



## AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Our Moral Educators: Educational Debate and Representations of Teachers in the Mid-Century Victorian Novel.

Abstract approved: \_\_\_\_\_

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In this thesis, I read the teachers in four mid-century Victorian novels—Charles Dickens’ *David Copperfield* (1850) and *Hard Times* (1854), Thomas Hughes’ *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* (1857) and Charlotte Brontë’s *Villette* (1853)— within the context of mid-century English educational debate in an effort to explicate the ways in which these characters represent the prevailing educational ideologies in discussion during the period. Although many scholars have discussed the ways in which these novels’ students and schools reflect educational trends, teachers are often small parts of the conversation. I contend that the teacher characters in these novels are worth focus because of the uniqueness of their role in the cultural imagination as the shapers of the future. Thus, their representations reveal much about what a culture values and desires to instill in its progeny, as well as how said culture feels they can go about instilling said values. With this in mind, Chapter 1 of this thesis will use critic Elizabeth Gargano’s definitions of standardized and domestic pedagogy to bring into conversation the political and pedagogical writings of educators in the nineteenth century with the four novels listed above. Here, I argue that while teachers and educational reformers either emphasized

standardization or attempted to look for compromise, the novels privilege teachers that ascribe to a kind of portable domestic ideology that can be transplanted into the school, while, in contrast, any standardized school culture that is brought into the home is inherently destructive. In Chapter 2, I discuss how this divide is a commentary on larger ideological divides among the Victorian middle-classes. Standardization, with its associations with industry, represents a starkly amoral and capitalistic model of education that many of the newly-empowered middle-class wanted to move away from, while the privileged portable domestic pedagogy combines middle-class industriousness with the aristocratic gentility valued as a marker of cultural capital. Through analyzing this conflict, I will argue that the teachers in these novels are expected to be the exemplars of this ideology of genteel work, an ideology that, even in the domestically-biased fictional world of the novel, they have trouble navigating.

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Our Moral Educators: Educational Debate and Representations of Teachers in the Mid-Century Victorian Novel

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

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Corey Taylor, Author

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1. Introduction .....	1
2. Chapter 1: The Victorian Educational Debate and the Teacher's Place: Portable Domesticity and Institutional Metastasis in Nineteenth Century Pedagogy.....	15
3. Chapter 2: A Moral Education: Middle-Class Novelistic Critique of Middle-Class Standardization.....	52
4. Conclusion.....	87
5. Works Cited.....	91



## Introduction

“For decades, Washington has been trapped in the same stale debates that have paralyzed progress and perpetuated our educational decline [...] I think you’d all agree that the time for finger-pointing is over. The time for holding us—holding ourselves accountable is here. What’s required is not simply new investments, but new reforms [...] It’s time to start rewarding good teachers and stop making excuses for bad ones. It’s time to demand results from government at every level.”

—President Barack Obama, from *Remarks of the President to the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce*, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009

“Still much remains to be done; and among the chief defects yet subsisting may be reckoned the insufficient number of qualified school-masters, the imperfect mode of teaching which prevails in perhaps the greater number of the schools, and examination of the nature of the instruction given [...] and, finally, the neglect of this great subject among the enactments of our voluminous legislation. Some of these defects appear to admit of an immediate remedy, and I am directed by Her Majesty to desire in the first place, that your Lordship, with four other of the Queen's Servants should form a board or Committee, for the consideration of all matters affecting the Education of the People.”

—Lord John Russel, from *Letter to Lord Lansdowne*, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1839

One-hundred and seventy years and an ocean separate these two quotes, yet, thematically they remain markedly similar. The first quote is from a speech given by the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the United States to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on the subject of education, particularly the education of the poor and minorities. The second comes from a published letter between Lord John Russell, who would later become Prime Minister of Britain from 1846-1852, and Lord Lansdowne, Lord President of the Council, commemorating the founding of the Committee of Council for Education in 1839—England’s first attempt at the federal regulation of its many church and charity schools. Both texts express an exhaustion with governmental attempts to improve education, the “stale debates” and “voluminous legislation” stagnating any true progress for schools and

students. Both articulate a desire to overturn years of “decline” and structural “defects.” However, perhaps most notably, both politicians place the blame for these defects, and the solution for these debates, on the backs of “bad teachers” or unqualified schoolmasters, as well as the lack of their regulation. Educational critic Kevin Kumashiro argues that the twenty-first century debate over education has been reduced to a good teacher vs. bad teacher dichotomy. He writes, “Today [...] a range of competing proposals exist on how to reform public schools, and yet, in the media, in policy papers, and in speeches by politicians, only certain initiatives seem to count as reform, and only certain actors as reformers” (10). These reformers, he points out, are only those associated with an increase in standardized testing and teacher evaluations. What is remarkable about Kumashiro’s description, is that it does not only apply to the educational debate of today’s America, but to an educational debate had over 170 years ago in England. Like contemporary American discussions, nineteenth-century English educational debate went beyond a legal and legislative argument and was taken up by various forms of media. Unlike Kumashihiro suggests, however, the conversation was not primarily associated with the “serious” press—newspapers and the punditry— but was a prevalent discussion in Victorian artistic and literary circles as well.

The ill-qualified, uneducated, narcissistic, lazy and selfish teacher was a staple caricature long before government-run public schools and teachers’ unions were characterized as such. While this caricature has become more of a pundit punching bag in today’s media, the lecherous and morally corrupt schoolmaster was a common trope across a variety of media in England throughout the nineteenth-century, reaching a saturation point in the 1840s and 50s. Along with the standard representations in political

cartoons and speeches, the “bad teacher” became an increasingly important stock character in the novel as well. As bildungsromans and children’s literature gained popularity, the stories they presented of young children’s development would establish the school as a common set piece, and the teacher as a common minor character, in the novel. Charles Dickens famously tackled the educational debate throughout his career and would create some of the most iconic teachers in literature in doing so. For every good teacher like *David Copperfield*’s Dr. Strong, Dickens created bad ones like the infamous Mr. Gradgrind, Mr. Creakle, and Bradley Headstone. Charlotte Brontë, in her short career, would write three novels—*Jane Eyre*, *Villette*, and *The Professor*—about protagonists whose primary profession was in education, and who had to deal with both poor and benevolent colleagues. Even children’s literature would see the popularization of the School Story with Thomas Hughes’ *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* and its idealized answer to this bad teacher archetype. What is unique about these depictions, however, is that, while the critique of this morally corrupt teacher was universal across journalism and politics, these novels took a unique twist on the archetype in ascribing their poor pedagogy not solely to the perceived status quo of teachers as they “were,” but co-opted the image in a critique of government intervention in schools. The bad teacher archetype could be adapted to the cause of critiquing the standardization movement of the mid-century, which in and of itself was an attempt at improving schools and weeding out so-called bad teachers much like it is today. Novels, as popular fiction, allowed novelists to take larger political narratives and make them concrete and personal while presenting subtler arguments than traditional criticism. Novels not only had the ability to provide

fictitious faces that characterized this bad teacher archetype, but also ascribe it to a political movement (standardization) that many Victorians found troubling.

### **Standardized Reform versus Novelistic Critique**

Victorian educational reformers were, to generalize, advocates for standardization. There were, of course, variations in opinion and those in dissent; however, Kumashiro's description of twenty-first century American reformers is near identical to many of the prominent political education reformers of nineteenth century England. James Kay-Shuttleworth, the first secretary of Russell's Council, was a strong advocate for "the inspection of schools; the examination of teachers," and for the "special authorization" of school inspectors to, "together with the diffusion of information concerning the best methods of teaching, the proper apparatus, and the most useful books," resolve "all matters relating to the internal regulation of schools" (219). Yet, bureaucrats like Kay-Shuttleworth were far from the only proponents of the movement; standardization was a popular movement among teachers themselves. In the transcripts of the 1848 meeting of the Home and Colonial School Society, one Mr. Reynolds, a teacher from Whetstone remarks,

there is nothing that makes parents value a good school, and raises a teacher so much in their estimation, as public Examinations [...] parents can send their children to school, without any fear of my over-burdening their memories, or injuring their health by too much excitement. ("Teacher's Meeting" 203)

Mr. Reynolds colleagues heartily concur throughout the rest of the transcript. The head of the society himself, Henry Dunn, would, in fact, dedicate a chapter of his wildly popular 1839 normal school manual *Principles of Education* to 141 example exam questions for

teachers to use in their classrooms, just in case a young teacher ran out of ideas.

Standardization and examination were the hallmarks of nineteenth-century educational reforms. It promised a uniformity of expectations, and, theoretically, of results, no matter what kind of schools a child was attending or where in the country the school was. Beyond students, reformers saw standardization as the panacea for the bad teacher issue—if teachers themselves could prove what they know and their effectiveness through examination, particularly public examination, and if they have a limited number of pre-approved lessons to use, then the government and parents could be reassured that their children were being taught by professionals. Moreover, they could be sure that these teachers were teaching them the “right” things.

While political reformers saw standardization as the one true hope of the English education system, the movement did not come without its share of antagonism. In opposition to these standardizers, many mid-century novelists actively derided the Educational reforms spearhead by men like Kay-Shuttleworth and Dunn. Dickens, notably, critiques the standardized system in his novel *Hard Times*, whose teachers, Mr. Gradgrind and Mr. M'Chokumchild deride “fancy” and instill in their students “only facts.” In traditional Dickensian style, even their names connote intellectual suffering or outright child abuse. The novel's critique was so obvious that contemporary literary critics felt the need to respond. Jane Sinnett, a critic for the *Westminster Review*, in her review of the novel would write that she supposed “it is in anticipation of some change of the present educational system for one that shall attempt to kill ‘the outright robber fancy,’ that Mr. Dickens launches forth his protest, for we,” the *Westminster Review*, “are not aware of such a system being in operation anywhere in England” (331). Of course,

despite rebuttals like Sinnett's, Gradgrind and M'Chokumchild, far from Dickens' only teacher critiques, would not be his last. In *Hard Times*, Dickens had effectively co-opted the bad teacher archetype and combined it with the modes of standardization.

Whatever the reality was, Dickens' critique marked a popular narrative for those concerned about the rapid government intervention in England's schools. To wit, Dickens' narrative is remarkably similar to Charlotte Brontë's experience teaching during the period, despite Sinnet's protests otherwise. In one of her journals, while teaching at Roe Head school, Brontë, after having "toiled" with her students, asks herself

Am I to spend all the best part of my life in this wretched bondage, forcibly suppressing my rage at the idleness, the apathy and the hyperbolical and most asinine stupidity of those fat-headed oafs, and on compulsion assuming an air of kindness, patience and assiduity? (*Tales from Glasstown*, 162)

Despite her efforts, her students, at least according to Brontë, were still as idle and stupid as before. Her prescribed teaching regimen, the "wretched bondage" she describes throughout her Roe-Head journals, not only did little for her students, but left her in a state of contempt. While Brontë would never fully critique education in the way Dickens did, she still bore a clear distaste for the modes of standardization during her own teaching career, a distaste that would worm its way into her fiction. Ultimately, Thomas Hughes would write this critique of standardizers most plainly when, in the second chapter of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, he tells the reader, "don't let reformers of any sort think that they are going really to lay hold of the working boys and young men of England by an educational grapnel whatever" (19). For all of these authors, the less these reformers were involved, the better.

### **The Correct Moral Taste and the Importance of Teachers**

Nevertheless, while the educational reformers and mid-century educational novelists may have disagreed on how to best administer proper education, it is evident in reading both in tandem with one another that they very much agreed on education's purpose. Unlike contemporary debates, the Victorians were not as concerned about how students would fare on the job market, and were more concerned with the character, spirituality and values students would have leaving their schools. The word morality is found throughout political and theoretical writings on Education through the period and, while the novels never use the word directly, there are overtones—the fates of those fictional teachers that instill traditional Victorian values and those that do not differ significantly. An example of the sheer presence and emphasis of and on morality in the pedagogical writing and policy is best exemplified in Henry Dunn's definition of the "one great object in education" as the "formation of A CORRECT MORAL TASTE" (160). Similarly, James Kay-Shuttleworth begins his study of the English education system with this edict:

The physical and moral evils by which we are personally surrounded, may be more easily avoided when we are distinctly conscious of their existence; and the virtue and health of society may be preserved, with less difficulty, when we are acquainted with the sources of its errors and diseases. (3)

As discussed earlier, Kay-Shuttleworth saw inspection, order and regulation as the way to make students both aware of these "physical and moral evils," and cure society of its "errors." But even Matthew Arnold who, although an advocate for pieces of standardized reform, differed philosophically from the likes of Kay-Shuttleworth and Dunn, in advocating for a French-like public education system in England, writes that schools

should always be “subject to State-inspection, to ascertain that the pupils are properly lodged and fed, and that the teaching contains nothing contrary to public morality and to the law” (*A French Eton* 30). These educationists, as reformers were often called, were not concerned with the employability of their students, but in instilling a “correct moral taste” (Dunn 160). In fact, none of the reformers quoted thus far write at any great length on education as a way to provide students with knowledge or skills— what one would normally associate with the objectives of an education system. Even Dunn, whose *Principles of Education* was provided as an in-classroom reference text, is far more concerned with classroom management as a means of instilling Christian values than reading, writing or arithmetic. Similarly, in fiction, Thomas Hughes would undermine “intellectual priggism” for muscular Christianity, Dickens would celebrate fancy only so far as it was earnest and honest fancy, and Charlotte Brontë’s refined Protestant teachers would triumph over their often continental and often licentious counterparts. What the authors and educationists lacked in agreement on policy they made up for in an agreement on philosophy.

For both sides of this argument, the teacher was an imperative figure. Teachers were not simply caretakers and instructors of reading and Latin, they were an adult outside the family that Victorian mothers and fathers expected to instill foundational social, religious and cultural values into their children. Yet, despite this important social function the teacher was expected to perform, there has not been a great deal of scholarship, either historical or literary, on the lives of teachers or their portrayal in literature. In both cases, the lives of students and the formation of schools have been the subjects of scholarly focus with teachers often playing a bit part in the scholarship. This



is startling because, as educational historian Marianne A. Larson notes there was a great deal of ideological work throughout the period on theorizing the good teacher versus the bad teacher, and the function of teachers in general. She writes that “as moral exemplar to her students, it was of utmost importance that the teacher’s moral character be beyond reproach” (94). She continues, “teachers were expected to conform to a set of appropriate standards, attitudes, values, habits and moral qualities that were to be inculcated into their pupils,” while bad teachers, she points out, were criticized by reformers for being “conceited and arrogant” (94). A great deal of social capital was spent in defining what teachers were, how they should act, and how they should perform their jobs. They were under an incredible amount of pressure to adhere to an almost impossible persona. Yet, Larson’s book is one of the only extant histories of the nineteenth-century educator at all, let alone published recently.

The presence of teachers in literary criticism is just as scant; there are only a handful of scholars that have delved into the educational history and theory represented in the Victorian novel, and these are, again, mostly student-focused critiques.<sup>1</sup> Even fewer address education across multiple novels or novelists.<sup>2</sup> While novels like *Hard Times*, *Villette*, and *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* have, because of their settings in and

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<sup>1</sup> Jenny Holt’s *Public School Literature: Civic Education and the Politics of Male Adolescence* (2008), and Laura Morgan’s *Educating Women: Cultural Conflict and Victorian Literature* (2001) are among the most prominent of those pieces that discuss how the ideologies promoted in the Victorian educational system effected different groups of students (young women or young men) rather than focusing on those that administered those ideologies.

<sup>2</sup> Phillip Collins’ *Dickens and Education* (1965), and Cathy Shuman’s *Pedagogical Economies: The Examination and The Victorian Literary Man* (2000) focus solely on Dickens’ biography as it relates to his teachers and students. Marianne Thormählen does the same with the Brontë sisters in *The Brontës and Education* (2007). In both of these cases the focus on connecting fiction to biography often clouds the discussion of larger educational debates, and leaves out the ways in which Dickens or Brontë’s texts interact with or share similarities with each other and others.

around schools, had various articles written about the educational prospects at play in them specifically, larger cross-textual studies are harder to come by. In the 1960s, John Reed wrote several articles and books regarding teaching in the school story and its reflections of Victorian public school life; his work would inspire similar critiques<sup>3</sup>. However, Reed's criticism often focuses solely on biographical criticism and interprets many of the teachers in various novels as historical allegory rather than ideological formation. He writes, for instance, that "those that took up school teaching were often incompetent in other lines of work, or had been forced into the profession through some social or economic misfortune" (*Old School Ties* 80). While this is a common trope in much of Victorian literature, this was not completely true. Teachers were, in fact, fairly well-educated in a normal school curriculum that included subjects ranging from Latin and Greek to natural science and philosophy, and by-and-large upper-working/lower-middle class (Larson 190-191). While Reed points to important historical and biographical features to take into account in many school-based novels—after all, many Victorian novelists either attended or had children attending school—his discussion of teachers provides little insight into the ways in which they reflect cultural discussions of education during the period.

