SOCIAL DREAMING: DICKENS AND THE FAIRY TALE

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of English
University of Toronto

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Dissertation Abstract

"Social Dreaming: Dickens and the Fairy Tale"
Doctor of Philosophy in English, 1998
by Elaine Margaret Ostry
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University of Toronto

Dickens played a key role in establishing the fairy tale as an important literary form for the Victorian middle class. The only two books on Dickens and the fairy tale (Kotzin 1972; Stone, 1979) take a psychoanalytical approach to the subject; I apply recent fairy-tale criticism to Dickens scholarship in order to discuss Dickens's social uses of fancy and the fairy tale. My first two chapters place Dickens in the cultural contexts of the fairy tale. First, I both introduce the fairy-tale heritage to which Dickens was exposed and outline the critical contexts of this thesis. As do Perrault and the Grimms, Dickens used the fairy tale to promote his social views. To Dickens, a liberal humanist, the fairy tale had a high cultural value because it helped readers maintain hope and humanity in a mechanical age. Secondly, my approach illuminates Dickens's role in the cultural dispute of the early nineteenth century over the value of the fairy tale for children, when writers battled for access to children's minds in the hopes of perpetuating their belief systems. In "Frauds on the Fairies" and Hard Times, Dickens not only defends fancy as socially necessary but satirizes the Christian and rational discourses of its attackers.

In a sense, all of Dickens's works are defences of fancy, as my last three chapters show. First, I discuss how Dickens uses fairy-tale motifs in his novels to
create plots, characters and setting, idealizing women and the home as cultivators of fancy. Secondly, I focus on Dickens's Christmas books and their "Carol philosophy" of fancy, social reform and domestic affections. Close reading, however, reveals his ambivalence towards his own solutions. Finally, I examine Dickens's periodicals, Household Words and All the Year Round, which were based on his Carol philosophy and featured his fairy tales. The popularity of these publications spread his views widely and both encouraged writers to experiment with the fairy tale and readers to consider it respectable and valuable. In part because of Dickens’s influence, the fairy tale continues to play a leading role in children's literary education today.
DEDICATION

To my family, for always being on the other end of the telephone line.
I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Peter Allen, for his astute advice over the past three years. My dissertation committee, Dr. W. David Shaw and Dr. Joanna Dutka, read my thesis thoughtfully and critically. I also thank Dr. Jill Matus for her helpful comments. Thanks to the English department at the University of Toronto for its financial support, and to the staff members of the Osborne Collection for their friendly expertise.

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PREFACE: Social Dreaming: Dickens and the Fairy Tale

I have never stopped reading fairy tales, because, to me, they are rich in meaning, and their images endure. The images that stay in my mind are not flowery and do not feature fairies. I think of the little sister who cuts off her finger to use it as a key, thus saving her brothers, who have been turned into ravens. I think of the woman who wears out three pairs of iron shoes searching for her lost husband. I think of Baba Yaga and her fence of skulls.

When telling stories to children, I have seen the way they jump a little when these details appear. Adults react, too, although not as dramatically. This reaction is a sense of wonder at the unusual image, at its shift from the mimetic to the fantastic. In the realm of the fantastic, a new level of reality appears in which anything is possible.

Reading "mainstream" literature that is generally supposed to be "realistic" and "adult," I come across details from the fairy tale again and again, especially the shift to a secondary, fantastic level or world. Because the shift from the mimetic to the fantastic provokes such a strong reaction, writers often use it to say to the reader, "pay attention." What they want the reader to pay attention to depends on what they want to communicate.

I suggest that writers use the fairy tale (whether they know it or not) to communicate their social views. In the fairy tale, magic occurs in familiar settings, thus both reflecting and destabilizing the world of the reader or listener. The fairy tale can therefore act as a disguise for social wishes and complaints, successfully communicating ideologies of all stripes. It is effective because, not in spite, of its apparent foolishness.
and its association with children. As Marina Warner writes, the fairy tale is "all the better to speak to you with, my dear, all the better to persuade you with" (*Beast* 193).

Writing about the fairy tale is a challenge because it is such a protean form. Since people could speak, the fairy tale has existed and has travelled from place to place, from culture to culture, taking on local characteristics. When the fairy tale began to be recorded and disseminated through both print and speech, it became even more complex. It shows the mutual influences of oral and written cultures, and also incorporates elements of allegory, romance, fable, legend, and myth. As a cultural product, the fairy tale intrigues me because it has been told and written by all classes of society, although it is predominantly associated with the peasantry. It changes as it is used by different social groups, just as it changes from country to country. No wonder writers such as Dickens have used it so frequently and fruitfully.

Dickens is a pivotal figure in the history of the fairy tale in England. When he was six, *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818) was published: this Evangelical text featured children viewing corpses in order to learn about mortality. Five years before his death, when Dickens was fifty-three, *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) appeared, mocking moral didactic texts and temperament. Dickens did more than witness this change; he helped direct it. In part because of Dickens's influence, the fairy tale became not only accepted but respected by the middle class. This thesis could be called "from House*hold Stories* to *Household Words*," as it traces the growing influence of the fairy tale in England from the translation of the Grimms' *Nursery and Household Stories* to Dickens's wide dissemination of the form in his periodical, *Household Words*. 
I draw my thesis title, "Social Dreaming: Dickens and the Fairy Tale," from Lyman Tower Sargent's definition of utopianism as "social dreaming" (xiii). This phrase combines social idealism with fantasy, and it could describe all of Dickens's works. Dickens was not a utopian writer in the tradition of Thomas More: he did not plan a utopia, but he did play upon ideas of utopia, and he had a vision of what he wanted society to become. He communicated the spirit of utopia, not a blueprint for it. Dickens focused on the utopian aspects of hope and tried to encourage humanity through hope. He belonged to a loosely-knit group of liberal humanist writers, including John Ruskin and Elizabeth Gaskell, who believed in moral reform, reform of the individual heart. The development of social sympathy would naturally give rise to social reforms, gradually producing not a classless society, but one in which the classes lived in harmony. Dickens believed that the faculty of fancy, which engenders the fairy tale, stimulated both hope and social sympathy. The home was Dickens's utopian space wherein all of these qualities were fostered under the guidance of a fairy-like woman.

Victorians believed that strong homes helped to create a strong nation, and that the home should be founded on a solid moral system. For Dickens, the fairy tale, as part of the strong home, had national significance. As he wrote in "Frauds on the Fairies" (HW 1853), "[a] nation without fancy, without some romance, never did, never can, and never will hold a great place under the sun" (97). In my first chapter, "Nurse's Stories: Fairy Tales as Cultural Voices," I will show that with this assertion, Dickens agreed with contemporary folklorists who were collecting fairy tales and writing about them. The fairy tale was part of the folk heritage, and thereby at the root of national culture. What
was told around the peasant hearth (and in the middle-class parlour) had implications outside. To Dickens, both the fairy tale and home were essential in creating a great nation. Dickens's ideology of home was like a fairy tale itself, for in this ideal home, both social and personal transformations were effected.

I have adopted the approach of the critics of the fairy tale whose focus is on cultural issues, such as Jack Zipes and Maria Tatar, in order to analyze Dickens's use of the fairy tale as a cultural tool. The only two critics to write books on the fairy tale in Dickens's work, Harry Stone and Michael Kotzin, use psychoanalytical and biographical approaches. Fairy tale criticism that deals with the links between folklore and culture can add to Dickens scholarship by linking his use of fancy to his social beliefs.

As I will show in my second chapter, "Frauds on the Fairies: the Battle over Fancy," the cultural value Dickens placed on the fairy tale was controversial in the nineteenth century, when this form was attacked as dangerous to both the reason and morals of children. What children read, and how they were educated, was important to the nation because they were its future citizens. As Samuel Smiles wrote, "[t]he nation comes from the nursery" (341). Defenders of the fairy tale argued that the home had to foster the child's fancy and engender a love of fairy tale. Dickens defended the fairy tale in "Frauds on the Fairies" and Hard Times, showing his readers what fairy tales and society will become if fancy is not respected.

In a sense, all of Dickens's works are defences of the fairy tale and fancy. My third chapter, "Monsters and Fairies, Homes and Wildernesses," is a thematic survey of the fairy tale in Dickens's works. To Dickens, the fairy tale was necessary for survival,
both for the individual and the nation. To him, the fairy tale and fancy developed hope, humanity and social sympathy, and this process was especially important in an age of materialism and machinery. Dickens used fairy tale images of monsters and fairies, of wilderesses and homes, to promote his views on the need to foster humanity in the home and in society. As I will show in Chapter Four, "Dickens's Christmas Fairy Tales of Home," the Christmas books are the best examples of Dickens's ideology of fancy and the home, especially the poor home. Dickens tried to model the poor home on the ideal middle-class home, revealing his ambivalence about class. A close reading of the Christmas books, however, reveals that Dickens actually questioned his own philosophy about the healing quality of fancy and the home.

Dickens called the basis for his Christmas books "Carol philosophy," that is, "cheerful views, sharp anatomization of humbug . . . and a vein of glowing, hearty, generous, mirthful, beaming references in everything to Home, and Fireside" (Letters 4:328). One of his earliest plans for a periodical was based on this philosophy. He wanted to be like the cricket in the hearth, "a little household god" guiding his readers (Letters 4:337). His friend John Forster persuaded him not to use that idea, and Dickens wrote The Cricket on the Hearth instead. Upon finishing The Haunted Man, Dickens came back to this concept, this time with the image of a "SHADOW, which may go into any place . . . and be in all homes, and all nooks and corners, and be supposed to be cognisant of everything . . . . everyone's inseparable companion" (Letters 5:622-23). This idea led directly to the establishment of Household Words in 1850. As I will show in my final chapter, "The Fairy Tale in Dickens's Periodicals," Dickens based this periodical on
the principles of Carol philosophy as opposed to utilitarianism, and on the ghostly images of his Christmas books.

With his periodicals Household Words and All the Year Round, Dickens sought to gain influence over his readers and become a part of their homes. As with his other works, his periodicals are distinguished by his use of fancy and the fairy tale both to mitigate and criticize the harshest aspects of Victorian industrial society. His fairy tales in Household Words both reflected and influenced the trend to write fairy tales that were socially aware. With his periodicals and novels, Dickens took his seat at the hearth of the nation's homes in the hopes of influencing his readers to adopt his views on fancy and its value to the home. By doing so, Dickens felt that he was helping his readers become better social beings. Dickens played a significant role in establishing the fairy tale as a form suitable for the middle classes in Victorian times, and in making it a cultural tool. Although his own fairy tales are no longer popular, his influence on the fairy tale is still felt today.
CHAPTER ONE: Nurses' Stories: Fairy Tales as Cultural Voices

The first diabolical character who intruded himself on my peaceful youth (as I called to mind that day at Dullborough) was a certain Captain Murderer. This wretch must have been an offshoot of the Blue Beard family, but I had no suspicion of the consanguinity in those times. His warning name would seem to have awakened no general prejudice against him, for he was admitted into the best society and possessed immense wealth. Captain Murderer's mission was matrimony, and the gratification of a cannibal appetite with tender brides. (Charles Dickens, "Nurses's Stories" Uncommercial 161)

The young Charles Dickens did not know how lucky he was to have a nursemaid who scared him silly with her stories. The older Dickens did know, and acknowledged his debt to his nurse, Mary Weller, in his article "Nurse's Stories" (1860). Throughout his career, Dickens engaged in fairy tales on every level: he wrote them, defended them, alluded to them and used techniques of the genre in his essays and novels. According to Dickens, fancy was the imaginative faculty, and the fairy tale was a literary form that both exemplified and encouraged fancy. Throughout this thesis I will be referring to both terms, for in defending fancy, Dickens defends the fairy tale in the same breath. Dickens was not a writer who made philosophical or semantic distinctions between related words: for instance, he used the terms fancy, romance, and imagination loosely and interchangeably. He did not distinguish between fancy and imagination the way Coleridge did; indeed, Dickens view of fancy is that it is something often more serious
than Coleridge's "mode of memory" (Coleridge 167). According to Philip Collins, fancy "can mean to Dickens anything from colourful jollity and fun, to that imaginative sustenance which should nourish in both children and adults a wisdom of the heart, as well as provide an escape from present sorrow" (Education 91). John P. McGowan defines Dickens's distinction between reality and fancy thus: "Reality is empirical, while fancy designates the nonmaterial mental processes associated with the romantic praise of the imagination" (103). Moreover, Dickens felt that fancy and the fairy tale was charged with social and political significance, and thereby represented an imaginative alternative to a society that cherished fact over fancy. Without fancy, he claimed in his essay "Frauds on the Fairies," a nation could never "hold a great place under the sun" (97).

In this thesis, I will examine how Dickens explored this alternative in his fairy tales and in his allusions to fairy tales in articles and novels. Writers have used the fairy tale, a form associated with the home, to depict their views on their homeland and its future. Dickens follows this tradition in order to criticize his society and develop his ideology of home. In this chapter, I will discuss the cultural significance of the fairy tale heritage that Dickens inherited and later used in his own writings. I will show how the fairy tale has been discussed in Dickens scholarship, and how the use of recent fairy-tale criticism could illuminate Dickens criticism, and I will conclude with a reading of Great Expectations as an example.

In "Nurse's Stories," Dickens acknowledges his first exposure to the rich heritage of fairy tales and offers one of his many defences of the fairy tale and other imaginative literature for children. Here he discusses how such stories give the young reader the
freedom to "enter" Robinson Crusoe's island and Gil Blas's cave by stimulating the imagination. As examples of the power of fairy tales, he recounts two of the stories Mary told him. The quotation above is the introduction to a variant of "Bluebeard." Captain Murderer marries women and then eats them in a particularly cruel way. He asks them to make a crust for a pie and, when they ask where the meat for the filling is, he shows them a mirror. He then cuts them into pieces and finishes the pie himself. He is tricked by the sister of one of his victims, who poisons herself so that he will die upon eating her. He dies spectacularly, turning blue and exploding.

The second story is just as gruesome. In it, a boy named Chips sells his soul to the devil in return for shipyard supplies. Unfortunately, a rat comes with the deal: it speaks and cannot be killed. Even worse, Chips is afflicted by an extra-sensory perception of what all rats are up to: "There's two of them smelling at the baby in the garret!" he cries (167). Chips is drowned in a shipwreck; eerily, he foresees his fate by sensing that rats are eating the hulk.

With her gothic fairy tales, Mary passed on to Dickens her love for the grotesque and the ironic, as his Christmas books and the interpolated tales in *Pickwick Papers* particularly show. This kind of fairy tale dwells upon the dark side of human nature and society; Dickens often combines it with humour and compassion. The language of the fairy tale offered Dickens an avenue to explore themes that more mimetic language could not, a secondary level of magic and fantasy that provided a perspective on the primary world of reality.
Mary Weller also introduced Dickens to the art of story-telling. Dickens describes Mary's tone and gestures, as well as his own reactions:

The young woman who brought me acquainted with Captain Murderer had a fiendish enjoyment of my terrors, and used to begin, I remember—as a sort of introductory overture—by clawing the air with both hands, and uttering a long low hollow groan . . . . I sometimes used to plead I thought I was hardly strong enough and old enough to hear the story again just yet.

(164)

Mary claimed that her stories happened to her or her relatives, an effective storytelling technique that shows the freedom that she felt in altering the story for an audience.

Dickens became a storyteller himself, always with an eye on his audience, and his public readings also pay homage to the oral tradition.

WHAT DID DICKENS READ?

Dickens claimed that Little Red Riding Hood was his first love ("A Christmas Tree" 291). As Dickens was only 11 in 1823 when the first English translation of the brothers Grimm appeared, it is possible he read this collection as a child. In "A Christmas Tree," (Household Words 1851), Dickens fondly recalls receiving fairy-tale chapbooks for Christmas: "Thin books, in themselves, at first, but many of them, and with deliciously smooth covers of bright red or green" (290). The majority of the fairy tales, ballads and romances Dickens mentions in his works were reproduced in this form.

The list of childhood reading that he attributed to David Copperfield, which his friend
and biographer John Forster states was autobiographical, includes the Arabian Nights and The Tales of the Genii.\(^1\) From Dickens's use of fairy-tale allusions, we know that he read the following chapbook favourites: "Mother Bunch," "Old Mother Shipton," "Bluebeard," "Cinderella," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "The Yellow Dwarf," "Dick Whittington," "Jack the Giant Killer," "The Children in the Wood," "Tom Thumb," "Cock Robin," "Valentine and Orson" and "Robin Hood." In "A Christmas Tree," Dickens describes the plots of some of these chapbooks and the effect they had on his young mind: "Oh, now all common things become uncommon and enchanted to me!" (291).

Dickens and his fellow schoolboys circulated chapbooks of legends among themselves, and Dickens wrote tales and circulated them among the other boys in the same fashion (Forster 1:41). His first tale, "Misnar, the Sultan of India", was based on one of the Tales of the Genii (Forster 1:8). The schoolboys also put on plays in their toy theatres, including "Cherry and Fair Star," based on "La Princesse Belle-Étoile et le Prince Chéri" by Mme d'Aulnoy (Johnson 49).

As an adult, Dickens deepened his interest in fairy tales. He read the Grimms' tales for himself (P. Collins 16), and read "the new German fairy tales" (probably by the Grimms, Ludwig Tieck and Albert Grimm) in translation to his children (P. Collins 47).\(^2\) He put on fairy-tale theatricals with his children, including the fairy tale of Fortunio (M.

\(^1\) Dickens also read the following novels, well-loved by children of his time: Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, The Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, and Robinson Crusoe.

\(^2\) Michael Slater notes that Dickens did not read German (Amusements of the People and Other Papers 11).
Dickens 96). As we will see in Chapter Five, Dickens wrote and published literary fairy tales in Household Words and All the Year Round. As well, he knew and published folklorists and writers who retold fairy tales, such as William Thoms and Sir Henry Cole, and through their work learned about the diffusion of folklore and the development of folklore as a new scholarly field. He was a friend of Hans Christian Andersen (until the latter overstayed his welcome at Gad's Hill), and discussed Danish legends with him (Bredsdorff 59). Andersen writes that among the books placed on his table in the guest room were The Fairy Family and the Arabian Nights (Bredsdorff 96). Dickens included two reviews of M. Planche's translations of Madame d'Aulnoy in Household Words. These reviews demonstrate the value of fairy tales to Dickens not only in their content, which shows their authors' wide-ranging knowledge, but in their very inclusion, for books were rarely reviewed in this periodical.

Dickens, then, was part of a continuum of writers who sought to preserve the fairy tale and keep it in the hands of the next generation. Moreover, he adhered to one vital aspect of the fairy-tale tradition: the use of the fairy tale to influence the way people acted as social beings. For Dickens and many other writers before and after him, the fairy tale was an essential voice of the nation which carried with it cultural messages. For him, the fairy tale had the power, or magic, to effect social transformations.

In order to understand what the fairy tale meant to Dickens, and how he used its fanciful language as a cultural tool, we must understand what the fairy tale signified to the Victorians. In this chapter, I will define the fairy tale and show how it can provide a political discourse. I will then show how the French and German fairy tale writers used
the genre to express their cultural and political goals. These writers stimulated and, to a
great extent, directed the development of the fairy tale in England.

DEFINING FAIRY TALES:

What is a fairy tale and what does it speak about? Most writers and critics define
the fairy tale with uneasiness, when they do not decline the attempt altogether. When
asked to define a fairy tale, George MacDonald replied, "Read Undine: that is a fairytale;
thен read this and that as well, and you will see what is a fairytale" ("The Fantastic
Imagination" 162). The German word for fairy tale, "märchen," simply means "a brief
story" (Lüthi, Once 35). However, although we tend to think of fairy tales as short,
especially in the English tradition, the French fairy tales tended to be very long indeed.
Mme d'Aulnoy's tales were generally thirty-five to forty-five pages long (Zipes, Fairy
129).

The OED is not much more helpful in this task of definition. It defines the fairy
tale as "a) a tale about fairies; b) an unreal or incredible story; c) a falsehood." However,

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3 The etymology of the word "fairy" is debated. Marina Warner traces it to "fata," which refers to the "goddess of destiny." Fata is a variant of the Latin "fatum," which means "that which is spoken." She links this etymology with the ideas of prophesy and fate that fairies represent (Beast 14-15). Thomas Keightley derives "fatum" from the Latin verb "fatare," meaning "to enchant." He thus argues that the word "faery" means "illusion, enchantment" (6-8). Robert Bringhurst traces "fairy" back to the Greek "pherēs," which means "creatures of the wild" (16). Bringhurst claims that "[i]t is sister to the Latin fērus, whose descendants in English include the words feral, ferocious and fierce. Faērie is . . . not a playground filled with diminutive amusements for young minds but the myth-world itself, which is everything outside of our control" (16). The etymology Warner describes is commonly used; The Barnhart Concise Dictionary of Etymology (1995), however, follows Keightley's etymology.
most fairy tales do not have fairies in them. The third definition is useless for my purposes, although, as I will show in Chapter Two, opponents of the fairy tale linked it to lying. Perhaps the second definition is more helpful, especially if we think of the fairy tale as about "faery" rather than fairies. Faery can mean a fairy, but it usually refers to the place where fairies dwell, and even to a state of being which honours mystery and possibility.

The fairy tale features a shift in language from the mimetic to the fantastic, or faery. This "faery" level is a secondary, fantastic level of the text, whereas the primary level of the text is mimetic. In faery, all is possible. Faery is strongly associated with utopia, the "non-existent good place" (Sargent xi) where wishes are granted and a perfect social system is presented. For example, the OED defines "faery" as "the realm or world of the fairies...beautiful and unsubstantial, visionary, unreal." It quotes Spenser's Faërie Queene: "None that breatheth living aire does know/ Where is that happy land of Faery."

In his famous Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, E. Cobham Brewer defines "faërie" thus:

The land of the fays or faëries. The chief fay realms are Avalon, an island somewhere in the ocean; Oberon's dominions, situate "in wilderness among the holtis hairy;" and a realm somewhere in the middle of the earth, where was Pari Banou's palace. (439)

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4 See Lyman Tower Sargent's introduction to his bibliography for an extended definition of utopia.
Fairy mounds, Walker writes, "were entrances to the pagan paradise..." (298). The Irish had many names for faery that reflect utopia: "Land of Ever-Youthful Ones," "Land of the Ever-Living," "Plain of Pleasures" and "Land of Light" (Walker 298).

In faery, "human institutions are not in control" (Bringhurst 15), and although social rank exists, it is extraordinarily flexible. The hero is often stripped of his rank upon entering faery, or fairyland; peasants become princes; princes become frogs. Fairy tales thus challenge the rigidity of worldly rank. Like a utopia, faery offers a critical perspective on the human world. In a fairy tale, George MacDonald writes, "man may, if he pleases, invent a little world of his own, with its own laws" ("Fantastic" 162). Indeed, the two phrases most associated with fairy tales, "once upon a time" and "happily ever after," both show utopian qualities. The phrase "once upon a time" is deliberately vague. Jack Zipes describes it as

not a past designation but futuristic: the timelessness of the tale and its lack of geographical specificity endow it with utopian connotations--"utopia" in its original meaning designated "no place," a place that no one had ever envisaged. (Spells xiii)

Ernst Bloch, a Marxist utopian thinker, claims that "once upon a time" refers not only to "something past, but a more colourful or lighter Elsewhere" (353). Joseph Campbell cites another such opening to fairy tales, "in the days of good King Arthur:" when King Arthur returns, utopia will be founded in Britain, but no one knows when that will occur.5

5 There are many other openings to fairy tales that play with time: "Once there was," "A thousand years ago tomorrow," "There was a time and no time," and "Once upon a time, and a very good time it was, though it was neither in your time nor my time, nor
The utopia of faery is the secondary level of the fairy tale that I mentioned in my preface. It can be another world, or the fantastic transforming the world of everyday, unmagical reality. This level is reached through magic, or enchantment, suggesting a means by which utopian ideals can be realized. Most of the canonical fairy tales we have inherited are *zaubermärchen*, or magical fairy tales. Zipes claims that the quality of wonder distinguishes the fairy tale from other oral tales, such as folk tales, and he suggests that metamorphosis is the "key theme" of the genre (*Spells* xiv, xvi). All forms are in flux, including social structures. Through magic, anything is possible: famine is relieved, power is gained. The poor orphan becomes a king of a distant country: this social advance is at the heart of the fairy tale and shows its utopian inclinations. The protagonists rarely return home, and if they do, they come bearing money and gifts that transform that home into a better world. If one doubts the utopian wishes of the tellers, one need only count how many stories begin with poverty and end in luxury. The prime examples are fairy tales about the Land of Cockaigne, which is literally a land of milk and honey. At the root of these tales are the poor peasants' dreams of plenty; indeed, Bloch calls Cockaigne "a social fairy tale" (357).

The fairy tale as a utopia fulfills the wishes of the tellers. It expresses the desire for a happy ending in which one receives the rewards of love, power and wealth. By giving fairy tales utopian endings, the tellers are not just playing with wish fulfillment, but expressing dissatisfaction with their own lives and social positions. Lyman Tower Sargent refers to utopianism as "social dreaming" (xii): this phrase combines the earthly nobody else's time" (Zipes, *Spells* xiii; Campbell 17; Carter xii; Opies 15).
notions of daily, social life with the secondary world of fantasy. Bloch calls utopia "a fairytale of an ideal state" (357); describing Bloch’s views, Jack Zipes uses the phrase "critical utopias of fairy tales" (Breaking 138). The level of the fantastic in the fairy tale, then, is not disconnected from the "real world." On the contrary, "[i]t plays upon the imagination not to open it up to escape into a never-never land but to make greater contact with reality" (Zipes, Breaking 141). One form of this contact is satire. Tolkien marks one "face" of the fairy tale as a "Mirror of scorn and pity toward Man" (31), and one result of the fairy tale as "recovery," or the "regaining of a clear view" (48, 58).

The fairy tale also carries strong moral connotations which make it fertile ground for a "critical utopia" or satire. The good are rewarded; the bad are punished. These contrasts, as Max Lüthi remarks, are particularly pronounced in fairy tales, where the good heroes are extremely good and the bad villains are nothing less than evil. Magic is used to reward or punish characters. The morality and contrasts of the fairy tale bring it into association with allegory: The Pilgrim’s Progress, for example, is sometimes referred to as a fairy tale (Hearn Victorian xvi). The fairy tale provides both instruction and delight. G. K. Chesterton observes that "[n]ot only can these fairy-tales be enjoyed because they are moral, but morality can be enjoyed because it puts us in fairyland, in a world at once of wonder and of war" ("Fairy" 258). As I will show in Chapter Two, the moral and allegorical aspects of the fairy tale were accentuated in the nineteenth century, allowing it to be used as an educational tool for both children and adults.

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6 See also Tucker for an examination of child psychology, fairy tales and morality.
Traditionally, fairy tales were told by peasants, mostly women, and the protagonists of the tales were usually children or adolescents. The tellers and protagonists represented groups of people who were silenced or otherwise disadvantaged in their societies; the fairy tale thus had special significance to under-represented groups. As the fairy tale presents the possibility of an alternate, and better, reality, the form easily becomes a medium for subversive and rebellious ideas, albeit in a disguised form. Tales tended to travel up the social hierarchy, from the peasant nurses to middle- and upper-class children. Charles Perrault, the French writer, heard the fairy tales he later retold from his son's nurse. Children, then, acted as a conduit for fairy tales as well as being the heroes of the tales. Although men also told fairy tales, women were given the most credit as storytellers, depicted in engravings as Mother Goose or a similar old crone, telling stories to children, with her finger pointing upward just as the sybils did in iconography. Dickens's grandmother was an illiterate housekeeper famous for telling romances and fairy tales. As she did not die until Dickens was twelve, he probably heard her stories (Kaplan 20).

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7 Marina Warner discusses the figure of the female teller in great detail throughout From the Beast to the Blonde.

8 To be precise, many heroes are adolescents. The fairy tale marks the transformation of the child into the adult.

9 See Warner's chapters on Queen Sheba (Beast chapters 7-9) for an extended discussion of the relationship between womanly wisdom, prophesy, and the fairy tale. Warner's argument is provocative but, although I agree that the iconography of the crone descends from the sybil, I am not convinced that Warner proves the fairy tale to be a prophetic art.
The fairy tale was the product of both tellers and writers, simultaneously part of oral and literary traditions. Herein lies one difficulty in defining the fairy tale. Some critics claim that the folk tale is an oral form whereas the fairy tale is literary; however, I find this to be a false distinction, and one which the Victorians did not generally make. As I will show presently, the oral and written traditions often influenced each other, and tales shifted easily from one form to the other. The fairy tale is a special part of the romance tradition. Northrop Frye defines categories of romance as follows:

*By naïve romance I mean the kind of story that is found in collections of folk tales and *märchen*, like Grimms' Fairy Tales. By sentimental romance I mean a more extended and literary development of the formulas of naïve romance.* (Secular 3)

By looking at the fairy tale as it appears in Dickens's novels, I will focus on the relationship between these two types of romance.

The fairy tale is related to two ancient literary and oral traditions, legend and myth. It is distinguished from the legend because it is not strictly identified with a particular person or place. It often stems from myth, and many myths such as "Cupid and Psyche" have their counterparts in fairy tales. Myths were told in much the same way as fairy tales: the daughters of Minyas, for example, told myths while spinning, just as German peasant women in the eighteenth century told tales in the Spinnstube, the spinning rooms. Myths, however, create a system of religious beliefs (the gods of Olympus) and give historical accounts (the battle of Troy). The fairy tale is lighter fare, and is predominantly used for entertainment. Yet this quality masks the subversive
nature of the fairy tale, for it acts, according to Mircea Eliade, as a "doublet" for the myth, questioning it. The fairy tale, then, has always been a subversive form that plays upon the "official stories" (Zipes *Fairy* 1-3).10

Although it has primarily been associated with the illiterate peasantry, the fairy tale was enjoyed by all classes. Indeed, the peasantry may not have been as uneducated as has been previously believed. David Vincent posits that peasants and other members of the lower classes were actually quite literate: broadsides and chapbooks were sold to peasants since the sixteenth century and, in the late 1830s, a survey of the Central Society of Education "concluded that few rural homes were without any sort of reading matter" (25). Many peasants, especially women, could read but not write (Jackson 69; Spufford 22-44).

The oral and written traditions of the fairy tale intersected in the chapbook. Chapbooks proliferated when the Act of 1662, which limited printing, was repealed in 1693 (Summerfield 33). The name "chapbook" comes from the terms "chopped" or "cheap" book. They were roughly 8.7 x 6 cm and cost from a halfpenny to twopence. (Later copies with coloured pictures cost up to 2s 6d.) This meant, of course, that common people could afford them, and as industrialization increased and they earned more money, more of their income was spent on books. Mary Jackson describes chapbooks as England's first paperbacks (69). There were chapbooks on nearly every

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10 See Zipes's introduction to his *Fairy Tale as Myth. Myth as Fairy Tale.*
subject, and fairy tales were only one part of this market. Medieval English romances such as "Guy of Warwick" were preserved in this shortened form as well as fairy tales. Publishers of chapbooks often collected and edited material themselves, acting as folklorists in the case of fairy tales and legends. They sometimes even wrote or rewrote the stories themselves (Jackson 3). Travelling pedlars sold chapbooks, and the books were also sold in stalls at markets and fairs (Spufford 3-4).

The literate person(s) of the village read the chapbook aloud, and subsequent oral tales drew from the written version and sometimes inspired more written tales. Vincent suggests that the chapbooks thus helped preserve the oral tradition rather than destroy it (27). In fact, the tone of the chapbooks, Summerfield argues, was closer to that of the oral storyteller than that of the writer (31). The fairy tale, therefore, was a form in which people could participate, by telling stories themselves, or reading them (or hearing them read) from cheap chapbooks. This oral tradition continued throughout the nineteenth century. One of the vagrants Henry Mayhew interviewed told him how tales were told in the workhouses: "We told stories sometimes; romantic tales some . . . . Not stories such as Dick Turpin or Jack Sheppard, or things that's in history, but inventions" (Letter 28, Morning 35). The vagrant began his story like a fairy tale: "You see, mates, there was once upon a time, and a very good time it was. . . ." (35). Reading aloud around the family hearth was a nineteenth-century ritual that stemmed from the oral tradition.

Dickens's books were read aloud among strangers as well as within the family. Edgar

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11 Chapbooks covered a number of areas, including witchcraft, political issues, moral and devotional manuals, saints' lives, ballads, medieval romances, pornographic stories, crime sheets, and cures.
Johnson describes how Dickens met an illiterate charwoman who "heard" *Dombey and Son*: "she attended on the first Monday of every month a tea held by subscription at a snuff-shop above which she lodged, where the landlord read the month's number aloud" (613).

Oral culture and the fairy tale has attracted many scholars since the nineteenth century, and there is much scope for analysis of oral forms and of literary forms that draw from oral traditions. In the twentieth century, the study of the fairy tale has been dominated by critics who draw from psychoanalysis and from structuralism in order to find meaning in these oral and literary forms. Critics such as Bruno Bettelheim, Maria Louise von Franz, Mario Jacoby, and Verena Kast have analyzed the fairy tale from perspectives influenced by Freud and Jung. Vladimir Propp and Claude Lévi-Strauss have analyzed the structure of the fairy tale according to their own paradigms. Max Lüthi has focused on defining the particular style of the fairy tale.

Over the past twenty years, a number of critics have appeared who, unlike the critics listed above, make the social and historical contexts of the fairy tale their priority. These critics include Jack Zipes, Maria Tatar, Marina Warner and Ruth Bottigheimer. Although their work is similar in approach, they do not comprise a unified school of criticism. Zipes focuses on issues of class, whereas Tatar, Warner and Bottigheimer emphasize those of gender. To varying degrees, these critics all argue that the fairy tale both reflects and perpetuates social ideologies and hopes. They take into account the text

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12 As Zipes notes, "[m]ost psychoanalytical critics take cues from Freud, even if they have departed from his method and prefer another school of analysis" (Brothers 17).
of the fairy tale, its audience and teller, and place all of these aspects in the socio-historical environment from which they came, thus acknowledging the powerful interaction between a society and its literature. This approach is particularly fruitful in understanding how fantasy works to communicate a social ideology. These critics use aspects of psychoanalysis and structuralism as well as history and gender studies. They embrace complexity and look for multiple meanings that change with the social context. Rejecting the notion of many critics that the fairy tale is universal, timeless and ahistorical, they claim that the content and language of the fairy tale is protean.

This thesis in general, and the following section in particular, owes much to such critics as Zipes, Tatar, Warner and Bottigheimer. By looking at how the fairy tales of Charles Perrault and the brothers Grimm, among others, are influenced by history and social mores, these critics prove that the fairy tales have been instruments of ideology, including that of nationalism. As Dickens was exposed to a fairy tale heritage that both addressed and influenced cultural issues and that was considered to be a necessary element of a nation’s identity, looking at this heritage through the socio-historical lens of Zipes and like-minded critics would illuminate how Dickens used the fairy tale to carry his own social messages.

THE FAIRY TALE AS A PRODUCT OF CULTURE AND NATIONHOOD:

In Europe:

Before Freud, Jung and Disney, the fairy tale was seen primarily as an expression of the folk. Because this genre came from the land, it was at the root of national culture.
As I will show with my brief history of the genre in France, Germany and England, fairy-tale writers and collectors of these three nations used the genre to consolidate national cultural identities. (They had, of course, varying ideas of what these identities should be.) English tales did not enjoy the status that their continental counterparts did, and the European tales, especially those of the Grimms, helped the English tales gain status even as they threatened to overwhelm them.

In Europe, the fairy tale marked its debut with Giambattista Basile's *Pentamerone* (The Story of Stories, 1634-6), and Giovanni Francesco Straparola's *Piacevoli Notti* (The Facetious Nights, 1550-53). In France, the fairy tale was written down by Charles Perrault, who introduced the world to Mother Goose with his *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passé*, or *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* (1697); by Mme d'Aulnoy (*Les Contes des Fées*, or *Fairy Tales* 1697-8); by Mme de Beaumont ("La Belle et La Bête," or "Beauty and the Beast," 1756); and by Madame de Murat (*Contes des Fées*, or *Fairy Tales* 1698). Although Perrault is the most famous, men were the minority among such writers. These writers did not write their fairy tales for children, but for each other and their social superiors. They came from the *haute bourgeoisie* or the aristocracy. They took stories from the lower classes, and they also made up stories as part of their word games in the salons of famous women.

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13 Also known as *Pleasant Nights* (Zipes, *Happily* 18).

14 *Stories of Times Past*, or *Tales of Mother Goose*.

15 Others include Jean de Prechac and Chevalier de Mailly. See also Siefert.
The French fairy-tale writers used the form to advertise their own ideas of what society should be, through their proposed code of civilité. Courtesy, industriousness, grace, beauty, self-control, respect for women, celibate friendship between men and women and marriage based on love were all articles of this code. They used this code to protest arranged marriages and double standards in sexual relations. It was, as Warner puts it, a "polite revolt against the dominant culture," arguing for the self-determination of both women and the bourgeoisie (Beast 168). Their protest had national significance in its defence of women, peasant culture and national culture against a learned tradition that scorned all these things. The fairy-tale writers took the part of the Modernes in the Querelle des Anciens et Modernes, or "quarrel between the Ancients and Moderns." The Ancients, led by Nicolas Boileau, held that Greek and Roman literatures were the proper models for French writers. In contrast, the Moderns wanted to promote French traditions, and the fairy tale as an integral part of the national culture. As Warner writes, "[t]o the Moderns, the fairy tale was a living shoot of national culture; to the Ancients, the genre was a bastard child of the vulgar crowd" (Beast 169).

With this treatment of the fairy tale, French fairy tale writers gave the form greater social currency. They promoted "an unleashed imagination that could invent a fairy-tale realm and embellish it so that reason and will were set out of commission" (Renate Baader, qtd. in Zipes, Fairy 23). Through their battles with the Ancients, the French fairy-tale writers played an important role in the wider English and European conflict over the value of the imagination.
The French writers were also influential in the spread of the fairy tale. Their works reached England shortly after they were published in France. The tales of Perrault and others also reentered the world of the peasant through the form of the chapbook. Huguenot refugees to Germany brought French tales with them in oral form, and the brothers Grimm later transcribed them as German tales. Examples of these French-cum-German tales are "Sleeping Beauty," "Cinderella," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Blue Beard," and "Puss in Boots" (Zipes, Spells xxiii; Michaelis-Jena 48).

In their political and social uses of the fairy tale, Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm were much more radical than the French fairy tale writers. The Grimms were part of two groups whose boundaries often intersected: the romantics and the bourgeoisie, both of which strove to revolutionize Germany at the turn of the century. Germany was not yet a unified state but was divided into tiny kingdoms ruled by despotic princes; the Grimms believed in political and cultural unity and used the fairy tale as a weapon in this fight. The development of romanticism in Germany had three phases: early, middle and late, and the Grimms espoused the middle romanticism of the Heidelberg school (1805-09), which Zipes calls the "folk period." In this phase, writers such as Clemens Brentano, Achim von Arnim and Ludwig Tieck explored "national history and tradition" by collecting folk tales and folk songs (Breaking 70). They were "socially concerned

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16 In The Brothers Grimm: From Enchanted Forests to the Modern World (1988), Zipes gives a full biographical treatment of the brothers, outlining their political radicalism and motives as well as the publication history of their tales.

17 Early romanticism, or the Jena School, 1798-1801, was characterized by "radical experimentation" and featured Novalis, Ludwig Tieck, the Schlegel brothers and Friedrich Schelling (Zipes, Breaking 70). The Grimms and their peers in the Heidelberg School
artists" who attributed social importance to the development of the imagination (Breaking 63).\textsuperscript{18} The Grimms founded the Wollzeilergesellschaft, a small society of folk enthusiasts who called for the preservation of folk culture (Bottigheimer 6), but they best contributed to the cause by collecting stories from both the middle-class and the peasantry in Hesse and Westphalia.\textsuperscript{19}

Many of the Grimms' informants were part of their social circle, such as the Wild family and their nurse, "die alte Marie," and the Hassenpflug sisters, who were originally French. Their most famous informant was an Westphalian eggwife, Katharina Dorothea Viehmann, whom they called their "Fairytale-Wife." As Wilhelm described her, "She retains these old tales firmly in her mind, a gift, as she says, not possessed by everyone, as some cannot keep anything in their heads at all" (qtd. in Michaelis-Jena 59). Their manuscript of 1810 was rewritten to suit a bourgeois audience, and they published Kinder-und Hausmärchen (Nursery and Household Tales) in 1812 (volume 1) and 1814

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were followed by E.T.A. Hoffmann, Adelbert von Chamisso, Freidrich de la Motte Fouqué, members of late romanticism, or the Berlin School, 1814-19. The latter group conventionalized romantic formulas for a general readership (Breaking 70).

\textsuperscript{18} With the other romantics, the Grimms were influenced by the poet Johann Gottfried Herder, who was the first to call for "a pure collection of children's tales in the right spirit for children's minds and hearts" (qtd. in Bottigheimer 3).

\textsuperscript{19} Brentano actually started the Grimms on their quest for fairy tales by asking for their contributions for a volume of fairy tales he hoped to produce. This volume never appeared, and Brentano left his copy of their manuscript behind in the Ölenberg monastery, where it was not discovered until 1920, but the seed of Household and Nursery Tales (1812, 1814) had been planted (Brothers 10-11). Luckily, they had made an extra copy, because they did not trust Brentano's editing.
(volume 2). It became a best-seller. In twentieth-century Germany, it has outsold every book except the Bible (Zipes, *Brothers* 15).

According to the Grimms, the act of collecting the folklore of Germany would unite the folk and express a pure, distinctive German identity. Since the German states were in political turmoil, their project was particularly significant. Along with their fellow romantics, the Grimms argued for a more democratic system. They were part of the Gottingen Seven, a group of professors at Gottingen University who refused to pledge allegiance in 1837 to King Ernst August II of Hanover (*Brothers* 5-9), and they became increasingly radical in their views. Zipes sees in the Grimms' tales elements of utopianism and social criticism, especially in tales that feature dispossessed characters such as soldiers and tailors, who were marginalized in nineteenth-century Germany (*Brothers* 51-61). The Grimms' tales, Zipes claims, celebrate individualism, which was a romantic notion (*Brothers* 84).

Yet the Grimms had a less radical side, for middle romanticism featured a "definite conservative tinge." Zipes describes how many of the romantic writers "developed the fairy tale as a form of protest against the vulgar utilitarian ideas of the Enlightenment" (*Breaking* 80, 12-13), but this statement does not really apply to the Grimms. As Zipes writes,

> the Grimms were success-oriented; their value system, based on the Protestant ethic, favoured a utilitarian function within the formation of the German bourgeois public sphere. (*Brothers* 34)
They were interested in making money, and therefore tailored their tales to a bourgeois market. Thus they adhered to a code of values that other romantics such as E.T.A. Hoffmann found stifling: domestic virtues, order, industriousness, and formal education (Brothers 21, 84). With regard to children, the Grimms were hardly revolutionary: their initial self-censorship of their 1810 manuscript for a bourgeois audience was simply intensified when they started to edit with children in mind.

Both the romantics and the bourgeoisie used culture as a weapon (Zipes, Brothers 21). The bourgeoisie was, as in France, a cultural force that desired some changes in the rigid social system. Members of the bourgeoisie did have a strict moral code, yet they were also revolutionary in demanding a say in the feudal system of their time (Zipes, Brothers 19). They were encouraged in this project by the principles of the Enlightenment. Zipes argues that the romantics did not really oppose these principles: they simply wanted them to be adhered to in order to free individual creativity and society from political oppression, and they did not see this happening in their society (Breaking 57). Zipes writes that "it was in the house . . . . that bourgeois character was to be developed" (Brothers 21); consequently, child-raising, including children's literature, had a high social value. Members of the bourgeoisie favoured "extremely didactic stories for children," (Zipes, Brothers 23) and they altered the fairy tale to accommodate this agenda.

The bourgeois emphasis on didacticism influenced the Grimms to make their tales for children more pedagogical. Zipes, Tatar, Warner and other fairy tale critics who focus on issues of culture emphasize that the Grimms published seven editions of Nursery and
Household Tales from 1812 to 1857, in a process of continual refinement. In their first edition, the brothers expanded their 1810 Ölenberg manuscript to provide a more literary expression of the tales. Their first volume in 1812 was intended for scholars, yet many parents bought the book for their children. As Jacob Grimm wrote to Achim von Arnim, "[t]he book of fairy tales is not written for children at all, but it meets their needs and desires, and that pleases me immensely" (qtd. in Schenda 87). In the preface to the second edition (1819), the Grimms wrote that they had "carefully eliminated every phrase not appropriate for children" (qtd. in Tatar, Hard 217). They even called it an Erziehungsübuch, or manual of manners (Tatar, Hard 19). Clearly the Grimms' motives shifted from producing a purely scholarly text to making money in the emerging children's market (Tatar, Hard 12). Moreover, the Grimms adopted an educational agenda. Their changes reveal the qualities they wanted children to develop: industry, modesty, obedience and other traits particularly valued by the bourgeoisie. Inspired by the commercial success of Edgar Taylor's 1823 translation of Nursery and Household Tales, complete with illustrations by George Cruikshank, the Grimms published the Kleine Ausgabe (Small Edition) in 1825, an edition of fifty of their 211 tales, chosen for

20 The editing process of the Grimms and its implications are totally ignored by critics influenced by psychoanalysis and structuralism.

