8-2002

Why Mystery and Detective Fiction was a Natural Outgrowth of the Victorian Period

Sharon J. Kobritz

WHY MYSTERY AND DETECTIVE FICTION

WAS A

NATURAL OUTGROWTH OF THE VICTORIAN PERIOD

By

Sharon J. Kobritz

B.S. Boston University, 1970

A MASTER PROJECT

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

(in Liberal Studies)

The Graduate School

The University of Maine

August, 2002

Advisory Committee:

John Wilson, Associate Professor of English, Advisor

Deborah Rogers, Professor of English

Kristina Passman, Associate Professor of Classical Languages & Literature

WHY MYSTERY AND DETECTIVE FICTION

WAS A

NATURAL OUTGROWTH OF THE VICTORIAN PERIOD

By Sharon J. Kobritz

Master Project Advisor: Dr. John Wilson

This Master Project presents evidence showing why mystery and detective fiction flourished during the Victorian period and argues that this enduring genre was a natural outgrowth of this time. The project presents material on the culture of the Victorian period and shows how the roles of men and women are defined.

This project will argue that mystery and detective fiction flourished because of the changes in popular culture; that the sweeping changes in education, medicine, literature, religion and business solidified the popularity of this genre. Along with this genre of fiction came a new way of publishing and reading. One mystery and detective fiction writer will be examined: Wilkie Collins, credited with writing one of the first mystery and detective novels and known as one of the fathers of the modern detective novel.

This project does not intend to examine in minute detail all aspects of the Victorian period that caused the popularity of mystery and detective fiction. Rather, it will highlight those areas that contributed most significantly and had the most enduring affects. What this project will assert, again, is that mystery and detective fiction sprang from the startling changes that occurred during a vibrant, tumultuous and exciting era of history—the Victorian period.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

VICTORIAN CULTURE

It will be argued in this thesis that detective and mystery fiction is a natural outgrowth of the Victorian period. To a great extent the Victorians were a self-satisfied lot, happy with their world and their place in it. Their mythos was that England was the best place to live and that they were living in the best possible time. Great strides were being made in all facets of their lives: technology, education, politics, the arts, religions, and medicine. The Victorian era ushered in a period of unsurpassed materialism while at the same time instituting social reforms of a magnitude not seen before. Social reforms were the order of the day, and this was the time when the wealthy began to create programs to assist the less fortunate.[1]

Changes regarding religion and science were all the rage. The world was changing quickly, and the Victorians wanted to be part of it. Paganism and spiritualism became exceedingly popular during this time, mainly as a reaction to traditional religions. Spiritualism appealed to the Victorians on several levels: it confirmed for them that there was more to life than that which could be bought with money; the ideal of communication with those who had died tantalized and intrigued them; all things Oriental and Far Eastern piqued their natural curiosity and intellectualism; spiritualism allowed them to be in touch with their souls without preaching by a priest or minister; and spiritualism was vastly different from anything they were used to.

---

[1]Unless otherwise noted, this Chapter is based on Bailey, Block, Campbell, Childers, GoGwilt, Haley, Neyck, Houghton, Kauvar, Langland, Ledger, Lowerson, MacKenzie, Morse, Mullen, Roberts, Taylor, Turner, Weiner, and Young.

The sensational aspects, too, of spiritualism cannot be underestimated when analyzing its appeal to the Victorians. Spiritualism brought to their lives a sense of adventure, a little scariness, and the ability to practically play G-d in communication with the dead. The prurient nature of spiritualism held great appeal for the Victorians.

Science, too, was undergoing vast changes during the Victorian era. Paul Roach writes that "Victorian England's fascination with pseudo-sciences such as phrenology, mesmerism, and spiritualism was a cultural phenomena which arose during a time of great social upheaval" (1). Seen as a natural outgrowth of the turbulent times, fascination with new and experimental religions and sciences makes much sense. Times of "great social upheaval" call for controversial changes to traditions and values. As Roach explains it: "The chaos and sweeping social reform in the early nineteenth century caused by the Industrial Revolution ushered in an era where people were torn between the new materialism and the old religiosity" (1). Although these pseudo-sciences did not originate in England, the Victorians adopted them as their own. Roach continues: "The doubt and search for meaning in a world gone mad reflected the outlook for a time when the romantic era had been superseded by a new faith in technology and progress. This rush towards progress left many lost souls in its wake who were either crushed under the wheels of materialism or who embraced any ideology which would help them explain their situation" (1). Taken in this context, it is quite natural to feel empathy for the Victorians, bustling along at breakneck speed toward the unknown, everything familiar having been pushed aside to make way for progress.

Another major cultural phenomenon of the Victorian era was the national chauvinism of the English people. The reign of Queen Victoria, 1837-1901, established Great Britain as the mightiest power in the world. Victorians took great pride in being known as Victorian England, a reference to their queen. The sun, indeed, never set on the British Empire. There was a notion among some of the Victorians that people from countries other than Great Britain were ill-mannered and ill-educated ruffians, continental fops, or should be relegated as servants. Literature reflected those values and frequently characterized the protagonist as an evil foreigner. Victorians took great satisfaction from the notion that the evil in literature could be attributed to a foreigner and not an Englishman. This literary device reinforced the English reader's narrow-minded, chauvinistic view of the world.

Another cultural phenomenon of the Victorian era was the obsession with death, which differed from their ancestors' views on the subject. Where death used to be considered a normal result and passage of life, the Victorians wanted to explore the meaning of death and what, if anything, came after it. Death in other centuries, filled with disease, pestilence, and ignorance, was G-d's will, something not to be tampered with. It was an everyday occurrence that was taken for granted. Mass deaths in plagues and wars were something sent from G-d as punishment or retribution. Because the Victorians had more desire for education, for travel, for information about the world, and for new ideas, it is quite natural that people would begin to think of death in more detail, perhaps not as an end but as a beginning. With access to new theories, the Victorians could hope that there was something beyond death that had not been known before,

and even something that could be delayed or reversed. Thus, the turning from

traditional religion and philosophy and the embracing of new concepts was their

way of answering the unanswerable questions about mortality and eternity.

Mesmerism, too, fascinated the Victorians. Developed by Franz Anton

Mesmer, a Viennese physician in the eighteenth century, mesmerism was used

to explain the great void between religion and science. Mesmer proclaimed that

certain individuals possessed healing powers, himself included. This fascinated

the Victorians, partly in response to new medical breakthroughs and the search

for meaning in illness and health.

All of these cultural phenomena were minutely scrutinized and analyzed

by the Victorians as a result of the rise in leisure time. Before, the masses spent

their time working and worrying about how they would feed their families.

Leisure time gave them opportunity to learn about the changes taking place in

their world and the world in general.

During this time, people developed a keen sense of the world and what

was happening around them. Along with science, medicine and religion, the

public took notice of the titillating crimes[2] and wanted to know more. They

demanded to be kept informed of all details of the crimes and avidly followed the

progress of trials. Again, with increased leisure time, people could become

involved in the solving of crimes.

There was, too, a searching for faith and meaning among the Victorians.