In recent years, spurred on by contemporary educational debates, there has been a renewed literary and historical interest in Victorian school literature. Dinah Birch, in her book *Our Victorian Education*, asserts the importance of having firm understanding of

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<sup>3</sup> Isabel Quigly's *the Heirs of Tom Brown* (1984) and Jeffery Richards *Happiest Days: The Public Schools in Victorian Fiction* (1988) would continue to explore the historical veracity of school stories in relation to surviving records from public schools like Rugby. However, they often build on Reed's discussions of schools and teachers to focus on student narratives.

Victorian education for modern educators, stating, “the Victorians invented education as we understand it today [...] our sense of what matters most in teaching and learning is shaped by legacies of nineteenth-century thought” (2). However, she uses much of the book to criticize the modern English school system for, what she argues, is following the footsteps of the mid-nineteenth century educational debate, and ends up using her literary critique as more of a backdrop. In terms of more focused literary criticism, Elizabeth Gargano’s 2008 book *Reading Victorian Schoolrooms: Childhood and Education in Nineteenth-Century Fiction* is the most extensive historical study of the evolution of the Victorian school and its connections to the evolution of Victorian school depictions in literature, including both students and teachers in her discussion. Gargano argues that to understand nineteenth-century anxieties surrounding the dramatic revolution of the English school system one must look at the art produced about the schools around that period. She asserts that it is not a coincidence that so many novels were written about, or have settings in, schools in the mid-century when the educational debate was at its most fervent. The idea of rearing a child outside of the home and in a public institution was a revolutionary and terrifying one for the notoriously private and insular Victorians. She asserts that the

Victorians’ abiding suspicion of institutionalized schooling should not be underestimated. The many fictive and journalistic attacks on institutionalized schooling critiqued [...] the expanding national schools [...] church and charity sponsored schools, as well as schools established [...] as commercial ventures. For many Victorians, the institutionalization of education represented a wrenching, inspiring, and terrifying sea-change that would alter not only social and familial relations but the very notion of childhood itself. (3)

In this way, Gargano fundamentally defines the two sides of the Victorian educational conflict: the reformers, who push to standardize and institutionalize the rearing of

children as the population increased and urbanized, and the novelists, who were deeply anxious about the ways such institutionalization could fundamentally change the dynamics of the Victorian family, and thus the English social strata itself.

This thesis will use the dichotomy Gargano defines in her book to explore the ways the tension between reformers and novelists is reflective of, inspired by, and inspired in and of itself, the age-old good versus bad teacher narratives at play in the novels of the 1840s and 1850s. The teacher is a person at the center of a dramatic cultural conversation about the future of Victorian values, and thus, while often not major characters in many of these novels, performs a nonetheless indispensable ideological work in portraying the anxieties surrounding the preservation of the Victorian social order through the education of its children, its future. The narratives of characters like Mr. Gradgrind do not solely lampoon teachers, but present a deep anxiety on the part of authors like Dickens about whom the teaching profession empowers and the vulnerabilities of Victorian children at the hands of these teachers, and thus these teachers' influence on the future of traditional Victorian values in a rapidly changing world. On the other hand, characters like Thomas Hughes' Doctor present an ideal narrative of what teachers *should* be, and the kinds of education and values parents, students and politicians should expect from their pedagogues. Thus, both Dickens and Hughes' work will be examined here: Dickens' fictional educators often represent what teachers should not be, while Hughes' provide an example of what teachers should be. In addition, Charlotte Brontë's teachers, no doubt influenced by her own work as a teacher, will be examined as greyer examples of pedagogues struggling between the Dickensian and Hughesian poles.

Ultimately, what teachers should and should not be depends upon who is creating the definition. Thus, this project will argue that these novelists use the good versus bad teacher contrast to privilege a kind of education, and thus a society, based upon the virtues of a middle-class ideology that combined ideals of middle-class industry, Christian chastity and gentility, that can only be found among the familial influences of domestic and domesticated spaces, against a political movement for standardization that they associated with industrial and capitalistic greed and corruption.

Therefore, Chapter 1 of this thesis will begin by examining the teachers in a set of four novels all published during the 1850s: Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1850) and *Hard Times* (1854), Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853) and Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857). In doing so, it will explore how the teachers in these novels are exalted or villainized based upon their associations with either the domestic or the institutional space. These novels celebrate teachers that are able to port the familial influences of the domestic into the institutional setting while deriding those teachers that are beholden to a corrupt system. Therefore, bad teachers evolve from being simply lazy and selfish to being lazy and selfish because of the systems of standardization, while good teachers, in their domestic purity, protect children from these negative moral influences.

Chapter 2 will build on this insight, exploring how the domestic/good teacher versus institutionalized/bad teacher dichotomy reflects a concerted effort on the part of the newly empowered middle classes to perpetuate and instill a narrative of middle-class superiority. Specifically, it will examine how the depictions of teachers in these novels celebrate the moral values of industrious hard work associated with the middle classes

and combines them with the historically celebrated genteel values of the aristocratic class. In this way, this thesis will explore how the teacher, through cultural commentary and fictional narratives, is the locus of a rapidly changing society attempting to define, justify and permeate the values of its newly empowered class of citizens.

In shifting focus away from the students and towards the teachers I hope to focus less on how cultural ideologies are being inculcated in children, and focus more on the creation and dissemination of those ideologies. If the children are our future then, the ways we talk, write and depict teachers reflect what we want that future to be, and teachers provide insight into how we think we can achieve that future. While Victorian novelists placed much of their focus on the lives of the schoolboys and schoolgirls, what they write about their teachers is significant because of what it says about how they think they can go about shaping that future. In exploring teachers as the centers of these cultural narratives, we gain further understanding not just of the Victorians' ideological work in defining their cultural norms and moral values, but of our own as well. The good versus bad teacher ideology has not changed much in the last two centuries. Just as the Victorians are using the teacher as a focus to explore their own anxieties about the shifting of cultural power occurring during the rapid development of industrialization, so are we. The shifting of wealth and power to the middle class because of the surplus wealth created by industrialization finds parallels in the rapid democratization of information and cultural power going on in the digital age. In understanding the narratives that characterized our past, we can understand the narratives at play in our present.

## Chapter 1: The Victorian Educational Debate and the Teacher's Place: Portable Domesticity and Institutional Metastasis in Nineteenth Century Pedagogy

"Well, here I am at Roe Head [...] the young ladies are all at their lessons; the school-room is quiet," a young Charlotte Brontë wrote as she was just beginning her teaching tenure at Roe Head school in 1836. In her diary she describes fulfilling her "duties strictly and well" but that her "heart [is not] in the task, the theme, or the exercise. It is the still small voice always that comes to me at eventide [...] it is that which takes up my spirit and engrosses all my living feelings, all my energies which are not merely mechanical" (*Tales of Glass Town* 158). Brontë's later journals, as she moved from Roe-Head to the Heger School, would build upon this theme—the "mechanical" structures of the school stifling the "still strong voice" of her inward expression and spirit. The "mechanization" of education and its effect on both teachers and students would become an increasingly important public debate in mid-nineteenth century Britain as fundamental shifts in the way the British educational system was governed took root. A system that, throughout the century, was becoming an increasing part of everyday life—placing the teacher in a central role in the daily lives of British children, and the domestic duty of rearing a child in the hands of a professional. As industrial, economic and political influences increased the need for education to occur outside of the home and in the public sphere, concern about *how* these children were educated increased. Of particular concern was not only the knowledge these students were taught, but how the institution could instill moral and spiritual values outside of the home. Some would see the "mechanical" model Brontë notes as the ideal solution, the installation of morality through "an efficient

system of wise and well-principled instruction” that would put in their reach “a great and glorious revival” from “so many ages of darkness and depravity” (“Education: The Sign and Duty of the Times”). For Brontë, and other novelists like Charles Dickens and Thomas Hughes, this mechanical model crushed personal voice and creativity, essential to moral development in their minds. They found solace in a domesticated education where the domestic individualized world of the home could be ported into the institution.

However, this “mechanization” was difficult to avoid as the fledgling British school system faced increasing government regulation and intervention. The system was experiencing remarkable growth at mid-century—from 1836 to 1851 the number of students attending some form of daily schooling increased by approximately one and a half million students (Williams 157). Seeing this incredible growth on the horizon in 1834, following the passage of the 1832 Reform Bill and increasing regulations on child employment, the House of Commons gave the British and Foreign School Society as well as the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor a combined £20,000 in grant money to run their church and charity schools (Paroissien 264). This was an unprecedented amount for the federal government to provide for the running of schools, and a moment that marked an increased governmental interest in the administration of these schools. As the amount of grant money increased,<sup>4</sup> so did government interest in where their money was going. For Parliament, ineffectual teachers were not just a poor investment for their pupils, but a poor investment economically. What better way to get a

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<sup>4</sup> By 1846 the British and Colonial School Society was receiving £50,000 from the parliamentary Committee on Education, for estimated expenses exceeding £150,000 (Minutes of the Committee).



return on their investment than through the "mechanical" and professional systems creating so much profit in the private sector?

In the 1840s, to both improve their teachers through the lens of professionalization and cut monetary waste on unprepared teachers and underperforming schools, the educational societies began implementing yearly examinations for teachers (Baines 22). Certificates were expected for instructors and head masters alike, and expectations were codified for educators across both charitable and for-profit institutions. On one hand, certification offered teachers professional respectability and regulated a multiplicitous and divided system. On the other hand, for many teachers and educational reformers, the standardization movement was not just about teachers but greater equality for students. These reformers did not see mechanization as a way of destroying the "still small voice" Brontë lamented losing, but as a way of ensuring that that voice was speaking to *all* people. Standardizing offered teachers an air of professional respectability as well as an apparatus to address the serious mismanagement of schools, particularly those that catered to the working classes.

Before government intervention in the 1830s, and eventually compulsory education under the Elementary Education Act of 1870, the British school system was split into unorganized webs of church-run schools, public schools, popular schools, charity schools, and day schools, all split between the genders. The schools most affected by the 1834 grants were largely church-run charity schools for the poor and working classes. Thus, the standardization movement was not only advocated for by government bureaucrats, but also became a fundamental part of the argument of those advocating for popular education. For instance, activist and poet Matthew Arnold argued that Britain

should adopt a state-run school system like the French, not simply because it would give the working classes “greatness and a noble spirit, which the tone of those classes is not of itself at present adequate to impart” but also because it was “economical” with “charges uniform and under severe revision<sup>5</sup>” (19). For many reformers, the most “economical” system of education was a factory-like system. To enlighten the working classes was seen as a proper business move; education was “worthy of the attention of the economist, even when considered as simply ministering to the production of wealth” (Kay-Shuttleworth 51-52). Standardizers saw education as a political necessity. The education of children in the *correct* moral and intellectual fashion was a benefit to British politics and industry as a whole.

Nevertheless, as much as reformers insisted that standardizing the school system, for rich and poor, would be beneficial for everyone, many saw the idea as an affront to the domestic ideals the Victorian middle class had worked so hard to construct. No longer were children seen as little adults, but as innocents to be cared for and nurtured in the realm of the private home space. They should develop an individual and moral spirit under the guidance of a parental figure until they were old enough to enter the public world. Unfortunately, that public world required some form of training. If the home is supposed to be private and protected, how can an unrelated, public professional be brought into that space to train children? If children have to be taken out of the home to be trained, should the public space in which they were trained be made home-like? How could a child develop morally without the nurturing guidance of the parent? These

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<sup>5</sup> While Arnold did advocate for a government-run and streamlined education system along with teacher examinations, he differed from other standardizers in his distaste of testing.

questions became central to the resistance to the standardization movement and the advocacy for a kind of ported home to be founded within the school. Ultimately, the Victorian teacher was caught between two opposing forces—the push for the standardization of education and its promises of equality, professionalization and fiscal responsibility and the prevailing ideology of the domestic ideal that posited that only true moral and creative development could come from within, guided by the parent.

In the mid-century Victorian novel, whose characters always seem to be striving for the domestic ideal in some way or another, the standardization movement is an ever-present threat to the natural development of their young protagonists. The school story and bildungsromans, in particular, celebrate the individuality of their protagonists—an individuality often constructed through earnest personal effort, self-revelation, and artistic expression. As György Lukács famously argues, “the novel tells the adventure of interiority; the content of the novel is the story of the soul that goes to find itself, that seeks adventures in order to be proved and tested by them, and, by proving itself, to find its own essence” (89). This “adventure of interiority,” the story of the soul testing and proving itself to “find its own essence,” cannot occur, according to these novels, in the realm of the institutionalized school. In fact, what makes the novel so unique in its critique of the education system are the ways it can both show the effects of education throughout a pupil’s adolescence or life, depending on the genre, and ultimately provide a commentary on pedagogical movements without directly engaging with them. It critiques pedagogy in macro, rather than just in the classroom, a feat traditional political reporting or protest does not have the imagination to do. Good teachers become characters who educate on a personal level, allowing for personal insight and who bring a portable

version of the home into the classroom. Bad teachers on the other hand, are thoughtless rule-followers, devoid of imagination, who bring moral and creative ruin to those around them. Brought together, this good versus bad teacher narrative illustrates an anxiety about educating children outside of the home—the instruction is antithetical to practical and natural moral growth, thus the home must be brought into the school to counteract this negative effect.

The dichotomy between good and bad schools has seen renewed interest in recent years. Much of the discussion has been based on rekindled curiosity in the ways physical spaces reflect standardized and domestic pedagogy<sup>6</sup>. For instance, Gargano argues that this tendency to code bad schools as standardized, and good schools as domestic, constitutes a “rhetoric of domesticity” which she describes as serving two functions:

representatives of institutionalized education employ it as rhetorical window dressing to temper a standardizing agenda that might otherwise seem threatening. Alternatively, their opponents often deploy the rhetoric of domesticity as part of an influential but admittedly ambivalent critique of the trend toward an institutionalized, standardized pedagogy. (49)

Gargano portrays this critique as being “clothed in human form” by the teacher characters in these novels, stating that while “bad” teachers are used as cautionary tales, “good” teachers suggest “both a corrective for institutional education and a standard against which it must be judged” (50). This, then, is the “ambivalence” of the domestic critique— it is a critique of standardization that creates new, equally rigid standards. The ideology of domestic education is meant to resist standardization, yet, in exclusively

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<sup>6</sup> The terminology of “domestic” and “standardized” education that Gargano establishes, and that I will use throughout this piece, is borrowed from Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Emile* in which he establishes these “contradictory forms of instruction—the one, public and common; the other, individual and domestic” (40).

valuing a particular type of teacher and pedagogy it, in effect, creates a new standard in which teachers must be judged.

The institutionalization of these new, quasi-domestic standards persists in both bildungsromans and school stories. As John Reed argues, school stories tend to privilege the school, while bildungsroman narratives do not, because of their difference in character focus—bildungsromans focus on children raised or abandoned by family, and school stories center around students raised among other students<sup>7</sup> (73). One child needs love and affection, while the other, wild schoolboys, need to be reined in. M.O. Grenby adds to this, pointing out that children's literature often made it a point to blur institutional boundaries and create a continuum between public and private, wherein the teacher can function as both parent and professional when needed<sup>8</sup> (478). However, while all of these critics point to the differing ways the domestic ideal affects students, schools and even genres, Grenby and Reed ignore the ways in which teachers are uniquely affected by the standardization debate and how clearly defined their roles are in contrast to the students' experiences. To be fair, the Victorian novel itself tends to ignore teachers

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<sup>7</sup> Reed points out that the children of traditional novels are “children [...] who are reared by parents or guardians” and/or “abandoned to fare for themselves in an adult world” that “usually perceive and display a distinctly juvenile innocence” (73). Whereas the children of the school story who are “raised predominantly among juveniles and male adults show little admiration for virtue” (73). For Reed, while bildungsromans work to relate the story of the middle-class artist or professional, the school story is a genre distinctly built to tell the story of male homosocial relationships and masculine development often defined by muscular Christianity—virtues that, in his view, are best transmitted in an institutional environment. In Reed's view, institutionalized education works for a particular type of student, while the domestic education works for another.

<sup>8</sup> Grenby argues that the school story in particular “habitually blurs the boundary between private and public education. The home was often depicted in very similar terms to the school, and schools, as depicted in children's books were very often distinctly domestic” (476). Grenby does not make this claim, however, about the school-centered bildungsroman—school stories present this continuum because they are ultimately more sympathetic towards the schools that function as their settings, in Grenby's view. While bildungsromans may critique education in the way Gargano describes, Grenby posits that children's literature, often an educational tool in and of itself, is more nuanced in its view of the educational debate.

as characters. After all, the interesting character developments in a school narrative all take place with the child, not the adult. Nevertheless, while Gargano's treatment of the teacher as a critique of education "in human form" is indeed a way of reading these characters, it also does not take into account the fact that the Victorian novel's teachers, even when reduced to caricature, function in more complicated ways than simply the cautionary tale or the revered hero. Many mid-century Victorian authors use these teachers to point to the malignancy of the standardizing agenda, and its antithesis, a portable domesticity that can be brought into the school and act as a kind of moral panacea, providing the world with earnest and upright future leaders.