21 For example, in the earliest draft of "Snow White," the dwarves simply ask the girl to cook for them. By the first printed edition of the tales, however, the dwarves say, "If you will keep house for us, do the cooking, make the beds, wash, sew, knit, and keep everything neat and clean, you can stay with us and you won't want for anything" (qtd. in Tatar, Hard 29).
children. The tales are mostly zaubermärchen, and comprise the canon that we know today (Tatar, Hard 19).

By discussing the changes the Grimms made to the tales, critics such as Zipes acknowledge that the Grimms' ideological positions influenced their writing and editing processes. Tatar especially focuses on the changes the Grimms and other fairy tale writers made for their child audiences, particularly girl readers. In Off With their Heads!: Fairytales and the Culture of Childhood (1992), Tatar argues that the fairy tale was altered to fit more closely the patterns of the cautionary and exemplary tales of moral children's literature. For example, disobedience became the great sin in fairy tales, quite a change from the rebelliousness of their folk roots, and the revised tales show the strain of this reversal (Off 11-13). Likewise, Tatar points out that the Grimms neglected the male Cinderellas, which were more common than female ones before the eighteenth century (Hard 47). The older Cinderellas, and Catskins (a Cinderella type), were more active than their Grimm and Perrault sisters. The greatest change occurs in the figure of the villain: many Cinderella/Catskin stories featured incestuous fathers from whom the Cinderella character flees (Tatar, Hard 153). The Grimms and other collectors, however, were uncomfortable with the incest plot and substituted wicked stepmothers, evil mothers or the devil for the incestuous fathers. The result is a story which features either evil or helpless women and which tells a moral, when it was "probably never really designed to illustrate the rewards of good behaviour" (Off 18). Similarly, Ruth Bottigheimer traces how, in the Grimms' editions of "Cinderella," Cinderella and the other female characters speak less and less, whereas the prince and the father speak more and more.
In England:

In England, the fairy tale became a cultural weapon much later than in Germany or France, for it had less prestige due to the pre-eminence of religious and rationalist thought in children's literature. The French and German tales played a great role in bringing the fairy tale greater acceptance in England, although, as I will show in Chapter Two, the fairy tale still faced difficulties in gaining acceptance as a form suitable for middle-class children.

In England, the term "fairy tale" came into existence in 1699, when the French writer Mme d'Aulnoy's *Les Contes des Fées* was translated (Hearn Victorian xvii). *Les Contes des Fées* was followed by three more collections from the French in 1707, 1716 and 1721. Mary Cooper published d'Aulnoy's tales, using the English folk term Queen Mab to describe their author (Jackson 79). D'Aulnoy was also called "Mother Bunch," an English fairy tale figure.²² Perrault was translated into English much later, by Robert Samber in 1729. Some of the most popular chapbook tales in England, such as "Puss in Boots" and "Bluebeard," were versions of Perrault's tales, published late in the eighteenth century as a series of tales called the Juvenile Library. Benjamin Tabart published all of Perrault's tales in his series of chapbooks-cum-books, *Tabart's Collection of Popular Stories for the Nursery* (1804-09). Bilingual editions of Perrault's tales were used to teach French to English children (Carpenter and Prichard 179). One fairy tale collection of 1820 is called *The Fairies' Repertory: Containing Choice Tales, Selected from Mother Bunch, Mother Grim, and Mother Goose*: d'Aulnoy, the Grimms and Perrault are thus

²² See "Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales."
described as old English women. Alongside the French tales appeared the Arabian Nights, translated into French by Antoine Galland from 1704-17, and into English by an "anonymous 'Grub Street' translator, from about 1706-21" (Mack xxv). These tales, too, were immediately published in the chapbooks with yellow covers that Dickens, Andrew Lang and William Wordsworth all remembered.\(^{23}\)

The brothers Grimm appeared in England much later than the French writers, but to greater effect, as they were published when the children's market was expanding rapidly, and when romantic views were being heard in England. The Grimms published Nursery and Household Tales in 1812 and 1814, and it was translated into English in 1823 by Edgar Taylor, the first of many translators and editors of the brothers. Other German writers, such as Ludwig Tieck, Albert Grimm and E.T.A. Hoffmann, also became popular in England.

The brothers Grimm inspired English writers to collect and tell their own fairy tales as a way of developing a cultural identity. The very term "folk-lore" was coined by William Thoms in a letter to the Athenaeum (22 August 1846), in which "[h]e hoped that some future Grimm would arise in England to reconstruct the ancient heathen mythology of Britain" as the Grimms had done in Germany (Dorson 81). Using the Grimms as a model, Thomas Crofton Croker published Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland in 1825, which was "the first intentional field collection" made in Great Britain (Dorson 45), and translated into German by the Grimms. In his preface to More Celtic

\(^{23}\) See Dickens's "A Christmas Tree" (1850), Lang's preface to The Arabian Nights Entertainments, and Wordsworth's The Prelude, Book V (lines 482-500 in the 1805 version, lines 460-76 in the 1850 version.)
Fairy Tales (1894), Joseph Jacobs wrote: "For the 'English' folk-lore district I have attempted to do what the brothers Grimm did for Germany, so far as that was possible at this late day" (x).24 In 1888, Caroline Hewins stated that the "[t]he reign of fairy-tales had begun again with the study of folk-lore" (32).25

The English folklorists sought to collect tales before they disappeared. They had a difficult task ahead of them, for French and German tales threatened to replace their English equivalents, which had not been collected, written or promoted to the same extent. Other reasons for the perilous position of the English fairy tale have to do with the dominance of religious and rationalist thought in children’s literature, and the changes that urbanization and industrialization made to oral culture. Although literacy allowed the tales to be preserved in chapbooks, it also offered new forms of entertainment that threatened the position of the storyteller.

The fear that fairy tales would disappear was an old one. Due to social changes, it intensified in the nineteenth century. In the late seventeenth century, John Aubrey complained that

Now-a-dayes Booke are common, and most of the poor people understand letters; and the many good Booke, and varierty of Turnes of Affaires, have putt all the old Fables out of doors: and the divine art of

24 See Dorson for more examples of the Grimms’ influence.

25 Folklore refers to the study of folk culture, of which fairy tales are but a part. Nineteenth-century writers often did not make this distinction clear.
Printing and Gunpowder have frightened away Robin-goodfellow and the Fayries. (qtd. in Dorson 6)

These forces became greater threats, as changes in technology and the rural way of life were accompanied by changes in the way people thought. In 1787, Francis Grose, among others, considered these developments to be dangerous. He wrote that there was a strong oral culture in the countryside, before “newspapers and stage-coaches had imported scepticism, and made every ploughman and thresher a politician and free-thinker. . . .” (qtd. in Dorson 26). By contrast, in his preface to English Fairy Tales (1890), Joseph Jacobs blames the paucity of fairy tales in England on the poor relations between the classes, noting

the lamentable gap between the governing and recording classes and the dumb working classes of this country—dumb to others but eloquent among themselves. It would be no unpatriotic task to help to bridge over this gulf, by giving a common fund of nursery literature to all classes of the English people. . . . (v-vi)

Promoting class unity through folklore was a radical change from the more conservative view of such antiquarians as Aubrey and Grose.

As a result of these fears for the future of folklore, there was an increase in the number of antiquarians who collected tales and customs of Britain, and in the enthusiasm with which they were received. The antiquarians became increasingly organized in their attempts to preserve folklore, as they gradually came to work together and build upon
each other's work.26 Between 1834 and 1844, antiquarians founded many learned
societies in London, such as the Percy, Camden, Parker, Aelfric and Caxton societies
(Dorson 44).

Through studying folklore, antiquarians and folklorists27 could not only preserve
what was fading, but construct a sense of cultural identity, as Englishmen, Irishmen, etc,
and as human beings with links to a prehistoric past. Since Victorians valued history
highly in their architecture, literature and other arts, it is not surprising that their popular
culture was likewise historicized. Folklorists also studied the folklore of other countries,
in an effort to establish a collective history with other nations. They wanted to find some
kind of unity within diversity, and to search for an origin. They sought to chart a history
not only of the fairy tale, but of human progress and thought.

The antiquarians and folklorists did not work alone, but tried to involve the
general public in their effort to preserve their national heritage. William Hone tried to
collect tales by setting up correspondence with people who would send in contributions
(Dorson 36). Essays on folklore and fairy tales became common currency in journals of
general interest such as Household Words. William Thoms founded his own periodical,
Notes and Queries, in 1849, in which he launched a column on folklore in February 1850,
supposedly to meet popular demand. Thoms's publicity on behalf of folklore made the
subject and the term universally known in England in a short time. Furthermore, the

26 See Dorson for more on the history of these collaborations.

27 These terms appear to be synonymous to Dorson, although of course the term
"folklorist" is a much later one.
correspondence Thoms held with George Laurence Gomme in *Notes and Queries* led to the establishment of the Folk-Lore Society in 1878 (Dorson 82-90) and the journal of the society, *Folk-lore*, in the same year. The Folk-lore Society was the site of furious debates over theories of folklore waged by foreign as well as British scholars.²⁸

Although the emphasis of the society was on academic work, the folklorists are best remembered today through the work that some of them did for children. Thoms, Mrs. Bray and Jacobs sought to promote the fairy tales of England and wanted to preserve them for future generations. Under the pseudonym Ambrose Merton, Thoms rewrote *English Prose Romances* (1846) for children in two volumes, *Gammer Gurton's Family Histories* (1846) and *Gammer Gurton's Pleasant Stories* (1846). Mrs. Bray turned her stories from Dartmoor and North Cornwall into *A Peep at the Pixies: Legends of the West* (1854). Alfred Nutt published Jacobs' *English Fairy Tales* (1890), *Celtic Fairy Tales* (1892), *Indian Fairy Tales* (1892), *More English Fairy Tales* (1894) and *More Celtic Fairy Tales* (1894). The sequels, and the number of volumes published in only five years, suggests that they were popular. As Jacobs's *Indian Fairy Tales* (1892) suggests, fairy tale books for children reflected the influence of and interest in international folklore as well as tales from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. From 1889 to 1910, Andrew Lang published twelve books of fairy tales for children, each volume named after a

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²⁸ Although none of the major theorists of folklore actually worked in the field, they encouraged and influenced collectors as well as educated the public. In 1878, Alfred Nutt published the journal that disseminated the ideas of the Society: it was first called the *Folk-Lore Record*, then *Folk-Lore Journal* in 1883 and, finally, *Folk-Lore* in 1888 (Dorson 203).
different colour. These volumes retold Grimm and Perrault and brought more unfamiliar tales from around the world to English children.²⁹

In collecting tales, especially in translating tales from other countries, English writers strove to present their audience with an English style. They believed that the fairy tale, coming from the folk, expressed national characteristics, though they do not exactly describe what they felt these characteristics were. Joseph Jacobs is typical in stating, without any clarification, that he rewrote foreign fairy tales as if they had been told by an "English storyteller" (European vii).³⁰ In his preface to The Brown Fairy Book, Lang credits his wife for translating the stories: she "does not give them exactly as they are told by all sorts of outlandish natives, but makes them up in the hope white people will like them, skipping the pieces which they will not like" (vii). The English translators of the Grimms toned down the violence of the tales, considering it inappropriate for their audience. Taylor, for example, left out the original ending of "Snow White," in which the evil queen is forced to dance to death in iron shoes heated up just for her. In his notes, he claims that this death is a "truly Northern punishment" (291).

Considering that Dickens was exposed to this fairy tale heritage, which both addressed and influenced cultural issues, and that he felt fancy and the fairy tale to

²⁹ Lang tells his child audience how George Laurence Gomme, as president of the Folk Lore Society, did not approve of his and Jacobs's efforts, but that "they did not see any harm in it, and they were ready to . . . be tried by a jury of children" (The Yellow Fairy Book, ix). Gomme felt that Lang and Jacobs had devalued fairy tales by representing them to children. He did not view their works as a way of disseminating the Society's ideas to a new generation. Lang's and Jacobs's books, however, are sold today, unlike those of their peers.
possess national significance, it is surprising that Dickens scholars have not mined this aspect of his work, including the recent scholarship on the fairy tale. After all, Dickens is known both as a master of the fantastic and as a social reformer; a socio-historical approach to the fairy tale can bridge these two areas of his thought and reveal how Dickens's use of the fairy tale illuminates his social attitudes. As it stands, criticism of Dickens's use of the fairy tale is not only rare, but old-fashioned, caught in a time warp in the nineteen sixties and seventies, informed only by psychoanalytical and structuralist criticism. This form of criticism tends to identify motifs from folklore in Dickens and relate them to the psychology of the characters. It is descriptive rather than critical in tone. A recent example is Cynthia deMarcus's "Wolves Within and Without: Dickens's Transformation of 'Little Red Riding Hood' in Our Mutual Friend" (1995), which does not depart from the approach of articles written twenty years ago in asserting that Our Mutual Friend is "a super-fairy tale filled with archetypal images" that "works in the reader's subconscious to help him integrate repressed aspects of his psyche with his waking personality" (17).

Such criticism, drawing from Freud and Jung, informs the only two books that deal specifically with the fairy tale in Dickens's novels: Michael C. Kotzin's Dickens and the Fairy Tale (1972) and Harry Stone's Dickens and the Invisible World: Fairy Tales, Fantasy, and Novel-Making (1979). Neither writer makes use of folklore resources such as the Sith-Thompson motif index. Although their approaches reflect the structuralist, Freudian and Jungian schools, they do not refer to fairy-tale criticism. Both writers,
however, have established an important groundwork upon which I will build my own criticism of Dickens's use of the fairy tale.

Kotzin's work provides a useful survey of the fairy tale and its status in the early nineteenth century. Describing Dickens's exposure to fairy tales and his defence of them in *Household Words*, Kotzin proceeds to identify the villains, heroes, and helpers of Dickens's novels and their analogues in fairy tales. Unfortunately, Kotzin does not take his argument much further than this process of identification. He does not pay much attention to fairy tale patterns, for instance, or to Dickens's narrative technique. He does briefly relate Dickens's use of the fairy tale to his social agenda. In "Prince Bull," for instance, Dickens used "the seemingly frivolous form of the fairy tale to burlesque bitterly the harmful effects of the tyrannical red tape damaging England during the Crimean War period" (46). Kotzin states that Dickens thus used fairy tales to satirize society in his novels, but he does not develop this claim.

More useful is the criticism of Harry Stone, who is recognized as the expert in this field. Stone strives to explain the psychological roots of imagination through a fusion of the writer's childhood reading and his adult experiences. Stone's analysis of Dickens's characters is more interesting than that of Kotzin, as he takes his argument past mere identification to prove that the fairy tale was integral to the forms and themes of Dickens's works. Stone argues that Dickens experimented with the fairy tale, particularly in the Christmas books, to develop a method of fusing the fairy tale with reality. The result is "a more profound or complete realism" (197). One drawback to Stone's criticism is his insistence on relating nearly every aspect of Dickens's use of the fairy tale to specific
events in the writer's life. A typical sentence: "Pip's love reflects the strange, complex loves of Dickens' life" (301). To me, this emphasis on biography limits his criticism. Moreover, Stone refers to fairy tale techniques and patterns without describing what these are; he does not compare the traditional fairy tales to Dickens's use of their elements. The result is a somewhat vague and unsatisfactory study of the fairy tale, despite the many interesting details he introduces.

Apart from these books, there are a number of works that touch on the fairy tale in less detail. A handful of articles discuss aspects of the fairy tale in Dickens's works: Richard Hannaford's "The Fairy World of Oliver Twist" and "Fairy Tale Fantasy in Nicholas Nickleby," Joseph T. Flibbert's "Bleak House and the Brothers Grimm," and, more recently, Nancy Alcock Metz's "The Blighted Tree and the Book of Fate: Female Models of Storytelling in Little Dorrit." Elliot Gose includes a chapter on Bleak House and the fairy tale theme of transformation in Imagination Indulged: the Irrational in the Nineteenth-Century Novel (1972). None of these works focus on social aspects of Dickens and the fairy tale.

Folklorists generally only deal with the fairy tale and other aspects of oral tradition, but Katharine M. Briggs and Jacqueline Simpson have ventured into the world of mainstream literary criticism by commenting on Dickens's use of the fairy tale and oral culture. They tend to be much more precise in their application of folklore motifs than other critics. In "The Folklore of Charles Dickens," Katharine M. Briggs classifies the nursery stories Mary Weller told Dickens according to the Sith-Thompson motif index. Jacqueline Simpson's "Urban Legends in The Pickwick Papers" is a thorough analysis of
how the urban legend reflects cultural anxieties in *Pickwick Papers*. For example, Sam Weller's story about the sausage pie made from fingers reveals discomfort with the new phenomenon of "fast food."

Aside from the introductory chapters of Kotzin's and Stone's books, little criticism places Dickens in the context of other Victorian writers of fantasy. In "Happy Endings in *Hard Times* and *Granny's Wonderful Chair,*" Alice Mills discusses how many Victorian writers associated women with imaginative and sympathetic qualities as opposed to utilitarianism, and uses Dickens's Sissy in *Hard Times* and Frances Browne's Snowflower in *Granny's Wonderful Chair* (1856) as examples. Dickens's fairy tale "The Magic Fishbone" is included in *Victorian Fairy Tales: the Revolt of the Fairies and Elves* (1987) and *The Victorian Fairy Tale Book* (1988). Zipes and Hearn respectively survey the scene of Victorian fantasy competently and mention how Dickens fits in, but obviously that form does not give them much scope for detail. For instance, they do not refer to Dickens's lesser-known fairy tales.


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30 Karen Michalson's *Victorian Fantasy Literature: Literary Battle with Church and Empire* (1990) provides useful information on how nineteenth-century reviewers criticized fantasy.
characters use fancy as a misguided form of self-protection against unpleasant reality.

Less successful is Mildred Newcomb's discussion of the fanciful delusions of Dickens' characters in *The Imagined World of Charles Dickens* (1989).

One branch of Dickens criticism deals with romantic forms such as fantasy, myth and allegory; the relationships between these forms and the fairy tale in Dickens's works, however, remain virtually unexamined. One convincing exception is *Possible Worlds of the Fantastic* (1996), in which Nancy Traill extends the structuralist framework of Todorov to discuss Dickens's combination of the "traditional fantastic" (a hybrid of the fairy tale and the Gothic) and the mystery story to form his own paranormal mode.

Discussions of different genres of fantasy lead to larger debates about romance and realism, and the difficulties of drawing such distinctions, arguments in which critics have neglected the particular role of the fairy tale. Studies that focus on these issues, however, could inform criticism on Dickens and the fairy tale. In *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: The Gothic, Scott, Dickens* (1992), Ian Duncan argues that Dickens domesticated romance and made it private, "distinct from the public regime of exchange, work, power, sex" (16). I argue that the home was viewed as the locus of the bourgeois culture that created this "regime," and that Dickens used the fairy tale to promote the home as a social model.32

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31 In studies of myth and allegory in Dickens, critics have drawn away from the strictly religious approach of Bert G. Hornbach, Jane Vogel and Theresa R. Love to discuss these topics more broadly. See Roland F. Anderson, Michele S. Ware and Barry Qualls.

32 See also Michael Wheeler, Robert Newsom and Katherine Kearns.
Much critical attention has been paid recently to popular arts forms other than the fairy tale in Dickens’s works, as shown in Peter Brooks’s *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama and the Mode of Excess* (1976), Paul Schlicke’s *Dickens and Popular Entertainment* (1985), Edwin M. Eigner’s *The Dickens Pantomime* (1989) and J. Hillis Miller’s "The Genres of *A Christmas Carol".* These critics discuss the lower-class roots and motivations of these cultural forms. Sue Zemka similarly marries class and genre by discussing Dickens’s use of "'classed' cultural forms" (292) such as Punch and Judy shows, waxworks and Gothicism. The fairy tale deserves the same historical and cultural attention.

Although few critics write about the fairy tale in Dickens’s works, his treatment of the child has held a high place of honour. Following the lead of historians such as Philippe Ariès, Lloyd deMause, Linda Pollock and Hugh Cunningham, literary critics have discussed the child as a socio-historical construct that gained cultural currency in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This attention to the figure of the child has also informed recent histories of children’s literature. In his excellent book *Dickens and the Grown-Up Child* (1994), Malcolm Andrews argues that many of the romantic sentiments attached to the Noble Savage were transferred to the figure of the child, and that childhood came to represent a project of "cultural reform" for Dickens and

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33 See Patricia Demers and Gordon Moyles, Samuel Pickering, Peter Hunt and Gordon Summerfield in particular. However, with the exception of Maria Tatar, critics of children’s literature often do not deal with the fairy tale in these histories, or they treat it peripherally, as if it were not entwined with other forms of children’s literature. These critics do not discuss how Victorian writers of literary fairy tales were indebted to the traditional tale, and they generally do not refer to critics of the fairy tale.
Wordsworth. Society would be improved if people integrated their "childlike virtues and powers" with their "[adult] strengths" (25). Andrews applies his knowledge of the child in history to interpretations of the "grown-up children" of the novels, David Copperfield in particular. Reviewing this work, Westland comments: "Given the prominence of the child in Dickens's fiction, it now seems extraordinary that the cultural meanings of childhood and maturity had not been more fully explored by Dickensians" ("Dickens" 125). 34 I make the same claim for the fairy tale. 35

Some recent criticism does extend the subject of the fairy tale in Dickens to an examination of Victorian society. In "Change and the Changeling in Dombey and Son," Gerhard Joseph links the fairy-tale motif of the changeling, well-known to the Victorian public, to questions of identity and catastrophism. In "Little Nell and the Marchioness: Some Functions of Fairy Tale in The Old Curiosity Shop," Ella Westland convincingly argues that Dickens engaged fairy-tale motifs in a radical critique of capitalism in this novel. In an inversion of the "Sleeping Beauty" story, the Marchioness rescues Dick Swiveller and represents hope for the lower classes to attain a fairy-tale-like reward. Westland effectively uses both the utopian perspective of Zipes and the framework of

34 See also James Kincaid, Reinhard Kuhn, William H. Scheuerle and Mary Galbraith.

35 Recently, some interest has been shown in Dickens as a writer for children. The Everyman series has published Dickens's Holiday Romance and Other Writings for Children (1995). Philip V. Allingham provides much background to the publication of these tales in his article "The Original Illustrations for Dickens's A Holiday Romance by John Gilbert, Sol Eytinge and G.G. White, as these appeared in Our Young Folks, An Illustrated Magazine for Boys and Girls, Vol. IV."
Propp in this essay. This is rather little criticism for such a rich topic, but it is a sign that critics are beginning to see the social value of the fairy tale in Dickens's works.

**GREAT EXPECTATIONS AND "CINDERELLA":**

In the sections above, I outlined the criticism of the fairy tale that deals with cultural issues and the current state of Dickens critics with regards to the fairy tale. I offer here a test case for how the fairy tale can illuminate the cultural values present in *Great Expectations*. A number of critics (Van Ghent, Moynahan, Romig, Morris) mention Dickens's use of the fairy tale in this novel, but only Kotzin and Stone, it seems, give a full analysis of it. Dickens uses the plot, motifs and theme of "Cinderella" in *Great Expectations* to develop the social as well as psychological themes of the novel. In *Great Expectations*, I argue, he uses the fairy tale to claim the need for a clear, harmonious social, as well as personal, vision. This goal is difficult to attain, however, and Dickens reveals his own ambivalence about social mobility.

*Great Expectations* tells the story of Pip, the blacksmith's boy who wants to become a gentleman. In *The Idea of the Gentleman in the Victorian Novel*, Robin Gilmour notes that *Great Expectations* is set from 1807 to about 1823, dates that roughly correspond to Dickens's own youth. During this time, the concept of "gentleman" began to be questioned; in 1862, when *Great Expectations* was published, it was still a point of cultural anxiety. According to Gilmour, the concept of "gentleman" shifted during Dickens's lifetime: it became increasingly important that to be a gentleman one had to be morally upright. Gilmour notes that Dickens reflects this shift in his use of the fairy tale
in *Great Expectations*. Pip frames his social advance in the form of a fairy tale, yet his is a superficial view of the genre, for he does not address the moral basis for advancement usually present in the fairy tale. As a result, his fairy tale becomes a cautionary tale instead, and Pip learns both the necessity of fostering morality while gaining status and the importance of being true to oneself. Dickens thus reverses the Cinderella tale for ironic effect, suggesting the impossibility of the happy resolution of the fairy tale for individuals and society alike.

Kotzin identifies Pip as a Cinderella figure who is disillusioned when his fairy godmother, Miss Havisham, turns out to be a witch-like woman, and his real benefactor turns out to be the ex-convict Magwitch. Like the fairy in Perrault's "Les Fées" and the English tale "Diamonds and Toads," Magwitch is the outwardly unpleasant character who demands charity and then rewards it (64-65). Kotzin also identifies Orlick as Pip's *Doppelgänger*, and suggests links between Pip and Dickens himself. Kotzin does not do much more than simply identify Dickens's characters as types.

Stone takes Kotzin's identifications further, establishing biographical sources for *Great Expectations*. For example, he connects Miss Havisham's broken marriage to Dickens's own marital unhappiness. I am not convinced that this is an important connection to make. Stone applies the Cinderella motif too widely to be effective: he interprets Estella as a false Cinderella, whereas Biddy is a true one, but even Miss Havisham is a "blighted Cinderella" (310-11, 313). He is most useful when he discusses the *Doppelgänger* motif and shows on how Dickens uses this fairy tale motif to show
Pip's emotional growth. Through his struggle with his Doppelgänger Orlick, Pip takes responsibility for his "dark side" (308-09).

In contrast to Kotzin and Stone, I will provide a reading of Great Expectations as a "Cinderella" tale which demonstrates Dickens’s social uses of the fairy tale. In my comparison between this novel and fairy tale, I will stress their social aspects, in particular the ascent of their protagonists to a higher social status. Both Great Expectations and "Cinderella" focus on how the protagonists rise in social status from positions of humility to ones of power. As Lüthi emphasizes, the contrasts in fairy tales are made as clear and dramatic as possible: the youngest, most vulnerable child—dispossessed, considered simple, or otherwise humiliated—rises to royalty through bravery, cleverness, and usually with the help of others.

Pip and Cinderella have much in common. They are both motherless and abused by at least one member of their households. Like Cinderella’s father, Joe Gargery is a passive, powerless advocate of Pip: when the going gets rough, he gives Pip more gravy. They rise in status: Cinderella becomes a princess, and Pip becomes a gentleman, positions that are generally inherited rather than attained through merit. Both Pip and Cinderella negotiate their social advances within the context of their societies. The Perrault and Grimm Cinderellas achieve aristocratic status by adhering to bourgeois values. Yet whereas Cinderella rises to power, Pip is never sure of his status and loses his “great expectations" of success. His social climb is tainted with doubt, suspicion and mystery: Dickens thus questions the value of such a social advance. Like Perrault and the

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36 See Zipes's analysis of "Cinderella" above (43).
Grimms, Dickens teaches bourgeois values, but by denying rather than granting his hero the ultimate reward of social power.

Humility is a major theme in "Cinderella," for the heroine has to endure her humble state as a servant in her own home. Humility—or, rather, humiliation—is expressed by the motif of ashes. Cinderella gets her name from sleeping by the hearth, where she gets sooty. Ashes are also a sign of mourning: both Cinderella and Pip are first seen at the graves of their dead mothers. In Great Expectations, Pip resembles Cinderella, as he comes from the ashy forge. He is afraid of being consigned to "sitting in the chimney-corner at night staring drearily" at Joe, if he loses the man's confidence (40). Joe is shown in a Cinderella position, stoking the ashes while his wife humiliates him. When Pip realizes how he has deserted Joe, he gazes at the fire and sleeps on the floor in front of it. Likewise, when Miss Havisham feels humbled, she stares contemplatively into the "ashy fire" (391).

The motif of clothing is potent in both "Cinderella" and Great Expectations. They are literally rags-to-riches stories. Pip relates clothes to class from his first visit to Miss Havisham, when he is ashamed of his boots. Significantly, this class shame leads him into deceit and a desire for disguise, as he lies about what he did at Miss Havisham's, and wishes he were "not common" (69). Cinderella is dressed in rags at the beginning of her story. Her variants—Catskin, Donkeyskin, Thousandfurs, Cap O' Rushes—wear dresses that signify humility, as their names suggest.

The transformation of Cinderella is marked by the change in her dress. She gets her prince though disguising herself, although her dress can be said to match her inner
worth. Pip's transformation into a gentleman is similarly shown: the first thing he does as a gentleman-to-be is to order a suit. The suit disappoints him, however, and does not seem to fit. Pip suspects that he is "at a personal disadvantage, something like Joe in his Sunday suit" (154). Pip's new suit of clothes fools Mr. Pumblechook into respect, but it does not work its magic on wiser characters such as Biddy. "Trabb's boy" loudly mocks Pip's new clothes, and by extension his ascent.

Cinderella successfully deceives her own step-sisters; Pip only really fools himself and Mr. Pumblechook. Pip clings to clothes as a disguise. When Estella writes that she will be in London, he remarks that "[i]f there had been time, I should probably have ordered several suits of clothes for this occasion..." (256). By contrast, Joe does not suffer from the same delusion, for he understands his place: "I'm wrong in these clothes. I'm wrong out of the forge, the kitchen, or off th'meshes" (222). When Magwitch tells Pip that he is his benefactor, he symbolically undresses the young man, remarking on his gold watch and diamond ring. "Look at your clothes; better ain't to be got!" he crows (316). Just as in "Cinderella," this transformation from riches to rags occurs at midnight.

In fairy tales, the hero or heroine often only succeeds with the help of others, usually animals or disguised fairies. In Perrault's "Cinderella," the fairy godmother helps Cinderella. In the Grimm version, the dead mother's spirit, in the form of a dove in the tree on the mother's grave, helps her daughter by throwing down dresses. Pip also receives help when at his mother's grave, for this is where he first encounters Magwitch, who emerges from the gravestones. Pip helps the convict get food, drink and a file, and Magwitch later repays him anonymously.
Pip errs by not realizing who his helper is, and becoming bound—indeed, spell-bound—to the false helper. Miss Havisham uses him to foil her greedy relatives and to help her wreak revenge against men through her adopted daughter, Estella. She is described in terms of a fairy godmother and a witch. One example occurs when Pip appears before her in his new suit: "This is a gay figure, Pip," said she, making her crutch stick play round me, as if she, the fairy godmother who had changed me, were bestowing the finishing gift" (154). Later in the novel, Pip describes her "witch-like eagerness" (298) and vampyric manner with Estella, hanging "upon Estella's beauty...as though she were devouring the beautiful creature she had reared" (298). Her entreaties to Estella, "Break their hearts my pride and hope, break their hearts and have no mercy!" (93) and to Pip, "Love her, love her, love her!" (237), sound like spells. By contrast, Magwitch appears in the opening scene as part ogre, commenting that he was tempted to eat Pip's fat cheeks, and part bog/bogeyman, rising out of the marshes; the goodness of his nature does not become apparent to Pip until towards the end of the novel.

The motif of helpers shows the need for sponsors in order for children to rise socially. Perrault's two closing morals to "Cinderella" show an ironic attitude towards social ascent: in his first moral, Perrault stresses the value of goodness; in the second, however, he claims that all virtue and beauty is worth nothing without a powerful advocate. Certainly in Perrault's time, as in Dickens's, it was not an easy matter to gain

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37 Gilmour observes that in Great Expectations, Dickens reverses the notion of fairy godparents of his earlier novels (116).

38 Perrault's morals to "Cinderella" read as follows:
"Moral:
social status. Perrault refers to the custom of godparents acting as sponsors for the child, helping it advance in society (Warner 48-49). In Victorian society, this need still existed, although it did not generally take the form of godparents. Middle-class boys needed sponsors to help set them up in trade; aristocratic boys waited for their twenty-first birthdays, when they would inherit money. Both systems required luck, which the fairy tale hero always has.

The passivity which sponsorship promotes among those it supports lies at the heart of the contradictory nature of Victorian success. On one hand, middle-class ethics required one to work for one's living and use one's talents to achieve status. It meant, as

Beauty is a treasure rare.
Who complains of being fair?
Yet there's still a something more
That good fairies have in store.
'Tis that little gift called grace,
Weaves a spell round form and face,
Of each word makes magic, too,
Lends a charm to all you do.

This it was—and nothing less—
Cinderella's fairy dress!
And if you would learn the way
How to get that gift today—
How to point the golden dart
That shall pierce the Prince's heart—
Ladies, you have but to be
Just as kind and sweet as she!

Another Moral:
Godmothers are useful things
Even when without the wings.
Wisdom may be yours and wit,
Courage, industry, and grit—
What's the use of these at all,
If you lack a friend at call?" (77-78)
Herbert Pocket says, "look[ing] about one:" "Then the time comes, when you see your opening. And you go in, and you swoop upon it and you make your capital, and then there you are!" (182-83). Dickens emphasizes this self-reliance in his fairy tale "The Magic Fishbone," in which Alicia does not apply the magic powers of the fishbone until there is no other solution. This attitude is a reflection of the value attributed to the power of the individual during the Enlightenment, proven in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by the rise of the inventor, the engineer, the tradesman and the businessman. The efforts of these professions propelled the Industrial Revolution and the expanding British empire. Samuel Smiles, the author of Self-Help (1859), perpetuated the idea of the self-made man as a cultural model.

On the other hand, the gentleman was of the highest order in Victorian society. Traditionally, the gentleman did not engage in manual or commercial labour, and he owned land. Gentlemen were army officers, Anglican clergymen, London physicians, or men of "liberal education" (Gilmour 7). Gilmour notes that "the one respectable 'trade' was in the service of a wealthy merchant" (7). The gentleman's life was marked by luxury and leisure. Money alone could not obtain social status; as a result, the nouveau riche often bought heraldic crests. In the early and mid-Victorian period, though, these definitions of "gentleman" were challenged. Work, including that within the new professions such as engineering, gradually became more respectable. The result was a conflict between two separate ethics, that is, between the "traditional social hierarchy" and the "new industrial society" (Gilmour 7).
The fairy tale and other forms of children's literature mirror this contradictory perspective on work. Work and subservience are part of the protagonist's period of humility, to be rewarded with the power as a ruler to command others. The emphasis on industry that the bourgeois Grimms placed on fairy tale heroes is at odds with the grander goals of the fairy tale, that is, of becoming royalty that do not work. Likewise, the popular stories that John Newbery published in the mid-1700s reflect these conflicting values. Goody Two-Shoes, for example, works as a teacher from the time she learns her letters and establishes herself in the community with her education and charity. But this status is not enough: the anonymous writer feels she deserves a greater reward, and has a lord marry her despite her low rank.

Dickens tackles this contradictory attitude towards work and success in *Great Expectations*, although the results of his examination show that he is similarly conflicted. In his treatment of the gentleman, Dickens reflects the anxieties of his time. Pip is confronted with the idea of gentlemanly status as something moral as well as material in nature. The most reliable character in the book, Herbert Pocket, quotes his father on the subject: "no man who was not a true gentleman at heart, ever was, since the world began, a true gentleman in manner" (179). Magwitch echoes this sentiment (less sweetly) in his analysis of Compeyson, who is a gentleman on the outside and evil within.

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39 It is thought that Oliver Goldsmith wrote *The History of Goody Two-shoes*, but there is no proof to support this claim.

40 Compeyson's position also helps him get half the sentence that Magwitch had received, an injustice which prompts Magwitch to "create" a gentleman of his own.
When he hears of Pip's expectations, Mr. Pumblechook chortles to Pip, "well deserved!" (150). But as Pip reveals to Herbert, he knows that he has not earned his success: "I know I have done nothing to raise myself in life, and that Fortune alone has raised me; that is being very lucky" (245). In the fairy tale, the protagonist helps another living thing (person, animal, insect, plant) and is rewarded for his or her charity and good nature; Pip is unaware that he has performed any such action that would have made him lucky. Pip is uneasy with the mystery of his situation as it forces him to be passive as well as ignorant. He imagines that Miss Havisham has "reserved it" for him to do "all the shining deeds of the young Knight of romance, and marry the Princess" (229), but there is nothing for him to do but wait. He cannot be an active hero, only, as Estella suggests, a puppet. "We are not free to follow our own devices, you and I," she says (261). Martin Price suggests that Estella is like the "cruel fair" of courtly love who "remains elusive and sets impossible tests" (120). The same character exists in fairy tales as the riddling princess; the difference here is that Estella is powerless, and knows it.

When Magwitch reveals himself to be Pip's benefactor, Pip feels he must reject his fortune. The circumstances of hiding Magwitch finally allow Pip to be an active hero. Pip can now act charitably towards Magwitch consciously, and morally, rather than blindly and out of fear. At last Pip confronts Miss Havisham and Mr. Jaggers for their lack of openness. This peripeteia signals a reverse of the Cinderella story: whereas Cinderella moves from humility to a high position, Pip moves from humility to pride and back to humility. In Zipes's terms, Pip is forced to embrace the bourgeois values such as domesticity and industry that he has dismissed in his fairy tale quest for easy social
advancement. To make the fairy-tale realization of true worth in a society that does not recognize it, Dickens must reverse the fairy tale. In this process, Pip realizes how he has misjudged Joe, who is the true gentleman.\footnote{Gilmour observes that by referring to Joe as "this gentle Christian man," "Pip (and Dickens) separates the word 'gentleman' into its classless elements. . ." (143). I suggest that the idea of morality literally divides the word into these two elements.} Under Joe's healing touch, Pip feels like a child: he must start over again. Unfortunately, as he says to Herbert, "I have been bred to no calling, and I am fit for nothing" (338). Magwitch tells him, "I worked hard that you should be above work" (315); now Pip must learn how to work himself.

It is in the final stage of \textit{Great Expectations} that Dickens particularly shows his anxiety about social mobility, suggesting that it is not enough, perhaps, for Pip and his society to recognize that true gentlemanliness lies within. Although Dickens emphasizes the importance of this recognition, he still subscribes to the exclusionary notion that high social status is, at some fundamental level, inherited. It is clear that Pip cannot continue to receive Magwitch's money, even though it was given out of love. Indeed, Magwitch's generosity stems as much from revenge and bitterness towards a society that tilts the balance towards the gentleman as it does from Pip's good deed in the past. Perhaps it is not just the taint of whatever crimes Magwitch may have committed, which in the eyes of society can never be, as Magwitch claims, "worked out and paid for" (341), but the motive of revenge, an attempt to foil society, that further taints the money. In any case, despite the clear affection he holds for Pip, it is obvious that it would have been better if the money had indeed come from Miss Havisham who, despite her cold, selfish, and vengeful madness, maintains an established position in society. Magwitch cannot be
redeemed: Pip reflects that, despite the convict's goodness, it was "unquestionably best that he should die" (441).

Furthermore, although Pip thinks of throwing himself at Biddy's feet and leaving it to her to say whether he will work at Joe's forge, he does not ask her this after all. Becoming a blacksmith is not an option even after Pip realizes Joe's worth and his own snobbery. Even Pip's initial discontent with his apprenticeship is shown in a somewhat sympathetic light; it seems clear that Pip is meant for something better. To have him return to the forge permanently would seem like a tragedy, an unwarranted humiliation.

In being swept away by fairy tale illusions, and in failing to recognize his true sponsor, Pip becomes the hero of a cautionary tale, a form for children popular in the early nineteenth century. Like the fairy tale, the cautionary tale has a moral attached; however, its moral comes in a much more didactic form. The cautionary tale warns children against physical and moral dangers. Many cautionary tales, for instance, were about playing with fire, and ended with the child being burnt to death. The tone of these tales is harsh and condemning. Herbert comments that Pip's name sounds like a moral boy out of the spelling-book, who was so lazy that he fell into a pond, or so fat that he couldn't see out of his eyes, or so avaricious that he locked up his cake till the mice ate it, or so determined to go a bird's-nesting that he got himself eaten by bears who lived handy in the neighbourhood. (176)

Great Expectations could be a cautionary tale writ large, warning boys not to advance beyond their station. Indeed, there are several instances in which Pip cries that he would
have been far happier if he had never left the forge. As Estella asks Pip, "will you never take warning?" (297). At the end of the book, Pip does indeed get burnt when saving Miss Havisham, and nearly gets burnt to death by Orlick in the limekiln.

At the same time, however, Dickens scorns the moral attitude of Mr. Pumblechook who, at the end of the reading of the tragedy of George Barnwell, tells Pip to "[t]ake warning, boy, take warning!" (115). When the company of Mr. Pumblechook, Pip's sister and the Hubbles talk about children, Dickens presents their conversation as a parody of Evangelical thought on the subject:

Mrs. Hubble shook her head, and contemplating me with a mournful presentiment that I should come to no good, asked, "Why is it that the young are never grateful?" This moral mystery seemed too much for the company until Mr. Hubble tersely solved it by saying, "Naterally vicious." Everybody then murmured "True!" and looked at me in a particularly unpleasant and personal manner. (25)

Also, Dickens gives short shrift to the tracts "TO BE READ IN MY CELL" (103) that both Pip and Magwitch are offered.

Dickens, then, rejects easy and righteous morals. Perhaps the moral of the story, or the warning that Dickens would want to leave his readers, is more subtle. I have been arguing that Pip is a Cinderella type who doubts his own disguise and his own advance; Dickens uses this fairy tale ironically for, as most critics agree, the fairy tale genre promotes psychological and social wholeness and harmony. At this point, I will turn from discussing Great Expectations in terms of the specific tale "Cinderella" to discussing
it as a fairy tale in general. Through Pip's divided self we can see how society is divided, and what pain this split causes. Here the influence of society on the individual psyche becomes evident. Part of Dickens's intention in *Great Expectations* is to warn readers of the dangers of a society which contains divisions that hinder communication among people, and which also lead to individuals suffering psychological splits.

In *Great Expectations*, society is divided between the rich and poor; as Joe says, "[d]ivisions among such must come, and must be met as they come" (222). Furthermore, it is divided between country and city, home and work. The country is the home of folk customs such as Joe's singing of "Old Clem" and throwing shoes after departing friends, and of oral culture in the form of reading aloud. It is the relaxed, harmonious, pre-industrial past of the fairy tale juxtaposed with the dirty, crowded, fast-paced, and unromantic City of London.

Wemmick is the perfect example of one who has divided his psychological and social selves: in the City, or "Little Britain," he is secretive and tight-fisted; in his pastoral retreat of Walworth, he has "innocent cheerful playful ways" (407) and close relationships with his aged parent and Miss Skiffins. In his home, Wemmick can be generous and open, aspects of his character that the City forbids. Reminiscent of the fairy tale, this pastoral retreat is called a castle, and is symbolically cut off from Little Britain by a moat. The very place must remain a secret from his employer, Mr. Jaggers. Indeed, it is only in private that the characters in this book are open with each other: the public space of the

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42 Edgar Johnson notes that Dickens knew the customs of St. Clement's Day (November 23) from childhood (17).
City is always fraught with deceit, and characters such as Wemmick disguise their true natures. It is also only in these private places that independence is exercised, symbolized by Wemmick's delight in having invented gimmicks about the house with, as Mrs Skiffins says, his "own hands out of his own head" (291). In the City, on the other hand, one cannot be so free and imaginative.

Wemmick's and Joe's homes\textsuperscript{43} are both described in fairy tale terms: pastoral, cosy, with warm hearths. They are utopias, places of imagination, independence and invention. Significantly, Wemmick's home is kept entirely separate from his work, showing a split in his own character as each place demands a different nature. By contrast, Joe is the only person in the book to work and live in the same place; not surprisingly, he is also the only main character whose nature is not divided. Pip criticizes the split in Wemmick's character, and reveals Wemmick's secret to Jaggers. Pip wants Wemmick to be whole: to be as kind and open a person at work as he is at home. In this book, Dickens both praises the cosy retreat of home, uncontaminated by the corruption of the workplace, and suggests that the good influence of home should not be hidden. The tension between the home as retreat from and example for the business world runs throughout Dickens's novels; in Chapter Four, I will discuss this contradiction with regard to the Christmas books.

When Pip desires that Wemmick act at work like the kind and open person he is at home, he also remonstrates with himself. Pip feels his own split in character between his

\textsuperscript{43} While married to Pip's sister, Joe did not have a particularly happy home. By contrast, the home that he and Biddy create is blissful.
social self and his true self. Pam Morris notes that the "narrative construction of Pip as a gentleman" results in two losses: his connection with others and his selfhood (113). Pip asks Herbert: "I was a blacksmith's boy but yesterday; I am—what shall I say I am—today?" Herbert replies, "a good fellow!" (245). This response is not enough for Pip, who builds his identity upon social position and finds the limbo between labouring and idle classes painful. Dickens uses Pip as a model for what he saw happening in society at large, as he reflects the fears of social change and division that the nineteenth-century folklorists had. Dickens had no great fondness for "the old days," but I think he wanted to make people aware of what psychological and social divisions had occurred since industrialization and urbanization overtook England.

With the technique of doubling, Dickens shows how nearly all of the characters suffer from the same plight: Orlick, Mrs. Pocket, Magwitch, Miss Havisham, and Mr. Pumblechook all mirror Pip's divided nature. Stone, Kotzin and Newcomb have commented on how the fairy tale reveals Pip's delusions: I think this idea can be extended to demonstrate that all of society suffers from the similar delusions and, consequently, divided natures. The idea of the country being associated with home, memory and imagination would have a great effect on Dickens's audience because, as "[m]ost Victorian city dwellers in the early nineteenth century had either grown up in the country or in a country town," they likely endured a similar internal conflict (Andrews, Dickens 43).

