantly, in my view—sympathy. As the extension of Frankenstein's psyche, the Creature personifies Frankenstein's potential, the ongoing processes of his passion and creativity that are still in a chaotic or metastable state. The problem is, ultimately, that the Creature and Frankenstein fail to sympathize with each other and thereby do not find the moral regulation that sympathy brings.

Many scholars have pointed out that Frankenstein and the Creature are two sides of the same coin[8]: Frankenstein represents the super-ego of the psyche, for example, while the Creature is the long-repressed id. Harold Bloom complexifies such accounts by making the relationship between Frankenstein and the Creature one of *extension* rather than *doubling*. He points out that the Creature is more than a naturally cruel and wicked, yet highly intellectual, murderer who represents Frankenstein's evil side. In fact, the Creature's humanity actually extends and exceeds that of his creator

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[8]This is a popular Freudian reading in which the Creature is identified as Frankenstein double that hunts down the other self. For example, see Naomi Hetherington's "Creator and Created in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*."

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> This nameless being, as much a Modern Adam as his creator is a Modern Prometheus, is more lovable than his creator and more hateful, more to be pitied and more to be feared, and above all more able to give the attentive reader the shock of added consciousness in which aesthetic recognition compels a heightened realization of the self. (4)

Bloom suggests that the Creature is a concretized outburst of Frankenstein's mind and imagination which turns against him in search of wholeness of the self— a greater humanization— which is the object of a lifelong, yet hopeless, quest. In this way, Bloom undercuts the Manichean binaries entailed by the readings of the Creature as an evil doppelganger. Instead, he allows us to read the Creature as an intensification of emotion—both "more lovable" and "more hateful"—that provokes a response on the part of the characters *and* the readers of the novel. The Creature is a provocation for contending with and resolving extreme, ungovernable emotions, especially passion.

Highlighting the novel's depiction of the destructive power of unrestrained passion and the necessity of controlling it, Andrew Griffen posits that Shelley is more Victorian than Romantic. He believes that the Creature's narrative "reveals a conservative distrust of Romantic extremes" (51). Thus, rather than championing the Creature, as Harold Bloom seems to suggest, Shelley uses him to map the places at which the extremity of order is transformed into destructive chaos. Symbolizing chaos and the exclusion of order, however, the Creature cannot integrate himself in human society; he is always and everywhere a disruption. Thus, both Frankenstein and the Creature need to resolve the problem of the split self before they can successfully integrate into society. It is not surprising that the Creature fails to integrate himself with the De Lacey family by learning and imitating their manners. It is understandable that Felix defends his household by casting the creature, a potential disruption, out of their house—a "safe" territory within which the members are protected from unknown and ungovernable forces. *Frankenstein* shows that without regulation, passion is hideous, just like the Creature. This impulsive sympathy—a temporary immersion and transference of sentiment—results in great trouble. The key to this resolution, Shelley insists again and again, is sympathetic dialogue. Paradoxically, it is sympathy—the empathic attunement to and engagement with others—that provides the emotional scaffolding of the self, the

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moral regulation required to become an independent subject.

Since neither Frankenstein nor the Creature is evil, how can their actions be so misguided? In alignment with Griffen, Shun-liang Chao also draws attention to this Romantic extreme; he coins the term "Gothic despair." According to Chao, although sympathetic love can resolve this problem, in *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley shows that it is a failure. Shelley negates the Romantic optimism of sympathetic love, instead pointing to the Creature as an embodiment of the "Gothic despair" that disallows moral redemption: "sympathetic communion is urgently needed and yet absent between Victor and nature, between the Monster and his 'human neighbors,' and between the Monster and his father Victor" (6). Chao takes issue with the optimistic belief held by Enlightenment writers Adam Smith and David Hume that mutual sympathy, the "extolment of love" (2), functions as the antidote to the issue of otherness in society. For Chao, Smith's sympathetic imagination is social "mobility" in an interpersonal sense (4), which serves as a counterweight to individual emotional isolation. While Chao's argument focuses on the limitations of Romantic love and how those limitations ultimately turn love to despair, my argument takes a different direction. I consider the limits of sympathy within a similar context to Chao's focus on the limitations of Romantic love. Then, I explore sympathy's potential for creating positive dialogues. For Shelley, the best motivations for sympathy ensure that it is a crucial component of the ordered self and an orderly society, but sympathy can also lead to tribalism.

In this chapter, I first illustrate that both Frankenstein's and the Creature's sympathy is influenced by the result of their strong impulses, which come and go easily, rather than by an attentive observation in cognitive thinking. This sort of impulse spurs Frankenstein's promise to create a female creature, but later, after thinking better of it, he breaks that vow. In a similar fashion, the Creature feels great sympathy for the De Lacey family. But when, after revealing himself to them, he is disappointed by their rejection, he yields to an overpowering anger and resentment. For the Creature, his goal, the thing which motivates him, is the desire to be accepted. Sympathy is a tool in service to the Creature's goal of being accepted and forming a relationship with others.

The cognitive process behind the Creature's desire for sympathy is motivated by his belief in what he imagines will be the outcome of his pursuit of human connection.

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Therefore, because he realizes that he cannot ever truly be a part of human society, he wants Frankenstein to create a female creature for him. Frankenstein's ultimate decision not to gratify that desire intensifies the chaotic entanglement which has always existed between himself and the Creature, the outcome of which is that each tries to destroy the other. This disconnect between Frankenstein and the Creature illustrates the relation between Frankenstein and his passion: the Creature is the extension of Frankenstein's passion.

Sympathy is seen as a powerful endpoint for morality since it can elicit philanthropic acts and has the power to cure suffering through actively engaging with others. The Creature is not only an ardent learner who educates himself in the wild, but he also possesses the quality of delicate emotions and a strong sensibility. Sometimes, his passion intensifies the strength of his action towards achieving this goal. In a positive sense, his intense passion encourages him to believe that he has achieved an emotional connection to the De Lacey family. However, the intensity of this feeling not only creates bitterness and a desire for revenge when his attempts at connection are rejected, but it also creates the possibility that the Creature will be enslaved by his passion. His susceptibility to strong feelings makes him impulsive, which spurs him to do good as well as bad deeds: he can work towards regulating himself and his emotions through sympathy, but he can also manipulate others in the same way. Before being rejected, the Creature uses sympathy to practice ethical behaviors, but after his desired outcome has been shattered, he uses sympathy to conjure harm.

Shelley addresses the possibility of evil when sympathy is twisted to serve the wrong motivation—in the Creature's case, sympathy is subsumed by his rage to hurt the innocent. Sympathy as a cognitive process is manipulated by passion. Thus, the Creature lashes out when he meets an obstacle that inhibits his achieving the desired relationship. Significantly, the more passionate he is, the more chaos he causes because of his strong emotions. Thus, passion intensifies the motivation behind the Creature's pursuit of his goal. On the other hand, when moral regulation becomes too extreme it can also be destructive. Frankenstein's moral certainty gradually becomes rigid and tyrannical as he tries to hunt down and destroy the Creature—the literal embodiment of his passion.

Both Frankenstein and his Creature are slaves to their intense passion, which

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Shelley often presents as disastrous and evil. Driving Frankenstein, whose "temper was sometimes violent, and passions vehement" (44), to succeed in his scientific breakthrough, his passion also enslaves him to his own ego. Consumed by this great passion, "like a hurricane" (64), Frankenstein is diminished into an unfeeling machine, working frantically towards the completion of the Creature:

> I could not tear my thoughts from my employment, loathsome in itself, but which had taken an irresistible hold of my imagination. I wished, as it were, to procrastinate all that related to my feelings of affection until the great object, which swallowed up every habit of my nature, should be completed. (66)

Restless, urged by a frantic impulse of "unnatural stimulus," Frankenstein "seemed to have lost all soul or sensation but for this one pursuit" (65). The result of his passion, "like a mountain river, from ignoble and almost forgotten sources" (46), however, turns deadly and ultimately devours its originator. Perceiving an "expression of despair, and sometimes of revenge, in [Frankenstein's] countenance that makes [her] tremble" (112), Elizabeth fails to persuade Frankenstein to turn away from his "dark passions" (112). The victim of his own success, Frankenstein, caught in his "whirlwind passions" and "intolerable sensations" (112), bathes himself with torturous pleasure resulting from his repetitive compulsion. In the heat of his passion, impulsively, Frankenstein creates the Creature; later, also impulsively, he destroys the female creature. Both impulses are disastrous.

Overcome by fear and cowardice, Frankenstein keeps the burden of the Creature to himself. His self-deception encourages him to put off acknowledging the fact that he has made a frightful monster. He is too proud to reveal his vulnerability and take responsibility for the mistakes that he makes. If Frankenstein had revealed the Creature's existence, for example, appropriate precautions could have been taken and William, Elizabeth, and Clerval might have survived. Consequently, he is entangled in guilt and fear. Incapable of accepting any sort of help, Frankenstein is trapped even more deeply in his nightmare. Even the death of the first victim, his brother William, does not affect his blindness. Even though the Creature shows no signs of guilt over causing the deaths of William and Justine, the Creature is not punished or disciplined, but is instead pampered and rewarded as Frankenstein grants him the female creature. Motivated by his own fear

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of revealing his creation to anyone, Frankenstein cowardly yields to the Creature's demand. Thus far, Frankenstein is trapped in his own dilemma. For him, neither revealing the Creature's existence nor creating a female creature will solve the problem.

Frankenstein's weakness is that he wants to play God by giving life to the Creature, but he does not have the ability to carry the responsibility for the Creature he has created. Claiming the gratitude of an entirely new species that worships him as their god exemplifies Frankenstein's devouring passion: "A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me" (64). Similarly, Shelley exposes the Creature's blindness in that the Creature is afflicted not only with humans' obvious flaws and weaknesses, but also by the wish to be satisfied by these pseudo-gods (i.e., humans) whom he intellectually and physically surpasses. Created from Frankenstein's scientific ambition, the Creature is trapped in the shadow of Frankenstein's vanity. According to the Christian tradition which pervaded nineteenth-century England, humans, made in God's image, are beings transformed by God. For humans, a return to the origin is thus a return to divinity, but the Creature can only return to a false god, the imperfect creator, Frankenstein. The Creature's ultimate return is not to divinity, but to a flawed humanity.

Shelley plays with the mixture of emotions by showing the opposing implications of Frankenstein's creation: the Creature, made of "beautiful" parts selected by Frankenstein, nonetheless becomes hideous as he comes to life. Anticipating the completion of the Creature "with an ardour that far exceeded moderation," Frankenstein looks at his finished work that has "deprived [him] of rest and health," shocked and horrified: "How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form?" (68). After Frankenstein collects himself, he looks once again at the Creature's appearance and is appalled. James Hatch argues quite rightly that "[Frankenstein] does not wish his creation to identify with him, and he is ashamed of him and of having created him" (85). Conflicted, Frankenstein must solve what seems to be an insurmountable dilemma: on the one hand, he wants to fulfil his ethical duty to his creation, but on the other hand, he is disgusted by the thought of forming an alliance with this hideous creature whose appearance seems to align him with the devil.

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The Creature's deformity is an illustration of the chaos that would endanger the human world if its functioning were dictated by the Creature's morality. Moved by the Creature's story, Frankenstein is filled with perplexing emotions of both sympathy and disgust as he weighs the Creature's words: "His words had a strange effect upon me. I compassionated him and sometimes felt a wish to console him" (176). But when he looks again at the Creature's abhorrent figure, Frankenstein's emotion is transformed into "horror and hatred" (176). At the Creature's birth, Frankenstein's original intention of creating a beautiful being of "sensitivity and rationality" produces the most abhorrent monster: "the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart" (68). Frankenstein's disgusted feeling shows how strongly Shelley is influenced by her fascination with the ancient Greeks' idea that beauty is symmetry and order while ugliness brings turmoil. In contrast to the Creature's "deformity and wickedness" (200), all male and female members in the De Lacey family, whose "grace, beauty, and delicate complexions" (136) build up their "perfect forms" are described as good sympathizers. The elder De Lacey can play the guitar with a melancholic melody that is "[so] entrancingly beautiful that [it] at once drew tears of sorrow and delight" (141). Closely related to poetry, music, and imagination, the image of sympathy is intrinsically aligned with the Romantic idea of beauty whereas the Creature's abhorrent appearance indicates a potential for an almost infinite and uncontrollable physical power, potentially preying on human society, which is frightening for humans.

Anticipating the human reaction, the Creature makes it his business to learn the unspoken rules of human society. The Creature hopes that, if he can follow these mores by learning the language and imitating the manners of the De Laceys, they will overlook his deformity and realize that his manners indicate his understanding of the social code: "I persuaded myself that when they should become acquainted with my admiration of their virtues they would compassionate me and overlook my personal deformity" (156). The first time that the Creature sees the cottagers, he has no idea of what human emotion is, but as he watches them, he studies the process by which they feel: sympathy can be learned intellectually through careful attention and imitation of others.

The Creature formulates his perception of reality through his observations of the De Lacey family's mannerisms. The De Laceys' French language serves the Creature as a

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tool through which he can show what he has learned. Realizing that his appearance might frighten the humans, the Creature strives to master language that will help manifest his manners: "[A]lthough I eagerly longed to discover myself to the cottagers, I ought not to make the attempt until I had first become master of their language, which knowledge might enable me to make them overlook the deformity of my figure" (136).

The Creature believes that his ability to control himself in a moral sense is equivalent to an ability to sympathize with others. Depicting the Creature as an admirer of virtue, Shelley's portrayal of the Creature's thought process implies that he adapts and regulates his conduct in accordance with social rules. Morality then becomes equivalent to sympathy. As Lionel Trilling points out: "[O]ur attitude toward manners is the expression of a particular conception of reality" (13). Trilling states that "manners [are] the indication of the direction of man's soul," (17) for "in the novel manners make men" (22). The Creature attempts to socialize himself by participating in the social game, by recognizing the moral rules of virtue and vice. In reading *Plutarch's Lives*, the Creature applies virtue and vice to pleasure and pain: "I read of men concerned in public affairs, governing or massacring their species. I felt the greatest ardour for virtue rise within me, and abhorrence for vice, as far as I understood the signification of those terms, relative as they were, as I applied them, to pleasure and pain alone" (154). The Creature tries to make the case that since he is capable of disdaining vice and following what is virtuous, he is qualified for humanity.

The Creature makes his way with his intelligence and eloquence, which impresses old De Lacey. Here, manners indicate a person's vices and virtues, for they show how well a person can manage self-regulation by following the social rules. Although the Creature's great intellectual and physical strength surpasses that of many humans, his appearance prevents him from assimilating into human society, even though the elder De Lacey's blindness precludes prejudice against the Creature's countenance. Judging from his voice and demeanor, old De Lacey concludes that the Creature is sincere. The old man tells the Creature that being "poor and exiled" (161) himself, it will give him pleasure to serve another human creature. Old De Lacey's response to him encourages the Creature to hope that he could be introduced into society. The irony is that the Creature is not a human being and the old man's sympathy, then, is predicated on his belief that the

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Creature is human like himself.

Since the Creature cannot change his origins, imitating and adapting the manners of his role models is his biggest chance to insinuate himself into human society. Following the De Lacey family as his role models, he educates and disciplines himself into a being who is reasonable enough to be morally virtuous. By imitating their manners, the Creature learns to build up moral virtues: "[W]hen they were unhappy, I felt depressed; when they rejoiced, I sympathised in their joys" (135). These actions show that sympathy is a social construct which can be learned and imitated. In the same way that the Creature feels for De Lacey, about whom he knows very little, Walton is deeply attracted by Frankenstein's demeanor and appearance, even though he doesn't really know anything about him either: "[H]is eyes have generally an expression of wildness, and even madness, but there are moments when, if anyone performs an act of kindness towards him or does him any the most trifling service, his whole countenance is lighted up, as it were, with a beam of benevolence and sweetness that I never saw equaled" (29). Both the Creature and Walton attach their emotions immediately to the objects of their affection because of the shared emotions that these objects project: misery, solitude, and grief. However, in fact the Creature's sympathy is impulsive and the means by which he hopes to satisfy his desires.

Through sympathy the Creature finds a common ground from which he can engage himself in human society since he has no other creature to claim. Conveniently, the De Lacey family's poverty opens a door through which the Creature can offer his services, allowing him to interact with human society and to put what he has learned about human rules into practice. But at the most trying time, the Creature is defeated by a surge of passion. It appears that society's rejection, in spite of his claim that he longs for "love and fellowship" (265) from others, has transformed the Creature from good to evil. Thus, mere sympathy does not necessarily lead to virtue; it is a strong feeling that can result in either a good or a bad outcome, depending on which side of the equation one is on. For the Creature, sympathy is set in motion by impulsive and fluctuating feelings.

From the beginning of his life, the Creature feels strong sensations. Portrayed as a feeling Creature, his initial consciousness comes from the five senses at the very moment of his birth. It takes him a while to learn to distinguish "the operations of my various

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senses.” Instead of a gradual realization of the power of his senses, the Creature is seized by a “strange multiplicity of sensations.” The Creature’s growing consciousness is at once intense and overwhelming. Abandoned by Frankenstein, the Creature wanders to the De Lacey family’s household. Seeing the family’s loving relationship, he feels “sensations of a peculiar and overpowering nature.” While the Creature tries to create a connection, it is feeling which determines his motivation, as he explains to Frankenstein before beginning the tale of the De Lacey family: “I shall relate events that impressed me with feelings which, from what I had been, have made me what I am” (139). This sensory activation paves the way for the Creature to become a hypersensitive being, a being who is as strong in his feelings as his desire for a true emotional connection with others is forever ardent and unfulfilled.

Shelley emphasizes certain events by using strong emotional expressions in a chronological timeline that illustrates the Creature’s growing thoughts and feelings. The Creature’s experiences are comprised of many types and levels of consciousness along with his narration. Departing from scholars who cleave to linguistic narratology, Patrick Hogan argues that “narrative time is fundamentally organized by emotion” (16). According to Hogan, both singling out an event and attaching a cause to a specific event are consequences of our emotional response (16). Following this unconscious reasoning, emotion, abstract as it is, becomes concrete. Events are transformed into emotions which are woven into the mindset that builds up one’s characteristics. Thus, emotions reveal a map of consciousness in an interplay with time.

The Creature’s experiences contribute to the development of both his human and his monstrous characteristics. The Creature’s strong affinity with nature is obvious from the start. Waking in darkness, his first memory is loneliness. Searching for community, he feels aesthetically even though he cannot at first articulate it. People who feel aesthetically seem to sympathize more deeply since they have a stronger sensibility. This sensibility, in the Romantic period, is strongly connected with nature.

The Creature’s emotions define how he looks at his experiences. As Hogan points out, “experiences, like time, are jagged” (66). Rather than thinking according to an orderly and chronological sense of time, we tend to prioritize the most intense moment of emotional response. To use Hogan’s words again, those “moment[s] of sharp emotional

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change, due to a sharp change of expectations" (34) burn experiences into our memories and define who we are as people. The magnitude of emotion is determined by the unexpected outcomes that counter our expectations. Hogan's idea of time and space is connected to Chao's argument about the Gothic sublime through nature and aestheticism. The Creature interprets his first feeling of loneliness in an aesthetic sense. Significantly, his memory is characterized by Chao's Gothic despair—i.e., a despair which exists without any sense of God or another, higher being. Consequently, the Creature's despair—both aesthetic and emotional—exists together in a void.

Drawing on the Longinian tradition that was later Christianized in the Enlightenment, Chao explains that the sublime encounter with nature has a moral history (6). Although the Godly sublime and the Gothic sublime both come from encounters with nature, they lead to different results. In religious/natural sublimity, even though we feel small and insignificant, we are conscious of God's power and love for us and we want to be closer to God, but in the Gothic sublimity we have nothing to hold on to. We are conscious not only of our insignificance, but of the emptiness, the void. Gothic sublimity exists in a vacuum and that makes it even more horrifying (Chao 6). Because of his hubris, Victor has trespassed on divine territory by playing God. Instead of finding consolation in nature, the "universal love" of the Romantic Godly sublime, Victor meets the Creature, the concrete manifestation of the Gothic despair that will ultimately lead to his death.

In the early days of the Creature's character formation, Shelley's depiction implies this kind of Gothic despair: the Creature calls himself poor, helpless, and miserable, yet with an aesthetic sensitivity of perceptions and strength of feelings. Without relative emotions attached to past experience, what the Creature has been through loses its meaning. As the Creature stumbles into the woods after being abandoned at Frankenstein's laboratory, he feels fragile and emotionally vulnerable. The Creature, "feeling pain invade [him] on all sides" (123), like a helpless child with a man's appearance, is afraid of the darkness and longs for protection. This perception frames him as "a poor, helpless, miserable wretch" (123) who will carry this victimhood into his future life. Incapable of doing anything else just yet, he "[sits] down and [weeps]" (123).

