

Hardy's Wavering Desires: Dislocating Female Desire from the Science of Romance

By **Kattie Basnett**, Rice University

<1> Critics hail Thomas Hardy for “depict[ing] the pain and joy of the relationship between the sexes with deeper penetration than any other novelist of his day,” a sentiment due, at least in part, to the allure of the quasi-scientific methodology he adopts to drive plot and character (Sasaki xxv). As Hardy states in his letters, “in respect of the tragedies of life that form the subject of my novels;...as a mere observer & recorder I am personally limited to the representation of these tragedies as faithfully as possible, without bias, or what is called ‘purpose’” (Purdy and Millgate 160, Vol. 2). Hardy evokes what George Levine has described as the empirically and ethically virtuous “power to observe accurately” not only as a scientific method of literary production, but as a moral defense as he sets out to rescue “‘sensuousness’” or “‘passionateness’”—what I will refer to more simply as *desire* throughout this paper—from the “stigma...[of] sensuality”” (*Dying* 4; Purdy and Millgate, *Letters* Vol. 2 57). Hardy taps into empiricist conventions in order to portray what he perceives as a more complete human experience as he, in his own words, “ai[ms] at...mak[ing] science” by putting into action “not the mere padding of a romance, but the actual vehicle” (Purdy and Millgate Vol. 1, 110).

<2> The vehicle Hardy references is evolutionary science and he significantly joins it to the term romance. This combination of terms—science and romance—is one that proved useful not only to Hardy and other Victorian novelists seeking to ground their fiction in contemporary science, but to evolutionists such as Charles Darwin who sought the characteristics of the literary romance to make scientific theory explicable to his Victorian audience as well as amenable to the period’s cultural values. Rosemary Jann has noted that evolutionary discourses on sexuality from “the Victorian period on...have attempted to explain, and by implication to justify, specific gender roles,” such as passive female sexuality, “by constructing a [biological] history for them” (79). I argue in this essay that even as Hardy invokes period science as integral to his romantic fictions, he ultimately provides a revisionary account of female sexuality. Hardy invokes, but ultimately rejects, a particular “science of romance” narrative that, I argue, reproduced and created an evolutionary backstory for the gendered sexual norms of the Victorian literary romance. Hardy’s fiction flirts with this biologized romance narrative, but only fleetingly as he largely abandons it for its failure to account for female desire. Hardy restores desire in his novels, marking it as an integral component of the female’s story that is sometimes fully displaced and sometimes inadequately accounted for by Victorian evolutionary science, the literary romantic tradition, and even, I argue, twenty-first-century instantiations of evolutionary science. For Hardy, the restoration of female desire to the fore of his evolutionary-romantic texts is merely a first step as he reframes the female’s experience of individuated and embodied desire

not only as a very real phenomenon, but as a disturbingly—for the Victorians—multiple and shifting phenomenon that cannot be reliably determined as culturally or biologically adaptive.

<3> Desire wavers. For Hardy's women, it changes form and appetite as it manifests, not as a generalizable and fully-determined sexual behavior rendered completely explicable by evolutionary science—past and present—via the language of adaptability but, instead, as an ever-changing product of the individual's struggle to marry the often competing forces of individual will and biological and environmental determinisms. This struggle often results, for his characters, not in a unilaterally or singular adaptive mating choice, but in a series of mating choices that are not clearly or consistently “adaptive” in a biological or more broadly cultural sense. Female desire as depicted by Hardy is not only or most meaningful when it can be distilled down into adaptive choices that can confirm or be predicted by the biological and cultural “rules” circulating in the period. Instead, Hardy's true interest in the phenomenon of female desire resides in the fact that it does *not* render itself fully explicable by the discourses—literary, scientific, and their combination—that sought to alternately explain and dismiss female desire. Female desire in Hardy's novels becomes a site of resistance to a set of culturally-inflected ideas about the evolutionary bases of female sexuality. Hardy defines his heroine's sexualities as active rather than passive, and he considers the full range of their sexualities: both the adaptive *and* “non-adaptive” mating choices they make. Focusing on the often competing and contradictory mating desires and sexual encounters experienced within his heroine's single lifespans, Hardy dispenses with the more abstract historico-biological “populations” that form the stuff of the sexual sciences and hones in on the nuances of the individual and the significance of the individual lifespan. Desire for Hardy cannot, ultimately, be let to fall victim to total inscription within evolutionary sexual narratives or the literary tradition of romantic love. Nor can desire be contained within the science of romance narrative that emerged with the consolidation of these narratives in the Victorian period. Female desire cannot, for Hardy, be fully contained within any of the discourses he activates in his novels to try to theorize and account for it. The multiple and shifting quality of female desire makes it move beyond the dominant narratives of Victorian sexuality that sought alternately to contain and exclude it: science, romance, and a newly coalescing science of romance.

<4> The development of what I am calling a science of romance narrative begins, as Anthony Giddens explains in *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*, with the relationship forged between the concept of romantic love and the “emergence of the novel” as a literary form in the eighteenth century (40). The novelistic tradition of romantic love, however, did not remain confined to the novel, nor did it remain more broadly confined to fiction. Instead it was transported, along with other literary conventions, into the realm of science. This transference is marked, for example, by the botanic works of Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles Darwin. His four-canto poem the “Loves of the Plants,” published in 1791 as part of a two-poem collection called *The Botanic Garden*, is a series of heroic couplets on taxonomy and plant reproduction. Importing the language of the romance narrative alongside poetic conventions, Erasmus Darwin's “Loves” looks less like a botanical treatise and more like a romantic fiction in which brief sections of scientific prose are bracketed off and subordinated to the romance plots of plant couples who unite under the auspices of “love” and “marriage” to become “husbands” and “wives.”(1)

<5> Charles Darwin's own search for a productive language through which to articulate the sexual-selection component of his theory of evolutionary development led him, much like his grandfather Erasmus, to invoke the literary in *Origins* and *Descent*. As Gillian Beer argues in *Darwin's Plots*, Darwin's recourse to the literary allowed him access to a set of conventions, such as the metaphors he sought to "substantiate" and the analogies he sought to "[convert] into real affinity" (37). These conventions, in turn, made it possible for him to "create a story of the world—a fiction" which not only pushed the "boundaries of the literally unthinkable," but also made his theory easily "appropriated" to other genres, including a new genre of Victorian romance novels strongly indebted to Darwinian evolutionary theory and its theoretical competitors (92).⁽²⁾ Darwin's reliance on literary conventions is not, however, limited to Beer's primary areas of interest—his use of metaphoric and analogical languages. Darwin also actively mobilizes the more specific literary convention of the romance genre as an explanatory mechanism for sexual selection, much as his grandfather had activated the romance tradition as an explanatory mechanism for plant reproduction a century before.