Dickens uses the fairy tale and the cautionary tale ironically. His ironic use of the fairy tale is steeped in sorrow, and he adds some parody to the cautionary tale. In the
fairy tale, the protagonist comes back home rich; in Great Expectations, Pip returns to his childhood home poor in material goods but enriched in spirit. His delusions about fairy tale expectations are revealed as such: Dickens uses Pip's example to warn society to guard against such delusions itself, to cast off the harmful dreams of success based on mere luck and magical sponsorship. A true fairy tale hero, however, is lucky because he is good: Pip wants the reward of the fairy tale without the moral work that must be done to deserve it. His society is likewise blinded by an illusion of the ease of success. Morris states that "this novel constructs a parodic fable aimed at an ironic exposure of national enchantment with the myth of great expectations for all" (108). Dickens suggests that, spellbound by these illusions, his society will become split, and separated from its past, its memory, and imagination.

Ironically, Dickens uses the fairy tale to kill romance. Pip's later rise in status is given only two paragraphs, and is described in dry, even banal terms. This is the utilitarian way of succeeding: hard work is honourable, but unromantic. Pip's struggle to succeed reflects the social reality, as opposed to the myth, of class advancement, for "social mobility actually decreased after 1850..." (Morris 105). Although this is the "proper" way to achieve success, Dickens's gloomy presentation of it reveals a desire for romance. Surely if society were not as divided between home/imagination/memory and

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44 G. Robert Stange notes the irony in Great Expectations that "Magwitch's fortune at first destroyed the natural gentleman in Pip, but that after it was lost... the 'dung-hill dog' did actually make Pip a gentleman by evoking his finer feelings" (70).

45 Morris treats Great Expectations as a product of its time of publication rather than of the time in which it is set. Dickens's novel is an amalgamation of both early and mid-Victorian views and experiences.
work, work would be more joyful and people more harmonious. In Dickens’s original ending, Pip and Estella meet again, but they are not reunited. In the second ending he wrote, in response to Edward Bulwer Lytton’s criticism, the two are indeed brought together again, but the phrase “I saw the shadow of no parting from her” (480) is somewhat ambiguous: after all, there is much that Pip has not seen, and there is no assurance that his vision will be correct this time. Certainly the predominant mood of the ending is one of fatigue rather than fulfilment. With his use of the fairy tale, Dickens shows how his society does not allow for the easy resolution of the genre. By using the fairy tale alongside the cautionary tale, Dickens plays upon the moral didactic discourses that dominated children’s literature in the first part of the nineteenth century. In the next chapter, I will place Dickens in the context of these discourses, and show how he defended the fairy tale against its early critics.
CHAPTER TWO: Frauds on the Fairies: the Battle over Fancy

As I have shown in my analysis of Great Expectations, Dickens uses the fairy tale in conjunction with other forms of children’s literature, such as the cautionary tale. In this chapter, I would like to expand this idea by showing the context in which Dickens defended the fairy tale, and used moral didactic forms of children’s literature ironically in “Frauds on the Fairies” and Hard Times. In “Frauds on the Fairies,” Dickens defends the fairy tale against those who would change it to suit their own moral agendas. In this essay, Dickens uses the moral didactic discourse favoured by the temperance movement in order to mock such didacticism. Similarly, in Hard Times, he plays with the discourses of children’s literature in his criticism of an education, and a society, based solely on fact. In "Frauds on the Fairies," Dickens states that the fairy tale must be "respected" in "an utilitarian age, of all other times" (97); in Hard Times, he shows us the horror of a world that fails to give the fairy tale this respect, and of a childhood deprived of this "precious escape" (100). When writing about Hard Times, most critics concentrate on Dickens’s use of language. Barry Thatcher’s argument that Dickens used the opposing language theories of Bentham and Archbishop Richard Trench, theories which had broad social implications, is particularly convincing. Dickens's use of the fiercely-debated discourses of children's literature, however, has been overlooked, an odd omission since Hard Times stresses the importance of children, fancy and education.

Children’s literature in the late eighteenth century and especially in the first half of the nineteenth century was the site of a rhetorical battle among three main discourses, discourses that related to different attitudes towards children’s education as well as
towards literature. These discourses were concerned with the roles of morality and fancy in children's literature. Most histories of children's literature discuss these three discourses in terms of the groups which are associated with them: the Evangelicals, the rational moralists and the romantics. The Evangelicals used literature to teach children about salvation; the rational moralists believed in teaching children the supreme Enlightenment value of reason; and, finally, the romantics believed that children's literature should be free of didactic agenda, and should encourage the imagination.

I would like to avoid this rigid classification because it conveys the impression that each group stuck to its own discourse and refused to experiment with the other discourses of children's literature, when in fact the opposite was the case. Thinking of children's literature primarily as a menu of discourses rather than an assortment of groups of writers can give a fresh approach to this criticism. Literary histories tend to run into difficulties when they try to classify many of the tales that children read in the nineteenth century: the author may be known as an Evangelical, but writes a fairy tale, a form disparaged by strict Evangelicals as a lie. Or a fanciful tale has a strong tone of moral didacticism, which is what the fantasists claimed to avoid. In fact, all children's literature has some kind of morality to convey, even as it may be claiming to be non-didactic. As we shall see in "Frauds on the Fairies," Dickens places a high moral—and thereby pedagogical—value on the fairy tale. Similarly, most children's literature uses fancy to some degree. What Dickens disliked, as we shall see in "Frauds on the Fairies," was the intrusion of moral didactic discourses in the fairy tale. He preferred a less explicit, and
more fanciful, representation of morality, as favoured by the fantasist discourse, influenced by the romantics.

Children’s literature was dominated by the “moral didactic” discourse, comprised of two strains that often intertwine, a strong religious one and one that emphasizes reason. Writers who tended to use Christian discourse included Sarah Trimmer, Hannah More, William Carus Wilson, Samuel Wilberforce, Maria Charlesworth, and Hesba Stretton.\(^1\) Christian discourse is didactic and proselytizing in tone, emphasizing morals as part of a religious system. The more extreme forms of this discourse stress the child's responsibility for its own salvation. Writers who used rationalist discourse include Richard and Maria Edgeworth, Lady Ellenor Fenn, Sarah Fielding, Mary Wollestonecraft, Barbara Hofland, and Samuel Grisewold Goodrich (a.k.a. Peter Parley). They were influenced by the Enlightenment, particularly by the works of John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and therefore emphasized the value of reason in their works. For the purposes of my argument, I will be referring to writers using these discourses as Christian and rationalist. However, these different emphases do not mean that rationalists were not religious at all, or that Christian writers never enjoyed works written in the other discourses of children’s literature, or used these discourses themselves. The emphasis on either religion or reason was simply an ordering of priorities. There were strong links

\(^{1}\) I use the term Christian because although the origin of this discourse for children's literature is strict Evangelicalism, born of Puritanism, the writers of children's stories using religious discourse of an "evangelical" bent were not all Evangelical in a sectarian sense. For example, Mrs. Sherwood has been called a Calvinist, Methodist and Millenarian, but Demers claims that she was "at best, a disillusioned Evangelical" ("Mrs. Sherwood," 134). Sherwood's sister, Mrs. Cameron, also was never an "extreme Evangelical" (Cutt 44).
between these two groups: for example, Richard Edgeworth recommended Christian writers to parents (Avery, *Childhood's* 32), and Samuel Goodrich admired Hannah More above all other writers for children (Demers, *Instruction* 179).

The moral didactic discourses show a distrust of fancy/imagination and the fairy tale; these discourses have particularly strong tone when speaking about children, as children were viewed as vulnerable to dangerous ideas. Users of these discourses varied in the degree to which they felt that fancy was dangerous for children, but at the very least, they communicate a distrust of it and a belief that children would be better occupied with more explicitly moral discourses. To many writers, fancy was wild and uncontrollable, and therefore unsuitable for children. Lucy Aikin exults that "dragons and fairies, giants and witches [have] vanished from our nurseries before the wand of reason" for they excite "a wild and exalted fancy" (qtd. in Summerfield 197). Both Christian and rationalist writers felt that loving fancy would weaken the child's perception of reality and ability to reason. For example, a review of the *Arabian Nights* in the *Monthly Review* (1793) states that "tales of this kind . . . have a tendency to accustom the mind rather to wonder than to inquire; and to seek a solution of difficulties in occult causes, instead of resorting to facts" (qtd. in Pickering, *Moral* 22). "Never wonder!" is the motto of the Gradgrind household in Dickens's *Hard Times*. Mrs. Matthias claims that "silly tales of the nursery" will lead to "a loathing of all mental exertion" (vii).

These complaints are part of a larger debate about the value of novels and fiction in general, a debate that was predominantly concerned with the possible impact fiction made on youth. Indeed, debates about discourses of morality tend to be cruder and more
vehement when speaking about children or young people than adults. W. R. Greg’s review “False Morality of Lady Novelists” (1859) criticizes the tendency for people to read (and write) novels when they are young, “when the moral standard is for the most part fluctuating or unformed” (145). Maria Hack commented that fairy tales are the “novels of childhood” (qtd. in Summerfield 197). Fairy tales, novels, and fiction in general were associated with lying or deception to varying degrees. In 1815, The Christian Observer noted that through the deception of fiction, “the imagination becomes itself the deceiver,” which “transforms life itself into a dream, the realities of which are all made painful and disgusting, for our false expectations and erroneous notions of happiness” (qtd. in Avery, Childhood's 33). To writers using the rationalist discourse, the lie of fiction displaced reason and provoked unnatural fear in children. Writers using a Christian discourse were particularly fervent in their disapproval of the lie: Jane Alice Sargant is typical of Christian writers in doubting whether “there is any crime more abhorrent to the Almighty...” (110).²

Both Locke and Rousseau, and by extension their followers, doubted the value of fiction for children.³ Locke could only recommend Reynard the Fox and Aesop's Fables to children: these were "useful Books amongst the number of silly ones" (213). He disapproved of servants' stories that terrified children, which probably resembled the ones that Dickens's nurse told him. Rousseau forbade his Émile to read any fiction, or anything

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² Even metaphors and similes were seen by extreme Evangelicals as “distortions of language and were believed to undermine truth, and thus to let Satan's cloven hoof in the door” (Jackson 57). See also Pickering, Chapter 7, “Liars and Tell-tales.”

³ See Smith for an interesting comparison of Locke and Rousseau (30-50).
at all: "Émile, at twelve years old, will hardly know what a book is" (95). Émile's first book was to be Robinson Crusoe (176); Rousseau proposed that this text can teach moral and practical lessons. These attitudes of Locke and Rousseau influenced Richard Edgeworth, who did not allow his daughter to read novels for a time, although she later wrote them herself (Butler, Maria 150). The Edgeworths deemed moral tales as acceptable fictional forms for their educational program.

The attitudes that writers reveal about the fairy tale, fancy and fiction stem from their educational beliefs. For both the Christians and rationalists, parents had to guide their children's education at all points and establish a proper "moral atmosphere" in the home which would "form" them (Abbott 146). Parents favoured the form of the catechism in examining their offsprings' hearts. One tactic was to give children blank books in which to write their sins and review these books with them. The Juvenile Review (1817), a periodical which reviewed children's books for parents, urges in its preface:

How carefully, how anxiously should these years be superintended! how studiously should religion and virtue be implanted in the heart, and solid, useful knowledge cultivated in the mind. (iv)

This preface combines the goals of the moral rationalists and the Christians. Indeed, many moral guidebooks exhorted parents to teach their children reason and religion, such

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4 The use of the catechism can be seen in Pinnock and Matthias, among many other examples. See Demers's Heaven on Earth for more on the catechism.

5 See Matthias, Chambers and Sargant for examples of this technique.
as Mrs. Matthias's Domestic Instruction on Useful and Interesting Subjects (1829) and William Chambers's The Youth's Companion and Counsellor (1858).

Writers using a rationalist discourse were guided by the secular philosophies of, primarily, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Locke's Some Thoughts Concerning Education (1693) influenced John Newbery, who established the mass market for children's literature in the 1740s. Locke uses the metaphors of water, wax and white paper (tabula rasa) to describe the malleability of the child, and to stress the formation of good habits (83, 265). His rational approach led to a "growing secularism" in children's literature, especially after the 1770s (Jackson 29). Rousseau made a huge impact on educational thought and, consequently, children's literature, with his Émile (1762). In this book, Rousseau demonstrates his theory of education by chronicling the fictional story of the relationship between Émile and his tutor. Émile learns "naturally," through experience and reasoning. As we shall see presently, Rousseau also influenced the fantasist writers, who took from him ideas of spontaneity and the natural child. Indeed, Rousseau employs both fanciful and rationalist discourses, although I suggest that Rousseau is more rationalist than fanciful and romantic. His narrator often sounds exactly like that of a rationalist tale or conduct book. Rousseau's theories were adopted by such children's writers as Thomas Day and Richard Edgeworth, who both tried Rousseau's experiment with real children, without any success. With his daughter Maria,  

6 A number of literary historians, such as Mary Jackson use the term "Rousseauist" instead of "rational moralist." I suggest that this use is a little too narrow; I prefer to use the term "rationalist" to emphasize the difference in this discourse from the other discourses of children's literature, all of which were quite moral.
Richard Edgeworth wrote *Practical Education* (1798). The Edgeworths' approach to education was not primarily theoretical like Rousseau's; instead, it emphasized the practical, lesson-by-lesson aspects of pedagogy (Butler, *Maria* 169).

One form of education that drew from—and distorted—the rationalist educational agenda was the "cult of the informed child." This educational style was exercised beyond the confines of rationalism; indeed, it ignored Locke's precept that children should not be forced to learn, as well as Rousseau's belief that children should not be forced to read at all. According to this educational plan, children were to be crammed with facts about natural history, trade and other subjects, and they were not to be exposed to fairy tales. Christian writers linked scientific knowledge with an appreciation of God's handiwork, whereas rationalist writers simply taught the material.⁷ Reaching its height at the turn of the nineteenth century, it was a still a strong movement in 1839 (Avery 29). As Summerfield comments,

> it assumed formidable proportion in the early nineteenth century, acquiring power, prestige, proof and legitimacy from the indisputable fact that industrialization, the application of useful knowledge, could create wealth.

(57)

The fantasist writers disputed the terms of useful and useless knowledge, and later in the chapter we will see Dickens satirizing the cult of the informed child in *Hard Times*.

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⁷ Richard Edgeworth was a notable exception to this desire to cram children (Avery, *Childhood's* 29).
Although George Cruikshank and Dickens were later to disagree over fairy tales, they both satirized the "cult of the informed child." In Cruikshank's cartoon "The Age of Intellect," a young girl explains to her grandmother, using scientific terms, how to blow out an egg. The grandmother replies, "They only used to make a hole at each end in my time—Well I declare they are making improvements in everything!" (Cruikshank, Graphic 47). The grandmother is reading a chapbook of "The Ballad of Cock Robin;" the child's books include Euclid and Hume. In The Mudfog Papers, Dickens satirizes the moral didactic approach to literature, as Mr. Slug and the other members of his section debate the value of "Jack and Jill," and "dwelt upon the immense and urgent necessity of storing the minds of children with nothing but facts and figures" (42).

As Dickens protests in "Frauds on the Fairies," writers who used the Christian and rationalist discourses to argue against fancy and the fairy tale did more than protest fancy in their statements on education. They had three other main strategies: they provided alternatives to the fairy tale; they changed existing fairy tales to accommodate their agendas; and they wrote fairy tales that were profoundly didactic. Alan Richardson argues that "the relation of didactic writers to the fairy tale might better be described as one of appropriation than one of censorship" (37). Indeed, they appropriated the fairy tale form in order to propagate their own views of religion, morality, and the role of fancy. They wanted to supersede the fairy tale in the growing and competitive market of children's literature, and to tame the wildness of the fairy tale. They even appropriated the traditional site for the telling of the fairy tale: Archdeacon Wrangham suggested that fathers could tell moral tales to their children by the hearth (Summerfield 26), which is
the traditional image that we receive of the teller of fairy tales. As Gillian Avery and Marilyn Gaull show, Christian writers in particular tried to replace the fairy-tale chapbook with the religious tract/moral tale, copying the cheap and popular mode of production of fairy tales as well as the simplicity of the discourse.

Writers using moral didactic discourses offered exemplary and cautionary tales as alternatives to fairy tales. The term "moral tale" refers to both of these types. The exemplary tale featured impossibly good children. Writers using the Christian discourse set a pious example for other children to follow: knowing the route to salvation, their heroes convert their peers as they die. One popular example of this form was Mrs. Cameron's "Margaret Whyte; or the Life and Death of a GOOD CHILD" (1827). Not all exemplary children were on their deathbeds: Mrs. Cameron’s “The story of the kind little boy” (1836) features a boy who teaches his brother to read while their mother is ill and who prays to God to help him in the task. Exemplary tales are also often about people who are content with their station, such as "The Murmurer," from A Selection from Mrs. Trimmer's Instructional Tales (1815) and Hannah More's "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain" (1795).

The exemplary tale is about good children; conversely, the cautionary tale is about a boy or girl whose bad example should be taken as a warning. Cautionary tales warn children about physical dangers, such as playing with fire, as well as spiritual pitfalls. Often a child suffers physically for its impiety: in The History of the Fairchild Family.

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8 See Avery's Childhood's Pattern and Gaull's English Romanticism: the Human Context.
selfish Augusta scorns religion and dies after playing with candles. Mr. Fairchild and the clergyman, Mr. Somers, agree that she will go to hell, for not only was she never taught religion, but she disobeyed her parents. Cautionary tales promote a certain kind of obedient upbringing: an example is Mrs. Lovechild's tale "The Virtue of a Rod; or, the History of a NAUGHTY BOY" (1820). They were often included in moral instruction books, such as Ann Taylor's Reciprocal Duties of Parents and Children (1818) and Mrs. Sargant's Letters from a Mother to her Daughter (1826), to illustrate moral lessons.

The cautionary tale was also part of the rationalist discourse, but these stories, reflecting their "enlightened" views, were not religious. On the contrary, they wanted to raise children in an atmosphere of pure reason, and to teach them to learn from empirical experience. The mother in "The Purple Jar," for example, lets her daughter Rosamund buy a purple jar instead of new shoes, even though she knows that the jar is merely full of dyed water. Rosamund must wear her ruined shoes for a month; this is a rationalist version of penance. Moral tales often have a strong allegorical tone to them. Writers of moral tales often use the "kind and unkind girls" motif of fairy tales, a parallel pattern in

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9 The edition I read was presented to the reader in 1888, so it had great staying power throughout the nineteenth century.

10 Other examples include William Chambers's The Youth's Companion and Counsellor (1858), Mrs. Trimmer's A Selection from Mrs. Trimmer's Instructional Tales (1815), and the Child's Reward Books series (ca. 1820).

11 See the "rational moralist" section of Demers's and Moyle's From Instruction to Delight for examples from Barbara Hofland, Sarah Fielding and Thomas Day among others.

12 This story appeared in 1796 in the Parent's Assistant and then as part of Rosamund (1801).
which two characters, one good and one bad, are contrasted with each other. (They are usually sisters, brothers, or acquaintances of the same sex.) Thomas Day uses this technique in Sandford and Merton (1783).

The second approach that writers of didactic discourses took was to rewrite fairy tales to reflect their own agendas. With her "The History of Sir Tom Thumb" (1855), Charlotte Yonge extends the fairy tale to the length of a small novel, and uses Christian discourse that had not previously been used to describe Tom. In previous versions, Tom attempts to rape Queen Guinevere and was excreted by a cow. Yonge cleans Tom up and makes him half-Christian, half-fairy: "To overcome the Imp and to draw forth the Christian, is the task of his life" (23). He succeeds, rejecting the amoral fairies: "Better honourable death as a Christian than such life as thine" (87). In this tale, fairies stand for temptation and oppose Christian values. Yet Yonge herself did not disparage fairy tales, and even collected them (Hayter 47). In her preface to this tale, Yonge states that she is following the examples of Perrault and d'Aulnoy in making old stories suit current "good taste" (iii). She intends to "adhere as closely as possible to the legitimate English fairy lore" (iv), although no English fairy sounds like Tom. Perhaps she is torn between her admiration for the old tale and her desire to impart moral lessons in Christian discourse. Similarly, E. W. Benson's Education at Home (1824), a rationalist text, includes a

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13 See "The Famous History of Tom Thumb" ca. 1800.

14 Mrs. Sherwood made a similar change in her rewriting of Sarah Fielding's The Governess (1749), substituting Fielding's fairy tales with moral tales.
variation on "Bluebeard" called "Curiosity." Benson draws out the didactic aspects of this fairy tale to turn it into a cautionary tale.\(^\text{15}\)

The third approach these didactic writers took was to write fairy tales that emphasized their views of fancy. An example of this approach is the Mayhew brothers' story, "The Good Genius That Turned Everything into Gold; or, the Queen Bee and the Magic Dress: a Christmas Fairy Tale" (1847). In it, a young woodman is made a king by a Queen Bee, really a fairy whose life he has spared. When he realizes that he can get wealthy by taxing his people more each year, he gives up the discipline that the fairy's help required. He thus abdicates social responsibility in favour of greed.

Although the Mayhews call it a fairy tale, "The Good Genius" sounds more like a rationalist text, for it includes several tales using allegorical opposites, the "kind and unkind girls" motif favoured by rationalist writers. Examples include the story of industrious To-day and lazy To-morrow, and that of the "good little dwarf called Try" (108). The Mayhews exhort the child to be industrious and shun fancy. They tell how Truth was sent into the world to "teach mankind the cares that ensue when Romance becomes Reality," namely, that "[b]eauty feeds not life, and soon men seeking bread found only flowers" (38). When the king loses his position, the kingdom goes "out of the frying-pan of Monarchy into the red-hot fire of Republicanism" (127), and the people clamour for his return. At the conclusion, the Fairy reveals herself to be Industry, and claims that riches "lie not in the vastness of the means, but in the restraint of the desires" (188). Although the Mayhews were part of the Punch radical circle, their tales support

\(^{15}\) See Maria Tatar's treatment of "Bluebeard" and female curiosity (Hard 156-78).
the status quo. The desire to write moral tales was not necessarily circumscribed by political views.

In closing their tale, the authors reveal their own intentions in calling this book a fairy tale:

[s]ince children of all ages will read Fairy Tales, we have sought to make the food wholesome by teaching them, instead of idly sighing for Fortunazio's magic purse, to feel that every suit they have may, at their own will, be turned into Silvio's magic dress. (192-93)

However, although they claim to use the "feelings of Surprise and Wonder" (193), their didacticism prevents them from successfully exploiting fairy tale imagery. As the examples from Yonge and the Mayhews show, the rationalist and Christian writers showed the strain of using the fairy tale while condemning or distrusting it at the same time. The fantasists, as we shall see, did not suffer from this dilemma.

THE FANTASISTS:

In these days, too, to print a Fairy Tale is the very way to be not read, but shoved aside with contempt. I wish, however, I were only as sure that my fairy tale is worth printing, as I am that works of this class are wholesome food, by way of variety, for the childish mind. It is curious that on this point Sir Walter Scott and Charles Lamb, my father, my Uncle Southey,
and Mr. Wordsworth were all agreed. (Sara Coleridge, letter to Arabella Brooke, July 29, 1837)\textsuperscript{16}

The popular tales of England have been too much neglected. They are nearly discarded from the libraries of childhood. Philosophy is made the companion of the nursery: we have lisping chemists and leading-string mathematicians; this is the age of reason, not of imagination; and the loveliest dreams of fairy innocence are considered as vain and frivolous. (Edgar Taylor, preface to \textit{German Popular Stories} 1823, x)

Dickens was not alone in his distaste for reworkings of fairy tales in moral didactic discourses; other writers shared this sentiment and preferred another discourse for children’s literature, a fanciful one. As the quotations above show, writers preferring a fanciful discourse for children responded vigorously to the dominance of the moral didactic discourses. Sara Coleridge claimed that publishers disdained fairy tales, whereas Edgar Taylor focused on the educational emphasis on reason and creating "informed" children, which resulted in a neglect of this form of children’s literature. However, it is difficult to ascertain just how much the fairy tale really was under threat. On one hand, Charles Lamb complained that he had difficulty buying fairy tales and blames "the cursed Barbauld crew" (421). The Christian writers maintained a high level of influence throughout the century, even though "no evangelical writers appeared who had staying

\textsuperscript{16} Coleridge is referring to her novel \textit{Phantasmion} (1837), an adult novel that uses fantasy themes.
power" after 1880 (Cutt 155). An 1886 survey of girls' reading still included Christian writers (Avery, *Childhood's* 221), and the Evangelical periodical, *The Child's Companion and Juvenile Instructor*, was published until 1930. One result of this influence was that, as late as 1887, Charlotte Yonge found children in English villages who had not heard of Cinderella (Avery, *Childhood's* 32).

Yet the fairy tale continued to be published throughout the nineteenth century. In the first half of the century, children could buy chapbooks of fairy tales, or books that were a number of chapbooks bound together, with the title pages of each separate chapbook remaining. *Pleasure Books for Young and Old* by Joseph Cundall (1850-51) and Sir Henry Cole's *Home Treasury* series (1841-49) are examples of this latter style of publication. Other major publishers included John Harris, Thomas Richardson and William Godwin.

The battle of rhetoric over the representations of morality and fancy in children's literature lasted a long time. Historians of children's literature cannot agree on when it ended. Watson states that the peak of the battle over the fairy tale occurred "during Coleridge's youth," and that it was "firmly established" by 1846 (15). Demers claims that

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17 This survey asked girls aged eleven to nineteen to list their favourite authors, and Dickens topped the list. Avery feels that the girls were showing off. However, I think that there is enough evidence in nineteenth- and twentieth-century biographies to prove that Dickens was read by children and adolescents. (Queen Victoria, for one, read Dickens as a teenager.) Even today, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield* and *A Tale of Two Cities* are routinely found in the children's section of bookstores, obviously marketed for children, in both abridged and unabridged forms.

the trend of the moral tale began in the late eighteenth century and lasted at least 100 years (Instruction 121). According to Jackson, the evangelical and rational moralist books "flooded the children's market between 1790 and 1860" (189). Jackson cites the fact that booksellers such as Elizabeth Newbery and Mary Cooper stocked both moral tales and fairy tales as evidence that there was, in fact, no battle between the didactic and fanciful creators of children's literature (191, 246). I see this phenomenon, however, as evidence that booksellers tried to profit from all sides of the rhetorical battle. In my view, moral didactics and fantasists attempted to corner as much of the children's market as possible.

The prefaces that fantasists wrote to their fairy tale collections suggest that this battle raged throughout the century. In 1843, Sir Henry Cole felt that the fairy tale was under assault:

The character of most Children's Books published during the last quarter of a century is fairly typified in the name of Peter Parley, which the writers of some hundreds of them have assumed. The books themselves have been addressed after a narrow fashion almost entirely to the cultivation of the understanding of children. The many tales sung or said from time immemorial, which appealed to the other, and certainly not less important elements of a little child's mind, in fancy, imagination, sympathies, affections, are almost all gone out of memory, and are scarcely to be obtained. (2)
As late as 1895, Agnes Repplier could write an essay entitled "Battle of the Babies" in which she claims that folk literature "will not be snuffed out of existence by any of our precautionary or hygienic measures" (35). To be sure, Cole and Repplier could have exaggerated for rhetorical effect, to give their projects greater importance.\(^\text{19}\) Certainly it benefitted these writers to promote the image of a battle over the fairy tale: by painting the fairy tale as endangered, they appealed to the nostalgia of parents to buy for their children the tales that they had once enjoyed.

Advocates of the fairy tale, including Dickens, brought prestige, artistic experimentation and contemporary social concerns to the fairy tale. Most of these supporters were artists very much influenced by the romantics, especially, as I have shown in Chapter One, the continental romantics such as the brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen. English romantics translated continental works, and wielding their own influence over their Victorian heirs.\(^\text{20}\) The romantics were not thought of in Victorian times as a homogenous group, and they disagreed bitterly over political issues (D. Stone, 8).\(^\text{21}\) However, they were united by the values they put on folk and romance traditions, the child, and imagination; they transmitted these values to the Victorians.

The English romantics made great use of fairy tales. Many of their poems, such as Coleridge's "Christabel" and Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," use fairy-tale motifs.

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\(^{19}\) Other prefaces and essays support their claims. See Merton, Ruskin (Introduction), MacLaren, Tieck, Cundall, Paull and Wheatley.

\(^{20}\) Scott and Carlyle, for instance, both translated Goethe, and German ballads and romances (D. Stone 20)

\(^{21}\) Current critics recognize their lack of cohesion. See Butler, Gaull, Perkins.
They were influenced by the Eastern tale in particular: Byron wrote a series of Eastern tales, and Coleridge credited the *Arabian Nights*, which his father had burned, with giving him a "love of 'the Great,' and 'the Whole" (Collected I:210). Robert Southey was the first to publish "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" in his novel *The Doctor*.

The romantics opposed the moral didactic claim that the fairy tale, fancy, and the imagination were useless, if not dangerous. They criticized Christian and rationalist discourses. Wordsworth mocks the language of the catechism in "We Are Seven," and Coleridge satirizes the moral tale in "The Raven" (McGavran 54-69; Watson 14-31).

Coleridge lectured against the moral tale, arguing that it taught not "goodness, but . . . goodyness" (qtd. in Summerfield 54). Shelley argued that the exercise of the imagination was indeed useful, providing "universal and permanent" rather than "transitory and particular" pleasure (1083). To the romantics, the imagination needed to be exercised and developed in childhood like any other mental faculty. Wordsworth in particular associated the imagination with memory, specifically that of childhood, and argued that the development of the imagination unifies the child and the man.22 The romantics argued that the exercise of the imagination that fairy tales promoted would result in personal wholeness, and also in greater social unity.23

22 Coleridge made a fine distinction—which Dickens did not adopt—between fancy and the imagination in his *Biographia Literaria*, in which imagination is "the living power and prime agent of all human perception" that "struggles to idealize and to unify;" fancy, however, "has no other counters to play with but fixities and definites" (167). See also John Spencer Hill's introduction to *Imagination in Coleridge*.

23 See McGillis, "Childhood and Growth: George MacDonald and William Wordsworth."
The major romantic figures had a strong influence on the fairy tale and children's literature, but it was mostly an indirect influence, because they primarily debated the fairy tale amongst themselves in their private correspondence, rather than publicly (Richardson 36). The writers that they influenced, however, brought the romantic views of the fairy tale further into the public sphere. Summerfield writes that the Wordsworthian tradition is "represented most persuasively by Dickens and Ruskin" (283). Although it came late in the debate, Dickens's "Frauds on the Fairies," was therefore important because it broadcast romantic views to a very large public audience through the medium of the family periodical.

I refer to the Victorian heirs to romanticism as "fantasists," a term that reflects those aspects of romanticism which they most adopted: fanciful discourse, the value placed on the imagination, and the interest in folk and romance traditions. John P. McGowan writes that "the Victorian writers adopt[ed] the romantic insistence that reality is more than material facts" (21); in particular, the Victorian fantasists adopted this creed. Ruskin claims that the fairy tale tradition "animates" for children "the material world with inextinguishable life" (Introduction ix). The Victorians had their own perspective on romantic ideas. As McGowan observes, the Victorians were more likely than the Romantics to use culture [rather than nature] as "the field of mediation" and to see the self as part of a community (21). They often disapproved of some romantic writers, such as Byron. Also, Victorian fantasists did not discard all moral didactic literature: Elizabeth Rigby, who defends fancy, recommends the works of Mrs. Trimmer and
Barbara Hofland, and Ruskin refers to some of the stories in *Evenings at Home* by John Aikin and Anna Barbauld as "fairy legends" ("Fairy Land" 237).

I agree with Richardson that the romantic promotion of the fairy tale is "a special instance of fairy tale appropriation for moral ends" (40). However, Richardson argues that the romantics used the fairy tale for conservative political ends, whereas I see the fairy tales of the romantics and fantasists as expressing a more critical, subversive and utopian social vision. The Victorians inherited the romantic use of the secondary level of fairy tales. According to Tobin Siebers, "[b]y embracing the falsehood of the fantastic, the authors of the nineteenth century strove to differentiate and to free themselves from the Rationalists" (77). Coleridge called the land of faery a "mental space" (qtd. in Watson 14). Through the fairy tale, polarities could be reconciled. As Watson writes, "[t]he realm of Faery becomes a symbolic metaphor for Spirit/God/the One Life, and the tale of Faery shows forth that Reality" (15). Like the moral didactic writers, the romantics imbued the fairy tale with morality, and the fantasists followed suit.

Like the rationalists, the fantasists emphasized the morality that they found in traditional fairy tales: they both used the "kind and unkind girls" motif, an example of this morality. The difference was in how explicitly didactic their discourses were. In his 1888 essay "Literature," Edward Salmon writes that "[t]hough Grimms' and Andersen's works are also intended to convey some moral, it is left to the child to digest this in the spirit as it digests the story in the letter" (47). The fantasists eventually succeeded in dominating the market for children's literature, in part because they disguised their
ideological agenda as non-didactic. However, the issues of goodness, innocence, childhood, freedom and imagination were not free from ideology or morality.

An example of this morality is John Ruskin's "The King of the Golden River," which he wrote in 1841 but did not publish until 1851. Ruskin said that his tale was "a good imitation of Grimm and Dickens, mixed with a little Alpine feeling of my own" (qtd. in Hearn, Victorian xx). Ruskin drew this tale from the Grimms' "The Water of Life" and amplified its morals of fair play and kindness to criticize misplaced notions of wealth. Northrop Frye writes that "Ruskin's treatment of wealth in his economic works [is] essentially a commentary on this fairy tale" (Anatomy 198). Indeed, in this tale Ruskin links true wealth with natural beauty as well as personal goodness. He disparages greed and praises honest craftsmanship. In the tale, the impoverished Gluck gazes at the river at sunset and says, "if that river were really all gold, what a nice thing it would be" (36). The King of the Golden River overhears him and disagrees, but gives him a chance to change the river into gold. This process involves a series of tests of charity and endurance, in which Gluck eventually succeeds whereas his evil elder brothers fail. The river does not turn into gold, however, but flows back into a drought-stricken valley. For the Grimms, money was the prize; Ruskin describes it as a blight. For him, the true gold

24 Ruskin published this tale anonymously (Hearn, Victorian xx), an act which suggests that, in 1851, it still was not entirely respectable for a man of letters to publish a fairy tale.

25 Hearn suggests that it was also taken from "The Golden Goose" (Victorian xx).
of the tale is nature and good-naturedness. Through his good heart, Gluck restores the pastoral utopia of the "Happy Valley."26

As the above example shows, the fantasists applied the healing quality of the imagination, epitomized by the fairy tale, to society as well as to the individual. The romantics and their fantasist heirs believed that the fairy tale, as an exercise of the imagination, could teach social sympathy to children. As William Godwin wrote, "without imagination, there can be no genuine morality, no profound feeling of other men's sorrow, no ardent and persevering anxiety for their interests" (qtd. in Gaull 65).

Through educational reform and children's literature, they wanted to create a humanistic society that would reflect their idealistic image of childhood. This attitude challenged the prevailing utilitarian approach to education, including the cult of the informed child.

The fantasist approach to discourse reveals the romantic view, adopted from Rousseau, that the child is a child of nature, and that its development should occur naturally. This child is spontaneous, individualistic, and simple. Unlike the child in many Christian texts, it is pure in heart, reflecting the benign rather than the savage side of nature. Wordsworth's sentiment that childhood was "fair seed-time" was echoed by his contemporaries' constant references to children as plants. Even more radically, romantic and fantasist discourses made the child an authority, a view which contrasted

26 For other examples of nineteenth-century writers taking an older tale and reworking it into a contemporary critique, see the section entitled "Refashioning Fairy Tales" in Auerbach and Knoepflmacher's Forbidden Journeys: Fairy Tales and Fantasies by Victorian Women Writers. Anne Thackeray Ritchie is particularly notable for reworking traditional fairy tales as gender critiques.
fundamentally with Christian and rationalist discourses. The rationalists' cult of the
informed child, for example, treated the child as a vessel that had to be filled with
knowledge. Christian writers likewise viewed the child as an object to be tamed and fed
knowledge, primarily the spiritual knowledge necessary for salvation. Parents were the
prime authority in all matters. However, fantasists, influenced by the romantics, handed
the child power, independence, spontaneity and individuality, and disparaged these
systems of education that did not.

Fantasist writers used metaphors of machinery to describe the child deprived of
fancy in its education and force-fed facts instead. As Catherine Sinclair writes, "[i]n this
age of wonderful mechanical inventions, the very mind of youth seems in danger of
becoming a machine..." (vi). Dickens makes similar comparisons in Hard Times. In his
1869 introduction to the Grimms' tales, Ruskin wrote that the fairy tale will "fortify"
children "against the glacial cold of selfish science" (ix). The fantasists feared that the
educational system would produce selfish, anti-social and mechanical children who
would, perhaps, be made unable to make individual judgements.

TACTICS:

Writers using fanciful discourse employed a number of tactics to win both a larger
share of the children's literature market and greater prestige for fancy. They wrote

27 Rousseau writes, "If ever you substitute authority for reason he will cease to reason;
he will be a mere plaything of other people's thoughts" (Emile 156-57).

28 See also Rigby's "Children's Books" (1844).
prefaces that contributed to the debate over fancy, and tales that were predominantly written in fanciful discourse, but which also used the discourses of moral didacticism. In the late 1850s and 1860s, fanciful discourse had gained much more prestige and more fairy tales were published. I will discuss the later tales in Chapter Five, as part of my examination of the role of Dickens's periodicals in the debates on fancy.

One rhetorical strategy of writers using fanciful discourse was to write prefaces attacking the devaluation of fancy. For example, the preface to A Book of Nursery Tales: A Keepsake for the Young presents a fairy tale about Queen Fancy, who went to earth "for she had heard that there were men living there who had passed their life in doleful sadness and oppressive toil" (vii). This statement echoes Dickens's claim that fancy enlivens the lives of the poor. Her daughter Fairy-tale, however, is banned from earth. As she tells her mother, "Men have put cunning sentinels on the watch, who are always prying into and testing every thing that comes out of your kingdom" (ix). Queen Fancy blames her sister Fashion for this change, and disguises her daughter in the "garb of a KEEPSAKE!" (xi). If she is then rejected, the queen says, "perhaps an after race, truer to nature, will give you their hearts again" (xii). Her disguise does not fool the guards, but she casts a spell on them. She is adopted by a man who says, "I will take you to my children, and make a snug pleasant little place for you at my fireside" (xiii). Thus the fairy tale is linked to nature, children, and the home, yet at present it must be disguised to be accepted by authorities.29

29 See also Merton, Ruskin (Introduction), MacLaren, Tieck, Cundall, Paull and Wheatley.
Indeed, authors wrote fairy tales under the guise of cautionary tales, emphasizing the value of fancy while using the discourses of the moral didactics. Consequently, the dividing line between the works of moral didactics and the fantasists is frequently hard to identify. As Richardson writes, "[e]specially in regard to the fairy tale, it is not always clear where the moral tale leaves off and the fantasy begins" (37). This is the case because fantasist writers of the fairy tale used the discourses of the moral tale, in part to make their use of fanciful discourse more acceptable. It is often hard to determine which discourse is most predominant, as the tales become an amalgamation of discourses that stress morality and fancy in turns.\(^\text{30}\) Two examples of this technique are the Rev. Francis Edward Paget's *The Hope of the Katzekopfs* (1844), and Catherine Sinclair's *Holiday House* (1839).

Sinclair's *Holiday House* is often cited as one of the first books for children that "rebelled" against "the utilitarian tendency" of the didactic books, featuring high spirits and fancy instead (Butts 83). In her preface, Sinclair valorizes the romantic love of nature and individuality, and criticizes the cult of the informed child: "The minds of young people are now manufactured like webs of linen, all alike, and nothing left to nature" (v). At the same time, she is careful to stress that religion is "the best resource in happier hours, and the only refuge in hours of affliction" (x), and she suggests that her work attempts to cultivate this resource. Sinclair’s protagonists are naturally buoyant and, to a certain extent, this quality is given a positive value unusual in children’s literature of the time. However, their high spirits always lead them into trouble. They are punished, and

\(^{30}\) See also Myers for a discussion of this aspect of Maria Edgeworth's work.
the nanny's violence is tolerated. Each chapter ends with a moral, just as the chapters in *The History of the Fairchild Family* do. The inset tale, "Uncle David's Tale of the Nonsensical Story About Giants and Fairies," is often anthologized and cited as a fairy tale. However, despite some fanciful imagery, it is a moral tale, an allegory of industriousness: Master No-Book learns the hard way that it is better to follow Fairy Teach-All than Fairy Do-Nothing. Karen Patricia Smith describes it as "didactic in stance while pointing the way to a more committed type of fantasy" (58). Sinclair thus tries to please two audiences by using two discourses.

Even though Carpenter and Pritchard, in *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*, state that Paget's *Hope of the Katzekopfs* is "generally regarded as the first English children's fantasy" (393), this work also features a mix of fanciful and moral didactic discourses. It is ostensibly written by "William Churne of Staffordshire," a man in English folklore, mentioned by Bishop Percy and featured in a poem by Richard Corbet, who went to fairyland. His preface features a mock dialogue between Churne and his modern reader, who cannot believe that a man born in the sixteenth century has returned to tell stories in the nineteenth. Churne remonstrates with the doubting reader:

I fear me that you have a larger share of the unbelief of this dull, plodding, unimaginative, money-getting, money-loving nineteenth century, than of the humour, and simplicity, and romance of the seventeenth. (xi)

Churne mocks the "progress" made on earth during his absence, and wants to see if his readers can be moved
to shake off the hard, cold, calculating, worldly, selfish temper of the
times, by being brought into more immediate contact with the ideal, the
imaginary, and the romantic, than has been the fashion of late years. (xiii-
iv)

This task means countering the influence of "Peter Parley, and Penny Magazines, and
such like stories of (so called) useful knowledge" (xiv).

The reader expecting a strong fanciful tone, however, will be disappointed, for the
tale is as didactic as any moral tale by Maria Edgeworth. Prince Eisenwillig, whose name
means "iron-willed," is thus christened by his fairy godmother. Unfortunately, the king
and queen spoil him and mistreat the companion, an unselfish boy, whom the fairy had
found for him. Like the rationalists, Paget exploits the "kind and unkind girls" motif of
fairy tales. Paget refers to the doctrine of original sin just as the Christians do, for
Eisenwillig is thus named because that was how he was born; his education must change
his original nature: "It is very shocking to think of so young a child having even the seeds
of such evil tempers; but how could it have been otherwise, when he was taught to think
only of himself...?" (39). The fairy puts him through an education of experience in
Fairyland to make up for the failure of his education on earth.31 Eisenwillig learns to
work for his food, and not to be proud of his station; furthermore, he battles the sprite

31 There are a number of tales in which the secondary level of faery acts as a place for pedagogy. In "Amelia and the Dwarves" (1878) by Juliana Horatio Ewing, for example, the spoiled Amelia is forced to mend all the clothes she has torn on earth, fix all the
crockery she has broken, etc. This story comes from the Irish tale "Wee Meg Barnilegs:" Ewing makes it contemporary and more didactic. (Auerbach and Knoepflmacher 19, 105-27).
Selbst (self) with the help of the old man Discipline. As he tells Discipline, "If thou hadst but taken a part in the eduction of my earliest years, how different should I now be from what, alas! I am" (202).

As the plot and the tone of voice suggests, this is a didactic tale that uses elements of the cautionary tale and, with the figure of the good companion, the exemplary tale. However, the text is also fanciful in nature and subversive in intent. The style is more playful, lyrical and humorous than that of the moral tale. The German names and exaltation of nature acknowledge the German romantics. Furthermore, Paget mocks education that does not address the spirit, education that dwells solely in knowledge. For instance, the Queen challenges the Fairy: "He has instructors in all the different branches of useful knowledge..." The Fairy replies, "What good is there in knowledge, unless a right use be made of it? And how is he likely to make a right use of it, if he be mischievous and self-willed?" (49-50). She also paraphrases Wordsworth: "the child is father to the man" (76).32

Paget uses the fairy tale to comment on political issues: he tackles the issues of right rule and argues for an unselfish society. All of the royal personages are selfish, except the king, who is lazy. In Fairyland, however, money is worthless and selfishness scorned. Traditionally, worldly rank does not count in faery.33 The lessons Eisenwillig

32 It is very near to the original line, "The Child is father of the Man" ("My Heart Leaps Up").

33 Worldly rank does not count in Christianity either; however, the evangelical discourse supports the status quo, as More's tracts make plain. The fantasists, to varying degrees, challenge the status quo.
learns in this harsh democracy of sorts allow him to become a good king. In Chapter Five, I will discuss more tales written by fantasist writers which also employ the court setting of the fairy tale to point out the selfish nature of English government, but these later tales are less ambiguous mixes of discourses. In 1844, however, this combination of romantic fairy tale and moral tale was necessary to draw an audience that could not yet accept a tale that was totally, or even predominantly, written in a fanciful discourse.