After he wakes up the next morning, his situation similar to that of a newborn baby,

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the Creature observes:

> I was delighted when I first discovered that a pleasant sound, which often saluted my ears, proceeded from the throats of the little winged animals who had often intercepted the light from my eyes. I began also to observe, with greater accuracy, the forms that surrounded me…Sometimes I wished to express my sensations in my own mode, but the uncouth and inarticulate sounds which broke from me frightened me into silence again. (124)

Remarkably like the Romantic poets, the Creature shows both his aesthetic feeling for nature and an aptitude for observing his surroundings. Connecting the older tradition of melancholia and Freud's theory, Jennifer Radden states that although later in his career Freud "relinquish[es] the associations [of melancholia] with inspiration, genius, and exaltation" (156), he also takes up the idea that "melancholia provides inspiration and a privileged knowledge" by admitting the melancholic "has a keener eye for the truth than others who are not melancholic" (157). Radden illustrates three features that highlight Freud's innovations with regard to melancholia as she compares the older tradition of melancholia with Freud's theory. She points out that melancholy is substantially glorified and revived during the Romantic era and that a "glorification of melancholy" can be traced back to the time of Aristotle: "the suffering of melancholy was again associated with greatness; again, it was idealized, and the melancholy man was one who felt more deeply, saw more clearly, and came closer to the sublime than ordinary men" (156). Frankenstein's Creature shows his aesthetic sensitivity and appreciation of nature like a melancholic Romantic poet, wandering in the wild in search of self-identity. This instinctive thought process provides one of the earliest and most important indications of the Creature's character. It is the Creature's acute ability to feel that emphasizes the construction of subjectivity at the turn of the century.

Shelley often equates sympathy with kindness, love, and companionship, especially when her characters embody these virtues. However, these virtues can also be taken to extremes and, in this instance, *Frankenstein* sheds light on the uncontrollable passion that ultimately results in suffering. Richard Parry raises Aristotle's idea which argues that appropriate feelings lead to appropriate actions and then to a succinct conclusion: "Virtue, then, is a reliable disposition whereby one reacts in relevant situations with the

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appropriate feeling — neither excessive nor deficient — and acts in the appropriate way — neither excessively nor deficiently." What makes an emotion "bad" is its intensity: either an excess or a deficiency. Virtue is conducted in the form of balance. In this novel, Shelley embraces the eighteenth-century belief in strong connections among emotional sensitivity, aesthetic sensibility, and outward appearances. However, the Creature's reaction to both the De Lacey family's and Frankenstein's refusal of sympathy clearly illustrates the limitations of this idea. On the other hand, to feel strongly can lead to compassion and "humanity" exhibited by the Creature, which evokes an emotional reaction in the readers, but at the same time, too much passion leads to chaos, to disaster.

In a similar vein, Frankenstein's mother, Caroline, is also devoured by her passion. She finds her passion in her continual devotion to the sick. Although her passion is for doing good, it nevertheless devours her. In this sense, her experience parallels her son's. For her, taking care of the afflicted is "a necessity, a passion." For Caroline, "remember[ing] what she had suffered, and how she had been relieved" (40) means that sympathy and passion are the same thing. Equating those two concepts causes her death. However, passionately sympathetic, her "imprudence," caused by the anxiety that she "could no longer control" (51), forces her to attend Elizabeth's sickbed. While nursing Elizabeth, Caroline contracts scarlet fever and she dies soon after. As a motivational force, a force which both embodies and produces emotion, passion can intensify both positive and negative emotions. Marylyn Williams points out that female characters take pride in their suffering since it proves their self-control—showing their strength by restraining an excess of energy (27). As for Elizabeth, she personifies sympathy. Frankenstein describes how sympathy is revealed through her smile, voice, and eyes: "Her sympathy was ours; her smile, her soft voice, the sweet glance of her celestial eyes, were ever there to bless and animate us" (45). In his agony, Frankenstein finds that Elizabeth is the only soothing power for him: "[Elizabeth's] gentleness and soft looks of compassion made her a more fit companion for one blasted and miserable as I was" (227). Elizabeth's "gentle voice" brings calm to his restless passion:

> Elizabeth alone had the power to draw me from these fits; her gentle voice would soothe me when transported by passion and inspire me with human feelings when sunk in torpor. She wept with me and for me. When reason

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returned, she would remonstrate and endeavour to inspire me with resignation. (227)

Female characters call for sympathy through the voices of male characters—Walton's silent sister Margaret, the female Creature who is torn apart before coming into life, the wrongly accused Justine who is executed, Elizabeth who is murdered, and mothers who die of sickness. Paralleling Shelley's life with the novel, Charlotte Gordon states that:

> By connecting Frankenstein to her own genesis, Mary [Shelley] hints at the many ties she felt to her story. Like the creature, she felt abandoned by her creator. Like Frankenstein, she felt compelled to create. Her own birth had caused the death of her mother, but it had also brought life to her characters. Since the novel is framed by Walton's letters to Margaret, whose initials were the same as Mary's now that she had married Shelley (MWS), it is as though she wrote the tale for herself, becoming both author and audience, creator and created, mother and daughter, inventor and destroyer. (375)

Even given their tendency to sympathize with the narrators and protagonists, readers often seem to leave out the female characters, who are in the shadows of the male characters. It is only through the male characters' narration that the female characters' stories are brought forward. Consequently, those female characters serve as indirect references to the past lives and future desires of the male characters.

In *Frankenstein*, the external perspective necessary for sympathy's enactment is represented by the female characters. Significantly, the male characters often rely on their female relations to soothe them with their sympathy. These shadowy female figures live more vividly in the thoughts and memories of their lovers than they do in lives of their own. As Gordon puts it: "to Mary [Shelley], all problems began with the erasure of maternal influence" (525). Frankenstein embarks on his scientific experiment to fulfill his wish to resurrect his dead mother; the Creature takes revenge on Frankenstein for destroying his female companion; Felix's sorrow comes from losing Safie; Walton puts himself in danger through ignoring Margaret's advice to use caution. Gordon expresses the importance of Walton's sister, Margaret, who preserves his life:

> [H]is change of heart also stems from his relationship with Margaret, who has cautioned him against his voyage from the beginning. Interestingly, despite the

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> importance of her viewpoint, Margaret appears in the story only indirectly, through the letters of her brother—a structural echo of the role most women were forced to play in the lives of men, one step removed, distanced from the action. But invisible though Margaret is, her cautionary words are crucial for creating a counterpoint to the unchecked ambition of the male characters. And Walton's letters to Margaret add an invaluable commentary on the central drama: what matters most, [Shelley] implies through Margaret, is not the quest, not the search for knowledge or justice, but the relationships we have with those we love. (373)

Every crisis in the novel involves a woman who is absent. While the main characters of the novel are male, female characters, often waiting for the male characters while they are off on their explorations, are kept in a distant background. Driven by insurmountable passion that cannot be restrained, Frankenstein and the other male characters in the novel strongly rely on their female relations who sustain them with their patience and compliance. As Gordon expresses the idea:

> For her [Shelley], the moral was clear: uncontrolled patriarchal power was dangerous for everyone, including men. Women needed to be empowered in order to rein in men's appetites, and, more important, to offer an alternative mode of being, one based on love, education, and cooperation rather than on aggression and ambition. (525)

Female characters, virtuous and moral, are seen as saviors of the male characters, the preservers of sympathy, who can redeem the male characters with their love and cooperation. Thus, the sympathy that the Creature asks for is embodied in the female creature: "My evil passions will have fled, for I shall meet with sympathy!" (176) A female companion is thus seen as a "cure" which could redeem him from his evil passions.

Since sympathy's redemptive connotation is also related to moral judgement, the Creature must "prove" himself to be worthy of sympathy. Appealing to Frankenstein's morality, the Creature's plea convinces Frankenstein to make a female Creature. The first step he makes is to win Frankenstein's sympathy by convincing him of his morality; then he can make a case as to why Frankenstein should believe in his humanity. Three times

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the Creature demands Frankenstein's sympathy[9] for the sake of the virtue that he once possessed: "Still thou canst listen to me and grant me thy compassion. By the virtues that I once possessed, I demand this from you. Hear my tale" (121). The creature manipulates Frankenstein's sympathy as his tool for gain. At their first encounter, the Creature attempts to persuade Frankenstein to listen to his narration, claiming that he is asking for nothing but his sympathy in listening to his tale. Later it is revealed that he makes those efforts to pave the way for his request that Frankenstein grant him a female Creature. Frankenstein admits that there is justice in the Creature's argument and the Creature's "tale and the feelings he now expressed proved him to be a creature of fine sensations" (175). By narrating his tale to Frankenstein, the Creature proves that he is worthy of Frankenstein's sympathy.

Sympathy, an emotional exchange between one and another, is rendered as a gift—an object that can be given with beneficial connotations. Perceiving sympathy as an object that can be given and received, the Creature demands sympathy as a compensation that Frankenstein "must not refuse to concede" (173). In the Creature's words, sympathy is precious; it is "[a] greater [treasure] than a little food or rest" (158). Frankenstein also equates his own longing for sympathy with "thirst:" "[M]y impatient thirst for sympathy was silent when I would have given the world to have confided the fatal secret." Walton's description of his own desire for a friend who can sympathize with him is just as intense. Observing Frankenstein, who is "generally melancholy and despairing" (29), Walton also tries to offer his sympathy to Frankenstein. Frankenstein thanks Walton for his sympathy but calls it "useless" and determines to plunge himself into death: "my fate is nearly fulfilled" (35). Frankenstein tries to convince Walton to restrain his passion, but Frankenstein is stuck in his own detrimental desire to take revenge on the creature: "My revenge is of no moment to you; yet, while I allow it to be a vice, I confess that it is the devouring and only passion of my soul" (240). Frankenstein's obsession backfires.

Stuck in his own traumatic experience and unable to differentiate between the past and present time, Frankenstein is trapped in a compulsion to repeat the past. Significantly, as the narration in the novel moves back and forth between the present and the past, Frankenstein and his Creature relive their pasts again and again. Acting out his own

[9]Compassion and sympathy are interchangeable in *Frankenstein*.

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melancholia[10], Frankenstein finds peace only with the dead and in anticipating his own death:

> The only joy that he can now know will be when he composes his shattered spirit to peace and death. Yet he enjoys one comfort, the offspring of solitude and delirium; he believes that when in dreams he holds converse with his friends and derives from that communion consolation for his miseries or excitements to his vengeance, that they are not the creations of his fancy, but the beings themselves who visit him from the regions of a remote world. (251)

Desiring to perish in his grief, Frankenstein repulses the idea of "reconcil[ing] him[self] to life" (238). Motivated by an eagerness to help lessen Frankenstein's grief, Walton expresses his "strong desire to ameliorate his [Frankenstein's] fate," (35) at which point Frankenstein thanks Walton for his sympathy, but nevertheless rejects it. Refusing Walton's sympathy, in fact Frankenstein has no intention of building new relationships and creating new ties. Frankenstein entraps himself in past memories and deliriums as he tells Walton: "When you speak of new ties and fresh affections, think you that any can replace those who are gone? Can any man be to me as Clerval was, or any woman another Elizabeth?" (35) However, Frankenstein allowed his obsession and frenzy to emotionally isolate him from his family and friends when they were still alive. Even at the end of his life, Frankenstein will not allow himself to receive the sympathy of others. In other words, rejecting sympathy is to reject fellow thinking, and, as a result, to reject building relationships.

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[10] [10]In "Mourning and Melancholia," Freud maintains that the human mind is a complicated mechanism, containing various and separate parts. Although most of the time those individual parts cooperate with each other and help a person function normally, there are times they will turn against each other and lead to pathological breakdowns. Freud asserts that the occasions that generate melancholia "extend beyond the clear case of loss by death" (251). Rather, they include "all those situations of being wounded, hurt, neglected, out of favour, or disappointed, which can import opposite feelings of love and hate into the relationship or reinforce an already existing ambivalence" (251). According to Freud, in the precondition of melancholia, "ambivalence" is the "motiv[ati(ng] force [behind] the conflict (258). The ego replaces the cathected position of the object. Then, the ego proceeds to the last precondition of melancholia—the regression of libido into the ego. In *Frankenstein*, the conversion appears when the Creature enters the ambivalent love-hate relationship as his love for human beings is transformed to hate. Under the circumstances of the conversion, the Creature needs not give up the human relationship he longs for: "In the love for the object—a love which cannot be given up though the object itself is given up—takes refuge in narcissism, then the hate comes into operation on this substitutive object, abusing it, debasing it, making it suffer and deriving sadistic satisfaction from its suffering" (251). Here, Freud emphasizes that a melancholic person has the propensity to hate, torture, and even kill himself. Indeed, Freud reasserts that the melancholic resembles, to some extent, a sadist (251-252).

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While Frankenstein rejects others' sympathy and refuses to sympathize with them, the Creature is desperate for sympathy. What motivates the Creature to continue serving the De Lacey family is the sweetness of feeling appreciated—sympathy creates a sense of belonging. This gratifying feeling gradually exerts its hold on the Creature since it brings an overwhelming euphoric feeling of self-satisfaction to which the Creature almost becomes addicted. This elation blinds him to the idea that they might not reciprocate his feelings. Having integrated the family's experience into his own, the Creature feels their losses and joys intensely, but the fact is that their experiences never belonged to him. The sympathy is never shared. It is a one-sided and unrequited emotion. His benevolent deeds are immediately appreciated, but the performer of those deeds is unrecognized. When the De Lacey children see the pile of wood outside the door and that the snow has been cleared, they express wonder and admiration for the invisible hands, this "good spirit" (137). Even though the family realizes that someone is helping them, they do not realize that their benefactor is not human. The Creature nonetheless feels connected to the human beings for the first time. This belief in the connection, then, is a belief in a false sympathy.

As he becomes more emotionally invested in their lives and emotions, the Creature believes that they will feel the same way about him that he does about them. Gradually, the Creature develops a strong emotional bond with the family and hopes to be rewarded with the same treatment when he presents himself: "[S]ometimes I allowed my thoughts, unchecked by reason, to ramble in the imaginative paradise, and dared to fancy amiable and lovely creatures sympathising with my feelings and cheering my gloom; their angelic countenances breathed smiles of consolation" (157). It is only an afterthought that brings him back to reason: "But it was all a dream; no Eve soothed my sorrows nor shared my thoughts; I was alone. I remembered Adam's supplication to his Creator. But where was mine? He had abandoned me, and in the bitterness of my heart I cursed him" (157). The gloomy undertone when the Creature expresses how he sometimes "dares" to "allow" his thoughts to be "unchecked" by the guard of his reason and to swirl in the paradise foreshadows the failure of his plan (157). In the creature's case, sympathy is a one-way process because the creature's relationship with the De Lacey family is only recognized by one party, himself. In fact, the family members are completely unaware of it. When

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the De Laceys become self-sufficient, not only does the Creature lose his physical place, but he also loses the relationship itself. When he finally reveals himself, rather than reacting positively to him, the young De Laceys are afraid of him, and attack him. Their reaction overturns the sympathy that the Creature has imagined.

Imagining what the De Laceys are thinking in fellow thinking, the Creature's imagination leads him to believe that they will react positively to him. When those feelings are not reciprocated, he becomes bitter and resentful toward them instead. Taking the cottagers as the model that forms his judgement and morality, the Creature's established morals are crushed after he is rejected by them. The Creature's narrative also changes—when he believes that the De Lacey family will accept him, he views them as angels, but when they reject him, he sees them as cruel and ungrateful. His perception and narratives are based on whether he successfully achieves his goal or not. But the family altogether remain the same; they do not change.

Although the physical pain of his beating by the younger De Lacey hurts him, it is the less tangible humiliation that injures his self-esteem which causes the real damage. Unfortunately, the Creature is cruelly rejected by both his creator and human society, leaving him no opportunities to achieve any sort of community. Benevolent and honorable, the De Lacey family never drives away the poor from their door, as the Creature remembers, but nevertheless he is attacked and cast out by the family's son. Violent passion suddenly unleashes his long suppressed constant anxiety and hidden bitterness. Quitting the cottage with pain and anguish, the creature, filled with "rage and revenge," imagines that he has "destroy[ed] the cottage and its inhabitants and…glutted [himself] with their shrieks and misery" (162). The Creature's unfulfilled desire is molded by the common ground of bitterness and agony. Shelley's portrayal of the Creature's killings of the innocents forces the readers to initiate a more complicated reading than would result from simply seeing the Creature as a pitiable victim of the mistreatment he endures.

It is important to realize that the Creature is not an entirely innocent victim. The way that the Creature presents himself as a victim forces readers to question his reliability as a narrator. For example, although the Creature is indeed assaulted by Felix and the countrymen, the fact is that those people are simply protecting their loved ones. Seeing a

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disformed figure clinging to his father's knee, Felix, De Lacey's son, probably thinks that his father has been attacked, so he rushes to his rescue. Even Walton, the unbiased listener who has knowledge of the Creature's human traits, is terrified, and cannot stand to look at him in spite of being moved by the creature's agony: "Never did I behold a vision so horrible as his face, of such loathsome yet appalling hideousness" (261).

There is further reason to believe that Felix's malice may have been unintentional. Although Felix attacks the Creature in self-defense, the Creature misinterprets the malice behind the attack, believing that Felix intends to beat him up. Because Felix has never tried to revenge himself against the Arab merchant whose betrayal turned the De Lacey family into outcasts, it is likely that he is not motivated by malice in the way that the Creature thinks that he is. Given that the Creature is clearly an intelligent being who is able to identify human emotion with remarkable accuracy, his choice to deliberately overlook those factors in favor of highlighting the worst moments in his life seems unconvincing. Charles Schug also shares this suspicion. He suspects the Creature's credibility for, "[a]lthough he purports to explain how he has become a homicidal fiend, the monster does not dispel any mysteries in his narration" (62). Underestimating the possible evil in him, the Creature does not realize the potential for evil that is part of his personality.

When sympathy does not help him achieve his goal, that is, to be accepted into human society, the Creature yields to violent rage. The Creature kills the innocents as a protest against this injustice: "For the first time the feelings of revenge and hatred filled my bosom, and I did not strive to control them, but allow[ed] myself to be borne away by the stream… But again when I reflected that they had spurned and deserted me, anger returned, a rage of anger"(64). Exhilarated rather than terrified by his power when he accidentally kills William by silencing him, the creature's excitement about his ability to cause harm shows that he is corrupted in heart. The Creature seems to be more cunning and evil for, rather than kill randomly, he deliberately plans to kill those whose deaths will bring Frankenstein the most pain.

The Creature maliciously frames Justine for William's death, causing her to be hanged. Spotting Justine sleeping in the forest, the Creature imagines the scenario that might result if she cannot love him. He believes that she will call him names after she

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awakes and that she will turn him in as a murderer. Thinking of these things, he feels hatred for her, someone whom he does not even know. Her execution is an indirect result of his bitterness: "[I]t stirred the fiend within me—not I, but she, shall suffer; the murder I have committed because I am for ever robbed of all that she could give me, she shall atone. The crime had its source in her; be hers the punishment! Thanks to the lessons of Felix and the sanguinary laws of man, I had learned now to work mischief" (172). Even though the Creature is not the executioner, it can be argued that he has "blood on his hands" in the same way that he would if he had killed her himself. Shifting the blame from himself to "the lessons of Felix and the sanguinary laws of man" (172), the Creature evades his own responsibility for committing the evil crimes.

The Creature's "monstrous" qualities are no longer simply the result of his physical appearance, but he has willingly embraced the evil that his appearance represents for other people. The Creature claims that he is naturally virtuous, given the fact that he looks up to virtue and despises vice. However, he does not acknowledge the possibility of evil in his heart, and it is only by recognizing this evil and by regulating it that he can be virtuous. He presumes that if he dutifully plays by the social rules, he will be rewarded for his good deeds. Thus, when he is struck by the De Lacey family's son, the Creature is embittered by his belief that he has not been treated fairly. In bitterness and despair, the Creature begins to disrupt the reality that no longer makes sense to him, for the world he has constructed has been shattered.

Placing his feelings and sentiments above all things, the Creature prioritizes feelings over meaning. The Creature searches for various things that he believes will fulfill his desire, that is to say, to satisfy his desire for a sense of belonging. Everything that the Creature does is motivated by this desire which manifests itself as the search for sympathy. He hopes to find—either directly or indirectly—sympathy through interaction with various targets. These hopes run the gamut from his thirst for acceptance in human society to his demand for a female creature from Frankenstein, for which the Creature asks Frankenstein directly. The Creature believes that with a female companion, his "evil passions will have fled, for [the creature] shall meet with sympathy!" (176) By exciting Frankenstein's sympathy, the Creature tries to push Frankenstein to consent to his demand: "Oh! my creator, make me happy…do not deny me my request!" (174)

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Sympathy is distorted into a vehicle for his demand for a female creature. The Creature mistakenly believes that sympathy will be the ultimate antidote for his troubles: "My vices are the children of a forced solitude that I abhor, and my virtues will necessarily arise when I live in communion with an equal" (176). Calling himself the "arch-fiend," and finding himself "unsympathised with," the Creature "wish[es] to tear up the trees, spread havoc and destruction around [him], and then to have sat down and enjoyed the ruin" (163). The Creature relates sympathy to a combination of love, kindness, companionship, and finally, happiness. However, the Creature's simple request "to be happy" as a solution to his problem is called into question. The fact is, what he wants is to be at peace with his feelings, a satisfaction which is unachievable, for feelings fluctuate and no one can count on a continuous sense of satisfaction.