Indeed, much of the culture of the Victorian era is enmeshed with this element of

society. Tristam Hunt writes that Victorian England was "haunted by a collapse

---

[2]See Smalls, Morris.

of faith" (14). He writes further that "Victorians regarded themselves as a nation horribly fallen. Faith, and fear of a crisis of faith, persecuted the Victorian mind" (14). According to Hunt, while Victorians loved all things new and challenging and constantly sought an expansion of their minds, they were well rooted in the past, with a special passion for the medieval age. There was a constant angst among the Victorians, a search for faith and righteousness that drove their society. The battle regarding the concept that the past was better on the one hand and the future must be sought on the other caused much turmoil and upheaval and was reflected in many facets of society. One of these conundrums was the religious/anti-religious/moral/amoral ideology.

An aspect of Victorian culture that was not positive was the significant impact that crime had on the literature of the era. The realism of sensationalism intrigued the Victorians and piqued their interest, both prurient and intellectual. Sensational literature grew out of the lurid crimes of the period as a response to the public's demand to know every detail of the atrocities, preferably while the trials were taking place.

The huge wave of people migrating from the farms to the cities brought problems not seen before and was another significant negative influence during the Victorian era. A major cultural change was the rise of crime in urban areas. As industrialization increased and lured people from the rural to the urban areas, crime in England increased dramatically. The myth that drew people from the rural areas--that fortunes were to be made in the cities--eluded many. The newcomers were easy targets, with their trusting ways and innocence. Overcrowding, extreme poverty, and the growing numbers of newcomers

changed the landscape of the cities. Some of the immigrants, in desperation, resorted to crime in order to feed themselves and their families. Larceny was the major crime of this period, and the number of reports exploded to the point that "After 1857, the Inspector of Constabulary judged the police to be efficient if they reported low rates of crime. Consequently, Victorian bureaucrats ensured that criminal justice statistics were kept to an average of 90,000 crimes per year, and many crimes were 'lost'" (Taylor, 1). This hotbed of desperate humanity created the perfect conditions for crimes and a resulting wealth of material for true crime reports and sensationalism literature.

Because one of the major reforms of the Victorian era was more accessible education, more people than ever before learned to read. Prior to 1500, less than 10 percent of the British population could read (Mitch, xiii). "Literacy rates [. . .] had been stagnant at around 50 percent from the middle of the eighteenth century through the first third of the nineteenth century and then rose to over 95 percent by 1900, thus almost doubling within a sixty-year period" (xvi).

Those dramatic numbers can be attributed to a large extent to the availability of education, particularly after the Elementary Education Act of 1870. "At the beginning of the nineteenth century, expenditure by church and state on elementary education was negligible; by the end of the nineteenth century, annual expenditure on elementary education by the state alone came to over six million pounds per year" (2). By the 1880s, all of England and Wales had access to schools with standards for attendance.

Other factors that influenced the rise in literacy were the rapid urbanization of the country and rising working-class living standards. To many, education was a class issue. In an effort to better itself as a class, the lower and working classes sought the same education as the upper classes, thereby pursuing the English dream that they could rise above their station and stand on equal ground with "their betters." To a great extent education is an equalizer; and many did, indeed, better their lot in life. But the pursuit of a dream can often be crushingly disappointing. In the Victorian era, people certainly were better off for obtaining an education, but the hope of the lower classes that everyone could or should stand on equal ground was something that did not happen in the nineteenth century.

Those with jobs could afford the price of a newspaper, but there was an untapped market. Even the poor took great interest in the crimes of the day and followed crimes by listening to others read or talk about what was happening in the world around them.

The interest was more than merely wanting to know about lurid details. The Victorians began to take a keen interest in police work. They wanted to know more than just what happened and who did what to whom. People wanted to know how the police did their jobs, what they were doing at all times, what evidence was available, what the witnesses at the trial said, what the defendant said and how he/she looked while saying it, and how crimes were actually solved. People began to look upon the police as dunces or heroes and never passed up an opportunity to praise or criticize.

Because of increased crime during the Victorian era, England's police force expanded and became more visible. The public chose favorites. They cheered on those they considered clever and severely denounced those they thought were fools. Police and detectives became wildly popular, and following their exploits was raised to a spectator sport.

The rise of forensic investigation, a purely Victorian manifestation, allowed the police to more accurately and quickly solve crimes. They were no longer confined solely to an eyewitness to the crime. Now suppositions could lead to facts, and facts could lead to the accurate solving of a crime. The public demanded to know what methods were being used to solve crimes and took an avid interest in how such methods were applied.

The Victorians wanted to be actively involved alongside the police. Every gathering place became a forum for debate and supposition—from the workplace to the home to the barroom. Every person became an expert with his or her own deductions and conclusions.

There was no television or radio, and the only communication was word-of-mouth and the printed word; i.e., newspapers and journals and to a lesser extent, books. The publishing industry, shrewdly sensing a trend, was quick to provide information to the public that turned to the prolific newspapers of Victorian England as the main source of information. The newspapers had great influence, and savvy publishers rose to the very heights of power, wealth, and political influence.

New developments in the publishing industry led to increased numbers of newspapers. The rotary press and the composing machine greatly increased the

speed at which newspapers could be printed. Now large numbers of newspapers could be printed at a significantly lower cost than previously. But while the cost of printing newspapers decreased, the new technology caused start-up costs to vastly increase. Mitch writes that "In 1850 only one or two thousand pounds was required to start up a provincial daily. In the 1880s, . . . the cost had jumped to twenty or thirty thousand pounds. And for a London daily, . . . the start-up capital went from twenty-five thousand pounds before 1850 to at least a hundred thousand pounds by 1870" (73).

Despite these costs, in Victorian London there were more than half a dozen major daily newspapers. They were the Daily Chronicle, the Daily News, the Daily Telegraph, Echo, Lloyd's Weekly, the Standard, and The Times. These newspapers created the look and content of their publications based on what the public demanded, and those with morning and evening editions often competed against themselves, sometimes pirating articles from each other and consolidating because of competition. Evening editions were more popular, particularly during times of scandalous court trials or after a grisly murder. Lucy Brown writes that "The Printer's Register claims that the London Echo printed and sold 124,000 copies on the day of the verdict in the Mordaunt trial, a sensational divorce case" (30), a reference to an increased circulation because of the trial. In 1872 there were 91 daily papers in Britain outside of London, 69 morning editions in 1874 and 74 in 1892; evening papers totaled 22 in 1872; 85 in 1892 (33). Weekend and provincial newspapers should not be underestimated. Those who did not make the transition from rural to urban areas were just as interested in reading newspapers as their city brethren. The

Sheffield Independent reported circulation figures of 6-7,000 on weekdays and 25,000 on Saturdays. There were even special interest newspapers; i.e., the "Glasgow Evening Times produced an athletic edition in the 1890s on Saturdays with a circulation of 150,000" (34).

The repeal of the Stamp Tax in 1858 caused some slight increase in newspaper circulation. When the price of a daily fell from a penny to a halfpenny, circulation at the London Standard rose from 30-46,000 in 1860 to 160-170,000 in 1874. In London, the halfpenny evening editions were popular, particularly among the newly literate working classes who had time to read only at night: in 1887 the London Star had a circulation of over 250,000.

