

# Victorian Feminist Criticism: Recovery Work and the Care Community

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IT is fitting that this article emerged from a conference in which the orderly progression of speakers was continually modified by exchanges within the conference space, for these two ways of organizing information form the subject of this article. When we aim to recover Victorian women writers, we often imagine a particular case in a timeline, selecting and extracting in a tacit model of linear orderliness. This is particularly significant in what we might call “recovery feminism,” the practice of salvaging texts that have been lost to history. Recovery feminism has dominated Victorianist feminist criticism since its development in the late 1970s, and I practiced it enthusiastically in my first book, *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes*. In this article, I want to acknowledge what recovery feminism has given us, but I also want to delineate the profound and often unarticulated ways it continues to structure our work, often with unintended consequences. In order to explore alternative forms of feminism, I assess theories of influence and intertextuality, and I use Charlotte M. Yonge’s *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853) as an example that both thematizes this issue and acts as a case study of forms of feminist criticism. A viable feminist criticism, I contend, ought to be able to address a novel like *Heir*, and *Heir* itself may be able to provide a model for how to do that. Such a model of feminist practice might actually resemble the simultaneous, atemporal, interactive model of the conference day. In the digital era, we occupy an alternative chronology, in which we envision ourselves not as strenuously excavating the last disintegrating relics of the past, but rather as choosing among multiple simultaneous virtual texts, severed from markers of time or space. What might be a feminist critical practice for the way we work now?

In this article, I advocate for using the feminist philosophical theory of “ethics of care.” Ethics of care focuses on care work, traditionally an unpaid duty assigned to women along with other forms of relational

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work, like emotional labor. “It is an ethics that gives voice and attention to humans who are undervalued precisely because they perform unnoticed, invisible tasks and take care of basic needs. And, more often than not, these humans are women, often nonwhite women,” explains Sandra Laugier.<sup>1</sup> Care ethicists argue that we are all in perpetual care relations with one another, constantly receiving and giving care. Nobody could survive infancy without care; nobody could live without the care of those who built our roads and purified our water. Fiona Robinson summarizes the field today:

Care ethics is not a claim about women’s essential nature, or about women’s universal oppression. It is not an exhortation for us all to “care” more, or to be “more caring.” Care ethics is a critical feminist theory that seeks to reveal the different forms of power that keep the values and activities of care hidden from “public” view, and to demonstrate the devastating effects that ensue when care is consistently devalued, sidelined, and subordinated to the higher values of profit and military power. As an antidote to the values of neoliberalism, care must be recognized as a social responsibility, an attribute of citizenship, and a basis of feminist solidarity.<sup>2</sup>

In other words, to read for care does not require the critic to feel caring feelings, or to seek admirably caring moments in texts, but, rather, to recognize the significance, incidence, and nature of care relations. Such relations make us rethink political alongside personal dynamics. The state can be understood as a social organism intimately interlinked by ongoing ties of care, rather than a rational collaboration of independent agents.

One form of care relations that is particularly common in Victorian fiction is the community of care, a group of voluntary participants who show up to help someone in trouble. The care community is supposed to be egalitarian, for the urgency of caregiving supersedes conventional class status. These fictional communities are also fluid, permeable, and affiliative. People choose to join or leave the community and they articulate their rationale. The care community also overrides conventional temporalities; the group occupies a kind of perpetual present in which members suspend their sense of past disagreements or future consequences in order to alleviate the immediate crisis that brought them together.<sup>3</sup>

This care community structure offers two useful ideas. First, it allows us to imagine ourselves as enmeshed in a care relation with a text, and to think about what we want to do in that role. Second, it enables us to reconceptualize Victorian authors as communal, interactive figures,

rather than linear inheritors of a female tradition. To explain this latter move, we need to understand the temporality of recovery feminism.

### 1. RECOVERY FEMINISM: THE HISTORY

The roots of Victorian feminist criticism go back to the Victorian era itself. 1890s New Women writers did not use the term “feminism,” but they saw themselves as participants in a larger movement that they identified as a chronological sequence. In *The Heavenly Twins*, Sarah Grand described human beings who were “seventh waves,” who could push human progress a bit further, until the next wave arose, and Olive Schreiner imagined an enormous mountain, on which seekers of truth painstakingly cut steps for others to climb.<sup>4</sup> In the 1890s, while Grand and Schreiner imagined themselves incrementally pushing ahead, Alice Meynell was looking backward, publishing reconsiderations of earlier female writers from Mary Wollstonecraft to Hester Thrale. A generation later, Virginia Woolf famously made a female lineage crucial to critical practice. Woolf claimed that we “think back through our mothers” and she began to try to identify members of the “tradition” that women writers needed.<sup>5</sup> What Grand, Schreiner, Meynell, and Woolf had in common was a sense of women’s writing as a linear iteration, a sequence that was, moreover, distressingly marked by gaps. In this respect they may have been influenced by evolutionary thinking, imagining history as a succession of types.

Second-wave feminist literary criticism, as it emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, built on this sense of a lineage with missing links that needed to be filled in.<sup>6</sup> Writing on Victorian women writers required poring over microfilm, working with special collections librarians, and traveling to archives. That work felt worthwhile because it meant rescuing another forgotten woman writer, and, indeed, the harder the task, the better it proved the researcher’s real passion for her subject.<sup>7</sup> It was also urgent, according to Carol Poster:

While we theorize, unrecovered Victorian women’s writings, printed on acid paper, crumble into permanent and irretrievable oblivion. Like a salvage archaeologist hastily digging a few feet ahead of road crews, racing against time to save artifacts and map edifices, the feminist Victorian scholar races against oxidation. Just as the archaeologist must work quickly with available resources to record unexcavated sites, eschewing the meticulous methodologies employed on more leisurely digs, so feminist scholars cannot indulge in the luxury of letting prolonged theoretical debate replace recovery work.

The consequence of delay will be the permanent silencing of the majority of popular Victorian female novelists by permitting physical disintegration of their works.<sup>8</sup>

Recovery feminism was a material practice, largely based in Anglo-American English departments, competing with the theoretical ideas coming out of French feminism at the same time. Both French and Anglo-American feminism aimed to multiply the number of texts available for reading. French feminism expanded women's reach through associating femaleness with a semiotic play that overrode conventional boundaries (Irigaray's "the sex which is not one"; Kristeva's intertextuality), but Anglo-Americans found more materials by doggedly digging them up, sometimes literally: in A. S. Byatt's *Possession*, the great novel of recovery feminism, the researchers have to recover priceless manuscripts from a grave in a lightning storm. Elaine Showalter remembers shivering in unheated libraries when researching *A Literature of Their Own*. Of a happier memory, she writes, "In 1971 I went to Bath in search of Sarah Grand, and, on a rainy winter day, opened the cartons in the Municipal Library which had sat untouched since her death."<sup>9</sup> Those who followed this heroic generation dreamed of such moments. Few could expect to literally dig manuscripts out of a grave, but any researcher might find a dusty box that contained treasures.