In spite of receiving sympathy from old De Lacey, Frankenstein, and Walton in specific moments, he is still not satisfied. The Creature's encounter with the De Laceys creates a context that unexpectedly creates anxiety, an emotion that the Creature originally was oblivious to (Chao 7). Because the Creature is isolated in nature, away from all social interaction, he has not experienced any anxiety. At this point, however, as Chao points out (7), circumstances change. If the Creature had never seen the binding relationships among Felix and Safie and the De Laceys, he would never have wanted a female creature because he would never have experienced the anxiety brought on by loneliness.

Ultimately, his rejection by the De Laceys means that the Creature loses the purpose of his life—being useful to the De Lacey family— and, as a consequence, he looks to find his own relationship as a means of creating his own identity. When there is meaning or purpose in life, it is difficult to be misled by unethical temptations and emotional inconsistencies; the Creature is even willing to endure hunger rather than steal food from the De Laceys. Although the De Laceys are angry about what has happened to them—they have been wronged by the French government—their belief in doing what is right sustains them in their poverty and exile. Unfortunately, without a sense of purpose, denied the happiness that will once and for all satisfy him, the Creature, in pain, finds pleasure in taking revenge. However, this sadistic pleasure is only a temporary stand-in for an unattainable wish.

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Another problem is that the Creature confuses his emotional sensitivity with morality; but in fact, being susceptible to strong feelings doesn't make these sentiments more moral or virtuous. To feel strongly only implies that characters may have been more aesthetically sensitive. Rather, to be moral and virtuous is to do the right thing when times are difficult—to endure, to sacrifice, to contend with things that are difficult in hard times. "[C]onsumed by a burning passion" (172), the Creature threatens Frankenstein unless he complies: "Frankenstein may not part until he have promised to comply with the Creature's requisition" (172), for he holds Frankenstein responsible for his misery: "[b]ut on you only had I any claim for pity and redress, and from you I determined to seek that justice which I vainly attempted to gain from any other being that wore the human form."

When Frankenstein destroys the only hope to which he has been clinging, there is nothing holding him back from venting his anger. Calling Frankenstein his "tyrant and tormentor," (201) the Creature vows to take revenge—"dearer than light or food"—on Frankenstein for unjustly taking his rights: "Shall each man…find a wife for his bosom, and each beast have his mate, and I be alone? I had feelings of affection, and they were requited by detestation and scorn…Are you to be happy while I grovel in the intensity of my wretchedness?" (200). Highlighting the Creature's "powerful and profound emotion," Percy Shelley claims that the full extent of sympathy is embedded not in those readers with mere feelings, but in those who are "accustomed to reason deeply on their origin and tendency" (282). Bringing powerful and passionate feelings together with the ability to reason through sympathy implies that, for Percy Shelley, those reasonable readers will be able to detect the novel's moral implication (238) because morality can derive from powerful feelings in a reasoning mind.

The Creature's parochial worldview is formulated by submitting himself to his feelings. In addition, he thinks that others are obliged to participate in responding to his feelings. The Creature oversimplifies human nature in his limited world view: "They loved and sympathised with one another; and their joys, depending on each other, were not interrupted by the casualties that took place around them…I required kindness and sympathy" (157). Examining the family through the filter of his projected feelings, the Creature narcissistically projects his feelings onto the De Lacey family. The Creature

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shows that he does not want to present himself for the benefit of the family, but rather for himself to be rewarded. However, he is ignorant of the fact that there is a hierarchy of values that dictates people's behaviors: rather than trying to harm the Creature in the first place, Felix attacks the Creature out of a desire to defend his family.

What the Creature cannot understand is that, in this "hierarchy of values," defending one's family is a stronger motivation behind Felix's actions than is a desire to inflict pain on the Creature. Consequently, when the Creature's expectations are not fulfilled, his world falls apart. In a way, he projects his expectations onto the family, which can be argued to be a false expectation because the family has no obligation to fulfill it. The Creature sees their frightened departure as an act of deserting him: "My protectors had departed and had broken the only link that held me to the world," and worse still, "[W]hen I reflected that they had spurned and deserted me, anger returned, a rage of anger." The Creature takes offense at their rejection; he turns nihilistic and resentful.

The Creature's real tragedy lies not so much in society's rejection, but in allowing his own rage to devour him for the wrong reasons. In contrast to the days when the Creature believed in his own goodness and in his potential for self-improvement, now he is nihilistic, caring about neither himself nor others. The Creature's first victim, William, son of Alphonse Frankenstein, is the happy and beautiful child whom the Creature always wanted to be. In killing William, the Creature kills his ideal self. His "demoniacal design" becomes an "insatiable passion" that he gradually "adapt[s]" himself to: "I had no choice but to adapt my nature to an element which I had willingly chosen" (263). Subdued by his bitterness, the Creature gives in to his rage and his impulse to gratify his hatred. Characterizing himself as a slave to his emotions, unable to control them, he evades his responsibility: "I knew that I was preparing for myself a deadly torture, but I was the slave, not the master, of an impulse which I detested yet could not disobey" (263). Shifting the blame to his unfulfilled desire for sympathy, the Creature evades his personal responsibility by claiming that he is hurried by a "frightful selfishness," (263) that he cannot resist even though he is full of remorse for his crimes:

> Do you think that I was then dead to agony and remorse…A frightful selfishness hurried me on, while my heart was poisoned with remorse. Think

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> you that the groans of Clerval were music to my ears? My heart was fashioned to be susceptible of love and sympathy, and when wrenched by misery to vice and hatred, it did not endure the violence of the change without torture such as you cannot even imagine (262).

Although he says he feels guilty about killing Clerval, the Creature says he is "not miserable" as he kills Elizabeth because he has "cast off all feeling, subdued all anguish, to riot in the excess of my despair" (263). Allowing his emotions to overpower him, the Creature's "[e]vil thenceforth became his good" (263). Having full knowledge that what he does is wrong, he chooses to ignore his conscience and rationalize his actions by shifting the blame to human beings, especially Frankenstein: "[I]mpotent envy and bitter indignation filled me with an insatiable thirst for vengeance" (263). Claiming his role as a victim, the Creature justifies his killings by his self-pity. It is his self-hatred which propels him to his ultimate destruction.

Shifting the blame for his unhappiness to Frankenstein, the creature transforms into a vicious killer by perceiving himself as a victim who has not received the sympathy that he deserves. In retelling his story, the Creature takes advantage of Frankenstein being his only listener to unleash his feelings. The satisfaction that the Creature derives from causing Frankenstein pain stems from a shared pain—a distorted sympathy. In order to divert himself from his agony, the Creature begins to hate the object he once loved, the ultimate result being the malicious murders which follow. For the Creature, the positions are reversed: the Creature, who has previously perceived Frankenstein as the oppressor and the victimizer while he is the oppressed and the victim, turns himself into a tyrant as he claims mastery over Frankenstein: "You are my creator, but I am your master" (200). Making Frankenstein his slave, the Creature dehumanizes him, thinking of him as nothing more than labor in the service of fulfilling his wish. Frankenstein admits that he is "the slave of my creature" (184), for he "[has] allow[ed] [him]self to be governed by the impulses of the moment" (184). Placing feelings before morality, the Creature is consumed by envy due to his pride and resentment:

> I pitied Frankenstein; my pity amounted to horror; I abhorred myself. But when I discovered that he, the author at once of my existence and of its unspeakable torments, dared to hope for happiness, that while he accumulated

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> wretchedness and despair upon me he sought his own enjoyment in feelings and passions from the indulgence of which I was for ever barred, then impotent envy and bitter indignation filled me with an insatiable thirst for vengeance. I recollected my threat and resolved that it should be accomplished (263).

He turns towards Frankenstein, the godlike figure, his creator, as the representative scapegoat of his revenge: "You can blast my other passions, but revenge remains—revenge, henceforth dearer than light or food! I may die, but first you, my tyrant and tormentor, shall curse the sun that gazes on your misery" (201). As the Creature loses the hope for an interpersonal relationship that a female creature represents, he turns to slaughtering human beings as retaliation.

The Creature finds satisfaction in tormenting Frankenstein as he turns him into a social outcast like himself, for this creates a bond between the two which could not exist if either one of them were happy. Despite Frankenstein having toiled day and night for two years to bring the Creature to life, he flees at the moment the Creature actually becomes animated. The Creature's belief that nobody will sympathize with him gives rise to his criminal tendencies. In fact, the Creature accuses Frankenstein of the same lack of compassion: "Unfeeling, heartless creator! You had endowed me with perceptions and passions and then cast me abroad, an object for the scorn and horror of mankind" (167). Although sympathy allows the Creature and his creator to communicate, when they distort this sympathy by demonizing each other, their desire for revenge forces each to try to kill the other.

On the one hand, sympathy is a bridge which facilitates understanding and connections. Sympathy is a powerful medium that bring people together, creating a stronger society, but on the other, it can also function as a border, separating people from each other, internalizing feelings of tribalism. Many scholars have alluded to the possibility that sympathy can result in tribalism. For example, Adam Smith points out that people are prone to sympathize with those who share similar identities, those who are like them. In contrast, people withhold their sympathies towards strangers and those who are different from them. It is only through fellow thinking in a sympathetic imagination that we can overcome this difference. Whereas in *Frankenstein* the importance of

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similarity is emphasized in the successful sympathetic friendships between Victor and Walton, and between Victor and Clerval (Chao 5), it seems to me sympathy that is fundamentally built on similarity can also lead to the more serious danger of tribalism. For example, Frankenstein's prioritizing of his own humanity at the expense of the Creature ensures that he can no longer relate to the Creature at all, ultimately resulting in a sort of tribal insularity. In contrast to Smith's optimistic perspective, Immanuel Kant rightly points out that mere sympathy can be "weak and blind":

> a warm feeling of sympathy is beautiful and lovable, for it indicates a kindly participation in the fate of other people, to which principles of virtue likewise lead. But this kindly passion is nevertheless weak and is always blind. For suppose that this sentiment moves you to help some- one in need with your expenditure, but you are indebted to someone else and by this means you make it impossible for yourself to fulfill the strict duty of justice. (22-23)

Frankenstein feels a stronger compassion towards his fellow human beings with whom he identifies through the exclusion of others, the Creature. In rejecting the Creature's request for a female creature, Frankenstein embraces tribalism—in this case, he feels a unity, a solidarity with the human race, a tribalism which comes first from his fear of the Creature's dangerous potential, and second, from simply being a member of the human race.

A purely motivated sympathy is nearly impossible when there is a conflict of interest. Frankenstein places the future of human beings ahead of the Creature's potential happiness. While Frankenstein's sympathy for the human race outweighs his ethical obligation to keep his promise, from the Creature's point of view, Frankenstein has trampled on his only hope. Sadly, the Creature and Frankenstein are at cross purposes. Thus, every justification the Creature tries to make is reduced to sophisms. For Frankenstein, the benefit to the human race is his highest priority. Thus, he betrays the ethical honor of his promise to the creature. Terrified by the thought that the Creature's offspring might take over the human race, Frankenstein perceives it as a tribal battle in the name of protecting the human race by demonizing the Creature: "Your threats cannot move me to do an act of wickedness; but they confirm me in a determination of not

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creating you a companion in vice. Shall I, in cool blood, set loose upon the earth a demon whose delight is in death and wretchedness?" (200) Frankenstein contextualizes his sympathy in terms of a higher virtue, the existence of his fellow humans, sustaining and preserving the human race. Thus, anchored by different concerns, their value systems are in continual conflict.

Frankenstein is deeply troubled by two conflicting beliefs: he believes that, in a moral sense at least, he must fulfil his duty as a creator, but he also believes that it is immoral to assist the devil in causing disorder. He believes that creating a female Creature would negate his inability to feel sympathy for his creation, but it would be an immoral act. Frankenstein's compassion for the human race surpasses his sympathy for the Creature. Thus, although Frankenstein once sympathized with the Creature, and has crossed an emotional border to connect with the Creature, his sympathy is momentary. The Creature is dehumanized into a being of mere evil. Demonizing the Creature, Frankenstein is justified in breaking his promise because acceding to the Creature's request is doing the work for the demon "whose delight is in death and wretchedness" (200):

> Had I right, for my own benefit, to inflict this curse upon everlasting generations? I had before been moved by the sophisms of the being I had created; I had been struck senseless by his fiendish threats; but now, for the first time, the wickedness of my promise burst upon me; I shuddered to think that future ages might curse me as their pest, whose selfishness had not hesitated to buy its own peace at the price, perhaps, of the existence of the whole human race. (198)

Frankenstein destroys the female Creature because his sympathy for the humans outweighs his sympathy for the Creature. Sympathy can be unreliable, subjective, and even blind, resulting in a moral principle that is tribal rather than universal. Frankenstein could no longer treat the Creature as an individual with a personal request, but as a potential threat to the human race. He views the Creature as an opponent, a representative of a potentially reprehensible tribe. It is possible, however, that, had the Creature not committed his crimes, perhaps he would have had a stronger case to present to Frankenstein.

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Frankenstein justifies his failure to take care of the Creature by promising to make the female monster, a compensation for the Creature. Even though he is cognizant of the havoc already wreaked by the Creature, Frankenstein nonetheless continues to sympathize with the Creature. Here, sympathy is a temporary border that opens the possibility for future relationships; alternatively, it is a platform which can facilitate the existence of two totally different narrations. It is a mediator. By granting the Creature sympathy, Frankenstein allows the Creature's narration to begin. The Creature's tale is only revealed after Frankenstein offers his sympathy and agrees to follow the Creature to his hut.

Sympathy, thus, allows the other narrations in the novel to operate. It seems that this type of multiple narrativization functions as a kind of vicarious experience for readers, who can see the results of various possible actions. Jeanne Britton has noted that the shift of narratives are produced "as one character sympathizes with another and begins to tell his story" (3). The first transition between narrations happens when Walton encounters Frankenstein at the north pole, surrounded by ice and enclosed in a thick fog. Likewise, because of the Creature's sympathy for the De Lacey family whose story is revealed through the creature's narration. The Creature moves from shadow to light, transforming from a ghostly figure to a real living being finally after Frankenstein, his decision confirmed by his compassion, decides to listen to his tale: "I was partly urged by curiosity, and compassion confirmed my resolution" (122). Frankenstein makes this promise, most importantly, in exchange for his family's safety.

As the creator, the only person who is responsible and powerful, he feels obliged to grant his creation happiness: Frankenstein, "as his maker," reflects that he does owe the Creature "all the portion of happiness that it was in [his] power to bestow" (175). But as he is working on bringing the female Creature to life, Frankenstein imagines the disasters which might result from his creation of a female. What the Creature expects for sympathy implies a deep intimate relationship, even to the extent of sexual consummation with a female companion, but Frankenstein is jolted out of his complacency by the possibility that the Creature might have offspring: "[Y]et one of the first results of those sympathies for which the demon thirsted would be children" (198). Frankenstein's sympathy for his fellow humans, the responsibility he senses, gives him the courage to track the Creature

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to the North Pole, disregarding his own safety. This sympathy also allows him to become Walton's wise mentor. Impulsively, Frankenstein destroys the female creature. If Frankenstein had utilized his imagination, allowing himself to be more prescient when he was making the creature, and if he had been able to conceive of the Creature's potential for harm, he might have destroyed the Creature before bringing him to life. If he had done so, the disasters for which the Creature was responsible would not have taken place. Ironically, the first time Frankenstein shows any awareness of his responsibility for the safety of the human race is when he reflects on the potentially disastrous effect of the Creature's offspring.

Anticipating the concerns the novel would evoke from commentators, Percy Shelley's 1817 essay "On Frankenstein" intends to counter expected hostile criticisms of *Frankenstein*. Although this essay, as Johanna Smith rightly points out, is somewhat "disingenuous [because of] Percy's feigned ignorance of the identity of *Frankenstein'*s author" (238), it accurately predicts the forthcoming criticisms concerning the novel's morality. Percy Shelley claims that the novel embodies a "direct moral,"— an "universal application [i.e.,] Treat a person ill, and he will become wicked" (283). He states that it is under specific circumstances that an innocent person will change to "a scourge and a curse," circumstances which arise from "neglect and solitude of heart" (283). I disagree with Percy Shelley's claim. I view *Frankenstein* not as a moral novel, but as a warning about morality: on the one hand, the novel acknowledges the limitation or inefficiency of sympathy, the ultimate virtue, while on the other hand, it recognizes that this limitation reveals sympathy's infinite power in such a way that readers are almost overwhelmed by the unfulfilled potential of unachieved sympathy, both for the Creature and for Frankenstein himself.

Although sympathy has the power to form a bridge between opposing narratives, it can only truly work in certain situations. Jeanne Britton argues that, through "production and transmission of narrative," narrative serves as a "compensation for failures of face-to-face sympathetic experience" (3). In addition, as sympathy "fails in actual experience," it opens another way "in the production of an appropriative narrative" (18). In *Frankenstein*, although sympathy can be a willingness to choose to build relationships with others, sympathy is not a long-lasting emotion. When Frankenstein starts to consider

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the dangerous idea that the human race might be extinguished by the Creature's devilish offspring, he redirects the energy he has devoted to sympathizing with the Creature into a desire to transcend the arrogance which led him to create the Creature in the first place. Sympathy is momentary and evolving. Sympathy creates a platform with which characters can communicate conflicting ideas. Sympathy is reaching out, crossing the border between the self and others, moving from an enclosed egoism to the possibility of forming binding relations in society. Rather than serving as a magical antidote to solve all problems, sympathy functions as a bridge that brings opposing parties together.

With the purpose of forbidding Walton, a younger version of himself, to make the same mistake that he has, Frankenstein clearly situates his confession within the context of a moral lesson. Before Frankenstein reveals how the Creature was created, he urges Walton to learn from his "infallible misery" and destruction: "Learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example" (63). However, not every contemporaneous critic saw the novel's didactic implications. In an 1818 review, John Croker writes that the novel "fatigues the feelings without interesting the understanding," (qtd. in Colavito 3) so that it imparts "no lesson of conduct, manner, or morality." Along similar lines, Richard Horne states that the novel "teaches the tragic results of …an impetuous irresistible passion" (228). Another critic, impressed by the "harsh and savage delineations of passion" (Review 249), however, is also troubled by the "gloomy view of nature and of man." Sir Walter Scott, on the other hand, captivated by the novel's strong emotion, remarks in *Blackwood's Edinburgh* magazine on "the high idea of the author's original genius and happy power of expression." Drawing on those early critics of Shelley's contemporaries who sharply criticized the novel for not taking a clear moral stand, Johanna Smith posits that it is for this reason that critics of high culture endeavor to influence and thus educate the common masses (239). It seems, in fact, that these contemporaneous critics correctly identify the "moral stand" of the novel (the tragic results of ungoverned passion) without realizing it.

Looking at *Frankenstein*'s morality from a Romantic perspective, Charles Schug states that this sort of readerly participation in the process of creating novels is a legacy of the Romantic poets, who established their poetry on the basis of a mutual reading and creative experience, and, by so doing, enforced morals on their readers (611). Schug

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maintains that "[t]he power of the novel lies in this sense of an on-going moral experience" (611). The moral in *Frankenstein*, however, in Schug's view, does not judge either Frankenstein or his creation favorably. Agreeing with Schug, Charlotte Gordon states that, in her refusal "to weight the story in favor of either the creator or the created, Mary [Shelley] conjured a sense of moral suspension in which the conventional questions—Who's the hero? Who's the villain? Who's right? Who's wrong?—no longer applied" (374). The novel's final claim to sympathy, Schug argues, comes less from an exact answer than from a space of indefinite wonder because the novel, in Larry Swingle's words, "catch[es] the reader up in open-ended questions and expanding possibilities" (614).

Frankenstein raises the question of how morality (in Percy Shelley's words) can turn "into a scourge and a curse" (283). I argue that, on the one hand, *Frankenstein* functions less as a work justifying the Creature's suffering than as a work designed to raise the awareness of the complexity of misplaced sympathy. On the other hand, the novel shows the tragedy which results from evading responsibility. Analogous to sin in that it is derived from what is good but which later turns sour, the Creature's evil is a distortion of the good, an emptiness to fill in his violent desire for love. At the end of the novel, when he is beside Frankenstein's death bed, the Creature admits that his desires have not been satisfied: "For while I destroyed his [Frankenstein's] hopes, I did not satisfy my own desires. They were forever ardent and craving; still I desired love and fellowship, and I was still spurned" (265).

The problem lies not so much in Frankenstein's creation of the Creature, but in his refusal to accept responsibility for what he has done. He abandons the Creature after bringing it to life. What makes matters worse is that Frankenstein breaks his promise at the last minute after igniting the desperate Creature's hopes. Ultimately, Frankenstein's decision to dash the Creature's hopes results in devastation, leading not only to the deaths of Frankenstein's loved ones, but to Frankenstein's own death. Creator of the Creature, Frankenstein turns out to be a pseudo-god, who is less powerful both in strength and intelligence than his creation. This disappointment and concurrent anger turns the Creature's reverence into contempt and bitterness.