Special editions and morning and evening editions pleased the public and allowed people to follow the progress of trials during the day and their favorite sport. The evening edition carried detailed information about the afternoon trial of the accused, and analysis ensued late into the night. The early morning papers carried updates and new information and were avidly awaited.

Another Victorian cultural phenomenon, the advent of leisure time, provided the time necessary for people to engage in amateur crime solving. Following crime became one of the Victorians' most titillating pleasures. While not everyone would admit to avid interest in the national pastime, most people did derive a great deal of pleasure from the screaming headlines of daily newspapers. It was not considered appropriate for ladies to know about crime; but ample opportunity to do so—when their husbands and fathers were away from the house--allowed them to keep abreast of current news.

The Victorian ideal was that middle-class women's place was in the home, to act as supporters of men. The ideal woman was obedient, artistic, nurturing, feminine, involved in good works, unversed in the ways of business and of the world, not overly educated, and submissive. New feminine ideals began to emerge during the Victorian period, however, and women assumed a different persona. They wanted to be as educated as men; some wanted a career. While many women were educated at home by governesses, they now wanted to join boys in schools. They wanted to own property and converse with men about business and politics. They wanted to be able to read books without the approval of their fathers, brothers, and husbands. As more women were educated, they became a force in the literary world as they chose what they read. Magazines and journals were targeted toward women; and they would soon appear as new, strong women in literature, particularly the mystery and detective fiction genres.

Such was the cultural environment of the Victorian period, an environment that helped shape the literary world. This environment was particularly nineteenth century and could not have emerged prior to that time. There was a natural evolution resulting from the assumption of the throne by Queen Victoria and her tastes and ethics defining the period. The British people were haunted by fear of a revolution similar to what had taken place in France; had to face a loss of faith, had to experience the great waves of rural people flooding the cities, had to develop new technology, had to slowly come to the realization that class and working conditions had to change, had to realize that education in all areas

was the path to the future, and had to be brave enough to confront uncertainties and be willing to take courageous steps to embrace the future.

The cultural environment of the Victorian period discussed in this section contributes to the argument that the popularity of mystery and detective fiction could have arisen only during this time.

Chapter 2

VICTORIAN LITERATURE

The Victorian environment did, indeed, shape the literary world. It defined what was written and read. Just as the religious and superstitious environments of previous centuries shaped their literature, so, too, did the Victorian culture. Literature of the Victorian era reflected the interests, passions, and fears of the nineteenth century British people. Literature was used to bring about social change, to amuse and challenge the Victorians, to further their knowledge of the world, to educate people about new advances and theories in the fields of medicine, science, forensics, psychology, religion, industry, and the arts. A discussion of the literature of the Victorian era will be useful in showing why mystery and detective fiction flourished during this time.[3]

Editor Joel H. Wiener writes that "As has been suggested by two historians of journalism, 'the press [in all its manifestations] became during the Victorian period the context within which people lived and worked and thought, and from which they derived their (in most cases quite new) sense of the outside world'" (xiii).

Printing presses, the availability of inexpensive ink and paper, increased literacy, the constant demand for more information about more diverse topics, and savvy marketing by powerful publishers all led to the proliferation of newspapers. Not only did newspapers provide information, but they controlled the information available to the public. Since there was a monopoly on the

---

[3]Unless otherwise noted, this Chapter is based on Anderson, Bullen, Collins, Cruse, Hares-Stryker, Helsinger, Houston, Morris, O'Neill, Parrott and Martin, and Shaw.

information industry, newspapers could decide to what information the public had access.

Competition in the Victorian newspaper industry was fierce. Newspapers started up, and newspapers closed down. Enterprising publishers bought their competition in order to increase their power base. It was not only the major mainstream newspapers that provided information and competed for readers. Savvy individuals, who saw a market for peddling scandals, began a new arm of the newspaper industry: the penny dreadfuls.

The London Journal was one of the first "mass market" publications, according to Weiner, who traces the beginning of its explosion to 1845: "its initiation was made possible by technological advances such as high-speed presses and cheaper paper and by an increasingly literate working class" (5). There was great demand for information, and even members of the working class could afford a penny for a newspaper sheet. Editors "recognized that the same profit could be made by selling a magazine to thirty thousand people at a penny each instead of to three thousand at sixpence and that a lot more people could afford to spend a penny than could part with a larger sum" (5-6).

According to Michael Anglo, "Penny dreadfuls were magazines published on inexpensive paper with fairly simple but exciting stories crammed together with often crude, vivid visuals seen at the time as being just as important as the written material" (1-2). He continues with this description of the penny dreadfuls and to explain their evolution: "The serialized cheap publications of the 1830s to 1850s are generally referred to as 'bloods,' while the 'dreadfuls' followed soon with a touch less gore and more adventure" (2). He writes that "Edward Lloyd,

the first publisher to target the semi-literate, working-class British readership, offered the following explanation of his strategy for success: 'Our publications circulate among a class so different in education and social position from the readers of three-volume novels, that we sometimes distrust our judgment and place the manuscript in the hands of an illiterate person—a servant or a machine boy for instance. If they pronounce favourably upon it, we think it will do'" (2).

As soon as the penny dreadfuls, or sensation journals, began to appear, stiff competition followed. The Victorians loved sensation, blood and gore, grisly details of mutilation and death. They particularly enjoyed reading stories of the upper classes gone awry, and those scandals drew a particularly large readership.

It was the Victorians' fascination with sensationalism that made the penny dreadfuls so popular. The public enjoyed horror and being scared. They consumed the details of grisly murders and mutilations. They avidly devoured any and all details, the more graphic the better. Reading about horrible crimes took them out of their own dreary lives and transported them, for a while, into someone else's life. If details were concocted, stories enhanced, exploits aggrandized, it did not matter. To many of the working class illiterate, if something appeared in print it was the truth.

Often, the public knew the writers who contributed to the penny dreadfuls. That made them all the more believable, regardless of whether the pieces were fictionalized. Weiner writes that "While most of the dreadful pieces were published by 'hack' writers working for next to nothing, a number of respected authors also contributed to the magazines, just as the impact of the dreadfuls can

be found in work by well known authors such as . . . Wilkie Collins, Charles Dickens, and Bram Stoker. Despite the similarities, the cheaper materials appear to have drawn a notably larger audience than either gothic novels or the sensation novels whose popularity peaked in the 1860s. Dreadfuls existed as a major form of popular literature for much of the nineteenth century" (2-3).