<6> Darwin and other Victorian men of science, for example the sexologist Havelock Ellis, joined in an adamant effort to conventionalize, on a broad-scale, the union of the romance narrative and burgeoning evolutionary narratives of sexual selection. Unlike Erasmus, who was forced by the aesthetic rigidity of the heroic couplet to bracket off his most technical scientific insights, Darwin and Ellis rhetorically harmonize the literary and scientific genres so that explicitly theoretical and scientific content would no longer undergo bracketing and subordination. Evolutionary mating behavior could be easily, if insufficiently, encapsulated by a scientized concept of romantic love that would operate according to the terms of sentimental domestic fiction: courtship, marriage, monogamy, female coyness, and choice (Dawson 32). As Angelique Richardson has aptly argued, such "deft rhetorical move[s]" by Ellis, Darwin, and others in the scientific community served to—however problematically—naturalize an overweening cultural investment in narratives of romantic love, courtship, marriage, and female coyness (232). Their strategy of uniting the evolutionary mating narrative and the literary romance "made science and love happy and natural bedfellows" and, quoting Ellis, signaled that "'the free play of love, however free it may appear, is really limited'" by scientifically recognizable factors (232).

<7> As a result of this shifting of the new science of mating into the terms of the romantic courtship narrative, Darwin's evolutionary mating narrative in *Descent* does not have the language of realized sexual encounter and the body at its fore. Instead, Darwin's text adopts the more abstracted languages, conventions, characteristics and gender conventions of the romance novel—conventions which downplay sexual intercourse and desire and insist on female sexual passivity. As Ruth Yeazell has pointed out, Darwin's work on sexual selection mirrors in many ways his fascination with the domestic novel, as he focalizes attention on courtship and rational choice rather than on sexual intimacy or erotic desire. Like sentimental fiction, Darwin's portrayal of evolutionary mating behavior "subordinated" sexual impulse and realized sexual congress to an all too chaste courtship plot (219). The persistent crossover between evolutionary and romance narratives Yeazell locates in Darwin's evolutionary texts is embodied, also, in the sexological work of Ellis, who claimed that St. Valentine was "the patron saint of sexual selection," and that Valentine was "a saint of science rather than of folklore" (784-785). Even the title of Hardy's own essay, "The Science of Fiction," promises a similar message to Ellis's

and Darwin's texts. Namely, that science has a species of retrospective explanatory power over the forms of human sexual behavior described in Victorian fictions of romantic love.

<8> Rather than reimagining courtship to include female sexuality and desire, work like Darwin's and Ellis's lend scientific support to the Victorian romance's constrained set of assumptions about sexual practices and a woman's role within them. As Beer notes, Darwin confined himself in *Origins* to "only two pages" of material regarding the process of sexual selection, asking his readers to imagine an ongoing adaptive sexual struggle within an imaginary population of bantams rather than human beings (116). When human sexuality is introduced as a topic of discussion within the pages of *Descent*, Darwin's account is always centered on issues of "productivity rather than on congress; on generation rather than on sexual desire" (Beer 116). On the rare occasions when Darwin is sexually explicit he employs several strategies to mediate the salaciousness of the content. He diverts attention away from the mating and reproduction habits of barnacles by portraying them as "figure[s] of sexual comedy" due to their phallic form, removes "objectionable adjective[s]" such as the word "sexual" from manuscripts, and in other instances converts sexual passages into Latinized footnotes in order to police their readership based on education level, social status, and gender (Stott 161-4; Dawson 135-8).

<9> The vigorously sanitized version of *Descent* that was ultimately published offers readers a rather inexplicit and un-sexy explanation of sexual selection as an evolutionary process. Darwin theorizes adaptation to a reproductive community's sexual needs and preferences without choosing to theorize the mechanism—desire—through which the drive to adapt actually manifests itself, let alone the embodied fruition of that desire.⁽³⁾ With the exception of some choice Latin footnotes about the voracious sexual appetites and enlarged sexual traits of Hottentot females,⁽⁴⁾ Darwin stages *human* sexual selection in the terms of the domestic novel's courtship plot, turning it, in part, into an intellectually-driven process of mate choice rather than an erotically-driven realization of sexual *desire* for one, often more, partners.

<10> When discussing the sexual behavior of nonhuman animals in *Origins*, Darwin writes that since there is inevitably "a struggle between the males for the possession of the female[s]... the females have the opportunity of selecting one out of several males, on the supposition that their mental capacity suffices for the exertion of a choice" (*Descent* 765). Although he attributes the mental fortitude necessary for mate choice to the females of nearly all nonhuman species, he makes an exception to this evolutionary "rule" in human beings and other "higher animals" in *Descent*, suggesting that human males, not females, have the intellectually-driven power of mate choice (*Descent* 767). Obscuring the problem of sexual desire and opting to engage with the problem of intelligence in its place, Darwin expounds in *Descent* upon the female's defunct intelligence, claiming that women are biologically endowed with "powers of intuition, of rapid perception, and perhaps of imitation," but adds the caveat that "some, at least, of these faculties are characteristics of the lower races [and animals], and therefore of a past and lower state of civilization" (*Descent* 1012-13).

<11> Darwin disqualifies desire as a predominant component of sexual selection—in effect, he swaps intellectual virility in the place of virility of a more sexual kind. This rather disingenuous maneuvering of the bodily into the rational-intellectual allows him to justify, by reference to

extant cultural norms, his denial of the human female's power of mate selection—a power he readily attributes to nonhuman females. The human male is offered as the rightful selector in the female's place, as Darwin claims that: “the chief distinction in the intellectual powers of the two sexes is shewn by man's attaining to a higher eminence, in whatever he takes up, than a woman can” (*Descent* 1012-13). Darwin's account of sexuality projects a normative patriarchal schema back onto the biological past in order to make it available to the more evolved beings, such as humans, of the evolutionary future.(5)

<12> Within the parameters of the evolutionary romance narrative Darwin produces, the characteristics of the literary romance, and Victorian sexual culture writ large, are naturalized and explained by reference to principles of evolutionary science. This exchange between biological past and Victorian present, between biology, culture, and its offshoots—namely, literature—meant that cultural proscriptions about the relationship between sexuality, gender, and intelligence (for example) could be drawn on by popular authors like Hardy in an effort to lend their fictional texts a new purchase on the realist literary endeavor. Hardy's representation of female desire, however, operates to some degree apart from the coalescing of love and science, contemporary culture and biological history, beginning in the late-Victorian period and continuing into the twentieth century. Hardy portrays desire as an embodied individual act that can be (at least sometimes) disarticulated from both the determining forces of the literary culture of romance and the scientific culture of evolutionary drive used to naturalize it.