This chapter will examine the ways in which the specter of institutionalized and standardized pedagogy affects the teachers in four different education-centered novels. First, there will be a brief discussion of the pedagogical theory in use during the period to better understand the pedagogical practices of actual teachers that influenced the fictive portrayal of teachers in the literature, and the ways in which this pedagogy is reflective of the larger standardization debate. The chapter will then examine the Dickensian depictions of the pedagogue in both *David Copperfield* (1850) and *Hard Times* (1854). *David Copperfield* represents a prototypical bildungsroman in which the school and the teacher play an indelible role in the development of the young Protagonist. *Hard Times*, on the other hand, is the most direct critique of the educational system in mid-century literature, taking the ideas of the educator as developed in *David Copperfield* and bringing them to their extreme. In response to this, the more sympathetic *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857) will be examined in its attempt to reconcile the debate and defend the boarding school as a site of moral development. Lastly, this chapter will examine the

most teacher-centric of these mid-century education novels, Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853). An almost autobiographical novel reflecting on her mechanical days at Roe-Head and in Belgium, Brontë's novel is the most conflicted in its portrayal of the standardization debate, showing how its teacher-protagonist Lucy Snowe, because of her gender as well as her profession, is caught between the institution and her desire for economic independence, and the domestic pull of her family along with the social pressures of the domestic ideal.

Ultimately, this chapter will argue that the teacher-characters of the mid-century novel are unique in the way they comment on the institutionalization of the British education system. These novels valorize the domestic ideal by portraying teachers as being in constant danger of institutionalization. Teachers that embrace standardized pedagogy are monsters or puppets of bureaucracy, while those that embrace the domestic space facilitate creativity, responsibility and morality in their pupils. Yet, even those that port the home into the school run the risk of allowing the school into the home and thus destroying the nuclear family. Ultimately, teachers in these novels must leave the institution or become swallowed by it. Those that remain are soulless automatons and slaves to the system, despite their intentions, while only those that leave can become part of the domestic world. The end result for the domestic teacher is not to remain a teacher, but to become part of a family. Good teachers do not remain teachers.

### **Standardized vs. Domesticated Education and the Pestalozzianism Movement**

The popular pedagogical movements of the period were influential in how these novelists viewed actual teachers, and, in turn, translated them fictionally on the page.

While Brontë is the only author among those discussed here who taught professionally, popular pedagogical movements become ubiquitous as teachers start using their findings.

By 1840, many of the teacher-training manuals in circulation were based on those used by James Kay-Shuttleworth at Battersea and largely fell in line with the teaching practices advocated for by the major societies. Henry Dunn, the secretary of the British and Foreign School Society from 1830 to 1856 would have his manual *The Principles of Teaching* “liberally presented [...] to every teacher trained by the Society” (“Minutes of the Committee” 20). Dunn’s manual was incredibly popular even before it became mandatory reading for Battersea teachers. By 1839 it would reach its third edition after only being in print since 1837. In this manual, Dunn presents young teachers with this image: “[The teacher’s] school is the field of his enterprise; in proportion to his skill and ingenuity in managing human nature, is the extent of his success; and in that success he finds an immediate and rich reward” (12). Dunn is making clear correlations here between capitalist “enterprise,” and the education of children. In this case, the teacher-as-entrepreneur's skills do not come from the management of capital, but the management of “human nature.” The teacher is a businessman and education the cold calculus of instilling the most “human nature” in the most “immediate” amount of time.

A physical manifestation of this philosophy is seen in the failed hallmark of the standardization movement, popularized by Dunn, the monitorial system. This system, at its most basic level, used older children to monitor groups of younger students. Students would be split into groups by age or skill level, a monitor would be assigned to the group and given an exercise, and the monitor would then patrol the group ensuring that each student completed the exercise in the allotted time and to the specifications of the master.



The benefits of the system were twofold: 1) A single teacher could theoretically educate more students because monitors would eliminate the need for direct supervision. Thus, only one teacher would need to be employed for an auditorium full of students, rather than a group, providing an economic benefit, and 2) “the greater facility that it affords the maintenance and order of good government, by securing at all times the regular and constant employment of every pupil” (Dunn 44). The capitalist imagery of Dunn’s classroom returns. The monitorial system was an imposition of the factory model on the school. Monitors functioned as foreman ensuring “employment” of their workers on the factory line, except in the case of the school, the products being made are their exercises.

James Kay-Shuttleworth would merge this system into his pupil-teacher system in 1840 with the founding of the Battersea normal school. It was essentially the same thing only the “pupil teacher” is slightly older, paid (although not well) and in Kay-Shuttleworth's words were “equivalent [...] to the most superior monitors in England” (394-395). Kay-Shuttleworth would become the first secretary of the council on education in 1839, and his insistence on “efficient” education would quickly become the *modus operandi* for any schools receiving committee grants or funding. Kay-Shuttleworth was not quite the economist Dunn was; however, his ideas are still couched in an insistence for “efficient,” “industrious,” and “certified” education—three words found throughout his many memorandums and reports. He argues that all elements of his pedagogy exist to eliminate the “barbarous habits and consequent moral depression” brought about by the uneducated poor, which he blames the industrial system for creating via their need for cheap cattle-like labor (52-53). He contends that this can only happen when the child has “clear perception and vivid conviction of every fact presented to its

mind” (320). This only occurs in a system that Kay-Shuttleworth insists must contain (his emphasis) “The *ascertained truths* of political science” and the “*correct* political information” that “should be constantly and industriously disseminated amongst” the working classes (63). While much Kay-Shuttleworth’s work, at least in word, attempts to push away from the industrial system of education Dunn proposes (while mimicking it in his pupil-teachers), he still proposes a system that is entirely based on the production of product. For him, morality can be taught through the “dissemination” of “ascertained truths” and “correct” information. Hence, Kay-Shuttleworth’s insistence on examination as a tool of assessment for both teachers and students. All the laboring classes need is an education in the correct facts and figures.

This philosophy of morality through facts, while celebrated by many, was reacted against with equal passion. The headmaster of Cambridge’s normal school G. C. Drew lamented that the “feverish anxiety” for “the common school curriculum of which almost every subject science can furnish” is “a species of educational ephemera. Nothing can be more unphilosophical than to distract and confuse the slowly awakening faculties of the young by an unnecessary multiplication of subjects” (18). Drew encourages his teachers to instead pay attention to “their [students’] games, their studies—especially where by these latter the school is linked with the home” because they “will form a field for the constant manifestation and observation of every feeling of which the human being is susceptible” (25). Drew’s pedagogy attempts to port the play he links with the home space into the school—letting the students discover their own interests and observe their feelings, which he argues is the beginning of a student’s moral development (11). This development, according to Drew is the “awakening of the love of right, and the hate of

wrong” (25). For Drew, teaching is not the business of imparting facts, but of bringing out inner intelligences and natural observations, and leading children to morality. The teacher’s job is not to impart knowledge, but to “awaken a feeling of that great truth in [their] pupil by the veneration, the earnestness, and the magnetic devotion of [the teacher’s] mind” (19). In contrast to Dunn and Kay-Shuttleworth, Drew presents the teacher as a parental figure guiding his students through play, not a factory-like influence on product. Morality is not determined by correctness, but through exploration, religious devotion and earnest hard work. This philosophy is celebrated in the mid-century novel, and is learned most often in the realm of the genteel home and spaces like it.

It is worth noting how indebted the domestic philosophy of educationists like Drew is to Jean-Jaques Rousseau. While Rousseau’s name is not frequently invoked in much of the educational discussion during the period, there are clear correlations between the individualized process of education and internal awakenings Rousseau theorizes and narrates in *Emile*, and those that Drew and others wished to see in their pupils. The paternal male tutor of *Emile* was less viable instructor as institutionalization and education of the masses became more of a reality, but pedagogues like Drew, directly or indirectly, took those same values and applied them to the schoolteacher.

As such, many nineteenth-century educators would attempt to find a compromise between the works of Dunn, Shuttleworth, and Drew in the writings of an eighteenth century Swiss educator and theorist named Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. When Pestalozzi’s work was first translated into English in the early nineteenth century, dubbed “Pestalozzianism,” his philosophy became wildly popular among mid-century Educational editorialists. His work provided an idealized compromise between domestic

and institutionalized pedagogy. Pestalozzi succeeded in bridging this gap through his emphasis on educating children through ordered interaction with the natural world. He places the weight of his theories on what are loosely translated as “sense impressions” (Anschauung) a term he never clearly defines, but can be best described as a kind of affective knowledge children gain via interactions with nature and the world around them. He writes,

The child must be brought to a high degree of knowledge both of things seen and of words before it is reasonable to teach him to spell and read [...] at their earliest ages children need psychological training in gaining intelligent sense-impressions of all things. (58)

In other words, students require training in understanding basic influences, such as the recognition of words and the emotions associated with them, before being instructed in practical knowledge, such as reading and explication. In Pestalozzi’s mind, the best trainer for this task was the child’s mother working in tandem with a professional educator (Pestalozzi 45). Yet, while Pestalozzi encouraged an education based upon personal discovery, he also posited that these discoveries could only happen “through a well-arranged nomenclature, indelibly impressed, a general foundation for all kinds of knowledge can be laid” (93). While Pestalozzi advocated for the education of children in a domesticated space with the mother, thus allowing the inner intelligence to be awakened by the forces of the family home, the only way to access that knowledge was through the guidance of an educator. In particular, *his* guidance in the form of the curriculum he outlined in both his pedagogical guide *How Gertrude Teaches her Children* and his own novel *Leonard and Gertrude*. As Gargano states, “Pestalozzian

education bridged the gaps between institutionality and domesticity, as well as between standardization and inspired improvisation” (61).

However, unlike so many educationists, the novelists to be discussed in this chapter were not as enamored with this bridging. When the mid-century school novel attempts to bridge the gaps between the institution and the domestic it cannot do so for long, at least not with its teachers. Pestalozzi's ideal functions in the wrong direction—it encourages both the domestication of the school *and* the standardization of the home. For novelists like Dickens, the standardization of the home is a dangerous prospect, potentially regulating a space associated with the fancy of artistic creativity spurred by concepts of individuality. While educators may have been in a furor over Pestalozzi, forming a movement in his name, the novel was more critical. Good educators can become family, but family should never become the educator.

### ***David Copperfield: Dickensian Domesticity vs. the System***

The tension between the familial and the educational is highlighted in the portrayals of the two primary educators in Charles Dickens' novel *David Copperfield*, wherein both pedagogues represent the dangers of institutionalization. Mr. Creakle is a threat to the innocence and individuality of childhood, while Dr. Strong, an effective domestic teacher, is a threat to the stability of the family unit because he is unaware of the dangers of his profession. *David Copperfield*, being the quintessential Victorian bildungsroman, is not a school-centered narrative; however, over the course of the novel the eponymous protagonist attends two different schools—the urban boarding school Salem House, run by the cruel Mr. Creakle, and a country day school in Canterbury run

by Dr. Strong. The two instructors are set up as diametrically opposed representations, one of a domesticated pedagogy and the other of a corrupt standardized pedagogy. Mr. Creakle is an abusive simpleton who blindly follows a corrupt “system”, and Dr. Strong is a well-meaning if eccentric paternal figure.

Much of the critical discussion of Dr. Strong, Mr. Creakle, and their schools revolves around the autobiographical elements of the characters. Phillip Collins points out that Salem House was likely based on Dickens experience at Wellington House Academy, and was likely meant to satirize the masters there, despite the school’s general respectability (113). On the other hand, Collins accuses Dr. Strong of being “based partly on wish fulfillment” to “indulge [Dickens’] dream-self in an idyllic period at a happy school where he flourishes,” and argues that Dr. Strong’s school is presented in a dream-like quality with few details when compared with Creakle’s painfully detailed abuse (118). Gargano takes issue with this reading, pointing out that Dr. Strong’s vague schoolroom puts “a narrative focus on spirit rather than method,” and that according to her rhetoric of domestic education “Dr. Strong’s classroom methods are less significant than his character and ability to inspire” (81). While Mr. Creakle and Dr. Strong may be based on real life figures, Collins’ reading misses the social satire and commentary Dickens provides at the end of the novel. Creakle does not simply remain at Salem House; he runs a prison. Similarly, the thrust of Dr. Strong’s narrative is not about his school; it is about his marriage. Gargano reads his union as typifying his domesticity due to his “fatherly relation to his young wife” (80). However, Gargano does not take into account that, however paternal, Dr. Strong’s marriage is in a state of turmoil in the novel. While these readings point out that Dr. Strong and Mr. Creakle personify two poles of the

educational spectrum, they miss that both characters become victims of the institutional schools metastasizing into the domestic realm. Creakle fully embraces "the system" due to his past as a failed businessman and its promises of stability, while Dr. Strong's marital problems are directly tied to his inability to separate his home life from that of his school. These problems are only fixed when Strong enforces the division, and retires from the institution entirely.

Dr. Strong and his school are heavily coded in paternalistic rhetoric, yet Dickens also never lets the reader forget that, however homey it may be, it is still a school. David remarks that Dr. Strong was "the idol of the whole school" because "he was the kindest of men; with simple faith in him that might have touched the stone hearts of the very urns upon the wall" (231). David is emphatic that without Dr. Strong's goodwill and faith the school would have been "badly composed" (231). It is through this kindness that Dr. Strong can "appeal to the honor and good faith of the boys" and that allows for a "sound system" in which the boys "felt that [they] had a part in the management of the [school], and in sustaining its character and dignity," thus allowing the boys to spend their time "playing mobile games" and giving them "plenty of liberty" (231). Dr. Strong's school is run through kindness and faith; Strong does not impose his will on his boys, they maintain good order because of their faith in him. In appealing to his pupil's innate sense of honor and goodness, like Drew advocates, Dr. Strong inspires the love of right and the hate of wrong through a simple guiding presence. He allows them to learn through play, giving them their "liberty" to inspire their personal growth. However, a "sound system" still must be maintained. Dr. Strong's school is still a school, while students have "liberty" they are still separated from the nurturing realm of the home, as is Strong

himself, and, while this is ultimately beneficial for his students, this has a dramatic effect on his personal life.

Strong has correctly brought the home into the institution, becoming a surrogate father for David in many ways, but he has also made the fatal mistake of bringing the institution into his home. The crux of Dr. Strong's marital problems, the discussion of Mrs. Strong's possible adultery, rests on the fact that Mrs. Strong does not know her place in their marriage. Upon Annie's admission that she and her cousin did have romantic inclinations—although she never acted on them—she tells her husband, “my first associations with knowledge of any kind were inseparable from a patient friend and teacher” (645). She continues that as Dr. Strong became her “benefactor,” she became afraid that she “had better have remained [his] pupil, and almost [his] child” than his wife (645). The Strong's ultimately forgive one another, and Mrs. Strong is placed safely within the realm of the wife. Now retired and safely outside of the institution, the book can end with the Strong's living in domestic bliss. However, it is Dr. Strong's profession, along with Mrs. Strong's age, that causes the categorical confusion between student, wife and daughter that is emblematic of Mrs. Strong's struggle. Dr. Strong quite literally brings his work home with him—he marries a pupil. In fact, Dr. Strong spends most of his time in the novel treating her like a naïve and innocent girl, “almost his child,” rather than a partner (645). While the bridging of the domestic sphere into the institutional is a boon to his students, the institution sneaks its way into his home life. While his fatherly relationship with his wife may typify his domesticity, it is the student-teacher relationship that they bring home that threatens to undermine it.



While Dr. Strong's experience is a commentary on the malignancy of institutional ideology, however beneficial, invading the home life. His foil, Mr. Creakle, is Dickens' commentary on the Dunn model of education. Mr. Creakle's Salem House is described as the "most forlorn and desolate place" that David has ever seen, defined only by its desks, forms and "scraps of old copy-books and exercises" that "litter the dirty floor," mirroring the descriptions of the factories David works at later in the novel (74). Upon meeting Mr. Creakle, David-as-narrator interjects to let the reader know that Mr. Creakle "had been taken to the schooling business after being bankrupt in hops" and that he "knew nothing himself, but the art of slashing, being more ignorant [...] than the lowest boy in school" (82). Mr. Creakle is a failed businessman who goes into the field of education to make money, and ultimately becomes a failed teacher. He has no knowledge of how to run a school and thus relies on abuse to keep his students in line. Creakle lacks Dr. Strong's kindness and warmth, and thus "he was the sternest and most severe of masters [...] charging in among the boys like a trooper, and slashing away, unmercifully" in his attempts to instill what he sees as order (82). Creakle is the worst embodiment of Dunn's pedagogies. A whip-cracker, he can only enforce industry through the end of his switch, which he uses at any opportunity when a student fails to perform what he deems as correct behavior. Mr. Creakle is allowed to teach because, despite his ignorance and cruelty, he follows the "system," Dickens' buzz word for the bureaucratic mandates and policies that standardized schooling.