Sensation novels grew out of the penny dreadfuls. They were simply longer forms, fictionalized, of what the public had been reading in the daily scandal sheets. From the penny dreadfuls, it was a short leap to detective and mystery fiction, and, again, many of the authors of sensation novels made the transition into this highly popular Victorian genre. It was most certainly the Victorians' fascination with police work, with forensic investigation, their love of puzzles and mazes, and their desire to learn more about modern scientific methods that made mystery and detective fiction so popular. Also, detective and mystery fiction lent itself perfectly to serialization, and the Victorians' enjoyed that mode of literature. This genre provided a main character--a detective or amateur sleuth--who appeared in succeeding stories. Therefore, the reading public gave great loyalty to a publication that published their favorite characters. In many instances the characters took on a life of their own and seemed real in the minds of the readers. Some characters became more popular and real than their authors. Sherlock Holmes is an example of the created outshining the creator. Everyone knew the famous detective; far fewer knew the name Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

According to Chris Willis, "Detective fiction became established as a genre towards the end of the nineteenth century. . . . [M]agazine publication was

an ideal medium for the detective story, lending itself to short-story sequences for linked, self-contained episodes which could be enjoyed separately. By the mid-1890s, around 240 of the 800 UK weekly journals regularly carried some form of detective story, as did monthly journals such as the <u>Strand</u> and <u>Harmsworths</u> . . . at its peak the <u>Strand</u> had a circulation of half a million. They were usually aimed at a middle-brow, family readership, and would have been read by both men and women" (8).

Eight hundred weekly journals throughout the United Kingdom provided ample opportunity for amateur sleuths to engage in their favorite pastime and writers to appear in print. The fact that detective stories could be read by both men and women, without doing so in secret, gave legitimacy to the genre and increased circulation. People could discuss openly detective fiction, whereas with sensation novels and penny dreadfuls not everyone who enjoyed them would admit to doing so. As for writers of detective fiction, some still used pseudonyms, since some literary publishers were reluctant to publish authors of detective fiction. The genre still lacked a certain cache, and it would take a writer of considerable talent to imprint the stamp of legitimacy upon it.

Like the detective stories serialized in magazines, the novel, too, lent itself well to serialization. The novel played an immensely important role in Victorian literature. Many of the major authors of the era, including Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, wrote serialized novels for newspapers which were widely anticipated, avidly read, passed around endlessly, critiqued, criticized and generally provided much fodder for amateur literary critics. The novel, serialized or published in three-volume sets, was one

of the Victorian age's most notable and enduring phenomena. The serialized novel revolutionalized publishing and paved the way for writers to publish their work when a publishing house would not or could not take the risk of publishing their books.

According to Joseph W. Childers, "By the mid-1840s, the literary production of fiction had become highly institutionalized. Also, the ideological impulses operating within novel writing and publishing had established a palpable, if tacit, set of presuppositions about what could and could not be said within the pages of a novel intended for the general reading public" (3). Childers believes that social-problem novels, including Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist, A Christmas Carol, David Copperfield, Bleak House, and Great Expectations, were one way for the Victorians to understand their world and how they fit into it. In the time-honored manner of novelists, Dickens wrote about social problems in fictionalized form rather than standing upon a soapbox and shouting at the Victorians to do something about the horrendous conditions of the working class. The characters in Dickens' books became real to the reading public, and people could empathize with a starving child within the pages of a novel more easily than if that child stood in front of them. Victorians loved engaging in good works, but there was the caveat that many did not want to get their hands dirty in the process.

To a certain extent, because of the tacit understanding about what could and could not be said within the pages of a novel, writers and publishers shaped cultural standards. If a subject was appropriate for both men and women to read about, then it could also be discussed in a drawing room. Society relied on the

well known authors to assist them in their pursuit of appropriate discussions and charitable undertakings.

Charles Dickens was instrumental not only in highlighting society's responsibility toward helping the working class receive education, better working conditions, medical treatment, and adequate food and housing, but he mentored the writer who would become known as one of the fathers of the mystery and detective novel—Wilkie Collins. In 1848 Dickens conceived the notion of founding a magazine so that he could dispense with the pressure of writing serialized novels. Because publishers did not think that even so well known a writer as Dickens could, on his own, sustain a magazine, the project did not get off the ground. Dickens then proposed and started a weekly journal. The content of the journal was book reviews, dramatic criticism, fiction and essays. He paid the writers well and maintained a high level of talent. One of his most noted writers was Wilkie Collins, who was, according to Malcolm Elwin, "a writer of brilliant originality and one of the most popular novelists in the golden age of literary serial" (207).

Even though mystery and detective fiction was serialized during the Victorian era, many people did purchase the three-volume sets. There was a market for both, and people enjoyed reading the books in installments and then as an entire book. The appeal of mystery fiction to the Victorians cannot be understated. They loved their real and fictional detectives and mystery games and never tired of engaging in heated debates as to the worthiness of a police detective or fictional character. Michael Cohen attempts to explain this love of mystery and detective fiction: "One of the appeals of mystery fiction, and far from

its least appeal, is its *difference* from 'serious' or mainstream literary fiction. Mystery readers want certain things from their books—series characters, puzzles that are solved, excitement . . . . Mystery fiction is genre fiction . . . . In mysteries, the center of attention is a crime and the search for answers about it" (122),

Just as the Victorians sought answers to questions about their world and their place in it, they demanded the same from their literature: a complex or puzzling situation and answers to questions. The mystery and detective novel sprang as a natural next level of the sensation novels, which were much loved by the Victorians. Dickens and Collins wrote sensation novels and were immediately accepted by the public as authors of mysteries and detective books. They wrote long, satisfying, complex stories that intrigued the public and left them wanting more. Their appeal, and the appeal of mystery fiction in general, and how that appeal is juxtaposed with society and cultural norms is further explained by Michael Cohen as follows: "Mystery fiction appeals because of the way its authors use its conventions, and those conventions have been present and have been changing ever since the first examples of mystery fiction. Convention, in art as in life, is the acceptance of certain givens by a group—a society in life, readers or spectators in art. . . . Accepted behavior or attitudes operate as glue to bind society; its conventions allow society to come together" (p. 25). In reading and accepting mystery and detective fiction, Victorians as a society bonded or came together in a shared love of the genre. Because of some of the elements of mystery fiction--secrets, crime, scandal—Victorians viewed this literary genre as a mirror of their society. It was their job to unravel

the secret and puzzle before the end of the book. It was their responsibility to seek the answers to the questions posed by mystery fiction.

The advent of forensic science made not only the work of the police force easier and more accurate but provided for the Victorians concrete evidence on which to base their suppositions, theories, and solutions. Ronald R. Thomas says that "Though it is often regarded as a cerebral form that appeals to the reasoning faculties of its readers, the detective novel is fundamentally preoccupied with physical evidence and with investigating the suspect body rather than with exploring the complexities of the mind. . . . In the detective story, a designated cultural authority—the literary detective—rises to power, corresponding in time with the invention of the science of modern criminology" (9-10). Forensic investigation gave power to the police force because it put within their hands the ability to solve crimes without an eyewitness. It gave that same power to the readers. They were given the same evidence as the fictional detective, and they did not always agree with the outcome. For the Victorians, that was part of the fun of being involved in detective fiction. Spirited debates, heated arguments, and varying outcomes all contributed to the enjoyment of this genre of fiction.

An important characteristic of English Victorian detective fiction was its place between popular and high culture. Many were dismissive of detective fiction because it appealed to popular tastes. Critics thought it did not encourage intellectual stimulation, but, rather, encouraged a lurid interest in the sensational. While part of its popularity rested on just that theory, it can be argued that detective fiction was intellectually stimulating to the Victorians and wildly popular.