<13> Hardy's ability to transcend the boundaries of a swiftly cohering and culturally reaffirming ideology of a romanticized sexual science propels his fiction into the category of “narrative embodiments of the [Darwinian] real” that, Levine argues in *Darwin and The Novelists*, do not “absorb[] Darwinian patterns to confirm the culture's dominant ideological and epistemological positions” (*Darwin* 13). Instead, his fiction “resists that absorption” to uncover “contradictions in [a] realist project” shared by domestic fictions and evolutionary narratives that were continuously in the act of exchanging dominant terms, plot structures, methods, and preoccupations (*Darwin* 13). The fact that Hardy's multiplicity of evolutionary stories—his novels—place issues of individual female sexuality, desire, and mate selection (or choice) at their forefront with “unusually explicit description” (Brady 94) only confirms Levine's argument that Darwinian narratives are experimental, and that “even in identifying” and utilizing “certain dominant Darwinian ideas and motifs”—in Hardy's case sexual selection—writers subjected them to “qualifications, complications, [and] alternatives” (*Darwin* 11).

<14> In 1883 Ellis, who had espoused St. Valentine a saint of science, “placed Hardy's fiction—because of its ‘minute observation,’ its ‘delicate insight,’ and its ‘conception of love as the one business of life’...—in the feminine tradition of novel-writing represented by such authors as Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, and George Eliot”—notably all female authors (Brady 95). The facet of Hardy's fiction which resonated so strongly with Ellis and other Victorian readers was that, “here was a male writer offering a style of writing and of plot constitution that was considered to be exclusively female,” in ways that the fiction of Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, and Trollope did not. Popular male authors, Ellis argued, traditionally “did not confine their emphasis so exclusively to the courtship plot, especially to the woman's position within that plot” (Brady 95). Although Ellis aligned Hardy's texts specifically with those of female authors

such as George Eliot due to his decision to place women at the center of his narratives, as Beer recognizes, Eliot's own rewriting of the evolutionary story is less revolutionary than that offered by Hardy. According to Beer:

For George Eliot subtly, and for Thomas Hardy more frankly, the contradictions, social, psychological, and biological in the man/woman relationship and its identification with genetic succession become crucial to their reading of traditional fictional topics. Rewriting and resisting are as important as assimilating in creating fictional energy...[in] relationship to Darwin's work. (199)

Hardy's novels exist in a relationship of fruitful juxtaposition against the texts that they complicate, re-imagine, and resist—not only Darwin's *Origins* and *Descent*, but also contemporaneous fiction, such as Eliot's "exclusively female" *Middlemarch* (Brady 95). *Middlemarch*, as Beer points out, and which I will go on to demonstrate, serves as a fruitful comparison text for its more unquestioning engagement with the forms of female sexual expression made possible (or not) by a new paradigm of human mating originating at the cross-section of romantic convention and evolutionary science. Like Darwin, who adopts the conventions of romance to de-privilege the phenomenon of desire and the embodied sexual act, Eliot mobilizes this new science of romance to eschew desire and, instead, ensconce the female within an evolutionarily deterministic system of "enforced [sexual] passivity" (Beer 211). Hardy, notably, resists this trend by refusing to re-adopt, on the strength of Victorian sexual science, traditional romantic conceptions of female sexuality. His re-desiring of the female mating plot challenges Darwin's "reversal of the common order in making man the selector" in human populations but, more importantly, manifests his active resistance to privileging a traditional courtship plot of intelligent choice over a more radical plot of female desire which is not static, let alone reliably biologically or, more generally, culturally "adaptive" or normative (Beer 199).

<15> Hardy, notably, puts little faith in Darwin's claim that the biological reality of sexual selection hinges upon a level of intellectual ability from which human females, but not female animals, would be automatically excluded. He utilizes ironic reversal in his novels to insist upon the intellectual capacities of the female, capacities that Darwin is forced to deny as a condition of reading Victorian patriarchal structures back onto the evolutionary past. Hardy, in fact, inverts Darwin's logic by utilizing the voices of male characters to demonstrate his heroines' *superior* intellectual abilities. In *Jude*, Phillotson says of Sue, "I can't answer her arguments—she has read ten times as much as I. Her intellect sparkles like diamonds, while mine smolders like brown paper" (Jude 236). Similarly, *Far From the Madding Crowd's* Gabriel Oak explains to Bathsheba, "I cannot match you, I know, in mapping out my mind upon my tongue. I never was very clever in my inside" (*Madding* 31). What makes Hardy's heroines so intellectually impressive by comparison to their male counterparts is that Hardy does not limit their mental abilities to the stereotypical sphere of female dominance, the domestic, but allows them to exert their mental capacities in male-dominated domains and activities. Hardy's women are able to outperform males even in areas that, according to Darwin, ought to be the special providence of men who have the capacity for intellectual advancement and are not doomed to wallow in the

“imit[ative]” powers he describes as being shared by women, “the lower races” and “past and lower state[s] of civilization” (*Descent* 1012-13).

<16> Bathsheba, for example, defies the expectations of her male farm hands in *Far From the Madding Crowd* when she explains to them that instead of taking orders from a male bailiff, they would be taking them from her, as she “‘ha[d] formed a resolution to have no bailiff at all, but to manage everything with [her] own head and hands’” (86). Bathsheba goes on to explain to her workers that they are not to “‘suppose that because [she is] a woman [she won’t] understand the difference between bad goings-on and good’” (91). Bathsheba’s awareness of gendered expectations and her determination to transcend these expectations enables her not only to manage her own farm (albeit with the help of men like Gabriel), but also allows her to renegotiate the gendered boundaries of the strictly masculinist setting of the Corn Exchange. It is here that Bathsheba shocks the male community at the Exchange by bargaining like “a natural dealer” (i.e., a man) and, significantly, it is also within this setting that she begins her ill-fated sexual pursuit of Mr. Boldwood (99). Within Hardy’s Darwinian universe it is the human female who emerges as the intelligent chooser and initiator of sexual relationships, as Bathsheba does when she by turns masters the Exchange and sends Boldwood a valentine.

