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Home invasions: Victorian domestic space and the figure of the outsider

Kathleen Rodems

Eastern Illinois University

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Home Invasions: Victorian Domestic Space
and the Figure of the Outsider

(TITLE)

BY

Kathleen Rodems

THESIS

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Ed. Stelen
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Abstract

Victorian fiction often represents a domestic space that is designed both architecturally and psychologically to protect its residents from the external harsh and hostile world. Novelists of the period perceived a weakness in the domestic fortress and incorporated characters that could enter these homes in various ways, whether invited or not, and threatened to expose the families to the world they represented. This thesis investigates characters able to disrupt this domestic idea of privacy including the orphaned outsider Heathcliff from Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), the impostor Lucy Graham in Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862), and the detective Sergeant Cuff in Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* (1868).

In order to explain the Victorian ideology that underlies domestic space and its perceived threats, my thesis discusses several different aspects of identity in relation to inside and outside the home. I rely on the work of sociologist Richard Jenkins, who maintains, "It is not enough to assert an identity. That identity must also be validated (or not) by those with whom we have dealings" (19). According to Jenkins, one must not only believe in their own identity but also prove to others around them that one is deserving of this position. This conflicting identity perception poses problems for the represented Victorian families as it disrupts their homes.

Heathcliff and Catherine of *Wuthering Heights* embody outsider identities and primitiveness in contrast to the cultured and presumably more socially sophisticated residents of Thrushcross Grange. Catherine attempts to find happiness in her marriage to Edgar and fully transform into a cultured insider. Heathcliff never truly assimilates to the rough Earnshaw home or "civilized" society of the Lintons, because his appearance and

temperament hinders acceptance. In Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret*, Lucy Graham uses her beauty and feminine traits to gain access into Audley Court; the actions that cross the community's accepted feminine boundaries ultimately aid in her success, but also reveal her faults to the amateur detective Robert Audley. In my epilogue, I focus on Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* as a way to summarize the patterns of containment and disruption at work in *Wuthering Heights* and *Lady Audley's Secret*, and as a way to point to a third pattern at work in the newly emerging genre of detective novels. The novel includes the impostor Godfrey Ablewhite, the detective Sergeant Cuff, and the colonial others Ezra Jennings and the Brahmin Indians, all who threaten to expose the Verinder family to the outside world.

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Dedication

For Shane because you are the greatest!

Acknowledgments

Thank you to my committee, Dr. Dagni Bredesen, Dr. Robin Murray and Dr. Randy Beebe for all their words of advice and continuous encouragement throughout this experience.

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Introduction

As Pip arrives at Mr. Wemmicks' home in Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, he soon finds the house is modeled after a secluded fortress—a home that is protected by a bridge or plank and guns that fire according to Greenwich time. Pip surveys the property in amazement as he states, "The piece of ordinance referred to, was mounted in a separate fortress, constructed of latticework. It was protected from the weather by an ingenious little tarpaulin contrivance in the nature of an umbrella" (197-198). At once medieval in look but modern in its gadgetry, Wemmicks' castle-home is designed for isolation and to guarantee protection from strangers. Although Wemmicks' home is amusing in its literalization of the cliché, Dickens captures the ideal middle-class domestic space in Victorian fiction—a domestic space that is designed both architecturally and psychologically to protect its residents from the external harsh and hostile world. Inga Bryden and Janet Floyd argue that the "middle-class homes were designed, externally and internally, to 'ward-off' urbanisation" (12). For the middle class Victorian, what went on in the home was private and thus separated from the public domain. The public domain included the working class and strangers whose very presence in or near the home could threaten the privacy and safety of the family. According to S. J. Kleinberg, "Homes were positioned to avoid stressful situations....Lawns, fences and distance from urban core minimised intrusions, allowing the middle-class housewife to exercise control over her domain, safe from threats posed by outsiders" (148). This sequestration established an ideological distinction between the home and the outside world and thus between the home inmates and outsiders. The domestic household included relationships between the immediate family members,

between the family and the servants and between the servants themselves. In most cases, the family structure was hierarchical with the father at the apex. The patriarchal authority determined the rules and guidelines even when this authority departed from regulating legal or social norms (as in the case of domestic abuse). Ideally, the lady of the home complemented the patriarch by signifying beauty, grace and order. She was the center of the household, in charge of the servants and represented the ideal social decorum. The lady of the home determined the domestic practices and charitable visiting. However, throughout Victorian fiction, these depictions of the home are consistently negated and the patriarchal order challenged as strangers enter and disrupt the familial structure and safety.

Victorian novelists perceived a weakness in the domestic fortress and Anthea Trodd asserts, "The 1860s saw an emergence of the new popular genre of sensation novels which made the interaction of crime and family life their pragmatic structure and attracted wide publicity in so doing" (1). While Victorian families were searching for a privacy that was a balance between Wemmicks' fortress and the bustle of the London's streets, the novels of the period depicted the many dilemmas that might arise in this search. A thick preventative hedge was a simple obstacle to defeat for anyone who wanted to enter the home. The binary between the insider and outsider began to appear in literature and novelists depicted servants, impostors, detectives, and foreigners to represent the figure of the outsider entering the home. They entered these homes in various ways, whether invited or not, and threatened to expose the families to the hostile world they represented.

Servants entered the home and frequently knew privileged information, but generally, their intentions were to assist the family. However, orphans, family members, impostors, and professional like detectives were outsiders that threatened the family. In my thesis, I explore representations of the Victorian home, focusing in particular on the viability of the domestic model when the boundaries of the home are breached by characters who do not share the values of the family upon which they intrude. I look at characters able to disrupt this domestic idea of privacy including the orphaned outsider Heathcliff from Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), the impostor Lucy Graham in Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862), and the detective Sergeant Cuff in Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* (1868). Each of these characters challenge the ideological underpinnings of the Victorian home in different ways, showing a cultural anxiety concerning the thin layer of protection that separated the family from the outside.

In order to explain the Victorian ideology that underlies domestic space and its perceived threats, this thesis discusses several different aspects of identity in relation to inside and outside the home. I rely on the work of sociologist Richard Jenkins, who finds that identity is always "'being or becoming.' One's social identity....is never a final or settled matter" (4). But in order to establish any identity, there must be fixed or determined guidelines, and Jenkins asserts there are core elements that never change. Race for an example is a settled identity, while gender roles and culture can alter based on social interactions and communities. Jenkins further defines social identity as "the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities" (4) and maintains that "It is not enough to assert an identity. That identity must also be validated (or not) by those with whom we have

dealings" (19). According to Jenkins, one must not only believe in their own identity but also prove to others around them that one is deserving of this position. This conflicting identity perception poses problems for the represented Victorian families and disrupts their homes. Some characters adjust and assimilate to the collectivity's view of acceptable behavior associated with each identity, but others cannot. Brontë, Braddon, and Collins depict realistic characters entangled in situations that represent these conflicting identity perceptions. Jenkins' social perspective lends a language and understanding of why these characters can enter the home. These Victorian novelists anticipated the fears and concerns of middle-class perceptions of social class and behavior. The three novels in my study not only depict such cases, but also offer exemplary cases for better understanding the ideology behind identity conflict.