Victorians took mystery and detective fiction very seriously and spent a great

deal of time analyzing and critiquing the stories. This is an example of

intellectual stimulation combined with leisure time, which gave the Victorians a

sense of satisfaction because it was an efficient use of time. The fact that

Victorians spent a great deal of time following criminal trials and solving the

crimes along with the police exhibited a wholesome, intellectual avocation that

was a major element of their leisure time. It was harmless. It could involve the

entire family. It was, regardless of what the critics said, intellectually stimulating.

And being a devotee of detective fiction meant that people were reading, one of

the major outcomes of the social reformation of the Victorian period.

It was only a matter of time before canny editors, publishers, and authors

saw a market for mystery and detective novels, serials, and journals. The

demand for stories about crime was tremendous. The newspapers were already

reporting on true crimes and selling out everything they could print—why not

create crime stories from a fertile imagination, and thereby satisfy the insatiable

hunger of the voyeuristic public and make money at the same time? David

Wright had the following to say about Victorian mysteries: "The dark and stormy

nights of winter are especially suited to the slimy cobblestones, fog-shrouded

alleyways, and lurking evil of . . . Victorian mysteries. The distinctive appeal of

these mysteries lies not so much in the gruesome deeds but in the profound and

unfeigned horror such evils inspired . . ." (1). The Victorians enjoyed being

scared; they liked sitting around a cozy fireplace on a moonless night reading

mystery and detective fiction. Atmosphere played a huge part in the appeal of

this genre, both inside and outside the story. Ambience became a character; it

took on a life of its own. Again, the atmosphere of detective fiction mirrored the atmosphere of Victorian London.

For the sake of this argument, it is important to note that women played a key role in detective and mystery fiction. Important as that role may be, it did, however, mirror Victorian society's view of the role of women. While women could step out of the societal norm and play the lead detective role—perhaps the only form of fiction that allowed them to play a leading role--they more often were characters around whom the action revolved. Keeping to their Victorian societal roles, they played wives, sisters, daughters. They needed the protection of a man, either a relative or the detective. The exceptions to the traditional role of women were in recognition of the large female readership of this genre of literature. While authors were willing to write about women as the main character detective, they did not give her full credit and equality of a male counterpart. The women remained in their domestic sphere, either working with their husband or fiancé or working behind the scenes.

Chapter 3

MYSTERY AND DETECTIVE FICTION AS A

NATURAL OUTGROWTH OF THE VICTORIAN PERIOD

The Victorian period produced Wilkie Collins, the father of the mystery and detective novel. His most successful and famous novel, The Woman in White, has been called the greatest mystery thriller in the English language. "The Woman in White, published in 1860, was Collins' finest novel, and it remains the most brilliant melodrama in a period when, as T. S. Eliot has said, 'the best novels were thrilling'" (Symons, 7). Collins' next novel, The Moonstone, published in 1868, is considered to be the first and best of the modern detective novel.

Collins took advantage of all the Victorian phenomena previously discussed. He was a prolific writer in an era when printing presses and inexpensive paper and ink revolutionized the publishing industry. He wrote for the penny dreadfuls, establishing himself as a writer of lurid imagination with a highly creative pen. He graduated to writing sensation novels when they were the Victorian rage. From there, it was a simple step up to mystery and detective novels, novels that paved the way for others. The Woman in White and The Moonstone were long, complex novels incorporating many of the Victorian cultural standards previously discussed.

The Victorians' desire to be scared was eminently satisfied in the very beginning of The Woman in White, when the main character, Walter Hartright, who is walking in the countryside at midnight, comes upon a solitary woman

wearing a flowing white garment who reaches out and touches him on the shoulder. Of course, readers, along with Hartright, thought she was a ghost. All the elements of a good ghost story were present: a dark and lonely night, a solitary walker, a hand upon the shoulder from behind, and a heart-stopping moment as Hartright turns. The fact that the woman turns out to be real, and not a ghost, adds pleasure since one can assume that the remainder of the novel will be about the woman, or it is hoped that she will at least figure largely in the story.

The Woman in White has an intricate plot filled to overflowing with eccentric characters, evil foreigners, confused identities, damsels in distress, strong women, mysteries, secrets, and lots of twists, turns and surprises. Like many novels, The Woman in White was based on fact—a French crime--and Collins had but to take his idea from the grisly headlines of the day. A Marquise was drugged and held prisoner so that her brother could inherit her land and money. So, too, in the novel, a woman is held prisoner and secrets and mysteries and an evil French Count all play critical roles. The ghostly woman in the opening scene had its origins closer to home. Collins encountered a woman being pursued by evil men during one of his late-night solitary walks.

Collins's mystery allowed women to play important literary roles. In The Woman in White, Marian Halcombe is charming, witty, independent, and unattractive. She cannot straighten out the muddle by herself, yet she is independent and strong enough to deal with men on an intellectual level. She still needs the assistance of a man to solve the mystery. Laura Fairlie is portrayed as the ideal Victorian woman: obedient, respectful of society and its norms, and somewhat of a martyr in that she is willing to sacrifice her needs for

others. Philip O'Neill writes that "Collins sees the situation of women as both symptomatic of, and supportive to, bourgeois patriarchy. Women cannot be discussed in Collins in isolation from the authority exercised by property and mediated through the sense of propriety" (5).

Propriety was all-important to the Victorians. Appearances were everything. It did not matter what secrets were hidden beneath the façade. One must put on a good face to the world regardless of what was happening on the inside. On the subject of propriety and how Collins used this Victorian ideological, cultural, and mythological aspect of life, O'Neill writes: "The Woman in White must still remain a central text in the Collins cannon . . . . This novel continues an examination of the relations of property and propriety, linked with the stereotypical representations of gender, and does so in terms of appearance and reality. The word 'propriety' recurs so frequently in this novel that it is impossible to ignore it. Significantly, too, it is often linked with appearance and contrasted with that reality which is dictated and circumscribed by the world of property" (7).

Collins' use of property and propriety in The Woman in White was his way of commenting on the social norms, not-so-gently making fun of the rules of society, and contributing to his reputation as a social reform writer. O'Neill continues: "It is implicit in The Woman in White that propriety is a lived practice, an ideology with a material basis which encourages and reproduces an attitude to the world. An ironic pattern of gender ambiguity distributed throughout the characters in the novel demonstrates that for Collins, this attitude belongs to

culture rather than nature" (7). And culture can be and should be changed, according to Collins and his novel.

In Count Fosco, Collins panders to the Victorians' disdain for those not British in portraying the evil foreigner. He was short and fat and was eccentric in his habits. He had lived in England for many years and was well placed in society. However, his brother-in-law, an Englishman, despised him on general principles. In The Woman in White, Collins writes, "These recommendations, however, availed nothing with Mr. Fairlie. In many of his opinions he was an Englishman of the old school, and he hated a foreigner simply and solely because he was a foreigner" (172). So on the one hand, Collins exaggerates a foreigner's characteristics in order to satisfy his Victorian audience. On the other hand, he points out the ridiculousness of hating a foreigner simply because he is a foreigner. Collins tells us that that theory is of the old school, a thing of the past and that the Victorians should change their outlook to correspond with a newly emerging global environment.