Mr. Creakle, as the avatar of "the system," makes the dramatic leap from school master to the magistrate of a government prison to accentuate Dickens' criticism. This position would seem like the perfect fit for the violent and order-driven Creakle. Yet,

when David arrives at the prison, he finds that it is a place of “supreme comfort,” where the prisoners receive better care than “paupers [...] soldiers, sailors, laborers, [and] the great bulk of the honest, working community” (828). David learns that this is because “the ‘system’ required high living” and that “nobody appeared to have the least idea that there was any other system, but *the* system, to be considered” (828). Mr. Creakle’s sudden shift to kindness only occurs because the “system” tells him to do so. He is the abusive dolt that is allowed to run a school because he follows the standards, but those same standards allow villainous criminals the creature comforts that many in the working classes would not see in their lifetime. For Dickens, the state apparatus is imbecilic, it creates schools that run like prisons, and prisons that run like school. The institution that should punish is kind, the institution that should be kind is violent. The problem with the standardization agenda, then, is not only that it tries to impose order upon a child’s natural development, but that the system itself is flawed. The standardizers factory-like insistence on correctness and efficiency leads to abuse to meet goals. Creakle is the monster standardization allows into a position to influence children. The only way Creakle can show kindness is when he is forced to, and he is only forced to do so in the wrong place.

In *David Copperfield*, educators are left in a no-win situation. The ordered regimentation that Creakle represents does not raise upright and earnest citizens like David, it punishes them. The children are not the focus, the standards are. Mr. Creakle is a slave to the system. On the other hand, Dr. Strong brings out the inner morality of students through a paternal benevolence, bringing the home into the school, yet simultaneously fails to keep his professional life from intruding on his personal one. A

teacher who follows too many standards is a slave to them, but one who forgoes them too much runs the risk of confusing the standards of the institution with that of the domestic space. One can bring the home into the school, but not the other way around. The only answer, as with Dr. Strong's retirement, is to remove oneself from the system entirely.

### **Hard Times: The Malignant Corruption of Facts-Based Pedagogy**

This mismanagement of spaces becomes a recurring theme for many of Dickens' novels. In *Hard Times* Dickens introduces Mr. Gradgrind, a man who runs both his family and professional life with factory-like regimentation and precision, and whose inability to separate the home and the school leads to the moral degeneration of his family—degeneration that can only be stopped when Gradgrind embraces the role of the domestic father. Far from Dr. Strong who unwittingly lets his professional life into his personal one, Mr. Gradgrind intentionally runs his home like a school rather than the school like a home. Lauren Cameron argues that Dickens throughout *Hard Times* is “playing with the inverse of the image of room as mind,” and, via portraying Mr. Gradgrind as a character willing to dictate to his students “good taste,” shows a “disapproval of the potential social engineering that could arise from a government-promoted taste” (76). The correlation between the physical space in *Hard Times* with its characters' moral and intellectual developments is evident, Coketown's identical red brick houses perfectly reflect the one size fits all pedagogy of the Gradgrind school. Nevertheless, Dickens' criticism is not just about government-promoted taste, but government-promoted *morality*. After all, both G.C. Drew and James Kay-Shuttleworth saw their methods as the best way to teach children the “correct” ways of conducting

themselves in the public world. If one gives them the right facts, they will think the right way. As Anne Hiebert Alton argues, *Hard Times* was in many ways a direct critique of Kay-Shuttleworth's pedagogy specifically. Just like Mr. Gradgrind, Kay-Shuttleworth had good intentions in trying to educate the poor in particular. Dickens is trying to refute Kay-Shuttleworth's philosophy that moral degeneracy is a result of the poor's "barbarous" habits. Alton writes that one of Dickens main goals with the novel was to "express the point that poverty and lack of education do not necessarily equal degeneracy" ultimately undermining the bedrock of Shuttleworth's teaching philosophy (74). What Dickens critiques in *Hard Times* is Shuttleworth's claims that morality could be taught through certain "ascertained truths." Thus, the crux of Mr. Gradgrind's dilemma in the book is that his facts bring about the moral ruin of his family, and it is only when he is realizing the error of his ways, and embraces the "fancy" of the domestic ideal and his role as traditional father, that his family can be reunited.

At the beginning of the novel, Mr. Gradgrind is clothed in an exaggerated version of Shuttleworth's philosophy. Gradgrind is described as "a man of realities. A man of facts and calculations...With a rule and a pair of scales, and the multiplication table always in his pocket, Sir, ready to weigh and measure any parcel of human nature" (2). Dickens is satirizing the very idea of standardization by characterizing the schoolmaster as a man whose mission it is to "weigh and measure" the abstract concept of "human nature" – the same words Dunn uses to describe the "enterprise" of teaching. The very idea of quantifying the abstract is a parody of Shuttleworth's insistence that the "truth" of political theory, and thus morality, is something that can be imparted to a pupil through

facts and repetition. To further Dickens' satire, Gradgrind attempts to teach his students factual "taste" via a diatribe against floral carpeting:

You are to be in all things regulated and governed [...] by fact. We hope to have, before long, a board of fact, composed of commissioners of fact, who will force the people to be a people of fact, and of nothing but fact [...] You must use [...] for all these purposes, combinations and modifications (in primary colours) of mathematical figures which are susceptible of proof and demonstration. This is the new discovery. This is fact. This is taste. (5)

As Lauren Cameron states, this is an example of Dickens equating the room and the mind. Floral carpeting is fanciful because it is not "governed by fact"—flowers do not grow on carpets. Dickens is revealing the absurdity of attempting to teach morality or taste through brutal calculus. This satire is built upon hyperbole—the constant repetition (7 times) of the word fact, the rapid staccato of his clauses, all ramp up to the word "taste," a word so vague and subjective as to be meaningless. The very idea that the government would care about a citizen's taste in carpet is humorous. Yet, if the government-funded schools were attempting to teach the *right* morals and politics, why stop there? Yes, Dickens satire escalates the problems quickly. However, for a culture, and author, which celebrated the independent nuclear family as the backbone of society, the idea that the government would come and tell your children what and how to think—even if it is based on "facts"—was a terrifying one. Thus, the Shuttleworthian Gradgrind must learn the terrors of what happens when one loses one's individuality and spirit.

Mr. M'Choakumchild, Gradgrind's head teacher, is the personification of this loss of individuality. Mr. M'Choakumchild is the perfect mechanized product of the industrial school system. The narrator recounts that

he and some one hundred and forty other schoolmasters had been lately turned at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many

pianoforte legs. He had been put through an immense variety of paces and had answered volumes of head-breaking questions. (6)

M'Choakumchild is an exact duplicate of 140 similarly manufactured teachers; the industrial metaphor is hereby made explicit. He has proven his homogeneity with the other teachers through his “paces” and “head breaking questions.” In Gradgrind's school, M'Choakumchild is the perfect example of what a student should be—a uniform copy of his classmates, capable of providing the correct answers to commissioners of fact. He is a man who has already been beat-down by standardized pedagogy. His spirit dead, he is the perfect vessel to disseminate the Gradgrindian philosophy.

But Mr. Gradgrind's children, Louisa, and Tom still have some spirit left and are thus able to prove to their father that his “facts” do not lead to proper moral development. By the end of the novel, Gradgrind has moved from being headmaster to a member of parliament, a job Dickens continually derides as “the national cinder-heap” where Gradgrind burns letters and gets nothing done (147). Luckily, this means that Mr. Gradgrind leaves his school and is, therefore, free of the profession so that he might learn his lesson and become domestically enlightened. This occurs after Louisa's emotional breakdown when he approaches her husband to ask for a separation. Here Gradgrind admits,

the enlightenment has been painfully forced upon me [...] I think there are qualities in Louisa, which [...] have been harshly neglected [...] and a little perverted...and I would suggest to you, that [...] if you would kindly meet me in a timely endeavor to leave her to her better nature for a while—and to encourage it to develop itself by tenderness and consideration [...] it would be far better for the happiness of all of us. (180)

Gradgrind has his own inward awakening forced upon him by his daughter. Her “nature” will not develop without time to herself and the consideration of her family. Gradgrind's

*real* education can only occur through his family and life experience, not through the school, and so must Louisa's. But Gradgrind can only do this when he becomes a member of parliament, not when he is still a functioning Headmaster. In the world of *Hard Times*, domesticity is the cure for Gradgrind's ills. It can be brought to him through Louisa, and even ancillary characters like Sissy, and usher in some level of moral redemption to the neigh-adultress Louisa and in the letter from gambling Tom's deathbed. Thus, while Mr. Gradgrind learns his lesson and returns to London reformed, Mr. M'Choakumchild is dropped from the narrative completely, presumably toiling away in his school like a machine with no future in sight.

In *Hard Times*, Dickens doubles down on the domestic ideal as a portable curative ideology. *Hard Times* provides no "good" pedagogues like Dr. Strong, but it does on some level provide a quasi-redemption narrative for standardizers. Mr. Gradgrind's failure as an educator is equated with his failure as a father. Once he reclaims his fatherhood, he is redeemed, the urgency to reclaim his educational position is not needed. The institution is no longer important to the narrative of the story either; it exists in the peripheries with McChokumchild. If one institutionalizes their life, there is no escaping the inevitable destruction, once the choice is made one can either repent and live with the consequences—a ruined family—like Mr. Gradgrind, or remain in a state of robotic ignorance doomed to be unfulfilled and forgotten like McChokumchild.

### **Tom Brown's School Days and an Attempt at Pestalozzianism**

While *Hard Times* is a novel based on criticizing the institution, Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's School Days* is a novel with the opposite goal. Hughes' novel is

set in a fictionalized version of Rugby public school, an institution that Hughes describes as “much-abused and much-belauded” (28). Unlike Dickens, Hughes wishes to portray the institution as a place where personal and moral growth can happen outside of the home. The boarding school is the perfect setting for this as an institution where students would seemingly be completely removed from home life. Yet, little of *Tom Brown’s School Days* takes place in a classroom, or around teachers. The book’s primary focus is on celebrating the fraternal relationships that the boys form on the sports field and in the church yard. As John Reed points out, Hughes was primarily working against the image of the public school set up by critics like Dickens. Reed writes that, in pulling emphasis away from the classroom, “Hughes depicted public school life in which juvenile politics and particularly juvenile sports were preeminent. The image of dull, unchallenged brutality and tyranny was successfully contradicted” (67-68). For an institution, the sports field, and the church were the closest places to the home. They were the spaces in which a boy could form brotherly bonds through games and celebrations with his schoolfellows, or come to learn from the heavenly father. Yet, as Dieter Petzold points out, this moving away from the classroom is not so anti-hierarchical as one would think. He argues that *Tom Brown’s School Days* still portrays a classified system in which “only through learning to obey can one learn to become a leader” (18). This correlates with Kay-Shuttleworth and Dunn’s philosophies—follow the system, obey the rules and work efficiently to learn the correct way of thinking and anyone can become leader. While Reed and Petzold point to the ways the novel can waffle between valuing standardization and fraternity, the novel’s objective, however, as the narrator himself points out, is to show that public schools are not places to “ram Latin and Greek into boys” but to “make



them good English Boys,” and “good future citizens” (Hughes 28). Hughes’ goal is to temper the bad reputation of the institution with domestic rhetoric, and he uses the teacher in the novel to do this. The Doctor is a carrier of domesticity, the spaces he occupies and the way he “teaches” his prized pupils contrast with the men under his command. The school may be an institution, but it is under the direction of a domestic leader, who, by the end of the novel and his death, becomes a part of the family rather than the school.

In this way, Rugby is characterized throughout the novel as a pseudo-Pestalozzian school in which institutional curriculum, such as the monitorial system, is tempered by the presence of a panoptical father figure. As Foucault famously argues, all institutions in the industrial age, including the school and the factory, incorporate this “disciplinary gaze” (174). This would seem like a perfect fit for a Creakle or Gradgrind, but here the gaze is domesticated. Instead of discipline in the denotative sense, Rugby functions with a fatherly gaze, one that still reserves the threat of punishment, but incorporates affective punishments like disappointment and shame as well.

Nevertheless, the plot of the novel becomes un-pestalozzian as it does not bring the school home with Tom and the other boys, so the institution remains safely separate. Nevertheless, *Tom Brown’s School Days* portrays the institution as the thing most needed to keep the rebellious English boys of Rugby in line. When Tom enters the fourth form at Rugby, he describes the group as being “unhappily constituted” and full of rebellious teens who were “not trusted to prepare their lessons before coming in, but were whipped into school” and forced to hammer in a quarter hour “their twenty lines of Virgil and Euripides” while “the masters of the lower school walked up and down the great school

together [...] keeping such order as was possible” (75). Hughes highlights the monitorial method here, the splitting up of students into forms by age and skill level, as well as creating a hierarchy of masters and prefects to maintain order. The only way that the rebellious young Englishmen can be kept in line is when they are forced, under constant supervision, to be industrious. Their Virgil and Euripides exercises are the products of a specifically timed period of manufacture in which they must produce, or are physically punished. Unlike the way Dickens presents Salem House, this system is shown to be effectual, the masters are not monsters for enforcing this system, they are simply trying to get their students to the next stage in their development—the next form.

This is contrasted with the depictions of the Doctor. The classroom is the space in which the masters of the form play foreman and whip young men into shape, but the Doctor’s office portrays a contrasting domestic flavor. During one of Tom’s first visits to the Doctor’s house he describes entering a room in which the Doctor is carving a sailing boat with some boys as “so kindly, and homely, and comfortable that [Tom and his friends] took heart in a moment” (71). During a time when Tom should be most fearful about his punishment, he enters the most domestic of spaces in the entire school. Oddly enough, this domestic space is at the very heart of it—the Headmaster’s office. In fact, the Doctor is remarkably forgiving for this particular mischief and lets them leave his home without “even twenty lines to learn!” (72). While Rugby is clearly a standardized school—the monitorial system ensures the students are producing their work and advancing through the forms—at the heart of the school is a man associated with kindness and the “homely.” The school room may be run by the masters of the form and

the monitors, but the domesticated head master's desk is always there, above them, observing.

Most of the novel keeps this balance: the Doctor leads Tom through his own personal awakening through a series of manipulations, while the masters and monitors work him through his lessons. However, at the very end of the novel, when the Doctor dies, he is no longer this balanced guiding figure. Hughes places the Doctor, and the teacher generally, within the realm of the family. After Tom hears news of the death, he visits his old headmaster's grave. Here the narrator remarks, "let us leave him" with the man who taught him to feel "the drawing of the bond which links all living souls together in one brotherhood" (184). Of course, Hughes is referencing both Christian and national "brotherhood" here, but this also codes human relationships, even at their most distant, as being inherently familial. In the final paragraph of the novel, the narrator contends that the only way for a young man to learn of this bond is "through our mysterious human relationships—through the love and tenderness and purity of mothers and sisters and wives, through the strength and courage and wisdom of fathers and brothers and teachers" (185). Hughes places the Doctor, and teachers, within the realm of the family, so that they help teach the values of the nuclear home. Gone are any professional connotations, gone are any of Arnold's associations with Rugby. Instead Arnold becomes akin to a father or a brother—a valorized domestic hero meant to inspire. Ultimately, the last moment in the text does not defend Rugby or institutionalized education; it still places the emphasis on moral development within the home and the family.

### **Villette: The Teacher's Perspective and the Fear of Becoming**

As the discussion of Dickens and Hughes has shown, teachers faced a double bind, wherein they were supposed to be familial and yet also part of an institutional system. These paradoxical goals trouble Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, a novel where the divide between public and private is in need of constant negotiation. Protagonist Lucy Snowe is caught between her life as an independent school teacher, and the social responsibilities brought about by the re-discovery of her extended family. *Villette* is in many ways both a bildungsroman, telling the story of Lucy's moral development with her aunt and cousins, and a school story from the teacher's perspective, where she must reign in wild and precocious Continental girls and teach them superior British values. In fact, as Monica Feinberg examines, at first, the two primary spaces of the book, La Terrasse and Rue Fossette (the family home and the boarding school) are described as homey spaces that offer seclusion and safety. Feinberg writes that despite being "situated at the very center of an international, cosmopolitan city" Rue Fossette, is isolated from the rest of the city, without any real history or access to the public (181). Lucy, an orphan, begins to think of Rue Fossette as a kind of home, guarded from the city and the intrusion of industry. Yet, as Feinberg argues, when the students and teachers leave the school for the holidays and Lucy is left alone with no family to return to, she is confronted with the fact of Rue Fossette's institutionality. Feinberg posits that the seclusion Rue Fossette offers

is synonymous with exclusion; thus, depending on whether one is inside or outside, 'guarded' can mean protection from intrusion as well as prevention of escape. What is wrong with such institutions seems to be the very fact that they are institutions, that they are places that can only imitate homes with residents who can only pretend to be a family. (181)

While Headmistress Madame Beck attempts to keep the girls safe from the influences of the public sphere and preserve their domesticity, she is an autocrat. Constantly associated

with “surveillance” she uses her panoptical influence, not to spread or rule through domestic virtues like the Doctor, but to enforce regimen and efficiency. Thus, Gargano argues that Lucy’s “domestic academy,” founded at the end of the novel, represents a domesticated foil to Rue Fossette (48).