<17> For Hardy, though, the recuperation of female intelligence and intelligent mate choice is only one component of the larger “theory” of sexuality he offers—desire is an equally, if not substantially more, important component that does not necessarily occur in relation or in equal proportion to intellectual capacity. While to say that mate selection in Hardy’s novels is completely dependent on a woman’s desire-driven choice would be false, throughout his novels, Hardy presents female characters with a number of more or less desirable male suitors from whom they typically have the power to choose. In *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Bathsheba Everdene is proposed to by, and ultimately agrees to marry, three different men each of whom activates some form of desire: some of her desires are explicable through sexual selection, some through traditions of romantic love, and some exist significantly beyond the purview of either. Hardy presents a similar diversity of mate choice to the character of Ethelberta Petherwin who, in the course of the plot of *The Hand of Ethelberta*, struggles to choose between four men of vastly differing wealth and circumstances.

<18> The presentation of females with a multiplicity of possible male suitors from which they might choose—intelligently or otherwise—is standard fare for the genre of the Victorian novel. In Eliot’s *Middlemarch*, for example, Dorothea is also burdened with choice; she is alternately courted by Sir James, and proposed to by Mr. Casaubon and his nephew, Will Ladislaw. In spite of the respective reservations family members and society have about Casaubon and Ladislaw as her suitors, Dorothea is endowed with the ability to accept or deny these men, to freely choose for better—as in the case of Will—or worse—as in the case of Casaubon—with whom she will couple herself. As Mr. Brooke explains rather apologetically when relating Dorothea’s acceptance of Mr. Casaubon’s proposal over Sir James’s, Dorothea has unmediated power in her choice of mate: “‘My niece has chosen another suitor—has chosen him, you know. I have had nothing to do with it...’” (55). Mr. Brooke’s statement makes clear that Dorothea has been left to indulge her desires, however fundamentally misdirected initially, and that neither he nor the balked suitors have any real power over the form—acquiescence or rejection—her choice takes.

She has the power to accept proposals, the power to decline them as she sees fit, or even to remove herself from the marriage market altogether if not suitably impressed by her prospects.

<19> Hardy's Sue Bridehead pushes her power of selection to a radical extreme, as she effectively chooses at moments *not* to choose. Her frequent decisions to co-habit with men—a male scholar from her early life and later Jude—without desiring marriage or intercourse strikes an uneasy compromise between all three of her more culturally feasible choices: rejection, marriage, and complete unavailability. Hardy's female characters not only choose from amongst suitors—accepting them, denying them, or refusing to participate in the marriage economy altogether—but actually renegotiate the terms of heterosexual couplings according to desires that are neither culturally nor evolutionarily beneficial, as does Sue. Unlike more normative representations, Hardy's women eschew traditional, erotically deprived courtship plots and, instead, extend their role in mating beyond merely accepting or rejecting males who have made them offers. They make the offers themselves, initiate sex, and even renegotiate the very possibilities for heterosexual desire to include everything from Sue's sometimes asexual companionship to Arabella's polygamy when she marries a second husband in Australia.

<20> This is not the case in Eliot's *Middlemarch*, where Dorothea, as a more normative representation of female sexuality, finds herself incapable of first recognizing and then avowing—in speech or act—her sexual desire for Will Ladislaw. Unknowingly intruding herself upon Will and Rosamond Lydgate (nee Vincy) as they participate in a seemingly intimate moment, Dorothea refuses to confront the situation with actions or words expressive of her budding recognition of passion, or the jealousy and frustration she experiences at finding her desire for Will forestalled by another, married woman:

Dorothea, after the first immeasurable instant of this vision, moved confusedly backward and found herself impeded by some piece of furniture, Rosamond was suddenly aware of her presence, and with a spasmodic movement snatched away her hands [from Will] and rose, looking at Dorothea who was necessarily arrested...[Dorothea] laid down the letter on the small table which had checked her retreat, and then...she went quickly out of the room. (775)

Unlike Hardy's women who hurl phalluses and valentines at their desired mates, Dorothea's only way of responding to the scene of intimacy before her is to retreat rather than confront the threat posed to her unacknowledged sexual desire: a desire sublimated beneath a slew of intellectual and charitable aspirations, all of which are failures. The sexual desires Dorothea experiences are expressed only through a language of emotional failure as Dorothea becomes simultaneously sexually activated and profoundly sexually "arrested," "impeded," and "checked," much like her movements (775). Dorothea seeks "power and mastery," but within her traditional narrative framework, can only achieve the illusion of it as her mastery is entirely dependent upon a male's initial choice—Sir James's, Casaubon's, or Will's—which empowers her only with a culturally-delimited set of choices *in response* without the freedom to originate or renegotiate the terms of her own sexuality or desires (Beer 215). Dorothea must be invited to action by a male, or she must be content to retreat physically and psychologically from her own uninvited desires.

<21> Clearly, Dorothea is a different specimen of choosing woman than Hardy's Arabella and Sue, whose desires are explicit, active, and flow in both traditional and culturally deviant veins. Described by Hardy as "no vestal," Arabella expresses a desire for sexual intimacy with Jude by literally accosting him with a phallus, a dismembered pig "pizzle." Sue offers a more active and desire-driven alternative to the scene of retreat demonstrated in the triangulation of Dorothea, Will, and Rosamond in *Middlemarch*, as the parallel triangulation of Sue with Jude and Arabella in *Jude the Obscure* causes Sue to initiate sexual intercourse with Jude (*Jude* 43). *Far From the Madding Crowd's* Bathsheba is seen to actively pursue even sexually disinterested men, like Mr. Blodwood, via the blunt invitation: "Marry me" (*Madding* 106-7). Hardy's women do not passively acquiesce and they do not retreat: they do the proposing, they initiate the sex, and they structure dynamic sexual relationships according to their own wants and needs. Hardy's women withhold sex from husbands they do not desire, while they give it freely to non-husbands they do desire; they use sex as a tool for exacting power over men, and engage in it for the satisfaction of their most basic sexual appetites. And, moreover, they defend their ability to be the initiators and choosers by lashing out, sometimes with murderous violence, against men who fail to recognize the phenomenon of female desire or who violate that desire through forced or unsolicited intimacies, including rape.