Collins peppers The Woman in White with the Victorians' love of puzzles, mysteries and mazes. The plot is complex and contains myriad characters, and Collins throws the readers red herrings and sends them down blind alleys. Perhaps the most obvious mystery, or red herring, is the title of the book. Because of the title and the fact that the woman in white appears so early in the story, we are led to believe that she will be the main character. However, although she is the focus of the novel in that everything happens because of her, other characters take center stage in the story. Collins took the Victorians' love of mysteries and secrets and wove a brilliant novel that began with a ghostly

mystery and became a complicated novel of intrigue. Collins does not want to make the solution to the puzzle too easy to solve, however, and he does not want to give too much away before the end of the book. Therefore, the complicated plot weaves a spidery web of deceit, intrigue, and mystery.

Collins is aware that the Victorians demand to solve the crime along with the police, or in this case, with Hartright. Therefore, he provides just enough information to do that; but he never gives away enough evidence and detail to solve the mystery too quickly. The plot moves along slowly, driven by the constant stream of letters flowing back and forth among the characters. Each letter contains a tidbit of information, not enough to give away the solution but enough to send the characters, and the readers, on a quest for more information. This is part of the maze—all the tidbits of information will eventually merge to solve the puzzle.

The use of a narrator, Hartright, allows the audience to learn what is happening from the perspective of the main character. In many instances, the reader and Hartright learn of events at the same time; and this builds an affinity with the character. The reader feels very much a part of the action, and as Hartright unravels the mystery, so, too, does Collins' audience. This mirrored the Victorians' desire to solve the crime along with the police and to follow criminal trials as they occurred.

Collins also incorporated into his mystery novel the Victorians' feelings of self-satisfaction and sense of being in the best place at the best time. Walter Hartright, frightened beyond measure by the woman in white tapping on his shoulder, confidently persevered to unravel the mystery. He could have run for

his life; however, that would have been very un-Victorian behavior. Therefore, he confronted the ghostly woman and attempted to determine who she was and what caused her to be alone so late at night. That confident characteristic was quintessential Victorian.

Collins, the Victorian creator of the first modern detective, was a stickler for detail, just as any detective should be. In one of the installments of The Woman in White, a Times reviewer pointed out that the train schedule was incorrect. In the book form, Collins corrected the error. In this way, he acceded to the Victorian obsession with order, punctuality, and correct detail.

Collins also used The Woman in White to bridge the gap between high and popular culture, which was the topic of endless intellectual discussion. When writing for the penny dreadfuls, Collins appealed to the lower elements of society with his graphic style and creativity. The Woman in White was considerably more intellectual than his previous sensation novels, and it was wildly successful with the upper classes as well as with the working people. This was a novel that could be openly discussed in drawing rooms and intellectual salons as well as pubs and social halls. Queen Victoria, too, read and immensely enjoyed the novel.

Wilkie Collins utilized all of the various Victorian cultural phenomena in The Woman in White. The novel was Victorian in its design, and it appealed to its readers on many levels. All of the elements that intrigued the Victorians were present, and Collins made the most of his ability to create one of the first mystery novels in the English language. Julian Symons writes that "Collins, like other Victorian novelists was an artist . . . in its style and shaping The Woman in White

is certainly a work of art" (16). About the popularity of the book, Symons writes

that "Queues formed outside the offices to buy the next installment, cloaks,

bonnets, perfumes, waltzes and quadrilles were called by the book's title.

Gladstone cancelled a theatre engagement to go on reading it, and Prince Albert

sent a copy to Baron Stockmar"(16).

The Woman in White brought Collins fame and fortune, but his Victorian

industriousness made him want more.

In an effort to break away from the sensation/mystery novel, Collins

invented the modern detective novel, The Moonstone, that introduced England's

first brilliant detective, Sergeant Cuff. T. S. Eliot calls the book "The first, the

longest, and best of modern English detective novels" (The Moonstone,

Introduction by J. I. M. Steward, 7). As with The Woman in White, the detective

novel was serialized in Dickens' All the Year Round from January 4 to August 8,

1868. It was published in three volumes on July 16, 1868.

The Moonstone, like The Woman in White, is long, complex and brimming

over with delightful characters. This novel, too, uses the technique of telling the

same or continuing story through different characters, a style popularized by

Collins. Each person, therefore, can be compared to a witness at a trial telling

his or her version of what happened. Each character has the opportunity to bear

witness, to tell the judge—in this case, the reader—his or her account of events.

In this way, Collins wrote a detective novel that mirrored a police investigation of

a crime and the ensuing trial. He allowed the Victorians their fun. The readers

could solve the crime along with the police and follow every detail of the trial from

the comfort of their home.

In The Moonstone, Collins allows his detective, Sergeant Cuff, to avail himself of the new forensic investigative tools. It is not necessary to have an eyewitness to the crime. Deduction, evidence, endless supposition and finally, the solution can all be accomplished without an eyewitness.

The Moonstone introduced an eccentric, savvy detective, a character to whom the Victorians could give their affection and loyalty. Several suspects are present, all of whom could be considered the culprit. For this detective novel, Collins created the rules of fair play whereby the detective knows more than the reader and slowly, tidbit by tidbit, feeds the audience information. Here, too, Collins created other techniques that are part of the detective novel: the detective summarizes the crime in front of all of the suspects and interested characters, the detective reveals the villain as the least likely suspect, the detective uses all of the witnesses' stories to solve the crime, the detective recreates the crime, and the law triumphs over the criminal. In this way, The Moonstone mirrors true-life crime-solving techniques.

According to W. David Shaw, "the reader of The Moonstone has to exercise the vigilance demanded by any act of going outside oneself, any act of interpretive scrutiny . . . so a reader of The Moonstone must empathize with each of Collins' narrators as he would with historical witnesses. At the same time interpreters must be critical of the witnesses, registering subtle differences between their own thought and that of witnesses belonging to a different class" (288). It is human nature to believe witnesses at a trial who belong to the upper educated classes rather than witnesses belonging to the working class, particularly if the observers are members of the former. Collins' style of having

different characters tell the same story is a marvelous way for the reader to engage in attempting to solve the riddle. But, not each witness carries the same weight. Victorian human nature was also such that if working class witnesses testified against the upper classes, it was assumed that jealousy and revenge were involved, not truth. Therefore, in Collins' The Moonstone, when residents and guests of the manor told their side of the story, they were automatically believed more than the household servants. Yet, each character told a perfectly valid and believable—but different—version of the same story.

The Victorians' love of exotic places, particularly if enjoyed from England, were satisfied in The Moonstone's use of Indian legends involving rare jewels. Again, foreigners—this time Collins used Indians—were portrayed as the evil characters; and an Englishman, Sergeant Cuff, saved the day. Just as The Woman in White has some basis in fact, The Moonstone was loosely based on an 1860 murder case. Included in the novel were several of the real-life crime details, including a paint-stained nightshirt and a laundry book. The solution to The Moonstone crime was pieced together by Sergeant Cuff gathering evidence from different characters. Collins borrowed this technique from real-life criminal trials, and it works particularly well in a detective novel. In this manner, the detective, or author, can withhold certain evidence until he is ready to inform the reader. In other words, in using this technique the author is able to set the pace of the plot and action.