This fantasy forms part of what Suzanne Keen has usefully described as "the romance of the archive." These are thrilling adventure stories, in which a researcher uses the tools of archival research to uncover a secret trove, with villains, clues, grave robbery, and detective work. She identifies Indiana Jones as a formative example. As Keen points out, archival research seems like an odd choice for action heroes, since the real experience involves long periods of drudgery and waiting.<sup>10</sup> Yet this vision of triumphant discovery animated dozens of popular novels and films in the last two decades of the twentieth century, as Keen shows, and its popularity surely perpetuated and reinforced recovery feminism in scholarship at the same time.

Recovery feminism was also appealing because it fostered a powerful personal connection between the researcher and the subject. 1970s recovery work "treated [authors] as having much in common with the feminists who unearthed them. An empathetic interpretive dynamic was set up, one based on a sense that both the historical writers and the present-day feminists shared the same constructive, nurturing goal of bringing depth and importance to the representation of women's

lives,” writes Jennifer L. Fleissner.<sup>11</sup> Feminism’s embodied, identificatory narrative allowed for anecdotes about bad food, aching backs, and sore throats, whereas the reader of high theory, who might also have felt cramped and headachy focusing on difficult language, was not supposed to commemorate this somatic experience. Bringing the body into the ivory tower is part of what disability studies fights to do, and of course it is also a feminist act, part of demanding a workplace that recognizes childcare and maternity care needs. Thus, recovery feminism affirmed the female critic’s bodily experience and personal feelings (her passion for the writer that brought her to that archive), and insisted that those elements formed part of the work.<sup>12</sup>

However, while recovery feminism empowered the critic, in certain ways it impoverished the text and its author.

First, the drive to “always historicize” exerts its own order. We *know* where to put that author whose novel was published in 1853. We also know what historical events are likely to have influenced it. We are the custodians of an inherently chronological tale, and we aim to fit a forgotten text into an empty space, sequentially: Whom can we slot in between the death of George Eliot and the first publications of Virginia Woolf? Who predated Jane Austen? This is not an inherently problematic way of organizing literary experience, but it is limiting, for if we are always trying to fill in gaps in a linear historical record, then we may not be noticing alternative modes of organization, nor the kinds of possibilities, texts, and feminisms that an atemporal, nonlinear arrangement might support. Victorian feminist criticism is increasingly exploring such new temporalities.<sup>13</sup>

Second, recovery work can produce reductive readings. Virginia Jackson and Yopie Prins astutely comment that recovery work “reduce[s] the history of canon formation to a politics of representation.”<sup>14</sup> Moreover, as John Guillory warned us in 1993, inclusion on a syllabus is not tantamount to real-world representation.<sup>15</sup> The drive to bring back women’s writing is a powerful narrative, but its effects may be limited to other scholars. Moreover, its focus on personal stories can militate against readings that focus on other issues: genre, style, the complicated production and imbrication of cultural categories.<sup>16</sup>

Third, if we assume that what we are after are always fragile, disintegrating material texts, historical relics, we may be overlooking the very forms of knowledge we use most often. Contemporary gender theory has put a lot of pressure on the word “women” in “women’s writing,” but we also need to interrogate the second term, “writing.” Today we

increasingly often experience texts as digital information characterized by omnipresent accessibility and a kind of perpetual presence. As scholars, we are accessing decontextualized, anonymously scanned, or digitized texts that often bear no markers of their original state. This is particularly true of scholars with visual impairments, who rely on vocalized versions of texts, as well as those readers who voluntarily prefer to consume audiobooks to written texts.<sup>17</sup> The problems are obvious: a richly complex artifact can reduce to a stripped-down current of information—and information that someone else, often a corporation, has decided is important. But our changing habits of access can also spur us to update our ideas of research. Marianne Hirsch has suggested turning to oral histories as the best way to capture the complex collectivity of feminist criticism over the past half-century. Perhaps we can imagine feminist work not as recovery, but as assemblage.<sup>18</sup> Feminism in the digital age might not work by identifying the content of a found physical document, but, rather, by interrogating our own process of selecting and juxtaposing them, as Hirsch imagines us doing in her futuristic fantasy of feminist research circa 2027.

Finally, recovery feminism can (ironically) reinforce a conventionally gendered narrative. It often tacitly imagines a woman writer who was suppressed, and who is rescued by an ardent, energetic researcher bravely surmounting all obstacles. But, as Brian Connolly remarks, the researcher should not be “some heroic individual recovering and resurrecting lost people, but rather a point through which a collective body of knowledge gets filtered into something both new and old.”<sup>19</sup> The notion of the researcher as heroic is just as regressive a myth as the idea that Victorian women were “lost,” silenced, or made mad or demonic by a world that refused to accommodate her.<sup>20</sup> For fifty years feminist scholarship has started with the baseline assumption that Victorian women were victimized, yearned for freedom, covertly rebelled, and that their writing reveals this historical trauma through publication history, reception history, and the narratives themselves. That story has truth, but it is only one of many possible stories, some of which do not treat the text as the representative of the person quite so directly, and do not assign the text/person such a conventional role. As Tamara S. Wagner explains, the complexities of real Victorian women get “chiefly ignored in ideologically driven appraisals that wish to create the nineteenth-century woman author as an inherently subversive, subaltern, protofeminist figure.”<sup>21</sup>

The 1990s saw the emergence of political criticism and attention to material culture and the economics of publishing, enabling an

outpouring of new work on sensation fiction, periodicals, and New Women fiction, and some serious analysis of not-particularly-feminist writers like Linton, Yonge, and Oliphant. This period also saw the emergence of readings of postcolonial and racial politics affecting recovery/canonization, further complicating the idea of a victimized silenced woman by showing that global forces were complicit in the policies that exalted or suppressed certain writers. The madwoman in the attic was raging about a history of colonial domination, not (just) her own personal history, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism" so famously showed. The politics of recovery work began to get complicated, moving beyond the dream of a heroic researcher's personal quest to rectify a historical wrong.<sup>22</sup>

However, this new work did not lead to a repudiation of recovery feminism, and its residual presence is causing problems today, when recovery feminism can feel like a naïve relic next to queer theory and gender studies. Victorian feminist criticism still retains essential or biological "women" as its subject, an untenable assumption in an era when gender is widely viewed as a constructed, intersectional category. Moreover, recovery feminism perpetuated a kind of simplistic biographic ascription. It allowed a slippage from the work to the author—if one was feminist, suppressed, subversive, endangered, then perforce the other was too, and saving the work was tantamount to saving the person. But today, theorists are accustomed to a far more sophisticated view of textuality than simply seeing it as an intentional product controlled by its author.