Rather than being a novel about sympathy, then, *Frankenstein* is about the failure

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of sympathy. Strong feelings have a negative connotation since ungovernable intense passion turns out to be destructive in the novel. For example, the Creature imagines the cottagers' emotions in the beginning, but his anger and resentment overpowers him when he is disappointed. Thus, this type of impulsive sympathy is often related to temporary passion and deceptive appearances. It works better in language and imagination, but is crushed the moment it comes to reality. When the Creature learns to describe his emotions through language, he also learns to imagine the response he would like to receive. Unfortunately, the resulting sympathy cannot exist in reality. The Creature ultimately turns to the only living being connected to him, Frankenstein, but the death of Frankenstein eliminates the only one capable of fulfilling the Creature's desire. Losing Frankenstein leaves the Creature nothing with which to sustain his existence because Frankenstein is the only person from whom he has a right to claim sympathy. Thus, the Creature's only option is to vanish from human society.

At the end, the Creature's crimes disqualify him from receiving sympathy. The Creature exclaims his devastation in his failure: "I seek not a fellow feeling in my misery. No sympathy may I ever find." The Creature fails to find others to sympathize, to engage in fellow feeling with him. Since the Creature has too strongly identified himself with the object— humans—the Creature has allowed the intense feelings behind his passionate love to transform themselves into a murderous desire. Because he blames Frankenstein (both directly and indirectly) for his inability to find sympathy, he kills Frankenstein's younger brother, his wife, his best friend, and, albeit indirectly, Frankenstein himself in the end. To vent his frustration, he turns to vice. Propelled by passion rather than by reason, the Creature indiscriminately submits himself to his intense feelings. But when Frankenstein is dead, he loses the object of his hatred. Consequently, he also loses his reason to live.

Without moral regulation, the Creature's unregulated energy spirals into melancholia and nihilism. The contrast before and after how sympathy has been twisted leads ultimately to a failed sympathy, a failure to sympathize with the passionate self. Readers in the nineteenth century perceived novelists as moral guides and the novelists appear to have embraced the role. Through their novels, these writers advocated moral actions. Shelley seeks to strike the balance, using the extremes of Frankenstein and the

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Creature to indicate their dangers and the need to construct a flexible, harmonious self. *Frankenstein* is, then, a type of experiment. By extrapolating Romantic subjectivity to its extremes, Shelley allows us to see how the self is constructed under "normal" conditions, and provides an ideal for subjectivity that persists into the Victorian period: the harmoniously balanced, morally virtuous, neatly-hierarchized, and socially engaged self that becomes characteristic of the Victorian period.

In *Frankenstein*, almost all of the characters die at the end, leaving Walton, the survivor, to pass on the story. Significantly, had he not been rescued by Frankenstein's moral teachings, he too would have died. It seems that Shelley is asking readers to sympathize with both the Creature and Frankenstein, even when they are overwhelmed by passion. When these passions overwhelm them, the motivations behind their actions are twisted; that is, passion transforms motives from good to evil. Psychological novels ultimately evolve into novels of redemption in the Victorian era. Considering the novel in a historical context, we can see that the novel alludes to a bleak world where being bereft of Romantic idealism ultimately evolves into a more practical point of view. This evolution is a direct result of admitting one's vulnerability and is then followed by redemption. What makes Shelley's Romantic novel special compared with the Gothic predecessors is her interest in constructing the individual characters' maps of consciousness. Shelley's *Frankenstein*, thus, stands as a demonstration of how novels finally become a literary genre in the early nineteenth century.

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Chapter 2

The Natural Growth of Sympathy and Character in *Jane Eyre*

> I have now been married ten years. I know what it is to live entirely for and with what I love best on earth. I hold myself supremely blest—blest beyond what language can express; because I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine. No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am: ever more absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. I know no weariness of my Edward's society: he knows none of mine, any more than we each do of the pulsation of the heart that beats in our separate bosoms; consequently, we are ever together. To be together is for us to be at once as free as in solitude, as gay as in company. We talk, I believe, all day long: to talk to each other is but a more animated and an audible thinking. All my confidence is bestowed on him, all his confidence is devoted to me; we are precisely suited in character—perfect concord is the result. (450-451)

In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë seeks to exalt the value of sympathy, which is shown most perfectly in the final unification between Rochester and Jane. To sympathize is to share, feel, and agree with each other. Thus, Jane and Rochester's wholesome unification is a full sympathy, a harmonious "perfect concord," both in body and mind. This complete unity between two individuals is the best expression of sympathy, a theme on which the entire novel is built. However, sympathy is not acquired easily; it is a long process. Brontë has various characters approach sympathy through different stages. Ultimately, she finds that sympathy is incomplete unless it includes natural sympathy—sympathy between human natures—and, more broadly, sympathy with the natural world. Perfect sympathetic unification is elusive because many characters fail to achieve sympathy with nature; this sympathetic unification is also exclusive, for it can only be achieved by those who share the same temperament and judgement—in other words, by those who share a similar type of human nature.

Although many scholars have pointed out that Jane Eyre is a novel representing sympathy, each of these scholarly discussions has a different perspective on what

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sympathy means to Brontë. Several critics focus on Brontë's cultivation of sympathy with or in her novel's readers. For instance, Mark M. Hennelly argues that Jane's continual direct addresses to her readers imply Brontë's anxiety: longing for readers' sympathy, "yet fear[ing] reader rejection…at the same time" (700). In agreement with Hennelly, Lisa Sternlieb considers that Jane's yearning for sympathy is directed to female readers, especially when she rejects St. John's unaffectionate proposal: "[Jane] is searching for female sympathy when she rejects St. John's marriage proposal" (453n2). Similarly, Sternlieb suggests that Rochester is trying to absolve himself of his past mistakes by endearing himself to readers, hoping to gain their sympathy: "Rochester's retrospective confession is intended to absolve himself while winning the reader's sympathy" (466).

In contrast, considering sympathy as more than a tool to manipulate readers' emotions, Jeffery Franklin sees "sympathy [as] the foundation [on] which Jane will form herself as a woman and as an independent [subject]" (475). In this chapter, following Franklin's approach, I will examine the ways in which sympathy is formed or becomes deformed in the development of characters in the novel. Sympathy not only forms "subjects," as Franklin puts it, but it is also the crucial determinant of character, in both senses of the word. Jane, the main character, has sympathy and good character; other, minor characters have partial or faulty sympathy, and are ultimately condemned by Brontë as being incomplete, of poor character. Kelsey Bennett points out that for nineteenth-century British bildungsroman authors like Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, their heroines' education—including, of course, their choices of marriage partners—is crucial to the self- and social development of these protagonists. For Bennett, the most crucial part of Jane's bildung, or "self-formation," can be found in her search for a balance between Rochester's romantic love and St. John's extreme religious austerity—"a reconciliation between romantic propensity and religious principle" (19).

Indeed, sympathy is a foundation stone for Jane's characters. Rebecca Mitchell explains that Jane's clearer self-perception results not only from age, but from the unity that she and Rochester experience: "Jane's dilemma focuses less on which man she wants and more on which version of herself" (316). In other words, Jane amalgamates her character from the perspective of her final sympathetic union with Rochester. Joyce Carol

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Oates provides a more thorough description of Jane's dilemma, suggesting that Jane's choice between two men urges her in different directions: "[I]f Rochester is all romantic passion, urging [Jane] to succumb to emotional excess, St. John Rivers is all Christian ambition, urging her to attempt a spiritual asceticism of which she knows herself incapable" (xiii–xiv). Jane's final decision to return to Rochester shows that to sympathize is to share the same moral value that indicates shared temperament and judgement, a sympathetic human nature. Thus, Jane builds her character by reflecting on herself—and finding her own reflection in Rochester.

Sympathy is the guiding force which makes Jane's autobiography a journey towards complete spiritual unification. Making Brontë's sympathy run parallel to "Mother Nature's [sympathy] with women," Franklin regards sympathy as "the basis of the discourse of spiritual love" (477). He suggests that sympathy, the spiritual communication between Jane and Rochester, reveals "fellow feeling, mutual respect, and equality of love" (466). Like Franklin, Angela Hague also concurs with the idea that sympathy is a spiritual unification. She pinpoints the greatest achievement in human relationships as a sympathetic bond of psychic interpretation and fusion, having the same thoughts and feelings (591). Like Franklin, Hague expands this intuitive sympathy that works in the fusion of two consciousnesses to include the broader (super)natural world: nature works in Jane's favor, for Jane and Rochester were given the same proclivities and moral values by (and through) nature.

In this chapter, I will examine how sympathy arises from "nature" in both senses of the word: first, nature as tree, flower, moor, etc.; second, nature as the essence of what it means to be human (human character). Although many scholars have examined the supernatural in the novel (especially Rochester's mysterious spiritual call), I follow Hague and Franklin in seeing the supernatural as a purely natural manifestation: Brontë makes it clear that the "supernatural" events in the novel are forms of sympathy, love, and unification that arise from or through (human) nature. Paradoxically, the seemingly supernatural is inside the natural. Brontë distinguishes this dual aspect of nature—the external and internal—by exploring the (super)natural as a key medium with which to move Jane from an incomplete sympathy to a complete sympathy.

But Jane is not the only character whom Brontë examines in relation to sympathy.

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Throughout the novel, she explores both failed and successful versions of sympathy. She shows that deformed or incomplete sympathy has three aspects: it is overdisciplined, it expects sacrifices, and it embodies a lack of respect for nature. Through her experience with incomplete or misdirected sympathy, Jane knows her own nature better and is better able to appreciate other characters who have the same character. Ultimately, by the end of the novel we arrive at Brontë's true sympathy, a "perfect concord" of the internal and external natures of two people. For Brontë, understanding nature is key to understanding sympathy. Indeed, nature sympathizes with humans in the novel, and unless they realize this, Brontë's characters cannot sympathize with their own human nature, with the character of others, or with their natural surroundings. Significantly, Brontë's vision of sympathy reveals the Smithian impartial spectator in the way that nature sympathizes with the characters. Nature functions as a judge which helps Jane make the correct decisions.

Through a discussion of key elements in Brontë's understanding of sympathy, I will focus on how Brontë articulates the process of sympathy, examining crucial events and scenes in the novel. First, I will explore how St. John embodies a malformed sympathy. St. John becomes an unsympathetic tyrant because he has too much discipline. Jane almost sacrifices her nature to fulfill St. John's version of sympathy, but realizes that to involve herself in his goal of missionary work would be, for her, a false union. Their characters, and their understanding of nature itself, are too widely dissimilar. Although her initial union with Rochester would have been incomplete because he has not resolved his bigamy, her false sympathy for St. John's goals is potentially even worse, as it would be a betrayal of her nature, of her very self. Second, St. John pressures and manipulates Jane to sacrifice her nature for his desire. These defects lead not to sympathy but its opposite— rather than having a close relationship with nature, St. John crushes flowers beneath his feet, symbolizing his disconnection from both external nature and internal human nature. In this way, Brontë uses nature to underscore bad sympathy. Nature serves as a lesson, a statement that shows how external nature is actually buried in internal human nature. In contrast to St. John, Jane understands sympathy though nature: the blasted tree shows her an approaching doom, yet it also foreshadows the solid unity between herself and Rochester. In fact, it is in the wild moorland, where she takes her

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first night's rest after leaving Rochester, that she begins to understand true sympathy. And it is through Jane and Rochester's spiritual call that external and internal natures are brought together. I end with this presentation of Jane and Rochester's complete union: the perfect expression of the character of Brontë's sympathy.

Sympathizing through Sacrifice

In this section, I will look into St. John's deformed sympathy: first, how he refuses to sympathize not only with others, but also with himself due to his overly strict sense of discipline. Not only does he sacrifice himself, but he also pressures Jane to sacrifice her nature and life to help him fulfill his missionary ambition. Although Jane tries to resist St. John, her need for approval and desire for love almost makes her betray her own nature by entering into a false union with St. John. Without sympathy, St. John becomes a tyrant in demanding Jane's sympathy.

Not only does St. John refuse Jane's sympathy, but by refusing to allow himself to feel sympathetic for himself, St. John isolates himself from the mutual understanding that, for Brontë, is crucial for the development of human character. Although both Jane and St. John try to restrain their intense passion in their submission to a loftier goal, St. John rejects all his tender feelings and turns himself into an automaton. Like Jane's cousin Eliza Reed, who is "headstrong and selfish" and "assiduous[ly] industrious," (15) St. John's overly stringent discipline ensures that he intentionally cuts himself off from other human emotions. Thinking that St. John "tasks himself too far" with his "firmness and self-control," (371) Jane tries to unlock his emotions, to "shed one drop of the balm of [St. John's] sympathy" (371) by talking about Rosamond, whom St. John has a natural connection with and for whom he could develop true sympathy.

Jane challenges St. John to face his true feelings by pointing out that he "tremble[s] and become[s] flushed" before Rosamond (374). Although he is taken aback by Jane's direct and blunt observation, St. John acknowledges Jane's "originality." However, rather than feeling embarrassed, St. John declares that he despises and scorns this "fever of the flesh" (375). Ironically, he replies that he does not "have a just claim to" (375) Jane's disproportionate sympathy. St. John, with his "cool and inflexible judgment," has "no power to sympathise" with feelings and views that do not contribute to his goal (409).

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Although he is “sincerely glad to see” his sisters, he cannot feel any sort of connection with “their glow of fervour and flow of joy” (394). Consistent and forthright in revealing his own nature, St. John concludes that he is “simply, in [his] original state… a cold, hard, ambitious man” (375). Cold as stone, St. John refuses to share his feelings as he tramples on the flame that Jane tries to ignite.

Believing that succumbing to any sort of emotional desire is a shameful weakness, St. John has no interest in sympathizing with Jane’s feelings. He considers Jane almost as an experiment, a specimen on whom to test whether she can endure the labor that is uncongenial to her natural “habits and inclinations” (403). Then St. John directs his attention to his observations. Although he notes her success in passing the test, St. John takes no interest in Jane’s emotional tribulations, nor does he feel any compassion in response to Jane’s suffering. However, St. John requests that Jane sympathize with his vision of serving as a missionary. In line with Brontë, for St. John, successful sympathy can be found in shared values.

Between the Natural and the Supernatural

St. John refuses to sympathize with Jane’s feelings, but he does sympathize with Jane’s ability to make sacrifices. Determined to take Jane as his faithful disciple and fellow laborer, St. John is oblivious to her lack of enthusiasm. For St. John, the reasons for Jane’s refusal of his proposal represent a shameful weakness that she should work hard to overcome through sheer force of will. Learning from his own experience, St. John tells Jane that she “could win while [she] controlled” (403). However, he does admit that he cannot overcome the power of “natural affection” either, for it has “permanent power over [him]” (375). Although he believes that his soul will never be at ease in the “depths of a restless sea” because of a continual turbulence of the flesh, he does believe that, by prioritizing “endurance, perseverance, industry, [and] talent,” (375) he will conquer the temptation of his flesh. St. John realizes that his ambition in his religious career is as strong as Jane’s desire for sympathy and affection. He points out that like himself, Jane, as a passionate person, will always be restless if she seeks to pass leisure in solitude, and works monotonously, although for a different “stimulus”—while Jane is under the power of “human affections and sympathies,” (356) St. John is urged by the desire for power

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and glory. St. John is wasting away when he first becomes a minister, for he feels stymied in England, believing that his life will be useless if he does not pursue his ambition. He cannot bear the thought that his God-given nature could be contravened and his abilities made useless.

St. John resolves the conflict between his natural propensities and vocational principles by redirecting his natural affection and fervor towards assisting his ambition: he has redirected all his energy and fervor into the spiritual vocation of serving as a missionary in India. It is only after this redirection that he can reconcile himself to his passion and find peace. It is from this emotional place that he entreats Jane to follow his example:

> It is hard work to control the workings of inclination and turn the bent of nature; but that it may be done, I know from experience. God has given us, in a measure, the power to make our own fate; and when our energies seem to demand a sustenance they cannot get—when our will strains after a path we may not follow—we need neither starve from inanition, nor stand still in despair: we have but to seek another nourishment for the mind. (361)

Not giving respect to his natural nature, St. John denies and bends his nature which resulted in a malformed sympathy by working himself to the extreme. With reason, rather than feeling, as his guide, he "will sacrifice all to his long-framed resolves," even at the expense of his "natural affection and feelings" (356).

St. John's call for Jane to join his great vision, however, would require not only a physical sacrifice but a sacrifice of her nature, of her essential self. Jane has to give up part, if not all, of her nature if she is to unify with St. John. Although St. John is deeply charmed by Rosamond's beauty, he is determined to stifle his affection, for Rosamond lacks the ability to suffer and labor, a failure as a missionary's wife. On the contrary, Jane's diligence, order, and energy make her a much more suitable candidate. In an attempt to persuade Jane to marry him in spite of practical obstacles, St. John speaks frankly. He tells Jane that he wants a wife, a laborer, whom he can "influence efficiently in life," and, even more terrifying, "retain absolutely till death" (406). Responding with a frightened shudder, Jane refuses to marry St. John, saying that she cannot "become part of [him]" if they do not love each other "as man and wife should" (406). A union without

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spiritual love and affection is a betrayal of Jane's sympathetic spirit. Sacrificing her perception of marriage as a complete unification in an attempt to sympathize with St. John's missionary ambition would be a betrayal of Jane's fundamental nature.

Taking advantage of Jane's thirst for approval, St. John urges her to marry him as a sacrifice, an exchange which would be sanctified by God. Jeffery Franklin claims that St. John sees exactly the same quality in Jane that Rochester does: Jane is the living spirit of sympathy. Jane's sympathetic spirit works as a strong attraction for St. John, for sympathy is something he lacks (467). Conflating sympathy and religious spirituality, St. John tries to manipulate Jane into serving his goal. He wants her to submit to his request that she marry him and work in India. Franklin argues that St. John turns his failure to offer Jane spiritual love into a religious calling (468) so that she will not be able to reject him for God's sake. However, this is an abuse of power in the guise in fulfilling one's duty. St. John conflates spiritual love with religious fervor, for both require sympathy and affection. This sympathetic, Christ-like love that Jane possesses enables her to put the good of others before her own. In addition, it creates the potential for heart-wrenching sacrifices that contradict her own desires. Brontë shows that sympathy, when it is expressed through self-sacrificing love and disinterested devotion, helps unify two people, making each one complete. It is unethical, however, to force others to sacrifice for personal gain, even in the name of doing good. Indeed, although both St. John and Rochester recognize Jane's characteristic excitement to sacrifice and "delight in sacrifice," (445) their responses to it are completely different. Rochester loves it, while St. John tries to take advantage of it.

Jane, headstrong as she is, is ready to plunge into anything "[that] was right," and to make sacrifices, if necessary, to fulfill her obligations: "I sincerely, deeply, fervently longed to do what was right; and only that" (419). Jane feels veneration for St. John, and wishes "to cease struggling," "to rush down the torrent of his will into the gulf of his existence, and there lose my own" (418). Many times, Jane admits that she is under St. John's power, "a freezing spell" (397) that deprives her of her nature. When St. John comes, Jane, fully aware of his discreetness, sacrifices her "vivacity" to "serious moods" and "occupations" (397). St. John becomes a live standard for Jane, whom she feels agonizingly controlled by, although she tries to convince herself that she should yield and

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look up to his will. Although Jane does not love her servitude and wishes that St. John could just neglect her, she is painfully conscious of St. John's power over her. Even so, Jane cannot truly reject him: "By degrees, he acquired a certain influence over me that took away my liberty of mind: his praise and notice were more restraining than his indifference" (397).

Under the power of affection and sympathy, Jane is too eager to please, hoping that this sort of accommodation will win affection and approval from those whom she admires and loves. Jane's vulnerability can be found in her almost overwhelming desire to be loved and accepted. Little Jane confesses this wish to Helen in Lowood: "[I]f others don't love me I would rather die than live—I cannot bear to be solitary and hated" (69). This childhood thirst for love and approval follows Jane into her adulthood. Imposing his will and his goals on Jane, St. John almost succeeds when he draws Jane "gently" to him, entreating her to marry him with gentle tones. She melts, "gr[owing] pliant as a reed under his kindness:" "Oh, that gentleness! how far more potent is it than force" (419). Although Jane knows clearly that this gentleness is a product of duty rather than love, she falls willingly into the gentle temptation. Deceived by her fervor for spiritual affection, Jane acknowledges that she was fooled by "an error of judgment" (418). Presenting the full picture of Jane's nearly irrevocable error, Brontë shows that it is not virtuous to sacrifice simply for the sake of sacrificing. It is radical fervor. Ironically, at the same time, Rochester, sitting by the window, is so lonely and desperate as he thinks of Jane that he cries out her name in anguish. Without the fortuitous rescue of this spiritual voice, Jane would have been unable to resist her impulses. Her experience with St. John is nonetheless a fortunate one: had she not experienced this sort of "false" or incomplete union with St. John, she might not have known a true and complete union when she found it.

St. John is disconnected from both external nature and internal human nature. Brontë thus suggests that one's relationship to nature is crucial for overcoming bad sympathy. She shows how external nature, where Jane's sympathy runs, is actually manifested in internal human nature. Jane senses an omen by observing the blasted tree, but is reassured by its solidarity; after leaving Rochester, she finds rest and refuge by taking comfort in the embrace of mother nature. Fleeing Rochester after discovering his

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previous marriage, Jane keeps her conscience free from corruption, for her conscience is her bridge to nature. Without a clear conscience, it is not possible to connect to nature. Jane's conscience helps to guard and preserve her internal nature from contamination so that she can maintain an intimate relation with external nature. External nature then comes to her aid when she is in peril. Similarly, it is after Rochester repents that he is reconciled with his conscience and once again reconnected to nature. Communicated through nature, Rochester and Jane's "supernatural" spiritual call brings together external and internal nature and unites the two characters in sympathy.