Lucy’s school, however, is only a foil to Rue Fossette momentarily, before the success of the school foreshadows a pull-back into the realm of institutionality. While Lucy starts her independent career with a small school, by the last page of the novel, Lucy is running a full *Pensionnat*<sup>9</sup> like Rue Fossette. The book ends with Lucy in a conflicted state—the prospect of becoming M. Paul’s wife and forgoing her profession or maintaining her professional career and risking becoming like Madame Beck. When Lucy first begins her tenure at Rue Fossette she is a semi-maternal figure despite her aloof personality, she is the teacher that cares for the sick little girls and mentors Ginerva Fanshawe despite their antagonistic relationship. As the novel progresses, however, she increasingly becomes a disciplinarian figure. In this way, *Villette* presents a domestic education that, however portable, is always in danger of becoming institutional, and the ways in which this is particularly problematic for female educators. *Villette*, through the narration of a teacher, proves that domesticity is not as easily portable as other novelists seem to believe, the school is always in danger of becoming a business, particularly for women who have few economic opportunities outside of the education field and to whom the domestic sphere represents an all-or-nothing aspect of their identity.

From the first moments of her time in Labassecour, Lucy remarks on Madame Beck’s penchant for order. Lucy describes the headmistress as having “high

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<sup>9</sup> The French equivalent to the British public school

administrative powers” and as having “her own system for managing and regulating this mass of machinery, and a very pretty system it was [...] ‘surveillance,’ ‘espionage’—these were her watchwords” (64). Unlike the Doctor whose surveillance of the schoolroom keeps his masters and monitors from going too far, Madame Beck’s surveillance is the key behind her “machinery” that keeps everyone following her rules. Her job is not to educate, but to regulate her “very pretty system.” Thus, when Lucy is placed in front of a classroom for the first time, frightened and inexperienced, she mimics Beck. Seeing in her students “eyes full of an insolent light, and brows hard and unblushing as marble,” Lucy realizes that she must “get command over the wild herd and bring them into training” (70). When a girl attempts to interrupt the lesson by locking Lucy in a closet, Lucy throws the girl in the closet, “the door [...] shut, and the key in [her] pocket,” only to return “to the estrade, courteously request silence” and watch as “the pens traveled peacefully over the pages” as “the remainder of the lesson passed in order and industry” (71-72). Like Beck, Lucy keeps a steady surveillance on the girls to “bring them into training” and punishes them when they turn on her. All of this keeps the girls quiet and industrious. Lucy is shown to be a proto-Beck here, and as she moves towards owning her own school, and experiences the domesticated instruction of her tutor M. Paul, she increasingly begins to move herself away from the institution and towards her dreams of the domestic day school.

When Lucy is put under examination by the University as a part of M. Paul’s certification process, Lucy’s shift away from institutionalized pedagogy becomes apparent. Lucy has been studying under her colleague M. Paul for months; Lucy’s account of M. Paul’s pedagogy is that he is “very kind, very good,” and “very

forbearing,” mimicking the domestic rhetoric seen with Dr. Strong and the Doctor (329).

Yet, when the young masters from the University arrive and administer her tests she freezes: “The ideas were there, but not words.” Finally, Lucy is asked to compose an essay, the process of which she narrates in detail:

...the matter was new to me, and I had no material for its treatment. However, I got books, read up the facts, laboriously constructed a skeleton out of the dry bones of the real, and then clothed them, and tried to breathe into them life, and in this last aim I had pleasure. With me it was a difficult and anxious time till my facts were found, selected, and properly jointed; nor could I rest from research and effort till I was satisfied of correct anatomy; but the knowledge was not there in my head, ready and mellow; it had not been sown in Spring, grown in Summer, harvested in Autumn, and garnered through Winter; whatever I wanted I must go out and gather fresh; glean of wild herbs my lapful, and shred them green into the pot. Messieurs Boisse and Rochemorte did not perceive this. They mistook my work for the work of a ripe scholar (375-376).

Brontë’s critique is pointed; the subject of the essay is foreign to Lucy; the composition is made up of regurgitated facts in a scientific manner compared to a skeleton. The composition figuratively has no “meat,” it simply has to have the correct “anatomy”—be in the correct order. For Lucy, knowledge is something tended like a crop throughout the year, but all the university desires is the harvest, the wild herbs that may or may not be there. What’s worse is that Masters Boisse and Rochemorte are completely fooled by her composition, while Lucy, having been properly educated by M. Paul, can tell that it is tripe. These standardized men consider it the work of a “ripe young scholar” in contrast to the unripe work she produces. Not only does the test not do anything for Lucy—she neither grows morally or intellectually—but the standardized pedagogues are so inept at their jobs they cannot tell good work from bad. Her work follows a standardized order like Madame Beck’s “pretty system,” but the system encourages no internal development. While Lucy never questions the idea of standardized systems directly, from this moment

forward Lucy moves away from her idealization of Becke into her romance with M. Paul, equating Beck with a similar "suppression" (449). M. Paul provides an example of domesticated education for Lucy, and her experience with the professors from the university provide her with an experience of the "suppression" of the standardized system, allowing her to resist Beck's.

However, the school provides economic opportunities for Lucy despite this suppression, particularly for a young single woman. When Lucy is provided with an example of a "real" home in La Terrasse, the novel's focus shifts away from Lucy's struggle as a new to teacher to her interactions with her family—particularly her cousin John, and his love interest Paulina. During a family meal with John, Paulina and their parents, the subject of Paulina's education is brought up. John informs the table that Lucy is employed at a school. Lucy informs Paulina and her father that she "is a teacher" and remarks that she "felt rather glad of the opportunity of saying this" (266). Paulina, a picture of doll-like domestic beauty, is filled with dismay and pity, asking why she continues to work even though Lucy admits that she does not always enjoy her profession. Lucy answers, "chiefly, I fear, for the sake of the money I get" (266). This scene highlights the connection between the standardized school, personified in Lucy's capitalist desires, and the domestic ideal personified in Paulina, who it is revealed was kicked out of a school because of her father's pampering. Their relationship highlights the ways in which the ideal of domestic education is complicated for female students and teachers. Teaching is Lucy's only source of economic support, as she is anxious to admit. Lucy describes letting her family know she is a teacher as if she is revealing a long-kept secret, and hedges revealing why she keeps a job she clearly does not enjoy. Yet, she



does not conform to Paulina's opinions of her profession either. Although nervous, she is not embarrassed, she does not "blush" or "look confused" because she is "spared the pain of being a burden to anybody" (266). Paulina's alternative is being totally dependent upon her father or John. The institution provides Lucy with an opportunity she otherwise would not have, and the domestic ideal, while still respected by Lucy, is burdensome and confining. While Beck's school threatens to turn her into a mechanical dictator, the home is a place where Lucy is pained by the burden by her own lack of mobility.

Thus, as the novel reaches its close and Lucy commits herself to M. Paul, she and Paul also attempt to port domesticity into the school space. Lucy's independent day school would seem to be a foil to Rue Fossette and the Athénée then; however, as M. Paul leaves to enlighten the Americas, the specter of Lucy's institutionalization, the proto-Beck, returns. Lucy narrates that her day school "became a pensionnat; that also prospered" a reprieve that could only be brought about by a "relieved heart" that comes with her impending marriage to M. Paul (460). M. Paul is described as a "spring which moved [her] energies" (461). Like a domestic educator and a husband should, M. Paul inspires inward reflection and action; he reinvigorates Lucy's spirit. In one way, Lucy's domestic desires inspire and prompt her professional aspirations. Yet, alluding to the institutionalized space of the pennsionat, rather than a domesticated day school, conjures the specter of Beck and the false home of Rue Fossette. It is also telling that the school prospers when M. Paul is overseas. Lucy is allowed some form of mobility when M. Paul is not present. While from afar he can be the "spring" from which she draws her "energies," his physical presence would complicate the politics of her budding school—

already built upon his reputation and funds. As the novel speeds towards its finale there is only one generic option to resolve the romance plot – Lucy’s marriage.

But the novel does not provide that ending. M. Paul’s ship is scattered against the rocks and Lucy abruptly stops the narrative. “Let there be enough said,” she writes, “let [the reader] picture union and happy succeeding life” (462). Thus, the fate of what happens to M. Paul is left paused; we are given no more detail. Lucy’s life is left in a perpetual state of anticipation. Unlike Dickens and Hughes, the novel cannot resolve itself with Lucy wedding into domestic bliss, this would take away all of the mobility and independence Lucy has worked for throughout the novel. Nevertheless, she can neither be the teacher-spinster or she would be renouncing the home and family she also worked to build and that ultimately saved her from her sickening isolation. This, on one level, highlights the tension faced by many female teachers; they could either take one of the few professional positions available to them for a chance at mobility, or give it up and get married for a chance at stability and to fulfill cultural expectations in an attempt to achieve “happiness.” On the other, the ending of *Villette* presents the catch-22 that many teachers, in life as well as in fiction, lived in the midst of this era of educational debate. Standardization gives Lucy and other teachers the opportunities of professionalization and the economic stimulus needed to run their schools and live their lives, yet, the model also dehumanized the entire educational process reducing the children to products and the teachers to businesspeople like Beck, Creakle and Gradgrind. Meanwhile, bringing the home into the school undermined the teacher’s credibility in the public space, reducing them to pale parental surrogates. Nevertheless, Brontë still favors M. Paul, she still despises Beck, Rue Fossette, and the Athénée. While the specter of the institution hovers

around Lucy's school, what Lucy's relationship with M. Paul provides – the little day school built just outside the little townhouse, is the ideal option. The ending of *Villette* simply shows that that option, however preferable, cannot last long when the temptation of the Pensionnat lingers.

As the discussion of these novels shows, teachers occupy an anxious space in Victorian society. As childhood was increasingly becoming associated with the domestic sphere, industrialization and greater political involvement demonstrated the need for out-of-home schooling, teachers were at the center of the debate between the ideal and the reality. As the standardization movement pushed towards its idea of compromise with the works of Pestalozzi, the novel was a place where an alternative could be tested. Dickens' novels actively criticized the standardization movements, pointing to the flaws in their fact-based philosophies. Only the heartless would crush a student's dreams and personality for the sake of bureaucracy. "Good" teachers were a kind of pseudo-parent, inspiring the best in their students through a school made an extension of the home. Thomas Hughes would employ the same tactics in attempting to soften the view of the most institutional of schools, the public school, and ultimately turn the Doctor into a pseudo-parent of transcendental importance. Even Charlotte Brontë, whose view is the most conflicted, having lived and worked in the midst of this debate, and whose gender presented unique complications, still idealized the domestic and the revitalizing energies of the family over the regimentation of school. Luckily, in the world of these fictions, domesticity could be brought anywhere, it could fix any institutional ill. As the school societies increasingly embraced standardization and its promises of a more organized and

educated future, these novels warn of a loss of individuality, of the abuse of childhood dreams and imagination, and of the loss of traditional middle class values; values that only the domestic space could instill. Teachers like Creakle and Gradgrind become the exemplars of this fate, and even Dr. Strong becomes a warning of how easily these losses creep into other spaces. But teachers like the Doctor and M. Paul can prevent or even reverse that loss. The institution is dangerous and must be regulated and the correct teacher, if they carry that domestic ideal with them and remain vigilant despite temptation, can provide that regulation.

## Chapter 2: A Moral Education: Middle-Class Novelistic Critique of Middle-Class Standardization

The introduction to the 1848 edition of *The Quarterly Education Magazine and Record of the Home and Colonial School Society* lays the groundwork of what many educational reformers saw as the fundamental problem with the English education system—the ineffectual education of the poor. The editors write,

The wise of this world have been content to be wise alone or, lacking themselves the true knowledge, have not understood its value to others. Ages and generations have rolled on, and the people have still been condemned to the bondage of moral ignorance and its consequent degradation, while the language of even professed teachers has too often, in effect, been, “This people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed.” (2)

Their introduction sets up a clear dichotomy between the “wise people,” the educated classes, and “the people,” those classes that are not educated. The Home and Colonial School Society, being an organization made up of primarily charity schools, had a vested interest in the education of the poor; however, this focus on how the well-to-do were educating the lower classes is echoed in the works of educational reformers throughout the 1840s and 1850s. Both James Kay-Shuttleworth, and G. C. Drew, reformers on the opposite ends of the domestic vs. standardized spectrum, used their philosophies to address the inequality in education between the poor and the rich. Kay-Shuttleworth writes that, despite the best efforts of charity schools, without regulation they “are utterly insufficient to produce a deep and permanent moral impression on the people” (40). Drew, on the other hand, argues that “under such [a] system” as Shuttleworth’s standardization “the people would become imitators and rulemen,” and ultimately lack independent moral or spiritual thought (48).

Yet, despite this emphasis on “the people” among reformers, only one of the novels discussed so far has addressed the education of “the people” at all. *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*, *Villette* and *David Copperfield’s* schools are all institutions that cater to the young bourgeois; only the Gradgrind school caters to a working-class clientele. Yet, even in *Hard Times*, most of the novel focuses on the Gradgrind children, rather than his working class pupils like Sissy Jupe, whose story bookends the novel. Both domestic and standardized educators were debating the best way to educate the poor and working classes while the novels play out the domestic vs. institution debate in settings like the public school, pennsionats, and the middle-class boarding schools modeled after them. While both the political and novelistic arguments are concerned with how, and in what space, children should be educated, they focus on entirely different groups of students. This difference in pupils should effect both the social and fictional commentaries on teachers. Yet, what remains in both is a remarkable similarity in narrative, whether students are laterally or horizontally related to their teachers, the effects of the heretofore outlined “bad teacher,” whether one views the standardizer as a bad teacher or not, are relatively uniform. This is startling because, according to both Kay-Shuttleworth and former school inspector Matthew Arnold middle-class schools were not facing the same challenges the schools of the poor were.<sup>10</sup> Yet, the uniformity in diagnosis of the bad teacher – whether said teacher exacerbates existing problems for many standardizers, or

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<sup>10</sup> Kay-Shuttleworth in his *Memorandum on Popular Education* (1868) calls middle-class private and public schools the “foundation schools” on which schools for the “populace” should be based (65). Arnold, on the other hand, in “Democracy” divides middle-class schools between those for the aristocratic upper-middle class and the “commercial middle-class.” Those schools for the upper-middle class have a “superior confidence, spirt, and style” while those of the “commercial middle” and working classes require state intervention (18-19).

are largely at the root of it for many of the novelists —comes back to the question of “moral education” posed in the introduction. As much as the bad teacher is scapegoated by both novelists and educationists, standardizers and domesticators, “proper morality” is the panacea. While the last chapter discussed the disagreements between what was the best mode to deliver “proper morality,” this chapter will expand outward to discuss the ideological implications of this emphasis on “moral education” and how the difference in focus between the domestic and the institution as sites of learning reflects a larger cultural conflict over what values middle-class Victorians wanted to see instilled in their children, as well as the children of the poor.

The education of the poor and working classes was not an idea unique to the Victorians. However, with the passage of the Reform Acts enfranchising people lower and lower down the economic scale, the focus of politicians around the education of those people soon followed. The years between the 1832 and 1867 would see not only the swell in government grants to the school societies, but five School Sites Acts, the School Grants Act, and the Grammar School Act<sup>11</sup> (Gillard). The reform acts gave people control of their government in ways they had never had access to before, and many of these people may or may not have had access to education. For those in political power, as people increasingly lower down the social scale became enfranchised, the more their position relied upon the voting power of people who may or may not have been educated generally, let alone “correctly.” Even today in England, the United States, and

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<sup>11</sup> Post the 2nd Reform Act England would see the government taking dramatic oversight over the traditionally elite public schools with the Public School Act of 1868 and, in 1870, the first school boards would be founded under the Elementary Education Act, which would effectively lay the groundwork for true government administered education (Gillard).

abroad, discussion of civic engagement revolves around the “informed” voter. This voter, presumably, would be educated through the primary level, at the very least, and could actively and articulately engage with the body politic. Thus, as England gradually began moving toward parliamentary democracy as we know it today, the powers that be, at least in the most noble of assumptions, would want an “informed” body of new voters. In the least noble of assumptions, those in positions of power would want a system wherein they could instill values into the minds of young voters that reflected those of the empowered classes themselves.

It is no wonder then that many educational reformers, with a patronizing superiority, saw the teacher’s job as that of a replacement parent. To them, the parents of the working classes were unable to morally educate their children because of the inherent moral deficiencies of their class, and it was the job of the presumably middle-class teacher to instill that morality. In Richard Johnson’s analysis of mid-century school inspectors, he explains that Shuttleworth’s middle-class overseers noted in their reports, “on a relatively trivial level, the sports, the amusements, the language and the lack of ‘civility’ of working people was severely censured,” while they criticized the “pathological tendency in domestic relations” (105). Johnson continues that by

reading [these reports], it is easy enough to believe that the working-class family had altogether ceased to embody kindlier purposes, or even to perform the most basic of social functions [...] it provided no comfort for its members because resources were squandered [...] and] It gave neither training or education for children since filial, and paternal duties were uncultivated. (107)

Ultimately Johnson argues that “this inspectorial distrust of the common school and the untrained or unsupervised teacher rested as much upon a social suspicion as upon narrower educational deficiencies” (115). Johnson’s research not only points to the



negative assumptions the bureaucracy had for its lower class students, but to the anxiety they had towards the untrained teacher. The uncertified teacher could be any manner of social miscreant or another working-class adult whose “filial and paternal duties were uncultivated.” Even domestic educators, in their emphasis on creating a home-like environment, wanted a surrogate parent figure as a teacher, and standardizers saw testing, certification and cookie-cutter curricula as a way of ensuring good pseudo-parents via the standards of the professional market. The “bad teacher” for educationists was akin to this bad-parent figure — lazy and uncivilized.