Part of the problem is that the idea of recovering forgotten foremothers relies on an undertheorized notion of lineage specifically, and "influence" studies more broadly. Virginia Woolf claimed that women think back through their mothers. F. R. Leavis argued that Austen led to George Eliot who led to Henry James; Harold Bloom imagined sons swerving from their progenitors.<sup>23</sup> These writers view influence diachronically, with predecessors enabling subsequent authors. A single great individual creates a major achievement, a legacy affecting people in the next generation who either express grateful indebtedness or fight for their own individuality. As Bloom wrote, this is a "historicism that deliberately reduces to the interplay of personalities," with Person A responding to Person B, without regard to their cultural milieu.<sup>24</sup> This stress on personal reactions may be useful for biographical work and for canon building, but it neglects authors' horizontal relations, as it tends to reach for ancestry rather than peers, and it utterly disregards the structural and material conditions—and even the genre expectations—that



determines what gets written, published, and praised. It now seems like naïve neoliberalism to soar blithely over the ways that race and gender and access to publishing networks condition what gets written and how it gets read.<sup>25</sup>

A second model of textual relationships, plagiarism, has had little impact on feminist recovery work, except in cases where a well-known work by a male author has been shown to have borrowed liberally from a lesser-known female source or coauthor. In cases of plagiarism, we use an economic model to regard a text as an artifact with a certain value, a thing that can be claimed or stolen. Brian Connolly calls this the “proprietary claim to knowledge.”<sup>26</sup> In this case, the text is an inert product, its content and its creator’s identity irrelevant to its status as intellectual property. We are in a marketplace of ideas, and someone has swiped the goods off the counter. Wayne Booth describes this theory as “an unthinking individualism: what’s mine is mine and what’s yours is yours, and I fill my responsibility to you if I resist the impulse to steal from you.”<sup>27</sup> While useful for expressing the kind of damage that intellectual theft can wreak, the plagiarism idea offers only a single, suspicious account of influence, not allowing for inspiration, allusions, borrowings, homages, or pastiches. Rather, it presents a dire either-or situation in which the only possible relation to another’s work is theft, or no theft. And while it does institute a code of behavior, that code is punitive rather than ethical, teaching writers to avoid danger rather than aspiring to good principles, regarding decent citation as a safeguard, not a positive ethical good in itself.

Perhaps, then, feminist criticism should move to intertextuality, a more theoretically sophisticated and postmodernist idea. Intertextuality imagines texts in fluid linguistic intermingling without human intention; in Julia Kristeva’s words, “the notion of intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity.”<sup>28</sup> Kristeva coined the term “intertextuality” while explicating Mikhail Bakhtin’s theories, and the idea was further developed by such theorists as Michael Riffaterre, Gérard Genette, and Roland Barthes. Like weather systems, language moves in complex chaotic eddies. In lieu of the generational model of influence, intertextuality requires a perpetual present, as if texts all coexist and interact all the time. Intertextuality frees us from the confines of authorial intentionality and the limits of authorial agency, as Barthes explained in “The Death of the Author,” making it particularly liberating for critics who can enjoy what Nancy K. Miller calls “the (new) monolith of anonymous textuality, or, in Michel Foucault’s phrase, ‘transcendental anonymity.’”<sup>29</sup> Barthes



explains that writing becomes “writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing.”<sup>30</sup>

However, intertextuality’s disregard for personal authorial input and cultural formations presents a problem for modern critics. In intertextuality, all texts are alike, products of linguistic interplay, regardless of who wrote them, when, and where. This kind of radical disconnection seems to violate what we know about how writing actually gets produced. It is particularly worrisome that intertextuality ignores the different and difficult conditions under which people of color, women, and other marginalized voices might generate their work and experience its reception. Erasing authorial agency is not a good idea for people who struggle to have that agency recognized in the first place. Intertextuality is so committed to a radically egalitarian, postmodernist, and fluid vision of culture as a “communications network” that it often dismisses the idea of inheritance as an elitist remnant, Mary Orr points out.<sup>31</sup>

Orr’s idea of “positive influence” aims to redress the balance. Insisting on a “positive influence” in the case of African American and women writers shows how newcomers become able to “empower their various heritages,” making a tradition retroactively visible inasmuch as it necessarily led up to the achievements of the present.<sup>32</sup> Whereas intertextuality inhabits what I have called a perpetual present, “positive influence” invites a creative, playful sense of chronological duration, permitting future renewal and reuse while reanimating the past.<sup>33</sup> However, advocating for intertextuality as the basic principle while allowing for tradition in certain selective cases seems to muddy both systems, and although it does help us read the work of women and people of color, it also may inadvertently support the assumption that white male writers are the default mode, the colorless norm to which no particular styles, forerunners, or traditions apply.

The care community mediates the influence/intertextuality divide because it is both personal and textual. The care community is intertextual inasmuch as it functions via a fluid, shifting, perpetually present method—but it features human histories, agencies, and relationships, the kind of personhood traditionally enshrined in influence studies. Where recovery feminism tends to cast the critic as rescuer of an imperiled Victorian female, care ethics aims to imagine egalitarian interrelationality. Where recovery feminism assumes a linear “influence” model, care ethics accommodates a decentered, fluid, intertextual network. Where recovery feminism prioritizes rebelliousness, care ethics is largely

indifferent to political expression as such, but is instead interested in the social relations among people. In this respect, care community readings can follow the female tradition in a deeper sense; as Woolf explains, works never have “single and solitary births” but rather express “the experience of the mass.”<sup>34</sup> This kind of collective social model can offer new ways to read—as we shall see in turning to *The Heir of Redclyffe*.

## 2. CASE STUDY: *THE HEIR OF REDCLYFFE*

How did *The Heir of Redclyffe* fare under earlier forms of feminist work, and how might a care reading open up alternative kinds of analysis?

Recovery feminism did not serve the distinctly nonsubversive Charlotte Yonge, one of the “bogeywomen of nineteenth-century proto-feminism.”<sup>35</sup> Yonge often wrote against feminist causes.<sup>36</sup> She advocated obedient wifhood and wrote approvingly about youths who stifled their own skills in order to practice pious self-discipline, thereby advocating the kind of cultural oppression that good feminist authors were supposed to be rebelling against. No madwoman in the attic, Yonge was, if anything, the prim aunt in the parlor, or, as Elaine Showalter describes her, “good grey Charlotte Yonge.”<sup>37</sup> At the same time, Yonge did not exactly present a textbook case of a forgotten, endangered foremother. She was sturdily popular throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and indeed continues to find a strong market among homeschooled children. She also had a scholarly record, of a sort—while mainstream academics were not very interested in Yonge, members of the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship held conferences and published articles. In other words, Yonge was neither forgotten nor feminist. *Heir* was a particularly unlikely case for recovery, being both well-known and male-centered; indeed, Showalter adduced the male characters of *Heir* as evidence of Yonge’s internalized male values in *A Literature of Their Own*.<sup>38</sup> From 1900 to the 1990s, there were fewer than a dozen articles, and only two or three scholarly books on Yonge.<sup>39</sup>

The other problem for recovery was that Yonge also never got lost. Indeed, the stability of Yonge’s reputation irritated critics like Q. D. Leavis, who warned that it imperiled the whole canon.<sup>40</sup> If recovery feminists imagined Victorian women’s writing rather like buried treasure that needed to be excavated, earlier scholars tend to treat Yonge like a large rock outcropping in the middle of a construction site: an inconveniently obtrusive presence from which a clever person might nonetheless be able to chisel out some useful information on the Oxford Movement,

literary allusions, lexicographic irregularities, folklore, or children's literature. Decades of "enormous critical condescension," as Clare Walker Gore calls it, finally wore that Yonge boulder down into rubble that had disintegrated enough to fit the recovery model.<sup>41</sup> By the 1990s, Yonge finally looked enough like the victim of unfair critical suppression to make it possible to read her seriously.