DICKENS AND CRUIKSHANK: THE BATTLE CONTINUES

I identify Dickens as a fantasist because he used genres that stem from the romance tradition such as the fairy tale, melodrama, pantomime and gothic, and his agendas often matched those of the romantics. As I have shown in Chapter One, Dickens read the brothers Grimm. He was not a great reader of poetry, and John Forster tells us that he "had little love for Wordsworth" (1:418); Philip Collins suggests that he was influenced not so much by the romantic poets as by the "romantic middlemen" (213), such as Charles Lamb, Leigh Hunt, and Thomas De Quincey. Dickens owned 13 volumes of Hazlitt (Marlow, "Dickens" 23), greatly admired Scott and above all, used Thomas Carlyle as a model. Donald Stone remarks that

Dickens's Romanticism seems . . . a simplified and sentimentalized version of the Wordsworthian-Coleridgean trust in the spontaneous, untutored imagination placed in opposition to the scientific-rationalist strain of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. (250)
As I will show in my discussion of his periodicals, Dickens was very much interested in science; however, for him this interest had to be mitigated by fancy. Yet for Dickens, as McGowan notes, the imagination "must be carefully circumscribed within a communal situation that transcends the self and its desires" (119). In this approach, Dickens is decidedly Victorian.

Dickens wanted to reform the educational system to suit his beliefs, inherited from the romantics, that children were pure and the imagination valuable. His view of education was humanist and secular as opposed to mechanistic and religious; he thus disapproved of a didactic, rationalist education that treated children as vessels of knowledge. In "Mr. Barlow," he attacks the tutor in Day's *Sandford and Merton*:

> If he could have got hold of the Wonderful Lamp, I knew he would have trimmed it and lighted it, and delivered a lecture over it on the qualities of sperm-oil, with a glance at the whale fisheries. (UT 363)\(^4\)

As well, Dickens opposed the didactic approach that the Evangelicals took to life and literature, as his Evangelical characters, such as the Murdstones and Mrs Clennam, show.\(^5\) Part of his motivation for writing *The Child's History of England* and *The Life of Our Lord* was to counter this kind of religious influence over his children. He himself did not attend church for most of his life, although he believed in God and Christ. He was, on and off, a Unitarian: Unitarianism was a Christian sect that denied the divinity of

\(^4\) See also Dickens's "Dullborough Town" (UT 123-35).

\(^5\) Kit's dialogues with his mother with regards to the Evangelical service at Bethel is another example of Dickens's dislike of this sect (OCS 390).
Christ, and promoted tolerance in questions of doctrine. In general, Dickens disliked
groups which imposed their morality on others. In "Frauds on the Fairies," for example,
he sarcastically imagines "vegetarian" and "pacifist" versions of Robinson Crusoe.

Dickens was not, however, exclusive in his practice of fanciful discourse. He
used the Christian discourse when it suited his needs, as it did for the death of Jo in
Bleak House. In this scene, the doctor Allan Woodcourt leads Jo through a recitation of
the Lord's Prayer. Dickens dislikes the moralistic rhetoric that Cruikshank employs, but
he fails to acknowledge the extent to which he uses this kind of discourse himself. Like
the other fantasists, Dickens disparages discourses that impose didactic moralities on their
readers; yet he also tries to persuade his readers to follow his own moral codes. They are,
simply, different moral codes, that often disguise themselves by claiming that they are not
didactic.

In “Frauds on the Fairies,” Dickens added his own criticism of didactic children's
literature while making a few points about morality himself. Written in response to
George Cruikshank's revision of "Hop O' My Thumb" (1853), this essay defended the
value of the imagination and of the fairy tale in terms that showed a strong romantic
tendency. "Frauds" most clearly outlines Dickens's views on the fairy tale, and shows that
he considered it a vital literary form. Critics such as Harry Stone have discussed the
debate between the two writers, but not in much detail; neither have they analyzed
Dickens's parody of Cruikshank's use of "moralizing" discourse.

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36 See also William Roscoe, a fanciful poet who also wrote an essay criticizing
Cruikshank's Fairy Library, "Children's Fairy Tales, and George Cruikshank."
Dickens and Cruikshank met in 1835, when Dickens was twenty-three and Cruikshank was forty-three. Despite the age gap, they were close friends throughout the 1830s and early 1840s. They collaborated on Dickens's first book, Sketches by Boz, in 1836 and on Oliver Twist in 1838. Cruikshank was the leading graphic artist of the day, and Dickens its rising novelist; unfortunately, their professional collaboration was tense, and ended in 1841. However, they remained close friends until Cruikshank became a teetotaller and a committed member of the temperance movement in 1847. His embrace of temperance was hardly temperate: he once angered Dickens by taking away another guest's glass of wine and trying to smash it (Stone 7). Dickens's estrangement from Cruikshank had deeper roots than bad manners, however. Cruikshank, with the zeal of the convert, blamed drink for all social evils. In his review in the Examiner of Cruikshank's "The Drunkard's Children" (1848), Dickens stated that Cruikshank’s social analysis was superficial.37

"Hop O' My Thumb" is an English translation of Perrault's "Le Petit Poucet." It was the first tale in Cruikshank's series The Fairy Library. In it, Cruikshank uses the fairy tale form to preach against alcohol. In Perrault's version, the parents abandon their children in a time of famine, and the youngest child, although only slightly taller than a man's thumb, tricks an ogre into killing his own children instead of his guests, and then uses the ogre's seven league boots to steal the ogre's fortune. In Cruikshank's version, the father is poor not primarily because of famine, but because he drank away the family's

37 See also "Whole Hogs" (HW 1851), in which Dickens satirizes the temperance movement.
money. The ogre is also a drunk, which makes his pursuit of the children comical. In one of the endings of Perrault's version, Hop goes to court with the boots and uses them to give orders to the army and deliver love letters for the ladies. In Cruikshank's tale, Hop's father, a count, becomes Prime Minister.

At this point, Cruikshank's moralizing turns from addressing alcoholism in the family to denouncing its manifestation in society. Cruikshank, like the Christians and rationalists, explicitly uses the fairy tale to state a social agenda, and here he does so in the bluntest, most unartistic fashion. Hop's father passes a law allowing foreign grain into their markets, and another law forcing a winner in gambling to pay the State for the support of the poor "double the amount of his winnings" (29). The count promotes public education in order to propagate his views: "he appointed moral teachers to those classes who required such assistance; and compelled parents to instruct their children in their own religion" (30). He abolishes alcohol,

the effect of which law was, that in a short time there were very few, if any, criminals in the land; and the only paupers, or really poor, were those sick or aged persons who were unable to do any sort of work, for all the people in the land were industrious, and the country was rich. (30)

The result is instant happiness for all classes. Cruikshank's moralizing is crude, his social agenda all-encompassing. He has a vision that is utopian--to a fervent teetotaller.

John Forster reviewed Cruikshank's tale in the Examiner (July 23, 1853) and praised it highly for both its artwork and moral message. Dickens suspected he would not agree and ordered the chapbook for himself. His response appeared in his "Frauds on the
Fairies," in *Household Words* on October 1, 1853. Dickens attacks Cruikshank on two fronts. First, he states that fairy tales are necessary for personal and social reasons; second, he satirizes Cruikshank's style by retelling "Cinderella" as a moral tale. "Frauds on the Fairies" is more than an attack on Cruikshank: Cruikshank's tale inspired Dickens to protest the misuse and condemnation of fairy tales in general, and the didactic discourses of those who used the fairy tale to promote what Dickens felt were narrow social agendas.

Dickens's Cinderella is a member of the Band of Hope, a youth group of the temperance movement. Dickens mocks the principle of self-denial that lies behind the Temperance Movement: Cinderella's father dies because he does not shave with cold water, and the King's banquet only includes artichokes and gruel. There is no dancing at the ball, only speeches: Cinderella forgets the time because the Prince has the people enthralled by his four-and-a-half-hour long speech. Dickens thus mocks meetings as well as asceticism. Dickens slights feminism: Cinderella wears pantaloons to the palace and, when she becomes Queen, gives her sex full rights, with the result that nobody dared love women any more. Dickens also satirizes Cruikshank's inclusion of economic details by having the Fairy Godmother mention that the glass slippers would not have been possible "but for the abolition of the duty on that article . . . the effect of all such taxes being to cramp invention, and embarrass the producer, to the manifest injury of the consumer" (99). Even the pumpkin is chosen for a political reason: this "virtuously democratic vegetable" comes from a nation [the United States] in which some states prohibit the sale of alcohol (99).
Dickens's Cinderella creates laws, as does Cruikshank's Hop, and Dickens thus satirizes Cruikshank's idea of including a political agenda in a fairy tale. Cinderella, "applied herself to the government of the country on enlightened, liberal, and free principles" (100). Yet these principles are not at all liberal:

All the people who ate anything she did not eat, or who drank anything she did not drink, were imprisoned for life. All the newspaper offices from which any doctrine proceeded that was not her doctrine, were burnt down.

(100)

Dickens links didactic morality to political dictatorship, thus suggesting the dangers of moral didacticism outside of the fairy tale.

Although Dickens disliked the intrusion of the moral didactic discourse into the fairy tale genre, he believed that the fairy tale did teach morals. All of Dickens's work is moral and didactic in the sense that he teaches certain morals; fanciful discourse, however, makes morals more palatable, and--herein lies a crucial difference between Dickens and the moral didactic writers--it is itself given moral value. In the first part of "Frauds on the Fairies," Dickens lists the qualities of the fairy tale that make it an important form, a list which shows his debt to the romantics. To him, the fairy tale promotes

[f]orbearance, courtesy, consideration for the poor and aged, kind treatment of animals, the love of nature, abhorrence of tyranny and brute force—many such good things have been first nourished in the child's heart by this powerful aid. (97)
The romantic desire to nourish the child's heart is obvious, as is the love of nature and abhorrence of tyranny. Dickens also praises the fairy tale for its simplicity, purity and "innocent extravagance"—romantic qualities indeed (97). Dickens uses plant imagery to show the unnaturalness of moral intrusion in the fairy tale: a moral opinion is like a weed, "a thing growing up in a wrong place" (97), when put into fairy tales. He paraphrases Wordsworth—"The world is too much with us, early and late"—and concludes: "Leave this precious old escape from it, alone" (100).

Cruikshank responded with spirit. His third installment of his Fairy Library was his own version of "Cinderella" in 1854. Very likely it was written in response to Dickens's mock "Cinderella." It follows the Perrault version quite faithfully and humorously, with the exception of the stepmother, whose gambling puts her husband in debtor's prison. In the final scene, however, the fairy godmother confronts the King about serving wine at the wedding, arguing that it is impossible for drink to be taken in moderation, and that God himself is against it:

he never intended that any man should be intoxicated, and as he knows that all men cannot take these drinks alike, such is his goodness and mercy, THAT HE WOULD HAVE SENT THEM TO US WITHOUT THE INTOXICATING PRINCIPLE. . . . (26)

The King is so convinced by her Christian rhetoric that he orders all the alcoholic drink in the land to be destroyed in a great bonfire.
Furthermore, Cruikshank directly responded to Dickens's attack in his own pamphlet, written as a letter by Hop himself. In his 1865 reprint of the *Fairy Library*, Cruikshank still felt compelled to argue with Dickens by printing "An Address to Little Boys and Girls" and "To the Public." In his lengthy address to his child audience, Cruikshank states that "I am one of those persons who recollect that I was once a child myself" (28), and that he was introduced to fairy tales by his old nurse. He credits these stories with the growth of his inspiration, but emphasizes both their fictionality and his authorial intentions:

I do not wish you to believe that . . . there ever were such great big creatures as these giants are described to be . . . . and therefore I wish you to understand that I only place these little books before you to *amuse* you, and, if possible, to convey some good *lessons* and *advice*, but not on any account to frighten you. (30)

Again, we see the strong belief in the malleability of children's minds and the desire to instruct as well as amuse.

Cruikshank saves his vitriol for his longer address, "To Parents, Guardians, and all Persons Intrusted with the Care of Children." Eleven years after "Frauds on the Fairies," Cruikshank is still angry at Dickens and evidently feels that there is yet a battle over fancy to be fought. Since "Hop's" letter went out of print, Cruikshank repeats his response to Dickens. He admits that he rewrote the tales

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38 It went out of print, and he published a similar essay in *George Cruikshank's Magazine* (1854).
to suit my own tastes in these matters, and taking at the same time the opportunity of introducing my own views and convictions upon what I consider important social and educational questions.... (31)

Cruikshank feels that such tampering follows the tradition of Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott altering history: if that is considered valid, he writes, "surely any one may take the liberty of altering a common Fairy Tale to suit his purpose, and convey his opinions; and most assuredly so, if that purpose be a good one" (34).

Cruikshank then describes Perrault's version of "Hop O' My Thumb" and asks how many of the romantic qualities of tenderness, mercy, nature and innocence Dickens mentions are actually shown in the tale. Cruikshank is right: the tale is a gruesome one. He is particularly incensed that Hop is a liar and a thief. Ironically, we see how Cruikshank's idea of childhood corresponds with that of the fantasists; the difference is in the discourse he chooses to use. As he sees it, the child's purity is more important than that of the tale itself:

At any rate parents and guardians will agree with me that as the first impressions upon a child's mind are those which last the longest, it is therefore most important that these impressions should be as pure as possible, and, if possible, morally useful to them through life; and this object I have had in view when I introduced some of my "doctrines." (39)

At this point in his argument, Cruikshank adds capital letters to his frequent use of italics for emphasis. He is truly confused as to why anyone would object to his project. After all, he simply wants to eradicate "POVERTY, MISERY, DISEASE and DREADFUL
CRIMES" and to stress the need for "EVERY CHILD in the land" to receive "a USEFUL
and RELIGIOUS EDUCATION" (40).

Ironically, these addresses were also printed in the 1864 edition of Cruikshank's
"Puss in Boots," a version which does not promote temperance views and follows the
original Perrault tale faithfully. Perhaps Cruikshank changed his practices to suit the
growing market for fanciful discourse, yet still maintained his theories about children's
literature. In any case, Cruikshank was fighting alone by this time. Dickens had long
moved on to prove his own points about the fairy tale by using them in his novels. I
suggest, along with George Ford, Sylvère Monod and Razak Dahmane that "Frauds on
the Fairies" was a prelude to his Hard Times. In this novel, Dickens broadens his
criticism to include the didactic temper and the utilitarian ethos that lay behind the
temperance movement.

HARD TIMES:

As I have shown above, Dickens uses moral didactic rhetoric ironically in order to
stress his affinity to a fanciful discourse in children's literature. In Hard Times, Dickens
refers ironically again to the discourses of moral didacticism, in greater detail. He mocks
the cult of the informed child and the results of an education that does not honour the
imagination. He both mocks religious discourse and uses it sincerely. Throughout the
novel he shows how an imbalance among these discourses and that of fancy results in

39 In their edition of Hard Times, Ford and Monod place Dickens's letters referring to
"Frauds on the Fairies" in a section entitled "The Composition of Hard Times."
chaos and distortion. *Hard Times* is a satire that desires to teach society not only of the value of fancy, but of the need for a balance among the discourses of fancy, religion and rationalism. As we have seen above, writers have written cautionary tales to warn their readers about the dangers of reading fairy tales and novels; in *Hard Times*, Dickens writes a cautionary tale which is in large part about the dangers of *not* reading imaginative literature.

In *Hard Times*, Dickens satirizes education based on rationalist principles. He begins by portraying a school run by Thomas Gradgrind, who promotes rationalism above all else, and then a society, Coketown, formed from total allegiance to such principles. He refers to the school as a factory, and reveals its emphasis on reason and rejection of fancy. Tom and Louisa are stuffed with knowledge about the "ologies" like the unfortunate "informed" children of the early nineteenth century. They are not exposed to fairy tales, nursery rhymes or "idle story-book[s]" (25):

No little Gradgrind had ever associated a cow in a field with that famous cow with the crumpled horn who tossed the dog who worried the cat who killed the rat who ate the malt, or with that yet more famous cow who swallowed Tom Thumb. . . . (12)

Dickens contrasts the fact-driven school with the circus, which performs the "fairy business" (45). Sissy the circus girl goes to the school and is adopted by the Gradgrinds. Members of the circus perform all sorts of traditional tales, such as the "Children in the

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40 Alton suggests that in *Hard Times* Dickens satirizes Kay-Shuttleworth's system of education.
Wood" and "Jack the Giant Killer." Sissy has read the Arabian Nights and other fairy tales to her father (78). A child of fancy, Sissy points out the lack of logic in the hyper-rational environment of the school. The visiting government official asks the children if they would have a carpet with flowers on it: Sissy says yes, and is mocked for this desire. The Gradgrindians' line is that if it does not occur in fact, it should not be represented.

Sissy's answer shows that she is actually more logical than they are, for she can differentiate between reality and representation: "They wouldn't crush and wither, if you please, Sir. They would be the pictures of what was very pretty and pleasant..." (8).

Her later logic when learning political economy shows her marriage of reason and emotion, a synthesis beyond the abilities of both her teacher and Coketown itself:

> Miss Louisa, I said I didn't know. I thought I couldn't know whether it was a prosperous nation or not, and whether I was in a thriving state or not, unless I knew who had got the money, and whether any of it was mine.

> But that had nothing to do with it. (75)

Because of her early training in the fairy tale, all the cramming, or "infinite grinding" (73) that Gradgrind puts Sissy through does not corrupt her. She will not become an "informed child" like the star pupil Bitzer.42

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41 Sissy's statements reflect J.R.R. Tolkien's belief that "Fantasy is founded upon the hard recognition that things are so in the world as it appears under the sun; on a recognition of fact, but not a slavery to it . . . . If men really could not distinguish between frogs and men, fairy-stories about frog-kings would not have arisen" (56).

42 There are many other examples of the lack of logic of Gradgrind and his friend Mr. Bounderby. For instance, the latter's motto, "Do it at once" (26), does not allow for reflection—for reason.
Dickens argues that fancy is needed, paradoxically, for reason to exist; this idea reflects the romantic desire to find unity through the fairy tale. Dickens argues that divisions between fact and fancy are false, and dangerous when insisted upon. Without fancy, reason becomes distorted; it becomes a warped image of fancy. It becomes more than illogical, it becomes destructive. The emphasis on utilitarian reason in Louisa's education makes her feel, in a most anti-capitalistic way, that "nothing in [life] could be worth the pain and trouble of a contest" (289). More alarmingly, it distorts what is human about Louisa, Tom, Gradgrind and Bounderby. The boundaries between animal and human, mechanical and human, are very slippery in the text. "Metallurgical Louisa"'s heart (15) becomes a "wilderness" instead of a "garden" (282). "[M]athematical Thomas" gives himself up to be "taken home like a machine" (15). He calls himself a "Donkey" (66) and is later called a "monkey" (378), and, throughout the text, a whelp. At one point, Gradgrind is referred to as "the eminently practical" (24)—thus losing his individuality. Bounderby is a truly artificial man: he has a "metallic laugh" and is "made out of a coarse material" (18). The narrator calls him a Giant, Mrs. Sparsit an evil Fairy and a Dragon, and Mr. M'Choakumchild an Ogre. These images, taken from fairy tales, intend to show the characters as inhuman due to their lack of heart, which would have been cultivated through fancy.

The town of Coketown similarly is shown as distorted through an overemphasis on usefulness. The name "Coketown" signifies any factory town in England, and thereby

43 See Soenstrom's excellent essay for a more detailed account of the destructive and self-destructive aspects of fancy, as well as the use of animal images in *Hard Times*. 
implies that the problems it encounters take place on a national scale. It is the realization of Dickens's proposed "nation without fancy" ("Fraud" 97). In it, what is intended to be only practical and real becomes something surreal, a true concrete jungle with nature "bricked out" (82), cloaked in dark smog, and featuring steam engines that resemble "melancholy mad elephants" (91). Coketown's red brick is blackened by smoke "like the painted face of a savage" (28); Efraim Sicher notes that this simile "echoes Carlyle's criticism in Past and Present of laissez-faire economics with its jungle laws of savagery" (201). Dickens ironically compares the factories to fairy palaces (91, 148) to emphasize just how far they are from being delightful. The images from nature show how removed the city is from romantic ideals of nature. Ironically, the model for urban life becomes a wilderness, and progress likewise regresses.44

Dickens uses these fanciful images, many of which are drawn from fairy tales, especially the Arabian Nights, in order to show how Coketown and the Gradgrind method of education lack the social sympathy that fancy engenders. For example, Mr. M'Choakumchild is likened to Morgiana in "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," the slave who kills the robbers hiding in the ums by pouring hot oil over them. The narrator asks him, in rhetorical, fanciful discourse, "dost thou think that thou wilt always kill outright the robber Fancy lurking within—or sometimes only maim him and distort him!" (10). In trying to kill what he sees as a social danger, the teacher does more damage in the end to

44 As Sicher exclaims, "What greater affront could there be to Gradgrindery, which denies the legitimacy of fairy tales and figurative speech as means of representation, than to represent it in imagery borrowed from fairy tales and in flights of fancy?" (198-99).
both the child and society. Fancy is needed, Dickens argues, to guard against the distortions of reason gone wild and savage.

Dickens also criticizes the religious approach to pedagogy, which he links with utilitarianism. He discusses the points upon which all eighteen of Coketown's denominations agree:

Body number one, said [people] must take everything on trust. Body number two, said they must take everything on political economy. Body number three, wrote leaden little books for them, showing how the good grown-up baby invariably got to the Savings-bank, and the bad grown-up baby invariably got transported. Body number four, under dreary pretences of being droll (when it was very melancholy indeed), made the shallowest pretences of concealing pitfalls of knowledge, into which it was the duty of these babies to be smuggled and inveigled. But, all the bodies agreed that they were never to wonder. (65)

Thus the leaders of the red brick churches believe in much the same principles as the rulers of the red brick factories do. The last two "bodies" refer to children's literature. Dickens satirizes the motif of "the kind and unkind girls," often found in moral didactic literature. Dickens condemns the use of fanciful discourse to disguise moral pedagogy, even though he too uses it to argue his moral points.

\[45\] Here the fairy tale is used, as Steven Connor observes, "to fix, caricature, and punish" (164).
The links between the churches and the utilitarians result, perhaps, in the lack of religious sentiment in Coketown as well as the town's lack of fancy. The substitution of "Fact forbid!" (11) for "Heaven forbid" suggests that these men worship fact, investing it with an emotion that is not rational. When asked to state the first principle of Political Economy, Sissy recites the Golden Rule instead, which figures in the Anglican catechism: "To do unto others as I would that they should do unto me" (73). Just as Dickens uses fanciful discourse to illustrate how nightmarish a world without fancy is, he uses religious discourse to protest the lack of religious guidance in Coketown. His religious rhetoric, unlike that of the Coketown denominations, is linked to nature, as the book titles suggest: "Sowing," Reaping," and "Garnering." The chapter that discusses the Gradgrind school is called "Murdering the Innocents."

Furthermore, fancy saves the individual soul: the "rugged fancy" that Stephen has of Rachel as an angel prevents him from doing harm to his wife (119). As Thatcher points out, when Gradgrind realizes the result of his teachings, he begins to use Christian discourse. Conversely, Ingham observes how Dickens uses empty Evangelical rhetoric to make Slackbridge, the union leader, a satanic figure (Language 87). With religious rhetoric that makes him sound like a preacher, Dickens connects the individual's need for undistorted fancy with that of society:

Is it possible, I wonder, that there was any analogy between the case of the Coketown population and the case of the little Gradgrinds? . . . That there was any Fancy in them demanding to be brought into healthy existence instead of struggling on in convulsions? That exactly in the ratio as they
worked long and monotonously, the craving grew within them for some physical relief—some relaxation, encouraging good humour and good spirits, and giving them a vent—some recognized holiday, though it were but for an honest dance to a stirring band of music—some occasional light pie in which even M'Choakumchild had no finger—which craving must and would be satisfied aright, or must and would inevitably go wrong, until the laws of the Creation were repealed? (32).

As I will show in Chapter Five, Dickens's motivation for publishing *Household Words* is to provide the public with just this kind of "vent," which is, on one hand, necessary for spiritual survival and, on the other, for social control.

This desire to "beautify" the lives of the poor with fancy is motivated, at least in part, by a desire to keep social disruption at bay. Fancy acts as a diversion, and holidays could be carnivals such as that of the Boy Bishop, in which the status quo is challenged, but only for one day. The circus is a controlled environment for fancy to appear, and diverts the poor from rebellion, from even realizing how badly off they are. Fancy thus acts as a social buffer between classes, whereas Dickens outwardly intends fancy to bring classes together.46

Here, as in many other places, Dickens sounds like the narrator of any cautionary tale, chastising the reader:

Utilitarian economists, skeletons of schoolmasters, Commissioners of Fact, genteel and used-up infidels, gabblers of many little dog's-earred

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46 See Soenstrom for an analysis of this contradiction in *Hard Times.*
creeds, the poor you will have always with you. Cultivate in them, while there is yet time, the utmost graces of the fancies and affections, to adorn their lives so much in need of ornament; or, in the day of your triumph, when romance is utterly driven out of their souls, and they and a bare existence stand face to face, Reality will take a wolfish turn, and make an end of you! (216)

Dickens thus suggests that the poor, like the middle classes, turn into animals without the help of fancy. Dickens is correlating one's environment to one's nature: people become what their education, whether of books or experience, make them. True, he seems content to let the poor remain poor as long as they retain their humanity; he is, perhaps, as simplistic in his social vision as Cruikshank, offering fancy instead of abstinence as a catch-all solution. Dickens's dystopian novel does not offer political solutions. According to Dickens, unions only add to the problem; he fears the mob mentality that may result from such "combination." It is all, in Stephen's term, a "muddle" (362).

Ironically, Dickens's use of fancy as a safety valve puts him in the same camp of the writers he mocks in "Frauds on the Fairies" and Hard Times. Mrs. Matthias comments in her preface that moral tales could act as "rational amusement" (xiii). With regard to the moral tale, Wrangham writes:

It is by such books alone, that the cottager can be lured back from the alehouse-corner, and the boon-companion to his family and his own fireside. He will read them to his children, or his children will read them to him, with equal instruction and entertainment . . . the evening will glide
more happily by, than if spent in the torpor of dozing or the tumult of a
debauch. (qtd. in Summerfield 26)
The image of the hearth replacing the gin-shop, and of the fairy tale replacing the gin, is a
comforting one for middle-class didactic writers.

Patricia Ingham argues that Dickens's "display of fanciful rhetoric makes his satire
less painful for the middle-class reader than cruder representations;" however, I suggest
that here, as elsewhere, Ingham fails to acknowledge the social value given to fancy in the
nineteenth century (Language 84). Indeed, fancy for the lower classes was a more valid
point of contention at the time than modern critics recognize: a year before Hard Times
was written, for instance, the managers of one school for poor children tore down the
drawings that had been put on the walls: "Such refinements, they said, should only be
enjoyed by middle-class children" (P. Collins, Education 159). Avery writes that it was
"generally felt" that fairy tales were only suitable for middle-class children (77). She
points out that Holiday House was not distributed to poor children, because it was feared
that it would stimulate "inflammatory ideas" (145). Similarly, Miss Monflathers in The
Old Curiosity Shop states that Dr. Watts's poem, "How doth the little busy bee," is
applicable only to genteel children. 'In books, or work, or healthful play' is
quite right as far as they are concerned; and the work means painting on
velvet, fancy needlework, or embroidery. In . . . the case of all poor
people's children, we should read it thus:

'In work, work, work. In work alway

Let my first years be past,
That I may give for ev'ry day
Some good account at last.' (309)

The entertainment afforded by the chapbook, as we have seen earlier, was viewed with similar suspicion. By claiming that fancy was not only safe for the poor but necessary for their survival and that of society in general, Dickens was making a controversial argument.

_Hard Times_ is a cautionary tale warning society about the dangers of ignoring the benefits, individual and social, of fancy. Robert Higbie suggests that Dickens wants to give imagination "a more serious purpose" by joining it with faith (91). I think that, to Dickens, fancy was serious in itself. Indeed, Dickens suggests in _Hard Times_ that religion and reason properly fulfill their roles only if fancy is valued. Otherwise, all three elements become distorted. By using the three discourses—fanciful, Christian and rationalist—of children's literature, Dickens proves the need for a balance among these three elements. He thus strikes a more conciliatory note than critics have previously acknowledged. At the end of _Hard Times_, Dickens outlines the futures of his characters. His final address to his readers is like the moral to a cautionary tale: "Dear reader! It rests with you and me, whether, in our two fields of action, similar things shall be or not" (398). These "two fields of action" are the private and public spheres, and fancy is necessary in both of them. In the next chapter I will discuss how Dickens used fancy as a tool in all of his novels to bring these "two fields" together. In a sense, all of Dickens's works are defences of fancy.
CHAPTER THREE: Monsters and Fairies, Homes and Wildernes

From that blessed little room, Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, The Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, and Robinson Crusoe, came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time,—they, and the Arabian Nights, and the Tales of the Genii,—and did me no harm; for whatever harm was in some of them was not there for me; I knew nothing of it. (Dickens, David Copperfield 44)

For Dickens, the public and private spheres, the "two fields of action" (HT 398), intersect in the home. The fairy tale and fancy provided Dickens with a matrix of images, a code of contrasts that graphically depicted the value of developing the social self and creating a secure home. As the quotation above suggests, Dickens considered the fairy tale and other imaginative forms of literature to be important for maintaining hope in its readers for the betterment of their own situations and of society itself. Without this hope, humanity itself is endangered. Dickens used the fairy tale to teach his readers how to be social beings and create good homes, a project that echoed his liberal humanist beliefs.

This chapter is a thematic survey of Dickens's use of the fairy tale in his novels and has four main parts. First, I give some background on Dickens's social agenda. Secondly, I show how Dickens promotes hope and humanity through his use of the fairy tale. Thirdly, I discuss the role of storytelling in Dickens's novels and how it often enables characters to survive. Fourthly, I examine how Dickens used motifs from the fairy tale to create his plots, characters and settings. With regard to character, Dickens
presents a contrast between monsters and fairies; he uses the dichotomy of homes and
wildernesses to depict settings.¹

With his agenda of hope, humanity and homes, Dickens reveals his political
position as a liberal humanist. Dickens was one of those writers who chose "more
traditional humanist views" that opposed the material values which seemed to dominate
the 1830s and 1840s (McGowan 19). Harriet Martineau accused Dickens of being a
"humanity monger" and encouraging the poor to hate the rich (qtd. in Brantlinger 117).
In his own view, however, Dickens encouraged harmony among the classes. According to
the humanists, whose ranks included Elizabeth Gaskell, John Ruskin, and Thomas
Carlyle, society was to be reformed from the heart, from the sympathetic desire on the
part of the privileged to relieve the suffering and lessen the alienation of the poor.

Dickens had a vision of social harmony that can be called utopian. However, this
term has to be qualified. Dickens was not utopian in the sense of having a plan for
Utopia. Dickens engages in the spirit of, rather than a program for, utopia. As Patrick
Brantlinger observes, both Dickens and Ruskin distrusted social theories (220). Dickens
did not envision a classless society, but he did imagine one in which the classes lived in
greater harmony, and the most degrading aspects of poverty were eliminated. He
believed in forms of direct reform through legislation, but he was, as Kaplan notes, "a
cautious national reformer" (331). Like many of his middle-class peers, Dickens feared

¹ As I have discussed Great Expectations and Hard Times in detail in Chapter One and
Two, I refer to them only sparingly here.
revolution and therefore the political movements of the working class. He preferred a
less direct route to social betterment: the fostering of social sympathy.

Dickens's social vision is utopian in the sense that it operates on the notions of
hope and optimism that many utopian theorists claim to be at the heart of utopia. Dickens
had an idea of what the perfect society should be, namely, one made up of his perfect
homes. It is a kind of "faery" space, an alternative to the reader's less romantic home.

Dickens publicized his vision of the perfect, or utopian, home in nearly every one of his
works, and he used the inflated language of visionaries to describe his idea of home. It
was an ideal shared by many in his society, which is one reason why Dickens's
presentation of it was so popular. Ruskin's depiction of the home as "a sacred place, a
vestal temple, a temple of the hearth watched over by Household Gods" headed by a
Queen ("Queen's" 137) is an example of the kind of utopian rhetoric that Victorian
writers used to describe the perfect home.

Dickens's perfect home fostered fancy, which Dickens believed helped to develop
social sympathy. Without this sympathy, society was in danger of losing its humanity. By
using fanciful language to describe real social problems, he and other writers who shared
this belief challenged the categories of romance and realism. Patrick Brantlinger calls
Dickens a "romantic realist," describing "romantic realism" as the "work of a number of
mid-Victorians who struggled to defend some form of romantic idealism (Dickens's
'Fancy') against the growing claims of both artistic and political realism (Coketown's
'Facts')" (218). According to Brantlinger,
Dickens's increasing insistence through the 1850s on "the romance of familiar things," and on the importance of fancy arises partly from the desire to keep the imagination of real injustice and ideal justice alive despite the encroachments of a false "realism," whether in the form of a theory of art or in the form of "advanced liberal conservatism." (215-16)

Dickens and other "romantic realists" strove to humanize their world through fancy.

Raymond Williams referred to this stance as "Romantic humanism" (97).

HOPE AND HUMANITY:

Dickens credited fancy, especially in the form of the fairy tale, with his own survival. In *David Copperfield*, Dickens credits David's psychological survival to the pleasure, escape and stimulation that fairy tales and other imaginative literature give him. Books were David's--and Charles's--"only comfort" (DC 122). As my opening quotation makes clear, these tales kept David's spirits from being crushed. Fancy allowed David to make "his imaginative world out of such strange experiences and sordid things!" (DC 137). Dickens describes here the power of the imagination to transform one's surroundings into something more hopeful and comfortable. By encouraging hope and imagination, the fairy tale was a powerful force that could sustain the individual. In "A Preliminary Word," an essay which I will discuss in detail in Chapter Five, Dickens claims that he wants his periodical, *Household Words*, to employ fancy to lighten the burden of the poor by giving them hope. The curative effect of fancy was essential to the
survival of not just the boy Dickens, but of the lower classes and, by extension, of a nation that needed fancy in order to be great.

Indeed, Dickens suggests that without fancy, the child withers and cannot grow—a decline which jeopardizes the survival of future generations. Dickens thus taps into the common fear of Victorians that evolution could reverse itself: instead of developing further, humanity would degenerate. The Smallweeds in Bleak House are like shrunken monkeys, and the poor children Dickens encounters in the ragged schools, with "no wonder" in their eyes, are "pale as maggots" ("Free" 171). Bitzer, the model Gradgrind student in Hard Times, writes off marriage and family as irrational, and neither Louisa or Tom have families of their own. On the other hand, the characters most associated with fairy tale heroes and heroines, such as Sissy, Little Dorrit, Walter Gay and Florence Dombey, marry and presumably reproduce, and thus add to the greatness of the nation.

Dickens engaged in social criticism by protesting the ills of his society and giving his readers hope for the possibility of its improvement, hope in the form of fantasy. Walter Bagehot called Dickens's political views "sentimental radicalism" (189), a label which suggests superficiality, although the sentiment of hope, or optimism, may well be essential for social improvement. The links between hope, fantasy and social reform are discussed by utopian thinkers such as Ernst Bloch and Robert C. Elliot. Bloch claims that hope and the imagination are the "driving forces" behind the "goal of a better life"
Bloch believes that art and imagination kindle hope and thereby perform a utopian function in society. As he writes,

[t]he will to journey to the end where everything turns out well thus always pervades utopian consciousness, plays throughout this consciousness with a never to be forgotten spirit of fairytale, works in the dreams of a better life, but also, and this must finally be understood, suo modo in works of art. (98)

Elliot points out that "[t]he hope feeds the criticism, the criticism the hope" (24).

The fairytale in particular fosters optimism: the Victorian illustrator Laurence Houseman states that its "morality" and "its value consists in its optimism" (qtd. in Hearn xxvi). In his 1930 essay "The Novel and the Fairytale," John Buchan links the Victorian novel and the fairytale through their common emphases on morality and "hope in humanity" (227). According to Buchan,

[t]he folk tale knows only too well the stubborn brutality of things; and, knowing this, is still prepared to hope. Such optimism is far more merciless than any pessimism. Also it is far closer to reality. (227)

G. K. Chesterton makes a similar argument and suggests that as an "optimistic reformer," Dickens did much good ("Alleged" 195).\(^2\) The combination of hope and fancy,

\(^2\) Bloch's idea of hope, however, is existential and mystical in nature, rather than domestic like Dickens's hope.

\(^3\) See also Norris Pope, who describes Dickens as "allied with a politics of sentiment" (11).
represented in art, would give everyone, especially labourers, hope for a better life that would save them from degradation and despair.

Hope and fancy serve to lift the mundane and brutal world of everyday life to the secondary level of the fairy tale, wherein lies a possibility of change for the better. This shift from the mimetic to the fantastic occurs constantly in Dickens's works, even within a phrase. It suited his whimsical and restless imagination and made his writing vibrant and alive. For example, when he describes clothes set out on the street for sale in *Sketches By Boz*, he immediately imagines their former owners and their histories (96-104). The shift from mimetic to fantastic takes place through dreams (Affery, Oliver, David), illness (Paul Dombey, Esther Summerson), altered states (Jasper's opium visions) or intense guilt-ridden panic (the haunted murderers Sikes and Jonas). For my purposes, I will focus on the shift that takes place through fairy tale allusions. I suggest that Dickens enjoyed using the fairy tale because in its shift from the mimetic to the fantastic, from the primary to the secondary world, it is the among the most dramatic of all literary forms. These shifts from the mimetic to the fantastic emphasize aspects of character and place, acting as a kind of allusive shorthand, and bringing out allegorical and symbolic qualities of the work. It makes the familiar strange, and thus allows Dickens to question and criticize aspects of the everyday world.

With these shifts from the mimetic to the fantastic, and the feelings of defamiliarization they inspire, Dickens emphasizes the need to foster what is human, and thereby what is necessary to cultivate in order for humanity to survive. In Dickens, the shift from the mimetic to the fantastic moves from human to animal, from human to
inanimate object, and back again. For example, Podsnap's cutlery is described as being as boastful as its owner (OMF 131); the house in *A Christmas Carol* has lost itself in an alley playing hide and seek; and the Blimpers' clock in *Dombey and Son* asks Paul, "How, is, my, lit, tle, friend" (DS 122). Likewise, Fagin moves like "some loathsome reptile" (OT 116), and Mrs. Skelton turns from Cleopatra to a skeleton at the touch of her maid's hand. The boundaries between states are fluid: in Dickens's works, there is always the danger of losing one's humanity. Dorothy Van Ghent notes that Dickens was writing at a time when

> a full-scale demolition of traditional values was going on, correlative with the uprooting and dehumanization of men, women, and children by the millions—a process brought about by industrialization, colonial imperialism, and the exploitation of the human being as a "thing" or an engine, or a part of an engine capable of being used for profit. (128)

The fluidity of the boundaries between human and non-human, then, acts in part as a humanist social commentary. For Dickens, fancy, including the fairy tale, keeps people human. To be more precise, as I will show in my discussion of women as "fairies," fancy made men human but raised women to a superhuman level.

**STORYTELLING IN DICKENS:**

Dickens's characters often tell stories, and the storyteller always holds a place of honour. These stories are usually fairy tales or gothic stories. In *Bleak House*, Esther tells the tales of "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Puss in Boots," among others (50, 52,
Agnes in *David Copperfield* is last shown telling her and David's children about a "wicked old Fairy in a cloak" (708). Dickens's novels were read aloud, and Dickens's use of storytelling enriches this performance. By having the characters tell stories, Dickens allows the tone and character of the language to change from that of the narrator, and a kind of ventriloquism occurs, with the reader-reciter speaking in the voice of the storytelling character. This phenomenon gives the performance greater variety, and it also allows the reader to gain a greater sympathy for the characters. For example, the manuscript that Miss Wade gives Arthur about her life gives the reader compassionate insight into a most unsympathetic character.¹

Storytelling in the novel is a way for the good characters to express, or deal with, difficult situations through sublimation. For example, nurse Richards tells six-year-old Florence about her mother's death in the form of a story, allowing the little girl to grasp for herself the significance of the story to her own situation. Likewise, Captain Cuttle tells Florence about Walter's return in the shape of a story, mirroring the stories that Sol told Walter about bravery on the open seas. The child Pip, overcome by the strangeness of Satis House, tells an even stranger story about it, a kind of fairy tale about playing with flags and swords, gold plates and silver baskets.

The sublimation of one's personal difficulties into fiction can also be a source of survival. By telling fairy tales to the neglected Jellyby children, Esther keeps herself "from being quite torn to pieces" (355). David Copperfield tells stories to survive: to keep himself company while working in the factory, he makes up stories out of what he

¹ See Thomas, *Dickens* for an analysis of Miss Wade's story.
sees in the streets (136), while at school he maintains social status by becoming
Steerforth's "Scheherazade" (74). If David is Scheherazade, Steerforth is the tyrannous
Sultan. Indeed, Steerforth makes David tell stories even when the younger boy is dying to
sleep. David seems to feel that his social life depends upon his storytelling abilities; this
situation parallels that of Scheherazade.

Dickens uses the stories that characters tell to reflect on the main themes of the
novels. In Pickwick Papers, for example, the interpolated tales, Gothic and dark, seem
out of place in the bright world of Dingley Dell, but they prepare the reader somewhat for
the dark turn of events when Pickwick is thrown into Fleet prison. Strangely, the
interpolated tales combine the humour of the main narrative with the Gothic nature of
prison. Some of these tales also act as commentaries on one major theme of the book,
generosity, embodied by Pickwick. "The Goblins Who Stole the Sexton" is the best
eexample of this process. This story is a precursor to A Christmas Carol: in it, the goblins
show a drunken sexton "pictures" that encourage him to change his selfish ways.

More effectively, the inset tales of Bleak House and Little Dorrit are referred to at
key moments of the text, when the tension of the novel peaks or the themes the tales
touch upon come to the fore. Mrs. Rouncewell, the housekeeper at Chesney Wold, tells
the story of the Ghost's Walk, so called because it is haunted by an earlier Lady Dedlock,
who cursed the house, saying, "I will walk here, until the pride of this house is humbled.
And when calamity, or when disgrace is coming to it, let the Dedlocks listen for my step!"
(BH 104). Mrs. Rouncewell and her daughter Rosa hear it; the housekeeper claims that
Lady Dedlock has admitted to hearing it as well. Appropriately, Mrs. Rouncewell tells
the story immediately after Mr. Guppy sees the portrait that implicates Lady Dedlock in disgrace. The narrator reflects that Lady Dedlock may well be listening to the mysterious steps (421); the next scene features Mr. Guppy breaking the news of Esther's existence to Lady Dedlock, who had believed her illegitimate child to be dead. Later, Esther is sitting at Chesney Wold, reflecting on the Ghost's Walk, when Lady Dedlock approaches her and confesses that she is her mother. As her story becomes known, the association between Lady Dedlock and her ghostly predecessor becomes stronger. Without naming names, Mr. Tulkinghorn tells Lady Dedlock's story to the company at Chesney Wold; later that evening the lady paces her room, "followed by the faithful step upon the Ghost's Walk" (610). Haunted by her past and future disgrace, Lady Dedlock turns to pacing about and fretting, so much so that Mrs. Rouncewell comments that she looks "as if the step on the Ghost's Walk had almost walked her down" (822). The housekeeper concludes that, as the legend predicted, the "great old Dedlock family is breaking up" (823).

Likewise, Little Dorrit's fairy tale haunts her at various points in the text. After meeting Flora and hearing about her past romance with Arthur, Little Dorrit tells her retarded friend Maggy a fairy tale about a "poor little tiny woman" (LD 244). This little spinning woman, who stands for Little Dorrit the seamstress, keeps a shadow of one who cared for her (Arthur) and shows it to the princess (Flora). Little Dorrit sublimates her sexual desire in this story, for the shadow is buried with her. The story also addresses aspects of class, for the middle-class Flora is portrayed as a princess whereas Little Dorrit
remains poor. It is an oddly static tale, in which Little Dorrit shows her belief that not much will change. All she will get is the shadow of what she wants, and she must be content with that. Little Dorrit's shadow is her memory of Arthur: "Some one [Arthur] had gone on to those who were expecting him . . . and that this remembrance was stolen or kept back from nobody" (245). Poor in everything else, Little Dorrit is rich in memory.

In *Little Dorrit*, as in the rest of Dickens's novels, memory must be cherished as essential to one's humanity: Frederick Dorrit's cry "Have you no memory? have you no heart?" (404) is the accusation underlying *Little Dorrit*.

Maggy brings up Little Dorrit's fairy tale three times after the initial telling, at points when she is with Arthur and Little Dorrit. She turns this story of self-abnegation into one of delight in luxury, of oral delight, for in her version chicken ("chicking") is served, which for her signifies Cockaigne. In one retelling, Little Dorrit is upset, will not tell Arthur why, and insists that she has no secret from him. Maggie says, "If you ain't got no secret of your own to tell him, tell him that about the Princess. *She* had a secret, you know" (322). Little Dorrit's secret, sublimated in her story, is her love for Arthur. Arthur is confused, and Little Dorrit blushes, saying that "it was only a Fairy Tale" (322); however, fairy tales reveal desire.

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5 The curiously erotic scene, in which Little Dorrit and Maggy sit in front of Arthur's fire after midnight, and Arthur feels how cold Little Dorrit's feet are and how thin her shoes, is given the page heading "Cinderella's Shoes." Little Dorrit is a Cinderella type who rises from poverty to riches.

6 It is one of the implicit accusations against society in this book that Maggy's one experience of luxury is eating chicken in a hospital. To her, the hospital, a place most people avoid, was a utopian space.
Characters may repeat stories as a way of framing the novels. The Hexam and Harmon stories in *Our Mutual Friend* are told by the Veneering set, providing a frame for the events and an upper-class perspective on them. Likewise, the rector in *Little Dorrit* frames the girl's story in a fairy tale triad: her three "volumes" of being christened, taking shelter in the church, and getting married.