<22> The eponymous heroine of Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* has often been read as operating less like the sexually active and multiply desiring women in Hardy's other novels, and more in the same desexualized vein as Eliot's Dorothea. *Tess*, therefore, provides a fruitful test case for Hardy's re-writing of female desire as operating in ways not accounted for in the science of romance narrative. Tess's character can be read in a new way: as a poignant way in which Hardy can critique, rather than confirm, the stunted female sexuality imagined in the science of romance narrative. Through Tess, Hardy exposes this narrative's incapacity to capture the complete human experience that he so painstakingly sets out to describe in his novels. At the heart of the science of romance discourse's failure is that it utterly lacks a mechanism for defining a legitimately *female* desire, instead choosing to define it narrowly as a response to male desire. This mode of defining female desire leaves women powerless, un-embodied sexual automatons whose enforced passivity becomes positively re-described as a desirable female sexual trait: purity. And it is this definition of female sexuality as purity that Hardy sets out to challenge in *Tess* as he depicts the danger posed by a narrative that erases and silences female desire.

<23> The purity that Hardy insists on for Tess in the subtitle of the novel—*A Pure Woman*—invokes, only to problematize, the vision of the undesiring and virginal female that attaches itself to the romantic marriage plot of the nineteenth-century novel and, subsequently, to the romanticized scientific narratives of Darwin and Ellis. Hardy invokes "purity" as a problematically gender-leaden and disingenuous term as he attempts to carve out space for a pure female sexuality that includes desire and that cannot automatically be stigmatized as base "sensuality" (*Dying* 4; Purdy and Millgate, *Letters* Vol. 2 57). Hardy's pure female sexuality does not define itself against desire, but, instead, goes so far as to privilege desire or "impulse" over and above actual lived experience (343). Hardy signals impulse as the true indicator of sexual character when he asks: "who was the moral woman? The beauty or ugliness of a character lay not only in its achievements, but in its aims and impulses; its true history lay, not among things done, but among things willed" (*Tess* 343). Female purity, for Hardy, is exactly the

converse of sexual passivity and disinterest as he redefines moral sexuality such that a woman must be able to acknowledge her desires and adopt an active role in deciding when or not to act on those desires irrespective of initial male interest. A distinction between “things willed” and “things done” is the difference for Hardy between the truly pure female sexual character that is capable of actively recognizing, interrogating, and choosing to act or not based on her internal desires and, alternately, the female, like Eliot’s Dorothea, whose sexuality is pure only insofar as desire can be sublimated or erased in favor of sexless behaviors, or “things done,” that confirm sexual norms (343).

<24> A narrative of “too much succulence” according to Mowbray Morris, the editor of *Macmillian’s Magazine*, Hardy’s *Tess*, is a violent—even murderous—refutation of a vision of women as “tabula rasae” on which men, including Tess’s rapist, Alec d’Urberville, and her estranged husband, Angel Clare, might “inscribe their own desires” (*Tess*, “Introduction” 11-12). Significantly, the desires these men attempt to inscribe upon Tess run the gamut from the physical violence of seduction and rape (Alec), to the more abstract violence of interpreting her as an impossible, archetypal, or idealized image of desire-less womanhood. This latter violence naturalizes Tess’s complete de-sexualization as she is described as a “virginal Daughter of Nature” (147) and “visionary essence of woman—a whole sex condensed into one typical form” in addition to being mythicized as an “Artemis, [and] Demeter” (156). Both men’s desires, however disparate in form, are uninterested in the disconnect between the “things [Tess] will[s]”—her impulses and desires—and the immoral (according to Hardy) vision of the sexually passive female they assume her, in different ways, to be (*Tess*, “Introduction” 11-12).

<25> Tess’s entrenchment by many scholars within a genealogy of passive female characters who have male desires visited upon them, but who cannot protect or express their own desires in any fundamental way, is often lent credibility by her penchant for passing into states of fainting and fugue. I insist, however, that Hardy uses Tess’s states of fugue and fainting to create moments of profound narrative silence that are better read not as moments of passive sexuality and “evasion,” but as revelatory of how the science of romance narrative’s erasure of female desire facilitates the possibility for various forms of sexual violence toward women, including rape (*Tess*, “Introduction” 22).

<26> Tess’s spells of fainting and fugue are Hardy’s attempt to mark moments where her inscription within a now scientifically naturalized romantic narrative of female sexuality fundamentally disables her ability to be a moral or “complex woman” (127). The narrative transforms her, in her state of unconsciousness, into a literal tabula rasa: a sexless body that can only be a passive reflection of the male desires visited upon it. Tess, and her identity as a desiring subject, are effectively put under erasure to facilitate the desires of males who might write their own sexual desires on her. Her silence and the inert state of her body in these moments of narrative breakdown reveal a problematic inability of the science of romance’s narrative structure to engage with and reveal her true sexual character. Tess’s unconsciousness and inability to actively narrate or be in conscious control of her own desire becomes a strategy through which Hardy can correlate an extreme form of female passivity and coyness—a literal, physical inability to be anything more than a passive body acted upon—with a larger impulse to usurp for the male alone the phenomenon of desire. Tess’s experiences of unconsciousness at

pivotal moments of her own heightened sexuality as well as moments of sexual exploitation offer a powerful critique of newly biologized romantic notions of female sexuality. As Tess's inert body demonstrates, normative female sexuality as defined by the science of romance narrative breaks utterly down in the face of female desire or desirelessness. Hardy shows how the biologized romantic narrative, thought it attempts to claim explanatory power over female sexuality, acts as a fundamentally disturbing inhibitor of the female character: it literally shuts Tess off, as though putting her in a state of suspended animation until the crisis of desire is removed. Tess's sexual desires literally cannot be articulated, cannot exist, when inserted into the gendered sexual narratives that accrue to the science of romance narrative, as it must, automatically, transform her from "complex woman" to its true feminine ideal: that of a prepubescent "girl" or, even worse, something uncannily corpse-like (127).

<27> The ultimate demise of the traditional female sexual narrative is solidified toward the close of the novel, as Hardy metonymically aligns Tess and Angel through the activity of fainting. States of dissociation and unconsciousness—fainting and fugue—become vehicles through which Hardy can illustrate how the very sexual narrative that represents Tess's desires through silence and stillness similarly immobilizes Angel when his own desires begin to deviate. Angel's receipt of a letter from Tess recriminating him for unjustly judging her sexual character by "things done" rather than things "willed" is preceded by his "legs seem[ing] to give way...[due to] a slight attack of faintness" (369). This moment of faintness at the moment of Angel's recognition of the violence he has done to Tess and her sexual character signals his emergence from out of a romantic tradition of female sexual inexperience and non-desire—a tradition he defended and sought to define Tess through—and into a new tradition inaugurated by Hardy: a tradition in which desires and impulse are the true components of sexual character and must be extended legitimate expression by females as well as males. Alec's failure to emerge into this new narrative of gender-equalized, desire-driven sexuality alongside Angel necessitates that he die in a symbolic clearing away of an old order of male sexual privilege and sexual violence.