Several examples of Victorian identities emerge as difficult to accept or understand for the family members in these novels. Elizabeth Langland discusses "the intersection of class and gender ideologies in a Victorian icon: the Angel in the House," arguing that although women or "Angels" always had the primary control of the home, that restrictive gender roles were never set in stone (8). Coventry Patmore's "Angel in the House" described an exceptionally beautiful woman who was discreet, sweet and candid with powers of persuasion that would be used for benevolent intentions. Men imagined "heaven in her eyes" as she represented something that was pure and innocent. The lady monitored the home making sure all was in order, and her relationship with the father of the house was balanced by her ability to assess moments of power or submission, but most importantly, this angel was innocent and kind to her core. She could not step out or question the predetermined gender role and still be considered feminine. Jenkins argues

that the collectivity must accept the asserted identity in order for it to be true. The idea that *individuals* questioned the very characteristics that determine a role or identity seems to complicate his argument. In *Wuthering Heights*, for example, Catherine Earnshaw Linton does not adhere to the actions considered appropriate for the lady of the home, but her daughter, later in life attempts to grasp these standards. In contrast to Brontë's Catherine Earnshaw, in Braddon's *Lady Audley Secret*, Lucy Audley seeks to conform to the image of the "Angel in the House," except for her acts of murder, bigamy and arson. On the one hand, she appears to be innocent, beautiful and intelligent, but many of her actions contradict the idea of virtue. Through Lucy's immoral actions, Braddon calls attention to the shifting of accepted gender roles. Mary Poovey's groundbreaking work, *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England*, also emphasizes the difficulty in accepting the "ideological formulation" of gender ideals according to Victorian standards, but stresses that these ideals were always questioned and changing. The boundaries of acceptable female behavior were in constant fluctuation as the restrictions on social behavior were questioned. Based on these scholars, an individual could change the collectivity's perception of acceptable female behavior as Catherine Linton and Lucy Audley demonstrate.

While Patmore's "Angel in the House" provides a concept for identifying gender disruption and control *within* the Victorian home, fictional portrayals of the police detective provide a way to examine the border between private and public space. Anthea Trodd discusses the invasion of police detectives into the Victorian home in her text, *Domestic Crime and the Victorian Novel*. According to Trodd, these detectives entered the home with benign intentions to assist the family and solve crimes; however, Trodd

asserts that these "encounters betray deep fears about the threat to the world of domestic innocence posed by the new police world of subterfuge and surveillance"(13). Whether the detective's intention was to help the family, or to expose the family's secrets, the family perceived the detective as a threat to their privacy.

Given the tension between the individual and the community revealed in the fiction I examine, most of these characters have undefined or unsettled identities, and as a result, are represented as being in a state of "liminality." Sarah Gilead defines a liminal person as one who "is detached from a prior condition of membership in the social structure, undergoes a transitional ordeal in which his structural attributes are neutralized or made ambiguous, and then reemerges into social structure, usually with enhanced functions, status or class" (183). Some of the characters do not physically alter or even alter at all, but the collectivity's conflicting perception of the individual forces them into a liminal position. Heathcliff and Catherine cannot grasp nor find their identity from the start to the finish of the novel—they are in a state of constant fluctuation as they move in and out of social acceptance. Lucy Audley begins her life as the daughter of a drunken father and insane mother, but she intentionally performs an identity that is physically similar to her previous lower-class identity. The difference between the two is one of wealth and social distinction, and because she can assimilate so well, she does not appear in a liminal position. Alternately in Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*, Sergeant Cuff is certainly wedged in a liminal position as he perceives his identity as helpful, yet the family fears his intruding questions and obligation to the law. He is caught in a midpoint or liminality, between the family's perception of his identity and his own perception of his identity. Ezra Jennings identity appears as the most difficult to define. He has a

mysterious background, and Franklin Blake and Rachel Verinder accept him, but the other characters in the novel are suspicious of his intentions.

Chapter one, "*Wuthering Heights: The Double Threat*," examines Heathcliff and Catherine who embody outsider identities and primitiveness in contrast to the cultured and presumably more socially sophisticated residents of Thrushcross Grange. Catherine attempts to find happiness in her marriage to Edgar and fully transform into a cultured insider. Her wild passionate existence binds her to Heathcliff and *Wuthering Heights*, and she cannot live according to the social conventions within the boundaries of Thrushcross Grange. Donna K. Reed uses Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* to explain and interpret Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* as a text paralleling the civilization of the coming Victorian society in her article "The Discontents of Civilization in *Wuthering Heights* and *Buddenbrooks*." Early in her article, Reed states, "Brontë's narrative of life on the moors is so stripped of neighboring civilization, of related social and historical events, that we seem to be thrust into an encapsulated world that is experiencing the rudimentary process of civilization itself, within its original unit, the family" (212). Reed's argument helps explain the damaging affects of Edgar's enforcement of the Linton's social standards on Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship. Catherine cannot function under the new social regulations of Thrushcross Grange, but Edgar does not understand why these conventions do not emerge naturally from within her. The moment that Edgar begins to enforce these standards, Catherine's health begins to fail.

As outsiders, neither Catherine nor Heathcliff can assimilate. Heathcliff never truly assimilates to the rough Earnshaw home or "civilized" society of the Lintons

because his appearance and temperament hinders acceptance. Together and separately, he and Catherine consistently break the boundaries of accepted cultured society. Most scholars agree that Heathcliff and Catherine's true identities are only complete in relation to each other. Their constant need to be near one another breaks all the social boundaries Edgar values, and causes the turmoil that afflicts all of the characters from the beginning to the end of the novel. In his essay "The Wuther of the Other in *Wuthering Heights*," Steven Vine defines the idea of "wuther," or rather "wuthering," as "a quivering movement" from within and labels his classification of these two characters as "othering," which is "a passing of boundaries that takes the outside in and the inside out, where the familiar is made strange" (340). Vine's remarks argue that "othering" lends an understanding to the intentional self-destructive behavior of both characters, and his definition of "wuthering" explains the inconsistent acceptance and rejection both Catherine and Heathcliff experience and perform. This quivering or othering continuously prevents Heathcliff and Catherine from assimilating into a cultured society while uniting them as outsiders. They question what is acceptable social behavior, but they are not strong enough to alter the collectivity's perception of decorum. Unlike Lucy Audley in *Lady Audley's Secret*, Catherine and Heathcliff never successfully assimilate, and not until the second generation do any characters unite the primitive and civilized that revitalizes the depleted stock of the Lintons and domesticates the wild nature of the Earnshaws to the evident benefit of both households. *Wuthering Heights* reveals an astonishingly sophisticated portrayal of a direct connection between the Victorian home and psychological identity.

In chapter two, I examine how Mary Elizabeth Braddon questioned women's positions in domestic space by creating a female character that climbs the social ranks exploiting the qualities and virtuous ideals that identify them as "Angels in the House." Elaine Showalter discusses the female sensation novelists in her book *A Literature of Their Own* and suggests these novels had "messages they wished to communicate" (159). These sensation novelists attempted to change the collectivity's perception of acceptable feminine behavior and prevent the rejection of women who could balance passive and aggressive conduct. Showalter finds that in the genre "everything that was not forbidden was compulsory" asserting that there was no limit on acceptable feminine behavior (159). In order to maintain her position as the Lady of Audley Court, Lucy must step out of those predetermined gender roles and act aggressively. Showalter continues:

For the Victorian woman, secrecy was simply a way of life. The sensationalists made crime and violence domestic, modern and suburban; but their secrets were not simply solutions to mysteries and crimes; they were the secrets of women's dislike of their roles as daughters, wives, and mothers. These women novelists made a powerful appeal to the female audience by subverting the traditions of feminine fiction to suite their own imaginative impulses, by expressing a wide range of suppressed female emotions, and by tapping and satisfying fantasies of protest and escape. (158-9)

Like the characters to which Showalter refers, Lucy Audley does not suppress her feminine qualities, but rather utilizes them along with typically male-identified

aggression to maintain her position. She appears as the beautiful lady of the home, and maintains her position by attempting murder, arson and bigamy.