If we turn to an ethics of care, we can see immediately that it asks different questions than recovery feminism. Recovery feminism wants to identify the author's political allegiance and the text's reception history. Instead of those static descriptors, ethics of care asks about relationality as a fluid, ongoing activity: How might care relations describe the author's relation to others, to the text, to the reader, and how might characters themselves enact mutual care? How might such relations shift and how effective were they?

Historically speaking, an ethics of care is deeply appropriate to Victorian writing. Care ethicists tend to look for three exemplary forms of care: parenting, nursing, and teaching. All three were, of course, central to Victorian women's experiences, and Yonge was immersed in all three. Although she never had children, she championed a group of younger female friends whom she nicknamed "the Goslings" (herself being Mother Goose), with whom she produced coauthored stories.<sup>42</sup> Yonge nursed her closest friend, Marianne Dyson, who could not walk and suffered from severe headaches.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, she witnessed her mentor, Keble, caring for his invalid sister, Elisabeth.<sup>44</sup> By the time Yonge was seventy, she had taught Sunday school for an astonishing sixty-four years and believed "any claim she had to recognition to be that of a veteran Sunday-school teacher," not an author.<sup>45</sup> Living her entire life in the village of Otterbourne, devoted to the church that her father helped to build, Yonge was deeply involved in local ties, and it is not surprising that she wrote such communities over and over in her fiction.

Yonge's lifelong experience of communal care was typical, although her unmarried status actually meant that she had fewer carework duties than most women. Virtually all Victorian authors wrote from home, surrounded by family members, whether it was Charles Dickens's ten children, Margaret Oliphant's unruly extended brood, or the intense sibling life of the Brontës. Above all, of course, almost everyone had experience of home nursing. As Florence Nightingale wrote in 1860, "Every woman, or at least almost every woman, in England has, at one time or another of her life, charge of the personal health of somebody, whether child or invalid,—in other words, every woman is a nurse."<sup>46</sup> Caring for

family members was simply one of women's duties, as Nightingale points out, but it was often men's responsibility too, particularly if the cared-for needed to be lifted and carried. In other words, the lived experience of caregiving was widespread in the nineteenth century, generating and confirming the sense of being constantly in relation to others.

Nursing is fundamental to *Heir*. *Heir* is structured as a feud between Philip Morville, a rational, modern, skeptical man, and his cousin Guy Morville, a chivalric martyr figure. Guy grows up in the gloomy Morville castle, while Philip rules over their mutual cousins, the Edmonstones, a modern suburban family with three daughters, Laura, Amy, and Charlotte, and a disabled son, Charlie. Eventually Guy marries Amy Edmonstone, while Philip marries her elder sister Laura. Much of the Edmonstones' home dynamic revolves around managing Charlie's physical and emotional needs. However, as is typical of Yonge novels, most characters fall ill in one way or another. Mrs. Edmonstone's elderly mother needs care, and Laura, suffering under the stress of her covert engagement to Philip, becomes severely depressed. On Guy and Amy's honeymoon in Italy, they meet up with Philip, who contracts a near-fatal disease, with which he infects Guy. Amy, who is pregnant, must nurse both men in a strange country. Guy dies, forgiving Philip in a saintly way, but although Philip survives, he is traumatized and disabled by the residual effects of the illness, which appear to include some brain damage, as well as devastated by guilt over Guy's death. Care ethicists stress that care should be reciprocal.<sup>47</sup> When Guy loads Philip with favors and then dies, Philip can never repay him, an imbalance that causes him acute psychological and physical pain.

Care relations in this novel are, in other words, both central and unremitting. Everyone is constantly caring for everyone else. The last two hundred pages of *Heir* depict the Edmonstones working to balance the needs of a physically disabled youth, an unhappy widow, a sister suffering from depression, a cousin intermittently delirious from malarial fever, an elderly grandmother, a rebellious cousin, and a baby. Everyone consults with doctors, travels to nurse each other, and checks that the carers left behind are not getting depleted. Nobody is more important than anyone else; they want to help all members equally. This community is female-dominated; the family consists of three daughters, a mother, a grandmother, an Irish female cousin, and a baby girl, while its main male members, Charlie, Philip, and Guy, require the most care. Within the community of care, roles must remain fluid; nobody is stuck as perpetual cared-for or caregiver, but everyone helps

everyone else in turn, a value vividly illustrated when Charlie and Philip, each too weak to walk, take a carriage, “each anxious for the comfort of the other.”<sup>48</sup>

Not surprisingly, the Edmonstone group, coping with all this caring, is essentially a community of care. It is highly permeable and inclusive, folding in neighbors, wards, cousins, family friends, and connections. Charlie’s father is “so fond of inviting, that his wife never knew in the morning how many would assemble at her table in the evening. . . . The change was good for Charles, and thus it did very well, and there were few houses in the neighborhood more popular than Hollywell” (37). It is also atemporal. Amy finds, when nursing Guy, that she is so “fully occupied” she “never opened her mind to the future” (458). The illness acts as a kind of reset button for relationships, erasing previous dissatisfactions, starting afresh, as when Guy’s fatal illness fundamentally alters Philip’s lifelong suspicions of him, and when Philip’s ghastly appearance, in turn, reconciles Charlie to him at last. Flexible, inclusive, egalitarian, and temporally suspended: in all these ways, Guy’s adoptive family, the Edmonstones, form a classic care community.