<28> Alec's death propels the narrative of female sexual repression and violence he represents to give way to a new narrative in which Tess and Angel might acknowledge and consummate their desires with full sexual purity. Alec's murder is the violent, but necessary, even that must take place for Tess to return to her "original self"—her true sexual character and the impulses and desires that define it (379). In her final moment of unconsciousness, in a state of fugue rather than a faint, Tess murders Alec. Emerging from the fugue state after the murder, Tess cannot recall how she commits the murder—she does not have access to her experience of the actual murder done—but she knows the impulse, the willed desire, that initiates the act. Hers is an impulse to reclaim a self violently stripped of desire by the science of romance narrative and the males this narrative lends a special privilege over sexuality and desire. The self she reclaims is one that for too long "had spiritually ceased to recognize" her own body "as hers—allowing it to drift, like a corpse upon the current, in a direction dissociated from its living will" (379-380). With Alec's death Tess is both reinstated as the master of her own desires and into a newly stabilized conscious and embodied subjectivity that can no longer be immobilized and erased by male desire or the delimited options afforded her by a scientifically naturalized romantic notion of female sexuality (379-380).

<29> Hardy's unusual resistance to inscribing desire within Victorian romance narratives and the evolutionary-scientific narrative that adopted romance as its vehicle for describing and disciplining sexuality makes his novels especially interesting to read alongside a new vein of twenty-first century evolutionary theories on mating and sexual selection that insist, also, on making a place—however problematically—for female desire. Evolutionary Psychology is the most recent evolutionary story to emerge out of nineteenth-century Darwinian evolutionary theory. While it might seem anachronistic to extend discussion here into twenty-first-century understandings of womankind's evolved sexual behaviors, I risk the folly of anachronism to think through female desire on this other Darwinian register. I do not introduce evolutionary psychology here to suggest either that it is the purely objective, unflawed, and unbiased story of human development that Darwin (and many after him) aspired to but ultimately failed to produce, or that Hardy in some way anticipates it. Instead, discussion of Hardy's desire- and gender- driven resistance to dominant nineteenth-century constructions of mating lends itself to consideration through this new instantiation of evolutionary theory precisely because it fails, like its Victorian evolutionary counterparts, to account for female desire in a fully convincing way. And, it does so even as it shares Hardy's investment in reconfiguring the evolutionary intersection of gender and sexual desire post-Darwin. This new sexual science, like nineteenth-century evolutionary theory, is problematic for the way it selectively decides which sexual characteristics and activities matter and which do not within a new scientized narrative of female sexuality that no longer seeks expression through the tradition of literary romance.

<30> Although evolutionary psychology and Darwinian evolutionary theory both propose that the ultimate goals of women (and men) across cultures are alike—to identify, compete for, reproduce with, and retain an ideal mate—their rationale for the evolutionary preferences, needs, and vulnerabilities of the female sex are differently imagined in this contemporary insatiation of evolutionary theory (Buss 6-10). While Darwin conceptualizes women as passive and their mating preferences as essentially unmotivated by the real, embodied prospect of sex, modern evolutionists believe that women are actively desirous sexual agents whose sex-specific mate preferences evolved as a result of men and women having to face, and subsequently adapt to, vastly differing evolutionary struggles.⁽⁶⁾ Even though the evolutionary psychological account of sexual selection has made a place for female desire, it shares with Darwin's account the positing of sexual selection as operating through a choice that is biologically determined. Desire is inextricably bound to considerations of evolutionarily salient factors such as mates' social positioning and wealth, as well as the problem of species propagation (Bender 462). In this sense, desire is always already forced into stable and scientifically-mappable directions, and female choice, though existent, is considered only insofar as it can be reduced to a pre-delimited set of evolutionarily "correct" or adaptive mating choices. To choose otherwise becomes scripted not as a significant and meaningful moment of desire's dislocation from the force of biology and the explanatory force of biological theories, but as a biological failure at the level of the individual: the non-adaptive choice has little to no impact on the human evolutionary trajectory and, consequently, no impact on research and theory.

<31> Although evolutionary psychologists suggest that, through greater awareness of our biological mating imperatives, we might better willfully choose against them, neither Darwinian evolutionary theory nor evolutionary psychological theories have been particularly interested in the *individuals* who do choose otherwise, whether consciously or not--their interests lie, instead,

in extrapolating patterns of evolutionarily salient behavior from *populations* across cultures and across historical time.(7) And, in so doing, this new evolutionary mode of thought fails to capture the very impossibility of pinning down female desire, of comprehensively defining it or predicting it according to cultural norms, biological scripts, or their combination.

<32> Hardy strikingly captures the impossible complexity that is female desire, refusing to reduce desire to trends in populations or cultural edict. It is this very permissiveness in Hardy's theorization of female desire which distinguishes him from his contemporaries. While Henry James critiqued Eliot's *Middlemarch* as being "too often an echo of Messrs. Darwin and Huxley" (Beer 139), the majority of critics argued just the opposite of Hardy's novels, seeing "Hardy's treatment of [female] sexual desire as sensational, violent, pagan, and bestial...[his] heroines," they noted, "were more like rapacious animals than...monogamous ladies, and their behavior digressed in disconcerting ways from the sentimental formula of love-at-first-sight-followed-by-engagement-and-marriage" (Brady 94).

<33> Hardy's narrative universe is a Darwinian one, for sure, but it is a universe in which female sexuality floats freely, unregulated and constantly morphing, reshaping, and reasserting itself not as a mere response to male interest but as an actionable impulse originating in the female herself. Hardy's desirous heroines—spoiled in their choice of suitors, rife with sexual appetite, and unabashed at exerting agency to secure the originators of their desires—serve to insist on female desire as a component of sexual selection, while also becoming a site of resistance to gender and biological determinisms playing out in Victorian evolutionary discourse and in the romantic fictions of Eliot and Trollope that emerged alongside Hardy's own. James Barrie condescendingly wrote in *The Spectator* that Hardy's heroines, "are seldom sure of their own love...the only tolerably safe thing to predict of them is, that first they will have two lovers and then marry a third" (Brady 94). Hardy's mating plots allow women this power and this freedom—disconcerting to Barrie and much of Hardy's contemporary readership—to desire freely and multiply, to renege on their original desires, and to desire anew again. The evolutionary paradigm, though always risking to enter Hardy's women into a narrative of biological determinism, nonetheless operates also as the most productive opening through which Hardy can work to rescue them from inscription within a science of romance which scripts women as passive, sexually "monogamous ladies" like Trollope's Emily Wharton and Eliot's Dorothea or even the unnaturally sex-less and desire-less human beings Darwin theorizes in *Descent* (Brady 94). Hardy's heroines are free within their respective Darwinian universes to assert themselves as the individually unique, sexually diverse, and "rapacious animals" they naturally are, and to do so in a way that can be divorced from the allure of full explanation by science and the notion of adaptivity (Brady 94).