When Jane tells Diana that St. John wants to marry her as a useful tool, "formed for labour—not for love" (402), Diana exclaims that her brother's behavior is "unnatural," a concise commentary on St. John's relationship both to human nature and nature itself. When Rosamond is first introduced in the novel and before even speaking to her, as if symbolically stifling the passion between himself and her, St. John steps on closed flowers and crushes their heads, preventing their blossoming. Alienated from nature, St. John's character is often described as unanimated—hard as stone, unmovable as metal, and "inexorable as death" (356). He escapes from the vivacity of his sisters' and Jane's happy Christmas reunion because "humanities and amenities of life had no attraction for him" (392). Jane is again and again frozen by St. John's coldness. For instance, when Diana pushes Jane to receive a brotherly kiss from St. John like the other sisters, his icy and marble-like kiss makes Jane turn pale.

In contrast to St. John's disconnection from nature, Jane has an intimate relationship with nature. If St. John is energized by sucking in Jane's lively, diligent spirit by turning her into his laborer, Jane regains her energy from mother nature. After leaving Rochester, in her desolation, Jane takes refuge in the wild moorland, the embrace of the universal mother: nature. Having an intimate relation with nature, Jane perceives it as a nurturing mother, providing her rest and protection:

> Nature seemed to me benign and good; I thought she loved me, outcast as I was; and I, who from man could anticipate only mistrust, rejection, insult, clung to her with filial fondness. To-night, at least, I would be her guest, as I was her child: my mother would lodge me without money and without price (323).

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As if reentering into the mother's womb, Jane bends towards a crag in the ground, and lays herself in a dark hollow.

In comparison to the human society where she finds no connection, nature is Jane's only relation and tie that holds a strong claim on her. Not only is she comforted and protected by nature, but she also learns from observing it. Her pondering the ruined chestnut-tree, whose "cloven halves were not broken from each other" (275), foreshadows the dismal event which is approaching her relationship with Rochester. She believes that, in its decay, the two halves of the ruined tree have "[comrades] to sympathise with" (276). To sympathize is to share an intellectual and a spiritual comradeship, grounded in the roots of nature. In the face of a devastating event, if one has a sympathizer as a comrade, one will not be consumed by desolation.

Guarding her conscience helps to keep external nature in communication with internal nature, a communication that can only take place when the purity of her internal nature is preserved. When Jane is in peril or at the edge of danger, her conscience, the guard of nature, sounds the alarm. Jane is again and again saved by an inner voice. Sometimes this voice manifests itself as her mother, a personified character of her conscience, and at other times, as a spiritual voice from mother nature herself. In a dream-like episode, her mother, descending from the clouds of the ceiling, speaks directly to her spirit, urging her to flee temptation. But to maintain this connection with the spirits of nature, Brontë suggests that to keep one's nature uncontaminated is to be truthful to one's own conscience. Jane's conscience forcefully reminds her to get back on the right track. Although the experience might be painful at the time, it cancels the trouble by learning the hard way.

As a guard who wrestles to protect this inner natural purity, Jane's conscience is presented as a violent tyrant who will save passion from misconduct. When Jane tries to dissuade herself from leaving Rochester in order to avoid the suffering of departure, and even thinks of death as a way to elude pain, a spiritual battle takes place in Jane's mind where "Conscience" does not allow "Passion" to muddy the waters. Conscience and reason, personified as strong male figures, forcibly squeeze the throat of Passion, a petite female who has entrapped herself in falsehood (297). The "voice" of her conscience urges her on, forbidding her to be weak: "But, then, a voice within me averred that I

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could do it and foretold that I should do it" (297). In order to rescue herself from the slough of falsehood, her conscience turns into a dictator with an "arm of iron" (297) which he then uses to prevent mischief. Sally Shuttleworth points out that Jane's internal self is a "battle ground of conflicting energies" in which "the play of the mind's powers is to be rigorously guided and controlled" (Shuttleworth, vii). Treating the self as a fierce battleground where an individual's aggression must be consciously controlled and guarded, Brontë shows that Jane is right to maneuver her force in guarding her inner self, a "hidden interior space," "against intruders" (vii).

This better connection with her conscience requires strong control, helping to resolve the problem when the desire for sympathy is in conflict with an incomplete unification. Brontë's novel addresses individual control in the Victorian era, when order and self-regulation were considered necessary virtues. Brontë's strongwilled heroine Jane Eyre illustrates the way that regulation, discipline, and individual power are manifested through sympathy. Griffen observes that "[t]hroughout the novel Jane steers a wavering course between extremes, the domestic hearth her lodestar as well as her goal" (54). Jane escapes becoming a monstrous woman like Bertha because she avoids extremes and maintains a balance, a common trope of Victorian fiction (72).

Neither Jane's author nor her nineteenth century readers could have imagined that it would become almost impossible not to mention Bertha in any discussion of *Jane Eyre*; as Elaine Showalter observes, contemporary readers tend to show more sympathy for Bertha than her author extends to her (68). In the middle of the twentieth century, scholarship shifted to a more sympathetic reading of Bertha Mason, Rochester's first wife, even in the face of her madness. Sandra Gilbert's and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1978), the classic feminist reading of Bertha, posits that Bertha is the surrogate for social anxiety in the male dominated literary world. In addition, Jean Rhys, in *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1985), a prequel to *Jane Eyre*, depicts Bertha's difficult childhood and her later imprisonment, trying to offer a reason behind her madness.

I see this outpouring of sympathy for Bertha as the result of the twentieth century's concern with women's issues; that is to say that the sympathy for Bertha is more symptomatic of this larger issue than it is a reaction to the character of Bertha herself. In other words, Bertha functions as a foil rather than as a fully rounded human being (in this

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sense, she is similar to all the side characters, such as Blanche and the Reeds). Thus, in accordance with Griffen, I see Bertha as the third person who frames the back-story for Rochester's pursuit of Jane, whose reason allows her to function as a tranquil harbor for Rochester.

Although Rochester is attracted to Jane's rationality, she is in fact possessed of a passionate temperament. Consequently, Jane makes an effort to restrain herself, to avoid falling into whimsical passion. For instance, Rochester receives Jane's serenity with surprise on the day after their first, aborted marriage ceremony: "You are passionate. I expected a scene of some kind. I was prepared for the hot rain of tears" (298). With her inner strength, Jane is empowered to counter and influence headstrong men like St. John and Rochester. In despair, after Jane's refusal to stay with him, Rochester leans towards violence. At the height of emotional intensity, it can be inferred that Rochester is about to rape Jane. During this experience an interesting inner monologue takes place in Jane's mind:

> The present—the passing second of time—was all I had in which to control and restrain him—a movement of repulsion, flight, fear would have sealed my doom, —and his. But I was not afraid: not in the least. I felt an inward power; a sense of influence, which supported me. The crisis was perilous; but not without its charm: such as the Indian, perhaps, feels when he slips over the rapid in his canoe (302).

The result of an approaching crisis which is "not without its charm" (302), a fount of excitement is generated by inward power. With this inner power that guards her from doing stupid things, it allows Jane to preserve herself and remain in control during devastating situations. Taking pride in winning another intellectual's respect, as if fighting a battle, Jane always works to "[pass] the outworks of conventional reserve," "[cross] the threshold of confidence," and "[win] a place by" the very center of their hearts (374). As someone "brave in spirit" who finds something "penetrating" her eye, Jane cannot stand or "rest" (374) until she wins the person's respect and brings herself onto an equal footing with another intellectual mind.

In contrast to Rochester, who disconnects himself from nature as he is enslaved by the whims of his passion, Jane maintains the clear conscience of her nature by defending

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the clarity of her character. Rochester praises Jane for her natural sympathies and calls Jane the cherished preserver of his "sympathy—my better self—my good angel" (315). Offering Rochester an innate and unobtrusive sympathy, Jane is the manifestation of his pure and uncontaminated sympathy. Trapped by the prospect of a potentially bigamous relationship, he is cut off from the alliance of nature by corrupting his conscience, a spiritual contamination. Consequently, ashamed of himself, he feels unclean and polluted when he tells Jane how he envies her "peace of mind, [her] clean conscience, [her] unpolluted memory" (135). It is only when Rochester repents of his wrongdoings by cleaning up his contaminated nature "in anguish and humility" (447) that he can be realigned with nature. Nature then gratifies him by transferring his call to "the alpha and omega of [his] heart's wishes," (447) to Jane herself. Although she may not be consciously aware of it, it seems clear that Jane's relationship with nature is a sympathetic one. Similarly, because she has a good relationship with nature, Jane's consciousness is able to be worked out in the vivacity of nature. Thus, she hears the voice comes from within, rather than outside of herself.

Jane's ability to hear this voice shows that nature marks those who are natural or original through favoring her—Nature's—own kind. In this novel, detachment is achieved through *nature*. When she is considering St. John's proposal, she realizes that, were she to accept, she would lose herself. She would have to submit herself entirely to his dreams and his thoughts. Because she sympathizes so strongly with the natural world, she is receptive to the guidance it provides in a concomitant of strong feelings:

> Suddenly it [her heart] stood still to an inexpressible feeling that thrilled it through, and passed at once to my head and extremities. The feeling was not like an electric shock, but it was quite as sharp, as strange, as startling: it acted on my senses as if their utmost activity hitherto had been but torpor, from which they were now summoned and forced to wake. They rose expectant: eye and ear waited while the flesh quivered on my bones (419).

As a result, she is able to make the correct choice: the power of nature possesses her, changing her consciousness and leaving her no option but to refuse St. John's proposal.

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Brontë shows that nature marks those who are natural or original through favoring her own kind.

However, it has long puzzled critics why she includes a supernatural twist at the end of her realistic novel. Seeing the spiritual voice as a "psychological design," Ruth Bernard Yeazell points out that the spiritual voice "dramatizes that fundamental correspondence between inner and outer reality which is at the heart of the novel" (142). Stating that the voice reintegrates Jane's consciousness with the workings of nature, Robert Heilman explains that this alignment between the inner conscience and the outer world is "an interplay between private feeling and cosmic order" (299). Brontë shows that the natural world reflects the essential human psyche. Throughout the novel, she consistently connects the rational and the supernatural through the working of sympathy. Sympathy exists between two individuals who share the same nature and, in the form of a supernatural or mysterious power, pushes them towards a better place. Sympathy is the bridge between the tangible natural world and the intangible supernatural world. In this way, the supernatural voice is nothing strange, but rather is natural, for nature simply reflects human consciousness. Brontë makes clear that the supernatural does not transcend the natural, for it is a sign of nature's sympathy with humans:

> Sympathies I believe exist (for instance, between far-distant, long-absent, wholly estranged relatives; asserting, notwithstanding their alienation, the unity of the source to which each traces his origin): whose workings baffle mortal comprehension. And signs, for aught we know, may be but the sympathies of Nature with man. (220)

Validating the idea that Jane's inner mind is manifested through the working of nature, Brontë sees the world as intertwined with the workings of the human psyche. Agreeing with Heilman and Yeazell, Hague clarifies that the voice is a long-planned scenario that makes Jane's inner consciousness an echo of the outside phenomenal world (140-141). Hague states that the power of intuitive consciousness "resides in communicating truth," that it is embedded between two people who share mutual sympathy, sensitivity, and emotions (142). Empowering Jane with nature's assistance, Brontë aligns herself with the Romantics' belief that there is, as Robert Hume notes, "a more profound truth" (289) manifested through the power of sympathy. Fortunately, presenting what Jane already

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knows by bringing her consciousness to light, nature "did—no miracle—but her best" (420). Aligned with human nature, nature itself cannot be fooled, for it is unaffected by human folly. Brontë depicts nature as interrelated with those who are naturally good. In Jane's case, rather than working against her, nature works particularly in her favor. Leaving Rochester after discovering his earlier marriage, Jane rejects what she believes to be an incomplete unification. Brontë shows that through the careful protection of her conscience and the disciplining of her passions and impulses, Jane is saved from a horrible downfall.

Sympathy is Found in Common Nature

Brontë believes that people's sympathy differs in various spectrums, differences which directly affect people's intelligence and values. Jane identifies those who share her nature through their shared sympathy. This shared sympathy provides strengths which allow them to overcome turmoil and enable them to support each other. Although they differ in origin, class, and sex, Jane and Rochester have a shared nature. Abiding by their common nature, a tender and truthful heart, they patiently endure and overcome hardships and achieve ultimate unity.

Hierarchizing people's temperaments and judgements, Jane finds her kindred spirits: sympathetic people are natural; they have character. People who are sympathetic are more closely aligned to her nature. When Jane discovers that the Rivers, in a miraculous coincidence, are her relatives, she tells St. John that she feels "satisfied" and "happy" since she knows that her "kindred" share her "full fellow-feeling" (388). For Brontë, sympathy is an instinct and intuition that indicates where someone belongs and which people are their same kind. Again, with reference to the previous quotes, Jane believes that sympathies can exist between people who are far from each other and is absolutely convinced that all people who share the same sympathy, will eventually find each other and achieve unity. Thus, those who succeed in sympathizing with each other share the same origin.

From the beginning of the novel, Brontë emphasizes the important relationship between natural origin and sympathy. Jane and the Reeds do not get along with each other because they do not share the same origins, in this sense: "They were not bound to

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regard with affection a thing that could not sympathise with one amongst them" (15). Jane, "discord[ant]" among the Reeds, intrudes and disrupts the harmony between Mrs. Reed and her children, "her chosen vassalage" (15). Lacking their "fellow-feeling," Jane, "a heterogeneous thing," admits bluntly that she interprets their judgement as "contempt" and feels that their "temperament" is in contrast to her own (15). Consequently, her lack of love for them mirrors their lack of love for her. It is only natural. It is neither of their faults, for they are not the same kind of people. Likewise, among Rochester's guests, Jane knows immediately that she shares nothing with them: she sympathizes neither with their appearance nor with their expressions. On the contrary, the first time she meets Helen Burns, Jane's best friend in Lowood, Jane feels the "touch [of] a chord of sympathy" (49) because of the shared enthusiasm for reading. Hennelly states that this sympathy is, for Jane, a "genuine intent," a natural intuition that Jane perceives in Helen's reading (696). People with the same origin will follow a path towards each other for unification. This process is baffling and incomprehensible, but natural. The etymology significations of "path," namely pain, suffering, feeling, and pity, etc. Thus, it is only natural that Jane and Rochester's mutual identification allows them to continually put themselves in each other's shoes.

Jane experiences a similar intuitive connection with Rochester in their first encounter. Rochester's roughness and frown, surprisingly, set Jane at ease, for she is drawn to his temperament. She recognizes that she is of his same kind, for they have the same tastes and shared feelings: "For when I say that I am of his kind…I mean only that I have certain tastes and feelings in common with him" (175). Thus, sympathy, for Brontë, lies in sharing, feeling, and agreeing with others in mind and soul. Accordingly, seeing Rochester's "obvious absence of passion" for Blanche Ingram causes Jane "ever-torturing pain" (186). Consciously aware that their different social classes make a match between herself and Rochester impossible, Jane, at the very least, hopes to see him successfully unify with someone who shares his sympathy, even if that is not she.

Brontë is unapologetically direct in pointing out that there are differences in the extent of sympathy people possess, and that those differences affect their intelligence, values, and goals. People with the same origin only select those who share their own nature to sympathize with. Alienated from sympathy and pity—Blanche's nature—a

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reflection of her mind and emotional character—appears to Jane as barren, and "no unforced natural fruit delighted by its freshness…bloomed spontaneously on that soil" (185). Blanche, showy and spurious, is "too inferior to excite" (185) Jane's jealousy, for Jane finds nothing in her character or nature that is inspirational or desirable. For Brontë, an "original" person is sympathetic and capable of offering her own opinion. But Blanche, superficial and unoriginal, can only "repeat sounding phrases from books:" "She advocated a high tone of sentiment; but she did not know the sensations of sympathy and pity; tenderness and truth were not in her" (185-186). Without tenderness and truth, a person cannot be sympathetic; sympathy is not of high tones, it is a willful decision to choose to be tender and truthful during difficult times.

In her agitation at his dalliance with Blanche, Jane proclaims that she "scorn[s] such a union" (253) and that she is better than Rochester, for he has degraded himself. Rochester's seeming ignorance of Blanche's defects is, for Jane, a betrayal of his "perfect, clear consciousness" (186). Nancy Pell indicates that Rochester has no sympathy with Blanche, an intellectual and spiritual inferior:

> He indulges in the luxury of scorn for Blanche Ingram. He has no sympathy for one who, like himself in his youth, is compromised in her choice of a mate by an elder brother's precedence in the family economy and who is, in addition, excluded because of her sex from ever inheriting entailed family land. (413)

Passing the stage of his youth and burying his mistake from the past, Rochester has no sympathy for Blanche who reminds him of his former self whom he despises and from whom he tries to run away. The difference is that Rochester recognizes his faulty choice but Blanche enjoys and indulges herself in this mercenary experience, a blunder that makes him scorn her all the more.

Expressed through unifying mind and soul with another, sharing another's nature is to identify with that person's goal through the heart, and by being in alignment with that person's character. St. John's relationship with Rosamond can be considered as parallel to Rochester's relationship with Blanche. St. John, although deeply drawn to Rosamond's beauty, rejects her love because she cannot share his vision. Having her as a wife would hinder him in accomplishing his ambition. He does not believe that she could

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"sympathize in [any]thing [he] aspired to—[or] co-operate in [any]thing [he] undertook" (374). He believes that his goal and ambition would suffer from the incompatibility of her love. There is a calm yet clear consciousness reminding him that Rosamond is not a suitable partner for him, nor will she make him "a good wife," and that if he were to marry her, he would end up in "a lifetime of regret" (374) She would not be able to truly support St. John in his professional ambitions.

Brontë's sympathy lies with those who are making sacrifices for an ideal, complete unification. Jane sympathizes with those who resonate with her. Rebecca Mitchell points out that Jane's sympathy for Rosamond's suffering for a man who cannot return her love causes her to project herself onto Rosamond: "Jane's sympathy for Rosamond is contingent on her identification with Rosamond as a woman in love with a man she cannot have" (323). For Brontë, Rosamond's unrequited love serves less as the focus for readers' sympathy than as an example of what St. John endures in resisting Rosamond's affection. It is St. John, rather than Rosamond, with whom Jane identifies. Like herself, St. John sacrifices his passion in order to abide by his principles; Rosamond, however, sacrifices nothing. As "a cool observer," Jane remarks that Rosamond is beautiful, yet overall plain in character: she possesses sufficient intelligence, but she is "not profoundly interesting or thoroughly impressive" (368). Sympathy, then, is not only feeling or understanding, but also the ability to identify with another's character. That is, one's nature.

Sympathy, more profoundly, is the pinnacle of unity: an integration of spirit. At his aborted wedding with Jane, Rochester protests that he was cheated into marrying Bertha but that to marry Jane is to "seek sympathy" (292) with her. Seeking someone whom he can truly love and with whom he can share his sympathy, Rochester is bound to Jane with "a strong attachment" (315). Similarly, sympathy and love are indispensable to Jane's idea of marriage. She declares that "if [she is] not formed for love, it follows that [she is] not formed for marriage" (416). People who are "unsympathising, alien, different" (388) can be strangers even if they are married. It seems clear that Brontë believes that to share another's sympathy is to share a spiritual fellowship that results in full equality. In Jane's famous manifesto of independence, she declares to Rochester that she is addressing him spirit by spirit, on an equal footing in front of the ultimate judge, God: "[We] stood at

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God's feet, equal,—as we are" (253) Thus, to sympathize implies a shared affinity.

Conclusion

Charlotte Brontë concludes *Jane Eyre* with a wholesome synchronicity of sympathy in Jane and Rochester's marital life. Sharing, feeling, and agreeing entirely with another, their conversation is an audible reflection of their own thoughts. They become one character, unified in one spirit, but with separate bodies. Although they do not share the same origin, they are unified through sharing the same nature. Brontë shows that in order to find one's origin, nature, and character, one must be directed by sympathy. Those with shared natures can easily recognize each other, for they sympathize with those who have the same temperament and judgement. Shared sympathy indicates one's value. Jane's sympathy serves as the body and soul of her unification with Rochester. Along the way to achieving this unity, Jane's character is molded, for she learns to harness, control, and direct the strong energy of her passion.

Brontë shows that Jane's and Rochester's life goal is to unify with each other through the guidance of sympathy, manifested through both external and internal nature. Those with a shared origin will attract one another through the guidance of their common sympathy. However, St. John allows his strict discipline to back himself into a corner, thereby making him incapable of sympathizing with himself or others. This deformed sympathy that is behind his unnatural frenzy not only isolates him from any natural human emotions, but it also forces himself and others to become slaves to his insatiable ambition. Taking advantage of Jane's desire to gain approval and love, he almost persuades Jane to marry him against her will. With help from both the natural surroundings and her own internal nature that is tightly connected to this external nature, Jane realizes that complete unity cannot exist without sympathy, a trait that she cannot find in St. John.