However, Guy’s biological family, the Morvilles, offer the opposite: a strictly patrilineal descent marked by strong forms of status differentiation. Family for the Morvilles means a traditional ancestry, and that lineage is male, singular, silent, sequential, and guilty. The Redclyffe lineage is grimly inescapable, with one man in each generation who will be the heir of Redclyffe, and who seems to live in isolation, hard-wired to repeat his ancestors’ mistake (each Morville man commits violent crimes). After all, Redclyffe is entailed and “has always gone in the male line” (529). The all-male Morvilles are entirely historically-oriented, inhabiting an ancient castle amongst a population that is “a primitive race, almost all related to each other, rough and ignorant, and with a very strong feudal feeling for ‘Sir Guy.’”<sup>49</sup> According to Lynn Shakinovsky, “The very concepts of lineage and inheritance contain within themselves the idea of replication, of passing on what is received down through history. The tightly woven domestic model into which Guy and Philip are interpolated appears to function as a fate that is predetermined and inescapable; it is through this claustrophobic and stultifying destiny that Yonge investigates the infinitely destructive potential of sameness, of repetition as it is played out through the generations.”<sup>50</sup> Because the Redclyffe world is based on a single heir, it does not recognize any principle of social reciprocity, egalitarian respect, or communal responsibility. Thus, the villages under its control deteriorate. The only kind of social relation it

can muster is that of an old retainer's feudal fidelity, a loyalty that is itself historical, inherited from generation to generation.<sup>51</sup>

To modern eyes, *Redclyffe* vividly illustrates what it would feel like to live Bloom's theory of influence. To remain hyperaware of one's inheritance, to feel threatened by the horror of repeating one's ancestor's acts, is to be caught in a nightmarishly diachronic imperative, where the best one can hope for is a swerve away from inherited determinism. In this case, the novel is reiterating the work of its powerful forebears, or experiencing a violent, wrenching turn away from them.

The issue in *Heir* is whether Guy can achieve what Bloom calls "poetic misprision," repetition with a crucial difference. Guy agonizes that he is "heir to the curse of Sir Hugh, and fated to run the same career, and as he knew full well, with the tendency to the family character strong within him, the germs of these hateful passions ready to take root downwards and bear fruit upwards, with the very countenance of Sir Hugh" (80). However, the Edmonstone coterie introduces Guy to de la Motte Fouqué's tale of *Sintram*. Guy can now imagine a fictional predecessor rather than a real ancestor, a new intertextual possibility. As Amy reminds Guy, "Sintram conquered his doom" (71). Guy had assumed that he was doomed to repeat his familial past, but Amy's comment reveals to Guy that he can alter his fate by choosing to leap laterally into someone else's story. In this supportive community, Amy can prompt Guy to a new thought: Is it possible to be *Sintram* rather than a grandfather? Rather than a literally inborn fate, can one elect literary, symbolic, atemporal affiliations, in effect choosing one's own adventure? The fact that it is Amy who suggests *Sintram* indicates that this form of flexible relationality is female-associated in *Heir*, as opposed to a grimly all-male lineage.

*Heir* is deeply steeped in other stories. Yonge uses *Dombey and Son* as an intertext when a dead boy's beloved dog consoles the miserable surviving sisters in both stories. She draws attention to that debt when she has the characters discuss the death of little Paul Dombey at the beginning of the novel, unaware that Guy himself will replicate this tragedy. However, Guy's Morville story is most clearly based on three Romantic tales: Sir Walter Scott's *Guy Manning* (1815), Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué's *Sintram* (1815, published in English translation in 1841) and Alessandro Manzoni's *I Promessi Sposi* (1821–27, but published in 1840).<sup>52</sup> *Sintram*'s influence is perhaps the most obvious—characters explicitly invoke the characters as models for their own behavior.<sup>53</sup> De la Motte Fouqué and Scott describe the doomed heir of a sinning race,



occupying a craggy northern castle on a sheer cliff, a man struggling towards moral salvation, clearly the urtexts for Guy. Yonge borrowed some of their characters' names, personality types, and specific episodes.<sup>54</sup>

It is not surprising that Scott was a formative influence on the work of someone born in 1823. Yonge was allowed to read one chapter a day of the *Waverley* Novels throughout her childhood.<sup>55</sup> She wrote that "I may respect, admire, rely on other authors more, but my prime literary affection must ever be for Sir Walter!"<sup>56</sup> However, the Edmonstone family also invokes *Sense and Sensibility*, with a coolly reasonable eldest sister, a more emotional slightly younger sister, and an immature third sister. Indeed, Yonge originally named the Edmonstones, the Dashwoods.<sup>57</sup> Much as she loved Scott, Yonge was also deeply influenced by Austen and saw herself as Austen's successor, especially since she too grew up in Hampshire among Austen's connections, and many of her novels rework Austen's.<sup>58</sup>

It is certainly possible to read Guy's two families as replaying the divide between Scott and Austen that is traditionally credited with undergirding Victorian literary forms. This one novel, indeed this one character, embodies the relation between a big national story of the movement of historical forces, and a small domestic marriage plot.<sup>59</sup> But the influences don't divide quite that neatly. The intertextual references exceed Guy's two families. Guy's story, the tale of the self-sacrificing good man, also invokes Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (1485); the Christ story; the parable of the Pharisee; Robert Southey's *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801); Lord Byron's "The Giaour" (1813) and "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" (1812–18); Kenelm Digby's *The Broad Stone of Honour* (1822); Edmund Spenser's "The Faerie Queen" (1596); John Keble's "Lectures on Poetry" (1832–41); and Samuel Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753). Critics have found echoes of all of these texts in *Heir*, and the novel itself offers a lively thread of self-referential literary conversation in which its characters discuss the merits of such writers as John Milton, Byron, Dickens, and de la Motte Fouquè.

*The Heir of Redclyffe* is a kind of community of its own, a chorus of half-recognizable voices chiming in together. Perhaps Yonge was taking Keble's famous advice, "Don't be original."<sup>60</sup> For the experience of reading *Heir* is not one of an insecure novice writer shoring up her work with references to the greats. *Heir* does not feel derivative, plagiarized, or like a pastiche of its source texts. Rather, it is a novel whose emotional effect is amplified because it harmonizes with so many other stories. This is a textual community of care. *Heir* treats everything from the story of Christ to *Dombey and Son* as if they occupy the same kind of no-time of



literature: a kind of egalitarian, intimate crowd in which one can swap stories with, say, Malory or Sir Walter Scott. It enacts the kind of literary community that Paul K. Saint-Amour seems to be calling for when he notices that the literary present tense “was multiple, describing events or conditions with a range of durations, ontologies, and temporalities. In what ways, I wondered, might the literary present be, in Ernst Bloch’s word, ‘non-synchronous?’”<sup>61</sup> Yonge writes non-synchronously, reusing and altering her sources, showing no interest in the sanctity of a text by someone else in the past. *Heir* often feels as if Yonge is coauthoring with a colleague (or a dozen colleagues), who simply happen not to be aware of their collaboration.

Reading *Heir* as a communal form allows us to assess Yonge’s interactions with her intertexts in terms of care theory. If Yonge is their carer, is she treating her cared-fors appropriately? One concern in care relations is that the carer can project an inauthentic need onto the cared-for. Real care demands “motivational displacement”: helping the cared-for do what s/he wants.<sup>62</sup> Nel Noddings warns us to avoid “the projection of one’s own personality into the personality of another.”<sup>63</sup> When Yonge rewrites her sources, is she respecting their own personalities, or projecting hers onto them?