Characters may view themselves as fairy tale figures, framing their lives as stories. Pip, as I have already discussed in Chapter One, sees himself as a Cinderella type; Walter in *Dombey and Son* identifies with Dick Whittington; David Copperfield wants to seek his fortune (DC 107) and wishes he had a monster to kill (120). David says he may be the hero of his life, which he views as "a great fairy story" (223). By contrast, his false friend Steerforth "confounds" himself with the "bad boy" in "nursery tales" who "'didn't care,' and became food for lions" (262). Jenny Wren not only sees herself as the wife of Cock Robin, the hero of the famous ballad, but also views others as fairy tale types. Riah is fairy godmother to her Cinderella: as she says, "You are so like the fairy godmother in the bright little books!" (433-34). When she turns on old Riah, she changes the narrative to another fairy tale, "Little Red Riding Hood." She calls him a Wolf, devouring others in the urban wilderness through cold-hearted usury. In a way, she refashions her world into a story that refuses to disguise the cruelty of the world or the vulnerability of the young and the poor.
FAIRY-TALE PLOTS:

Dickens used many commonly known fairy tales as well as ballads and nursery rhymes. The tales he seems to refer to most often are Bluebeard, Cinderella, Dick Whittington, and the eastern tales of the Arabian Nights and Tales of the Genii. He tends to use a variety of fairy-tale motifs rather than simply fleshing out a single fairy tale in a novel. His most common fairy-tale plot is "Cinderella," and he is especially fond of the quest and "modesty brings reward" motifs. These plot motifs are not peculiar to the fairy tale. Indeed, Nicholas Nickleby is a good example of the quest: Nicholas sets off to find his fortune in London and to rescue the "princess" Madeleine, whereas his evil uncle Ralph pursues Smike, not knowing that the boy is his son. However, the treatment in this novel is closer to melodrama than to the fairy tale. The strong contrast between good and evil is an element that the melodrama and the fairy tale share, but Dickens does not significantly allude to the fairy tale in this book.

Dickens's novels are populated with characters searching for other people. These quests are motivated by either evil or loving intentions. Quilp, Ralph Nickleby and John Jasper pursue their innocent victims with a doggedness that suggests the power of a corrupt world. On the other hand, Mr. Peggotty's search for Little Em'ly is the motif of the

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7 See The Dickens Index, edited by Bentley, Slater and Burgis.

8 These are not, strictly speaking, true Eastern tales, but imitations. The Tales of the Genii was a "collection of pseudo-oriental tales purported to be translated from the Persian by Sir Charles Morell, 'formerly Ambassador from the British settlements in India to the Great Mogul' but actually composed by the Reverend James Ridley (1736-65). First published in 2 volumes in 1764" (Bentley, Slater and Burgis 255-56).

9 See Vicinus for a cultural analysis of melodrama.
"quest for the vanished husband" found in such fairy tales as "East of the Sun, West of the Moon" and the myth "Cupid and Psyche." In these tales, a wife loses her husband through violating a prohibition, and must travel and suffer to find him. In one variant, she wears out three pairs of iron shoes looking for him. By changing the sex and relation of this character, Dickens questions society's rejection of the fallen woman. She is not cast away, but sought out, and is worth the pain of the quest: "I'm a going to seek my niece though the wureld" (DC 371).

Dickens's characters also engage on quests for success. Dickens's use of fairy tale patterns here can be viewed in a social light, as they show the child characters reacting to their environment and desiring both to make their mark in society and maintain their morality. Walter Gay, Martin Chuzzlewit Jr, Kit, Dick Swiveller, Pip and David Copperfield seek adventure and status, and frame their ambitions in fairy tale terms. Waiting at the Garlands', his first employers, Kit thinks

about giants' castles, and princesses tied up to pegs by the hair of their heads, and dragons bursting out from behind gates, and other incidents of the like nature, common in story-books to youths of low degree on their first visit to strange houses. . . . (OCS 233)

Pip imagines that Miss Havisham has set him up as a hero to win the princess, Estella, and both Walter and Dick Swiveller think of themselves as Dick Whittington's heirs. Their ambitions show the desire for the lower-class boy to raise himself socially. Dickens uses these fairy tale allusions ironically, for as Pip and Walter in particular discover, social advancement is not romantic. As I showed in Chapter One, Pip is a Cinderella
with a fake fairy godmother. Dickens also uses the Cinderella motif to portray the advancement of lower-class female fairies such as Little Dorrit, the Marchioness and Jenny Wren.

Dickens is fond of the fairy tale motif "modesty brings reward," or the "modest choice," and this motif tempers the quest for social advancement. Although many of the good characters (particularly the male ones) desire a fortune, they will not get it if they do not exhibit modesty. Often this is tested by another character. There are scores of fairy tales in which characters (often two stepsisters) are given a choice between something promising and something unpromising, for example, between a light and a heavy basket of goods. Appearances are deceptive and the most promising choice is the modest one. A famous example of this motif is the "three caskets" variation that Shakespeare uses in The Merchant of Venice: it is the lead casket which contains Portia's portrait, not the gold or silver ones.¹⁰ Dickens uses this motif in order to convey his dislike of selfishness in his society. Martin Chuzzlewit Sr. tests his relatives to see which of them deserves his wealth: "by the golden standard which I bear about me, I am doomed to try the metal of all other men, and find it false and hollow" (37). He sees his house as being ruined by "self," and wants to reward the one who shows a degree of selflessness. The winner is Martin Jr., who learns to become less selfish throughout the novel.

Most successful among Dickens's works in the depiction of the modest choice are Little Dorrit and Our Mutual Friend. In both novels, the heroine must decide how to

¹⁰ Shakespeare used folklore sources for this motif, principally drawn from Jacobus de Voraigne's The Golden Legend and the Gesta Romanorum: a Record of Auncient Histories.
approach poverty and wealth. Choosing the modest life comes easily to Little Dorrit, but not to Bella Wilfer. Born in the Marshalsea debtor's prison, Little Dorrit is stunted partly through her poverty, but also because she tends to save her food for the rest of her family to eat. In poverty, she copes while her family mopes. When the family inherits money, Little Dorrit insists on leaving the Marshalsea in her shabby old dress, and cannot revel in the luxury of her family's newfound wealth because she recognizes the hollowness of the lives of the rich. She misses "the scene of my poverty" (463), and happily returns to prison to take care of Arthur, who has gone bankrupt. She tries to give him her money, telling him: "It would be of no value at all to me, but for your sake" (633). When he is released, they are married and enter "a modest life of usefulness and happiness" (688).

In Our Mutual Friend, John Harmon returns home and, in his disguise as secretary, watches how his old servants, the Boffins, react to their new wealth. Harmon is believed to have drowned, and the Boffins have inherited his proper estate. When they have proved themselves to be unspoilt, they aid Harmon in testing Bella. Mr Boffin tests her by pretending to become avaricious.¹¹ When he "fires" Harmon, Bella follows the poor secretary and gives up her ambition to marry well by marrying him. John tests her change of heart, asking her if she would not like him to be rich. Her reply shows that her former desire for wealth has been subsumed into her love for him: "it's not possible that you suppose I think we are poor?" (680). When he wishes that they had a carriage to ride in so that her shoes would not get soiled, his sentiment is enough for her satisfaction:

¹¹ Unfortunately, Dickens depicts this with such glee that it seems unnatural for it to have been pretence.
"your wishes are as real to me as the wishes in the Fairy story, that were all fulfilled as soon as spoken" (680). Paradoxically, she is rewarded for this modest choice with wealth as her husband and the Boffins reveal their deception.12

By celebrating the modest choice, Dickens seeks to encourage the selfless self, that is, the social self. However, this motif also shows his ambivalence about social advancement. According to the values of this motif, people are meant to work hard, but not to push themselves forward. They are not allowed to desire the wealth that the upper classes take for granted. Modesty is supposed to be the route to advancement. While in reality, advancement without ambition is very unlikely to occur, it fits a mould with which Dickens and other members of the middle classes were comfortable. It promotes a pattern of advancement that will not change the social quo, that will not demand.

FAIRY-TALE CHARACTERS: MONSTERS AND FAIRIES:

Dickens either weaves a fairy tale plot motif through a novel like a thread, or "clusters" motifs from fairy tales onto certain characters and places. Fairy tale motifs act as a shorthand to signal what the reader is to think of a particular character or place. These clustered motifs may be disparate and even contradictory, lending richness and complexity to the character or place described. For example, Aunt Betsey in David Copperfield is a discontented fairy visiting the baby, like the one in "Sleeping Beauty".

12 The Boffins undergo a parallel test of their modesty when they, like a king and queen in a fairy tale, want to adopt a child. The first child they adopt is young and well-formed, but it dies. Mrs. Boffin suggests that it was vanity, perhaps, on their part to want a beautiful child; consequently, they adopt Sloppy, an awkward young man not entirely "all there."
(10); she is a witch (152); and she acts as a helper, or a fairy godmother, to David. Using fairy tale allusions is a way of achieving this depth without burdening the reader with allusions that may be unfamiliar, such as classical ones. Fairy tale allusions are at once significant in meaning and light in tone.

Dickens's leading male characters, such as Arthur Clennam and Nicholas Nickleby are usually morally upright and unremarkable, acting as the "straight men" to the people around them. The heroines, villains and supporting cast are more vividly drawn, using images of the fairy tale. Stone and Kotzin have tabulated which kind of fairy tale figure almost every Dickens character can be; instead of repeating this work, I will focus on how Dickens uses the fairy tale motifs of monsters and fairies to create his characters. This contrast reveals that Dickens judges the humanity of his characters based on how well they act socially.

Dickens relates the concept of selfhood to the social self, that is, how people relate to their society. Dickens's desire to reform society through the individual requires a reformation of the social self, a reclaiming of the person for society. Good characters bring people together and into society: Florence Dombey, for instance, reclaims her father when he has been reduced to a spectral form referred to by the narrator as "it," considering suicide (705). The worthiest characters are those who can maintain hope for a

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13 Dickens does use classical allusions, but almost always ironically. Moreover, his classical allusions are often not identified. For example, Dickens refers to Pecksniff as a Midas figure by writing, "But such is the magic of genius, which changes all it handles into gold!" (MC 79).
better world, and create their own utopias in their homes, while living in a nightmarish, selfish, unsympathetic world.

Dickens uses fairy tale imagery to create two of his most bizarre child characters, Paul Dombey in *Dombey and Son* and Jenny Wren in *Our Mutual Friend*, who are like otherworldly creatures possessing a critical perspective on the society that threatens them. The allusions to fairies provides a faery distance from the dealings of the real world.

Paul, for example, is described as a changeling, "one of those terrible little Beings in the Fairy Tales" (77). He asks pertinent questions of his authorities: "What's money after all" he asks his father, who cannot tell him why, if money is so powerful, it cannot bring back his dead mother. Paul is ruined by his father's pride, which forces a taxing education on the delicate boy. Simply being the Son of Dombey and Son carries a symbolic weight that crushes him. He is a kind of exemplary child whose death is a warning that his father does not understand.

Another canny (and uncanny), though less innocent, child is Fanny Cleaver, who names herself after the wife of the ballad bird Cock Robin. By calling herself "Jenny Wren," Fanny emphasizes her vulnerability, for wrens are small; her love of romance, as "Jenny Wren" is courted by Cock Robin; and her ability to survive, because "Jenny Wren" outlives Cock Robin. Stunted and crippled, Jenny sees the "tricks and manners" (241) of the world around her, and criticizes others openly. Her own position and stunted growth is an implicit criticism of society. She is doomed to play with dolls only by making

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14 Jenny makes this criticism more explicit in the scene where Eugene Wrayburn, the gentleman who is courting Jenny's friend Lizzie (far below his station), jests with her. Eugene says,
clothes for them; rich children have the luxury of actually owning them. Jenny is at once "earthly," scolding her drunken father, and "otherworldly," as she has been visited by angels. When she was ill, Jenny says, they came to her, crying, "Who is this in pain?" (239). It is the fault of the adults around her if she is more shrewd than spiritual: "How often so dragged down by hands that should have raised her up; how often so misdirected when losing her way on the eternal road, and asking guidance!" (243). These critical children show how far the adult world is from the utopian bliss of the angelic world.

The monsters in Dickens's books are marginal characters who reject society and act as negative examples for readers. Dickens's favourite monster is the ogre, and many of his ogres are schoolteachers. Mr. M'Choakumchild, Mrs. Pipchin, and Mr. Creakle are all referred to as such, and this allusion emphasizes the damage they inflict on their pupils. Instead of encouraging them, these ogre-teachers intimidate and frighten them, and even threaten their lives.¹⁵ Dickens was criticizing the real cruelties of the Yorkshire schools in Nicholas Nickleby, and fairy-tale imagery gives greater emphasis to the literal nature of the threat. Another favourite monster is the Blue Beard type, inspired by his nurse's story about Captain Murderer. Mr. Murdstone is the prime example: as Aunt Betsey points out, David's mother "marries a Murderer" (161). His sister Miss Murdstone

"Why, if we were all as industrious as you, little Busy-Body, we should begin to work as soon as we could crawl, and there would be a bad thing!"
"Do you mean," returned the little creature, with a flush suffusing her face, "bad for your backs and your legs?" (OMF 238).

This exchange is particularly significant as Jenny has just been teasing Eugene that he should be industrious; the criticism extends to him as a lazy gentleman.

¹⁵ See Harry Stone's The Night Side of Dickens for more on ogres and cannibalism, including their appearance in the chapbooks and graphic art of Dickens's youth.
is a "Dragon" (447). Magwitch in *Great Expectations* is shown as a kind of ogre, or bog/bogey man, at the beginning of the novel in the passage in which he describes his hunger in cannibalistic terms to a frightened Pip: "[w]hat fat cheeks you ha' got....Darn Me if I couldn't eat 'em...!" (4-5). Dorothy Van Ghent describes Orlick, the true ogre of *Great Expectations*, as "the daemonism of sheer external Matter" (138).

Quilp is the ultimate monster in Dickens's novels. He is clever and unpredictable, and knows exactly how to unnerve everyone. He refers to himself as a "Will o' the Wisp" (OCS 470); with regard to Nell and her grandfather, he says, "I'll be their evil genius yet" (619). He can appear anywhere, most spectacularly out of a statue nook, as if he were a gargoyle come to life (276). He is buried at crossroads with a stake in his heart, as if he had been a vampire. Indeed, as a moneylender, he can be viewed as sucking the lifeblood of his victims through usury and demands for payment. He has certainly shown a vampyric desire to consume Little Nell and does in fact hound her to an early death.

Quilp seems born for malice; other monsters in Dickens's novels, however, become so through their own anti-social actions. Through his love of money, Grandpa Smallweed becomes a "money-getting species of spider" (BH 307). Bill Sikes, haunted by his murder of Nancy, becomes the "very ghost" (OT 324) of himself, and Charley thus rejects him: "Don't come nearer me. You monster!" (325). Sikes's crime has dehumanized him, set him beyond the pale of society. Jonas Chuzzlewit, another murderer, is called a "Griffin" (MC 343).

A number of men become, or feel, bestial in their relations with women. Jasper in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is a "Monster" to Rosa (51); David Copperfield says of
Dora, "I felt like a sort of Monster who had got into a Fairy's bower, when I thought of having frightened her, and made her cry" (DC 443). Martin Chuzzlewit claims that he has been a "beast" (455) to Mary, and Mr. Dombey goes in search of his errant wife like a "wild beast" (619). Aside from the last example, the above quotations refer to "Beauty and the Beast," in which the woman acts as a civilizing force over the man.16

There are fewer evil female than male characters in Dickens's works; charitable women generally form a contrast to anti-social men. The female monsters are often inversions of good fairy tale figures: Miss Havisham, for example, is a failed fairy godmother to Pip. Good Mrs. Brown in Dombey and Son is hardly good, although by kidnapping and robbing Florence, she inadvertently sets Florence and Walter's romance in motion. Both Good Mrs. Brown and the opium dealer in The Mystery of Edwin Drood are referred to as witches (DS 137, 460; ED 127). The latter is "as malignant as the Evil One," seen shaking her fist at Jasper in church (279). These characters resemble the Fates as well as witches, for they both tell the future (DS 459; ED 127). Although The Mystery of Edwin Drood remained unfinished, I think the clues show that, like Good Mrs. Brown, the opium addict prophesies what will happen in the future and acts behind the scenes to bring certain truths to light.

Dickens often uses monster imagery ironically. Mr. Spenlow, Dora's father, seems like an "Ogre, or the Dragon of Wantley" (DC 452), keeping David from his

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16 See Warner (Beast) and Zipes (Fairy) for more on "Beauty and the Beast." Warner describes how the tale changed from depicting the civilization of man by the woman through the code de civilité to the opposite (280-313). See Forster's reference to this tale below, page 176.
daughter. The dark images of Aunt Betsey as a witch (DC 152) and as "the Dragon of that night" (681) show ironically how her forceful demeanour frightens those around her, such as the meek Dr. Chillip, to the extent that they cannot see her kindness. Likewise, regarding the energetically good Mr. Boythorn, Mr. Jarndyce tells his charges that "[y]ou might suppose him to be an Ogre, from what he says." (BH 105). Such ironic uses of monster imagery show how characters wish to see themselves as heroes of fairy tales, as David does, or to see others as stereotypes.

Dickens's monsters show the dehumanizing effect of being greedy, selfish and uncompromising. Dickens uses images of monsters to show how selfishness leads to isolation from society, which in turn leads to degeneration. They are warnings that the ungenerous society becomes inhuman. In the 1850 "Preface to the Cheap Edition" of Martin Chuzzlewit, Dickens writes that the purpose of the book was "to show how Selfishness propagates itself; and to what a grim giant it may grow, from small beginnings." He then asks the reader to "judge whether those are monsters who disgrace our streets, . . . or are creatures whom we have deliberately suffered to be bred for misery and ruin." Indeed, Dickens often uses images of animals and insects to describe the

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17 The Dragon of Wantley is "[a] Yorkshire dragon that devoured children and cattle; subject of a humorous ballad included in Percy's Reliques" (notes, DC 745).

18 Marina Warner explains that the word "monster" comes from the Latin words monstrare, "to show," and monestrum, "which encloses the notions of advising, of reminding, above all of warning" (Managing 19).

19 This quotation is reminiscent of Frankenstein. Elizabeth Gaskell similarly compares class relations to the relationship between Frankenstein and his Creature in Mary Barton. In Chapters Four and Five, I will discuss this aspect of middle-class responsibility in greater detail.
poor, but emphasizes that the members of the middle and upper classes are responsible for this degradation through their selfish neglect. Fittingly, this neglect dehumanizes the more fortunate in turn. For example, Dickens uses the ogre image half-ironically, half-seriously in *David Copperfield* when Mr. Waterbrook, host of a dinner party, proclaims the superiority of the aristocracy with the cry, "give me Blood!" (305). David observes, "We might have been a party of Ogres, the conversation assumed such a sanguine complexion" (305). Pride, Dickens writes in *Dombey and Son*, "is as hard a master as the Devil in dark fables" (469). This emphasis on the dehumanizing effect of selfishness criticizes utilitarianism: "Some philosophers tell us that selfishness is at the root of our best loves and affections" (76). In Chapter Five, I will comment on Dickens's criticism of utilitarianism in more detail, and discuss how he uses fancy to attack it in his periodicals.

If neglected through the selfishness of the more fortunate, Dickens suggests, the poor will degenerate in a particularly vicious way into animalistic, vengeful mobs. Individually, the poor are usually represented by Dickens in a generous light. Like many members of the middle classes, however, Dickens did not like the poor *en masse*, an attitude which arose from the horror of the French Revolution and the mobs that participated in it. Dickens portrays the mob in *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), set during the Gordon Riots of 1780, and *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), set during the French Revolution.

In *Barnaby Rudge*, the hero of the title is an idiot, who is immediately swept away by the great crowd assembled by Lord George Gordon to protest the granting of certain rights to Catholics. Without knowing anything about the reasons for the mob, Barnaby
joins it and becomes part of the leadership, so to speak. He meets Lord George, who says, "I am proud to be the leader of such men as you" (521). The irony of being proud to lead idiots does not occur to Lord George. The mob Lord George assembles is even less intelligent. When its members become part of the collective, they lose their humanity: "The mob raged and roared, like a mad monster as it was, unceasingly, and each new outrage served to swell its fury" (453). They certainly lose their senses: "If Bedlam gates had been flung wide open, there would not have issued forth such maniacs as the frenzy of that night had made" (508).

Dickens places the blame for mob violence on the actions of the elites more strongly in A Tale of Two Cities than in Barnaby Rudge. At the beginning of the novel, he illustrates the despair and hunger of the poor Frenchmen, as well as their utter powerlessness. They have been treated by the elites as less than human. When they take action, they degenerate further by becoming the subhuman creatures that the upper classes had originally made them out to be. Members of the mob are worse than savages; they are animals: "their hideous countenances were all bloody and sweaty, and all awry with howling, and all staring and glaring with beastly excitement. . ." (321). The upper class is responsible for this degeneration. It resembles, Dickens writes, "the fabled rustic who raised the Devil with infinite pains, and was so terrified at the sight of him that he could ask the Enemy no question, but immediately fled. . ." (286). Both the Marquis and Madame Defarge, at opposite ends of the social spectrum, resemble each other in their subhuman natures. The Marquis "moved like a refined tiger:—looked like some enchanted marquis . . . in story, whose periodical change into tiger form was either just
going off, or just coming on" (150). Madame Defarge puts herself beyond the animal kingdom altogether: "tell Wind and Fire where to stop; but don't tell me" (421). Both the upper and lower classes are implicated in the violence and are punished by losing their humanity. Dickens thus warns both against the dangerous consequences of group action and the arrogant neglect of social ills.

Characters lose their humanity through great selfishness or through suffering bad treatment. Monstrous selfishness is countered by the kind of selflessness expressed by the good women of Dickens's novels. Nearly every heroine is described as a fairy; in folklore, fairies are generally thought to be women (Walker 298). Like fairies, Dickens's heroines are generally diminutive, graceful, and magical, charming those around them, such as Rosa Bud, "the fairy bride that is to be" (ED 40), and Dora, who is "a Fairy, a Sylph" (DC 317). When Dickens describes David's and Dora's marriage as "this fairy marriage" (515), he is not entirely complimentary, for he thus points out its unreality: it is not the love "founded upon a rock" (542). In general, however, the fairy nature of women is given positive value. Clara in Great Expectations (371), Little Dorrit (178, 237), Ruth Pinch in Martin Chuzzlewit (122), Aunt Betsey (DC 10), and Florence Dombey (DS 571) are all good fairies.

Esther Summerson of Bleak House is one example of how Dickens clusters fairy tale images to form a female character. Other characters in the story call Esther by a host of nicknames drawn from folklore: Old Woman, Little Old Woman, Mrs. Shipton,

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20 Walker writes that the fairy queen was an "ancient fertility-mother" and that the Welsh and the Irish called fairies "The Mothers" (298).
Mother Hubbard, and Dame Durden. Esther comments ironically that "my own name soon became quite lost among them" (11). These images cast her in the role of housewife, for Dame Durden is, in Brewer's phrase, the "notable housewife" of a folk song; the Old Woman sweeps cobwebs from the sky; and Mother Hubbard presides over bare cupboards (392). These images also present Esther in a nonsexual light, as an old woman. The reference to Mother Shipton is particularly interesting: this legendary figure is famous for her prophecies about both her neighbours and national affairs, and is a figure in both pantomimes/harlequinades and moral tales of the eighteenth century. She is Harlequin's mother who, with her magic bat, helps him win Columbine, and she also reconciles the Father to the Lovers. In the moral tale, she "exercised a virtuous influence over others" (Shefrin, n.p.). Esther has a similar effect on people. The other characters see her as the household fairy and she, desperate for affection and a sense of belonging, willingly acquiesces. She feels the burden of their expectations, as she jingles her household keys nervously and gives herself sermons on duty. She cannot, however, bring harmony to the worlds of Chancery or Chesney Wold; neither can she foresee the events that occur or her place in them. She cannot clear Chancery of its fog as the Old Woman can clear away cobwebs. Dickens thus uses images of nursery lore ironically to show, by contrast, the absurd chaos of modern England.

What, for Dickens, makes a woman a fairy? Diminutiveness, modesty, kindness and femininity are qualities that all of his fairy women share. But their fairy nature has to

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21 A harlequinade is "a type of transformation book popular in England in the latter half of the eighteenth century" (Shefrin, n.p.). It has flaps that move up to show pictures.
do with their ability to work as well: "You industrious little fairy," Flora calls Little Dorrit (237). Dickens's women, however, are not merely passive vessels of virtue; they are active social beings who not only take care of others, but spur them to become similarly active and engaged in society. By contrast, the men in the novels seem passive, made active only by the presence of women. The best example of this active woman is Little Dorrit who, aside from her own labour, finds work for her ungrateful brother and sister. She is constantly asserting her strength: "I don't think I am weak, ma'am" (61). Arthur is inspired to search for the truth mainly by the mystery of Little Dorrit.

Dickens generally contrasts the fairy woman with the monstrous man or the unfriendly environment. For example, Nell, "[s]o very young, so spiritual, so slight and fairy-like a creature" spends her nights in a bed "that a fairy might have slept in" alone, unprotected, in the midst of the dark shop of gloomy curiosities (OCS 55). Later in the novel, it becomes clear that the whole world is one of curiosities through which Nell must travel, avoiding the monster Quilp.

FAIRY-TALE SETTINGS: HOMES AND WILDERNESSES

The "monsters" of Dickens's novels threaten to disturb or destroy the home that the fairy woman has created. For Dickens, as for many Victorians, the home is a utopian space. As such, it has the "Janus-face" of utopia: it presents an ideal which can also be

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22 In this point, I disagree with Patricia Ingham, who writes that in Dickens, "women are not agents at all but the objects of men's small actions and of circumstance" (15), and that only the fallen girls are given "a degree of agency" (Dickens 61)—although that hardly does them any good.
perceived as negative social control, a doubleness I will describe in greater detail in Chapter Five. According to Monica Feinberg, home was "a Victorian expression of paradise" (6). In Martin Chuzzlewit, home is magical, "a name, a word . . . stronger than magician ever spoke, or spirit answered to, in strongest conjuration" (471). For Dickens and other Victorians, the home had a national significance: "In love of home, the love of country has its rise" (OCS 364). The home, therefore, had to be protected as the nation's crucible for morality and education.

The homes that these little women (and some men, such as Old Sol in Dombey and Son and Mr. Tatar in Edwin Drood) create, or try to create, are the only utopias that Dickens recognizes. As with his characterizations, Dickens uses clusters of fairy tale images when describing places. Places are either utopian or dystopian: they are either homes or wildernesses. Dickens sees the perfect home as cosy, small, quaint, and clean. Moreover, the creation of the home is spiritual, an act of loving imagination that transforms the house, no matter how poor, into a good home. A poor man, Dickens writes,

has no property but in the affections of his own heart; and when they endear bare floors and walls, despite of rags and toil and scanty meals, that man has his love of home from God, and his rude hut becomes a solemn palace. (OCS 363)

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23 See Frances Armstrong for a fuller analysis of this point. She also describes how many characters approach housekeeping as a game.
The Plomishes' "Happy Cottage" is "a most wonderful deception:" in the heart of London, the couple pretends to be living in the country (LD 479). It is the only luxury they can afford. Even a spinster's home like Miss Tox's "Princess's Palace" in Dombey and Son has its domestic charms. The characters who are most pitiable in Dickens's works are those who are homeless, such as Betsy Higden, Nell and her grandfather in the countryside, and especially Jo in Bleak House, who asks, "What's home?" (162).

By contrast, Dick Swiveller calls Quilp's tower "the Wilderness" (OCS 236) and the Brass's residence a "most remarkable and supernatural sort of house!" (334). Quilp's tower is separate from the rest of society but able to overlook it; this home thus resembles its spying owner. Miss Havisham's room is like a wilderness, infested as it is by mice and insects. Camberweil in Martin Chuzzlewit is likened to a "giant's castle" (118), as is Mrs. Pipchin's home, although her residence has a "Castle Dungeon" in the back for punishing her charges (DS 84).

Dickens refers to the city as a wilderness many times throughout his career. In Bleak House, he depicts London as a prehistoric wilderness of fog, mud, lizards, and dinosaurs. Dickens likens the world of fashion to being wrapped in jeweller's cotton just as the court of Chancery is embalmed in fog: both are "deadened" worlds (17). There is a "wilderness of dowager old chimneys" in Our Mutual Friend (279), and Hard Times's Coketown is a dystopian "town of unnatural red and back like the painted face of a savage," with "serpents of smoke" from the factory chimneys, and steam engines like mad

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[24] Feinberg discusses the irony of Esther Summerson seeing the houses that take her in (Bleak House, Chesney Wold) as paradisiacal when they are not particularly; Esther thus reveals her intense desire for a safe and happy home.
elephants (28). In *Dombey and Son*, Dickens refers to the "wild and savage places of the City" (468), and he calls the trains "tame dragons" (185) that bring "Death" (237). It is not only the city that is referred to as a wilderness, but the City and the new technology of the steam engine that has transformed England.

The good characters take refuge from this wilderness in good homes. The Brownlow house, with the lovely Rose as a maternal figure, is Oliver's middle-class refuge from Fagin's den. In *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Rosa flees from the monstrous intentions of Jasper to London, where her guardian lives. The apartment in which Mr. Tatar, the jovial green thumb, lives becomes the place where Rosa can meet with Helena. Dickens refers to it as the "garden in the air," "a marvellous country that came into sudden bloom like the country on the summit of the magic bean-stalk" (ED 188-89); it is, however, an escape from an ogre rather than his home. A similar refuge is the Manettes' home in London; Dickens uses the echoes that are constantly heard in the courtyard, however, to signify the coming danger of the French Revolution.

**FLORENCE DOMBEY AS SLEEPING BEAUTY:**

Dickens's use of the Sleeping Beauty tale in *Dombey and Son* is an example of how he uses a specific fairy tale, and the contrasts in character between monster and fairy, and in setting between home and wilderness. Florence Dombey is "like the king's fair daughter in the story" (DS 267), her father's "better angel" (422) and "household spirit" (423), and a "Fairy" (57). Like Beauty in "Beauty and the Beast," Florence is a merchant's daughter. Dickens also refers to her indirectly as Cinderella (63) and Sleeping Beauty
Captain Cuttle calls her "Beauty" (577). Dickens sets the two of them in a tableau that recalls the story: "A wandering princess and a good monster in a story-book might have sat by the fireside, and talked as Captain Cuttle and poor Florence thought—and not have looked very much unlike them" (572). Like Beauty, Florence saves her father's life. This cluster of images gives Florence and the household affections she represents greater lustre.

Dickens uses "Sleeping Beauty" rhetorically, stating that Florence's situation is even more fantastic than that of the fairy tale: "No magic dwelling-place in magic story, shut up in the heart of a thick wood, was ever more solitary and deserted to the fancy, than was her father's mansion in grim reality. . . . (266). The house is under a "spell . . . more wasting than the spell that used to set enchanted houses sleeping once upon a time, but left their walking freshness unimpaired" (266). The building slowly turns black, and grass begins to grow upon the roof. "Mildew and mould began to lurk in closets . . . . Dust accumulated, nobody knew whence nor how; spiders, moths, and grubs were heard of every day" (267). It is, literally, a "wilderness of a home" (268). It is preternaturally quiet, and the clocks are all out of time (266). Boys draw ghosts on the stable doors (266).

Through these images, Dickens criticizes the world of unfeeling business, for Dombey is the head of a House as well as a home, and focuses all his attention, even love, on the former. All of his personal affections bear on his desire for his firm's success; consequently, he does not love Florence who, as a girl, will not inherit this enterprise.
The house is a figure for Florence's neglect: as Mr. Dombey disregards his daughter, so does he abandon his property.

In this wild and timeless house, Florence waits like Sleeping Beauty to be disenchanted. She waits for the love not of a prince, but of a father. Despite the "cold walls" that "looked down upon her with a vacant stare, as if they had a Gorgon-like mind to stare her youth and beauty into stone" (266), Florence "bloomed . . . like the king's fair daughter in the story" (267). She gives "to every lifeless thing a touch of present human interest and wonder" (267), and it is from her humanity and her great hope for her father's love that the redemption of the home and its owner springs. Florence lives in the utopian hope of a better time; she eventually does bring her father out from the realm of monster to her fairy home. When he becomes bankrupt, he begins to acknowledge his earlier, spiritual losses. Like his daughter previously, Dombey haunts his own empty house. Unlike Florence, his isolation is not blessed by hope, and he therefore deteriorates to the point where the narrator refers to him as "it" and "spectral" (704-05). In a reversal of the Sleeping Beauty theme that earlier characterized her, Florence "wakes" her father out of his despair. She embodies the selflessness and love that redeem the inhumanity of the selfish Victorian world of business. This pattern is reflected in the ideology of the home as a feminine place where the man could maintain a distance from the corruption of business.25

Florence is a Sleeping Beauty type with a difference: she is also an outcast child, abandoned by her father. Dickens is very fond of the fairy-tale motif of the "outcast

25 See Vicinus, Nead, and Michie for more on the split between home and work.
child." Florence is a rich outcast child, but most of these abandoned children in Dickens's novels are poor and, by depicting their neglect, Dickens criticizes society. The outcast child is pure and innocent, a victim of its surroundings. Using this motif, Dickens fully exploits the contrasts between monsters and fairies, wildernesses and homes.

The motif of the outcast child is ancient, dating to biblical and classical times, and is very common in fairy tales and romances. It fits the romantic agenda of the child whose natural purity contrasts with the corrupt society. The child stands for nature whereas the wilderness it is thrown into is an urban jungle with all of the negative attributes of an industrial society. Oliver Twist is the prime example of this type in Dickens's works: the boy is so innocent that he thinks the thieves make the handkerchiefs they bring home. Little Nell first appears to Master Humphrey as a lost child alone in the poor and unsafe streets; likewise, Florence is lost in the City and is rescued by Walter. Smike and Jo are examples of children who have been so damaged by their cruel environments that they will never be able to function, and so die. Many of his heroes and heroines are orphans, such as the Landlesses and Oliver, and many others are not technically orphans but are forced to be independent, such as Little Dorrit and Little Nell. In Edwin Drood, Neville Landless recites a family history that is straight from a fairy tale: he and his sister are orphans who have suffered at the hands of their stepfather.

The "outcast child" searches for a home in which the vulnerability of the child can be protected. The quest for a better home is at the heart of Dickens's social criticism. It is

26 Sidney Hartland's 1886 essay "The Outcast Child" is still the most comprehensive effort to trace the motifs related to the abandonment or exile of innocent children.
a very common fairy-tale plot: children and adolescents in the fairy tale leave the homes where they are threatened or are abandoned by their parents. The popular ballad, "The Children in the Wood" depicts a brother and sister abandoned by their uncle-guardian; they die in the woods and the uncle goes mad from guilt. In tales such as "Hansel and Gretel," the abandoned children find an even worse home, belonging to a witch. They destroy her and return to their old home with arms full of jewels. Their former home is thereby renewed and becomes utopian. Usually, however, fairy tales show the protagonists' progress from an unfavourable home to a new home, one in which they become kings or queens, and thus attain all they desire. In short, they gain power and security, just what they lack in their poor homes.

According to Dickens, all children deserve a home free of degrading poverty (simple, uncorrupted poverty, such as that of Kit's home, is just fine). He believes that all children need fairy tales and fancy to give them the inner resources to survive their environment. Childhood is "that fairy period of existence" (DS 465), and children need fancy to develop their humanity. The home becomes a place of refuge and, as part of that refuge, a crucible for fancy and the hope that fancy engenders. It becomes the utopian space that protects the child and educates it in such a way that it can help to renew its corrupt society.

The happy reunions and marriages with which most of Dickens's novels end parallel the endings of fairy tales. However, instead of ruling a new utopia of an uncorrupted England, Little Dorrit and Arthur, Bella and John, David and Agnes rule over their own homes, their little utopias. While "the noisy and the eager, and the
arrogant and the froward and the vain, fretted and chafed, and made their usual uproar,"
these couples begin "a modest life of usefulness and happiness" (LD 688). On one hand,
it seems like a failure of a grand scheme of reform in the country. On the other hand,
these couples set examples for right rule in the heart of the nation, that is, at its hearth. In
the home, love, charity, respect and fancy are kindled and, with them, the hope that the
children of these unions will exhibit these qualities in the world beyond. As I will show
in the next chapter, the Christmas books are the best examples of how Dickens uses fancy
to promote his vision of a utopian home influencing the nation. In these books, however,
we can see the ambiguities of such a solution, and Dickens's own ambivalence towards it.
CHAPTER FOUR: Dickens's Christmas "Fairy Tales of Home"

No one was more intensely fond than Dickens of old nursery tales, and he had a secret delight in feeling that he was here only giving them a higher form. The social and manly virtues he desired to teach, were to him not less the charm of the ghost, the goblin, and the fairy fancies of his childhood; however rudely set forth in those earlier days. What now were to be conquered were the more formidable dragons and giants that had their places at our own hearths, and the weapons to be used were of a finer than the "ice-brook's temper." (Forster 1:301-02)

As the above quotation from Forster makes clear, Dickens uses fancy, especially in the form of the fairy tale, to communicate his social vision in the Christmas books. The Christmas season, which encompassed New Year's Day and the Epiphany, was weighted with religious and folkloric meanings that complemented Dickens's own utopian visions of hope, charity and memory. Utopia in these books is not just related to a vision of a better time, but to the current enjoyment of the senses.¹ In these books, fancy leads the characters to the utopian space of the happy home. The Christmas books chronicle the struggle between the monster and the fairy, the wilderness and home. These texts play with ideas of utopia as Dickens posits Christmas and the home as, respectively,

¹ Chesterton credits Dickens for this emphasis in his Christmas books, and links it to Dickens's use of the grotesque: "The grotesque is the natural expression of joy; and all the Utopias and the new Edens of the poets fail to give a real impression of enjoyment, very largely because they leave out the grotesque. A man in most modern Utopias cannot really be happy; he is too dignified . . . . When real human beings have real delights they tend to express them entirely in grotesques--I might almost say entirely in goblins" ("Christmas" 110).
utopian time and utopian space. Furthermore, he tells readers how to behave in order to create a perfect society. To Dickens, the Christmas spirit was one "of active usefulness, perseverance, cheerful discharge of duty, kindness, and forbearance!" ("What" 1). This pedagogical element irritated one reviewer who wrote, sarcastically, that Dickens's "Christmas books are his grand moral lessons" (Critical 180). Thackeray, on the other hand, called A Christmas Carol "a national benefit" ("Box" 169). However, Dickens's bright vision of the hearth as utopia casts dystopian shadows, and even Dickens questions both his use of fancy and his utopian vision of home.

When Dickens started to publish Household Words, he stopped writing Christmas books. Instead, he and other contributors collaborated on Christmas numbers. Editors of the Christmas books (Glancy, Slater) imply that the Christmas stories continue where the Christmas books left off, but this is not the case. In tone, form and content, the Christmas stories tend to be more superficial than the Christmas books, and they are not similarly intent on illuminating or criticizing society. Most of the stories are not set at Christmas, and those that are fail to discuss the holiday in the profound sense of the Christmas books. Only four of the Christmas stories can be classified as fairy tales. For these reasons, I will be referring almost exclusively to the Christmas books.²

The Christmas books are indeed long fairy tales, closely related to the oral tradition, as their full titles reveal. The five Christmas books are: A Christmas Carol in prose. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas (1843), The Chimes: A Goblin Story of Some

² Thomas provides the most thorough analysis of the Christmas stories in Dickens and the Short Story.
Bells that Rang an Old Year Out and a New Year In (1844), The Cricket on the Hearth: A Fairy Tale of Home (1845), The Battle of Life: A Love Story (1846), and The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain: A Fancy for Christmas-time (1848). They demonstrate elements of the fairy tale and reflect the fantastical aspects of the Christmas tradition. In his essay "The Genres of A Christmas Carol," J. Hillis Miller writes that

[it would be possible to argue plausibly that A Christmas Carol is an allegory or a parable, or the text for a pantomime, or a conversion narrative, or a dream vision, or a melodrama, or a ghost story, or a Gothic tale, or the text for a dramatic reading or a monologue, all at once. (199)

This description applies to the other Christmas books as well. It is surprising that Miller omits the fairy tale, but I think it can be easily added to the list, especially since, as he says, "A Christmas Carol takes us across the frontier of the marvellous. .." (203).

Not only were the books written with the traditional fairy tale in mind, they were written for a similar audience and setting. They were written to be told: the reader becomes listener or storyteller. In The Chimes, for example, Dickens addresses the audience as "O listener" rather than "reader" (180). These books were read aloud at Christmastime, presumably when the family was together for the traditional celebrations. The image of reading by the hearth emphasizes Dickens's praise of the home that the hearth represents. As Catherine Waters writes, "A Christmas Carol speaks not only for, but from, the hearth, situating the reader--and the listener--in a domestic context. .." (75). Indeed, Thackeray described Cricket as "a Christmas pageant which you witness in the armchair--your private box by the fireside--" ("Christmas" 91). Two of the Christmas
numbers in *Household Words* are advertised as rounds of stories "by the Christmas fire," a strategy which reflects oral tradition. When read aloud, the books and stories become performances. One could say that Dickens was like a ventriloquist, with the reader as puppet-actor; the response of the reader and listeners to the tale, especially with regard to the conversion of the protagonists, is heightened by this relationship.

The performative aspect of the Christmas books meant that they translated easily into drama. By February 1844, eight adaptations of *A Christmas Carol* were mounted. These productions added songs and emphasized the melodramatic features of the story (Davis 9). Many plays based on the books were mounted throughout the nineteenth century and still continue to be performed. Dickens gave readings of all the books, the most popular being *A Christmas Carol*. He read an abridged version of this work for his first and last readings, and often read it for charity as well as for profit.

The Christmas season proved a perfect time for selling books. The custom of exchanging Christmas gifts was imported from Germany in the early 1800s, and Christmas became increasingly commercial in Victorian times. Since Christmas is marked by family gatherings, it was a particularly good opportunity for Dickens to

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3 In his essay "Christmas Books," Chesterton gives examples of how the very celebration of Christmas is theatrical. The Christmas numbers in particular provide a variety of different voices for the reader to interpret. One of the strangest stories is that of the Scotch boy in *The Wreck of the Golden Mary*, who tells a ghost story and actually becomes a ghost while telling it. *The Wreck of the Golden Mary*, *The Holly Tree*, *Mugby Junction* and *Mrs. Lirripers Lodgings* give examples of the importance of storytelling.

4 See also Davis for information on adaptations of the story in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. See also Glancy's introduction to the Christmas books. These productions were international; for example, the Russian version of *The Chimes* was performed in Moscow in 1918. The audience loved it, but Lenin walked out (Glancy xv).
express his utopian concepts of home and charity. The marketing strategy worked: the Christmas books were bestsellers, even though their reviews were mixed.5

With *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens created the tradition of the Christmas gift book, which flourished in Victorian England. Other writers who wrote Christmas books and stories include Thackeray (*The Rose and the Ring*, 1855), Hans Christian Andersen (*A Christmas Greeting to my English Friends*, 1847),6 Juliana Horatio Ewing ("Christmas Crackers," 1869) and Frances Browne (*Granny's Wonderful Chair*, 1856). Elizabeth Gaskell complained that publishers wanted to repeat the success of *A Christmas Carol* by demanding that other writers write books "recommending benevolence, charity etc." (qtd. in Glancy xxii). There were many imitations of Dickens, including sequels to *A Christmas Carol*.7

Dickens's celebrations of Christmas were blows against puritanism and utilitarianism. Christmas had been banned by the Puritans in 1652; in 1817, Leigh Hunt blamed the decline of Christmas on the "commercial and jobbing spirit" and the "habit of trying everything by the test of common sense and utility" (qtd. in Waters 60). Capitalists also discouraged Christmas by not allowing employees to take Christmas Day off.

According to Chesterton, Christmas traditions would have died out "[i]f a little more

5 *The Cricket on the Hearth* doubled the initial sale of its predecessors (Johnson 567). *The Battle of Life* sold 23,000 copies on the first day of publication (Slater, *Christmas* 126). 20,000 copies of *The Haunted Man* were subscribed for by the trade before publication day.

6 This work was dedicated to Dickens, as were six other fairy tale collections by Andersen (Bredsfdoff 28).

7 See Hearn and Davis for discussions of these imitations.
success had crowned the Puritan movement of the seventeenth century, or the Utilitarian movement of the nineteenth century" ("Introduction" 1). Hearn writes that Dickens "has even been credited with almost single-handedly reviving the holiday customs" which were then in decline (Annotated 1). Dickens's relish of Christmas feasting and fun is his answer to Puritanism; his championing of Christmas as a time of charity counters utilitarianism.

By celebrating Christmas, Dickens also praises the folk customs that belong to it, customs that are threatened by the growing city. He thus joins Walter Scott and Washington Irving in preserving the memory of the traditional Christmas. In "A Christmas Tree" (HW 1850), Dickens discusses the chapbooks of his youth, which he associates with Christmas. Among his contributors, Harriet Martineau, Edmund Ollier and Adelaide Proctor in particular used the folklore of Christmas in their Christmas stories. However, Dickens did not indulge in nostalgia. By moving the Christmas book

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8 In 1912, the folklorist Clement Miles contrasts the contemporary industrial society to its peasant past: "[t]he folk who first sang [Christmas carols] were more truly comrades, more closely knit together than we under modern industrialization" (155). Industrialization, as many Victorians suggested, divided society and destroyed folk customs.