In contrast to St. John's disconnection from nature and, consequently, from sympathy, Jane is susceptible to nature's messages: especially when she is in difficult situations, she tends to interpret what she sees as harbingers of her future. Although his guilt and bitterness once hinder him from aligning with nature and the perception of sympathy, Rochester is reconnected to nature after he surrenders his ego and authority in

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repentance of his past. As a faithful messenger, nature calls Jane and Rochester in her wonderful work of sympathy, where internal and external nature are married. Brontë's novel proves that a sympathetic attachment can only take place when Jane gains an impartial perspective on her own origins and character. Paradoxically, this perspective can only come from the detachment that her relationship with nature provides.

Withstanding difficulties with tenderness and truth shows that Rochester and Jane are destined to achieve sympathetic unity. When Jane reveals near the end of the novel that it has been ten years of happy marriage, readers are prompted to have a second thought to past tragedies. Looking back, it appears that Jane and Rochester are like players who simply play out a well-planned script. The older Jane is able to be more sympathetic towards people who cause her pain, for she knows that sorrows are temporary and that things will ultimately come around. Sympathy renders times of struggle more bearable, for it places them within a larger context. Brontë provides insight into how Victorians conceived of the potential for a sympathetic connection between humans and nature, whereas Henry James utilizes sympathy in a more formal way in *The Portrait*, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

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Chapter Three

James' Formal Experimentation in Sympathy and Suffering in *The Portrait of a Lady*

> "What is it you wish her to do?" Edmund Ludlow asked. "Make her [Isabel] a big present?"
> "No indeed; nothing of the sort. But take an interest in her—sympathise with her […]"

Whereas most Romantic and early Victorian novels only use sympathy as part of the novel's content, meta-sympathy is a formal feature of Henry James's novels, a feature which acts as a bridge between Victorian realism and modernist formal experiments. Meta-sympathy allows James to challenge the way in which the novel considers chronological time as Cathy Caruth argues that novel is a "form of questioning time." For example, considering her present self from a third person perspective, Isabel is reassessing her past actions while simultaneously imagining her future action. Similarly, Henrietta informing Goodwood that Isabel has just the day before returned to Rome initiates Isabel's next action, even though the readers are never told what that action is. As the novel closes, the readers' final view of Isabel leaves her continually poised on the brink of initiating an action. Meta-sympathy is, thus, a move from knowing to acting. In contrast to sympathy, meta-sympathy is taking an action which is motivated by the specific knowledge that a sympathetic transaction brings. I use Adam Smith's theory of the spectator to elucidate James's technique of meta-sympathy. To sympathize is to rationally understand the real message behind characters' interactions. The difference between sympathy and meta-sympathy is that sympathy is an intellectual act, while meta-sympathy requires action. Through the understanding behind this action, then, characters alter their behavior.

The novel's transformation from a quintessentially Romantic genre to the central vehicle of realism is illustrated by Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). This transformation is achieved by adding chaos to the unified plot of the sentimental novel. Because the plots of these sentimental novels lack narrative uncertainty, in adding uncertainty to the novel, James makes the novel more realistic.

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James's contribution to the novel is that he adds chaos to the order in the sentimental novel, thereby pointing to modernism —although he maintains unity within the novel, at the same time James creates an uncertainty. When there's too much order in a novel, the importance of a "true" depiction of actual experience seems to be diminished, making the novel less realistic. If, as James posits, a true depiction of reality is at the center of any novel, including this type of uncertainty is crucial because "real life" itself is full of incongruity. Thus, James's addition of the chaotic material makes the novel as a genre more complete. James's methodology is to focus on the characters' consciousnesses, which means writing from a viewpoint which is narrow, but which, at the same time, allows for a more profound description of the characters' experiences. James sums up the novel in this sentence: "A novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life" (557), which provides the foundation for his focus on delineating characters' consciousnesses in the novel. Significantly, this technique foreshadows a more modern perception of reality. In contrast to his contemporaries, James captures the experience of psychological consciousness in a comprehensive impression of reality: "The only reason for the existence of a novel is that it does attempt to represent life" (557).

In it, his Victorian readers are gradually forced to move away from the belief in the inherent evil posed by novels in general to a more nuanced investment in the genre of the novel itself. As readers of Romantic novels, Victorian readers already have an emotional investment in the well-being of the characters, but in *The Portrait*, James forces readers to reconsider their approach to reading literature or art in general as separated from morality. Ruth Yeazell points out that James "felt the need to distance himself from the identification of fiction with the mere entertainment of plotting" (315). She further explains that in "The Art of Fiction," James aggressively question the earlier writers claiming that novels should contain the conscious moral purposes. Yeazell further points out that analogous to a picture, the novel, James claims, is the art for the purpose to its own end, rather than just to "make believe" or a mere "story" (315).

James turns Romanticism to realism in terms of the transformation from curiosity to meta-sympathy. In order to keep the readers interested in the novel, James must excite their curiosity, which is produced by feelings of uncertainty about the development of the

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novel's plot. By focusing on a character's personal consciousness, James brings in a narrower, more profound viewpoint. This capturing of this narrower viewpoint is a harbinger of the stream-of-consciousness narrative later found in the novels of James Joyce, for example. This narrower depiction of consciousness is a literal portrayal of how the human mind works.

In focusing on the development of a single character—Isabel—rather than on the events of the plot, the novel becomes a living organism, one that can develop seemingly without conscious authorial direction. Much like the way that parents attempt to direct the growth of their children even without any guarantee that their work will yield the desired results, the character development in a realist novel mirrors the way that real people develop and grow. Isabel is young and willing to insert herself into uncertainty so that she can grow and change at the end. Madame Merle and Osmond represent the rigid mindset of the old European system which is to compete with the new system that Isabel represents.

In James's nineteenth-century novel, *The Portrait*, he questions the eighteenth-century connection between morality and sympathy[11]. From his dual positions as a realist writer and as a theorist of the novel, James challenges the Victorian view of sympathy that was inherited from the Romantics on both sides of the Atlantic. Edwin Still Fussell suggests that *The Portrait* is strongly influenced by Hawthorne's approach to the theme of sympathy (162). Although sympathy may be vague and difficult to define in James's writing, his own definition of sympathy was anything but vague[12]. Fussell points out that

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[11] At the end of the nineteenth century, the way that novelists portrayed sympathy changed. Between the eighteenth century and the twentieth, the idea of sympathy has become less material and social and more psychological. The conception of sympathy moves from a moral concept, a sentiment that shows one's virtue, to an active cognition–thinking along with others. Rather than focusing on the need to educate their readers about moral feeling, Henry James, along with other late Victorian novelists like Thomas Hardy, began to prioritize the treatment of reality. In other words, they began to "[treat] fictional characters as if they were real people" (Pennell 138). Contrary to eighteenth-century belief—if someone felt sympathetic towards others, they believed that this emotion illustrated their virtue—in the late nineteenth century, people realized that behavior is not necessarily an accurate reflection of internal thoughts; in fact, it is possible to separate the two. In *The Portrait*, James argues strongly for this concept.

Henry James's *The Portrait* shows how sympathy as a moral guide in the eighteenth century transforms to the active process of cognition, that sympathy from the reification of actual monsters and supernatural elements to a more subtle and abstract heightened imagination of the psyche, from suppressing the hostile self that turns monstrous and destructive to regulating it by allowing it to move from the subconscious to the surface. Sympathy, thus, moves from an external morality to an internal conversation in the psyche.

[12] Fussell points out that "sympathy was recognized and reprobated by James in Hawthorne's works,"

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James is a standard bearer for the American literary heritage of sympathy[13]. Eighteenth-century moral philosophers Adam Smith and David Hume were the first to truly focus on sympathy. However, because sympathy is ambiguous and hard to define instead of clear and precise, philosophers did not spend a lot of time on it. Therefore, sympathy was embraced by literature, whose myriad modes of expression are much more conducive to the ambiguous (161).

James's examination of sympathy is perhaps the most complex, as he explores sympathy's limitations in addition to its potential for good. James turns the excess of the emotions, sentiments, into a more regulated form of consciousness. For him, sympathy is a much more conscious process, something akin to forming our intellectual beliefs. James shows how an individual is made concrete in the novel by portraying a character's map of consciousness, therefore paving the way for the "stream-of-consciousness" technique of the twentieth century. Patrick Parrinder states that "[The novel] can inform and lead into new places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness, and it can lead our sympathy away in recoil from things gone dead." Parrinder maintains that, as opposed to George Eliot's[14] belief in the importance of the novel as an art form in and of itself, James regards the novel as an important art form because of the way that it draws readers' attention to their own perceptions of the characters' experience, but it does not address the nature of experience itself. For James, the novel's beauty is derived from its ability to illustrate reality.

[3]Eliot views sympathy as something which can extend from a character to society at large, while for James, sympathy is much more internal to the character (Parrinder 135-136). James regards the novel as an important art form because of the way that it arouses

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although James himself complains that Hawthorne makes sympathy too ambiguous: "Hawthorne's extreme predilection for a small number of vague ideas…which are represented by such terms as sphere and sympathies" (162). Fussell illustrates James's fascination about sympathy and how his writing is strongly influenced by Hawthorne: "Sympathy in James is not a vague idea, nor is it in Hawthorne, but it is multifaceted, curious in tone and for those reasons obscure and confusing"(162).

[13]The first American novel is "The Power of Sympathy." The theme of sympathy can be widely recognized in works such as Charles Brockden Brown, Cooper, Poe, Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, etc. (161).

[14] George Eliot pioneers in minimizing the author's role in the story. In the novel's early days, eighteenth-century novelists like Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, and Laurence Sterne often included lengthy commentaries from the narrator. It can be argued that this sort of continuous interference makes the narrator almost a character in the novel. I exclude Eliot's novels from my analysis for the reason that her sympathy is mainly in the context of others; the individual is not her primary focus.

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consciousness of the characters' respective experiences, but not of the nature of experience itself: "it is their consciousness of their situations which is artistically important, and not the nature of the situations themselves" (138). In a similar line, Wayne Booth maintains that morality will manifest itself when James, the novelist, achieves aestheticism in his work. Beauty and morality, then, are intertwined with each other.

Although James has long been recognized as the father of realism for his contribution to establishing the importance of the novel as a genre, James's definition of realism is still ambiguous. Not surprisingly, critics, as James E. Miller points out, are divided in their own understanding of James's theory. Miller lays the foundation for a contemporary critical discussion of James' conception of a realist novel by exploring how James crafts his novels in such a way that they represent the "illusion of reality" without, at the same time, privileging a clear rule of method. He sheds light on James's ideas within the context of the modern theory of the novel (586). He implies that the way critics and readers perceive the modern novel has been directly affected by James's theory.

Resonating with Miller, Richard Blackmur[15] maintains that, in the preface to his essay "Romanticism and Reality," for example, James distinguishes between Romantic and Realist novels by stating that, whereas the conventional plots of Romantic novels encourage readers to suspend their disbelief, realistic novels are characterized by the "disconnected and uncontrolled experience" (xxxiv) of reading them[16].

In "Henry James in Reality," Miller points out the significance of Jamesian writing in that James shows his readers that the way that the novel shapes our point of view is

[15]Blackmur's influential work *Introduction to The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces by Henry James* (1934) points out the key feature in each of James's prefaces. According to Blackmur, these prefaces reveal two things: first, James's authorial consciousness in each novel, and second, a preliminary introduction to the characters in the novel.

[16]Norman Friedman elaborates James's idea that plot cannot be separated from character— what makes the plot also makes the character. Friedman argues that "[m]eaning is a function of form." Philip Stevick argues that, for Friedman, the central question hinges on function rather than meaning of plot: what must be defined is "to understand and respond to the process of change [the corresponding sequences]" in the novel. Friedman argues that plot is a series of events designed to emphasize the "main idea" of the novel. In *The Portrait*, then, what happens to Isabel is less important than the process she follows in making her choices. In Sarah B. Dougherty's *The Literary Criticism of Henry James* (1981) offers a chronologically full-length overview of James's critical works and his literary predecessors.

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similar to the way that we experience the world. It is the process by which characters think about and reassess their experience that makes the novel realistic:

> Experience, impressions, consciousness, imagination—the sequence for James is tightly, inseparably linked. One cannot comprehend experience until he has followed through the chain to the end link, imagination. It is this fixed pattern in his perception of the way human beings come to be and interact with the world that enabled James to describe reality not as simply "out there," fixed in its elements and qualities but as indeed myriad...it is this myriadness that enables James to sweep away the superficial categories, kinds, and classes that fictional theorists have recurringly tried to establish: the uniqueness of the individual novel created by the individual consciousness puts it in a category single and solitary, and this individuality transcends all the identities critics can invent. (593-594)

James creates an impression of consciousness as a whole, which he argues is the truest representation of reality. James does not believe novel is a fixed form, but an ongoing and changing process, like a growing organism. This sort of developing imagery is representative of the way James crafts his characters. In opposition to the Victorians' love of categorizing, James endorses the idea that the novel is a "living being" —a living organism that continues to grow on its own—and it is the uncertainty embodied in this type of growth which makes the novel realistic. The defining characteristic of realism, then, is uncertainty. By injecting this sense of uncertainty, James recasts the novel into a new and more realistic entity, one which more accurately illustrates real life.

In his ground-breaking essay, "Theory of the Novel," rather than basing his ideas on concrete personal experience as Walter Besant does, James grounds his work in depicting the more nebulous consciousnesses of his characters. In moving from "Besant's concept of exterior experience to his own notion of interior experience, [James conceives] experience [a]s ... an immense sensibility" (Miller 592). When they read *The Portrait of a Lady,* readers are pulled most strongly into Isabel's consciousness. Their experiences of this consciousness allow them to immerse themselves in the same reality that James is depicting. This process, then, creates a realist novel.

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According to Miller, Besant seems to envision experience as something concrete, quantifiable, and unchanging. However, the important thing about James's view of it is that experience is always changing and is never complete. Therefore, Besant's notion of experience is flawed. James can write from "experience," but rather than using the experience as a background in the way Besant argues for, James depicts the process of experiencing experience, which leads him to draw the readers' attention to his conception of " impression." Our perceptions of any given experience can be changed according to how we reassess our impressions.

In the preface to *The Portrait*, James argues that a novel should not be plotted through a series of related plots that are designed as set relations, but instead praises Ivan Turgeneiff 's methodology in his novel by centralizing, if not prioritizing, the single character as she serves as the crucial vehicle for plot development. James believes that when a writer focuses primarily on the protagonist, the plot will begin to develop; all events in the novel, then, will radiate from that character. The novel, then, reveals James' consciousness through its plot development. James says as much in *The Art of Fiction* when he comments, "Tell me what the artist is, and I will tell you of what he has BEEN conscious. Thereby I shall express to you at once his boundless freedom and his "'moral'" (8). Thus, this consciousness also indicates James' morality. James sees the novelist's consciousness is inevitably intertwined with his character.

For James, the "high price of the novel as a literary form" (7) is the difficulty of balancing the writer's genuine individual relation to his subject matter and the need to preserve the novel's coherence. He comments that *The Portrait* "wears for me: a structure reared with an 'architectural' competence, as Turgenieff would have said, that makes it [measurable by the standards of] the author's own sense" (13). With this measuring stick in hand, James exposes Isabel to a series of challenges, events, adventures, and watches how the novel develops and grows through these adventures, as his "conception of a young woman affronting her destiny" (10). James, thus, regards that making Isabel as interesting a character as he can ensures the quality of his novel.

Achieving this realism requires that the reader's imagination align with the character's—in other words, fellow-thinking. Thus, Booth believes that authors have the responsibility to make their readers think along with the character's action, for every

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action is a result of the author's moral judgment: "When human actions are formed to make an artwork, the form that is made can never be divorced from the human meanings, including the moral judgments, that are implicit whenever human beings act." Booth suggests that, for Henry James, a successful novel "creates" its readers through their reading of it. This reading is, then, an ongoing two-way communication. Indeed, James is so conscious of the presence of his readers that like a preacher, he treats his novel as a live conversation with his readers.

Resonating with Booth, Jeanne Brewer suggests that since sympathy mainly works through storytelling, novels allow readers to transcend their own lives and experience other worlds (29). Thus, sentimental storytelling unites the reader, author, and character all in one sympathetic stratum (29). In contrast, James leads his readers to uncharted territory, where a new meaning and order is derived. Readers' visceral reactions to their sentimental reading create an intimate "desire to [establish] a sympathetic relationship with the person responsible for exciting their sympathy" (34)—the author. Thus, in addition to feeling sympathy for the characters, the readers will also feel sympathy with the author. Brewer continues to explain that, bounded by sympathy, readers are more eager to participate in the lives of the characters, and in that of their creator, the author. That is when the author's opinions, as well as his or her private life, matter to readers. On the other hand, upon successfully opening his readers' eyes, the author, in return, finds his reward in forming his readers into his peers: "[I]f he makes them well—that is, makes them see what they have never seen before, moves them into a new order of perception and experience altogether—he finds his reward in the peers he has created" (Booth, 397-398). The authors have more power in choosing their own readers by forming the character that accords with their tastes. In this manner, the novel becomes a platform on which an ongoing communication takes place (397).

What makes *The Portrait* so important in the realm of realist novels is that James makes clear that he takes on a challenge, a novel experiment (the word "novel" also means "new") in writing about Isabel's life to test out what kind of future she will make for herself. To probe into her mind in real time indicates an uncertainty that invites the readers to think with her. In previous novels, regardless of what characters may think, the outcome is certain and the characters' thoughts and actions do not affect it. However, in

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this novel, what the characters think and do at any given moment really does matter to the outcome of the plot. Characters in a Romantic novel often function as mere vehicles by which the writer can advance an already determined plot. In contrast, the characters in a realist novel are endowed with much more autonomy. Consequently, because the characters' autonomy directly affects the plot's outcome, the novel stands as, in James words, a "competitor of real life."

In chapter forty-two, James guides his readers masterfully through Isabel's mind, allowing them to think along with her, and, ultimately, to arrive at a judgement. Isabel's thoughts are revealed to the readers while they are still in progress. Readers are given hints about the potential consequences of Isabel's decisions: Ralph warns Isabel that she is in danger when she is engaged to Osmond, and after the wedding, Madame Merle tells Mr. Rosier that Isabel and Osmond are having a difficult marriage. Although the end of the novel is open, a "blank" for the readers to fill in, Isabel has finally made up her mind. She has figured it out because she sees that there is "a very straight path" (581). She knows her way. Rather than revealing her thoughts to the readers, this time James expects the readers to figure it out by themselves. James is training his readers to think along with Isabel. This training leads to the readers' moral education, not only with sympathy, but also by and through sympathy.

Although Isabel's self-awareness is still an incomplete one, she sees her own misperceptions and vulnerabilities more clearly than ever before. But she is still in a limbo of uncertainty, trying to make sense of what happened. James' sole focus on Isabel's limited consciousness is shown through non-linear description, which allows a more narrowly focused perspective. The narrator presents Isabel's state of mind by jumping backward and forward in time, illustrating the chaos in her mind. Isabel's consciousness is the result of a constant reiteration of impressions that make up her experience. As a result of the way Isabel reconsiders her situation, she is able to more clearly focus on the wrongs she has overlooked. Consequently, her perceptions change as a result of these impressions and experiences. Like Isabel, readers are at first mystified, rather than enlightened, when she encounters the truth in her limited consciousness. Isabel's mind becomes less and less penetrable to the reader, for she is constantly reassessing her thoughts. It seems as if James has become progressively more involved

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with his primary character, Isabel. This novel illustrates James' progression from his early role as a sort of detached spectator—whose only interest in Isabel was that of curiosity—to his final position as someone whose authorial consciousness is almost entirely bound up in hers. Thus, critics who criticize the novels' ending are at odds with James' novelistic theory.

James' Meta-Sympathetic Ending

Since its publication in 1881, *The Portrait of a Lady*'s ambiguous ending has been a crucial field of debate for puzzled critics. Victorian readers did not consider a novel to be "good" unless they felt in agreement with the author's thoughts. Therefore, when Victorian readers believed that, as the author, James felt that there was a possibility that Isabel would return to her miserable marriage rather than elope with Caspar Goodwood, their assessment of the novel's quality went down. This ending, while abhorrent to conservative readers, is also unsatisfactory to contemporary liberal readers. Reading Isabel's return to Rome as a "sign-post into the abyss," an unnamed reviewer in the 1881 *Spectator* was horrified by Isabel's "liaison with her rejected lover." Intending to clarify the ending, James modified it in his 1905 revision of the novel, but as Tessa Hadley suggests, the ending remains "uninterpretable": James does not seem to make it clear that "Caspar has nothing to hope for" (613). In fact, in neither the original 1881 version of the novel nor in the 1905 revision does James offer a definite answer, an answer which might provide a clue to Isabel's unsettled future. In contrast to James' contemporary critics, current critics agree that, rather than eloping with Caspar Goodwood, Isabel keeps her promise to Pansy, returning for her.

With this ending, James creates an "impasse," as Hadley calls it. She argues that James is "pressing the development of the tradition to a new point where that kind of formal manipulation will not answer," addressing the same problem that the convenient deaths of the troubling spouses in earlier novels (for example, Bertha in *Jane Eyre* and Casaubon in *Middlemarch*) solve (613). Therefore, readers looking for the sort of neat solution which would allow the union of the hero and heroine, where everything works out happily, are disappointed to say the least.