Sometimes she domineers, giving bad care. When Yonge conflates Scott, Manzoni, and de la Motte Fouqué in *Heir*, she makes them into convergent allegorical accounts of the same dynamic of a sinning, erring, repentant boy in a wild landscape, not independent narratives by people from different national and linguistic traditions, writing in different genres (myth and historical fiction). Some of these losses are profound. Where *Guy Mannering* addresses the painful process of land enclosure, dispossession, and the rise of a monied middle class that pushes out the older landed lairds, *Heir* simply has attractive, scenic crags.<sup>64</sup> Where Scott’s work addresses the nostalgic recovery of an imagined national past, Yonge’s novel envisions moving into a modern world that provides up-to-date ethical and spiritual guidance for self-improvement. Similarly, Yonge ignores the fact that Renzo, the young man in Manzoni’s *I Promessi Sposi*, is a peasant embroiled in class struggle against the massive legal, military, financial, and sexual power wielded by the nobility. Guy has little to do with class differences, for he lives in a pleasantly homogenous middle-class suburban England.<sup>65</sup> Thus Yonge smoothly eradicates her predecessors’ more radical national and class critiques, overriding cared-fors who cannot speak back.

However, Yonge may have thought she was taking care of her writerly colleagues, editing away their bad elements so as to allow the pure core spiritual narrative to shine through. In this respect, she was acting on their behalf, giving good care. For not only does Yonge erase the regional and class politics of her forebears, but also alters these source texts in ways that her own readers would have preferred. For instance, Yonge mutes the aristocratic violence and sexual obsessions of her Romantic sources.<sup>66</sup> Yonge is aiming to care for her readers by giving them what she perceives as the best possible versions of the story, a cleaned-up, softened version, retroactively improving Scott and the others.

The larger point is that *Heir* forms part of a textual community. Guy reaches out laterally for additional models: Sintram, Christ, Sir Charles Grandison, King Arthur. Yonge's productivity rivals her famous contemporaries Anthony Trollope and Margaret Oliphant, for Yonge wrote over a hundred novels, many of which are enormous (*The Pillars of the House* is well over a thousand pages), not to mention her prolific production of nonfiction books: schoolbooks, biographies, history, reference works. She sometimes published four books in a year. Maia McAleavey has written about the excess of Yonge: the vast novels, the enormous families, the plenitude of events, while Kelly Hager and Karen Bourrier have developed a database demonstrating that Yonge is the only nineteenth-century writer who writes about large families in such a way as to make every sibling a substantive character.<sup>67</sup> Yonge's famous family chronicles follow more characters, over more time, with more independent and simultaneous subplots, than virtually any other Victorian author.<sup>68</sup> This vast sprawl aligns *Heir* with the capacities of a digital era, databases that can keep track of multiple sources and elements.

The literary world of *Heir*, with its dozens of allusions and source texts, functions as a kind of community in which it is perfectly legitimate to intervene and alter someone else's work. While this may seem odd to us, it was normative for the period. "Many critics have observed that, in a sense, women writers 'collaborate' with the historical and literary figures they seek as precursors and revise," Jill Ehnenn comments.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, cooperative writing was more common than the alternative. As Margaret Beetham reminds us, "A literary criticism that carries some trace of the Romantic idea of the writer as solitary genius is . . . inadequate to an understanding of Victorian literary culture," since that literary culture often operated in collaborative ways.<sup>70</sup>

Collaborative writing was particularly common in periodical culture, with which Yonge was profoundly involved. Yonge began editing *The Monthly Packet* as she started writing *Heir* and remained its editor for an astonishing thirty-nine years, making her “the longest-serving novelist-editor of the nineteenth century,” in Beth Palmer’s words.<sup>71</sup> She also edited a private amateur magazine called “The Barnacle,” and the journal of the Mother’s Union, *Mothers in Council*.<sup>72</sup> The periodical offers a synchronic space in which disparate worlds coexist, impinging on one another through spatial juxtaposition and coincidental echoes rather than in a linear, chronologically logical progression. Linda Hughes thinks of print culture as a kind of city, “defined by multiple centers,” with different neighborhoods, movements, temporal rhythms, an “interactive mix of disorder and order.”<sup>73</sup> Journalism involved a fluid idea of textuality, since the author pitched the original piece to the particular journal’s style, the editor would alter it, the author recorrect it, and the author might well change it again if s/he republished it later.<sup>74</sup> In a periodical context, then, writing is contingent and flexible and emerges from a social organization. This was especially true of “The Barnacle,” which contained coauthored work produced by her own circle. Yonge’s writing experience, by the time she came to write *Heir*, was of a jostling, miscellaneous community, and of herself as a person who mentored younger writers by correcting their work.

This kind of collaboration seems to have characterized Yonge’s method of producing poetry and fiction. Elisabeth Jay has pointed out that Yonge tended to chime in with other poets rather than aiming for an original voice of her own. In writing her novels, Yonge famously subjected all her drafts to her father and Keble, and, when writing *Heir*, Yonge leaned heavily on her group of prepublication readers, deleting and changing scenes according to their advice.<sup>75</sup> Writing, for Yonge, seems to have been a composite process, working on multiple texts simultaneously, showing different versions to different readers, expecting it to be read by unknown people in other times and places. The fact that her interlocutors could not respond may not have mattered much. An editor may not hear back from a contributor; a collaborator may fall silent; in these cases, the other’s unreachability does not erase one’s duty to keep working. But the idea of Scott or Manzoni as silent interlocutors creates a disorienting sense of atemporality for a reader who has been trained to “always historicize.” The synchronicity of a text, in which everything is always happening, in which the bold lover

never, never can kiss and the melodist is forever piping songs for ever new, describes a mode of thought of which we may well ask: Is this feminist?

### 3. FEMINIST CARE COMMUNITY CRITICISM

Reading for care is feminist, no matter whether it involves male or female writers. Modern care ethicists are not interested in essentialist identification of their subjects, but rather on the work of caregiving—a form of labor that has for centuries been intimately associated with women. Community, too, is historically associated with women; as I have argued in *Romance's Rival*, women were cast as the socially enmeshed, emotional, nurturing alternative to the rational, autonomous, advantage-seeking individualism granted to men in the seventeenth century.<sup>76</sup> This is still the case today, Lisa Baraitser reminds us, for women (and particularly mothers) “remain disproportionately involved in the production of communal activities, support networks and other activities that may appear as ‘leisure,’ but in fact can be thought of as part of maintaining the supportive structures in which mothering can remain viable, and require a certain kind of ‘work-time’ to make happen.”<sup>77</sup> To read for care is to insist that “women’s work”—traditionally disrespected, unpaid work—is crucial to political life, social relations, and literary analysis, and this remains a feminist declaration no matter how egalitarian a culture might become. Indeed, if carework became a respected pursuit for men as well as women, that would be a feminist triumph.