The novels, on the other hand, are not as concerned with cross-class parentage as they are with the idea of the pseudo-parent generally. In the novels, domestic teachers succeed by using domesticity to encourage inward self-discovery, and intellectual and moral change in their students, regardless of class background, whereas standardized teachers allow the amoral nature of the institution to infect their own lives as well as their students’. While both groups want the teacher to be a surrogate parent, the novels, in co-opting the bad teacher narrative and equating it with institutionalization and standardization, effectively equates the criteria of the professional market standardized educationists valued with poor parenting, and a lack of morality. Standardizers saw the working-classes as uncivilized, uncultured and amoral, and the Victorian novelists discussed here are painting standardizers with the same brush. Yet both of these groups are dominated by members of the middle-class establishment. While the educational bureaucracy, intentionally or unintentionally, punched down by equating bad pedagogy with the perceived bad parenting of the poor, the novelists punch laterally, equating the same symptoms of poor pedagogy with other middle-class educational reformers.

It is with the middle-class audience in mind that Matthew Arnold writes the introduction to his report *The Popular Education of France*—tellingly titled “Democracy”—as a call to action for the instatement of a state-run educational system. It is a piece in which he simultaneously calls out middle-classes selfishness while calling them to action on the issue of education of the poor. In making this case, Arnold deftly points out the ideological conflict of middle-class culture taking place in the novels. His political and educational theories, although written after the novels discussed here were published, are among the most lucid theories of the period outlining the complex class ideologies at play in the mid-century English education system. Arnold notes that

on the one hand [...] the masses of the people in this country are preparing to take a much more active part than formerly in controlling its destinies; on the other hand, the aristocracy [...] while it is threatened with losing its hold on the rudder of government, its power to give to public affairs its own bias and direction, is losing also that influence on the spirit and character of the people which it long exercised. (12)

While Arnold does see the enfranchisement of the “masses” as a good move for the general equality of Britain, he also argues there is an inherent danger in it. Arnold states that “nations are not truly great solely because the individuals composing them are numerous, free, and active; but they are great when these numbers, this freedom, and this activity are employed in the service of an ideal higher than that of an ordinary man” (14). He sees this “higher ideal” in the values, the “lofty spirit, commanding character, and exquisite culture,” of the landed English aristocracy (11). Education, then, is the way to instill these “higher ideals” into English citizens regardless of social class. However, as Arnold admits, if the aristocracy no longer has the political clout to instill these virtues; it will fall to the middle classes to do so. Unfortunately, the middle classes, as he sees it, are

too focused on ideals of industry to teach anything beyond their interests to those below them. Thus, he lectures his middle-class readers that “all the liberty and industry in the world will not ensure these two things: a high reason and a fine culture” (20). Arnold argues for the intervention of the state which, through bureaucratic checks can infer “greatness and a noble spirit” which the middle class “is not of itself at present adequate to impart” (19). Arnold sees a nationalized educational system as a great equalizer, providing free education to the poor while the wealthy still maintain their schools. This, he insists, is a win-win for the middle-class, whose distaste for government regulation on their precious industry is preventing them from seeing the benefits of his system. In arguing this, however, he insinuates that the middle classes lack the cultural and moral superiority of the aristocracy. For Arnold, the middle classes are no more cultured than the lower classes. The middle class only cares for itself—its “liberty”—and its money—its “industry.”

Arnold’s view of the middle-classes does not match the image of middle-class heroes like David Copperfield, Lucy Snowe and Tom Brown. Mr. Gradgrind fits the description somewhat, but the thrust of *Hard Times*’ plot moves Gradgrind away from that industrial philosophy. Linda Young argues that the view Arnold espouses of the middle-classes, was a view many in the middle-class were trying to fight against. She contends that the Victorian middle classes exerted a significant amount of effort on the cultural work of combining what Arnold sees as distinctly aristocratic virtues— high culture, control and religious devotion—with the middle class’ values of industry, liberty and individualism. She argues that the middle class, flush with capital during the nineteenth century, “displayed a strong aspiration towards refined culture” that would

both signify and justify their assent to political power (17). However, to participate in this refined culture required the leisure time and surplus wealth that the middle classes, without the land and inheritances of the aristocracy, could not maintain while still involved in the industry that provided them with their fortunes. Thus, Young argues, “the genius of the Victorian middle class was to invert this view of work and leisure so that *not to work* became a standard for poor behavior” (17). Young calls this rebranding “genteel work” which successfully took the trappings of the former elite and reconfigured them with industrial values, allowing the middle class to condemn “the idle rich as much as the feckless poor” by combining emphasis on family, estate, and Christian modesty, with an industrial attention to self and environmental control and hard work (16-17). While Arnold chastised the middle classes as representing the excesses of industrialism, the middle classes themselves were attempting to create this culture of “genteel work.” Teaching theorists were struggling with who should “parent” the poor, but the novels are more concerned with what that surrogate parent represents. The novel’s privileging of domestic education is also wrapped in a privileging of this genteel ideology, while they ascribe Arnoldian middle-class critique to standardized teachers.

In this chapter I argue that the veneration of the domestic education in these novels privileges an aristocratic envisioning of the middle class in which morality is tied to the old aristocratic values of high culture that are inherently tied to a genteel home space, while standardized education, as outline in the last chapter, is made to represent a vision of Arnoldian middle-class values of capitalistic industry and greed. Thus, as this chapter moves into a discussion of the critical landscape of these ideas, it is important to explore the two narratives, and the ways in which they come into play in the development

of the middle-class home, as well as its ties to the ideologies that ultimately inform the domestic education so defended by these novelists.

Domestic education, as discussed in the last chapter, valued those teachers that could bring elements associated with the home—leisure and play time, and the parental model of individualized attention and development—into the school. The concept of home plays an invaluable role in creating this genteel work ideology. It is the space where play time is had, where the signifiers of status and culture are created and performed; it is a refuge from the working world, allowing for a balance between work and leisure. As Young notes, “home” was the space where, by performing the “representational labor of keeping up appearances,” the middle-class family (notably the women in said family) could execute “the social rituals of” this genteel culture “to maintain honor” and signify middle-class moral superiority (18). Following from this same idea, many cultural critics have pointed to the sheer volume of writing done about the making and shaping of the home space, particularly in texts and periodicals aimed at women. As historian Andrea Kaston Tange argues, the middle-class home was the site where the ideal of domesticity was defined, and later redefined as the nuclear family became an increasingly common structure across all social classes. Tange argues that both the physical and mental spaces of the “home” were spaces where Victorians, who “assumed that good taste was either in-born or impossible to accomplish,” could “perform important cultural work by subtly confirming that only those who were born middle-class would be successful at reproducing the domestic image from the page into three-dimensional space” (19). She furthers this claim by arguing that “domesticity became the central focus of efforts to preserve the notation of middle-class privilege”

(27). This middle-class privilege, of course, is a product of “genteel work,” and uses the cultural symbols of the upper-classes and reapplies them to the middle-class home space. The difference is that the trappings of one estate were paid for by titles and land, while the others were paid for by management and industry. Therefore, by bringing the domestic into the institution, teachers are effectively porting this genteel ideology into the public space, ensuring the privileging of the middle-class’ inborn good taste. The standardized institution, effectively modeled after the factory, is representative of everything Arnold derided. However, by porting in this notion of “genteel work,” the middle-class could distance themselves from a purely capitalistic identity and towards one that combined their industry with high culture, thus establishing them as the rightfully empowered class. The teacher, with their influence on children across the class spectrum, would have been an integral tool in the furthering and preservation of this ideology. The debate between standardization and domestication, then, is a debate over how the Victorian elite thought to preserve their own values.

The good teacher in these novels becomes a kind of guardian and purveyor of genteel middle-class ideology. For standardizers industry in and of itself, a focus on product, on profit and making the deal was enough to cure the perceived idleness of the poor. What these novels present is the absolute failure of that method, where the focus on the product leads to selfishness and familial decay. While educationists wanted the teacher to represent middle-class values, the novels are more concerned with what kind of middle-class values are represented. Certification is not needed if the right kind of morality is represented on the lecture stage. There is no danger in the lower class students being improperly “parented,” unless the wrong “parent” is put in front of them. Thus, the

domestic versus standardized pedagogical divide evolves into a divide between two different kinds of middle-class ideologies. Domestic teachers embody middle-class ideals and protect the sanctity of the middle-class home, instilling genteel culture through earnest hard work. Industry is encouraged for a higher, often spiritual, purpose, and it is associated with virtues like honesty and chastity. Industrialized teachers, on the other hand, are social climbers who breed selfishness by embodying the worst excesses of industrial greed. The metastasis of standardization is thus the inescapable push of the market. This is why teachers are placed in such problematic positions in these novels—as much as they are expected to be like parents, to instill honesty, chastity and spirituality, the imparting of those values is still their *job*.

This chapter will explore the ways in which the teachers examined in the last chapter are guardians and exemplars of this “genteel work” ideology or are motivated purely by greed, and the ways in which even those genteel educators are vulnerable to that greed themselves. This chapter will explore Dickens’ novels *David Copperfield* and *Hard Times* which set up this dichotomy, warning readers of the bleak future for England if genteel ideologies pass away in favor of industrial-capitalist values. Then *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* will be examined as a novel that presents a rosier future, where the Doctor can fix the ills of the public school with his emphasis on a uniquely Christian industriousness that simultaneously allows for aristocratic leisure, and the associated social connections and benefits. Last, *Villette* will be explored as a novel whose protagonist presents a conflicted view of how teachers fit into the genteel work ethos, and the contradictory nature of their positions within this ideology.

Ultimately, teachers in these novels become representations of not only what novelists want education to be and where they want it to take place, but what they value as members of the middle-classes, what they want the future of Victorian culture to value and how they think they can get to that future. What these novels present is a vision of the future in which old aristocratic markers of power and success still hold true, but can be achieved through responsible and honest labor, rather than a fall into capitalist degradation brought about by focusing too much on industry and efficiency —a balancing act that can only be achieved if one is allowed refuge from the market by the genteel home, if indeed such a balancing act is possible at all.

***David Copperfield: The Home versus the Market***

In *David Copperfield*, Dickens sets up the clearest relationship between a “genteel work” middle-class educator and a purely capitalistic one. Mr. Creakle is a purely market-driven character, while Dr. Strong embodies the mixture of earnestness and industry that characterizes genteel work, he also leaves himself open to the manipulation of the greedy. In letting the institution, his student/wife, into his home, he also brings the wastefulness and greed of her relatives in with her.

In discussing social class and its implications on teachers in *David Copperfield*, much of the critical focus on the novel has been on the foiled relationship between middle-class protagonist David and the social-climbing Uriah Heep, not Dr. Strong and Mr. Creakle. However, many of the traits that differentiate Heep and Copperfield are similar to those traits that differentiate Strong and Creakle. For instance, David Thiele argues that Uriah Heep “is a manifestation of condescending and even downright hostile



suspicious directed toward the lower middle classes by a Victorian bourgeoisie which, like David, wanted distance from its closest social inferiors” (209). Thiele notes that Uriah’s ironic claims of inferiority and corpse-like body are used to create

gothic images of monstrosity—the enormously wicked, the perverse, the unnatural and the grotesque—are presented by the narrator in a clammy, writhing, cadaverous Heep which, even in its transfigurative extremity, meshes superbly with bourgeois Victorian social prejudice. (209-210)

Creakle, the failed hop-grower, is dehumanized in much the same way, while he is not cadaverous in nature like Heep, he is described as a beady-eyed, trollish and veiny personification of anger who “had no voice, but spoke in a whisper” (78). Similar to Heep, Creakle’s description is a perverse version of the human body, characterized more by a theme, or a distinct physical trait like his voice, rather than his humanity. Much like Heep, Creakle becomes a manifestation of the fears of middle-class professionals like David. The failed businessman, Creakle becomes a symbol of this failure, physically embodying the anger of it while also using his position as a teacher to attempt the economic advancement that he failed at in the business sector. He willingly leaches off his students for his own benefit.

Mr. Creakle’s relationship with Steerforth is emblematic of a teacher whose focus is not on instilling the virtues of the middle-class home, but on the desire for capital. The dependent relationship Creakle has with Steerforth is highlighted in a scene in which Steerforth disrespects one of Creakle’s subordinate teachers, Mr. Mell. A working class teacher who takes his ill-paying position at Salem House to provide for begging family members, Mell is the butt of wealthy Steerforth’s jokes. After young David mistakenly provides Steerforth with information about Mr. Mell’s family background, Steerforth

confronts him in front of the entire school. Steerforth, after being reprimanded by Mell, calls him “an impudent beggar,” and Mell replies by attempting to strike Steerforth in a fit of anger. Mr. Creakle then intervenes, Mr. Mell accuses Steerforth of being shown favoritism and Steerforth reveals Mell’s economic standing to his employer in response. While Mr. Creakle commends Steerforth’s “candor” and “honor,” he chides Mell for being “in the wrong position altogether” and for mistaking Salem House “for a charity school.” Mr. Mell is then fired and Creakle thanks Steerforth “perhaps too warmly” for “asserting the independence and respectability of Salem House” (94-95). Mr. Creakle’s sympathies do not lie with his assistant, but with the wealthiest student in his school. Creakle’s “perhaps too warm” enthusiasm for Steerforth is representative of the failed-businessman’s focus on his business rather than his pupils’ moral development. Rather than supporting Mr. Mell’s dedication to the maintenance of his family—one of Dickens’ many working class characters that embody middle-class values—he financially destroys that family. Mr. Creakle does not instill Steerforth with the ideals of earnest hard work but instead leaches off him. Steerforth’s own proceeding selfishness is fitting as Creakle’s star pupil.

David, on the other hand, as Dr. Strong’s star pupil, is a character that embodies genteel work in his formation of a domestic-professional identity. As Rena Dozier points out, David functions as a character that consolidates middle-class moral authority through his ability to bridge the professional space with the domestic. Dozier notes that David “can observe the domestic sphere more accurately and control its representation more successfully than [his wife, Dora]” and that “what Dickens is arguing with these representations of masculinized domestic spheres is that the world would be improved if

the health, morality, and cleanliness of the domestic novel were extended into areas that were considered exempt from domestic influence” (822). Dozier ultimately argues that David represents a masculinized domesticity that can be ported into the public world, thus improving problematic aspects of it—a representation that is similar to the ideal of the domestic educator. David is able to combine the refined domestic culture of the home with a honest, professional industry. Dr. Strong, although he is coded in similar ways to David—they are both middle-class professionals whose work is often associated with home or home-like spaces— and while he to successfully domesticates his profession by running his school domestically, he fails to protect his refuge from the market while David succeeds. The threat of standardization crept into the Strong home when Dr. Strong married one of his students, however, she not only brought with her this categorical confusion, but her social-climbing family members. Mrs. Markelham, rather than working to improve her own position honestly, leeches off of the naive Dr. Strong. Dr. Strong’s blind faith in people and unflinching honesty is both what makes Dr. Strong a great teacher, and prevents him from seeing the serious problems going on in his home life. While Mr. Creakle presents a teacher motivated entirely by selfishness, Dr. Strong is a character so distracted by his own intellectual pursuit and true love that he opens himself up to being easily manipulated by people like Mrs. Markelham.

Dr. Strong’s problem as a teacher, then, is not that he is motivated totally by the market, but that he is so removed from it as to be blind to those that are motivated by it. While Mrs. Strong’s confusion over her place in Dr. Strong’s household ultimately leads her to contemplate adultery, her mother has facilitated her separation from Dr. Strong by using her daughter’s position to provide for her poor relations, which in turn caused

Annie to distance herself in shame from her husband. Dr. and Mrs. Strong's final confrontation only occurs after Mrs. Markelham eavesdrops on Dr. Strong bequeathing Annie all of his assets in his will. Letting go of her facade of propriety, Markleham excitedly informs her daughter of the development. Prompted by this action, Annie confesses that she was ashamed

when [she] saw how many importunate claims were pressed upon [Dr. Strong] in [her] name; how [he was] traded on in [her] name; [...] the first sense of [her] exposure to the mean suspicion that [her] tenderness was bought [...] fell upon [her] like unmerited disgrace, in which [she] forced [him] to participate. (643)

Throughout Annie's confession, her mother attempts to interject until Annie admits, "It was at the time that mama was most solicitous about my Cousin Maldon. I had liked him" (643). The Doctor's infatuation with his student not only destabilizes the boundaries between pupil and wife, it also makes him oblivious to the machinations of his mother-in-law. Mrs. Strong is caught in the middle of being a student and wife, *and* between the economic desires for her family and the pressures to preserve the reputation of the Strong household. There is nothing worse to Annie than being cast in the light of a gold-digger, of being thought to take advantage of her husband for her own benefit. She ultimately chooses to preserve her home with Dr. Strong and remove herself from the influences of her mother. Nevertheless, Dr. Strong fails to protect his home space, not only because he blurs the lines between institution and home space in the wrong direction, but because this blurring unwittingly allows in the purely capitalistic desires of Ms. Markelham. Unlike David, who is the master of his home, allowing him to bring the virtues of domesticity forth into public, Dr. Strong lacks control of either space. While allowing a

social climber like Mr. Creakle to teach is inherently dangerous, there is also a danger in allowing the kind-hearted if myopic Dr. Strong to teach as well.