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Not only are some readers annoyed by James' unsympathetic ending, by his refusal (after hundreds of pages) to reveal Isabel's consciousness to them, but their annoyance is intensified by the implication that Isabel will return to the scene of her misery. Even more frustrating, the ending is also marred by an uncertainty which exacerbates the scope of her misfortune. Isabel's decision to return to her marital prison rather than seizing the opportunity for escape that Goodwood offers does nothing to relieve readers' distress. In general, it seems that critical attitudes have changed from a focus on Isabel's morality to a more compassionate view, a sympathetic dissatisfaction with Isabel's decision to surrender herself again to her miserable marriage.

An important part of those discussions of James' sympathy in the novel is the larger critical shift from the early critics' strong emphasis on the ending itself to the later critics' narrower focus on James' rhetoric, on his narratological technique to draw attention to point of view. Even so, Hadley argues, it is important for James' readers to make sense of the ending because the ending is the fundamental theme of the Victorian novel—as Tony Tanner puts it, the struggle between social norms and individualism, the "tension between law and sympathy which holds the great bourgeois novel together" (qtd 613). Consequently, to skirt the issue of morality is to miss the core of the novel, for Isabel's choice is motivated solely by her moral understanding.

Considering the unhappy ending in a different light, Annette Niemtzow believes that the subtle criticism of Victorian convention implied in James' literary decision to allow Isabel to elope with Goodwood makes the novelist sympathetic. Niemtzow argues that James transforms the "marriage novel" into a "divorce novel." This transformation allows him to use Isabel's own folly as a vehicle through which he can fulfill his commitment to produce an artwork of aestheticism:

> His scorn for the happy ending, the marital ending…was an aesthetic commitment in consonance with newly visible nineteenth-century social reality and with James' quiet, albeit anti-social and critical, sympathies. (393)

It should not surprise anyone, then, to realize that readers' frustration embodies a dissatisfaction resulting from a moral concern.

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To that end, Hadley points out that most critics interpret that James punishes Isabel for a tangible flaw "of hubris, or self-knowledge, some fatal punishable error" (615). The question arises, then, of whether Isabel deserves to be punished. Is her suffering a consequence of her errors? And, most importantly, is there any way that she can avoid this suffering? Booth explains that, to establish norms in the novel, the narrative "[depends] on the precise relation between the detail of action or character to be judged and the nature of the whole in which it occurs." In order for the readers to make accurate judgments, the author must make the readers aware of the norms already established in the novel, even if these judgements go against them (182-183).

Skeptically addressing sympathy in the novel, Annette Niemtzow harshly asserts that "there is hardly room for human sympathy" (392). She argues that in this novelistic society, characters are different versions of each other, versions who participate in roles of collectors, spectators, and objects. In this way, Niemtzow sees sympathy as having no place in this indifferent world of detached participators. Rather than viewing James and his characters as unsympathetic, cold-hearted observers, Ernest Sandeen considers Ralph to be Isabel's "sympathetic creator." For Sandeen, Ralph serves as a sympathetic stand-in for James as an author, an author who endows his character with resources to stretch her imagination. Ralph assists Isabel in fulfilling another phase of development: "Ralph himself plays the part of an author contriving her [Isabel's] destiny from within the story [in the same way that] James contrives it from without" (1061-1062). Whereas Niemtzow assumes that detachment precludes sympathy, Sandeen suggests that detachment, especially formal or authorial detachment, is a catalyst for sympathy.

Indeed, Ruth Yeazell suggests that James' sympathy for Isabel is expressed in the way that he tries to detach himself. In doing so, he keeps his distance from his heroine by designating two characters, Osmond and Ralph (both of whom he depicts as "authors" of Isabel's life) to reflect his influence on her: "Critics of the Portrait have long recognized that both Osmond and Ralph Touchett are 'types of the artist,' and that in imagining their effects on Isabel, James is at once deflecting and critiquing his own relation to his heroine" (Yeazell 327). Thus, by means of interference and narration from his other

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characters, James is able to reflect on his formation of Isabel and the very possibility of sympathy.

Turning the focus to Isabel herself, if we consider the resources and power—beauty, money, and talent—that James bestows on her, there is almost no explanation except for Osmond's villainous character behind her refusal to accept the fact that she herself is the main cause of her own misery. Alfred Habegger focuses on the novel's readers' mixed feelings of both admiration for Isabel and distress at what can be interpreted as her self-betrayal. It is inevitable that the question will arise whether Isabel, who willingly deceives herself, is worthy of the readers' sympathy. Her conscious choice to plunge into what turns out to be a disastrous marriage causes readers to defer their sympathies indefinitely (159). Thus, from Habegger's viewpoint, James' biggest challenge is to "keep the reader sympathetic" in the face of Isabel's voluntary mistake. Aligning himself with Niemtzow, Habegger suggests that although James succeeds in producing a work of beauty, this work can only comply with moral convention through sacrificing Isabel's freedom.

Considering these critics' different approaches towards sympathy, it appears that Jamesian sympathy is three-fold, a triangle of connections among the author, his characters, and his readers' sympathy. Both Niemtzow and Habegger seem to assume that, since James' commitment to mannerism results in Isabel's entrapment in her marital prison, this authorial decision cannot be seen as an act of sympathy. On the other hand, critics like Yeazell and Tankard, who regard James as a more sympathetic author, see his sympathy manifested in his authorial detachment and formal decisions. Clearly, James is interested in sympathy between characters, how it arises, and how it is frustrated. It is also clear that, in contrast to Jane and Rochester, Osmond and Isabel fail to achieve Brontë's wholesome sympathy. Nevertheless, the closest version of this sort of wholesome sympathy is illustrated by what Tankard calls the "intense mutual sympathy" between Ralph and Isabel, even though this perfect sympathy only appears momentarily when Ralph is on his deathbed. It seems that James uses formal decisions as a means to heighten sympathy, but, significantly, he is willing to formally defer, interrupt, or leave its appearance ambiguous.

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As far as the readers' sympathy is concerned, I agree with Habegger that James deliberately complicates the readers' sympathy by pushing Isabel into a moral impasse. However, James shows his mastery by invoking the readers' sympathy with Isabel's moral dilemma. I suggest that it is her striving, not her misery, which earns the respect and sympathy both of the other characters and of the readers. To be precise, what warrants the readers' sympathy is not Isabel's self-incurred misfortune, but her willingness to "suffer actively" in her troubles. James refuses to allow Isabel a convenient escape from her tyrannical husband, making the novel a reflection of the messiness of real life and underscoring the blurry line between the authorial world and the world of the novel. By allowing Isabel to make mistakes and thereby to suffer, James makes her a lively, rounded human being, just like an actual human being in real life. James' sympathy for Isabel is revealed in his belief that his creation, this "mere slim shade of an intelligent but presumptuous girl" (9), is capable of withstanding a depressing future, although it seems to me that his open ending represents hope for Isabel's future.

In this essay, I reveal how the limitations of sympathy at the level of content and form which are folded into James' formal meta-sympathy. James portrays sympathy's limitations in two ways: through characters deceiving themselves and through characters deceiving others. For example, sympathy also allows Isabel to deceive herself. When she chooses to embrace a theory rather than the facts about Osmond, she sympathizes with his poverty that is dressed up as virtue. This is a false sympathy— to sympathize in theory rather than reality.

On the other hand, sympathy can do more harm than good when it is manipulated to achieve an egoistic goal. Although Madame Merle can talk about sympathy accurately, this ability does not mean she is sympathetic herself. The socially sophisticated Madame Merle, "the great round world itself" (255), accurately understands the discourse. Thus, she can easily use her sympathy to manipulate Isabel. Even though Madame Merle is equipped to show her sympathy at the right time with the right expression, this ability does not necessarily make her sympathetic. As the representation of sympathy, one who "hasn't a fault" (201), she takes advantage of Isabel.

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In order to transcend the false sympathy exhibited by other characters, Isabel reexamines her own consciousness. James counters Isabel's false sympathy with formal features such as limited consciousness and temporal delay. In terms of form, Isabel derives a genuine understanding of sympathy through pain. Isabel's detachment helps her see her situation more clearly, and, as a result, mitigates her suffering. Unlike Madame Merle, who utilizes her sympathy to take advantage of others through pain, Isabel transforms this understanding into sympathy with Pansy, and therefore gains the strength to return for Pansy despite her own miserable marriage to Osmond. All of these formal features and plot developments are crucial for understanding James' meta-sympathy.

Isabel's Self-Deception

It is important to note that Isabel is a full—even if involuntary—participant in her own deception. Sympathy can amplify misperceptions. Her imagination makes her susceptible to entering into sympathy with Osmond, but it also leads her into danger. When Isabel confronts Ralph about her decision to marry Osmond, she argues that Osmond is noble; therefore he must be just: "You might know a gentleman when you see one—you might know a fine mind. Mr. Osmond makes no mistakes! He knows everything, he understands everything, he has the kindest, gentlest, highest spirit. You've got hold of some false idea" (345). But Isabel is wrong about Osmond—he only appears to be flawless.

In her dealings with Osmond, Isabel's imagination fills in details that she believes Osmond has not told her when he says he "could do nothing. [He] had no prospects, [he] was poor, and [he] was not a man of genius" (268). What she admires in him in the beginning—his nobility, his renunciation of the world—turns out to be false, as she misreads him. Falling into his trap, Isabel deceives herself by embracing a theory, rather than the facts, about Osmond; she sympathizes with his poverty that is dressed up as virtue. Osmond appears to be a man of taste, of studied renunciation, but he only presents consciously crafted parts of himself. Isabel is the embodiment of the gullible social world which Osmond takes great satisfaction in deceiving. He excites her curiosity and she

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marries him, but both of them participate in deceiving each other by pretending to be better than they really are.

Luring each other into a relationship based on artificial sympathy, both Isabel and Osmond are dishonest with each other: Osmond hides the truth about Pansy's parentage while Isabel hides her true thoughts. In sharp contrast to Jane Eyre's clear-eyed and independent approach to her relationship with Rochester, Isabel is not completely honest in her interaction with Osmond. She tries to impress him so much that she makes herself small. This attitude is also a sort of false sympathy.

For example, she tries to impress him by presenting a "measured sympathy" (269) when Osmond shows her his art collections: "It was her present inclination, however, to express a measured sympathy for the success with which he had preserved his independence. 'That's a very pleasant life,' she said, 'to renounce everything but Correggio!'" (187). In this case, rather than showing her whole self, Isabel positions herself emotionally not far from Osmond, trying to make her like him by ignoring his true intention of proving his nobility by denouncing the world. Sympathy is a carefully measured artificial affect. Blinded by her naiveté and impatience to increase her control over whatever aspects of her world that she can, Isabel is on a mission to elevate her mind and its consciousness.

Although her motives—unlike those of Osmond and Madame Merle—are pure, sympathy functions for Isabel in the same way that it does for Osmond and Madame Merle. It is a means by which she believes she can achieve her goal. It is important to realize that, deep down, Isabel is as ambitious as Madame Merle (and Osmond), but while Madame Merle's goal is simply self-serving, Isabel's goal is self-improvement. Isabel seeks to marry well—not in the sense of being prestigious or affluent like Madame Merle— but in order to find the finest mind, a great consciousness that will transform her own mind. A true Jamesian heroine, Isabel is conscious of her own superior intelligence, which can be seen in her heightened imagination (Osmond states that she is the most imaginative woman he has ever known). Her desire to elevate her mind propels her to marry Osmond.

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Jamesian sympathy has a moral quality. Like Brönte's Jane Eyre, Isabel wants to do the right thing, to make the right judgement, and to elevate her morality; like Charlotte Brontë, James exalts superior minds, and believes that intelligence can align itself with morality only in the service of a superior mind. For James, consciousness is directed towards a correct moral judgement. In Peter Rawlings' words:

> James believes that exercised with rare imagination and taste, the art of fiction cannot but be moral...To possess a refined and responsive consciousness in the world of experience is to be able to navigate within and beyond conventional moral territory. (117)

For this reason, Isabel admires Madame Merle; she takes her as a "judicious companion" (195), a role model, and a standard to which she can aspire. It seems clear that, for Isabel to enter Madame Merle's sympathy, for example, means that she trusts Madame Merle's judgements, and, by implication, the accuracy of her observations. The same point can be made about her initial sympathetic feelings toward Osmond.

Isabel's version of a "completed consciousness" is connected to "moral images" that are in accordance with her "sublime soul:" "[H]er visions of a completed consciousness had concerned themselves largely with moral images—things as to which the question would be whether they pleased her sublime soul" (114). For Isabel, sympathy can only be found in things that please her soul. She believes in a "completed consciousness," that is, she can achieve this goal of elevating her morality through finding the one who can do it.

The elevation of the mind often expands from an intangible image to a tangible illustration—Ralph calls Osmond's mind "small" (345) in circumstances similar to those in which Isabel often feels suffocated. An example is that, when Goodwood, trying to convince Isabel to elope with him, optimistically tells her that the "very big" world (580) is just waiting for the two of them, Isabel cannot accept his perspective, saying that in fact the world is "very small." Isabel's refusal of Goodwood's world view, then, mirrors her refusal of Osmond's perspective. Thus, sympathy is a moral judgement because trust and judgement are indispensable in it. Like Rochester, Caspar Goodwood "[offers] himself in defiance of all convention and all contract" (613); however, like Jane Eyre,

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Isabel chooses to stick by the law, regardless of how painful the consequences might be in doing so.

Isabel's contempt for Osmond, thus, indicates that they have different moral horizons, thus values (464). More significantly, she has more integrity than Osmond—a more ethical path to follow through life than his rigid system. Madame Merle initially presents Isabel's mind and consciousness as a gift to Osmond. He acknowledges that Isabel is the most imaginative woman, a woman who is, at least potentially, capable of sympathizing with him. He wants to make her mind an extension of his mind. Thus, Osmond is mainly offended by Isabel because she will not offer him her full sympathy, to think and feel exclusively with him.

Osmond, deep down, lacks confidence so that he must boost his self-esteem by possessing Isabel, and he must make sure she is fully loyal to him by identifying with him: "He had expected his wife to feel with him and for him, to enter into his opinions, his ambitions, his preferences" (428). Mirroring Frankenstein's co-dependent relationship with his creature, Osmond wants Isabel to worship him and think in the same way that he does; he thinks that he can "[regulate Isabel's] emotion when she came to it" (464). Both Osmond and Frankenstein hope to satisfy their pride by having creatures to worship them. Because he is so insecure, Osmond wants Isabel's consciousness to be his; that is, he wants her mind and her thoughts to be in perfect accord with his own, even if this accord goes against her own desires.

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Shocked by the discovery that Isabel holds different opinions from his, for the first time, Osmond is forced to acknowledge the possibility that his view could be wrong. Realizing that she could dispense with him, Osmond hides his fear and anxiety behind his hatred for her. Hiding his emotional pain behind his disdain for Isabel, Osmond blames her for what he perceives as not supporting the best taste, not upholding his grand tradition. One of Osmond's traditions, or assumptions, is the belief that all women lie and have lovers— they will have affairs with men who will pay them the price they want. Isabel is scornful of this statement.

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Osmond doesn't believe in chastity, but Isabel believes in chastity and decency. Isabel disdains his concept of moral values (464) and if he is to accept Isabel's thought, he must give up his own thought. That is to say, he must admit that he might be wrong. This realization is a change of his world view—i.e., that his world which he has so carefully built according to his own taste can be shaken. Thus, the only other option, the option which he ultimately chooses, is to believe that Isabel is wrong. The spite and hatred he feels in the face of this shock first becomes his refuge and later becomes his comfort (464).

The fact that Osmond fails to find full sympathy in Isabel is because they have different values—Isabel thinks and feels differently than he does. In the same way, when Isabel tries to sympathize with Osmond, she finds that she is unable to share his thoughts. To sympathize with Osmond would be to endorse his morality, and ultimately she cannot do it. Characters with the same consciousness share the same sympathy and therefore the same goal.

Sympathy's Limitations

Madame Merle and Osmond work perfectly together to deceive Isabel because they sympathize with each other. Here, the sympathy that Madame Merle and Osmond share manifests itself in the fact that they are compelled to work together in achieving the same goal— to ensure that Pansy marries well. Many important things are contained in the characters' "deep looks"—silent mutual exchanges which result in important insights. When Isabel accidently sees the mutual gaze and understanding between them, this sight leaves an impression that Isabel cannot forget, an impression which confirms her detection of their scheme. Even though the characters may not speak to each other out loud, their minds speak louder than words. Sympathy works in the consciousness of thoughts, produced by imagery, an impression that speaks to the mind and the heart. Instead of limiting their own selfish ambitions, these characters consciously use sympathy as a tool with which to achieve their goal.

For example, Osmond hopes to use the sympathy he believes that Isabel feels towards Lord Warburton, but he is ultimately thwarted. Osmond is convinced that Isabel

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still exerts power and influence over her former admirer Warburton, whose looks, possessions, and title Osmond envies. Thus, helping Pansy to marry well satisfies not only his paternal pride, but it also allows him to assure himself that Isabel's hand in Pansy's marriage illustrates her loyalty to him. In spite of the false position that he has placed her in, Isabel wants to argue against Osmond's opinion that Lord Warburton will marry Pansy simply to please Isabel and to provide an excuse to be near her. Isabel wants to believe in her heart that Lord Warburton is not interested in her; she does not want to think that he is pretending to love Pansy in order to get near Isabel: "Lord Warburton was as interested as he need be, and she was no more to him than she need wish. She would rest upon this till the contrary should be proved; proved more effectually than by a cynical intimation of Osmond's" (420). The self-deception represented by this resolution to make up her mind on this matter does not, in fact, settle it, for there are still doubts that disturb her. Through his depiction of the "exquisite" thought processes of Isabel's mind, the methods by which she tries to deal with the different types of limited sympathy she faces, James forces his readers to enter into Isabel's thoughts.

The disconnect between what Isabel wants to believe and realty means that there are still things that are unresolved, things which come in the form of terrors evoked by Osmond's request that Isabel support Pansy's marriage to Lord Warburton: "Such a resolution, however, brought her this evening but little peace, for her soul was haunted with terrors which crowded to the foreground of thought as quickly as a place was made for them" (420). To explain this terror, Isabel's thoughts leap to a seemingly unrelated and rather innocent incident—the "strange impression" that she felt observing Madame Merle and Osmond:

> What had suddenly set the[se terrors] into livelier motion she hardly knew, unless it were the strange impression she had received in the afternoon—the impression that her husband [might be in] more direct communication with Madame Merle than she suspected. (420)

She is disturbed, as "[t]hat impression came back to her from time to time, and now she wondered it had never come before" (420). She wonders where it comes from. However,

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she senses that this impression is related to Osmond's malevolence—he is no longer the kind and noble gentleman who knows everything, but a devil's messenger, turning everything he touches to misfortune. She has begun, very slowly, to understand the extent of her self-deception.

The fact that Isabel cannot share the sympathy between Madame Merle and Osmond sounds an alarm. The possibility—faint that it is at this point—that Isabel will not participate in her own deception makes Madame Merle and Osmond very anxious. After Lord Warburton leaves, Madame Merle, in her disappointment, demands Isabel's sympathy to vent her frustration. She tells Isabel what she wants from her is sympathy because "[she] had set [her] heart on that marriage [between Pansy and Warburton]; the idea did what so few things do—it satisfied the imagination" (507). The possibility of a marriage between Pansy and Warburton satisfies Madame Merle's imagination since it brings about a reality that she has long desired but has been incapable of achieving, a reality which seems to be in her daughter's grasp. To ask Isabel to sympathize with her means asking not only for Isabel's understanding, but her complicity—her active help in bringing about her plans and desires.

Madame Merle's demand for sympathy forces Isabel to come to a conclusion that forces her to confront her mistrust of Osmond. The deception which is illustrated by the difference between Isabel's and Osmond's moral values results in doubt, a doubt which undercuts her desire to achieve true sympathy with her husband. Isabel's resistance to Osmond's attempts to make her into an extension of himself ultimately reaches a point at which she deeply "mistrusts" him. Isabel starts to doubt Osmond when she finds she cannot agree with what she perceives as the immorality of some of his thoughts. Isabel's doubts allow her to detach herself from her circumstances in order to reassess her situation. Rather than entering his thoughts, now she is observing them:

> Besides this, her short interview with Osmond half an hour ago was a striking example of his faculty for making everything wither that he touched, spoiling everything for her that he looked at. It was very well to undertake to give him a

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> proof of loyalty; the real fact was that the knowledge of his expecting a thing raised a presumption against it. (420)

Neither is she projecting her thoughts onto him any longer. Significantly, at this point, Isabel is still unsure whether her judgement of Osmond is correct. She cannot truly believe in the value of her own assessment: "Was the fault in himself, or only in the deep mistrust she had conceived for him?" (420) She questions whether she has made this up; she doesn't trust her own mind. This realization overthrows her previous theory that Osmond is a noble man; even worse, it proves that she is wrong about him. She must confront the fact that he has worked to deceive her.