Lucy Graham uses her beauty and feminine traits to gain access into Audley Court, yet the actions that cross the community's accepted feminine boundaries ultimately aid in her success, but also reveal her faults to the amateur detective, Robert Audley. The Audleys perceive her refined femininity, and she comports herself as the lady of the home while at the same time, her attempts to commit murder and arson contradict the accepted feminine behavior. Nicole P. Fisk argues in her article, "Lady Audley as Sacrifice: Curing Female Disadvantage in *Lady Audley's Secret*," that Braddon was also responding to the patriarchal society and that Lucy Audley "serves as a sacrifice" (24). She identifies that Lucy Audley's actions and later containment at the end of the novel are a sacrifice for the other female characters of the novel. According to Fisk, Lucy's actions pave the way for the other female characters to become assertive and break out of the passive feminine role. Lucy Audley temporarily succeeds in balancing the typical female characteristics and predetermined male characteristics to gain status and wealth so that despite her ultimate failure and confinement, she sets a precedent in female representation.

In my epilogue, I focus on Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* as a way to summarize the patterns of containment and disruption at work in *Wuthering Heights* and *Lady Audley's Secret* and as a way to point to a third pattern at work in the newly emerging genre of detective novels. This novel incorporates all of the intruding characters into one novel, but the Verinder home is protected by an additional element, the servants. Particularly, Betteredge acts as a guardian and gatekeeper when strangers attempt to enter

the home, or when the Sergeant begins to question Rachel's innocence. Brian McCuskey finds in his article "The Kitchen Police: Servant Surveillance and Middle-Class Transgressions," that in the Verinder home, "Privacy, one of the cornerstones of Victorian domestic ideology, remains under siege as long as the family remains under surveillance," but also suggests that the servant "necessarily but not offensively encroaches upon the family's privacy" (359). The servants of Verinder home acted as surveillance and added an invaluable layer of protection without threatening the privacy of the family.

The novel includes the impostor, Godfrey Ablewhite, the detective, Sergeant Cuff, and the colonial others, Ezra Jennings and the Brahmin Indians that threaten to expose the Verinder family to the outside world. All of these characters contradictory behaviors threaten to disrupt the family's stability. Ian Duncan's article "*The Moonstone*, the Victorian Novel, and Imperialist Panic," argues that "what the household disintegrates into is London. Swarming with lawyers, usurers, philanthropists, and the detective police, the modern commercial metropolis is the very locus in the nineteenth-century urban gothic tradition" (307). Sergeant Cuff threatens the home because, although he has benign intentions, he holds no allegiance to the family members. His very presence threatens the family's privacy. His intended identity and perceived identity are different, but because of the stolen diamond the family momentarily perceives his assistance as necessary although unwelcome.

Along with Sergeant Cuff, several other characters threaten to enter the Verinder home. Sergeant Cuff arrives with the intention of finding the diamond and helping the family but achieves this very idea that Trodd discusses instead; his presence in the home

creates fear rather than subdues it. However, it is the collectivity or family's perception of his identity that threatens the home. Like Lucy Audley, Godfrey Ablewhite represents the impostor who also acts aggressively to keep his true identity hidden. Ablewhite is conscious of the difference in identity perception, but uses this to obtain the diamond and sympathy from the Verinder family. If he were to reveal his true deceptive and shocking qualities, the Verinders would not allow him in their home—his presence as a thief would also cause a threat. Finally, Ezra Jennings who wishes to assimilate into middle-class society, and the Brahmin Indians, whose only goal is to recover the stolen diamond, represent the colonial other. However, there is an important difference between these characters. Jennings comprehends his physical identity plague as the cause for concern. Characters suspect his behavior as he tries to help Franklin Blake, but his intentions are benevolent. In contrast, the Brahmin Indians are not concerned with the family's privacy or welfare. Their only apparent goal is to gain possession of the diamond using whatever means necessary. Looking at Collins' preface, Charles Muller states in his article, "*The Moonstone: Victorian Detective Novel*," that "The characters are more than agents of action: in a sense they create the ramifications themselves through their own theories and misconstruction of motive, and involve the reader by allowing him to exercise his own ingenuity" (5). The reader is asked to validate these identities through an assortment of narratives; however, they are intentionally made to misjudge characters based on the opinions of the other characters to show how easily one might misperceive an individual's intentions and identity.

As I will argue, *Wuthering Heights*, *Lady Audley's Secret*, and *The Moonstone* provide examples of characters that breach the parameters of domestic space despite the

many levels of obstacles. Some of their accepted identities enable them to cross the boundaries as they enter the homes while other identities hinder or prevent this penetration. These characters disturbingly circle the boundaries and are still able to cause constant harm to the families and demonstrate how easily one can enter a home when the community's perception of an identity is mistaken.

Chapter One
Wuthering Heights: The Double Threat

'Don't you [Nelly] see that face?' she enquired, gazing earnestly at the mirror...And say what I could, I was incapable of making her [Catherine] comprehend it to be her own...'Oh dear! I thought I was at home,' she [Catherine] sighed. 'I thought I was lying in my chamber at Wuthering Heights. Because I'm weak, my brain got confused, and I screamed unconsciously...Oh, if I were but in my own bed in the old house!' (106)

This epigraph depicts one of the many crucial moments when Catherine can no longer function at Thrushcross Grange. Catherine's unfamiliarity with her own face in the mirror is triggered by her undiagnosed illness, and she no longer recognizes the woman she's become while living at Thrushcross Grange because the social constraints of her new home are more than she can bear. She may appear in the mirror as the lady of the house, but her spirit and mind tell her she is still the woman wandering the moors with Heathcliff. She wishes to return to the only place that she considers home, and where she has the freedom to follow her passions. Although not physically altered since her marriage to Edgar, Catherine cannot recognize her identity *without* Heathcliff or away from Wuthering Heights.

Wuthering Heights represents many elements that are essential to Victorian domestic ideals, such as privacy and protection. At the same time, without the social fundamentals of the community, these elements are manipulated or construed to fit the needs of the inhabitants so that they do not conform to the domestic ideal. The unruly servants, and dark, rustic interior run counter to the ideal home, as does the near complete

lack of cultural or educational refinements. Very few visitors enter the home, and even when they do arrive, they receive no welcome. While *Wuthering Heights* maintains the physical seclusion desirable in Victorian homes, this seclusion from civilization as a whole, rather than just the wandering stranger or uninvited guest means that the family is without the social standards of the community. Although Emily Brontë's novel is set long before Victoria's reign, it reflects the coming standards of Victorian ideals. The interior of *Wuthering Heights* does not adhere to any Victorian domestic standards of decoration or social conveniences. It is dusty and dark without the normal foyer or greeting area used to keep strangers separate from the members of the family. In contrast, Thrushcross Grange exemplifies the ideal home because it and the members of the Linton family adhere to the collective standards that were often asserted in Victorian society. Though secluded to provide protection from strangers, the Grange still allows civilized interaction and standards between its inmates and with the outside world. Several walls or boundaries discourage strangers in order to ensure familial privacy not complete retreat. The interior of the home is beautiful with the embellishments that signal culture, and the children exhibit a social sophistication that demonstrates a polish that comes from their interaction with the world.