9 The influence of Dickens should not be overrated, however: Prince Albert introduced the Christmas tree to England in 1840, and Sir Henry Cole invented the Christmas card at the same time that Dickens was writing A Christmas Carol. In literature, Walter Scott and Washington Irving both described Christmas traditions in Marmion (1808) and The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. (1820), respectively. William Sandys published his Selection of Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern in 1833, and Thomas K. Hervey and Robert Seymour produced The Book of Christmas in 1837 (Davis 19).

10 See "An Idyl for Christmas In-doors" (1850) by Edmund Ollier, "What Christmas is in Country Places" (1850) by Harriet Martineau, and the poems "The Seventh Poor Traveller" (1854), "The Third Poor Traveller" (1854), and "the Host's Story" (1854) by Adelaide Proctor. Ollier and Martineau explain the folk roots of Christmas, whereas
from the country to the city, Dickens "proved that urbanization had not destroyed Christmas" (Davis 13). This "urbanization" was influenced by theories such as utilitarianism; Dickens's use of folklore and Christian themes ensures the continuance of these traditions in spite of social and economic upheaval. Dickens certainly believed in social and economic change, but he wanted to mitigate some of the harsh results of these developments in his Christmas books, in order to challenge the utilitarian agenda that gave rise to them. He offered his readers his "Carol philosophy," which consisted of "cheerful views, sharp anatomization of humbug . . . and a vein of glowing, hearty, generous, mirthful, beaming references in everything to Home, and Fireside" (Letters 5:328). With the high value it places on fancy and the home, it counters the utilitarian/capitalist emphasis on business.

Dickens's protest against utilitarianism was particularly important in the Hungry Forties, when there were numerous strikes, great hardship among the working class and paupers, and the cities were rapidly expanding. His Carol philosophy was intended to address the problems of the poor that the utilitarians were, in his view, neglecting, or rationalizing. This intention behind the books is particularly evident in The Chimes, in which Dickens satirizes the well-known figures Lord Brougham (as Sir Joseph Bowley) and Sir Peter Laurie (as Alderman Cute). Both Brougham and Laurie claimed to be friends of the poor, but Dickens, among others, argued that they were hypocrites.¹¹

Proctor enjoys telling legends in ballad form.

¹¹ See Slater's "Dickens's Tract for the Times" for more background on Brougham, Laurie, and the Mary Furley case. In his edition of The Chimes, Slater includes the passages that Dickens deleted from his text, which criticize the Young England
Laurie, for instance, insisted that the Jacob's Island of Oliver Twist did not exist, a statement that Dickens mocked in his second preface to Oliver Twist. Laurie also led a much-criticized campaign to prosecute the poor who had attempted suicide. Brougham supported various popular causes yet suggested that upper class matrons had as much difficulty feeding their babies as women working more than 10 hours a day in factories (Slater, Christmas 263).\footnote{12}

For Dickens, utilitarianism was a catch-all term that included all those theories, common in his time, which treated people as cogs in a machine, or otherwise dehumanized them. One of these theories was Thomas Malthus's study of overpopulation.\footnote{13} In his "Essay on the Principle of Population" (1798), Malthus argues against early marriages and states that the poor should not have families they cannot afford to raise. In his 1803 edition, Malthus writes that the poor man has, "if society do not want his labour, no claim or right to the smallest portion of food, and, in fact, has no business to be where he is" (qtd. in Slater, "Dickens's" 115).\footnote{14} In The Chimes, Trotty movement led by Benjamin Disraeli.

\footnote{12} Dickens further satirizes Laurie in "Perfect Felicity in a Bird's-Eye View" (Household Words 1850). His raven-narrator squawks: "I should like to put . . . the Board of Health, all the London undertakers, some of the Common (very common I think) Council, and all the vested interests in the filth and misery of the poor into a good-sized cage, and see how they'd get on . . . . You wouldn't find Sir Peter Laurie 'putting down' Sanitary Reform then, or getting up in that vestry, and pledging his word and honour to the non-existence of Saint Paul's Cathedral, I expect!" (191).

\footnote{13} Utilitarians supported Malthus's population principle as well as Bentham's views on political economy (Mill, Autobiography 58).

\footnote{14} Slater notes that this passage was edited out of following editions "but it was long remembered by Malthus's opponents" ("Dickens's" 115).
echoes these views about his fellow poor men: "I can't make out whether we have any business on the face of the earth, or not. Sometimes I think we must have—a little; and sometimes I think we must be intruding" (101). Alderman Cute's friend Filer recites the Malthusian line. Slater writes that "Filer stood for all the Malthusians and political economists, all the utilitarians and statisticians—the 'philosophers' of Oliver Twist—whom Dickens had always detested. . ." ("Dickens's" 114). When Filer hears that Meg and Richard are going to marry, he says, "[t]he ignorance of the first principles of political economy on the part of these people; their improvidence; their wickedness; is, by Heavens! enough to—" (113). He is too horrified to finish his sentence. Scrooge, the lover of money and efficiency, also supports Malthus's arguments: if the poor had rather die than go to workhouses, he says, "they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population" (CC 11-12).

In general, Dickens's social protests in the Christmas books tend to be allegorical. In A Christmas Carol, Scrooge sees the spirits of what are, perhaps, "guilty governments" (23) floating about, condemned to bewail their previous neglect of the poor. The Christmas books feature cruel, greedy employers such as Scrooge, and Tackleton in The Cricket of the Hearth, who stand for the cruelty of the businessman who cares only for profits and not for his workers. Even the dolls in The Cricket on the Hearth are divided into classes by the materials with which they are made:

As to the common-people, they had just so many matches out of tinder-boxes, for their arms and legs, and there they were—established in their sphere at once, beyond the possibility of getting out of it. (215)
The poor, subjected to this low standard and ill treatment from authority, are doomed.

While writing the Christmas books, Dickens also wrote *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-4), *Pictures from Italy* (1846), and *Dombey and Son* (1846-8), and he explores the themes of corrosive greed and the utopian home in all these works. In *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Dombey and Son*, characters struggle between greed and love. *Dombey and Son* in particular deals with the opposition of domesticity to business. As I have noted in the previous chapter, Dickens uses fairy tale imagery of monsters and fairies, wildernesses and homes to illustrate the above themes throughout his oeuvre. In the Christmas books, these allusions inform the text more completely.

Each Christmas book resembles the fairy tale predominantly through its use of a secondary world or level. This idea matches well with Christmas because, according to folklore, it was a time when the secondary world intersected with primary reality. As the folklorist Clement A. Miles observes, "Christmas is a quite peculiarly uncanny time" (239), combining pagan beliefs and the mystery of Christ's birth. Fantastical events were believed to occur at Christmastime: oxen knelt, animals spoke, and trees blossomed. Utopia was frequently evoked: when Christ was born, apparently "rivers ran wine instead of water and trees stood in full blossom in spite of ice and snow" (Miles 268).

In *A Christmas Carol* and *The Chimes*, the secondary level takes the form of alternate histories, or what might have been. Among the Christmas books, only *The Battle of Life* does not emphasize the secondary level or the existence of spirits. However, a secondary level does exist in this text, beginning with the indeterminate words of the fairy tale: "Once upon a time, it matters little when, and in stalwart England,
it matters little where, a fierce battle was fought" (281). This battle had become the source for many "old wives' tales" (283). Dickens describes the domestication of the battlefield and how the spirits of soldiers "would have risen on the hearths of quiet homes" (283) if reanimated. Unfortunately, they are not reanimated, and the homes are altogether too quiet. Dickens begins on the high legendary plain of the secondary world and then moves down to "reality," and the story never recovers from this shift. In the story, Marion ostensibly elopes with a dissolute young man who is not her intended husband. Many years later, she returns, apparently still chaste, to reveal that she left out of self-sacrifice, leaving her fiancé to her sister Grace because she realized that Grace was in love with him. The ancient battle is meant to be an allegory of the battles of life, including that of self-sacrifice, but Dickens fails to make this particularly clear or moving.

The other four Christmas books are much more effective because the connection, even tension, between the real world and the secondary world is emphasized. In each book, the protagonist is led into a secondary reality by a spiritual guide or guides. In A Christmas Carol, Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his old partner Marley and by the ghosts of Christmases past, present and future. Marley points out the unhappy spirits wandering helpless in the street, thus giving Scrooge "his glimpse of the Invisible World"

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15 The Christmas stories also feature ghosts, but they are not used for the same psychological or philosophical ends. See also "The Wreck of the Golden Mary," "Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings" and "Somebody's Luggage." The exception is "The Haunted House," in which the ghosts who "haunt" the characters are really memories of their past selves. For instance, in Dickens's "The Ghost in Master B.'s Room," the protagonist sees himself in the mirror at different ages.
(24). The Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge his past; the Ghost of Christmas Present shows him not exactly the present, but the Christmas that will come the next day if he does not change; the Ghost of Christmas Future projects a vision of what will happen at the time of Scrooge's death. In *The Chimes*, the goblins of the bells are, like the spirits in the street in *Carol*, everywhere but invisible. They present Trotty with the grim vision of himself as being dead and the miserable future of his daughter Meg and her fiancé Richard if they live without hope, that is, if they take the advice of the Alderman and do not marry. Trotty sees despair, degradation, ill treatment and poverty for his daughter and for Richard, who has become a drunk.

In *The Cricket on the Hearth*, Dickens presents us with the perfect home and the perfect wife, Dot. She and her husband, John, offer hospitality to a stranger. Tackleton hints to John that his wife Dot has been unfaithful. Together they secretly watch as the stranger takes off his disguise of age and Dot lovingly teases him. John battles thoughts of murder, and the cricket on the hearth appears to him in "Fairy shape" (248) to help him overcome his suspicions of his wife. The cricket calls forth domestic spirits:

> From the hearthstone, from the chimney; from the lock, the pipe, the kettle, and the cradle; from the floor, the walls, the ceiling, and the stairs; from the cart without, and the cupboard within, and the household implements; from every thing and every place with which she had ever been familiar, and with which she had ever entwined one recollection of herself in her unhappy husband's mind; Fairies came trooping forth. (249)
The house becomes a secondary world as its memories and affections are made visible. The fairies present the memories John has of his wife in a kind of mirror, and each vision strengthens his love for her and weakens his resolve to kill her supposed lover. Thus the "unseen world" again becomes visible in order to change the protagonist's perspective. The fairies did not lie: Dot has been faithful all along, and the stranger is Edward, the disguised, long-lost fiancé of their friend May.

In The Haunted Man, the hearth also acts as a way in which fantastical visions appear, revealing a secondary level of magic as well as spiritual truths. Like many of Dickens's characters, who see "pictures" in the fire, Redlaw sees images in the fire of his past, including his disappointed dreams of a golden future. His fire casts shadows that "danced about the room, showing the children marvellous shapes and faces on the walls, and gradually changing what was real and familiar there, to what was wild and magical" (472). In this ghostly atmosphere, a Phantom, his doppelgänger, appears and offers to banish all unhappy memories from Redlaw's mind, an offer Redlaw accepts. Redlaw is also given the ability to remove sad memories from other people, although he does not have any control over this gift. Redlaw soon finds that the gift is a curse, because people need the memory of loss to develop sympathy and thereby their humanity.

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16 One of the many examples of this trope in Dickens's works is Louisa in Hard Times, who spends many hours musing in front of a fire. Likewise, it is the only entertainment available to the odd little man who guards the factory fire and offers shelter to Nell and her grandfather in The Old Curiosity Shop. Like the magic lantern, the fire inspired Dickens's highly visual imagination.
The secondary worlds that Dickens presents in his Christmas books are based on visions. By means of illusion, the spirits expose people and situations for what they really are. This is the main paradox of fantasy: secondary reality explains present reality. In *The Cricket on the Hearth*, the goblins use "enchanted mirrors" to reveal situations to people, and they reflect John's own thoughts as if in a "glass or picture" (249). The visions that the spirits present to the protagonists in the Christmas books are those of a magic lantern, as they appear mysteriously and quickly switch to other images. Dickens was fond of this device: he even referred to the streets of London as a huge magic lantern (Forster 1:420). Magic lantern pictures tend to be tableaux, and thus lend themselves easily to allegory. These tableaux also recall the masque. In his 1852 preface to the Christmas books, Dickens states that his "chief purpose was, in a whimsical kind of masque which the good humour of the season justified, to awaken some loving and forbearing thoughts, never out of season in a Christian land." With the projection of images in such tableaux, viewers get an immediate perspective on what the images represent. As R. D. Butterworth notes, "writing within the masque tradition allows Dickens to foreshorten character development" (67). Reality is communicated in a fanciful way: fancy can thus be both personally and socially illuminating.

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17 Sarah A. Solberg notes that the illustrations emphasize the supernatural, "dreamlike sense of time and space" in the Christmas books (106).

18 According to Johnson, Dickens was exposed to the magic lantern as a child (14) and enjoyed it as an adult (449).

19 See also Household and Smith, and Horton for background on the magic lantern.

20 See also R. D. Butterworth's article, "*A Christmas Carol* and the Masque."
In *Carol*, *The Chimes*, *Cricket* and *The Haunted Man*, the protagonists see pictures of their own lives and surroundings: it is a written version of a magic lantern show. Dickens first experimented with this technique in one of the interpolated tales of *The Pickwick Papers*, "The Goblin Who Stole the Sexton." The protagonist of this story, Gabriel Grub, is a prototype of Scrooge, and the goblins show him "pictures" (359) of the world and how other people live. Sometimes the reflection of reality is verbal: the goblins keep chanting to Gabriel Grub, "You a miserable man!" (360), and the Cricket's fairies repeat "Is this the wife who has forsaken you!" (CH 250). Similarly, although less benevolently, the Phantom echoes Redlaw's self-pitying thoughts.

The visions have a doubly transformative effect. First, they bring out the magical/allegorical qualities that lie hidden in the trials of everyday life; second, they change the minds of the protagonists. They are, in a way, conversion narratives. These conversions occur in three major parts: before, during and after the visions. The triad structure mirrors that of the fairy tale.21

In each book, the protagonist learns from the visions and makes a vow or statement of conversion. In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge vows: "I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year" (83). Trotty cries, "I know that we must trust and hope" (C 178), thus preventing, it seems, his daughter's suicide. Redlaw's conversion is religious:

21 The fairy tale often uses the number three: three wishes, three attempts at accomplishing a task, three journeys, three waves of a wand . . . the list is infinite. Incidentally, the number three predominates in European fairy tales but not in fairy tales from other parts of the world. In native North American tales, for instance, the number four is the "magic" number.
"Oh Thou," he said, "who, through the teaching of pure love, has graciously restored me to the memory which was the memory of Christ upon the cross, and of all the good who perished in His cause, receive my thanks, and bless her!" (HM 470)

Less melodramatically, but perhaps more touchingly, John in The Cricket on the Hearth states that "[p]assion and distrust have left me!" (258); Tackleton casts off his gruff cruelty and asks, "Be gracious to me; let me join this happy party!" (276). Doctor Jeddler of The Battle of Life changes his mind about the absurdity of life: "It's a world full of hearts, and a serious world, with all its folly..." (366). These conversions show the transformative effect of fancy.

The idea of conversion, of a turn, is particularly appropriate for Christmastime. Christmas offers hope with the redeeming birth of the saviour, the conversion of the world from darkness to light: lux in tenebris. The association of Christmas with hope predated Christianity, as Christmas was set on December 25 in order to appropriate the pagan celebration of the equinox, another "turn." The Christmas tree and Christmas holly were pagan symbols of life in midwinter, considered magical for their greenery when everything else was dead (Miles 268, 275).

The turn of the old year into the new one was also symbolic of hope and new life. Miles observes that New Year's Day customs are founded on the saying "a good beginning makes a good ending" (321). The bells in The Chimes, which toll out the old

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22 See Eigner's "On Becoming Pantaloon" for a convincing essay relating A Christmas Carol to Christmas pantomimes. This form uses Spirits (The Malevolent Sprit and the Benevolent Spirit) and transformation scenes.
year and ring the new one in, remark that "Time IS for . . . [Man's] greater happiness, his
better life. . ." (144). In The Chimes, Dickens connects the hope that the new year brings
with social responsibility:

So may the New Year be a happy one to you, happy to many more whose
happiness depends on you! So may each year be happier than the last, and
not the meanest of our brethren or sisterhood debarred their rightful share,
in what our Great Creator formed them to enjoy. (182)

Dickens thus urges the reader/listener to follow Trotty's conversion to charity, to spread
hope to the less fortunate.

Dickens centres this hope for society's conversion on the figure of the child.23

Dickens was not often an explicitly religious writer; he rarely mentions Christ in the
Christmas books. The figure of the child, however, stands for the Christ child. Redlaw
comes to recognize the significance of the Christ child by associating Him with Milly's
dead child (HM 470). Tiny Tim imagines that people in church would think of Christ
when they saw him, and when he is "dead," his mother reads the Biblical verse, "And He
took a child, and set him in the midst of them" (CC 79; Matt.18:2). With his innocence
and vulnerability, Tiny Tim redeems Scrooge. Seeing himself as a child and the
nightmare vision of Want and Ignorance also lead Scrooge to embrace childlike qualities:
"I'd rather be a baby" (85).24 As the narrator remarks with regard to the games at

23 By contrast, among the Christmas stories, Somebody's Luggage and Tom Tiddler's
Ground feature failed attempts to convert a misanthropic hermit through a child.

24 Andrews discusses the aspect of childlike rejuvenation in A Christmas Carol in
Dickens and the Grown-Up Child (97-111).
Scrooge's nephew's house, "it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself" (66). Both Scrooge's Ghost of Christmas Past and Trotty's guide in The Chimes are childlike spirits. All of the particularly good characters like children and are referred to as children, and thus fulfill Christ's words, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein" (Luke 18:17).

Most importantly, Dickens indicts the ruling classes with the figure of the downtrodden child: not only is this child a figure for the Christ child, but its Christlike potential is in jeopardy. In the Christ child, "utter poverty" is united with "highest kingship" (Miles 156); Dickens means to give this dignity to the contemporary poor child and to show, with images of monstrous degradation, the fragility of this state. Tiny Tim is the poor child whose life depends on the generosity of his father's employer.

Significantly, Dickens started writing the Christmas books when he began to learn more about the condition of the poor child: in 1843, he spoke on the education of the poor and visited the Field Land Ragged School (Waters 72). He was especially interested in reports on child labour. He corresponded with Lord Ashley (December 1840), who had made the speech on this issue that led to the Commissions for Inquiring into the Employment and Condition of Children in Mines and Manufactures. Dickens read the reports of these commissions (1842-3), and promised his friend Dr. Southwood Smith, one of the Commissioners, that he would write a pamphlet protesting the conditions of child labourers. In the end, he did not do so, but these reports may well have contributed to his social impetus in writing A Christmas Carol and The Chimes. Certainly he uses the
metaphor of a sledgehammer striking a blow for the poor to describe both his proposed pamphlet and The Chimes (Slater, "Dickens's" 100-01).

Dickens protests the unjust condition of labourers, particularly child labourers, with fanciful images, often depicting both cruel employers and the child victims as monsters. Scrooge is likened to a bear (CC 65), a ferret (25) and an Ogre (56), whereas Tackleton, with his gruff manner and tendency to growl, is a "domestic Ogre" (CH 204). In Cricket, the thought of murdering the guest "dilated in [John's] mind until it grew into a monstrous demon in complete possession of him" (247). Want and Ignorance in A Christmas Carol are figured as children who have degenerated to beastly status, with claws instead of feet.

The beastliness of both aggressor and victim is explicit in The Haunted Man. Redlaw, who in giving up his memory of sorrow has become something of a monster, notes a similarity between himself and the poor child to whom the Williamses have shown charity. This child is called a "baby savage" and a "young monster" (397). Redlaw's Phantom both confirms their similarity and blames the entire society for it:

this wretched mortal from his birth has been abandoned to a worse condition than the beasts, and has, within his knowledge, no one contrast, no humanising touch, to make a grain of such a memory spring up in his hardened breast. All within this desolate creature is barren wilderness . . .

. there is no one raised from the state of childhood, but shall be responsible in his or her degree for this enormity. There is not a country throughout the earth on which it would not bring a curse. (447-48)
Through neglect, the child becomes a beast and lives in a wilderness rather than a home: treated as an animal, he becomes one. His Christlike potential is unfulfilled and he loses all dignity by becoming bestial. By the child, the nation is judged. The passage above implies that by forgetting sorrow, especially that of the poor, and by being uncharitable, the nation itself faces degeneration. A slip back to beastliness is the obverse of progress; Dickens thus plays upon evolutionary fears in order to make his social point.

To Dickens, remembering others and their sorrows is part of what makes one human. Memory unifies the family and keeps the home intact: the fairies of the home force John to remember his wife Dot as faithful and loving, and the characters of The Battle of Life guard the memory of Marion, however painful. When the Tetterbys and the Williamses catch the virus of memory loss from Redlaw, family members become cold and bicker with each other. The inhumanity of not remembering is particularly well-drawn when old Mr. Williams forgets his mother because the memory is too bittersweet. Indeed, the living must remember the dead: in folklore, Christmastime is linked to festivals of the dead, and ghosts are expected. As Miles writes,

\[\text{[a]ncestral spirits, it seems, were once believed to be immanent in the fire that burned on the hearth, and had to be propitiated with libations, while elsewhere the souls of the dead were thought to return to their old homes at the New Year.\ldots (181)}\]

Memory implies a sense of unity in the person between his or her past, present and future. In Carol, the Ghost of Christmas restores Scrooge's long repressed memory of himself. Redlaw feels himself psychically split and splinter when he forfeits his sad memories.
To Dickens, Christmas was a time not just of memory but of taking account of one's past. There is a strong mood in the Christmas books of melancholy reflection. Redlaw muses, "Another Christmas come, another year gone! More figures in the lengthening sum of recollection that we work and work at to our torment. . ." (HM 382). By contrast, the negative characters view the reflective aspect of Christmas solely in an economic light: Sir Joseph muses that "at this season...we should look into our--our accounts" (C 121), and is horrified that Trotty will enter the New Year in debt.

Each book features a conversion from this utilitarian perspective to a more humanitarian one. Marley, converted too late, wails, "Mankind was my Business," (CC 21) and Scrooge alters his familiar use of business vocabulary when he asks one of his guides for another lesson: "let me profit by it" (CC 47). In The Battle of Life, Dr. Jeddler, who views the world as absurd and has a habit of "turning every precious thing to poor account" (288), is taught the value of love. When Redlaw loses the essential part of his memory, he comes to his sick student, saying, "I came to offer [money]; and that is all I came for . . . . There can be nothing else, and yet--" (HM 421). What is missing is the feeling of generosity behind the charitable act. The Chimes can be seen as a triumph over the statistical, Malthusian view of the world that praises "facts and figures!" (120) and proves with "mathematical certainty" the improvidence of marriage among the poor (114). Likewise, The Cricket shows marriage based on love substituting for marriage based on profit, when May marries Edward rather than Tackleton.

Christmas was perceived in both the Christian and pagan traditions as a time when people exercised charity, and Dickens associates this act with memory and the taking of
accounts. Milly is immune to Redlaw's influence because she has kept the memory of her dead child alive and has used it to become more charitable. Her loss has not embittered her but has enlarged her sympathies:

For poor neglected children, my little child pleads as if it were alive, and had a voice I knew, with which to speak to me. When I hear of youth in suffering or shame, I think that my child might have come to that, perhaps, and that God took it from me in his mercy. (HM 350)

Redlaw follows her example, vowing to "protect," "teach" and "reclaim" the poor child. In *The Haunted Man*, the narrator remarks that Christmas was "a time in which . . . the memory of every remediable sorrow . . . should be active within us" (351).

The sentiment of mending "every remediable sorrow" especially applies to the poor. Dickens saw Christ primarily as an advocate for the poor: in his *The Life of Our Lord*, he told his children, "[a]nd when people speak ill of the Poor and Miserable, think how Jesus Christ went among them and taught them, and thought them worthy of his care" (445). The message of *The Chimes* is to remember the poor, and Trotty must be reminded of this moral through an elaborate vision. As the gentleman collecting money for the poor in *A Christmas Carol* says, Christmas is a time "of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices" (51). Less poetic, but just as true, is Mrs. Tetterby's plaintive cry that she feels most poor at Christmastime (HM 412). The charitable aspect of Christmas reflects one of the pagan holidays that influenced Christmas, the Roman holiday Kalends (January 1-5). During Kalends, as the Greek sophist Libanius wrote in
the fourth century AD, "[p]eople are not only generous toward themselves, but also
towards their fellow-men" (qtd. in Miles 168).

In these books, charity means not just remembering the poor, but feeling akin to
them. Scrooge's nephew calls Christmas

a kind, forgiving, charitable pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the
long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to
open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if
they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of
creatures bound on other journeys. (CC 9)

This sentiment has pagan origins in the Roman holiday Saturnalia (December 17-24).
The priest Cronosolon decreed that at this time, "All men shall be equal, slave and free,
rich and poor, one with another" (qtd. in Miles 167). The "golden age" of Saturn was a
utopia (Miles 167), as Christmas promises to be. Both Kalends and Saturnalia feature
"topsy-turvydom, or the temporary exaltation of inferiors" (Miles 304). Miles associates
these holidays with later customs held around Christmastime: the Lord of Misrule, the
Feast of Fools, the Boy's Bishop and the Twelfth Night King, all of which feature social
role reversals. Miles applies these holidays to Dickens's Christmas. He writes that in the
desire that the poor may for once in the year "have a good time" . . . we
may trace the influence of the Saturnalia, with its dreams of the age of
gold, its exaltation of them of low degree. Mixed with a little sentimental
Christianity this is the Christmas of Dickens—the Christmas he largely
helped to perpetrate in England. (359)
According to Waters, "[t]he domestication of a range of Saturnalian impulses and rituals of the season was a crucial step in the making of the Victorian Christmas" (66). Topsy-turvydom is represented, as Waters points out, by the paterfamilias stirring the pudding; this role reversal is in jest and temporary. Similarly, although Dickens claims that Christmas charity should be exercised throughout the year, perhaps his emphasis on the holiday itself foils this desire. The utopia that Christmas offers is elusive; the conversion that the characters undergo is, perhaps, illusive.

Dickens wanted fancy to convert his readers as well as his characters to a more hopeful and charitable frame of mind. His preface reflects this emphasis on conversion: he wants to "awaken some loving and forbearing thoughts." He urges us to respect the memory of our dead, our past, and transmute these emotions into charity. Scrooge has, at the beginning, "as little of what is called fancy about him as any man in the City of London, even including—which is a bold word—the corporation, aldermen, and livery" (CC 54). As Graham Holderness argues, "Scrooge's education is the process of learning to imagine, to distinctly understand the wonderful" (36). Yet Scrooge is not taught how to imagine; rather, he is forced to remember. The first indication that he will convert comes when he is softened by the recollection of his fanciful childhood reading, such as the Arabian Nights. Scrooge's vow, inspired by fancy, to "honour Christmas" and "live in the Past, Present and the Future" (83) is meant to be emulated by his readers. As Edgar Johnson writes, "[t]he conversion of Scrooge is an image of the conversion for which Dickens hopes among mankind" (489).
Dickens's characters are often representative of the types of people who most need to change. Scrooge and Tackleton are the bad employers whose conversion in character, as Dickens makes explicit in Scrooge's case but only implies in Tackleton's, should inspire other businessmen to follow suit. As Stone observes, "Scrooge assures us that we can advance from the prison of self to the paradise of community" (Dickens 125); indeed, A Christmas Carol portrays the development of the social self.25 The ending of The Chimes makes very clear the lesson that the readers should learn from the use of fancy:

try to bear in mind the stern realities from which these shadows come; and in your sphere--none is too wide, and none too limited for such an end--endeavour to correct, improve, and soften them. (182)

The more fortunate members of society, then, should remember their common humanity with the poor and exercise charity towards them. As Forster said in the passage with which I opened this chapter, by giving fairy tales "a higher form" and applying them to the rich religious and folkloric heritage of Christmas, Dickens taught "social and manly virtues" (1:301-02). The desired result is social harmony, which Forster describes in fairy-tale terms in the same passage:

what is evil in ourselves was to be subdued; with warm and gentle sympathies, what was bad or unreclaimed in others was to be redeemed;

the Beauty was to embrace the Beast, as in the divinest of all those fables;

25 In "Solitude and Ghosts in Dickens's Christmas Books," Jarvis and Patience Barnes argue that Dickens's horror of solitary confinement, and his belief that prisoners thus confined were haunted, contributed to the theories of isolation and society in his Christmas books.
the star was to rise out of the ashes, as in our much-loved Cinderella; and we were to play the Valentine with our wilder brothers, and bring them back with brotherly care to civilization and happiness. (1:301)

One goal of Dickens's Christmas books, then, was to be a civilizing agent.

Forster's reference to the "Valentine and Orson" tale particularly reveals this motive to civilize. "Valentine and Orson" is an old chapbook tale that Dickens mentions having read, in which two royal brothers are separated at birth. Valentine grows up in court; Orson, as his name suggests, is brought up by bears. Meeting by chance, Valentine recognizes this wild man as his brother, acknowledges their relationship, and reclaims him. Deborah A. Thomas suggests that the child in The Haunted Man is Orson to Redlaw's Valentine (58). I think this relationship underlies many of the Christmas books and their morals for their middle-class readers. Scrooge, for example, is forced to recognize his kinship with the wolfish children Want and Ignorance. "Are they yours?" he asks the Spirit, who replies, "They are Man's. And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers" (CC 67). Both Scrooge and Redlaw pledge, in their different ways, to reclaim the poor child as their own. Edwin Eigner notes that the stories that Scrooge read as a child all feature brothers ("Becoming" 181). The Orson image is also used, less fancifully, in the character of Will Fern. No one properly helps Fern, who pleads on behalf of his class for "better homes" (156). As a result, Fern grows wilder, more anti-social and violent, setting ricks on fire and spending most of his time in prison. The lesson is clear: adopt your wild, poor brother or else he will bite. The Valentine and

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Orson allusions remind middle-class readers that they are related to the poor in the family of Man, and that they must take responsibility for having neglected them. Furthermore, by neglecting the wild poor, they risk becoming bestial themselves. The civilizing aspect of "Valentine and Orson" works both ways: Valentine preserves his own humanity as well as that of Orson. This image is somewhat condescending and paternalistic, revealing the middle-class fear of lower-class violence and degeneracy, and the consequent desire on behalf of the middle class to control, or at least contain, the poor.

HOME OR PRISON? DYSTOPIAN SHADOWS ON THE HEARTH:

The merry homes of England!
Around their hearths by night,
What gladsome looks of household love
Meet in the ruddy light!
There woman's voice flows forth in song,
Or childhood's tale is told,
Or lips move tunefully along
Some glorious page of old.  (Hemans 289)

This verse from Felicia Hemans's "The Homes of England" sums up the Victorian ideology of home: the hearth is linked to household affections, women, children, and fanciful literature. It redeems. As we have seen in the above pages, Dickens uses the figure of the poor woman as a means of redemption. The woman is the heart of a poor home, and this home is a crucible for morality for the poor and the nation at large. The
homes of the Cratchits, the Tetterbys and the Williamses are utopian visions of familial joy and cooperation. The poor home, then, is a utopian space in the Christmas books and also, like the woman who leads it, a way for society to redeem itself.

In this section, I argue that Dickens applies the middle-class ideology of the home to the poor home with contradictory effects. Like fancy itself, "home" is both a refuge and a pedagogical tool. Furthermore, there is a dystopian side to the utopia of the ideal Victorian home. I suggest that even as Dickens promoted this ideology, he revealed this doubleness in his Christmas books. Indeed, these works are more self-reflexive than they have been previously considered. Yet it is difficult to measure how conscious Dickens was of the doubleness of his ideology of home and fancy. I doubt that Dickens intended to undermine his own philosophy; however, especially with regard to fancy in the Christmas books, he seems to be questioning himself. Dickens was too much of a craftsman not to be aware of the pattern he was setting with his ambiguous endings, but he was probably unaware of how far the implications of such questioning could be taken.

With regard to the ideal home, the contradictions of Dickens's presentation of home are mirrored in Victorian culture at large.

Dickens celebrates the home in all his books, but especially in the Christmas books. Margaret Lane claims that "[t]he extreme of the domestic fantasy is found in the Christmas Books" (156). Frances Armstrong writes that Dickens "saw in home at its best a place to sense the transcendent, and a source of moral power; at the same time he wanted to use its influence to preserve those elements which he valued in traditional Christianity" (43). Miles refers to Christmas traditions as "connected with distinctively
domestic religion," centred on the family and the hearth, complete with Yule log (180).

The dark coldness of the outdoors contrasts well with the warmth of the hearth.

According to Dickens, the warmer the family home, rich or poor, the less threatening are the cold streets outside. The *Household Words* Christmas numbers of 1850 and 1851 show the desire for home and hearth at Christmastime, especially for those who are far from home in the navy or India, or who are homeless in workhouses and hospitals.

The home, especially at Christmas, is associated in Victorian culture with spirituality. Ruskin describes the home as "a sacred place, a vestal temple, a temple of the hearth watched over by Household Gods" ("Queen's" 137). Dr. Jeddler mocks the sentiment behind his daughter Marion crying over a book exalting Home, by saying that "a real home is only four walls" (BL 319). This echoes Tackleton's "Bah! what's home? Four walls and a ceiling!" (CH 206). But we are not to follow their materialist examples, and, indeed, they are proven wrong.

Significantly, Jeddler and Tackleton are proven wrong by women. The utopian home is indeed inseparable from the perfect wife and mother. Ruskin claims that "wherever a true wife comes, this home is always around her;" furthermore, for the home to function as a spiritual force, "[s]he must be enduringly, incorruptibly good; instinctively, infallibly wise. . ." ("Queen's" 146-47). In *The Cricket*, Dot transforms the hearth of "a few stones and bricks and rusty bars" into "the Altar of your Home" (248). She gives the home a spiritual quality that transcends the material. At the beginning of the book, the "Genius of his Hearth and Home," the Cricket, "came out, in fairy shape, into the room, and summoned many forms of Home about him" (211). Each one of these
forms is a picture of Dot. The Cricket later informs John that "[a]ll things that speak the language of your hearth and home must plead for her!" (249). Grace in The Battle of Life has "home-adorning, self-denying qualities" and her "quiet household figure" contains a "sweet temper, so gentle and retiring, yet including so much constancy and bravery of spirit" (288, 306). Dickens describes The Chimes's Meg as "an Angel in [Trotty's] house" (179), a dominant image in Victorian iconography of the woman. Dickens's perfect woman is small, charitable, loving, faithful, thoughtful, reliant, and earnest.

This ideology of the home and the woman stems from the profound insecurity produced by the new industrial society. As in Dombey and Son, the home in the Christmas books is opposed to the place of business. One of the lawyers' wives in The Battle of Life, Mrs. Craggs, states that she has "been so long accustomed to connect the office with everything opposed to domesticity, that I am glad to know it as the avowed enemy of my peace" (335). The home is spiritual, the business world material. As the Cricket says, the smoke from "the Altar of your Home," the hearth, is more fragrant than "the richest incense that is burnt before the richest shrines in all the gaudy Temples of this World!" (CH 248). The boundaries between home and the workplace, as the world of business became increasingly impersonal and mechanical, had to be enforced.  

Martha Vicinus connects the home/work opposition to the idea of home as utopia:

The home was the setting for passion, sacrifice, suffering, and sympathy; the work place for action, for earning money to pay for the home comforts . . . . The ideal of domestic happiness, like myths of a past golden age,

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27 See Mary Douglas on the subject of social boundaries.
assuaged fears an audience might have about being too committed to the

goals of an industrializing society. (129)

If the world of work was too powerful and intimidating, the home had to be propped up
as a defence. The selfless woman guards the home against the corrosive effects of the
business world, as the temple of the hearth could not be contaminated by the temple of
Mammon. When Scrooge displaces Belle, his sweetheart, in favour of "[a]nother idol . . .
. A golden one" (CC 38), he makes his first irrevocable mistake. Belle symbolizes the
beauty that money cannot buy.

These exemplary women, or "fairies," in Dickens's Christmas books must
shoulder total responsibility for the happiness of the home. The possibility of Dot or
Marion being unfaithful or unchaste threatens to destroy the home; as a result, their
sexuality is controlled by the middle-class ideology of home.28 The holy relationship
between the home and women is particularly striking in The Haunted Man, in which both
the Tetterby and Williams homes rely on their mistresses for their happiness. Without his
wife, Mr. Tetterby can only rule his children through nagging and a little force, even
recounting statistics on infant mortality to his son Johnny, who is in charge of the baby.
"I only wish my little woman would come home!" Mr. Tetterby cries (HM 403). With
Mrs. Tetterby, the household is content even if poor: when she is depressed about their

28 The woman's purity, which sanctified the home, was a common theme in Victorian
literature. Sally Mitchell notes that the 1840s marked a "sudden proliferation" of books
and articles about fallen women (22); likewise, Nina Auerbach writes that "[a]ngels [of
the house] proliferate most freely in the novels of the 1840s and 1850s" (Woman 82). The
fallen woman blurs the boundary between home and the marketplace; the home had to
remain pure of sexual and material corruption.
poverty, she only has to remember their shared history to feel more hopeful, and communicate that hope. With a switch of the magic lantern, however, this utopia is replaced by its opposite when Redlaw infects it with his memory loss. Suddenly the home is transformed: all the family members start quarrelling, and Johnny hits the baby. It takes an even more saintly woman, Milly Williams, to redeem, unknowingly, this household and the other people who have been infected: "She came among them like the spirit of all goodness, affection, gentle consideration, love, and domesticity" (457). The savage child, ignorant in everything else, knows her value, stating, "I like the woman best" (464).

Dickens's fairy-like women display a wisdom that is often beyond their male peers, and thus gain a certain superiority in their relationships. Clemency, the Jeddlers' maid, lives by two mottos: "forget and forgive" and "do as you would be done by." These mottos strike Mr. Britain with such force that he marries her, and "it was she who managed the whole house" (BL 347). Likewise, the scientist Redlaw leans on Milly "submissively:"

he felt he was quite dependent on her, and that she was his staff in his affliction....not as if he were the wise and learned man to whom the wonders of nature were an open book, and hers were the uninstructed mind, but as if their two positions were reversed, and he knew nothing, and she all. (HM 461)

The spiritual wisdom that the woman provides makes the house a home and helps to turn the man away from his destructive values.
To the Victorians, the home was nationally significant to a great degree. In "Dickens and Christmas," Chesterton remarks that "[t]he open fire is the veritable flame of England, still kept burning in the midst of a mean civilization of stoves" (140). According to Warner, the "mythology of the hearth" contains the "interdependency of home, ethnic identity, heritage and women," and this is "at the heart of Romantic nationalism" (Managing 86). Warner writes that the "romantic figment of the folk hearth returns us once more to mum, she who embodies birthplace as well as the larger allegories of native land, and by extension of nation" (Managing 88).29 The relationship between home and state was overtly communicated at Christmastime:

the Victorian middle-class Christmas helped to create an illusion of social harmony, establishing the values of the bourgeois family as a norm, and creating a sense of national identity. (Waters 69)

Since the home was so important to the state, it also needed to be controlled. The Victorian ideology of the home serves to reconcile women to a private rather than public life, and one of self-sacrifice at that. However, the Victorians presented this restraint in a positive light. Miss Beecher calls the woman of the house "the sovereign of an empire" (144),30 and Ruskin calls her a queen. Ruskin believed that the home was to be expanded into the public sphere, so that women assisted "in the ordering, in the comforting, and in the beautiful adornment of the state" ("Queen's" 165). That is, they could have the

29 Warner links this home imagery to the imagery associated with the Queen and the royal family in her essay "Home: our Famous Island Race" (Managing 87-92).

30 Miss Beecher is the author of the Treatise on Domestic Economy (1841), a bestselling manual advising women on how to run a house.
consolation of influence without direct political power. The morality of the home was to radiate outwards to guide the nation; as a result, the morality of the woman was under firm check. I suggest that Dickens uses fancy in general, and the fairy tale in particular, to serve this ideology. His image of the woman as fairy is at once empowering and belittling. Dickens's women are active and spiritual beings, but in a limited and determined sphere of action.

The idea of home was used to control women who did not fit the pattern, namely the insane (or hysterical) and the fallen. In *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture 1830-1980* (1985), Elaine Showalter illustrates how insane asylums were modelled on the middle-class home, reproducing the hierarchy of the family, with patients as children (28). Showalter quotes Mortimer Granville in *The Lancet* on the subject: "[i]t is by domestic control . . . [that] the psychologist hopes to reach, capture, and re-educate the truant mind" (34). The same concepts defined the homes for fallen women. Linda Mahood describes how "[r]efromers hoped that inmates would embrace middle-class values such as family, cleanliness, chastity, domesticity, and appropriate feminine gender roles" (102). Even washing clothes was seen to have "a symbolic function" as a "cleansing ritual" (Mahood 91).

In 1847, Dickens, along with his philanthropist friend Angela Burdett-Coutts, founded Urbana Cottage, a home for fallen women. Dickens was involved in the daily operations of this institution. Its program was designed to teach these young women household skills and discipline, in an institution that resembled a home. They were, in other words, mostly poor women who were taught how to live in a home with middle-
class values. As in the asylums that Showalter describes, their dresses were kept plain in order to discourage vanity. Outside visitors were discouraged, and their visits chaperoned. These tactics served to lessen feelings of personal identity and forestall attempts at sophistication. They were also intended to foster a sense of belonging to the institution. Dickens's Urbana Cottage worked on a points system by which the women were encouraged to exercise particular types of behaviour. This domestic model was also employed by the schools of industry for the poor, and workhouse schools for girls.31 One significant difference between Urbana Cottage and other homes and asylums was that the management made a point "never to treat the inmates as children" (Dickens, "Home" 172).

On one hand, the concept of home in these institutions fostered some useful sense of belonging. In his essay on Urbana Cottage, "Home for Homeless Women" (1853), Dickens stresses that the first object of the Home is "to replace young women...in a situation of hope" (161). This hope, as I have mentioned, is for Dickens a necessary aspect of a better life. Dickens and Burdett-Coutts arranged for the women to emigrate to the colonies for a fresh start. It seems that Urbana Cottage did give some women hope, or at least good memories, for Dickens cites the tears that inmates shed upon leaving the home and their continuing contact with their peers.

31 See "A Workhouse Girl" (AYR 1862). Here the state acts in loco parentis with the workhouse as a home, for the young poor girl "should have something really a little like a home to go to--as like a home as the warm sympathy of strangers can succeed in making it" (133).
The system reproduced however, all the tensions and strict boundaries that provoked hysteria and the evils of fallenness in the first place. Without any sense of irony, Dickens writes that the women "are constantly employed, and always overlooked" ("Home" 170). He does not seem to see the insidious nature of the management's surveillance of the women: he notes in a matter-of-fact fashion that they were glad when their interviews with visitors were over, not realizing that the presence of a chaperone probably made them uneasy. Martha Vicinus writes that the central paradox of melodrama is that it defends the domestic ideal against a malign society under the belief that a larger moral order will prevail, yet in fact this moral order is a reflection of current social values. (134) Vicinus refers to melodrama, but I think her comment applies to the Victorian ideal of the home in general, and the use of other forms of fancy, such as the fairy tale, to depict this "moral order."

How does Dickens apply the middle-class ideology of the home to his depiction of the poor home? To begin with, his depiction of the poor home demonstrates some of the contradictions in the Victorian ideology of home and in his own attitudes towards the poor. In some ways, the poor are treated like fallen or insane/hysterical women, trapped in the model of a middle-class household. Yet the home does provide his poor characters with a sense of belonging, "[b]e it ever so humble" (Payne 175). With his vision of the poor home as an utopian space, Dickens teaches the more fortunate that the poor have, as Trotty learns, business on the face of the earth and should not be made to feel that they
are "intruding." They may be poor homes, but they are loving: these depictions humanize the poor.

Dickens uses the character of Meg to convince both her father and the middle-class reader that it is good to establish a home even in poverty, because the hope that domestic love engenders is life-sustaining and keeps alive the belief in betterment. Meg is constantly described as hopeful, her eyes beaming "[w]ith Hope so young and fresh; with Hope so buoyant, vigorous, and bright, despite the twenty years of work and poverty on which they had looked..." (101). Dickens's audience would have recognized the newspaper article that threatens to destroy Trotty's hope in his fellow poor as referring to the case of Mary Furley. Furley, an impoverished woman rejected in her quest for relief, threw herself and her baby into the Thames. She was rescued; the baby drowned; she was sentenced to death for infanticide. Public protest, which Dickens joined with his "Letter to Thomas Hood," changed the sentence to transportation. Furley was driven to suicide by despair: the underlying question of The Chimes is whether Meg will similarly lose hope and degenerate. The goblins make Trotty envision Meg on the verge of becoming just like Mary Furley, and this vision of despair leads him to acknowledge the need for hope. Dickens here defends marriage and family among the poor against the utilitarian/Malthusian belief that, as (the spell-bound) Mr. Tetterby says in The Haunted Man, "[p]oor people ought not to have children at all" (455). The family, Dickens argues,

32 See also the "Threatening Letter to Thomas Hood from an Ancient Gentleman by Favor of Charles Dickens" (Hood's Magazine and Comic Miscellany 1844) (Slater, Amusements 67-73). Dickens adopts the voice of a Lord in this satirical piece, in much the same way he adopted the voice of "Mr. Buster Bendigo" with regard to education. See also Slater, "Dickens's Tract for the Times."
is necessary for all classes, but especially the poor, to maintain their feeling of hope for better times, and thereby their humanity.