In The Moonstone, Rachel Verinder receives a rare yellow diamond for her eighteenth birthday. Rachel embodies the educated middle-class Victorian woman's ideal of what a woman should be and highlights one of the

contradictions found in Victorian society: she is masculine in her ability to persevere yet feminine in her feelings, especially for the handsome Franklin Blake. She follows her heart, yet she uses her mind to analyze evidence. She shares the intellectual ability to do so with Marian Holcombe of The Woman in White. This was one of Collins' techniques: to pepper his new genre fiction, mystery and detective novels, with independent women who can hold their own intellectually with men.

Rachel does not know that the diamond has been stolen from a shrine in India and that it carries with it a deadly curse. Here Collins uses the habit of some Victorians who criticized and questioned the British Empire's role in world domination. By making the diamond--the Moonstone—stolen, Collins was comparing the stolen gem to the fact that Britain "stole" India. It was his way of criticizing the British Raj as economic and military imperialism rather than a state of benevolence or paternalism. The diamond is stolen from Rachel, and nothing is done until the family lawyer asks the house steward to put into writing the events surrounding the loss of the jewel. Testimony is given by several narrators, and it is interesting to note the different versions of the same events. Naturally, the servants are considered prejudiced toward their masters, and other characters have personal agendas that must be muddled through by Sergeant Cuff and Collins' readers. In that aspect, the audience is very much a part of the novel. The Victorians loved their puzzles and riddles, and Collins includes enough to satisfy even the most diehard detective fans.

Collins' characters, which include outcasts, ex-prisoners, servants, addicts, and the deformed, appealed to the Victorian desire to be the reformers.

The author highlighted the plight of servants, for instance, in describing laundry day activities, bath rituals, heating and cooking chores, etc. Victorians related warmly to The Moonstone's Rosanna, whose social class, physical handicap, and prison record did not stop her from loving the hero, Franklin Blake. Despite these handicaps she dares to compete with Rachel for Franklin's affections, and many readers found themselves hoping she would win. In this sense, Collins' novels also belonged to the social reformer genre. Part of this social reform storm sweeping Victorian England was woman's place in a man's world. Collins allows his women characters to rise above Victorian ideals of women and stand without a man at their side.

As Collins writes with the Victorians' love of riddles and puzzles in mind, the reader does not see that beneath the surface is a dark reality. Beautiful, respectable homes hide secrets, but the reader is not privy to them at first glance. People are not who they appear to be on the surface. The reader must work to find the answers. The reader must get through to the end of the maze, in this case reading the narrations of various characters and putting together the evidence into a viable solution. Like a magician, Collins uses sleight-of-hand and tricks to keep the reader's attention, send the reader scurrying around for the answers, and keep the reader turning the pages.

In The Moonstone Collins highlights another Victorian phenomenon: fascination with the workings of the mind. In the novel, he used his life-long interest in how the mind functions under the influence of mesmerism and drugs. The parts of the novel that involve dreams, drugs and delirium contrast sharply with the clear, cold, objective Sergeant Cuff, especially in gathering his physical

evidence and gleaning information from the various narrations. Playing with the mind is a central technique of mystery and detective fiction, and Collins ably uses it in his famous detective novel.

Exploration and development of the mind was a major factor in Victorian England, as evidenced by the great strides made in science and medicine; and the intricacies of mystery and detective fiction are a natural outgrowth of that fascination. For the Victorians their world was turbulent and filled with dramatic change; i.e., the great surge of people moving from rural to urban centers and the social reforms such as education and changes in traditional industrial working conditions, and the Victorians sought to bring order to chaos. They felt a strong desire to control the world and their place in it. They sought to bring order to chaos. Bringing order to chaos is the prime ingredient in the mystery and detective novel.

A desire to explain and control their lives led the Victorians to their fascination with the mind. Since England controlled a major portion of the world, it was natural that the Victorians wanted to explain how, why and where they fit into that world. The Industrial Revolution caused great chaos; people began to question the materialism it created and the religions of earlier times. Spiritualism, greatly attractive to the Victorians who were questioning and searching for answers, became popular.

Literature during the Victorian period highlighted social problems and was responsible for bringing about some changes. Literature amused, challenged, and educated people about new advances and theories in medicine, science, forensics, psychology, religion, industry and the arts. The press gave Victorians

their conception of the world. In a sense, the Victorian world was defined by the press, which controlled access to information.

As Cohen wrote, "In mysteries, the center of attention is crime and the search for answers about it" (122). This paralleled the Victorians' search for answers about the meaning of their lives. Cohen also states that, "Mystery fiction appeals because of the way its authors use its conventions ... accepted behavior and attitudes operate as glue to bind a society" (25). In reading mystery and detective fiction, Victorians bonded together as a society in their shared love of the genre. They viewed the elements of mystery fiction—secrets, crime, scandal—as a mirror of their society.

As they sought answers to the mysteries of life, so, too, did the Victorians seek answers to the mystery stories. They loved long, complex puzzles. Wilkie Collins' books were long and complicated, embodying many of the cultural standards of the Victorians; i.e., the foreigner as the villain, a woman around whom the action revolves but who must depend on a man for protection, a hero detective, etc.

Collins' use of propriety in his mysteries is based in the Victorian concept of people's places in society. This, too, was a mirror of Victorian society, and people enjoyed that comforting and familiar aspect of mystery fiction.

Mystery and detective fiction contains the Victorians' obsession with order, punctuality, and correct detail. Readers could spot a false note and did not hesitate to tell writers of inaccuracies and inconsistencies as evidenced by the fact that Collins changed a train schedule in the book version of The Woman in

White after an error was discovered in the serialized version. The public felt so involved in solving the puzzle that they insisted on accurate details.

Collins embraced other Victorian cultural passions in his mysteries and detective fiction. He wrote from several characters' viewpoints. In writing a novel that mirrored a trial with different witnesses, Collins allowed the reader to "attend" a trial without leaving his home. He used his novels as a forum for calling attention to social injustices; i.e., the plight of servants and what he considered the rapacious colonialism by England, both of which were highlighted in The Moonstone. He wrote about a new emerging woman, one who could stand as an intellectual equal to a man but who still needed a man's protection.

Victorian mystery and detective fiction ably highlight another phenomenon of the time: fascination with the workings of the mind. Collins displayed his lifelong interest in how the mind functions under the influence of mesmerism and drugs. These aspects of mystery and detective fiction contrast with other elements of the story that require cold, clear thinking to solve the puzzle and perfectly capture the almost split personality of the Victorians. On the one hand, they were bold, confident, filled with the desire to maintain propriety, knew who they were and loved being Victorians. On the other hand, they questioned many aspects of their lives and looked for answers in non-traditional and new religions and psychological advances. This ability to forge ahead into the new world while still clinging to some of the past gave Victorians their personality.

It was these Victorians who helped develop mystery and detective fiction. From the evidence presented in this thesis, it is clear that there were many factors--cultural, educational, technological, scientific--that contributed to the

popularity of the mystery and detective novel. These phenomena support the

argument that this genre was a natural outgrowth of the Victorian period.