After years of isolation from the community, Heathcliff and Catherine repeatedly break Victorian social standards. Instead of maintaining her position as the lady of the home, Catherine wanders the moors with Heathcliff. They act as they please without any concern for parental or community standards of behavior. While they are adopted brother and sister, their relationship resembles that of incest. They use marriage to obtain something other than love opposes the accepted community's perception of proper moral

behavior, and Heathcliff continues to visit Catherine at Thrushcross Grange even after Edgar demands his departure from their lives.

Even with these high levels of privacy in both homes, Heathcliff and Catherine still function as domestic intruders; they cannot assimilate in either of these traditional domestic spaces, even one as rustic and brutal as Wuthering Heights. As Mary Burgan states, they, "stand in the middle, inheritors of abuse of parental authority which they can deflect only by clinging to one another in defiance of all convention" (395). Although not the only scholar to argue that Heathcliff and Catherine can only exist in relation to each other, Burgan adds to the analysis of these figures by arguing that the inconsistent parental authority of Wuthering Heights is the main cause for their positioning as social outsiders. Catherine's guardians (parents, husband and in-laws) fail to limit her emotions or actions; therefore, she occupies a liminal state in which she, although attracted to the material comforts and privileges of Thrushcross Grange, she always yearns after Wuthering Heights. Her marriage to Edgar attempts to resolve her liminality, but, because she never truly conforms to the Lintons' standards of appropriate behavior or controlled emotions, she is unsuccessful.

Heathcliff is considered an intruder in both these homes: first as an interloper, he displaces the acknowledged son; then, as the soul twin because he constantly defies the social customs and boundaries in his relentless crusade for Catherine's company. Unlike Catherine, who is welcome in the Linton circle, and even after his transformation into a polished, well-spoken "gentleman," his dark features blunt expression impede his acceptance by the civilized world. His early abrupt insertion into the Earnshaw family ensures his outsider status at Wuthering Heights; his violent adherence to his relationship

with Catherine disrupts the stability and harmony of the family at Thrushcross Grange so that he is viewed as an enemy.

Wuthering Heights's physical isolation persists over the several generations represented in the novel; but, as mentioned earlier, it is not the ideal seclusion most Victorians would soon value. Mr. Lockwood, Heathcliff's tenant is confronted with this isolation immediately upon his arrival at Wuthering Heights, which causes him to readjust his assumptions of a proper home. The isolation at Wuthering Heights results from primitive rusticity rather than the deliberate, secured, cozy, privacy often sought by many middle-class residents. The inhabitants are unfriendly and even hostile towards this stranger, Lockwood. He chooses Thrushcross Grange and this area of England, Yorkshire, because he imagines that he wishes to be distant from civilization. One of the first things he does is visit Heathcliff at Wuthering Heights. There he finds a place more remote than Thrushcross Grange, a place "completely removed from the stir of society" (13). This sense of isolation pervades the novel. No other neighbors are mentioned in the story—only a few wandering children who spot Catherine and Heathcliff's ghosts at the end of the story, and the passing glance at a church and minister. Without these neighbors or community, there are no social fundamentals for the family to live by, other than their own. This social removal causes Heathcliff and Catherine to mature into uncultivated adults. Although standards of others can be limiting, behavior, education, and social interaction are generally influenced by the principles of society. But the Earnshaws disregard what others might consider wrong, as when Mr. Earnshaw adopts an orphaned child who resembles a gypsy and later christens him with his deceased son's

name. The child's appearance is dirty and his smell foul, yet Mr. Earnshaw decides to bring him home and raise him as his own.

The children of Wuthering Heights have neither physical nor emotional ties to keep them close at home. Allowed to roam through the moors, they have the freedom to do as they please. Catherine ignores the little respect her father wishes; he asks her to be a good child, and she responds, "Why cannot you always be a good man, father?" (44). And while Hindley is sent off to school, the only education that Catherine and Heathcliff receive is through reading books and Joseph's biblical teachings—which they eventually completely reject. The only socially-maintained family near Wuthering Heights is the Lintons at Thrushcross Grange, and while Catherine admires them, Heathcliff finds them silly and weak.

The contrast between Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange operates at a level of interior design as well. The interior of Wuthering Heights ignores the standards of Victorian ideals. Similar to its inhabitants, the home is resilient and sturdy. It is introduced as a building strong enough to withstand "the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather," and is presented as a dark and secluded building with small windows for little ventilation and three centuries of habitation (14). Lockwood's description of the interior contradicts the standards of 19th century domestic ideals, as there is no usual lobby or foyer in which to accept and introduce guests. In *The Secret History of Domesticity*, Michael McKeon describes in detail many floor plans ranging from Renaissance and Victorian that included private halls and entries in order to prevent the family's exposure to servants and strangers entering the home (252-253). The sought-for privacy was not only achieved by the secluded position of the home, but also

the space in the home that was unseen by strangers or guests. *Wuthering Heights* has very little area unseen by visitors, and all the space is shared with the servants and other members of the home. The kitchen barely resembles the normal site of culinary preparation that Lockwood is accustomed to, and even the roof has little cover, as it "lay bare to an inquiring eye" (14). The builder's initial concern was focused on the strength of the exterior of the home, rather than making the interior appealing. *Wuthering Heights* has no way to separate the visitors from the members of the home or maintain the distinctions between servants and master.

Domestic space includes not only the architectural elements but also the members of the home and their relationship with the each other and the community. In her preface to the novel, Charlotte Brontë claims that Emily uses residents of *Wuthering Heights* to represent the true primitive and uncultured existence of her own Yorkshire neighbors (9-10). Most of Emily's contemporary critics hailed her writing as an accurate portrayal of the people of the rural Yorkshire. John Forster's 1848 review of *Wuthering Heights* states, "some of the incidents look like real events; and the book has the merit, which must not be undervalued, of avoiding common-place and affectation.... an author who goes at once fearlessly into the moors and desolate places, for his heroes."¹ And *Wuthering Heights* still appears as a place which Inga Bryden and Janet Floyd see as a "powerfully influential space for the development of character and identity" (2), but not one likely to produce an identity and character development that conforms to societal ideals and expectations.

¹ Forster further states that although he appreciates her accurate character portrayals, that some of their actions (presumably Heathcliff's) are better left unknown. 281

Without the defining architectural standards and influence of the community, the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights represent the result of years of seclusion and separation from society. The novel first introduces Heathcliff as the owner of the dwelling, but Lockwood, as the naïve observer, also finds that he (Heathcliff) runs counter to the typical English patriarch or gentleman of the home. Lockwood assumes this home will be similar to many 19th century homes, but Heathcliff's appearance and subsequent conversations prove otherwise. The dark haired and gypsy-like Heathcliff evidently acquired some polish and rudimentary social skills before returning to Wuthering Heights. Lockwood states that his first (mistaken) impression of Heathcliff contrasts with the house because the owner is a "handsome figure." Because Heathcliff is handsome and the owner of Wuthering Heights, Lockwood assumes that he is a gentleman; Heathcliff's surliness has a "reserve [that] springs from an aversion to showy displays of feelings—to manifestations of mutual kindness" (15). Lockwood's misapprehension about Heathcliff extends to the rest of the house and its inhabitants. Heathcliff warns Lockwood that he, evidently reaching to pat a dog, "better let the dog alone.... She's not accustomed to be spoiled—not kept for a pet" (16). The undomesticated and snarling dogs further demonstrate the primitiveness of this home, but the lack of proper domestic fundamentals reaches deeper than the animals. This misreading continues as Lockwood moves further into the kitchen and living area.