<34> I would urge us to read Hardy's desirous women as embodying a multiplicity of coexisting, even actively competing, desires that do not accrete or lose significance in relation to nineteenth- or twenty-first-century evolutionary definitions sexual adaptivity. Hardy's sexual narratives are fluid, with ever-changing sexual couplings and re-couplings that are depicted as conspicuously coexisting with latent desires that have yet to find their embodiment or are actively chosen against, as when Sue finally returns to Phillotson at the end of *Jude*. Such a sexual narrative of multiple and contradictory desire activates a tension existing between what many scholars

perceive as the deterministic influence of environment and instinctual sexual behavior (i.e., biological determinism) on mating in Hardy's novels, and the exertion of individual will and choice on the part of Hardy's characters—heroines and heroes alike. Hardy is acutely aware of, and interested in probing, this tension between the freedom to negotiate, act, and choose made possible by the force of human desire and the inevitable constraints of environmental and bodily determinisms on that freedom. According to Beer in *Darwin's Plots*, the "grandeur" of Hardy's fiction can be located precisely in his "acceptance of people's independence and self-assertion," yet she perceives that any exertion of individual will and agency is "doomed and curtailed persistently...even those recuperative energies are there primarily to serve the longer needs of the race and are part of a procreative energy designed to combat extinction, not the death of any individual" (224).

<35> While Beer identifies an inherent instability at the level of the individual—what George Levine in *Dying to Know* articulates as a continual "combat" in Hardy's fiction "between body and mind" (205)—she ultimately suggests that every so-called free or willed act is actually, at the most basic level, an evolutionarily determined one. Hardy undoubtedly recognizes and narrativizes, with a certain amount of pessimism, the ways in which body and environment are determined in acknowledgement that "[t]he simple conditions of daily life, the physical fact of being, one's place in class and gender are determining" (Levine, *Dying* 204). While Hardy's invocation of the science of romance, with all of its attendant cultural baggage, would suggest that biological determination taken up in the service of cultural gender reification has full explanatory power over the female and her desire, I urge us to not read Hardy in such a telescopic way. Ultimately, hard and fast determinist readings of female sexuality and desire in Hardy's texts are "metonymic leap[s]" which incorrectly reduce to "fantas[y]" the notion of human will, in much the same way, I would suggest, that evolutionary stories from the nineteenth century and into the twenty first are so often accused of doing (Levine, *Darwin* 11). An unwaveringly deterministic outlook enacts a tragic violence upon Hardy's women, denying them the specific, wavering, and always febrile sexual identities and identity re-formations which allow them to navigate the divides between the mind and the body and the deterministic forces of nature and culture.

<36> Nineteenth-century evolutionary discourse and the twenty-first-century evolutionary discourse I have merely gesture toward above, operate in this essay as productive tools, tools employed to elucidate the ways in which Hardy utilizes "certain dominant...ideas and motifs" found within Darwinian thought, while subjecting them to his own unique "qualifications, complications, [and] alternatives" with the ultimate effect of liberating female desire from the literary discourse of romance and evolutionary discourse (Levine, *Darwin* 11). Hardy not only resists the marked trend to reproduce the iconic female figure that is exchanged back and forth between the swiftly coalescing discourses of nineteenth-century evolutionary thought and romantic fiction—an un-desiring but desired subject entrapped within a biologically determined system of "enforced passivity" in which she is chosen by men, but cannot freely choose mates and mating structures for herself (Beer 211). He also markedly resists twenty-first-century evolutionary renderings of women as desirous, but only significantly so if their ever changing and sometimes competing desires can be mined for mating strategies considered "adaptive" and which, in turn, become the singular focus of evolutionary-psychological and sociobiological research. As convincing (or not) as any reading of desire-driven mating behaviors in Hardy's

novels through twenty-first-century evolutionary psychology might ultimately be, this reading is only meaningful insofar as we are willing to accept female desire as desire in the singular—a predetermined evolutionary desire that transfers from one male subject to another based on reliable patterns of adaptive female sexual preference—or, alternatively, if we view only a woman’s evolutionarily adaptive desires as meaningful. And, notably, these are conditions that Hardy refuses to accept.

<37> Hardy’s portrayal of the deterministic “burden of evolution” on female desire and sexuality does not constitute the full extent of his texts. As Beer points out, “[t]hrough the individual may be of small consequence in the long sequence of succession and generation,” Hardy takes “the single life span,” in all its inexplicable and contradictory intimacy, “as his scale” (224). In Hardy’s evolutionary story, unlike Darwin’s story and unlike the story of evolutionary psychology, the single generation and the desires of the individuals who compose it are meaningful outside of the context of evolutionary history and their contributions to a genetic future yet to come. The female individual and her desires carry the full weight of signification even when they cannot be explained by or contained by science, romance, or the Victorian phenomenon of the science of romance.