During her journey to England, having learned the truth from Madame Merle—that Ralph gave her the fortune—she feels completely disconnected from both the past and the future. Until she can find something to which she can anchor herself, nothing will change. She will continue to float around in the ether. The image of being surrounded by foaming water illustrates her feeling that she is drowning when Isabel feels uncertain. Isabel keeps asking herself: "What was coming—what was before them? That was her constant question. What would he do—what ought she to do?" (429). This question is constantly asked by the author, the characters, and readers. If Isabel cannot find any use for her understanding of the "trifles" of the past, then she will be unable to connect herself either to the past or to the future.

Transcending Suffering

Isabel's misplaced sympathy and trust for Madame Merle and Osmond, masters of the consciously crafted persona, leads to her downfall as she becomes their victim. But while Madame Merle is the one who leads Isabel to the marital prison, it is Osmond who locks the door. Nevertheless, Isabel has to suffer before she can fully understand sympathy; without this understanding, she is only living theoretically. Evil opens her eyes, as Dorothy Van Ghent points out:

> [Isabel's] voluntary search for fuller consciousness leads her, in an illusion of perfect freedom to choose only the best in experience, to choose an evil; but it is

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that, by providing insight through suffering and guilt, provides also access to life— the [fruition] of consciousness that is a knowledge of human bondedness. (551)

Isabel, in her quest to understand life in general, is searching for someone with whom she can be in perfect accord. It is only after her marriage to Osmond that Isabel finds that things can go out of her control—in other words, beyond her ability to comprehend.

Suffering helps Isabel to see the truth, while the limited consciousness that the readers see helps them to realize it as well. Thus, suffering can help manifest sympathy, magnifying the clarity of focus. When Isabel asks Ralph to show her the ghost in Gardencourt in chapter five, Ralph replies that she will not be able see it, for she is "young, happy, [and] innocent" (60). In order to see the ghost, her eyes must first be opened by great suffering:

> "But I like you all the same," his cousin [Isabel] went on. "The way to clinch the matter will be to show me the ghost."
>
> Ralph shook his head sadly. "I might show it to you, but you'd never see it. The privilege isn't given to everyone; it's not enviable. It has never been seen by a young, happy, innocent person like you. You must have suffered first, have suffered greatly, have gained some miserable knowledge. In that way your eyes are opened to it. I saw it long ago," said Ralph.
>
> "I told you just now I'm very fond of knowledge," Isabel answered.
>
> "Yes, of happy knowledge—of pleasant knowledge. But you haven't suffered, and you're not made to suffer. I hope you'll never see the ghost! (60)

In other words, knowledge arrives only through suffering. James opens the novel with a seemingly romantic plot, where a young and beautiful woman, who is characterized by her independent spirit, travels to Europe to see the world, and "to be as happy as possible" (61). From this point, James turns the romantic novel into a realistic novel. James makes clear that to see the world is to be touched by evil, by true suffering.

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The emotional fallout from Isabel's refusal of Caspar Goodwood's desire that she elope with him and from her refusal of Lord Warburton’s marriage proposal forces her to understand suffering. Significantly, the pain that she feels comes not from her refusals, but from the realization that she has made the wrong choice in marrying Gilbert Osmond. Although Isabel understands that experience is the only way that she can test out her theory, she thinks that her theory is correct in the first place. Isabel rejects Lord Warburton’s proposal because marrying him will be separating herself from “the usual chances and dangers, [from] what most people know and suffer” (142). Thus, even though she had definitively rejected Goodwood’s proposal, she nonetheless had difficulty putting it entirely out of her mind.

In stark contrast, Isabel never regrets rejecting Lord Warburton, never giving his proposal a second thought. Her desire to experience life in a fuller way propels her to reject guaranteed privilege and comfort. However, Isabel tries to experience life intellectually—to understand it with her mind, rather than with her heart. In this sense, the detachment she wants is like reading a novel rather than truly being in the world. Unfortunately, when she makes the wrong choice, she must suffer, although, as she discovers, I would argue, suffering (and the evil which causes it), is the only way for her to reach this understanding.

Gardencourt’s ghost is the manifestation of sympathy—a connection with the inarticulable sorrow that is transcended in a relationship of experience of lifelong wisdom. To see the ghost is to have a relation with the sorrow, to share the pain. Kristin Boudreau believes that James’ sympathy involves a participation in shared pain and that “suffering is not confined to a victim, but shared between selves whose boundaries dissolve in the act of bestowing sympathy. In losing the self one gains something else” (71). In this shared suffering, Isabel is elevated, sublimated to another level, losing parts of herself that are transformed in a better understanding of humanity.

It is impossible to have genuine sympathy without understanding one’s own limitations; and suffering makes these limitations clear. Before her marriage, Isabel has known no evil. Her good fortune, beauty, and intelligence shielded her from such base

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knowledge. She is never bitter nor angry towards anyone. Kindness seems natural and effortless to her. Therefore, at the center of her character is a certain detachment towards the manipulative people around her. It is thus not a surprise that she admires Osmond and Madame Merle, who are the masters of postures and impressions. The machinations and manipulations by which Madame Merle and Osmond work to eliminate Isabel and Pansy's individuality are Isabel's first acquaintance with evil.

Isabel's imagination encourages her to misinterpret the reality of the situation. However, she is ultimately able to transform herself into an observer who can adapt herself to the situation, someone who can clarify her feelings and consider them detachedly. Isabel's ability to distance herself from the role that she is in, to see herself as a character, enables her to be more clear-headed in seeing her situation instead of being engrossed and entangled in her own thoughts. Laura Hinton points out that Isabel both as a character and a viewer is a "present-absent sympathetic spectator…who is 'nothing' but 'sees all'"; Isabel views herself as a character in the same way that she views Lord Warburton (311). She looks at herself and at him as if they were characters in a novel. Hence, "Isabel is [simultaneously] a fictive subject and a speaking subject, a controlling figure over self and world" (311). In other words, because she is an author who is writing her own story, she is also an actor who is acting it out. This dual role, then, embodies James' version of a complete consciousness. Isabel mimics the role of the novel's omniscient narrator, who hovers passively observant over the mimetic landscape." Her "self-posturing and sympathetic self-dispossession reflect the sympathetic identification defined by Hume and Smith." (311). The self is passive, without agency of its own, because it perceives itself as others see it.

Encountering evil, Isabel is forced to assume the position of a detached, almost Smithian, spectator by observing Osmond's inconsistency from a more neutral, less emotionally charged perspective. Her new position clarifies her perceptions. It isn't that she did not see Osmond's problems before her marriage, but rather she chose to engross herself in her own theory, overlooking what now seem to have been clear warnings. Isabel's self-posturing and complete consciousness works in the way that her ability to see her situation as if another person were seeing her situation provides her with the

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detachment to become an impartial spectator. What makes Isabel admire Madame Merle and Osmond in the beginning without noticing their schemes is their apparent sympathy results from their observations of past experience. Madame Merle's emotional distance allows her to act the part of a successful impartial judge and spectator. It is this quality which allows her to perform so well in society and it is this quality which attracts Isabel to her, at least at first. Madame Merle knows how to think because she knows how to observe.

Because she has seen Madame Merle as not only a friend, but a role model, Isabel feels that her trust has been betrayed by Madame Merle and Osmond. However, Isabel does not choose to retaliate by being cruel to Pansy as a form of revenge on Osmond and Madame Merle. Doing so would make her a replica of Madame Merle, a disillusioned woman whose failure to achieve her social ambitions has reduced her to taking unfair advantage of others. Sympathy is a recognition not only of someone's faults or lacks, but also of the possibility and the hope of transcending that lack or those faults. But what James also emphasizes is that suffering doesn't necessarily make a person sympathetic; the result of her disappointment, Madame Merle's suffering transforms itself into a hidden bitterness, becoming manipulative and evil. What shows Isabel's virtue is that she chooses to suffer actively. In this way, her suffering is transformed into strength by taking her duty in hand by taking care of Pansy.

Before realizing her limitation, Isabel feels as if she were an omnipotent author who could direct both her own and others' lives based on her personal theories. In a process similar to reading, Isabel utilizes her imagination and expands her sympathy to such an extent that she thinks she is omniscient. But she is oblivious to the fact that her perspective is finite. As the actual author, James is also playing with the ideas of attachment and detachment, finity and infinity. He wants to make his character, Isabel, infinite, by detaching the readers from her. Catherine Gallagher argues that the readers' attachment to the characters comes not from identification but rather from "the ontological contrast the character provides" (357): "Characters' peculiar affective force, I propose, is generated by the mutual implication of their unreal knowability and their apparent depth, the link between their real nonexistence and the reader's experience of

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them as deeply and impossibly familiar" (356). James uses the characters' limited consciousness to "dramatize their 'gropings' as a way of representing the reality of the experiencing consciousness" (86). Suffering is at first only a metaphysical idea for Isabel, but in order to relate, to have sympathy, to see the ghost in Gardencourt, she has to fully understand suffering.

Rather than seeing Ralph (and by implication, James) as an author who is positioned above his character, Alexandra Tankard suggests that Ralph's role is more like a sympathetic companion who shares and understands Isabel's suffering. Tankard shows that, in contrast to Gilbert Osmond—who expects and even demands that Isabel enter his mind and think exactly with him—Ralph willfully submerges himself in Isabel's life. In fact, it is Ralph, not Osmond, with whom Isabel shares her fullest sympathy. Tankard argues that, for James, sympathy is built upon a mutual understanding of suffering (66).

Addressing the unfulfilled sympathy between Osmond and Isabel, J. T. Laird explains that Osmond fails to sympathize with Isabel because they are of different temperaments. In spite of his precise judgement and exquisite taste, Osmond lacks the feeling of "sympathy, love[,] or guilt" because of his vanity and egotism (646). Laird suggests that an overly aesthetic personality blinds Osmond into "[losing] sight of the real, by substituting amorality and judgement for sympathy, true understanding, and conscience" (646). Thus, while Laird maintains that Osmond cannot share Isabel's sympathy because they lack a common temperament, Tankard suggests that Ralph enters into Isabel's sympathy through the common experience of suffering.

Isabel's progress towards the role of successful impartial observer forces her to reevaluate her perceptions. However, unlike Ralph, who always takes the position of a detached observer, Isabel at first fails to observe, and is consequently carried away by her misperceptions. She turns a blind eye to Ralph's and Mrs. Touchett's warnings. But eventually, detaching herself helps her to observe and understand why she is now at the mercy of her misinterpretation of her husband. The suffering that she experiences during this process of detachment ensures her transformation from an unsuccessful impartial observer to a successful one.

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Limited Consciousness and Temporal Delay

Readers are drawn into James' illustration of Isabel's individuality through his narration, a narration which seems closely related to stream-of-consciousness. In this way, James makes the ending clear to the readers by withholding Isabel's future from them. As Ruth Yeazell puts it, the portrait of Isabel occludes the readers' view of her thoughts, her consciousness, but it is exactly in this way that Isabel seems more human: "James renders Isabel lifelike by occluding her consciousness and inviting us to imagine—rather than pretending to know—what she is thinking" (331). By leaving Isabel's fate unresolved, James demands that the readers continually engage with Isabel's consciousness. Through the interconnections of pain and anxiety, James leads his readers to participate, to think along in this conversation of pain through Isabel's consciousness. During chronological breaks in the narration, the readers focus more intently on what is happening in Isabel's mind.

There is a certain detachment from and consequent deferment of sympathy portrayed when readers are told that Isabel is already engaged to Osmond. Rather than allowing readers to see Isabel and Osmond together, Isabel's mind is indirectly revealed through her discussion with Ralph about her engagement when Osmond is not there. The second instance of a deferment of sympathy comes between Isabel's engagement and the first year of her marriage. Because Isabel does not speak for herself, almost everything that readers learn about her during this time they learn from other people. It is almost as if she has become Osmond's "representative," losing her previous individuality. The third instance where sympathy is deferred is never satisfactorily explained: it takes place when Isabel returns to Rome. Those delays indicate that James is reluctant to let the readers immerse themselves in their sympathies; rather, these delays force readers to pause so that they can more effectively observe what happens. James will not reveal Isabel's thoughts before readers make a final judgement.

Like Madame Merle, each character exerts a different influence on Isabel's character, so Isabel must make up her own mind with regard to how closely she wants to align herself with them. Osmond's cold-blooded action of locking Pansy in the convent

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without notice illustrates the difference between him and Isabel, which is a significant reason that they cannot share sympathy in the same way that she and Ralph can. Osmond wants to spark Isabel's imagination in fright: "He had wanted to do something sudden and arbitrary, something unexpected and refined; to mark the difference between his sympathies and her own" (525). The search for control behind Osmond's decision to send Pansy away is in stark contrast to the motivation of love and care behind Isabel's visit to Ralph.

Sharing her sympathy with Ralph rather than with Osmond shows that Isabel's goal is more aligned with Ralph's, while Osmond and Madame Merle share the same goal. Sympathy works in the connections between two consciousnesses. To sympathize is to integrate oneself into another's consciousness, to accept and enter into the other's feelings. Characters who share sympathy can exchange their thoughts, each with the other. Similar to the way that Madame Merle and Osmond share their thoughts in silence, in chapter forty-two, the narration of Isabel's stream of consciousness suddenly switches to Ralph's thoughts, in which he forgives her because he knows that she forgives him. There, in the interchange of consciousness, they reconcile with each other. Sympathy is what allows the alteration of consciousness. This sympathy works on both sides through the shifting of consciousnesses among the author, the observer, and Isabel.

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Conclusion

Giving the novel a life of its own grants James the ability to measure its quality based on how realistic and how true to life it is. James structures his novel as a sort of authorial journey from a simple curiosity about how Isabel will turn out to a much more complex relationship with his character. This journey can be termed "meta-sympathy." Ultimately, sympathy culminates in the indeterminate, open ending of the novel. Based both on his taste and as his experience as an author, James is able to meticulously measure his increasing involvement with his character throughout the events of *The Portrait*.

Rather than focusing on whether James is sympathetic, I consider that Jamesian sympathy transcends sympathy's limitations, especially in situations in which sympathy

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is frustrated or discredited. James' sympathy is a moral consciousness, a way of thinking and having conversations which are grounded in integrity; these conversations then allow his characters to navigate ambiguous moral situations. Jamesian sympathy is a conversation that happens when characters realize their fragility, a realization which comes through pain. This pain transcends the boundary between the self and the other. James suggests that overwhelming and overly emotional sympathy is a dead end; thus, the most important thing is to go beyond sympathy and find morality. Therefore, in an ideal sympathy, it is important to establish not only firm principles, but also to be merciful towards oneself and others.

Jamesian sympathy allows Isabel the maximum liberty possible within which to address the uncertainty of her future. James' meta-sympathy means a more reasonable and calculated sympathy, that prioritizes taking responsibility rather than being carried away by feelings. At first, Isabel is carried away by the emotions behind her sympathetic impulses. Later, however, she is able to detach herself from the situation, enabling her to sympathize responsibly.

Allowing Isabel's consciousness to unfold in real time and involving readers in Isabel's mental processes, James encourages his readers to think, feel, and question along with Isabel, giving them novelistic practice in the creation of sympathy. Ultimately, James presents the limitations of sympathy in order to transcend them. He endorses sympathy, but not in a way that would have been obvious to Victorian readers. James' meta-sympathy is grounded in suffering, and it is only through suffering that sympathy can be transcended. This subtle process is shown through the lens of Isabel's consciousness that is finalized in a moral impasse rather than a definite outcome.

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Conclusion

The foregoing chapters explore sympathy's depth and complexity. In alignment with Adam's Smith's questions about sympathy, I argue that, through sympathy in these three novels, the characters' "dark sides" —in other words, the parts of their personalities that they do not want to acknowledge, or, alternatively, of which they are unaware—are in conflict with Smith's impartial spectator. The detachment illustrated by this Smithian spectator helps characters to make better judgements because it allows characters to communicate with their "dark sides," thus solving moral and emotional dilemmas.

It seems in some ways that the characters in these novels are split in three dimensions: the self, the dark self, and the impartial spectator, a division which is similar to Sigmund Freud's ego-id-superego distinction: the ego is constantly caught between a dilemma, namely between the desire-driven id and the disciplining superego. For example, Jane Eyre exemplifies this conflict when she is pulled between the strong impulses of the dark side and the impartial spectator, and here she must choose between the dark side and the more objective impartial spectator. The Creature and Frankenstein are overcome by their darker sides, while Jane Eyre and Isabel Archer succeed, although they succeed for different reasons. Jane is helped by the supernatural voice that she hears in the woods, while Isabel transcends her suffering by adapting the perspective of the impartial spectator.

It is impossible to discuss sympathy without taking morality into consideration. In all three novels, the protagonists either transform themselves or they perish, depending on whether or not their morality allows them to transcend their suffering. Sympathy can work both positively and negatively. How sympathy works in a given situation depends on the motivation behind it. Sympathy, then, becomes a powerful endpoint for morality because not only can it elicit philanthropic acts, but it also has the power to cure suffering through an active engagement with others. In other words, this impartial spectator is the crucial component in the development of these characters' morality.

Sympathy can be manipulated. However, through revealing characters' shared vulnerabilities, these novelists posit a more hopeful way of considering this essential emotion. Sympathy, a multifaceted, powerful, and healing human feeling, carries with it

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the possibility for redemption. In these novels, characters who are willing to bravely and honestly face their darker sides can, ultimately, embrace this possibility. Assuming the perspective of the impartial spectator allows the characters to successfully repress their evil impulses.

Even though the hero(in)es of these novels are inherently good people, they must still overcome evil impulses. One would assume, then, that the villainous characters—the Creature, and the duo of Madame Merle and Osmond—would be obviously evil. They are not. On the contrary, they often feel and understand more deeply and accurately, and with intensity equal to that of the hero(ine). In all three novels, the villainous characters' genuine understanding allows them to successfully manipulate the hero/ine. Through this detachment, observation, imitation, and self-reflection, these antagonistic characters learn to "sympathize" more effectively with the novels' protagonists. The question becomes, then, do these intellectual processes represent genuine sympathy? If someone understands and acknowledges another's feelings/thoughts, but does not truly feel with the other, is this intellectual knowledge without emotional fellow-feeling immorality? Or is it more beneficial to feel without agreeing with the other—i.e., to say: "I truly understand your view and feel for you, yet I strongly disagree with you"? Although these purely intellectual processes mimic sympathy, they are not genuinely sympathetic because they lack the morality of a true sympathy. Although those characters successfully adapt the impartial spectator, their motivations are not authentic because they are born of bitterness and resentment.

One of the grand goals of the humanities is to cultivate our humanity through better understanding people who are different from ourselves. However, one of the major obstacles is that people have different value systems which are often hard to reconcile. In *Frankenstein*, I explore how sympathy can turn into tribalism. I show that the intensity of emotion does not necessarily imply virtue. Since villains can also feel as strongly and as "sympathetically" as heroes, within this context they have a unique ability to use sympathy as tool to manipulate others. For this reason, readers, like Frankenstein himself, must be conscious of the possibility of being drawn into a false sympathy with the Creature.

The line between an entirely virtuous and an evil character becomes blurry when the

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readers understand that each character has the potential to choose which direction to go in—that of virtue or that of vice. What is important is not the *tendency* towards evil, but rather the *action* that the character chooses. Like Frankenstein, the Creature has the potential to be both hero and villain. Because of the actions he chooses to initiate, the Creature ultimately becomes the villain. Ultimately, to feel sympathetic does not guarantee the virtuousness of the character, but rather it is a tool by which the character can understand what the other is thinking and feeling. This understanding, then, provides them with the ability to reflect on his/her own action.

The addition of other people complicates the situation, however. Both *Jane Eyre* and *The Portrait* are centered around similar marital plots, but while Jane Eyre escapes St. John's false sympathy, Isabel Archer is trapped by the scheme of "the most sympathetic woman," Madame Merle. Of the three novels' protagonists, Jane is the one who finds perfect sympathy with Rochester, but the sympathy she receives from nature, the sympathy which helps her to achieve this perfect accord, is the most mysterious and illogical of the three novels. Jane does not undergo any sort of transformation in character; instead, nature finds her own kind and assists her. At the moment when Jane is dangerously close to making a wrong decision, nature functions here as the impartial, detached observer that Jane is unable to create for herself. It saves her.

In contrast to Brontë's romantic, albeit unrealistic plot, the realism of Henry James provides a more believable storyline. In *The Portrait*, Isabel learns to extricate herself from her immersion in her imaginative theories. It is ironic on James' part that he has created a protagonist who loves to read. Reading, for Isabel, is a means by which she can elevate her intelligence and cement her morality. In spite of the fact that reading has taught her to function as one who is capable of making good judgements, she is not immune to making the wrong decision in admiring Osmond and Madame Merle, who are the embodiments of false sympathy. Learning to act as a Smithian impartial observer allows Isabel to transcend her suffering. Isabel transforms herself from an innocent and naïve young girl to an emotionally self-sufficient woman.

My argument about sympathy lays the groundwork for future studies of Romantic and Victorian novels in that it provides a context within which we can once again reconsider the ways we look at these novels. It seems to me that a truly authentic critical

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experience of these novels will allow us to understand the complexity of sympathy and to use this experience as a means to meet the end of cultivating our humanity. Ultimately, what I am arguing is that we as critics must embrace the same type of sympathy that I have discussed here. This question is already proposed by Henry James as he suggests that authors should present reality in the novel while at the same time allowing the novel to develop and grow in its own way. It will fall to future critics to chart this development.

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