Within Wuthering Heights, the differences in appearance between servant and family members are blurred. At the same moment Lockwood enters, Heathcliff yells at Joseph. A longtime servant at Wuthering Heights, Joseph's status in the home and relationship with its members differs from the standard hierarchy of respect one expects.

Joseph never truly honors Heathcliff as the master of Wuthering Heights, and with the years of erratic if not totally absent social training, Heathcliff chooses not to assert his pre-eminence or even define his position in the home to Lockwood or any stranger. The servant Joseph remains unresponsive to Heathcliff's commands; the combination of irascible master and disobedient servant signifies the turbulent atmosphere of this home.²

Moments later, Lockwood cannot even seem to entice young Cathy, whom he describes as having incredible physical beauty, into conversation. In the same way that Lockwood misinterprets Heathcliff's handsomeness as an indication of his status and nature, Lockwood responds to Cathy's beauty as an indication of her status as a lady of the house. Yet she is even less welcoming than Heathcliff and Lockwood senses her strong disdain upon their first meeting. Before Heathcliff explains the relationship between all the current inhabitants of the home, Lockwood misrecognizes Hareton as "the clown at my elbow, who is drinking his tea out of a basin and eating his bread with unwashed hands" (21). Because of Hareton's dirty exterior, he appears as a servant, yet his presence at the table resembles that of family member. Lockwood leaves Wuthering Heights in complete confusion and not until Nelly's explanation can he even begin to comprehend his visit Wuthering Heights.

While Wuthering Heights exhibits very little (if any) characteristics of an ideal home, Thrushcross Grange, in almost all forms, lives up to that ideal. The Grange is not far from Wuthering Heights, but its seclusion does not seem as pronounced. The boundaries and walls at Thrushcross Grange provide protection, but this protection strikingly differs from Wuthering Heights. Walls and gates on the property establish

² Although a servant, Nelly indicates in her narration that she is treated more like a family member, rather than an employee.

parameters for the inhabitants and maintain privacy, but gates still allow culture within its boundaries. The interior of Thrushcross Grange conforms to the standards of beauty sought in middle-class homes, and the children are educated and generally well-behaved and even the dog that Edgar and Isabella fight over is domesticated, contrasting the nearly feral dogs at Wuthering Heights. They do not exhibit the same wild passion that Heathcliff and Catherine so often assert; that is until Catherine's marriage. Isabella impulsively marries Heathcliff and later abandons him, revealing how quickly the Victorian woman's behavior can lose its social veneer.

The boundaries of the estate are not only physically constructed but also verbally insisted upon as indicated in the second half of the novel. Edgar will not allow his daughter, Cathy, to leave the boundaries of the Grange because he does not want his daughter to resemble her wild and untamed mother or come into contact with Heathcliff. Edgar explains to Cathy that he keeps her in "not because I disliked Mr. Heathcliff, but because Mr. Heathcliff dislikes me; and is a most diabolical man, delighting to wrong and ruin those he hates, if they gave him the slightest opportunity" (180). He comprehends the difference between the Earnshaw home and his own. While Nelly notes the locked gates with little concern that she might escape the grounds, the younger Cathy eventually evades these restrictions. As soon as her father finds out that she has been outside the Grange and visiting her cousin Linton, he forbids any more correspondence between the two. He fears that Heathcliff will in some way influence her, and she too will be unable to function in the civilized home like her mother. Inevitably, the location and person Edgar has so long worked to protect his daughter from is exactly the place that Cathy discovers and is entrapped by.

Thrushcross Grange also exemplifies many of the features associated with affluent middle-class homes, and although there is not a clear description of the Grange, the narrative mentions features associated with the domestic ideal: a protective hedge, path, flowerpot, drawing room, shutters and curtains. The home is "beautiful—a splendid place carpeted with crimson, and crimson-covered chairs and tables, and a pure white ceiling bordered by gold, a shower of glass-drops hanging in silver chains from the centre, and shimmering with little soft tapers" (47). While on their first visit to spy on Thrushcross Grange, Heathcliff and Catherine do not necessarily see the advantage of these adornments. The description of a warm, beautiful and clean home clearly opposes the accustomed residence. Thrushcross Grange follows the guidelines for guests and the separation between servants and family members. The structure of the Grange ensures privacy in accordance with Victorian standards. When Heathcliff returns from his two-year absence, upon his return, he quickly seeks Catherine at Thrushcross Grange. Heathcliff waits in the foyer while Nelly announces his arrival. He is not directly led to the parlor where Isabella, Catherine and Edgar are sitting, nor can he see the entire house from the foyer. He is forced to wait while Edgar and Catherine discuss his visit, and Edgar does not even find him fit to sit with the family because he still considers Heathcliff a servant. This passage demonstrates the way the foyer serves as a holding place that enables the family to determine who they will allow in and how far they will be permitted to enter.

The inhabitants are one of the most pronounced elements of social development that Thrushcross Grange resembles. When first introduced to the Grange, Heathcliff and Catherine want to discover if the home is any different from their own. They sneak up to

a window and watch from the outside observing Edgar and Isabella arguing. The voyeurs cannot understand why the siblings are fighting; the parents are not around and they have the freedom to do whatever they wish. With a freedom that Heathcliff and Catherine can only seize stealthily from their guardians, Isabella and Edgar waste it fighting with each other over the dog. Most importantly although the social boundaries in place are followed, the children are spoiled and petulant. Brontë critiques the domestic ideal, demonstrating that "civilized" behavior was not consistent even in a home that represents the social standards of the community.

Isabella and Edgar provide a contrasting example of a civilized sibling relationship, because Brontë must have a control family with which to compare the Earnshaws. Donna K. Reed states that Brontë "appear[s] to have carried on an inner conversation, trying out polar positions with respect to the 'progress' of civilization, as exemplified through its smallest unit, the family" (211). Edgar and Isabella exhibit the typical sibling relationship, that heightens recognition of the atypical Heathcliff and Catherine bond that is stronger than blood. Heathcliff defines this difference as he asks himself when, "would you catch me wishing to have what Catherine wanted?" (48). He finally exclaims that he would never wish for the same conditions—*he is content with their surroundings*.

However, because they are laughing at Edgar and Isabella, Heathcliff and Catherine are soon noticed, and the Lintons immediately distinguish between the two, accepting only Catherine and dismissing Heathcliff. Essentially, Catherine's beautiful features and established birth are much more acceptable than Heathcliff's, as they find him to be strange, dirty and "quite unfit for a decent house" (49). Isabella even wishes

him removed into the cellar for she is instantly afraid of this stranger. Heathcliff is again forced outside the home. The wedge of social division more successfully splits Catherine and Heathcliff apart than Hindley's earlier efforts to distinguish between Heathcliff and the Earnshaw family.

As the only Earnshaw daughter, Catherine inherits her mother's place as lady of the house, yet she never performs any actions generally associated with her title. McKeon notes that "Rightly educated, the female child becomes the domestic wife and mother whose crucial role is to reproduce her experience for the succeeding generation" (187). The novel provides little description of Mrs. Earnshaw, and it's possible that Catherine never really saw or was taught the actions expected as the lady of the home. But would it really have mattered? She prefers to spend the afternoon running through the moors with Heathcliff. As a child living at Wuthering Heights, Catherine is described as having wild fits of passion and acting as she wishes. She is given the freedom to do as she pleases, and after her father dies, Hindley appears happy for her to keep away from the house and his new wife. Catherine chooses and is allowed to live a free and wild existence with Heathcliff on the moors. Yet, despite the parallels between her and Heathcliff's upbringing, she is accepted inside of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange even though she always wishes to be outside with him. Richard Jenkins' analysis of social identity defines two motivations that inspire conforming behavior: the desire to be correct, and to remain in the good graces of others (125). She has no desire to please anyone other than herself, and with little influence from society and no direction from her family, she attempts to create her own identity, one that is socially upwardly mobile and

the other, free from social constraints. These contradictory tendencies prevent her from feeling at home in any place and thus confirm her liminal position.