In this way, *David Copperfield* presents two teachers with opposite ideologies, both failing at protecting their refuge from the corrupting influences of the market. While Dr. Strong's domestic pedagogy is part of the reason David shows such adeptness at bridging the domestic and professional spheres, his gentle heart and paternal kindness also leave him vulnerable to the insidious corruptions that work around him. Mr. Creakle, on the other hand, uses teaching for his own financial gain, allowing a family to become destitute for his own greed. A teacher's job is to privilege the ideals of genteel work which is codified in the domestic space, a space they must use to instill those ideals in their students, but also protect from external corruption. Neither teacher is able to complete this later, and essential, part of their job. Ultimately, David is the one who maintains the social order, prodding Annie to reconcile with her husband and retreat into domestic bliss. David leads the middle class forward towards a future where leisure culture, his writing and love of art, can be celebrated in conjunction with a working professional lifestyle. Mr. Creakle fails to inculcate this ideology in his pupil, Steerforth, who is as greedy and spoiled as ever, despite his social standing, and ends up working at a prison, pampering thieves like Uriah Heep. Dr. Strong successfully educates David, but is ultimately so kind-hearted and complacent that he cannot fight against the industrial middle-class members of his own family. While Dr. Strong is more of a father figure than Mr. Creakle, both fail at creating a future defined by middle class moral values in the way David can. David can combine the realms of art and profession, he is aware of the spiritual and moral values of his family and allows that to motivate his industry, while

Creakle is so motivated by making money that he does not care about who he hurts to get it, and Dr. Strong who is so uninterested in anything beyond his wife and the intellectual pursuit of his dictionary that Mrs. Markelham can syphon off him without him even realizing what she is doing.

### ***Hard Times* and the Death of Victorian Genteel Culture**

*Hard Times*, upon first inspection, would seem to be a contrast to *David Copperfield*'s domestic fiction; however, even as it portrays its working-class characters with sympathy and maligns the utilitarian education they receive, its central focus on the afamilial Gradgrinds turns the novel simultaneously into a cautionary tale of middle-class moral decay. Patricia E. Johnson argues that even Dickens' prose reflects the faults of this product-oriented philosophy. She contends that the lack of usual Dickensian whimsy in the novel "pays a chilling tribute to the power of the factory system by allowing [Dickens'] creative energy to be harnessed by it, by producing his novel as factory" (418). Johnson sees the economical style of the novel itself as a commentary on a purely industrial ideology. Much like Gradgrind, Dickens puts his focus on fact rather than fancy. As Johnson notes, "Dickens does not emphasize the pollution, the labyrinthine slums, or the hustling, bustling streets of the industrial city. Instead, he abstracts its essential structure" in presenting Coketown and its inhabitants (411). Unlike *David Copperfield*, this is not a novel meant to celebrate the ideals of the middle-classes gentility, but a critique of a middle-class industrial ideology by painstakingly portraying its effects on working-class characters like Stephen Blackpool, and on the middle-classes' own children, like Louisa and Thomas. As Kristin Flieger Samuelian indicates, many of

the working-class characters in *Hard Times*, particularly Stephen Blackpool and Sissy Jupe, represent a “passive paternalism,” recognizing “that the responsibility for the spiritual and material welfare of the working-class lies with the well-to-do, but [...do] not [...] presume to take an active part in reform” (58). Stephen’s character is not one of the wretched poor found in the Johnson’s inspector’s reports; it is sympathetic. However, the philosophy that the lower classes need guidance from their betters is still in force. In fact, this philosophy is encouraged by the working class characters themselves. Samuelian notes that in *Hard Times* one popular middle-class ideal, “the myth of the self-made man,” is critiqued in favor of another, “the combination of bourgeois domesticity” and a reliance on this “passive paternalism” (59). In other words, the myths of genteel work, and the self-made industrial-capitalist that Arnold criticized, as represented in Josiah Bounderby, are contrasted against one another. Thus, Bounderby becomes a hypocrite, and Stephen Blackpool is the unfortunate martyr. Dickens critiques the morally corrupt nature of utilitarian education and industry while extolling virtues of the genteel versions of those same institutions. In this way, Mr. Gradgrind is used as a cautionary tale both to criticize the standardizers as failed “parents” for working-class students, and equate that with the middle-classes’ over-emphasis on industrial-capitalism and factory-like education system.

Mr. Gradgrind, at the beginning of the novel, would seem to be a model of middle-class surrogate parenthood by adopting Sissy Jupe, but this action quickly becomes a source of irony in the novel as it becomes clear that Gradgrind is failing to parent his own children. In one of Louisa’s first lines in the novel, she asks her brother while watching the hearth “as I get older [...] I often sit wondering here, and think how

unfortunate it is for me that I can't reconcile you to home better than I am able to do." To which young Tom Gradgrind responds, "well, no more do I. I am as bad as you in that respect" (38). This exchange foreshadows Tom's upcoming escapades with gambling and expatriatism, and Louisa's commitment issues; nevertheless, what the two young Gradgrind's point out here is that the Gradgrind home is so un-home-like that they have no concept of what the home-space is for. Louisa and Tom cannot make the space inviting, a refuge from the public world, even as they sit beside the hearth. This becomes poignant given how both characters deteriorate. When Louisa admits to her father that she wishes to separate from Bounderby she implores,

Would you have doomed me, at any time, to the frost and blight that have hardened and spoiled me? Would you have robbed me [...] of the immaterial part of my life [...] my refuge from what is sordid and bad in the real things around me, my school in which I should have learned to be more humble and more trusting with them, and to hope in my little sphere to make them better? (162)

Louisa paints the domestic space as a literal refuge from the "sordid and bad in the real things around" her; it is a place where she can find sanctuary in her own imagination, in the "immaterial." She even chastises her father for not providing her with a school where those virtues could be facilitated. In one speech Louisa undercuts her father both as a father and a teacher. He neither created the middle-class domestic vision at home or at school, and she is left rudderless in a "frosted blight" that has "spoiled" her like old milk. She speaks as if she is permanently untouchable. Gradgrind cared only that Louisa achieved a beneficial marriage and that Tom had a profitable job— both provided by the lying but rich Bounderby. Mr. Gradgrind cannot replace the father figure when his tools are not fatherly in and of themselves. His pedagogy has only promoted a desire for capital for his children, even though he convinces himself he is teaching the way he is and



indenturing them both to Bounderby, for all the right reasons. Ultimately, Louisa signs the marriage contract because it looks good on paper, and Tom robs a bank to pay off his gambling debt. Despite the tools he receives from the Standardizers, his facts, he fails at being a surrogate parent, and at being a real one.

The negative effects of this utilitarian pedagogy are extrapolated beyond the Gradgrinds when Mr. Gradgrind is reunited with one of his star pupils late in the novel. Bitzer, early in the novel, is the one student who is able to identify that a horse is a “quadruped” and “Graminivorous” (3). However, as an adult Bitzer is a light porter at the bank Tom Gradgrind robs. Bitzer apprehends Tom, planning to take him to the authorities, but Mr. Gradgrind, newly reformed, pleads to release the criminal to his family. Bitzer responds

in a very business-like and logical manner, “since you ask me what motive I have in reason, for taking young Mr. Tom back to Coketown [...] I have suspected young Mr. Tom of this bank-robbery from the first [...] I am going to take young Mr. Tom back to Coketown [...] I have no doubt whatever that Mr. Bounderby will promote me [...] so it will be a rise to me, and will do me good.” (215)

Gradgrind then accuses Bitzer of being selfish, to which Bitzer replies, “the whole social system is a question of self-interest. What you must always appeal to, is a person’s self-interest” (215). Finally, in a last ditch effort, Gradgrind entreats him to have pity on his former teacher, and Bitzer responds, “my schooling was paid for; it was a bargain; and when I came away, the bargain ended” (215). Gradgrind's focus on facts has taught Bitzer only the cold hard value of cash. He sees no moral imperative in reuniting the Gradgrind family; he has not been taught generosity, pity or even respect for the man that taught him. Bitzer only cares about improving his position, and his possible advancement of it. He holds to none of the values Mr. Gradgrind has come to realize. Gradgrind has failed at

both promoting middle-class domesticity in his middle-class children and in his working-class students.

The results of Gradgrind's industrialized pedagogy are that Louisa becomes a divorcee spinster, Tom dies alone as an ex-patriot bank-robber, and Bitzer is an emotionless husk that only sees the world in pounds and pence. Only Sissy escapes the Gradgrindian fate because, as an "affectionate, earnest good young woman" she is not suitable for schooling and escapes becoming another Bitzer (68). Gradgrind's pedagogy has failed to instill the proper genteel morality in its students, and thus they are only motivated by the movement of the markets. Only the most domesticated of characters, Sissy, gets a happy ending in the novel. Even as Gradgrind comes to realize his mistakes by the end of the novel, it is not a happy ending. Mr. Gradgrind has to live on, seeing all of the chaos his ideology has wrought—a broken family and all of the little Gradgrind's that went through his school at work in Coketown. In only emphasizing what his students could produce, and what positions his family could hold, he has unwittingly created a group of children and students that lack the morality only domestic culture could give them. In *Hard Times* Dickens illustrates the effect a "bad" teacher can have not just on a single student, but an entire community. Despite its somewhat positive ending, *Hard Times* presents a possible future where everyone could become a Bitzer or a Tom Gradgrind and Victorian moral values cease to exist.

### ***Tom Brown's School Days* and Claiming Gentility for Middle-Class Boys**

*Tom Brown's Schooldays* is a novel that, in its attempts to rehabilitate the reputation of the public school, presents an almost *too* rosy view of public school life and

reform, wherein the Doctor's reforms turn Rugby from an institution of moral decay to a place of Christian honesty and hard work. As many critics have noted, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* begins with an egalitarian view of Tom's youth, where, as a child of a middle-class family, he plays with working-class children and wealthy alike. However, by the time Tom heads to Rugby the working-class characters are reduced to a few servants, and Tom seamlessly integrates with the aristocratic Rugby boys. Peter Stoneley notes in the time in which *Tom Brown's Schooldays* was published; the Public Schools

remained notorious for drinking, swearing, gambling, and pugilism. Attempts to curb boys' privileges led to rebellions, but the new style of masculinity—chaste and religious—was in the ascendant and led to the massive popularity of men such as Thomas Arnold of Rugby. His religious authority assured middle-class parents that they could give their boys the advantages of an upper-class education without approving the licentious extravagance associated with the aristocracy. (72)

This “new style of masculinity” is, of course, muscular Christianity—an ideology that bears much of its inspiration on ideas founded in the genteel middle-class ideology. This gentility, along with a kind of evangelism and an emphasis on masculine strength, became defining characteristics of British imperial heroes. The introduction of this ideal is at the heart of the novel's conflict between the “old days” of Rugby and the new under the Doctor. This mirrors the real life conflicts that occurred in the public schools as the sons of middle-class families, hoping to use the social advantages the public school education would have provided, began attending these aristocratic institutions, often maligned for idleness. As J.A. Mangan notes in his study of public school athletics, the reason the public schools and narratives about them put such emphasis on the sports field is because they “made possible a ‘conspicuous consumption’ of time in ‘conspicuous leisure’” and thus became “symbols of security and elitism” (100). In other words, the

importance of attending was not, at least primarily, in gaining knowledge but in obtaining the aristocratic markers of culture and success, as well as making the fraternal connections with those boys already in positions of power on the field. The focus on masculine sport is emblematic of why so many middle-class families sent their students to schools like Rugby—it made physical their place among the elite. However, they also did not want to be associated with the licentiousness often associated with the idleness of inherited wealth. Enter the reforms of the Doctor into Hughes' fictional rugby, providing the ideal compromise where the excesses of the public school can be tempered by Christian chastity and hard work while never infringing the socially beneficial games that were so beneficial to the advancement of middle-class boys. To do this, the Doctor becomes a walking symbol of this genteel middle-class, he instills in Tom, the middle-class boy at the center of the narrative, the industrious values of self-improvement and hard work while allowing him to benefit from the leisure-based games that permit him to form bonds with his aristocratic fraternity.

The discussion of the Doctor's reforms bookend his presence in the novel, one before his introduction and one just before his death, highlighting the magnitude of the effect the Doctor has had on the school. The first discussion of the Doctor's reforms takes place after the novel's first soccer game when Pater Brooke, one of the oldest boys at the school, speaks to the schoolboys following their victory. Brooke acknowledges that many of the boys are complaining "'there is this new Doctor hasn't been here so long as some of us, and he's changing all the old customs,'" which he admits is indeed happening; however, he cautions his fellow students from taking their frustration out against the doctor, questioning "what customs has he put down" other than stopping them

from stealing from farmers? (57). Brooke then admits that he admires the Doctor, stating, “I’m not the fellow to back a master through thick and thin. If I saw him stopping football, or cricket, or bathing, or sparring, I’d be as ready as any fellow to stand up [...] but he don’t; he encourages it [...] he’s a strong, true man” (57). This is the first instance the novel gives of the Doctor as a paragon of masculine strength and Christian honesty, while also not being a complete reformer in the fact that he still allows them their games. The old aristocratic sons in the audience are angry with his reforms, but all he has done is prevented their stealing from the poor farmers working outside the school. Yet, he continues to allow and encourage them to play the leisure sports that mark the boy’s genteel status. When the narrator breaks in to describe the Doctor, it relates that

the boys felt there was a strong man over them, who would have things his own way, and hadn’t yet learnt that he was a wise and loving man also [...] for he had found School and School-house in a state of monstrous license and misrule, and was still employed in the necessary but unpopular work of setting up order with a strong hand. (58-59)

Thus his alignment with genteel work is furthered; he is the strong panoptical father looming over them, as well as loving Christian figure that is able to improve the monstrous state of the school through his “necessary but unpopular work.” Even before the Doctor is an active part of the novel’s plot, both the students and the narrator set up the Doctor as the personification of middle-class morality. He represents muscular Christian virtues of manliness and religiosity, but further than that, he embodies a controlled industriousness that simultaneously encourages the leisure of aristocratic sport. The Doctor is the perfect exemplar and guardian of middle-class gentility, in porting the middle-class domestic into the institution he has also, in effect, ported in values of honesty and hard work that have been lacking in the school. When Tom firsts visits the

Doctor's home it is not only "homey," but he is teaching the boys how to build a boat—honest hard-work is at the heart of the Doctor's home space, which is at the heart of the institutional school. The Doctor reforms Rugby by embodying a middle-version of gentility, as opposed to the languid and corrupted version found in the old-boys of the school.

The Doctor not only embodies this gentility, but also instills it in his students, particularly, of course, Tom. As Tom starts heading down a licentious path—neglecting his school work, loitering around and stealing from local farmers and shopkeepers, like the old rugby boys used to—the Doctor tasks Tom with a younger brother figure to look after, Arthur, as part of a plan to return Tom to the right path. Arthur is a character heavily coded by the domestic sphere, particularly in his femininity and his attachment to his mother. Arthur and Tom's first interactions occur at a dinner with the Doctor, where Tom, being invited to the Doctor's home, "felt himself lifted on to a higher social and moral platform at once" (103). Tasked with mentoring "poor little Arthur," Tom rises to the occasion and successfully guides him through the rituals of the public school and defends him from bullies. In one scene Tom attempts to cheat in his schoolwork to which Arthur asks, "you say, Tom, you want to please the Doctor. Now, do you want to please him by what he thinks you do, or by what you really do?" (152). Tom, of course, concedes that he should back up his word with action. The Doctor exemplifies a domestic pedagogy here by allowing Tom to learn through his own experience, and interaction with his peers, prodding him in the right direction rather than lecturing him. Tom learns the value of honest work, of doing rather than saying, via Arthur but only because the Doctor has set him on that path. Arthur's association with the domestic is important in

this regard. As Stoneley, and many critics, have noted Arthur and Tom's relationship is heavily homoerotic, yet also oddly heteronormative in that it "is modeled on an adult heterosexual binary with manly Tom and feminine Arthur" (79). By setting up this relationship, Hughes sets up a domestic partnership within the all-boys institution. Arthur reminds Tom of values like honest work because of his association with the home space, and Tom becomes a masculine variation on those ideals, protecting Arthur from the worst excesses of public school life. Tom becomes the representative of the Doctor's muscular Christian ideology. He becomes a strong and true young man and a protector of the domestic moral center of middle-class authority. The Doctor is the perfect middle-class domestic educator in that he both embodies the domestic rhetoric of genteel work and instills it in his students.