In this article I have used a Victorian novel as my case study and I have explained why care relations are particularly apt for Victorian texts, but ethics of care can be useful for work from other eras, including our own. Genre fiction might be composite writing, for fantasy, science fiction, romance, and horror novels predictably follow the conventions of multiple other texts, and we might benefit from reading this not as a failed bid for singular originality, but, rather, as the expression of an interestingly communal, capacious sense of textuality. For instance, J. K. Rowling’s “Harry Potter” series is frequently critiqued as derivative, but a care reading would turn those multiple voices into a feature, not a bug.<sup>78</sup> We could also use this perspective for fictions that revise earlier work, like Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*, which Caroline Rody reads as a “radically participatory literary universe” that works “to value inclusion, not individualism, to honor difference and multiplicity.”<sup>79</sup> My point here is that a care-community reading can

help us read popular writing (often but not always by women) by focusing on its achievement of complex relationality, instead of making it fit a recovery narrative that focuses on individual achievement vis-à-vis a linear timeline.

My larger argument, however, is that all texts are composite texts. All texts are produced by people who have internalized others' work, with drafts sent out to different people, with editors and readers and collaborators who shape the product, carrying the traces of their development in a social nexus. Intertextuality is true: language is fluidly interactive. Influence is true: writers are thinking about other writers. But reading the text as communal labor makes it clear how those two factors converge. Recovery feminism sought rebellious women writers to recover, but a communal, composite feminism no longer needs to subject historical women to a political litmus test that requires them to fit a rescue narrative. Instead, a more contemporary feminist practice derives from the process, not the subject. Composite feminism—as befits its name—has been here for a long time, practiced by multiple authors. It is nineteenth-century in its experience of multiple simultaneous relationships, twentieth-century in its explicit revision of predecessors, and contemporary in its compatibility with digital methods. It can help us read genre fiction, bestsellers, revisionary histories, and even, perhaps, *The Heir of Redclyffe*.

Recovery feminism has served us well, and my own deep involvement in recovery feminism gave me some of the most indelible scholarly memories of my career. It gave us a compelling narrative so attractive that it emerged in everything from *Possession* to *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Its strong script gave us a way to identify Victorian women writers, an elemental and emotionally powerful argument for reversing historical injustice, and on the tide of recovery feminism we have brought hundreds of historically underread women safely to shore. But as scholars become increasingly uncomfortable with the residual assumptions of recovery feminism, we risk looking outmoded next to other theoretical schools. The alternatives of poststructuralist intertextuality and biographical influence theory do not serve feminism well; one is too purely textual, the other too linear, to do justice to the kinds of issues we need to grapple with.

A composite, collectivist criticism can help us perform a different role as feminist critics. Instead of seeing ourselves as saviors of a silenced victim, we can imagine ourselves into a care relation with the text—which might mean reparative readings, readings designed to respect the other regardless of whether we agree with its politics. We might, then, think of

ourselves not as the agents of heroic rescue, but, rather, as carers keeping the welfare of the text at heart. Practicing Noddings's "motivational displacement," we strive to avoid imposing our own expectations on the text. We might, in a communal critical mode, want what Paul K. Saint-Amour movingly describes as "an implied petition or prayer that said: let there emerge a readerly community for which this reading is not only true but generative of further discourse, further community. Let this literary present be the time in which the critic, the reading, and the reader-to-come can be as if contemporaries. Let the dead too be our interlocutors."<sup>80</sup> We might, in other words, end with the desire to care for the dead, and recognize that if we read as caregivers, we can work toward their "recovery" in a whole new way.

## NOTES

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1. Laugier, "Ethics of Care," 218.
2. Robinson, "Care Ethics," 308.
3. For a more detailed account, see my "Care Communities."
4. Grand, *Heavenly Twins*, 99; Schreiner, *African Farm*, 166. Jones has argued that current suffering for a future payoff is also a way Grand imagines the reading of her novel, thus implicating the reader in its feminist push into futurity. Jones, "'A Track'."
5. Woolf, *Room of One's Own*, 76.
6. Formative work included Vicinus, *Suffer and Be Still*; Showalter, *Literature of One's Own*; and Gilbert and Gubar, *Madwoman in the Attic* in the 1970s; and then Mitchell, "Charlotte M. Yonge"; Auerbach, *Woman and the Demon*; Poovey, *Uneven Developments*; and Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction* in the 1980s.
7. Steedman has commented feelingly on "the deeply *uncomfortable* quest for original sources," including bad food and awkward social interactions (*Dust*, 9–10).
8. Poster, "Oxidation is a Feminist Issue," 289.
9. Showalter, "Introduction," xxviii.

10. Keen, *Romances of the Archives*, 29.
11. Fleissner, "Is Feminism a Historicism?" 46.
12. Similar insistence on readers' affective investments can be found in Felski, *Limits of Critique*, and Ruddick, "When Nothing Is Cool." Lynch interrogates the origins and uses of this sense of affective investment. Lynch, *Loving Literature*.
13. See Michie, "Hard Times"; Goodlad, "Bigger Love"; and Damkjaer, *Time, Domesticity, and Print Culture*. In the Romantic period, see Langbauer, *Juvenile Tradition*, and Bundock, *Romantic Prophecy*. Also see Dimock, *Through Other Continents*.
14. Jackson and Prins, "Lyrical Studies," 522.
15. Guillory, *Cultural Capital*, 4.
16. For a comparable account of the fetishization of empirical findings at the expense of self-aware theorizing, see Kleinberg, Scott, and Wilder, "Theory and History."
17. For a memorable explanation of this kind of research, see Mounsey, "Henry Crawford."
18. Assemblage is a term that Puar has taken from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. It also speaks to Bruno Latour's actor-network theory, in which at every moment an array of actors forms an assemblage. Puar, "I would rather be a cyborg."
19. Connolly, "Death of the Author."
20. The locus classicus here is, of course, Gilbert and Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic*, but see also Auerbach's *Woman and the Demon*.
21. Wagner, "Victorian Antifeminism," 6.
22. However, Scott argues that postcolonial narratives can end up following narrative structures that render them similar to what I am calling recovery feminism (*Conscripts of Modernity*, 7–8).
23. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*; Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*; Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*.
24. From Bloom, *Map of Misreading*; cited in Allen, *Intertextuality*, 141.
25. Allen explains, for instance, that when Elizabeth Barrett Browning appropriates the love sonnet for her female speaker, she is playing with genre in a way that Bloom's theory cannot recognize (*Intertextuality*, 143).
26. Connolly, "Death of the Author."
27. Booth, *Ethics of Fiction*, 135.
28. Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," 37.
29. From Foucault, *Subject to Change*; cited in Allen, *Intertextuality*, 155.
30. Barthes, "Death of the Author," 142.