After years of uncontrolled actions, even as a young adult, she has moments of passion and rage long before her move to the Grange. After she pinches Nelly for not acting as she wished in front of Edgar, Nelly states that Catherine "never had power to conceal her passion, it always set her whole complexion in a blaze" (65). Catherine cannot control her anger (because she was never asked to) and acts aggressively even to the woman who has so long taken care of her. These moments show early that Catherine finds no one and nothing off limits during her passionate fits.

Nevertheless, the fact that she cannot easily control her temper or emotions makes her feel like an impostor whenever she does try to conform to expectations at the Grange. Catherine repeatedly refers to herself as an impostor after her first quick stay at the Grange, and Nelly describes her as having a "double character without exactly intending to deceive anyone" (62) to keep her acquaintance with the Lintons while maintaining her ties to Heathcliff. Catherine intends to please both the Lintons and Heathcliff and certainly understands the difference between the two. Her previous liminal position was defined by a lack of parental guidance and control; however, now she seeks to live this double life as a "gentle-woman" in front of the Lintons while retaining the unrestrained, uncultivated license of her girlhood at Wuthering Heights. These two opposite personalities cannot long be held in tandem. Occasionally Catherine's anger spins out of control, and later she even strikes Edgar during one of her fits of rage. Nevertheless, she eventually coaxes him back to her side (65-66). Even before Catherine moves into the Grange, Edgar finds it easier to make her happy by allowing her to act as she pleases than

to face her anger and disappointment, which sets a pattern for their married life. Edgar does not realize at this moment that the socially acceptable behavior he assumes to be inherent in all people, is not inherent, but rather taught and learned.

In her marriage to Edgar, Catherine attempts to resolve her liminality between her childhood uncivilized home and the new cultured life she becomes accustomed to while at Thrushcross. Shortly after a very ill Catherine is brought to the Grange, both Mr. and Mrs. Linton die of a fever they seem to have contracted from her. The dangerous infection she brings signals her hostile relation to all that Thrushcross Grange stands for. Once the elder Lintons die, the Grange begins to resemble *Wuthering Heights* in terms of the lax authority structure. The Linton home no longer has parental guidance and control that once ensured the culture and civilization. Edgar and Isabella must now inadequately attempt to regulate life as their parents had established.

While most marriages are based on love or social obligations, Catherine sees her marriage to Edgar as a means to help Heathcliff break free from her brother's control. Catherine finds "Cathy elides her separation from Heathcliff in an attempt to become herself the fantasized completion of his identity, even imagining that her division from him in her marriage to Edgar Linton will 'aid Heathcliff to rise'" (351). In Catherine's warped perception, her raised social class will also advance Heathcliff's. Whether her intention is to give him money, or her presumption that his position would just change by association, it completely disregards the exclusive loyalty to her husband implied in the sacred vows of marriage.

During her marriage to Edgar, Catherine never entirely transforms into the ideal lady of the home, but rather exerts opposite characteristics. Upon her arrival, the doctor

explains that due to her recent illness, Catherine should not be crossed and "ought to have her own way" (79) reinforcing this idea that her behavior is uncontrollable. She again receives permission to act as she pleases, and she maintains her liminal position, in which she is in the home but not contained by it, because she is not forced to conform to their ideals. She functions as a domestic intruder in her inability to conform fully to the values held by the Linton family. Reed adds that "Moving to the Grange offers Catherine all the benefits of refined gentry life: comfort and ease, dignified conduct, charming company, a library of books, and, as Nelly says, respectability—the essence of Victorian virtues" (219). But for Catherine, the Victorian social conventions that are the foundation of the Grange, essentially "dignified conduct," are still not enforced. Even after she takes up residence at the Grange she frequently loses composure. The main element that defined this home as an ideal is removed in order to appease her. By not adjusting to her new home, she requires everyone else to adjust to her arrival, forcing Edgar to succumb to her will from the start of the marriage and thus subverting the familial hierarchy in which the compliant wife submits to her husband.

As time goes on, Nelly detects Catherine's increased affability, which she thinks indicates that Catherine has adapted to her new environment. Nelly adds that they might have even been happy. At this point, Heathcliff has been gone several years. But her apparently successful adaptation does not erase the profound differences between Catherine and the Linton's siblings. As Nelly accurately observes Edgar and Isabella are the "honeysuckles embracing the thorn," (81) which suggests that Catherine's domestic intrusion is like that of an invasive species. The Lintons seem to realize that she is dissimilar; because no one is to disturb Catherine or make her upset fearing that they

suspect her assimilation is only superficial and temporary. Repeating a warning from Edgar, Nelly states, "He, many a time, spoke sternly to me about my pertness; and averred that the stab of a knife could not inflict a worse pang than he suffered at seeing his lady vexed," (81) a conciliatory attitude that further encourages Catherine's outbursts. No one is truly happy, but rather just avoiding confrontation if Catherine is crossed.

Reed explains:

Edgar, as a husband, will prove himself capable of enormous devotion, constantly bending to Catherine's wishes. Because of her lesser capacity to reciprocate such behavior, his supremely civilized ability to curb his own impulses makes their marriage work—until she asks him to transcend all customary arrangements when Heathcliff returns. Thus natural, instinctive concern for an identical other, which seems to know no restrictions, contrasts with a learned devotion to a decidedly different person, a devotion limited by accepted social conventions. (214)

Catherine continues to act as she pleases, forcing Edgar to adjust to her behavioral standards rather than her fully adapting to his. Briefly, she appears content with her new life, and seems to conform to the wifely behavior Edgar wishes to see.

The instant that Heathcliff returns, however, Catherine teeters between her two homes again, preventing her identity as the ideal wife from ever consolidating. Abbie L. Cory asserts that Catherine's desire to stay close to Heathcliff defies all the conventional "ideas of women's roles in courtship and marriage" (133). The marriage vows that Edgar adheres to are irrelevant to Catherine and Heathcliff. They refuse to end their relationship, and as Edgar finally decides he's had enough, he exclaims to Heathcliff:

Your presence is a moral poison that would contaminate the most virtuous; for that cause, and to prevent worse consequences, I shall deny you, hereafter, admission into this house, and give notice, not, that I require your instant departure. Three minutes' delay will render it involuntary and ignominious. (99)

Edgar is finished with the pair's impulsive and damaging devotion to each other, and as he feels he cannot scold or pursue Catherine (for he truly does not blame her), he instead attacks and ostracizes Heathcliff.

The social conventions that long govern the family at Thrushcross Grange prove futile with the family members of Wuthering Heights. Edgar cannot allow Heathcliff and Catherine to remain friends/lovers or maintain an association. He feels it is immoral that his wife sustains a relationship with another man—particularly one resembling a gypsy clearly *below* their social class. When Edgar finally does question Catherine and begins to implement the social boundaries that were previously ignored, she spins out of control and, once again, becomes physically ill. Catherine cannot and will not function under these conditions. Catherine refuses Edgar's efforts to limit her behavior, and with her lack of either knowledge or compliance to social decorum, she cannot understand why she must choose.