*Tom Brown's Schooldays* does not present a bad teacher; the Doctor always knows the right things to say, the good thing to do, and the moral and upright way to behave. The novel is not so much counteracting the purely-capitalist standardized teacher as it is planting its flag into the ground for the vision of the middle classes as rightful inheritors of aristocratic culture and morality. The novel, in fact, paints the old aristocratic boys as so morally bankrupt they are beyond even the greed of Creakle—they steal from peasants for fun, not because they need money. The Doctor, as one of his masters puts it, in "quietly and naturally, putting a good thing in the place of a bad, and letting the bad die out" has reformed Rugby into an institution that is both a symbol of wealth and high culture, as it is a beacon of hard work (174). By placing the home at the center of the institution, he has reformed the institution from its own moral decay. The Doctor's reforms are an allegory for the transfer of cultural power and authority from the

old aristocratic families to the newly-empowered middle class. The Doctor is what every teacher *should be*—hardworking, honest, Christian, cultured and free from any influence but his own.

### **Double-Bound Teachers in *Villette***

Unlike the Hughes and Dickens' educators, Lucy Snowe is a teacher who is conflicted about the genteel work ideology. While she values the ideals of earnest industriousness and protestant chastity, she also values the independence her professionalization brings. As Linda Young points out, women had a constricted and strictly defined role when it came to the construction of the genteel work. She writes, "women inhabited the private world of the home, where as domestic managers they demarcated the family's middle-class status via control of working-class servants" and via their bodies, through fashion and lack of physical labor (18). Lucy celebrates the domestic as the center of middle-class moral and intellectual authority, with its emphasis on self-control and industry, while resisting becoming the "angel in the home" whose domestic labor goes uncompensated despite how that work demarcates social classes. This conflict mirrors the conflict Lucy, and the other teachers discussed thus far, have faced in navigating the ideal of the domestic moral educator. The expectation is that teachers are supposed to be surrogate members of the family, and domesticated educators must literally bring the home with them when they go to work while simultaneously embodying the values of earnest hard labor and aristocratic leisure. Their work is equated with the unpaid domestic labor of the parent, yet they are not a parent. They are hired by an institution and paid for their services. How does one raise a child in the values of the



child's family home when they do so in an institution? How does a professional justify their professional status and compensation when their labor is equated with unpaid domestic work? Not only is the space between woman and professional difficult to navigate, but so is the space between loving parent and earnest professional, leisure culture and hard work. While Dickens attempts to warn of what happens when teachers do not achieve this balance, and Hughes' presents a vision of what could happen did, Brontë presents a muddled vision. She presents a protagonist teacher that tries to live up to an ideal that she cannot seem to make work, trying to find balance in a profession that is neigh unbalanceable for her.

Lucy, in many ways, should be the ideal candidate to perpetuate the genteel work ideology in her students, but ultimately she can never quite get there. Lucy is at once a fallen member of the aristocracy as she is a middle-class professional—the perfect combination of aristocratic bloodline and middle-class work ethic. Terry Eagleton argues that Lucy's ambiguous positioning is at its most evident in the contrast between her interest in her two possible lovers, M. Paul and Dr. John. He writes that “the opposition between the two men is one between convention and eccentricity, domesticity and solitariness, the English and the Alien, gentility and passion,” but later admits that “Paul Emmanuel [...] is a rebel more in style than substance” (72). Dr. John has a family name and an estate, allowing Lucy to return to her roots, while M. Paul represents a marriage to a working professional, a future that Lucy ultimately finds preferable. While M. Paul does not represent the traditional English middle-class bridegroom in the way John Bretton does, he is also the man that continually censures Lucy for a perceived lack of propriety. Both John and M. Paul, in being part of a marriage plot, provide a path towards

a home that Lucy idealizes but is unsure if she wants. Eva Badowska astutely summarizes this conflict:

the novel feels homesick while being at home. Lucy is frequently homeless [...] she is the model of that *licroce e delizia* of nineteenth-century interiority, which is [...] thrown into sharp relief by her displacement from bourgeois domesticity. Her capacity for interiority in the face of material deprivation, an absolute test of Victorian inwardness, does not imply, however, an opposition between psychological depth and material things [...] From the beginning of the narrative, home—the place of interiority in all its guises—is an object of the narrator's unquiet idealization and longing (1519).

Lucy embodies middle-class work-ethic but lacks a home space, yet, she is constantly searching for that refuge. Teaching is both a threat to Lucy, becoming the cold-hearted businesswoman like Beck, and a boon, giving her some level of freedom and individuality as opposed to Paulina, who is beholden to her father and Dr. John. The wrinkle, of course, is that this also comes with the temptation of completely leaving the home altogether and merging totally with the public sphere. Lucy's idealization of the home leads her away from Madame Beck, whom she learns she must protect her family, and her future husband, from, but her desire for self-sufficiency and recognition for the honest labor she performs prevent her from fully becoming part of the Bretton family, and ultimately from marrying M. Paul. Lucy presents not only the double-bind of being a female professional, but of being a teacher, who is expected to both instill values of hard work and leisure-based aristocratic culture at the same time.

First, Lucy must lose faith in Madame Beck, a character who seemingly has it all figured out. Beck is both refined and aristocratic in nature, and runs a successful business. Initially, Lucy respects Beck as a seemingly austere and self-made woman like Lucy wishes herself to be. Lucy describes Beck as a “charitable woman” who “did a great

deal of good” (64). Later in the novel, after visiting Pierre Silas and Madame Walravens, Lucy reveals to the reader that Madame Beck, when she was supposed to be sleeping “was gone, full-dressed, to take her pleasure” and that she “had no sort of taste for a monastic life” (429). Lucy also reveals to the reader that, despite her charitable persona, Beck maintained associations with Madame Walravens, the mother of M. Paul’s dead fiancé, because “she wanted [Walraven’s] money and her land” and was manipulating her own brother into caring for the woman, and never remarrying, to get it (432). Madame Beck transforms from a symbol of a woman who had it all—a woman whose good nature and hard work led to her financial independence, who both had the heir refinement with an austere monastic work-ethic—to a greedy socialite. Beck’s charity is a veneer for her obsession with her own social advancement. She is willing to sell out her brother for wealth, which, in turn, provides her with the means to participate in bourgeois nightlife. Rather than working honestly to bolster her family’s position, she sells her brother’s life in an attempt to better her own. Beck’s participation in the high culture of Villette is only because she takes advantage of her own family, not because of her own hard work. Beck is not only an example of everything a teacher should not be, but a fraud. Ultimately, Lucy is able to lead M. Paul away from the corruption of his sister and towards marriage. She removes M. Paul from his corrupt family and creates a new one.

However, while Lucy is increasingly offended by what she discovers about Madame Beck, she is not prepared to jump into the role of homemaker either. When John and “little Polly” are reunited he confides in Lucy about his feelings for Paulina. He thanks Lucy for being a confidant, citing that Lucy had always been his “inoffensive shadow.” Lucy suppresses a groan at “these epithets,” because, “these attributes I put

from me. His ‘quiet Lucy Snowe,’ his ‘inoffensive shadow,’ I gave him back; not with scorn, but with extreme weariness” (296). John denies Lucy’s interiority and individuality, referring to her as not only a shadow of a person but a shadow of *him*. Lucy does not demand to be called something different, to be alluded to as something more, but it becomes clear over the course of the novel that she has aspirations for a life beyond being a man’s shadow. She wants her hard work to be recognized as her own, not in service of a husband or father. This desire becomes more apparent when Lucy is shunned by M. Paul due to Madame Beck’s machinations. She narrates that she pondered how she “should make some advance in life, take another step towards an independent position,” and begins to describe how she might save up enough money to open a day school on her own. She tells herself “with self-denial and economy now, and steady exertion by-and-by an object in life need not fail you [...] be content to labour for independence until you have prove, by winning that prize, your right to look higher” (338). Even when Lucy loses the chance at domestic happiness, rather than becoming a burden on the Brettons or stay in the corrupt institution of Rue Fossette, Lucy instead turns toward making her own living. Unlike Beck, however, her independence is not maintained by the exploitation of another. Lucy will build her day school with “self-denial” and “economy,” a process that she describes as “higher” than her other options. Lucy privileges the ideal of genteel work while simultaneously disagreeing with its gendered inequities. She also wants to win her own independence, yet does not want to do so through deception and greed, purely for her own benefit. Lucy is ultimately not content to marry a Dr. John-type in the way the devoted Paulina is, but she does not chastise Paulina’s choice either. The domestic space is ultimately the moral center of Lucy’s world, a space she must protect,

but it is not a space she can fully inhabit without giving up the individuality she holds so dear. Lucy is not content to be the inoffensive shadow the genteel work ideology would want her to be, she wants her work recognized.

This conflict between settling in the domestic space or receiving recognition, finds corollaries in Lucy's teaching practices. In the beginning of the novel, Lucy starts as a nursery governess, but is ultimately promoted to full teacher. She is promoted from the most domestic and feminine space in the Pennsionat to a public one. She initially respects, and models her own teaching after her mentor. However, upon reuniting with the Brettons, she then neglects much of her teaching for nights out with Dr. John, spending her leisure time at the opera, slowly becoming a lady in a pink dress, much like Paulina. Upon seeing herself in the mirror, however, she remarks "A pink dress!! I knew it not. It knew not me. I had not proved it" (193). She realizes that she is becoming a lady of leisure, and cuts herself off more and more from that lifestyle as she becomes close with M. Paul. When she then begins her tutelage with M. Paul and moves away from Becks pedagogy, she ultimately discovers the truth of Beck's character. She then begins her plan of forming her own independent day school, a goal which she only achieves because of her forthcoming marriage to M. Paul. Yet, the book ends unclear as to M. Paul's fate and with Lucy gradually transforming her domestic day school into a boarding school. The very course of Lucy's teaching career bounces her between the public and private, the domestic and institution, high culture and hard work, and the professional and the familial. While Lucy values all of these parts of herself, and while there is an expectation that she should exhibit all of them, she exists in a world where she cannot have or be all of them.

Unlike Mr. Creakle and Mr. Gradgrind, Lucy's world is not destroyed or overwhelmed by her desire for recognition and compensation, nor is she maternal to the point that she does not desire that recognition like the Doctor or Dr. Strong. Lucy wants both her professional respectability and the ethical and cultural respectability that comes with her family values. Yet, unlike David in *David Copperfield*, she cannot find a way to balance the two. Part of this is her gender, but the same ethos that prevents her work from being recognized as a female professional is what is preventing her professional recognition as a teacher. By tying the work of teaching to the domestic space, a space that is supposed to be free of capitalistic influences and a realm of leisure, art and spirituality, it can no longer be recognized as work. If the teacher is supposed to port these things into the institution, is supposed to be the domestic refuge in the school, then they are devaluing their own work in the institution, which expects facts, figures and results. While teachers can instill proper morality, they can never gain professional respect, much like Lucy, whose desire to be seen as a woman of upstanding character often conflicts with her desire for recognition.

The morality that both educationists and novelists strive to instill in their students, fictional or real, is a distinctly middle-class version of morality. The novel's version of this morality celebrates the cultured leisure activities, the religion and the artistic values of the landed aristocracy, while simultaneously encouraging industrious labor to achieve those goals. Educationists, on the other hand, largely wanted to write facts of middle-class superiority into the minds of working-class children. The bad teacher, on both sides, is a representation of the decay of these moralities. What is unique about the novelistic

critique, however, is in that it is critiquing, not a group lower down the economic ladder, but those on the same level. These novels successfully paint standardizers with the same brush which the school inspectors painted the poor. The fear of the institution, then, evolves from just a fear of the public sphere, to a fear of the public sphere without check, of a public sphere invading all other forms of culture and reducing Victorian society to nothing more than various exchanges of money. Mr. Creakle and Mr. Gradgrind's stories, and Dr. Strong's failures, warn Dickens' reader of this fate. The Teacher, then, is supposed to be the bulwark against this future. If the teacher can successfully bridge the institutional public and domestic private, the loving care of the parent with the economic respect and capital of the professional, then they can educate a child so that he or she appreciates both of these things. This domestic teacher is the answer to *how* the Victorians thought they could ensure that their values were being carried onto the next generation. The problem comes in the fact that the same culture that expects this from its teachers, is simultaneously dividing these cultural realms into separate and distinct spheres. While Hughes presents an ideal world where this indeed may be possible, Brontë cannot finish her novel because of the contradictions at play in it. A teacher may be all of these things, they are defined in the cultural narrative as one side or the other. The teacher is supposed to be independent from the home space, a public figure that is a surrogate for the home but never part of it. Yet, they are expected to replicate the development that is supposed to occur in that home space, but do so entirely outside of it. This is the only way that true morality can be taught. If these are the standards to which the Victorian teacher must live by, then the Victorian teacher is left in a lose-lose situation.

## Conclusion

The teacher's place in Victorian literature is one that leaves them in a double-bind. The fears that the institutionalization of Education will corrupt young minds is present throughout the works explored here. The idea of raising children in the institution and its ties to industry represented an uncomfortable association with rampant capitalism that troubled the newly empowered middle classes. The domestic teacher presented an idealized alternative—the perfect combination of parent and professional. These teachers instill the virtues of leisure through play while combining it with the rhetoric of industriousness. Middle-class parents wanted their children to value hard work without the excesses of greed encouraged by industrialization, all the while maintaining the cultured refinement and religiosity of the aristocracy. This constituted good morals. The Doctor, after all, successfully reforms Rugby from a school for the entitled, lazy and greedy rich, to a haven for the industrious Christian. Because of him, Tom has good morals. Only the middle-class home space, free from the grasping fingers of industrialization, could instill this morality. As out-of-home schooling became an increasing necessity, the need to instill these moral values in children across the economic spectrum in an institutional setting became a defining cultural desire. Teachers were torn between a system that promised moral education through efficiency, that offered the economy and respect of the professional and industrial world, and the cultural values of those that wanted Teachers to be surrogate parents, to port the home into the school and focus on their vision of refined culture. This is represented most acutely in Lucy, who is torn between the economic security and intendance of her job, and the expectations of many in her life, at times including herself, to fit into an ideal of feminine



domesticity. To side with the likes of Kay-Shuttleworth and Dunn was to become a Mr. Gradgrind, Mr. Creakle, Madam Beck or worse. It was to pledge allegiance to economy over culture. On the other hand, the ideology of genteel work, represented by the domestic, was a standard to which many teachers could not rise. Domestic educators must give up personal and economic advancement for the sake of a bourgeois ideology and a kind of faux home-life.

This double-bind provides yet another example of a Victorian binary whose strict insistence on boundaries trouble those caught within its bounds. Yet the ideological conflict surrounding teachers also reveals a deeper conflict about narratives of work, class and knowledge that are wrapped up in the standardization versus domestic educational binary. Not only are teachers expected to be walking carriers of domesticity in the dangerous realm of the institution, but they are the physical embodiment of a concerted effort to carry aristocratic morality into a class whose economic and political advancement relied upon institutional industry. In examining teachers in literature, this distinctly ideological work comes into focus. One can view the political cartoons depicting teachers during the period, examine the pedagogical manuals teachers used to teach and read how teachers wrote about themselves; however, in examining fictional representations in conjunction with history one sees not only what teachers did and were instructed to do, but what people *wanted* them to be and what they themselves wanted to be. Examining teachers in Victorian literature in conjunction with historical debates adds to the understanding of how Victorians thought about childhood, what they valued in education and what they saw as its place in a world and economy that were changing at an unprecedented clip.

Few professions can boast being a part of near every single citizen's daily lives for multiple years. Even fewer professions have such an impact on childhood development. In this way, characters that seemingly take up such small spaces in much larger novels are valuable in understanding broader ideological struggles because of their sheer unanimity in youngster's formative daily lives, whether a fictional representation of reality or actual reality. These ancillary figures that come and go in the major characters' lives do provide a window into how, both contemporaneously for the novel and as a reader today, people understand the ideological and cultural functions of what ubiquitous professions like teaching represent.

Thus, as modern American presidential candidates discuss the values of charter schools versus home schooling, pound their fists about teacher examination while simultaneously advocating that teachers should form "true relationships" with their students, and both villainize and valorize teachers' unions, teachers in centuries-old novels can provide a lens through which to examine such stump speeches. The ideological work present in the educational debates of Victorian England, while evolving into different time periods and adapting to different cultures, remain remarkably similar to those had today. While the hallmarks of standardization—regulation and examination—transcend national boundaries, the domestic influence of Pestalozzi, Drew, and even Arnold can also be felt in the work of influential American educational philosophers like John Dewey. Thus, both conceptions of education stay with us. The teacher of today is still caught between the expectations of maternity/paternity and standardization; they still desire economic advancement and professional prestige while they are expected to be the nurturer of knowledge. Echoes of the kooky but caring father

figure Dr. Strong resonate with characters like Albus Dumbledore, just as the deceptive social-climbing Madame Beck resonates with Delores Umbridge. As one looks at conflicts around standardization today, in its attempts to deal with the changing economic space of the post-industrial internet economy, one still sees the same struggle over who *should* be the one to impart major cultural values to our children and *how*. While modern American values may differ significantly from those of the mid-nineteenth century English middle-class, modern American teachers still occupy the same double-bound space.

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