WORKS CITED

Anglo, Michael, "What are Penny Dreadfuls?,"
http://www.ryerson.ca/-denisoff/dreadful-defined.html.

Brown, Lucy, Victorian News and Newspapers, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.

Childers, Joseph W., Novel Possibilities: Fiction and the Formation of Early
Victorian Culture, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995.

Cohen, Michael, Murder Most Fair: The Appeal of Mystery Fiction,
Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000.

Collins, Wilkie, The Woman in White, London: 1859-60.

Collins, Wilkie, The Moonstone, London: 1868.

Elwin, Malcolm, Victorian Wallflowers: A Panoramic Survey of the Popular
Literary Periodicals, Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, Inc.
1934.

Mitch, David F., The Rise of Popular Literacy in Victorian England, The Influence
of Private Choice and Public Policy, Philadelphia: University of
Pennsylvania Press, 1992.

O'Neill, Philip, Wilkie Collins: Women, Property and Propriety, Totowa,
New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books, 1988.

Roach, Paul, "Wandering Between Two Worlds: Victorian England's Search for
Meaning", 1999, <http://www.gober.net/victorian/reports/mesmersm.html>.

Shaw, W. David, Victorians and Mystery: Crises of Representation,
Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990.

Symons, Julian. Introduction. The Woman in White. By Collins, Wilkie.
London: 1859-60. 7, 16.

Thomas, Ronald R., <u>Detective Fiction and the Rise of Forensic Science</u>, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Wiener, Joel H., editor, <u>Innovators and Preachers: The Role of the Editor in Victorian England</u>, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Wright, David, "Gaslight Thrillers: The Original Victorians," *Library Journal*, 02/15/200I/ Vol. 126, Issue 3, p. 228, <http://ehostvgw20.epnet.com/get_xml.asp?booleanTerm=Victorian+Mystery&fuzzyTerm=&hitNum=1&AN>.

WORKS CONSULTED

Anderson, Amanda, <u>Tainted Souls and Painted Faces: The Rhetoric of Fallenness in Victorian Culture</u>, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993.

Bailey, Peter, <u>Leisure and Class in Victorian England, Rational Recreation and the contest for control, 1830-1885</u>, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.

Black, Eugene, editor, <u>Victorian Culture and Society</u>, New York: Walker and Company, 1974.

Bullen, J. B., editor, <u>The Sun is G-d: Painting, Literature and Mythology in the Nineteenth Century</u>, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

Campbell, Joseph, <u>The Hero with a Thousand Faces</u>, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949.

Chapman, Raymond, <u>The Victorian Debate: English Literature and Society, 1832-1901</u>, New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1968.

Cruse, Amy, <u>The Victorians and their Reading</u>, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, no publication date given.

GoGwilt, Christopher, <u>The Fiction of Geopolitics: Afterimages of Culture, from Wilkie Collins to Alfred Hitchcock</u>, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

Haley, Bruce, <u>The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture</u>, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Hares-Stryker, Carolyn, editor, <u>An Anthology of Pre-Raphaelite Writings,</u> New York: New York University Press, 1997.

Helsinger, Elizabeth, "Pre-Raphaelite Arts: Aesthetic and Social Experiment
in the 1860s," 1998,
<http://www.nhc.rtp.nc.us:8080/ideasv52/helsing.htm>.

Heyck, T. W., The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian England,
London: Croom Helm, 1982.

Houghton, Walter E., The Victorian Frame of Mind 1830-1870, New Haven:
Yale University Press, 1957.

Houston, Gail Turley, Royalties, The Queen and Victorian Writers,
Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999.

Hunt, Tristam, New Statesman, January 8, 2001, Vol. 130, Issue 4519.

Kauvar, Gerald B., and Sorensen, Gerald C., editors, The Victorian Mind,
New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1969.

Langland, Elizabeth, Nobody's Angels: Middle-Class Women and Domestic
Ideology in Victorian Culture, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995.

Ledger, Lorraine D., M.S., "When were Victorian Times?," 1996-2002 Liberal
Arts & Crafts, Inc.,
http://www.liberalartsandcrafts.net/contentcatalog/history/victoria.shtml.

Lowerson, John, and Myerscough, John, Time to Spare in Victorian England,
Essex: The Harvester Press, 1977.

MacKenzie, John M., editor, The Victorian Vision: Inventing New Britain,
London: V & A Publications, 2001.

Morris, Virginia B., Double Jeopardy: Women Who Kill in Victorian Fiction,
Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1990.

Morse, David, High Victorian Culture, New York: New York University Press,
1993.

Mullen, Shirley A., <u>Modern European History, Organized Freethought: The Religion of Unbelief in Victorian England</u>, New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987.

Parrott, Thomas Marc, and Martin, Robert Bernard, <u>A Companion to Victorian Literature</u>, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955.

Peters, Catherine, <u>The King of Inventors: A Life of Wilkie Collins</u>, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Roberts, David, <u>Paternalism in Early Victorian England</u>, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1979.

Smalls, Lea, "Crime and its Popular Manifestations in the Nineteenth Century," 1999, <<u>http://www.gober.net/victorian/reports/crime.html</u>>.

Taylor, Dr. Howard, The University of Nottingham History Department, PA64/97, December 22, 1997, <u>http://www.nottingham.ac.u/c/public-affairs/pressreleases/1997/64.htm</u>

Taylor, Jenny Bourne, <u>In the Secret Theatre of Home: Wilkie Collins, Sensation Narrative, and Nineteen-Century Psychology</u>, London: Routledge, 1988.

Turner, Frank Miller, <u>Between Science and Religion: The Reaction to Scientific Naturalism in Late Victorian England</u>, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

Weltman, Sharon Aronofsky, <u>Ruskin's Mythic Queen: Gender Subversion in Victorian Culture</u>, Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1998.

Wiener, Martin J., <u>English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980</u>, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Willis, Chris, "The Woman Detective, 1859-1910," 2000, <<u>http://www.chriswillis.freeserve.co.uk/dissert1.htm</u>>.

Wohl, Anthony S., "Victorian Racism," 1992,
     <http://65.107.211.206/history/race/re5.html>.

Young, Robert M., <u>Darwin's Metaphor, Nature's Place in Victorian Culture</u>,
     Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Sharon J. Kobritz, who was born in Bangor, Maine, recently returned to her home state after living and working for many years in Boston. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from Boston University, with a major in Management and a minor in International Business. She began working on her Master's Degree in English and American Literature and Language at Harvard University's Extension School, and enrolled in the University of Maine's Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program in 1999.

While in Boston, Sharon worked in the financial services industry as a communications practitioner. Her experience is in public relations, event creation and implementation, marketing, strategic planning, and fund-raising. A great deal of her career has been spent as a corporate trainer of oral and written presentations to high-level executives and salespeople. She has worked in both the for-profit and non-profit segments of business.

For many years, Sharon has been a free-lance writer whose work appeared in newspapers and magazines worldwide.

After receiving her Master's degree, Sharon plans to continue her writing career and teach as a full time instructor in a private, college preparatory high school and in the communications departments of two colleges as an adjunct faculty member. Sharon is a candidate for the Master of Arts degree in Liberal Studies from the University of Maine in August, 2002.