Yet Catherine's actions are not deliberate; because of her childhood, she has never been taught the pre-Victorian values of her contemporaries. She knows no social conventions or ideas that would imply that Heathcliff's presence in her life, as a married woman, is immoral. Catherine exclaims to Nelly:

Oh, I'm burning! I wish I were out of doors—I wish I were a girl again, half savage, and hardy and free; and laughing at injuries, not maddening under them! Why am I so changed? why does my blood rush into a hell of tumult at a few words? I'm sure I should be myself were I once among the heather on those hills. Open the window again wide, fasten it open! (107)

She wants to return to Wuthering Heights, and the life she had with Heathcliff—the only place she feels represents her true identity, and where, in being outside in nature and society, she will no longer be an outsider. Together, Heathcliff and Cathy show the fragility of Victorian conventions of domesticity by their refusal to abide by the rules of decorum and respectability that everyone else tacitly agrees and conforms to.

While Catherine's position in the Earnshaw home was rightful, long before Lockwood arrives at the Heights, the adoption of Heathcliff initiates a new familial structure, as he instantly becomes Earnshaw's favorite child. Heathcliff is described as a "dirty, ragged, black-haired child" that can only spit out gibberish (39). He frightens the children, and Mrs. Earnshaw rejects him because he not only physically appears different, but he is not a blood family member. Nelly (also a pseudo-adopted family member) admits that she, too, was frightened of the intruder and decides to put him outside for the evening. Vine discusses this idea and references Nelly Dean identifying Heathcliff as "a cuckoo." The cuckoo lays her eggs in the nest of other birds. The cuckoo chick hatches and grows faster than the other chicks, and soon evicts them out of the nest. Vine adds that Heathcliff takes the name of a dead child, the affection of Mr. Earnshaw, and finally Wuthering Heights from Hindley. Heathcliff acquires Thrushcross Grange as his last triumph (342).

Although he is not Earnshaw's actual child, Heathcliff's position in the home and family is consistently unclear because Earnshaw punishes his real son, Hindley, anytime his behavior or anyone else's behavior damages or upsets Heathcliff. Mr. Earnshaw wishes this orphaned child to be accepted among the family members, but his very presence undercuts the gendered legal principle of primogeniture that gives preeminence to the first-born son. Heathcliff displaces Hindley in his father's affection, upsetting the familial order. Heathcliff and Hindley never become friends, nor brothers, and are constantly at odds. While Heathcliff generally prevails, his very success with Mr. Earnshaw deepens his alienation from others in the family. When Heathcliff threatens to tell Earnshaw about a dispute with Hindley, he yells at Heathcliff "Take my colt, gipsy, then!....And I pray that he may break your neck: take him, and be damned, you beggarly interloper! and wheedle my father out of all he has, only afterwards show him what you are, imp of Satan—And take that, I hope he'll kick out your brains" (41). Heathcliff still ends up in possession of Earnshaw's affections, unlike many of the other family members, and secures his *temporary* position inside the home.

Heathcliff's identity continues to shift from the moment of his introduction, but as Jenkins indicates, an identity is never settled (4). Vine states:

The fact that Earnshaw takes to the child "strangely" demonstrates Heathcliff's liminal position at the Heights as both other to and part of its affective structures; 'strangely' Heathcliff is an Earnshaw son and not an Earnshaw son, belongs to the Heights and does not belong to the Heights, is the fulfillment of the Earnshaw's patriarchal desire and exceeds the desire as an unincorporated other. (344)

He is a brother, son, servant, lover, and father by the end of the novel. Whether embraced by everyone or not, Heathcliff becomes a permanent fixture in the Earnshaw home, and therefore disrupts the previously established relationships. He is never truly Earnshaw's son, nor Catherine or Hindley's brother, nor a loving husband nor a good father, although he takes on each of position as required in order to achieve his own ends.

One reason for his unstable positioning results from the mixed validation or acceptance of his identity (Jenkins 4-5). While Earnshaw, and eventually Nelly, Catherine, and Joseph accept Heathcliff into the home, Hindley refuses to accept him as family or anything other than an intruder, and the Lintons only recognize him as a servant of the lowest order. Yet his unsettled position in the home is further confused as he is continuously, physically rejected *and then once again accepted* into the home. Catherine most consistently acknowledges Heathcliff as a member of the family, yet other than her father, she is the only one. In retaliation for his own displacement from his father's affection, and in compliance to social conventions he learned at school and perceives are necessary, Hindley treats Heathcliff as a servant, forcing him to work outside and sleep in the attic. Nevertheless, Catherine still maintains her connection to him, and seeks to continue their relationship.

Even with Catherine's constant attempt to raise his position, if Heathcliff did not already appear as a servant, his rough exterior and lack of education soon define the difference. As a youth, Heathcliff remains the dark haired gypsy that Mr. Earnshaw brought home. When a young Heathcliff and Catherine are found at Thrushcross Grange, Heathcliff's appearance frightens the Linton children. They assume Heathcliff is a thief who has come to murder them. They cannot believe that Catherine would roam the

moors with a "gypsy" because the Linton children would never be allowed to do so, nor would they ever want to. Elsie Michie finds that this is what "teach[es] Heathcliff not only to see himself as visibly different, but also be dissatisfied with that difference" (133). While most people find his physical appearance revolting, Nelly suggests he could be a Mediterranean prince. His appearance is in stark contrast to the blonde hair and blue eyes of the Lintons. And even at Wuthering Heights, after the years of outdoor labor Hindley has insisted on, Heathcliff's appearance resembling that of a weathered servant, thus it is no wonder if he cannot assimilate into the Earnshaw family. At this point in the novel, when Heathcliff and Catherine come into contact with the Lintons, Heathcliff is associated wholly with the world outside of the home.

Ultimately, Heathcliff runs away and then returns with even greater powers and determination to disrupt and disenfranchise not only the Earnshaws, but also the Lintons. Catherine's erratic attempt to elevate Heathcliff's social position finally becomes significant upon his return. Mysteriously acquired, Heathcliff now has the money and education that had created the difference between him and Edgar. According to Reed, "Even after Heathcliff overcomes his ignorance and relies on strategic cunning more than brute physical strength, his major motive for mistreating others and acquiring their property is not impersonal greed for wealth or status but revenge for personal injury" (223). Heathcliff appears to have completely altered his appearance and behavior to appease Catherine, but nevertheless, he is still the angry, damaged, revengeful interloper that left a few years before. Michie discusses this idea in reference to Emily's father, Patrick, but makes an important statement in reference to Heathcliff: "it [his upward mobility] implies that while one may rise in class, such apparent empowerment does not

allow one to 'overcome' or leave behind traces of racial difference" (132). Edgar Linton still does not accept him even after he obtains an education and money. Heathcliff is wrong; the distinctions are based on more than just money and education. Catherine could be accepted into this home because she is lady by birth if not by action, but because Heathcliff does not have a known pedigree, he will never be anything more than an outsider. Her birth and manners mask her violent behavior. And although Heathcliff may adopt gentlemanly characteristics, his subsequent actions still indicate that they are merely a veneer.

After he destroys the stability of Wuthering Heights and completes his revenge upon Hindley, he then seeks to ruin the Lintons by eloping with Isabella. In marrying Isabella, he also reveals that he can cross the civilized boundaries set by the Lintons, but only through malicious and underhanded measures. Prior to Isabella's elopement, Nelly and Catherine attempt to warn her of Heathcliff's mischievous intentions. Nelly states that, "He's a bird of bad omen; no mate for you...Honest people don't hide their deeds. How has he been living? how has he got rich?" (90). Heathcliff's disrespect of boundaries means that to him Edgar's words have no power over him. Even if Edgar forbids entrance into Thrushcross Grange, Heathcliff finds a way in through windows and open doors. Leaping through windows, Heathcliff manipulates Nelly's devotion to Catherine's sanity to gain entrance into her room. Marriage to Isabella's puts Heathcliff in line for control over the Grange after Edgar's death, thus establishing his position in the home and shattering the social boundaries that had previously separated him from Catherine.