31. Orr, *Intertextuality*, 62.
32. Orr, 171.
33. For a different perspective on the historicity of intertextuality, see Frow, "Intertextuality and Ontology."
34. Woolf, *Room of One's Own*, 65.
35. Wagner, "Victorian Antifeminism," 7.
36. For instance, in *The Clever Woman of the Family*, the catastrophic results of a woman's sanitary and labor reform efforts convince her to undergo painful retraining as a submissive wife.
37. Showalter, *Literature of One's Own*, 137.
38. Showalter, 137.
39. The pre-1990 books are *Mare and Percival*, a published version of a Swedish dissertation by Sandbach-Dahlström, and a collection put together by the Charlotte Mary Yonge Fellowship, *A Chaplet for Charlotte Yonge* (1965). There were also biographies by Battiscombe, *Charlotte M. Yonge* (1944) and Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge* (1903).
40. Leavis, "'Christian Discrimination,'" 152. Popular writers like Yonge threatened the Leavises's project of demonstrating the seriousness of the nineteenth-century canon, Gore explains ("Setting Novels at Defiance").
41. Gore, "'Setting Novels at Defiance.'"
42. Palmer, "Assuming the Role," 61–62.
43. Yonge's relation with Dyson is discussed in both Battiscombe, *Charlotte M. Yonge*, and Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, but a more modern summary can be found in Simmons, "Introduction," 9–10.
44. Jay, "Tractarian Aesthetics," 47.
45. Richardson, *Women of the Church*, 212.
46. Nightingale, *Notes on Nursing*, v.
47. See, for instance, Wendell, *Rejected Body*, 140.
48. Yonge, *Heir*, 574. All subsequent references to this edition are cited parenthetically in the text.
49. Yonge, *Heir*, 285. They are indebted to the lawless Scots in *Guy Mannering*, who are reckless sailors, smugglers, gypsies, thieves, and poachers.
50. Shakinovsky, "Domestic History," 79.
51. Markham, the loyal retainer, has also served Guy's father and grandfather. He seems to be based on Rolf, who stays with Sintram throughout his life and helps him work through his ancestral curse.
52. On *I Promessi Sposi* as an important intertext for *Heir*, see Mitchell, "Reading, Writing, and Recycling." Yonge admired Manzoni so

- much that she translated it so that her father could enjoy it (Jay, “Tractarian Aesthetics,” 54.)
53. Coleridge quotes a letter in which Yonge “refers to ‘Mrs. Keble’s favourite part is the Mondenfelsen time,’ glossing it in a footnote: ‘The time when Guy was banished to Redclyffe, in imitation of the banishment of Sintram to the Rocks of the Moon’” (cited in Yonge, *Letters* 66).
  54. *Sintram* and *Guy Mannering* provide recognizable origins for specific episodes in *Heir* (shipwrecks, duels), character types (inept tutors, guilty brooding older men, foolish patriarchs), and names (Wellwoods, and of course Guy himself).
  55. See Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 111. Escott wrote that, other than Fouqué, “Yonge had studied no modern author but Sir Walter Scott. In his character and books she saw the mirror of knightly manhood, the inspiration of the noblest human duty, and exemplars of personal courage” (“The Young Idea,” 687). See also “The Author of *The Heir of Redclyffe*.”
  56. Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, 93, 113; Mitchell, *Fallen Angel*, 43–44.
  57. In a letter she wrote while composing the novel, in 1850, she calls the family the Dashwoods (Yonge, *Letters*, 73–74).
  58. Regarding Yonge’s rewritings of Austen, see Schaffer, *Romance’s Rival*, 143–44, 181–83.
  59. However, it is also possible to say that Scott foresees this doubling. In *Guy Mannering*, the heir, Harry Bertram, is also adopted by a middle-class family, the Vanbeest merchant clan in Holland, but we learn almost nothing about his upbringing there. By revising this plot, Yonge reverses its polarities; in *Heir* we learn all about Guy’s adoptive middle-class milieu, and very little about his ancestral locale.
  60. Chadwick, *Spirit of the Oxford Movement*, 57.
  61. Saint-Amour, “Literary Present,” 377.
  62. Noddings, *Starting at Home*, 16–18.
  63. Noddings, 13.
  64. Duncan argues that in *Guy Mannering*, Scott invents the romance genre, in which a private individual’s development parallels (but also conflicts with) the development of the modern nation (*Modern Romance*, 7–15). However, Trumpener argues that in *Guy Mannering* Scott imagines a historical actor who is oblivious to the larger forces shaping his destiny, for he acts from private feeling rather than as a representative of a historical force (*Bardic Nationalism*, 185).

65. The one exception is Guy's impecunious uncle, a musician with a gambling problem, but he hardly counts as a real underclass.
66. In *I Promessi Sposi*, Don Roderigo is trying to abduct and rape another man's fiancée. Sintram is passionately in love with a married woman. Guy Mannering fights a duel with a man he suspects of trying to seduce his wife. These powerful illicit desires motivate the sins from which the good characters must recover by slow repentance and good deeds. In *Heir*, however, the story of sexual obsession survives only in a harmless if embarrassing teenage crush mix-up.
67. Bourrier and Hager, "Recurring Siblings."
68. For a similar investigation into contemporaneity, see Michie, "Hard Times, Global Times," and "Victorian(ist) 'Whiles.'"
69. Ehnmen, *Women's Literary Collaboration*, 3.
70. Beetham, "Periodical Writing," 222.
71. Palmer, "Assuming the Role," 61–62. See Yonge, *Letters*, 67–68.
72. Richardson, *Women of the Church*, 212.
73. Hughes, "SIDEWAYS!" 2.
74. Brake, *Subjugated Knowledges*, 13–18.
75. Yonge, *Letters*, 67–68.
76. Schaffer, *Romance's Rival*, 52–54.
77. Baraitser, *Enduring Time*, 73.
78. Rowling's influences include *The Lord of the Rings*, the Narnia series, the Christ story, the myth of King Arthur, Austen, Dickens, school stories like *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, E. Nesbit, Dorothy Sayers, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Wuthering Heights*, Roald Dahl, "Star Wars," and fantasy literature of the 1960s and 1970s, including Lloyd Alexander's Prydain Chronicles, Susan Cooper's *The Dark is Rising* series, Diana Wynne Jones's *Charmed Life*, and Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea quartet.
79. Rody, "Burning Down the House," 316, 317. However, Rosen has argued that minor-character narratives hew to a predictable narrative. Like Scott's postcolonial romances, and Keen's romances of the archive, Rosen's minor-character elaboration encourages us to feel delighted at the liberation of a previously silenced figure. In all three cases, the past is made to serve a liberal fantasy of vindication and redemption. Rosen, *Minor Characters*.
80. Saint-Amour, "Literary Present," 388.

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