Endnotes

(1)As Janet Browne argues, Erasmus Darwin’s poetical plant romances not only recast plants as monogamous lovers, but retain and reinforce the gender stereotypes embedded in the literary romance: his depictions of the female’s role in courtship and mating “remained deeply polarized between the chaste, blushing virgin and the seductive predatory woman, the modest shepherdess and the powerful queen” (618).(^)

(2)As Michael Mason notes in his review of Beer’s *Darwin’s Plots* in the *London Review of Books*, Eliot, who I will also discuss as having an evolutionary influence, was a skeptical reader of Darwin who may, in fact, have sided more with competing Lamarckian theories.(^)

(3)According to Laura Otis, female desire was perceived culturally “as a dangerous force that threatened the social order” (239), while Richard Altick has suggested that a “woman’s lack of sexual passion...was universally accepted as a biological fact,” and that for Darwin (or anyone else) to have “assum[ed] otherwise” would have been “indecent” (54).(^)

(4)Darwin not only displaces desire into the margins—the literal footnotes—and translates it into a language inaccessible to the bulk of his readers (including the women-readers whose desires he

displaces into the language of literary romance), but he also actively codes female desire as a specifically racialized and Othered phenomenon.(^)

(5)In so doing Darwin eschews a full explanation for how “normative” female sexuality had been “subverted” to allow female animals mate choice to begin with (Jann 80). Darwin’s intellectualized account of sexual selection fails overwhelmingly to register the paradoxical relationship between his argument for biological determinism and the terms he theorizes as biologically determined—gender and sexuality. Whatever deterministic quality these terms might have originates in cultural consensuses that can be altered, rather than the sort of historically and culturally stable biological reality Darwin inadequately theorizes.(^)

(6)For further reading on the topic of sociobiology and evolutionary psychology generally, see Edward O. Wilson’s seminal text *Sociobiology, The New Synthesis* and also Robert Wright’s *The Moral Animal: Why We Are, the Way We Are: The New Science of Evolutionary Psychology*. For reading on the specific topic of twenty-first century evolutionary psychological and biological approaches to mating and sexual behavior see Buss’s *The Evolution of Desire*, Matt Ridley’s *The Red Queen: Sex and the Evolution of Human Nature*, Robin Baker’s *Sperm Wars: The Science of Sex*, and the recent article, “Signals of Sexual Selection Found in Recent Human Evolution” in the online science journal *WIRED*. For Darwinian (including evolutionary-psychological) approaches to literary scholarship, see David and Nanelle Barash’s *Madame Bovary’s Ovaries: A Darwinian Look at Literature*, and Jonathan Gottschall’s *The Literary Animal: Evolution and the Nature of Narrative*, with a foreword by E.O. Wilson, author of the above mentioned seminal text *Sociobiology*.(^)

(7)Evolutionary psychologists are interested in the ways in which modern medical advances, like birth control, are actively changing our mating decisions, allowing today for women and men to engage more readily with “less fit” partners due to lessened risk. The theory is malleable in this respect, but in relationship to modern advances in reproductive technologies that affect large populations, rather than in relationship to individual mating decisions that fall outside patterns of mating behavior.(^)

Works Cited

Altick, Richard D. *Victorian People and Ideas: A Companion for the Modern Reader of Victorian Literature*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1973.

Baker, Robin. *Sperm Wars: The Science of Sex*. London: Fourth Estate, 1996.

Barash, David P. and Nanelle R. Barash. *Madame Bovary’s Ovaries: A Darwinian Look at Literature*. New York: Delacourt Press, 2005.

Beer, Gillian. *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. New York: University of Cambridge, 2000.

Bender, Bert. "The Teeth of Desire: *The Awakening* and *The Descent of Man*." *American Literature* 63.3 (1991): 459-473.

Brady, Kristin. "Thomas Hardy and Matters of Gender." *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Kramer, Dale, ed. New York: Cambridge UP, 1999.

Browne, Janet. "Botany for Gentlemen: Erasmus Darwin and 'The Loves of the Plants'." *Isis* 80.4 (1989): 592-621.

Buss, David M. *The Evolution of Desire: Strategies of Human Mating*. New York: Basic Books, 2003.

Dawson, Gowan. *Darwin, Literature and Victorian Respectability*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2007.

Darwin, Charles. "On The Origin of Species." In *Darwin: The Indelible Stamp*, edited by James D. Watson. 339-602. China: Running Press Books, 2005.

---. "The Descent of Man." In *Darwin: The Indelible Stamp*, edited by James D. Watson. 603-1065. China: Running Press Books, 2005.

Darwin, Erasmus. *The Botanic Garden. Part II. Containing the Loves of the Plants*. Middlesex: Echo Library Publishers, 2007.

Eliot, George. *Middlemarch*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.

Ellis, Havelock. "Eugenics and St. Valentine." *Nineteenth-Century* 59 (1906): 91-100.

Giddens, Anthony. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1992.

Gottschall, Jonathan. *The Literary Animal: Evolution and the Nature of Narrative*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2005.

Hardy, Thomas. "The Science of Fiction." In *Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings*, edited by Harold Orel. 125-133. University of Kansas Press, 1996.

---. *Far From the Madding Crowd*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2005.

---. *Jude the Obscure*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2003.

---. *The Hand of Ethelberta*. Ed. Toru Sasaki. Vermont: Everyman Paperbacks, 1998.

---. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Ed. Sarah E. Maier. Ontario: Broadview Press, 1996.

Jann, Rosemary. "Darwin and the Anthropologists: Sexual Selection and its Discontents." In *Sexualities in Victorian Britain*. Eds. Andrew H. Miller and James Eli Adams. Bloomington: Indiana UP (1996): 79-95.

Levine, George. *Darwin and the Novelists*. Chicago: Chicago U.P., 1988.

---. *Dying to Know*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Mason, Michael. "Taking Darwin in." *London Review of Books* 6.3 (1985): 8. Web. <<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v06/n03/michael-mason/taking-darwin-inn>>.

Otis, Laura, ed. *Literature and Science in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Oxford UP, 2002.

Pennisi, Elizabeth. "Signals of Natural Selection Found in Recent Human Evolution." *WIRED Science*, 1 May 2012. Web. 7 May 2012. <<http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2012/05/human-genetic-evolution/>>

Purdy, Richard Little., and Michael Millgate, eds. *The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy*. 2 vols. New York: Oxford UP, 1978.

Richardson, Angelique. "The Eugenization of Love: Sarah Grand and the Morality of Genealogy." *Victorian Studies* 42.2 (1999): 227-255.

Ridley, Matt. *The Red Queen: Sex and the Evolution of Human Nature*. New York: Penguin, 1993.

Sasaki, Toru. Ed. "Introduction." *The Hand of Ethelberta*. Vermont: Everyman Paperbacks, 1998.

Stott, Rebecca. "Darwin's Barnacles: Mid-Century Victorian Natural History and the Marine Grotesque," in *Transactions and Encounters: Science and Culture in the Nineteenth Century*. Eds. Roger Luckhurst and Josephine McDonagh, Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002.

Wilson, Edward O. *Sociobiology, The New Synthesis*. Boston: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Wright, Robert. *The Moral Animal: Why We Are, The Way We Are: The New Science of Evolutionary Psychology*. New York: Vintage, 1994.

Yeazell, Ruth Bernard. *Fictions of Modesty: Women and Courtship in the English Novel*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