The home also affords the poor a measure of autonomy. For many people, home is the one place where they wield authority. Unfortunately, this influence is often abused, but it can be used more positively. Whatever the limitations that class has put on the power the poor held in the public sphere, the private sphere has remained a place which they could fashion according to their needs and desires.

In Dickens, the poor home, like the middle-class home, is held separate from the working world. It is unclear how the Victorian ideology of home could function: if the division between public and private spheres had to be maintained, how would the virtues of the home necessarily extend to the nation at large? This contradiction is even greater in the depiction of the poor home: it cannot truly be a refuge because it is continually under threat from outside forces. Unlike the middle-class home, the threat is not in the form of lucre but in the lack of it. This poverty, which literally threatens to rob the poor of their homes, is made worse by cruel employers such as Scrooge and Tackleton.

Middle-class readers could legitimately respond to Dickens's poor homes in a number of contradictory ways. They could simply sympathize with the poor all the more for seeing them in a threatened domestic setting, maintaining their humanity in spite of poverty. As Chesterton writes, "[Dickens] described their happiness, and men rushed to remove their sorrow" ("Alleged" 197). Yet perhaps Dickens, by emphasizing the cosy aspects of the poor home as refuge, lessened the effectiveness of his concern that the home was under threat. One feels that the Cratchits could weather anything. Although
Dickens suggests that the poor home is threatened by social forces, he also implies that the happiness of the home relies primarily on the ability of the family to love and help each other. Here he makes moral advancement the priority over social advancement, which threatens middle-class readers. Perhaps Dickens implies, despite himself, that the poor should resign themselves to their condition. Perhaps the position of the poor is analogous to that of the middle-class angel of the house: they should be satisfied with staying in the home and not intruding into public space in anything like an aggressive fashion. This vision of the poor could easily appease the fears of middle-class readers as well as ease their consciences. After all, if poor people are happy in their homes, what more do they need?

Yet if the Victorians held that the home was the centre for the nation's strength, then Dickens is suggesting to his readers that the ill-treatment of the poor will result in weak homes, and thereby a weak nation. As the dispossessed labourer Will Fern pleads with the rich in *The Chimes*, "[g]ive us, in mercy, better homes..." (156). The alternative is social disruption: the rejected Fern becomes a rick-burner. In this way, middle-class readers are warned that if the poor continue to be mistreated or neglected, they will rebel and threaten the society that threatens them. Members of the middle class should be Valentines to their Orson brothers to ward off this disaster.

Dickens's vision of the poor home is confused and offers no practical social solutions to the problems of poverty. It is not just with joy, but with a certain desperation, that Dickens paints such a bright portrait of home. With the rigidity and lack of personal freedom that his utopian vision requires, perhaps it can be called a dystopia
for everyone except middle-class men. Dickens criticized one of the *Household Words* contributors for going "too glibly with the comfortable idea . . . that a man is to sit down and make himself domestic and meek, no matter what is done to him" (qtd. in Stone, "Conducts" 75). However, it seems that Dickens is blind to the occasions in which he promotes this "comfortable idea" himself.

Yet it is too easy to simply label Dickens a hypocrite and point out his limitations as a reformer. Even as Dickens uses fancy to create a utopian image of home, he criticizes this solution as blind and simplistic. He is, I think, genuinely confused about the role that fancy plays. The contradictions in his use of fancy and the utopian home are particularly evident in the Caleb Plummer episodes in *The Cricket on the Hearth* and the endings of each of the Christmas books, ambiguous closures which defy the happy ending of the fairy tale.

In *The Cricket on the Hearth*, Dot and John are friends with Caleb Plummer and his blind daughter, Bertha. I have already discussed Tackleton, the Plummers' employer, as a kind of monster figure threatening their home with poverty, but I have not mentioned how Caleb uses fancy to protect his daughter from this knowledge. Dickens introduces Caleb and Bertha in an allusion to storybooks:

> Caleb Plummer and his Blind Daughter lived all alone by themselves, as the Story-books say—and my blessing, with yours to back it I hope, on the Story-books, for saying anything in this workaday world! (213)

This romantic beginning is augmented by Caleb's speeches to his daughter. Caleb disguises the poverty of their "little cracked nutshell of a wooden house" (213) and the
cruelty of his employer from his daughter by painting a utopian picture of security and happiness. For example, he describes their home as "[h]omely, but very snug . . . the general cheerfulness and neatness of the building; make it very pretty" (222). The narrator qualifies this description: "Cheerful and neat it was, wherever Bertha's hands could busy themselves. But nowhere else, were cheerfulness and neatness possible, in the old crazy shed which Caleb's fancy so transformed" (222). Even when Tackleton is being insulting, Caleb manages to turn the insults around by whispering to his daughter, "[i]f you could only see him, Bertha, how he's winking at me! Such a man to joke!" (218-19). Caleb has created a kind of utopia, "an enchanted home of Caleb's furnishing, where scarcity and shabbiness were not, and trouble never entered" (213).

Here fancy has transformative power, but Dickens questions Caleb's "innocent deceit" (223). Part of creating a perfect home means creating the perfect master. Bertha has fallen in love with the false image of Tackleton and is depressed when she learns that he is to marry the young May, news that distresses those who know the truth about the man. As a result, Caleb feels he must tell his daughter that the utopia he has described is a false one:

Your road in life was rough, my poor one, and I meant to smooth it for you. I have altered objects, changed the characters of people, invented many things that never have been, to make you happier. I have had concealments from you, put deceptions on you, God forgive me! and surrounded you with fancies. (CH 262)
Bertha asks Dot to tell her "what my Home is. What it truly is." Dot replies that "It is a poor place, Bertha; very poor and bare indeed" (105). Bertha accepts this news rather well: she recognizes that her father's love motivated him to lie to her, and she loves him more for having deceived her.

How does Caleb's use of fancy as illusion match Dickens's own ideas about fancy? In "A Preliminary Word," an essay which I will discuss in greater detail in Chapter Five, Dickens defended romance as a means of giving the poor reader hope for better times, and offering an escape from current hardship. In this subplot of The Cricket on the Hearth, however, Caleb's use of fancy as a kind of escape from hardship is criticized despite his best intentions. It is as if Dickens were criticizing himself, suggesting that creating an illusion of the perfect home where poverty resides is neither productive nor honest. It will not bring better times, and it may engender false hopes.

Dickens also criticizes fancy with the endings of the Christmas books. In her introduction to the Christmas books, Ruth Glancy writes that the books follow Tolkien's interpretation of fairy tales, in which the tales are marked by a "sudden joyous turn," or eucatastrophe. This eucatastrophe is the happy, utopian ending. Tolkien likens it to spiritual grace. It "denies . . . universal final defeat and in so far is evangelium, giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy" ("Fairy" 68). Indeed, each book seems to end happily, as the protagonists are converted and the home sanctified. But Dickens makes a second "turn" that suggests catastrophe, or dystopia. As I will show in Chapter Five, he also makes this reversal at the end of his fairy tales in Household Words.
Each Christmas book features, in its ending, an awakening from a dream. Only the best-known of these works, A Christmas Carol, does not end ambiguously; although it is very likely that Scrooge, waking up in his bed, has dreamed the entire adventure, neither he nor the narrator draw attention to the possibility. The other Christmas books, however, do not end in such a clear-cut fashion.

The Cricket on the Hearth, for example, was praised by Thackeray for ending like a pantomime,

with a grand pas d'ensemble, where the whole dramatis personae figure, high and low, toe and heel, to a full orchestral crash, and a brilliant illumination of blue and pink fire. ("Christmas" 91)

Thackeray forgets, however, that the book ends in solitude and darkness. After describing the celebration of the nuptials of May and Edward, which features music and dance, Dickens pauses and adds the following closing paragraph:

But what is this! Even as I listen to them, blithely, and turn towards Dot, for one last glimpse of a little figure very pleasant to me, she and the rest have vanished into air, and I am left alone. A Cricket sings upon the Hearth; a broken child's toy lies upon the ground; and nothing else remains. (278)

It is as if the narrator has woken up from his fancy, or dream, and seen it for the illusion it is. Could Dickens be doing to his readers what Caleb did for his daughter, revealing an

33 Only one critic, as far as I have discovered, discusses the ending of this book. In his introduction to the Christmas Books, Slater links this ending to the feeling Dickens describes in "A Christmas Tree," that of returning to the dreariness of everyday life after a
illusion that is not an honest escape, but an illusion which, like that of Caleb, hides an uglier reality? Dickens's storytelling does seem to mirror Caleb's own invention. Perhaps with this ending, Dickens is criticizing the domestic utopia he has so lovingly presented in the tale, or suggesting that this utopia is not so easily found. Perhaps he is hinting, as Chesterton believes he does in Bleak House, that fiction is not enough.34 The ending certainly casts a shadow over the projected utopia of home.

Likewise, The Battle of Life ends with Time informing the narrator that self-sacrificing Marion married Michael Warden, the man with whom she had supposedly eloped, and that their story ended happily. However, Dickens's narrator chooses to end the book on a slightly cynical note that questions this happy ending: "But, as I have observed that Time confuses facts occasionally, I hardly know what weight to give to his authority" (231). Indeed, what is the reader meant to believe? Why would Dickens cast doubt upon the happy ending which the characters surely deserve?

Both The Haunted Man and The Chimes end with the narrator suggesting that the protagonist has been dreaming or day-dreaming. The Haunted Man ends with the narrator reporting that

[s]ome people have said since, that [Redlaw] only thought what has been herein set down; others, that he read it in the fire, one winter night about

pantomime. However, I suggest that the tone of the ending of A Cricket on the Hearth is more serious, bitter and mysterious than anything in "A Christmas Tree," and thereby open to deeper interpretations.

34 Chesterton writes: "This tyranny, Dickens said, shall not be lifted by the light subterfuge of a fiction. This tyranny shall never be lifted till all Englishmen lift it together" (Chesterton 159).
the twilight time; others, that the Ghost was but the representation of his
own gloomy thoughts, and Milly the embodiment of his better wisdom. I
say nothing. (472)

To this ambiguous conclusion the narrator only adds a description of the shadows in the
Hall "showing the children marvellous shapes and faces on the walls" (472), and the fire
illuminating the motto of the founder of the college, and of the book itself: "Lord! Keep
my memory green" (472).

The Chimes ends with the most explicit suggestion of how we are to interpret the
fictionality of the story. The narrator writes:

Had Trotty dreamed? Or are his joys and sorrows, and the actors in them,
but a dream; himself a dream; the teller of this tale a dreamer, waking but
now? If it be so, O listener, dear to him in all his visions, try to bear in
mind the stern realities from which these shadows come; and in your
sphere—none is too wide, and none too limited for such an end—endeavour
to correct, improve, and soften them. (182)

Fancy, here, is meant to be socially illuminating. Even if the fantastical events did not
occur, they represent "stern realities" which the audience has some power to "correct."

With the exception of The Battle of Life, all of the endings suggest that the
characters or the narrator have been dreaming, and thus reflect a common type of utopian
literature, what Manuel and Manuel call the "awakened-dreamer utopia" (3). This pattern
suggests a similar moral to the ending of The Chimes in particular, handing the
responsibility for attaining the betterment of society to the reader. One famous example
of this type is the ending of News From Nowhere (1890), the utopian text by William Morris, a later and more radical social reformer than Dickens. Morris's narrator has just woken up after his dream of visiting the utopian future:

Or indeed was it all a dream? . . . as Ellen's last mournful look seemed to say . . . "Go back and be the happier for having seen us, for having added a little hope to your struggle. Go on living while you may, striving, with whatsoever pain and labour needs must be, to build up little by little the new day of fellowship, and rest, and happiness.

"Yes, surely! and if others can see it as I have seen it, then it may be called a vision rather than a dream." (News 300-01)

This ending does not differ much from the ending of The Chimes. Put side by side with an acknowledged utopian text, perhaps the utopian quality of this and the other Christmas books is more apparent. The same need to cultivate hope that I have illustrated in Chapter One is present in Morris's text and in Dickens's Christmas books. This hope is cultivated through the faculty of fancy and its manifestations in visions and other forms of romance, including the fairy tale.

Did Dickens's readers view this message of hope as a serious challenge to society's mistreatment of the poor? Was his use of the fairy tale thought to be a good medium for such confrontation? His Christmas books sold extremely well, even The Battle of Life, which has been generally acknowledged to be a failure. Critics, however, were not unanimous in their praise, although Thackeray, Lord Jeffrey, Forster and the Economist rated the books highly. The technique of creating a secondary level of fantasy,
by which the primary world of the everyday could be criticized, met with mixed reactions. The *Times* reviewer felt that this use of a secondary level worked:

> Using a machinery similar to that of the *Carol*—that is to say, making a dream the instrument of conveying his lesson—he employs it with great potency against all that he deems the enemy of the poor man. . . . (Critical 155)

The reviewer from the *Christian Remembrancer*, however, disliked Dickens's use of fancy: "the clumsy and threadbare trick of a dream is managed with more than its ordinary maladroitness" (Critical 161).

Likewise, Dickens's social criticism was either thought to be influential and valuable, or overly simplistic. There is no doubt that his Christmas books inspired some degree of positive social change. Robert Louis Stevenson was probably not the only reader to state, upon reading Dickens's Christmas books, "I shall give money" (qtd. in Glancy xii). The books occasionally led to direct action: in one recorded instance, a factory owner decided to close his factory every Christmas and send his workers home with turkeys (Davis 87). In 1843, a charitable trust for poor crippled children was set up and called the Tiny Tim Guild (Callahan 217).

Some critics, and probably many readers, felt drawn to Dickens's Christmas despite their intellectual reservations about his *Carol* philosophy. Carlyle's response to Dickens's Christmas was twofold: he reacted to *A Christmas Carol* with what his wife Jane called "a perfect *convulsion* of hospitality" (219), yet he criticized Dickens's "theory of life" as "entirely wrong:" "[Dickens] thought men ought to be buttered up, and the
world made soft and accommodating for them, and all sorts of fellows have turkey for their Christmas dinner" (Critical 204). The reviewer from the Westminster Review also criticized the simplicity of Dickens's social criticism. According to Dickens, the reviewer writes,

all social evils are to be redressed by kindness and money given to the poor by the rich. This, doubtless, is something essential; but it is only a small part of the case. The poor require justice, not charity. . . . (Critical 151)

The reviewer dislikes Dickens's reliance on these "good fairies" (150), but concedes by the end of the piece that "the books of Dickens are unquestionably humanizers of the people." (153).

Other reviewers were much less ambivalent in their criticism of Dickens. The Christian Remembrancer reviewer scorned A Christmas Carol as a "moral story" with "[n]ot a scrap or spark of religion in it" (160), and suggested that Dickens's social agenda was beyond his talents. The reviewer for Macphail's Edinburgh Ecclesiastical Journal (1849) was even less convinced by Dickens's treatment of fancy and womanhood as tools of redemption:

As one of the greatest boons to man, do, Mr. Dickens, do communicate to the world, the secret which blessed Redlaw, the Swidgers, and the Tetterbys, and you will cause the world to spend a happy Christmas; but pray don't mock us by saying, that the charm was in silly Milly's face.

(Critical 181)
Yet the reviewer from the *Northern Star*, the leading Chartist newspaper, had no qualms about Dickens's performance in *The Chimes*. The reviewer writes,

> Mr. Dickens enters the public arena, as the *champion of the people!* . . . .
> [The Chimes] will impart hope to the oppressed, and strengthen in thousands the cheering, saving belief that a *better future for the many will come*. . . ." (158)

This reviewer frames his or her praise in terms of the value of hope, just as Dickens and canonical utopian writers do.

The Christmas books are Dickens's early experiments with the fairy tale form. In his novels, especially the novels following the Christmas books, Dickens used the fairy tale in more subtle forms: they cannot be called fairy tales, but they allude to them and use elements of this form. In the Christmas books, Dickens established a kind of rhetoric that he derives from the fairy tale: a way of both protesting social injustices, such as the treatment of the poor, and of maintaining the status quo, as he does with his depiction of the home as a utopian space. Dickens did not resolve the tensions inherent in his Carol philosophy, the negative aspects of his "home" and "fairy tale." These tensions reveal his own ambivalences towards social advancement, class, home and the status quo, and Dickens more fully explores these issues in his novels, especially *Dombey and Son* and *Great Expectations*. Whether he used fancy effectively to conquer, as Forster put it, the "dragons and giants" of his readers' society depends on how much readers were convinced by his use of fanciful rhetoric to promote his social views. The popularity of the Christmas books indicates that, despite the reservations of some critics, Victorian readers
were seduced by Dickens’s use of the fairy tale. The unflagging popularity of *A Christmas Carol* suggests that modern readers are just as susceptible as Victorians to fairy tales and the fairy tale home. In my next chapter, I will show how Dickens capitalized on the popularity of the Christmas books, and extended his influence over his readers, by basing his periodicals, *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, on his Carol philosophy. Every week, Dickens’s readers continued to receive his views on the ideal home and social relations.
CHAPTER FIVE: The Fairy Tale in Dickens's Periodicals

The Christmas books inspired Dickens to start a periodical in which he could further promote his "Carol philosophy." As with the Christmas books, Dickens used fancy and fairy tale to convey his social ideals. Household Words and All the Year Round were based on a mandate by which all articles were to be enlivened by fancy. As these periodicals often protested social evils, and utilitarianism was believed to be opposed to the imagination, Dickens's use of fancy was political. In this chapter, I will demonstrate the role of Household Words and All the Year Round in promoting the fairy tale as a way of educating people in humanist social values. Although he wrote few fairy tales himself, he significantly influenced the genre by setting an example for writers outside the pages of his periodicals to use the fairy tale as a form of social criticism, and he helped to make it an important literary form for the middle classes of both Victorian times and the present day.

The genesis of Household Words shows how indelibly the philosophy and images of the Christmas books influenced Dickens's relationship with his audience. As he wrote to John Forster, it would be based on "Carol philosophy, cheerful views, sharp anatomization of humbug . . . and a vein of glowing, hearty, generous, mirthful, beaming reference in everything to Home, and Fireside" (Letters 4:328). This philosophy combined the optimism, social criticism and ideology of home that characterized Dickens's writing and use of fancy. Dickens hoped to influence his readers every week, and enter their homes as a cheerful spirit. The periodical would be called "The Cricket:" the cricket of the hearth would be Dickens himself, chirping, as he put it, "in every
number until I chirped it up to—well, you shall say how many hundred thousand!" (328).

Getting his message across to as many people as possible was crucial to Dickens. When Forster persuaded him not to use this idea, Dickens wrote *The Cricket on the Hearth* instead, describing the cricket as "a little household god" guiding the readers towards proper behaviour (*Letters* 4:337).

The idea of creating this kind of household spirit, however, was irresistible to Dickens, and he returned to it upon finishing *The Haunted Man*, which featured a Phantom. Dickens thought of a periodical based on the figure of a "SHADOW, which may go into any place . . . and be in all homes, and all nooks and corners, and be supposed to be cognisant of everything . . . everyone's inseparable companion" (*Letters* 5:622-23). He wanted the Shadow to "loom as a fanciful thing all over London . . ." It would "issue his warnings from time to time, that he is going to fall on such and such a subject; or to expose such and such a piece of humbug . . ." (622). This figure echoed Dickens's own ambitions: both he and the Shadow sought to be "everyone's inseparable companion" (623). The above passage reveals Dickens's desire to be influential on a grand scale, to see and understand everything around him, and to uncover injustices.¹ The image of the shadow led directly to the establishment of *Household Words* in 1850.

Some of the suggested titles for the periodical indicate Dickens's fascination with the home and with seeing all: *The Household Face, The Household Guest, The Household Voice*, and *The Microscope* (Forster 2:66).

¹ Dickens uses a similar image in *Dombey and Son*: the spirit who lifts up the rooftops of houses and shows people the joys and sorrows of their neighbours (540).
As in his utopian home, fancy was cultivated in his *Household Words* to counter utilitarianism. In the opening article of *Household Words*, Dickens writes, "No mere utilitarian spirit, no iron binding of the mind to grim realities, will give a harsh tone to our Household Words" ("Preliminary" 1). Dickens used a popular definition of utilitarianism, interpreting its "principle of utility," or "greatest happiness principle" as promoting selfish and materialistic attitudes.² It was also perceived by Dickens and other humanist writers to be a philosophy opposed to fancy and the arts. In his essay "Utilitarianism" (1863), John Stuart Mill argued that this perception was a "shallow mistake" (6); however, in "On Bentham" (1838) he criticized Jeremy Bentham, the leader of the movement, as blind to the aesthetic and sympathetic aspects of human nature (93-95).

Dickens and his fellow humanist writers felt that utilitarianism had made the spirit of the age grim and impersonal. Dickens referred to "these cast-iron and mechanical days" (*Letters* 8:223), and Carlyle called it "the Mechanical age" ("Signs" 100).³ In *The Prelude* (1805), Wordsworth refers to "these too industrious times" (Book V, l.293). These phrases were often directly linked to utilitarianism: Carlyle refers to "these hard, unrelieving utilitarian days" (OED), and the *Morning Herald* discusses "the money-

² This interpretation frequently occurs in the OED: G.S. Faber refers to "sordid godless Utilitarianism," and one definition of a utilitarian is "a person devoted to mere utility or material interests." W.H. Dall refers to "[t]he growth of sentiment (as opposed to savage utilitarianism), which is characteristic of the human mind in all ages" (OED). Robert Southey coined the term "futilitarianism," referring to "[t]he whole race of Political Economists, our Malthusites, Benthamites, Utilitarians, or Futilitarians" (OED).

³ It was also called an "iron time" and a "mathematical age" (Summerfield 63).
getting utilitarian age" (OED). These writers saw their era as scorning romance in favour of commerce and industry.

Yet Patrick Brantlinger claims that there were similarities between the goals of the humanists and the utilitarians. Both emphasized the need for social and legal reform, and the impact of one's environment. Both were fundamentally optimistic about society and human nature. Unlike the utilitarians, however, the humanists believed that social reform had to follow moral reform, which included the development of social sympathy.

Resisting utilitarianism, then, meant placing as great a value on social sympathy and the imagination as on reason. In *All the Year Round*, Dickens calls himself the "Uncommercial Traveller" in his set of sketches of that name. As the Uncommercial Traveller, Dickens "travel[s] for the great house of Human Interest Brothers, and [has] rather a large connection in the fancy goods way" (UT 1-2). Using this appellation, Dickens opposes the materialistic, capitalistic approach to life and emphasizes his humanist position and use of fancy.

Dickens and the other humanist writers to whom I will be referring give the imagination and social sympathy a strong moral value to protest the kind of national culture that they felt the utilitarian emphasis on reason was creating. Bentham's lack of experience with the deeper emotional side of human nature, Mill argues, prevented him from seeing how "profoundly" the arts "enter into the moral nature of man, and into the education both of the individual and of the race" ("Bentham" 95). As part of their social protest, humanist writers asserted that the arts and fancy in education were necessary for
the moral development of the nation. They thus criticized Benthamite social selfishness and proposed a "right rule" of social sympathy.

**HOUSEHOLD WORDS AND ALL THE YEAR ROUND:**

Dickens provided a forum for writers to experiment with fancy and political satire in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. Since they were family magazines whose mode of writing was fanciful, Dickens's social criticism was introduced into the middle class Victorian home in an outwardly innocuous fashion. The use of these journals to promote social criticism through fancy disseminated this technique farther than the nursery. *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* did not simply feature articles and stories that battled the moral didactic attacks on fancy; they provided a forum for the battle on behalf of the imagination and the encouragement of social sympathies.

*Household Words* was an unillustrated miscellany of "Instruction and Entertainment" (Lohrli 4) that cost twopence. Read by middle-class families, part of its intention was to displace sensational periodicals such as those by G.M. Reynolds (Slater, *Rational* 176).4 There were 479 regular numbers of *Household Words*, of 24 pages each, and eight extra Christmas issues. It was published in weekly numbers, in monthly parts, and later in bound volumes (Lohrli 44). *Household Words* lasted from 1850 to 1859, whereupon Dickens dissolved it and started another periodical, *All the Year Round*, based on the same idea. *Household Words* was very popular: it apparently sold 100,000 copies

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4 G.M. Reynolds was a Chartist leader who published the sensational penny weeklies *The Mysteries of London* (1846-48) and *The Mysteries of the Court of London* (1849-56) (Rational 176).
of its first number (Johnson 706) and maintained a regular record of selling 40,000 copies per week (Lohrli 23). *All the Year Round* was even more popular, consistently selling 100,000 copies a week. When Dickens died in 1870, his son Charles Jr. became editor, and carried on its publication until 1893 (Oppenlander 46-57).

*Household Words* and *All the Year Round* taught their readers about natural history, science, medicine, industry, inventions, and foreign customs. They entertained readers with stories of all kinds, including fairy tales and ghost stories. Only rarely were book reviews and literary discussions featured. They were primarily known as socially aware journals, publishing articles which condemned the mistreatment of the poor, especially that of poor children. They advocated national public education (free for the poor), adequate housing, safe workplaces, literacy and the proper spending of charitable funds. They protested the elitist, nepotistic nature of Victorian society, a tangled bureaucracy and abuses of trade companies such as the Hudson's Bay Company, among other examples of "culpability in high places" (Lohrli 4-5).

Dickens was the "Conductor" of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, or perhaps "dictator" would be a more appropriate term. He was one of the owners of *Household Words*, along with John Forster, William Henry Wills, and the publishers Bradbury and Evans (Lohri 249). Dickens bought Bradbury and Evans's share and co-owned *All the Year Round* with Wills.\(^5\) Dickens wrote for the periodicals, and revised the contributors' papers, often rewriting them completely to suit the periodicals' style. He

\[^5\] For the most comprehensive account of the move from *Household Words* to *All the Year Round*, see Oppenlander (2-15).
made suggestions for articles and gathered research materials for them. His assistant
editor William Henry Wills worked extremely hard to make sure the magazine suited
Dickens's standards. Nothing went into the periodical without Dickens's consent or
direction and, as a result, we can assume that the opinions advanced in its pages were, in
general, Dickens's own.

Of the 390 writers who contributed to *Household Words*, thirty-five wrote
regularly for the periodical (Lohrli 24-25). Dickens maintained the same roster of
contributors in *All the Year Round*. The contributors represented a broad range of
perspectives: they hailed from all social classes and many professions. Henry Morley, the
contributor whom, aside from Dickens, I shall discuss the most, was the only university-
trained staff member (Kaplan 268), and he "wrote more in *Household Words* than did any
other writer" (Lohrli 25). All corners of the British Isles and the British Empire were
represented by contributors. Foreigners often contributed articles on their native folklore
and customs. The articles and chips\(^7\) of all contributors were published anonymously, and
the writers were paid one guinea for a two-column page (Lohrli 21-25).

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\(^6\) Unfortunately, there is no office book extant for *All the Year Round* as there is for
*Household Words*. As a result, few of the articles in *All the Year Round* can be identified
(Oppenlander 60). Unless stated, all articles from *All the Year Round* mentioned here are
anonymous.

\(^7\) Chips were short pieces, from a quarter of a column to four columns long. They
covered many subjects, including history, nature and life abroad (Slater, *Rational* 282).
Many of the contributors were women, including Eliza Linton, the first woman to earn a fixed salary as a journalist. Household Words had a good reputation among woman writers, unlike Fraser's and Blackwood's, which were, as Mary Russell Mitford said, not journals "as a lady likes to write for" (qtd. in Lohrli 24). Whole families sometimes wrote for Household Words as joint contributors (Lohrli 24). The respectability of Household Words gave its social message greater credibility.

Anne Lohrli points out that the content of Household Words did not differ much from that of other miscellanies, and that its social concerns matched those of other "socially-minded journals" such as Eliza Cook's Journal (7). Dickens's style, however, distinguished the magazine from its competitors, and made its material and social message highly accessible to the public. This style was informal, personal and fanciful. It used such literary devices of fancy as personification, visions, and fictitious characters (Lohrli 9). As John Hollinghead, one of the staff at Household Words, said, even "the driest subjects" had to contain "some degree of fancy and imagination" (qtd. in Lohrli 9).

Wills assured Dickens that, compared to other periodicals,

we come out brilliantly in the very excellence which you say we want--fancy. It is universally acknowledged that subjects of an uninviting nature are treated--as a whole--in Household Words in a more playful, ingenious and readable manner than similar subjects have been hitherto presented in other weekly periodicals. . . . (Lehmann 74)

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8 See "Eliza Lynn Linton, Dickens, and the Woman Question" by Nancy Fix Anderson.
I argue that this style was not just sugar to sweeten the social message of *Household Words*, but intrinsic to the message itself: fancy was part of the solution to social ills caused by the utilitarian gestalt.

The opening article of *Household Words*, "A Preliminary Word," states the main purposes behind the periodical.9 Dickens intended to have as wide an audience as possible, offering a common space for rich and poor, young and old, and workers of all kinds. The purpose of the magazine was to bring into innumerable homes, from the stirring world around us, the knowledge of many social wonders, good and evil, that are not calculated to render any of us less ardently persevering in ourselves, less tolerant of one another, less faithful in the progress of mankind. . . . (1)

Dickens also intended to bring the rest of the world into the homes of his readers, along with aspects of the past as well as the present. The domestic imagery of the household affections was important, as Dickens and his contemporaries viewed the home as the breeding ground for the nation's morality.

Certainly Dickens believed that his *Household Words* would have a national effect on class relations, by enlarging social sympathies. Dickens is careful to distinguish his brand of reform from G.M. Reynolds's "Chartist and republican views" (Slater, 1853). See also the following articles: Dickens, "Conductorial Injunction" (1853), which stated, "Keep *Household Words* Imaginative!"; Dickens and Morley, "H.W." (1853); Dickens, announcement, "All the Year Round" (1859); and Dickens, "The Household Narrative" (1850), in which he states that "[t]he intimate connexion between the facts and realities of the time, and the means by which we aim, in HW, to soften what is hard in them, to exalt what is held in little consideration, and to show the latent hope there is in what may seem unpromising, needs not to be pointed out" (49, italics mine).
Rational 176), as Dickens seeks to "displace" such "Bastards of the Mountain, dragged fringe on the Red Cap" ("Preliminary" 2).\textsuperscript{10} Dickens wants to develop social sympathy not through political confrontation but through an engagement with fancy and romance:

In the bosoms of the young and old, of the well-to-do and of the poor, we would tenderly cherish that light of Fancy which is inherent in the human breast; . . . there is Romance enough, if we will find it out:—to teach the hardest workers at this whirling wheel of toil, that their lot is not necessarily a moody, brutal fact, excluded from the sympathies and graces of imagination; to bring the greater and the lesser in degree, together, upon that wide field, and mutually dispose them to a better acquaintance and a kinder understanding—is one main object of our Household Words.

("Preliminary" 1)

Lohrli observes that Household Words does not quite meet its own requirements: the poor are "discussed but not addressed," the working class is "at times addressed" and the upper class is "appealed to," but the middle class is the main audience for the magazine (15). It could further be argued that Dickens attempts to soften the justifiable anger of the lower classes, and uses fancy merely as a placebo for true social wrongs. However, fancy is not just an escape for Dickens, but essential to society's betterment, and even survival: it is the keynote of his utopian vision.

Dickens's social agenda is opposed to utilitarianism, but his embrace of fancy is not a nostalgic reaction against the modern industrial society that this philosophy

\textsuperscript{10} This is a reference to the Jacobins of the French Revolution.
championed. On the contrary, he wants to use fancy to draw from new technology "many moving lessons of compassion and consideration" ("Preliminary" 1). As he writes, "[t]he mightier inventions of this age are not, to our thinking, all material, but have a kind of souls in their stupendous bodies which may find expression in Household Words" ("Preliminary" 1). In "Chatham Docks," from The Uncommercial Traveller, for instance, Dickens personifies the dockyard machine as an "[o]bedient monster" (283) in a way that both admires its precision and "tames" it.11 In "The Poetry of Fact" (AYR 1867), the inventors "have been our poets" and thus what some consider "a dull prosaic age of utility" has a brighter side (279).

By using fancy to depict scientific and mechanical subjects, the writers of Household Words and All the Year Round strove to interest their readers in these fields. In "Fairyland in 'Fifty-Four" (HW 1853), George Augustus Sala and Wills describe the exhibits at the Crystal Palace in terms of fancy.12 The mysterious science of pathology is discussed fancifully in "The Modern Alchemist" (AYR 1862): Morley describes a chemical reaction as a "battle," in which "the good fairy hydrogen escapes from the uproar" (383).

Fancy introduced readers to scientific advances and social change in a non-threatening fashion. Two of Dickens's proposed titles for All the Year Round were

11 See also "Ignoramus at the International Exhibition" (AYR 1862) for a similar use of fancy to describe machinery.

12 See also Morley's "Science and Sophy" (HW 1854) and Richard H. Horne's "True Story of a Coal-Fire" (HW 1850).
"Change" and "Time and Tide." Readers could relate to the narrator who called himself "Ignoramus at the International Exhibition" (AYR 1862). Household Words and All the Year Round provided forums by which writers could discuss the changes in their society in a fanciful way that could challenge and educate their readers, yet soothe them at the same time. The Small-Beer Chronicles of August and September 1862, which responded to the Great Exhibition of that year, are examples of this kind of exchange.

The "Small-Beer Chronicles" of August 30, 1862, states that

> [t]he last fifteen or twenty years, which have wrought great alterations in the world at large, have brought about corresponding changes in our social existence . . . . We are no longer the same people. (583)

This article discusses "our greatness" and suggests that "this age of machinery and steel" appeals to the imagination (585). At the same time, the writer acknowledges that, with regards to the photographs of space,

> [o]ne feels that sadness which Wordsworth has spoken of, and something, too, of terror. For it is terrible to think of that vast globe away in the blue space, a chaos of rugged forms, deserted, silent. (587)

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14 See also Andrew Halliday's "Fathers" (AYR 1865), which comically discusses the disappearance of the "old-fashioned father" due to the Reform Bill and the penny post (133); and "Small-Beer Chronicles" of September 27, 1862 (AYR), which "records" "the death of the old-fashioned gentleman" (59).
The following "Small-Beer Chronicle" of September 6 takes this unease further: "All that mass of machinery, so marvellous in its power, so unerring in its accuracy, which shakes the very girders at the Great Exhibition—what is it for?" The writer then lists what this machinery can do, and what it cannot, such as "annul the past" (608-09). Its power cannot touch the spiritual side of life.15

The project of Household Words is summed up by its subtitle, a "Miscellany of Instruction and Entertainment." Dickens wanted to educate his readers in an interesting way. In a sense, he follows the same technique of more overtly didactic writers, the rational moralists and the evangelicals. His use of fancy is much less inhibited, however, and he has no ambivalence about the value of fancy, or of using fancy to educate. Dickens intends to bridge the gap between useful and useless knowledge. His formula of fancy worked for most readers: Household Words and All the Year Round were bestselling periodicals. The critics were not, however, unanimous in their praise. Walter Landor praised the "pure pleasure" and "useful knowledge" that Household Words gave the reader, but the Press criticized the "over-writing" and "distortion" of the Household Words style, calling it "peculiar" (Lohrli 23). Even Percy Fitzgerald, himself a contributor to Household Words, termed it "Dickensese" (qtd. in Lohrli 23) and claimed it could become tiresome to readers.

15 See also Dickens's "Dullborough Town" (UT 123), in which the Uncommercial Traveller returns to his childhood town and notes its changes. The playing-field, for instance, has become a railway station. See also Malcolm Andrews's essay, "Dullborough—the Birthplace of His Fancy."
Many articles dealt with issues of folklore, with which Dickens's contributors tended to show a great familiarity. Dickens's own understanding of this developing subject is evident, as well as his desire for readers to be educated in this growing field of study. Many contributors were folklorists who wrote up legends, tales, and folk customs. There were many poems on folkloric topics, especially by Adelaide Anne Proctor and Eliza Griffiths. For the purposes of space, I shall only discuss the essays in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* on the fairy tale, children, and education, and the tales invented by Dickens and Henry Morley. I focus on Dickens and Morley as they are the most prolific writers of fairy tales in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*.

The fairy tales that Dickens and Morley wrote tend to deal with political and social issues, and the fairy tale, with its emphasis on play, humour and exaggerated figures, easily communicates satire. As well, the secondary level of faery provides

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16 See in particular Morley, Bayle St. John, Dudley Costello, Ossian Macpherson, Mrs. Eustace Murray, Edmund Ollier, William Thomas, John Oxenford and William Allingham.

17 Alaric A. Watts wrote "A Lament for the Fairies" (1850) which suggests that modern education has resulted in a kind of loss of innocence:

"Yet these fair fictions of our earlier day
We have but changed for guides less kind and bland; . . ." (60)

18 Morley also wrote fairy tales outside the pages of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. His tale "Melilot" (1861) is anthologized in Zipes's *Victorian Fairy Tales: the Revolt of the Fairies and Elves*. He published two collections of fairy tales: *Fables and Fairy Tales* (1860) and *Oberon's Horn* (1861).

19 I am excluding the numerous legends and ghost stories of *Household Words* from this discussion, as they tend not to reflect on social issues to nearly the same extent as the fairy tales.
critical distance. "A South Kensington Legend" (AYR 1862), a critique of the architecture of the South Kensington railway station, opens with fanciful satire:

Once upon a time, in a great hardware city which shall be nameless, a great hardware capitalist formed a pious wish. He had made money of the hardest kind from the hardest materials, and he wished to display his gratitude in some striking manner. (175)

Similarly, in "The Great Indian Beanstalk," John Capper describes corruption among Indian officials as the "beanstalk, by which many very small adventurers have climbed to wealth" (60). In "A Christmas Pudding" (1850), Mr. Oldknow meets the spirits of the different ingredients of a Christmas pudding. The "Genius of Bread" is "slow of speech" and mutters "Protection," to which Mr. Oldknow gives a speech on the value of free trade (Knight 302). The ingredients come from around the world through the miracle of free trade and mercantilism. The "low" form of the fairy tale criticizes society perhaps more effectively than a "high" form of art, as it acts as a seemingly harmless conduit for satire.²⁰ A modern example of this phenomenon, I suggest, is the editorial cartoon. The fairy tale likewise arrests the readers' attention, catches them off guard and amuses them, but it also teaches them, and promotes an ideological viewpoint.

²⁰ By "low," I mean that it did not belong to "high" culture. Within the genre of fairy tale, there are high and low forms: MacDonald's fairy tales are written in a "high" mode, whereas F.W.N. Bayley's fairy tale burlesques are written in a "low" mode.
DEFENCES OF THE FAIRY TALE IN *HOUSEHOLD WORDS*:

Aside from Dickens's "Frauds on the Fairies," there were a few other defences of the fairy tale in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, notably those by Henry Morley, George Sala and W.H. Wills. These defences mark the same target as Dickens: the spirit of the age which valued only "useful knowledge" in children's stories, education, and the society at large. In "Nurse's Stories" (UT 1860) and "The Guest" (HW 1855), Dickens implicitly defends the value of the fairy tale, nostalgically remembering the imaginary people and places of his childhood reading. The tone of the other defences is more combative, as the writers use battle imagery, showing the fairy tale under siege. As with "Frauds on the Fairies," these defences use allusions to the fairy tale to make their points about this form.

In "Case of Real Distress" (HW 1854), Sala mourns the fall from power of Queen Mab, "the autocrat of imagination, the mistress of magic, the czarina of fancy, poetry, beauty--the queen of the fairies and fairyland" (457). The essay describes her kingdom: "The East was long her favourite abode" (458), but her powers extended throughout the globe. Actually, Sala portrays the passage of folklore from India, following the diffusion theory of folklore transmission. He also portrays the fairy tale tradition as an old and honourable one:

> The King of the Frogs—that of Doctor Layden and the Brothers Grimm—was a tributary of Queen Mab in Lesser Thibet, centuries ago; and the fact

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21 See also John Oxenford's "Fiend-Fancy" (HW 1855).

22 See above, page 50.
of the same story being found in the *Gesta Romanorum*, and in the popular superstitions of Germany, only proves the universality of Queen Mab's dominion. (459)

He claims for Mab the stories of Grimm, D'Aulnoy, Basile, Ovid, Homer, and Shakespeare, among many more. He writes, "[b]efore Queen Mab came to be a 'case of real distress,' she was everywhere" (459). Yet she has been "sadly reduced:" "Boards, Commissions, and Societies, grimly educating the reason, and binding the fancy in fetters of red tape, have sworn to destroy her" (460). Sala ends on a plea to spare her.

Sala responds to his own article with "The Complaint of the Old Magician" (HW 1854), in which the Magician attacks Sala's argument for Queen Mab. The Magician argues that Fairyland is "extinct . . . a kingdom recently blotted out from the map by the united efforts of the March of Intellect, Transatlantic Go-a-headism, and the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge" (540). He complains that Sala's description of Mab's territory infringed on his own kingdom of Magic, which is the real case for distress. The Magician argues that Queen Mab and her subjects can still be found in "pantomimes and Easter spectacles" and in chapbooks: "There are yet to be found publishers (though few alas!) who will invest capital in the illustrations, editing, and publishing of fairy tales. . ." (546). Sala responds to the Magician's argument by associating magic with "ages of darkness," and concludes that he grieves "more than ever (if that be possible) for Queen Mab and the fairies, flouted and contemned by this sometimes and somewhat too dully practical age" (546).^23

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^23 See also Sala, "The Kingdom of Reconciled Impossibilities" (HW 1853).
Henry Morley goes further in his defence of the fairy tale in "The School of the Fairies" (HW 1855), a review of M. Planché's translation of Madame D'Aulnoy's fairy tales. Remarking that Planché has treated the tales with "due reverence" and "strict fidelity" (509), Morley also notes that the volume is both pretty and cheap. He ends the article by suggesting that the child should receive a wide variety of fairy tales: tales from the Grimms, Musaeus, Tieck, Goethe, Hoffmann as well as Irish fairy legends, legends of King Arthur, fables, the Arabian Nights, classical tales, Eastern tales and English fairy tales.

Moreover, Morley claims that the fairy tale is important to a child's education:

For, there is in all literature nothing that can be produced which shall represent the essential spirit of a man or of a people so completely as a legend or a fairy tale. The wild freaks of fancy reveal more of the real inner life of man than the well-trimmed ideas of the judicious thinker.

(509)

Why? Because fancy allows the inventor to "play among impossibilities," a pastime which results in showing "all that is most unalterable and essential in his own mind, or the minds of those whom his inventions are designed to please" (509). That fancy also encourages social sympathy, Morley takes for granted: "Of course, it is difficult for any person gifted with a prompt and active fancy to be cruel" (511). This statement reflects Dickens's assertion in "Frauds on the Fairies" that the fairy tale promotes tolerance.

Like Sala in his two defences of the fairy tale and magic, Morley strives to give the fairy tale more credibility by citing its long history. Furthermore, he links it to an
educational agenda. The fairy tale, Morley suggests, can educate the child about "[e]very main period of history and every clime" (510). It can also teach the child about the changes in the fairy tale according to its social context:

It is not necessary to accept the traditions of despotism which have filled all eastern tales with only royal heroes; the fairy tales of other countries and of freer men have spoken to the people of themselves--the countess [d'Aulnoy] spoke of courts to courtiers. (512)

This comment anticipates the claim of twentieth-century critics (such as Zipes) that the fairy tale changes to suit the ideology and social conditions of its times.

EDUCATION AND THE FAIRY TALE IN HOUSEHOLD WORDS:

In Household Words, Dickens and his contributors placed a high value on the child and on the role of fancy in its education. They felt that the fairy tale was important to the development of the young mind, and presented it as part of an educational agenda that protested the cult of the informed child and the idea that only "useful" knowledge should be taught to children. They stressed that children "accept us for their guides" ("Which" 47), and that adults should not ignore the responsibility they have towards the younger generation.

Children were addressed alongside adults in Household Words and All the Year Round, and the magazines included stories and non-fiction articles for them, such as Dickens's "A Child's History of England" (HW 1851-53). Dickens commented that "a good miscellany for grown people, should have much in it of interest to growing people"
Many of his contributors, particularly the women, wrote for children, although mostly not in the pages of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. Dickens, then, was part of a circle of children's writers and was interested in cultivating the same audience.

The writers who discussed children in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* tended to reflect the romantic view of children as innocent and spontaneous beings who were closer than adults to nature. They link these qualities to children's literature. In "Where We Stopped Growing" (HW 1853), Dickens echoes the Wordsworthian idea that one should always keep alive some part of one's child nature: "We, the writer . . . were led to consider whether there were any things as to which this individual We actually did stop growing when we were a child" (145). These "things" include fairy tales, *Robinson Crusoe*, theatres and Covent Garden.

Morley and Dickens championed the German system of education, which was more faithful to these ideals than that of England. They particularly supported Frederick Froebel, the German educator who invented the kindergarten. In his essay on Froebel,

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24 Examples of the male writers for children include Hans Christian Andersen ("The World's Fairest Rose" HW 1852), Robert Barnabas Brough, Fox Franklin, Tom Hood, Richard Henry Horne, Thomas Miller and, supposedly, Sir Henry Cole. Among the women are Sophia De Morgan, Mrs. Bradburn, Frances Freeling Broderip (née Hood), Georgiana Maria Craik, Amelia Edwards, Mrs. Hill, Mary Howitt, Jennett Humphreys, Harriet Martineau, Dinah Maria Mulock, and Sara Smith (Hesba Stretton).

25 See also Wills, "The Schoolmaster at Home and Abroad" (HW 1850).

26 Froebel's system stood in sharp contrast to the typical child-rearing practices of Germany in the nineteenth century, as Alice Miller's *For Your Own Good* makes clear (3-91).
"Infant Gardens" (HW 1855), Morley writes that "[t]he first sproutings of the human mind need thoughtful culture; there is no period of life, indeed, in which culture is so essential" (578). Morley enthusiastically describes how German kindergartens carefully tend children's abilities and promote a culture of the child, and he recommends that the English adopt these institutions. In "At Home and at School" (AYR 1859), Morley praises the homelike and non-sectarian atmosphere of the kindergartens.

Froebel's belief that play was necessary for children's education was enthusiastically supported by Household Words contributors. The emphasis on play corresponds to romantic notions of the child's freedom and imagination. "Infant Gardens" describes how nursery rhymes, games and toys aid the "development of its [the child's] whole nature" (Morley 579). Morley quotes Froebel on the subject: "There is often a high meaning in childish play" (579). In Dickens's "The Child's Story" (HW 1853) and "The Child's Dream of a Star" (HW 1850), the child narrators describe the story of one's growth through the ages of man, and associate the child with the outdoors, and with play. The child character in "The Child's Story" says, "I am always at play. Come and play with me!" (5). The spontaneous and free nature of play even leads to the development of the child's spiritual capacity. Through play, Morley argues in his essay "Playthings" (HW

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27 This was, as Philip Collins points out, the "first notable essay in English on the Kindergarten movement . . . much quoted and commended by Froebelians . . ." (3). Collins notes that although Dickens supported the first English kindergarten, and visited it often, he did not send his own children there, even though it was "only a minute's walk" away (41).

28 The superiority of continental pedagogy and of religious toleration is discussed in "International Education" (AYR 1864), and mentioned in many other articles.
1853), children learn "to have some childish sense of the infinity of knowledge; that is, to master the essential groundwork of all human wisdom" (432). This aspect of learning wisdom through play is possible, Morley claims, only if "philosophical toys" such as stereoscopes are not "turn[ed] into lessons" (432).

For these writers, imagination and curiosity had to be encouraged before facts were taught, and this could only be done by giving children access to works of fancy.29 As a result, children in Froebel's kindergartens learned fairy tales. The child in "The Child's Story" reads "the most astonishing picture-books" of fairy tales (5). "We have never grown out of the real original roaring giants," Dickens writes in "Where We Stopped Growing" (362). In "The School of the Fairies," Morley states that

[t]he fancy of a child is--for the first six or seven years at least, of childhood--by a great deal the broadest channel through which knowledge and wisdom can be poured into the mind . . . . To clip fancy in youth for the sake of getting more wisdom from age, is about as wise a scheme of mental culture as it would be wise in agriculture to pick off the leaves of apple-blossom in the spring, for the sake of getting monster apples in the autumn. (509-10)

Fancy, then, is related to the proper growth of the child, which must be carefully tended.

In "Little Children" (HW 1853), Sala states "[t]hat child has a maimed child-mind who

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29 The exception to this rule in Household Words is Richard Henry Horne's "A Witch in the Nursery" (1851). This essay criticizes the cruelty of nursery rhymes and fairy tales and suggests that they are therefore unsuitable for children.
does not believe implicitly in all the fairy tales— in the existence of ogres, fairies, giants, and dwarfs" (290-91).

To these writers, education is a "scheme of mental culture" (Morley, "School" 510), and they often use agricultural images to portray an education that is gentle, natural, and which cultivates fancy, as opposed to the mechanical, utilitarian education of the informed child. Here again they show the influence of romantic thought. In "Little Children," Sala writes, "[b]ut that young flowret is too tender yet to bear the crude blast of uncompromising fact" (291). Froebel's kindergarten did not allow "book work" of any kind before age seven. In "Bouncing Boys" (AYR 1865), Andrew Halliday writes that the intellectual growth of these modern boys may be a little too rapid, and that, like trees which grow quickly, his timber may be rather too soft for the solid purposes of life's carpentry. (39)

These writers also use the romantic associations of children, spirituality and romance. Morley claims that the child reader of fairy tales gains a greater understanding of other peoples

and of the one spirit that is in them all— than thousands ever get who have had grammars and catechisms only for their mental spoon-meat, and who enter their graves without having once come fairly into contact with the warm, quick heart of human knowledge. ("School" 510)

The fairy tale teaches the spiritual essentials, which facts alone cannot communicate.30

30 Halliday asserts that fairy tales provide the child with a "cultivation of the intellect and the understanding" similar to that which Greek and Roman mythology gives (40).
Some of the essays that deal with the subjects of the child, education and fancy are satires that promote an education based on fancy by mocking one founded on fact. The German system that Dickens praises is criticized by the narrator in his and Morley's satire on anti-intellectual attitudes, "Mr. Bendigo Buster on our National Defences Against Education" (HW 1850). Mr. Buster criticizes the German system, in which "[t]he course of instruction professes not to cram the mind with facts . . . [but to] excite a spirit of enquiry" (315). The papa in Morley's "Much Too Good Boys" (HW 1859) tells his infant: "You admire, baby, the brightness of the moon; but it is time that you should be made aware, my poppet, that the moon is intrinsically a dark body, without inherent light of its own" (311). In his "Monstrous Clever Boys" (HW 1858), Morley lists the accomplishments of prodigies in history, and comments: "To anything of that sort, however, we are, in these days, well accustomed. To this course of proceeding British babes are driven daily by the advice of friends" (516). To Morley, these children are not even created in a natural fashion: "At the door of the oven in which this philosopher was baked, I will lay down my batch of solemn boys" ("Monstrous" 516).

In his fairy tale "The Two Guides of the Child" (HW 1850), Morley contrasts the education that crams children with facts with one informed by fancy. The first of these

31 This technique of using a persona with whom the writer does not agree is also seen in "In Praise of a Rotten Board" (Parkinson, AYR 1866). The speaker of this piece resembles Mr. Bounderby. With regards to paupers, he says, "Arm-cheers and drawing-rooms, that's what they're all hankering after, and if you don't give it 'em, you're abused in the papers, and called cruel and heartless by a parcel of fellows who are paid to write respectable tradesmen like us down" (342).

32 See also "Boy Monsters" (AYR 1868).
fairy tales describes a child living in "Child Valley," who tells a spirit about the two
guides it sees leading other children in "the Land of Life" (560). The child sees "[a]
severe man" seize another child and drag it "over steep rocks to the plain of the mature"
to teach it "its duty in the world above." The child victim is then taught "two languages
spoken by nations extinct centuries ago, and something also, O Spirit, about the base of a
hypotenuse." The children thus taught are lost, although "[s]ome become active, seeking
right, but ignorant of what right is; they wander among men out of their fog-land,
preaching folly" (561). Thus Morley criticizes both conventional education and
evangelical religion.

By contrast, the second guide of the child "has magic spells to conjure up glorious
spectacles of fairy land." He "frolics" with the children, who are not separated from each
other, and he does not force them to leave Child Valley. Through fancy and nature, he
teaches children about God. This approach helps them learn: "Sports and fancies are the
rod and spur that bring them with new vigour to the lessons." They thus become loving
people willing to help others once they reach the plain of maturity. In other words, they
have become responsible social beings. Reflecting his essays on education, Morley
moralizes about the value of fancy: "Love and fancy are the stems on which we may graft
knowledge readily." Furthermore, Morley reverses the authoritarian position of the adult,
proposing a more equal relationship: "O, teacher, love the child and learn of it; so let it
love and learn of you" (561). This development indicates the endurance of the romantic
view of childhood. The authority of the child grew as the nineteenth century went on, as
Dickens's Holiday Romance indicates.
THE HOLIDAY ROMANCE OF ALL THE YEAR ROUND:

In *Holiday Romance*, published in *All the Year Round* (1868), Dickens illustrates the above issues of education and the child in three tales told by a group of child narrators. These tales are fanciful and satirical, reversing the balance of power between adults and children. One of the children, Alice, suggests that through writing stories they can

[e]ducate the grown-up people . . . . Let us . . . throw our thoughts into something educational for the grown-up people, hinting to them how things ought to be. Let us veil our meaning under a mask of romance . . .

(406)

The fairy tale thus acts as a disguise for the social criticism of their elders. As Alice promises, the stories criticize traditional education and suggest utopian alternatives in which the children vent feelings of revenge against adults.

In all three stories, children are shown to be capable and assertive. Alicia in Alice's tale[^33] is clearly a projection of the narrator's desire for recognition and control. Alicia takes care of her 18 younger siblings easily: her talents are recognized by the Good Fairy Granmarina, who directs Alicia's father the King to feed his daughter salmon[^34].

[^33]: Alice's tale is the only one of Dickens's fairy tales currently found in anthologies, under the title "The Magic Fishbone." In *Holiday Romance*, it is simply called "Romance From the Pen of Miss Alice Rainbird," with a footnote informing the readers that she is seven years old (408).

[^34]: The King is reluctant to serve his daughter salmon, claiming that it would not agree with her. The Good Fairy reproves him: Don't be greedy. I think you want it all yourself" (409). I suggest that this is a comment on how, in Victorian times, the adults ate choice foods that children were denied in the belief that only plain food was good for them.
Alicia thus gets a magic fishbone that will help her "PROVIDED SHE WISHES FOR IT AT THE RIGHT TIME" (409).

Although illness and financial hardship afflict the family, Alicia withholds her power until the King confesses that there is no hope for them otherwise. As she says, "When we have done our very very best, Papa, and that is not enough, then I think the right time must have come for asking help of others" (415). Alicia uses the fishbone and receives both money and marriage as rewards for her prudence. This tale teaches the moral lesson of asking charity only when needed, a moral which honours the high value the Victorians put on independence and industriousness.

More significantly, I think, this tale exalts the child's abilities by showing her as wiser than her elders, for Alice not only asserts the child's talents, but also challenges the adult claim to rationality. When the King asks for a reason for the gift of the fishbone, the Good Fairy replies, "[t]he reason for this, and the reason for that, indeed! You are always wanting the reason. No reason. There! Hoity toity me! I am sick of your grown-up reasons" (409). As Alicia confides to her doll: "They think we children never have a reason or a meaning!" (411).

For the remaining two child narrators, authority can only be attained by challenging the conventional approach to education. Robin's tale features Captain Boldheart, a pirate who captures a Latin-Grammar Master and sets him afloat on a boat with only a few provisions and a Latin grammar. Boldheart later saves the master from being roasted by cannibals, on condition that he never teach again; however, the master proves himself treasonous and Boldheart hangs him. When the pirate ship is intercepted
by the ship "The Family," Boldheart shows off his ship to admiration of his cousins; this event parallels the acknowledgement of Alicia's capabilities in the first story.

Likewise, in Nettie's tale, the roles of adults and children are reversed. Nettie presents this situation as a utopia: "There is a country, which I will show you when I get into Maps, where the children have everything their own way" (428). In the story, the adults, who are called children, are shown playing the childish and "tiresome" game of parliament at a party. The children-cum-adults are vexed by their progeny, and put them in school without holidays. As Nettie concludes,

This was what brought that country to such perfection, and made it such a delightful place to live in; . . . the children . . . kept them at school as long as ever they lived, and made them do whatever they were told. (437)

The faery perspective that the child narrators give the reader mocks conventional education and other adult institutions as ridiculous and powerless.

EDUCATION FOR THE POOR CHILD:

The drive behind a system of education that values fancy goes beyond simply raising a happy and natural child: it is, these writers argue, necessary for society. For these writers, education is at the heart of reform, and fancy is central to education. As Morley comments in "Infant Gardens," "[t]o improve society—to make men and women better—it is requisite to begin quite at the beginning, and to secure for them a wholesome education during infancy and childhood . . ." (577). This statement assumes that social
reform is linked with the refinement of the individual's mind and morals, and that such development occurs in early education. It suggests that the ideal society includes fancy.

This "wholesome education," however, is more difficult for a poor child to attain. In "Anybody's Child" (HW 1854), William Blanchard Jerrold writes that the street child is "a mass of ignorance" (552). Part of Dickens's agenda in his periodicals was to persuade society to take responsibility for the neglect of the education of poor children. As one All the Year Round contributor writes, "[w]e have always upheld in this journal, and its predecessor, the absolute duty of the state to aid vigorously in support of education for the masses of the people" ("In" 79).

One way in which Dickens and his contributors tried to urge the need for action was by mocking the irresponsibility of the fortunate in satirical fairy tales or fanciful articles. In his fairy tale "My Wonderful Adventures in Skitzland" (HW 1850), Morley points out the difference in education between rich and poor, and how a shoddy education handicaps the poor. In Skitzland, this handicap is visible: "During the night of his twenty-first birthday, each Skitzlander loses the limbs which up to that period received from him no care, no education" (226). Significantly only the aristocracy survive this day of inheritance with all their limbs intact. In Dickens's satire, "Nobody's Story" (1853), a poor man wants only two things from the Bigwig family: for his children to be educated and for his people to have access to rational amusement. The Bigwigs, however, break into great quarrels, rooted in sectarian politics, about how the poor should be educated and amused, and end up doing nothing for them. Dickens thus mocks both the elite and religious arguments about education.
The writers of essays about education for poor children use fancy to portray nightmarish images of neglect and the harm it causes. The streets of London are, to one contributor, the "The Devil's Training School" (AYR 1867) for children. The vices of poverty, this writer claims, can be averted with children, who are still malleable: "With them anything may be done. You have in your hands a certain amount of raw material with which you may do almost what you choose" (402). Untended, the child becomes an animal, as Dickens indicates with his images in "The Amateur Beat:" "The piece of money I had put into the claw of the child I had overturned was clawed out of it, and was again clawed out of that wolfish gripe..." (UT 370). They become the monsters of the wilderness of the city.

However, even when poor children receive an education, it does not necessarily mean that it improves them, as Dickens and Morley show in "A Free (and Easy) School" (HW 1851). Material and intellectual poverty may continue to dehumanize the children, reflecting the "baked" children described above:

Pale as maggots, in unwholesome-looking clothes, the children swarm, heavily busy at their work; no look of joyous curiosity, no wide bright eye of wonder rests upon us... (171)

35 See also Dickens, "Crime and Education" (Daily News 1846); Dickens, "Ignorance and Crime" (The Examiner 1848); Dickens, "A Sleep to Startle Us" (HW, 1852); Dickens, "Received, a Blank Child" (HW 1853); Alexander Mackay, "The Devil's Acre" (HW 1850); Frederick Knight Hunt, "London Pauper Children" (HW 1850); W.H.Wills and Mr. Taylor, "A Day in a Pauper Palace" (HW 1850).
If the poor child is denied fancy and hope, which these writers viewed as agents of social sympathy and humanity, then it becomes a danger to society. This fear lies behind Dickens's call for free, national and public education of good quality.

In Household Words and All the Year Round, writers salute the initiatives taken by various educators and philanthropists to deal with the state of education for poor children. They support programs that combine education with work, and which are cost-efficient and, if possible, self-supporting. In "Little Red Working Coat" (HW 1861), Morley calls the "Ragged School Shoeblack Society" a "good fairy" to poor children, because it offers them education and work. As he writes, "Little Red Working Coat, saved from the wolf that fattens in our London alleys, is now regularly set up in business in our London streets" (324). In "Short-Timers" (Dickens UT) and "In and Out of School" (AYR 1861), learning for half the day is hailed for being cheap and just as efficient, due to the short attention span of children, as full-day classes. Angela Burdett-Coutts's sewing school in the East End is praised in "Number Seven, Brown's-Lane"

36 As stated in "Work for More Volunteers" (AYR 1861), "[w]e may admit that education is as necessary to a child as food, and that if the parent cannot feed the mind of a child, the State must in some way protect it from absolute starvation; must supply it with the first necessaries of rational life" (208). Without this action, the poor child risks becoming irrational—like an animal, perhaps.

37 See also "Hail Columbia—Square!" (Anon AYR 1862), "A Sleep to Startle Us" (HW 1852) by Dickens, "The Devil's Acre" (HW 1850) by Mackay, "The Girl from the Workhouse" (Anon AYR 1862) and "Children of All Work" (Anon AYR 1861). See also Dvorak's essay "Dickens's Ambivalence as Social Critic in the 1860's: Attitudes to Money in All the Year Round and The Uncommercial Traveller."

38 The Ragged Schools, Morley claims, enact "fairy-transformations" that are "quite as interesting to our hearts as any pleasant legend of the nursery;" by these allusions, he hopes to capture his readers' attention and cultivate their sympathy ("Little" 324).
(AYR 1864), for "uniting charity with profitable work," "for no sort of help shall be a substitute for proper industry and individual exertion". . . (308, 306).³⁹

It is the social responsibility of the privileged, Household Words writers suggest, to provide poor children with a decent education; otherwise the children will grow up and become, perhaps, an animalistic mob. By ignoring this responsibility, the middle and upper classes become degenerate themselves, Valentines who did not save their wild brothers. As Jerrold comments, "what are we if, under our eyes, Anybody's child grows up to be Everybody's enemy?" ("Anybody's" 552).⁴⁰

PROTESTING POLITICAL & SOCIAL IRRESPONSIBILITY:

In their fairy tales in Household Words and All the Year Round,⁴¹ Dickens and Morley try to persuade their audience to recognize and protest the irresponsibility of the political elites of England. Dickens's fairy tales "The Thousand and One Humbugs" (HW 1855) and "Prince Bull" (HW 1853) take place in courts which stand for England. The names of the rulers, the Sultan "Taxedtaurus" and Prince Bull, reflect "John Bull," the appellation for an Englishman; thus, they are meant to represent England.⁴² Their

³⁹ Playgrounds were also established for poor children. See Octavia Hill's "Poor Playgrounds" (AYR 1867) and Sophia Elizabeth De Morgan and Henry Morley's "A Plea for Playgrounds" (HW 1858).

⁴⁰ See also Jerrold, "Nobody's Philanthropist" (HW 1859).

⁴¹ Most of these tales came from Household Words.

⁴² See also "The Old Lady in Threadneedle Street" (HW 1850), in which Dickens and Wills use this nickname of the Bank of England to fancifully explain the workings of the bank as the actions of a rich old lady.
servants in the court represent the politicians whose arrogance, greed and bureaucracy hinder England's happiness and progress. For example, the frame narrative of "The Thousand and One Humbugs" mentions that these tales have "a curious accidental bearing on the present time . . . [i]t would often seem . . . that they were written expressly with an eye to events of the current age" (265). Indeed, the Sultan cannot find a Howsa Kummauns to suit him, and is in despair that the lovely Reefsawm "made as bad a Howsa Kummauns as any of the rest" (266). The morals of the tales suggest the impossibility of "right rule" when the leaders do not take responsibility for the nation's problems and are arrogant towards its citizens.

One theme of the fairy tales in Household Words and All the Year Round is the problem of pollution and the need for those in power to take responsibility for curbing it. In "Water-drops: a Fairy Tale" (HW 1850), Morley protests the polluted water of London, thus adding a fanciful element to his oeuvre on clean water. Water sanitation was a particularly important issue to Victorians, especially since cholera affected all classes. Morley sets up the fairy tale plot of the suitors performing deeds to win the

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43 See also John Oswald Head's "All Smoke" (HW 1858), in which the narrator consults Haroun, a magician, about who is most fitted to run the country; Haroun cannot give him an answer, but only tells him his visions of bank fraud at "The Royal Swyndling and Doem Joint-Stock Bank," the greed of "country gentlemen of irreproachable respectability" and the plight of the poor and of soldiers (530).

44 See also "The Nut-cracker" (AYR 1863), which deals with the destruction of a forest, and Morley's "The Death of a Goblin" (HW 1850). In the latter tale, the legendary goblin in the cellar that poisons a family proves to be simply bad drains that led to disease.

45 See also Morley's articles "Light and Air" (HW 1851), "The World of Water" (HW 1851) and "A Way to Clean Rivers" (HW 1858).
princess: the water drops compete to be worthy of the Princess Cirrha by showing how much good they can do for the humans below. However, they cannot do any good at all because the water in London is so polluted already.

Morley uses fancy to teach his audience about water pollution, especially how it affects the poor. One water drop, Nebulus, lands in Jacob's Island, a poor area of London to which Dickens referred in *Oliver Twist*. The filthy water into which he becomes submerged causes cholera. Another water drop, Nubis, also finds himself in a poor neighbourhood. He "rejoiced that his good fortune brought him to a district in which it might become his privilege to bless the poor..." (484). He is thrown out the window for not being fit to drink. One drop says, "[O]nce I was in a butt in Bethnal Green, twenty-one inches across, and a foot deep, which was to supply forty-eight families" (484).

Morley emphasizes his educational motives by including footnotes which refer the reader to such articles as the "Report of Mr Bowle on the cause of Cholera in Bermondsey."

Clearly, Morley is using the fairy tale form in order to make this information palatable to his readers and thus urge them to protest the situation.

Dickens protests the arrogance of the political elite that allows such problems to remain unresolved. Dickens disliked politicians from his days as a parliamentary reporter, and he especially disdained the aristocracy. He claims that the political elites do not recognize problems in society in part because they view the public with such condescension. In "The Great Baby" (HW 1855), Dickens suggests that the House of Commons and the "monomaniacs," such as the supporters of the Temperance movement, view the public as a "Great Baby, to be coaxed and chucked under the chin at elections."
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Dickens offers a less humane image in "On Her Majesty's Service" (HW 1854), in which "Sir Hector Stubble . . . seemed to look upon mankind as a mere set of tools: when he wanted an instrument he took it; and when he had done with it, he put it aside" (433).

In Dickens's "One Thousand and One Humbugs," the "Dowajah" is "a female spirit of voracious appetites, and generally with a wig and a carmine complexion, who prowls about old houses and preys upon mankind" (289).46

According to Dickens, people who grant the aristocracy unearned honours are partly responsible for the destructive arrogance of this class. In "The Toady Tree" (HW 1855), Dickens uses the image of a huge tree to suggest that subservience to the aristocracy is one reason that reform is not taking hold: "Let every man, therefore, apply his own axe to his own branch of the Toady Tree. Let him begin the essential Reform with himself, and he need have no fear of its ending there" (387).

The elites are not only snobbish, but greedy. Greed, as Morley makes clear in "The Golden Fagots (sic): a Child's Tale" (HW 1850), is self-destructive. In this tale, the grandmother finds that her blood turns whatever it touches into gold. She begins to mutilate herself in order to create a stack of golden faggots, and dies from loss of blood.

46 For more examples of how Dickens uses fancy in political satire, see "A Haunted House" (HW 1853), about Parliament; "A Crisis in the Affairs of Mr. John Bull, as Related by Mrs. Bull to the Children" (HW 1850), about the Papal Bull of September 1850 that restored the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England; and "Proposals for a National Jest-Book" (HW 1856), in which Mr. Bull encounters an M.P., a Bishop and a gentleman. Dickens's first essay in political satire uses the fairy tale: in "The Story Without a Beginning' (Translated from the German by Boz)" (Morning Chronicle 1834), Dickens takes the German fairy tale "Das Märchen Ohne Ende" by F.W. Carove, translated as "The Story Without an End" by Sarah Austin in 1834, and applies it to the scandal created when William IV dismissed Melbourne and the Whigs on November 15, 1834 in favour of the Tories (Slater, Rational 10).
In Morley's "King of the Hearth" (HW 1850), an imitation of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, Phil Spruce meets the King of the Hearth, who is unimpressed by Phil's utilitarian philosophy: "Cash and Mortality make up, according to your theory, the aim and end of man" (232).47

As Dickens's fairy tales emphasize, the greed exercised by the elites damages the entire country. In his satiric version of "One Thousand and One Nights," Dickens presents three stories. In "Scarli Tapa and the forty thieves," Scarli Tapa sees thieves driving bulls (again, a reference to England) laden with gold into the cave, labelled O.F.F.I.C.E. Instead of "Open Sesame," the robbers say "Debrett's Peerage." Scarli steals from the cave, justifying the act to his wife by saying, "no one suffers but the public" (290). In the end, a Coalition is formed between the Scarli Tapas, the

47 See also Sala's anti-Semitic tale, "The Poor Second Traveller" (HW 1854), in which a Jewish merchant Acon-Verlaz goes to the Sky-fair, which is held only once every hundred years. At this fair, jewels are cheap as dirt, and Acon-Verlaz loads himself down with them so much that he cannot leave, and is therefore turned into stone as punishment for his greed.
Yawyawahs (the captain of the robbers),[^48] and the Jobbianas (the family of the slave that helps Scarli Tapa)[^49], taking the riches and shutting out "the rest of mankind" (291).[^50]

The greed that aristocrats show combines cruelly with their arrogance. In the two other stories of "One Thousand and One Humbugs," barbers represent politicians, perhaps because both professions shave the public closely.[^51] In "The Story of the Talkative Barber," Publeek's twin brother, Guld (gulled) Publeek, is very poor and begs from Barmecide,[^2] a rich barber. Barmecide hands the starving man empty plates, pretending that they contain "a smoking dish of Reefawm," "Educational Kabobs" and other dishes less savoury, such as "Law of Partnership" (315). In reality, he forces "the nauseous mess called DUBLINCUMTAX" down Guld Publeek's throat: "This is the punishment of Guld Publeek who asked for nourishment and said he wanted it" (316).

[^48]: According to the OED, "yaw-yaw" means "to talk affectedly, or "to utter inarticulate cries resembling the syllables, "yaw, yaw." The OED uses an example from Dickens's *Hard Times*: "They liked fine gentleman . . . and they yaw-yawed in their speech like them." Margot Louis suggests that "Yawyawahs" could refer to British aristocrats and their characteristic drawl. She points out that the "insufferable aristocrat" Lord Cardigan had the nickname "Lord Haw-Haw."

[^49]: The OED lists "to job" as to turn a public office or some position of trust to private or party advantage. Other definitions include thieves' slang for a theft, "to cheat," "to speculate."

[^50]: See also "Dreaming Sharp" (Anon AYR 1865), which describes a dream about a pantomime called "The Metamorphoses of Mammon," in which the "Ghuthepools," the "Rhaubalyucan" and the deceptive "Ballanzjheet" fool the innocent "Public Confidence" (106-08).

[^51]: There is also a group of stories in the *Arabian Nights* told by barbers.

[^52]: This story alludes to "The Barber's Story of His Sixth Brother," in which a prince of the Barmecide family invites a starving beggar to dinner and pretends that there is food on the empty plates (Mack 298-305).
For Dickens, bureaucracy makes power relations even more poisonous. He likes to engage in word play with the phrase "red tape" in his diatribes against bureaucracy, as we have already seen with the name "Scarli Tapa." In his essay "Red Tape" (HW 1851), Dickens refers to bureaucracy thus: "He will put a girdle of Red Tape round the earth, in quicker time than Ariel" (481). Dickens uses this imagery again in "Prince Bull," in which the prince's evil godmother Tape, who is bright red all over, "could stop the fastest thing in the world, change the strongest thing into the weakest, and the most useful into the most useless" (212). Tape's vindictiveness and the bureaucratic laziness and greed of the prince's servants (politicians) cause failure in the Prince's necessary war against Prince Bear. Prince Bear stands for Russia just as Prince Bull represents England; Dickens uses the fairy tale form to protest the bureaucratic bungling of the Crimean War.

Although the Prince is generous and gives all the right orders for the army to be well taken care of, Tape foils his plans. Her spells are the choice phrases of bureaucrats: "On Her Majesty's service" and "I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant" (50). With only the word "Tape!", the godmother causes havoc:

the houses, clothes, and provisions, all mouldered away; and the soldiers who were sound, fell sick; and the soldiers who were sick, died miserably:

and the noble army of Prince Bull perished. (50)

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53 Dickens often shows his disgust with bureaucracy, most notably in his depiction of the Circumlocution Office in Little Dorrit, where Doyce's attempts to receive patents for inventions which will benefit the country are foiled.
This is just what happened in the Crimean War: bureaucratic mismanagement led to deaths both on and off the battlefield, as battle commands and relief efforts were bungled.

In "Nobody, Somebody, and Everybody" (HW 1856), Dickens also refers to this scandal:

> It was Nobody who occasioned all the dire confusion of Balaklava harbor,
> it was even Nobody who ordered the fatal Balaklava calvary charge. The non-relief of Kars was the work of Nobody. . . . (145)

Dickens thus uses the fanciful technique of personification to illustrate how bureaucracy leads to diminished social responsibility and hence to such disasters.

In "Prince Bull," Tape rules over Bull's servants, who are the thoroughly unreliable politicians:

> indolent and addicted to enriching their families at his expense, [they] domineered over him dreadfully; threatening to discharge themselves if they were found the least fault with, pretending that they had done a wonderful amount of work when they had done nothing, making the most unmeaning speeches that ever were heard in the Prince's name, and uniformly showing themselves to be very inefficient indeed. (49-50)

They ignore both the prince's desires and the needs of the country. Tape makes the prince lethargic, and his relatives ignore him rather than help him out of this trap, "as though they had quite forgotten that no harm could happen to the Prince their father, without its
inevitably affecting themselves" (213). With the above passages, Dickens suggests that no man is exempt from social duties.\textsuperscript{54}

The fairy tales of Dickens and Morley in Household Words all implicate selfishness as the root cause of the greed and arrogance of the elites. In "The King of the Hearth," Phil's belief that "the most convenient and proper thing is for every individual to worship only just his self" is scorned (231). As a result of the selfishness of the elites, which runs counter to the interests of society, the fairy tales "The Water-Drops," "The Thousand and One Humbugs," and "Prince Bull" all end unhappily. In "The Water-Drops," for example, the generous nature of the water-drops' quest, to do "the most useful service to the race of man" (483), is rewarded by the Prince of Nimbus selfishly taking advantage of their absence to marry the princess himself. The Sultan is called "Taxedtaurus," or "Fleeced Bull," suggesting that the country is being bled dry; Prince Bull is likewise victimized. Both "The Thousand and One Humbugs" and "Prince Bull" end with the rulers as helpless and the country in chaos. The Sultan does not find a proper "Howsa Kummuns," and the cycle of stories ends abruptly, emphasizing that they do not offer any solutions and only add to the Sultan's despair.

THE INFLUENCE OF DICKENS'S PERIODICALS ON THE FAIRY TALE:

Household Words and All the Year Round were very popular and respectable journals which played an important role not only in criticizing social ills, but probably in

\textsuperscript{54} Dickens also refers to the bungling of the army in the Crimean in "Proposals for a National Jest-Book" (HW 1856), although here he blames the army elite rather than the British bureaucracy at home.
disseminating the fairy tale beyond the mere chapbook or collection of chapbook tales. Though it is difficult to prove this influence, there was a definite increase in the number of fairy tales written from the late 1850s onwards, a growth which suggests that the fairy tale had grown in status. It is likely that the championship of Dickens and the contributors to his periodicals raised the prestige of fairy tales in particular and fancy in general. Moreover, many of the fairy tales appearing outside Dickens's periodicals criticized social irresponsibility and thus reflect the fairy tales written by Dickens and his contributors. Dickens's Household Words and All the Year Round, then, played a significant role in establishing the fairy tale as a valid genre for social criticism and satire.

Examples of these tales include William Makepeace Thackeray's The Rose and the Ring (1855), Frances Browne's Granny's Wonderful Chair (1856), Alfred Crowquill's "Heinrich; or, the Love of Gold" (1860), Mary de Morgan's "The Toy Princess" (1877), Thomas Hood's Petsetilla's Posy (1870), Mary Louisa Molesworth's "The Story of a King's Daughter" (1884), George MacDonald's The Princess and the Goblin (1871) and The Princess and Curdie (1883) and Oscar Wilde's "The Happy Prince" (1888) and "The Star-Child" (1892). Like the tales in Household Words, these tales combat the utilitarian/capitalistic ethos that values material goods over the things of the spirit. Through fancy, these writers, like Dickens and Morley, hoped to enlarge the social sympathies of their readers. The fairy tale in Household Words, then, was a social weapon whose attack was felt outside its pages, and gained many allies in the battle to create a more equitable society.
Like Dickens's tales in *Household Words*, many of these fairy tales are set in courts corrupted by vanity and greed. The court represents the British government. In *The Rose and the Ring*, Thackeray presents us with a burlesque of a usurper:

All Valoroso wanted was plenty of money, plenty of hunting, plenty of flattery, and as little trouble as possible. As long as he had his sport, this monarch cared little how his people paid for it. . . . (14)

In *Granny's Wonderful Chair*, King Winwealth, Queen Wantall and Princess Greedalind rule the court, and "a multitude of people were always at the gates clamouring for goods and lands which Queen Wantall had taken from them" (Browne 14). In *Petsetilla's Posy*, Hood criticizes taxation, the New Poor Law and utilitarians. A tax is levied to build almshouses, and, "[a]s all members of the Royal Cabinet were exempt from taxes, there was no opposition to the scheme. . . ." (36). No wonder that King Rumpti cannot come back to life: a fairy has turned this good king into stone until an honest hand touches him. At the heart of these tales is the question of right rule, and their moral is for readers to be unselfish, for a selfish society leads to ruin and despair.

In *The Rose and the Ring*, *The Princess and Curdie* and *Granny's Wonderful Chair*, the poor child reforms the corrupted court and restores its rightful ruler. These tales draw from the Fisher King motif of the King Arthur legend, in which the sick king and his wasteland kingdom are both restored to health and fertility. The idea of the totally disenfranchised—the hero or heroine is both poor and a child—as a saviour is subversive. In the secondary world of faery, however, all is possible and social status is suspended or reversed. As we have seen in *The Hope of the Katzekopfs*, worldly rank
does not apply in faery; therefore, it is easy for writers to criticize social hierarchies in their fairy tales. In his Princess books, MacDonald reiterates many times that true princesses and gentlemen are polite and unselfish. His heroes are Curdie, the miner's son, and the princess Irene. Thus the two opposite classes are brought together, in shared youth and belief in the magical/spiritual, to save the kingdom from corruption.

In all these stories, the poor child saves the kingdom from its own greedy self-destructiveness. The writers of these fairy tales exalt poverty as a simple way of life unencumbered by material possessions and greed. We saw this romantic theme in Morley's "The Golden Fagots" and Paget's The Hope of the Katzekopfs. Curdie's family is poor, but its members do not want more than what they can earn from their labour. In "Heinrich; or, the Love of Gold," the hero sacrifices "love, friendship, peace of mind, and all that is supposed to make life lovely" (69) to mine an ore of gold. He later repents his choice and becomes a hermit helping others for free. In Oscar Wilde's "The Happy Prince," the statue, who donates the jewels and gold he wears to the poor people he observes, is destroyed because he is no longer outwardly beautiful. Wilde, too, gives the poor greater moral qualities than the rich, although he criticizes poverty more than the above writers. Petsetilla in Petsetilla's Posy concludes that "she had taken a wrong view of life altogether, and had associated goodness and virtue with wealth, and wickedness and vice with poverty" (Hood 130). Poverty is praised and wealth disparaged in these tales.

The greedy courts are held in cities, and the writers of these fairy tales favour the romantic view of the country as morally superior to the mercantile city. The contrast
between the evil city and the innocent countryside is a medieval motif which took on greater significance during the Industrial Revolution and the rapid growth of the Victorian city (Evans 245-50). In "The Toy Princess," the rejected human princess happily chooses to live in poverty as a fisherman's wife. Curdie notes the unhappiness of the citizens of the city, and immediately experiences their violence. Snowflower in Granny's Wonderful Chair (1856) is likewise struck by the presence of misery in the midst of wealth: "Rich as they were . . . . Snowflower thought she had never seen so many discontented, covetous faces . . . indeed, the citizens did not stand high in repute for either good nature or honesty" (11).

The children who reform the corrupt court possess a spirituality their elders have lost. In The Princess and the Goblin, Curdie and Irene must believe in the existence of Irene's fairy godmother and the spirituality she represents, even though their senses tell them otherwise. If they believe in her, she will help them. In The Princess and Curdie, Curdie nearly loses his faith entirely when he grows up. When he reinstates his belief, he is given the power to tell, by shaking hands, if people are morally corrupt, for the hands of such people feel like those of animals. In Molesworth's "The Story of the King's Daughter," the tyrannical prince is punished by being turned into a beast: "I have to be in appearance what I was formerly in heart" (280). Dickens, too, as I have already shown, delighted in the contrasts between human and beast, and the moral values assigned to these states.

The child restores the kingdom by recalling the court to the moral values it has lost. Snowflower in Granny's Wonderful Chair reintroduces such values through
storytelling. She goes to court in her grandmother's chair, which moves magically and tells stories. Each night, Snowflower's chair tells the court a story with a moral about unselfishness and charity, and these stories parallel Snowflower's act of restoring the court. In one story, Merrymind brings joy with his fiddle-playing to a cheerless city where "every word was something about work or gain" (113). After each story, members of the court claim it as their own. Through her stories, Snowflower acts as a catalyst of memory and brings the members of the court back to their better selves.

In "The Toy Princess," a fairy has substituted a toy princess for the real one in order to teach the members of the court a lesson about their poor values, but they refuse to listen. When the ruse is revealed, the court still chooses the toy princess, who never makes a mistake, over the true one. In short, the court values the machine over the human, and is mocked by the fairy, and cheerfully abandoned by the real princess, as foolish in its inability to recognize the value of humanity.  

Mary de Morgan plays with the traditional happy ending in "The Toy Princess." Likewise, the endings of Granny's Wonderful Chair and The Princess and Curdie are unexpected. The tales seem to end happily: Curdie and his army restore the king and, after the monarch's death, Curdie marries Irene, and they rule together. At the end of Snowflower's last story, Queen Wantall chops open the chair: a bird flies out and turns

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Mary de Morgan is working within a romantic tradition. Her story resembles "The Sandman," by the German romantic E. T. A. Hoffmann, in which no one but the poets realize that the belle of society is a life-size doll. It also recalls "The Emperor and the Nightingale" by Hans Christian Andersen, in which the Emperor chooses the toy bird over the real one.
into Prince Wisewit, who had been trapped there by a spell. His return to court signals a return to the utopia that was his former kingdom:

The houses and lands which Queen Wantall had taken away were restored to their rightful owners. Everybody got what they most wanted. There were no more clamours without, nor discontents within the palace. . . .

(Browne 125)

These utopias, however, do not last. *Granny's Wonderful Chair* ends with the narrator making the following observation:

that time is long ago. Great wars, work and learning have passed over the world since then and altered all its fashions . . . the fairies dance no more. Some say it was the hum of schools--some think it was the din of factories that frightened them . . . (Browne 126)

Browne thus blames industrialization and education for this loss of utopia. It is said, Browne recounts, that when Prince Wisewit, who has "somehow fallen under a stronger spell" is freed, he "will make all things right again, and bring back the fairy times to the world" (127). Since only Hans Christian Andersen, she claims, has been in contact with the fairies, perhaps she is suggesting that fairy tales are the way to bring the fairies back; after all, the fairy tales Snowflower's chair tells redeem the society, if only for a while.

Macdonald ends *The Princess and Curdie* on an even less hopeful note. Curdie and Irene have no children, and their successor discovers gold in the foundations of the

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56 It is uncertain if Browne means education in general, formal didactic education as criticized in *Household Words*, or national education.
city. He starts to mine obsessively, forgetting the people, who sink "toward their old wickedness" (219). As the city stands on a hill, supported by pillars, it eventually collapses, and returns to being "a wilderness of wild deer" (221). Similarly, the king who succeeds the reformed hero of Oscar Wilde's story, "The Star-Child," "ruled evilly" (204).

These endings parallel those of "Prince Bull," "The Thousand and One Humbugs" and "Water-drops," and suggest the same reason: the authors withdraw the utopian ending to protest the selfish management of English society. The authors have played with our expectations of the fairy tale formula of a happy ending, including the underdog's rise to power. The result is that we are thrown back into the chaos or deprivation that characterized the kingdoms before the heroes and heroines came to power or restored the rightful rulers. We are denied the utopian resolution of the fairy tale in order to make us think why this utopia is curtailed. Victorian society, these writers suggest, is too corrupt, materialistic and selfish to achieve or maintain utopia. Perhaps these endings function as warnings, since they show that utopia can turn into a dystopia at any moment. Utopia, they argue, is a spiritual process rather than a material product, and must be continually maintained through personal and social vigilance as well as continued faith and hope. These writers thus suggest that fancy and hope must be continually renewed in order for society to achieve social justice.

The writers of these fairy tales, then, reflect both the social concerns and the style of the writers in Household Words and All the Year Round. They share the same mission: to prove the value of the imagination and to combat the corruption that greed
and social status breeds. Like the writers in Dickens's periodicals, these writers use fancy to satirize or otherwise criticize their society. In the power they give to the child, the value they put on fancy and hope, and the desire for a more equitable society, they share the humanist views promoted in Household Words and All the Year Round. Their style, combining fancy with social realities, and influenced strongly by romantic principles, also reflects that of Dickens's periodicals. Household Words and All the Year Round, then, inspired writers to use the fairy tale as a social weapon. These periodicals occupy an important, if little acknowledged, place in Victorian fantasy.

In Dickens's lifetime, in part due to his efforts, the fairy tale became not just respectable but vital to the middle classes of England. Dickens and other humanist Victorian writers defended the fairy tale until it was no longer necessary to do so. The fairy tale eventually achieved the moral standing that the moral didactic works for children had previously held. As part of this movement of humanist writers, Dickens helped to establish the idea that fairy tales and fancy were necessary for the development of children's minds, and his periodicals were especially valuable media for spreading these views. By the time Dickens died, the fairy tale was firmly ensconced as an important part of the nursery, children's literature and education.

These changes did not occur in Britain alone. Dickens was read outside of England as a novelist, and All the Year Round was published abroad in the United States as well as in England (Oppenlander 50-53). As a result, Dickens's use of the fairy tale in his novels and journals influenced writers in other countries. For instance, his presentation of the home as a domestic ideal is found in Little Women; this home
encourages fancy, as the March girls play at being members of the Pickwick Club, and Jo writes fairy tales.

As fairy tales became more accepted, they became also more inventive and surreal, as Jean Ingelow's *Mopsa the Fairy* (1869) and Christina Rossetti's *Speaking Likenesses* (1873) show. Ingelow and Rossetti are among a large group of Victorian writers, some of whom I have discussed above, who like Dickens use the fairy tale to communicate social concerns. But these concerns change with the times. For example, Ingelow and Rossetti, unlike Dickens, communicate their unease with issues of gender rather than those of class. Nina Auerbach and U.C. Knoepfmacher's collection *Forbidden Journeys: Fairy Tales and Fantasies by Victorian Women Writers* (1992) shows this development of the fairy tale from 1867 to 1901.

Dickens played a pivotal role in the use of the fairy tale for satire or social protest, and contemporary writers of fairy tales have continued to use the genre for such aims. At present, the fairy tale is popular among adults as well as children. Many collections of traditional, Victorian, and modern fairy tales aimed at adults have appeared in recent years. As well, many current fantasy novels and collections, such as *Black Thorn, White Rose* (1994), are based on fairy tales. The new popularity of the fairy tale is marked by an awareness of its cultural capital. Feminism has encouraged both the revival of non-canonical tales featuring strong women and the revision of well-known tales. Jack Zipes has gathered feminist revisions of tales in two outstanding collections: *Don't Bet on the Prince* (1987) and *The Outspoken Princess and the Gentle Knight* (1994). Such tales challenge both fixed cultural notions about gender and the genre of the fairy tale.
Similarly, multiculturalism has resulted in an increase in the production in the West of tales from around the world that challenge the centrality of the European fairy tales.

The more conservative aspects of Dickens's use of the fairy tale also appear in contemporary fairy tales, as Walt Disney echoes Dickens's entwining of the fairy tale, the ideal home and the fairy-like woman. As did Dickens, Disney makes a link between the home and the nation to promote his "family values," and publicizes his views as widely as possible, using the latest technology. The current battle of the fairy tale has little to do with religion or reason; instead, the battle is between Walt Disney and other producers of fairy tales who are trying to provide alternatives to the former's monolithic presence.

Children today are not at all deprived of fairy tales or fancy; the fairy tale has become part of children's literary education just as Froebel's kindergarten has become the model for early education. Children are introduced to fairy tales and nursery rhymes before any other kind of literature, and the same concept holds true for film. Fairy tales are available in a multitude of media, even in CD Roms that teach children how to read. Fairy tales are read in school. As well as the new fairy tales and films based on fairy tales, children continue to receive the fairy tales of the Grimms, Perrault, George MacDonald and Oscar Wilde. The fairy-tale collections of Andrew Lang and Joseph Jacobs continue to be published.

Although many of the fairy tales now produced, such as Walt Disney's films, contain moral didactic discourses, none of them approaches the extremes of the moral didactics of the early nineteenth century. Instead, fancy is viewed as a faculty that, as Dickens and others argued, must be encouraged for the child's mind to be properly
stimulated. Child culture today is based on the concepts that Dickens and his fellow humanists praised: imagination, joy, and tolerance. The fairy tale is now an undisputed part of children's education, a cultural product whose high value is taken for granted. Given the efforts that he and other Victorian humanist writers made in establishing this literary form, Dickens would be very pleased indeed.
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