Although Heathcliff secures ownership of Wuthering Heights, he does not establish himself as a respected head of the family, except in Hareton's eyes. Vine states that "Heathcliff comes from the outside, from the other, introducing the instability into the world that precariously incorporates him, and he is never stably lodged in any of the social places he assumes" (341). Joseph may perform his duties, but he never embraces Heathcliff as his master of the dwelling. Heathcliff will always be the young child who refused Joseph's teachings. Heathcliff does not imagine that Hareton and young Cathy will also rebel against him, completely duplicating the identities established before they were born. Yet even at the end of the novel, Hareton chooses to defend Heathcliff's actions and protects him against Cathy. As Heathcliff begins his decline, he slightly softens and becomes more lucid. Although still domineering, Heathcliff is less visible and certainly less concerned with Hareton and Cathy's actions.

Miraculously, Brontë's novel comes full circle in its second half, or second generation. Cathy educates Hareton, altering his servant status, and reinstating him as rightful heir of the Earnshaw home. With the symbolic garden she also begins to domesticate Wuthering Heights. Cathy and Hareton are able to surpass all the concerns and problems that plagued their family members and find a balance between nature and culture that neither Catherine and Heathcliff on the one hand, nor Isabella and Edgar on the other, could seem to achieve. Though their names are similar to their predecessors, their natures differ enough so that they can help rather than destroy each other. Cathy seeks to pull Hareton from the inferior position forced upon him; the position that her mother could not accept or find a way to resolve previously with Heathcliff.

Cathy and Hareton are in a position different than Catherine and Heathcliff's but are able to work it to their advantage. They both seem to share a compassion for each other that was never present in the preceding generation. Hareton asks Catherine to "hold her tongue" and stop speaking poorly of Heathcliff and continues by asking, "how she [you] would like him to speak ill of her father?" (253). Cory writes "While Hareton is indeed being socialized into the middle-class value system and Catherine appears content with her domestic role, the fact remains that Hareton—until now a member of the working class—and Catherine—a woman—have obtained property to which they would otherwise have had little access" (22). Hareton is eventually completely accepted into the home, establishing his position as a member. He is able to rise above the servant position because of the mixture of nature and culture that inhabits Wuthering Heights. Young Cathy finally takes on her position as lady of the home at Wuthering Heights and eventually Thrushcross Grange, while Hareton is also able to function in and out of the home.

Thrushcross Grange possesses the essential conventional societal boundaries that Wuthering Heights does not. And because of this "lack of boundaries," neither Heathcliff nor Catherine can function in the civilized world. Heathcliff is a prime example of an intruder because his identity is never settled at Wuthering Heights, and he is never forced to abide by social conventions. Heathcliff never finds his identity because his relationship with Catherine contradicts the other character's perception of his identity. She accepts him, and cannot live without him, while everyone else rejects him. Catherine also functions as an intruder because although she is invited into Thrushcross Grange she cannot assimilate and therefore disrupts the entire household. When Edgar finally refuses

to accommodate her demands, she can no longer sanely function and soon dies. Vine argues that she can only find her identity in relation to Heathcliff's. He further states, "In the sense each of them is a 'framed' or invented self; produced in terms of one another, they trope each other into existence in a precarious, impossible conflation of identity and alterity" (348). Instead of allowing the communities standards to define their identities, they have found it in each other. According to Brontë's novel, without the social conventions in a home that help shape an identity, the individuals cannot function outside of it. Domestic ideology is something that the community establishes, and without these modes of assimilation and identity formed within a home and family, the community will not validate them.

Chapter Two
Lady Audley's Secret: The Deliberate Impostor

The beauty of Audley Court and its secluded boundaries make it the perfect representation of the ideal Victorian home while providing a good depiction of Victorian domestic ideology. Large hedges keep the grounds concealed, but more than privacy makes this home exemplary. Audley Court conveys the nobility, style and luxury that epitomize Victorian ideals of the home. However, this home and its boundaries are penetrated, not by an interloper, but by someone who looks as though she belongs, who is, in fact, an impostor. Unlike the homes in Brontë's novel, where the ideas of seclusion and privacy are manipulated by the inhabitants, the sincerely wild and uncultivated person would not be invited into Audley Court. In Mary Elizabeth Braddon's sensation novel, *Lady Audley's Secret*, the home invader is invited in. The social climber, Lucy Graham wishes to shed her previous identity as a penniless mother and deserted wife. She does this at the expense of her filial duty to her father and her maternal bond with her son. However, because she looks like Coventry Patmore's "Angel in the House," that is, a woman who is not only beautiful, but also innocent and benevolent, those around her assume that she is one. She is discreet, sweet and candid, with a sense of duty to her husband and family. The fact that Lucy privileges her material well being over familial ties is one indication that she may look like an angel, but the resemblance is only skin deep.

Lucy Graham Audley represents the deliberate impostor, one who is both fraudulent and bigamous. She represents the dangers of someone who can conform so well that she is not recognizable as an outsider. Her identity is validated and accepted by

the collectivity, but she is only imitating the traits that identify her as the altruistic lady of the home. Lucy intentionally replicates the feminine ideals of the upper class community to gain the admiration of her second husband, Sir Michael Audley. She succeeds in her deception. The malicious impostor, unlike Catherine Earnshaw, intentionally hides her past and transforms into the Lady of Audley Court. Mary Poovey argues that Victorian gender role restrictions were only imaginary and were constantly changing, but "the practices and social institutions that govern people's social relations" are what validate these guidelines (3). According to this idea, socially restricted behavior was only "in the eye of the beholder." Braddon's portrayal of Lucy Audley reflects this changing gender stereotype, as she appears to utilize not only the predetermined feminine roles, but the masculine as well. Lucy's act of leaving her son behind does not follow the usual maternal actions of a woman, and she appears to shed this role and assert typically considered masculine traits of dishonesty, murder, and bigamy. She also highlights her beauty and charm, generally feminine qualities, when necessary. Although only temporarily successful, Lucy's balance between the feminine actions she has mastered so well and the actions outside this gender role contrasting this position are essential in her assimilation.

Audley Court represents the ideal Victorian home in ways much different than *Wuthering Heights* or *Thrushcross Grange*. The homes in Brontë's novel both embody the idea of privacy, and *Thrushcross Grange* displays a few additions that implied luxury and sophistication. Audley Court does this on a general scale with its kitchen gardens, a fish-pond, an orchard and "rhododendrons which grew in more perfection here than anywhere else in the country" (1). Braddon presents this home as exemplary. Audley

Court's qualities focus not only on the beauty but also the nobility of the home while also establishing domesticity as its primary feature.

The novel opens with the description of the home and continues for three full pages to establish not only its beauty but also the full advantages Lucy Graham acquires after marrying Sir Michael Audley. All the people in the community admire this home. It is described as not only noble, but also "A glorious old place—a place that visitors fell into raptures with; feeling a yearning wish to have done with life, and to stay there for ever" (2). Lucy often plays the piano for her husband, creating a portrait of the perfect Victorian home and family. In order to show his complete devotion and gratitude for her love, the baronet even adds to the beauty of his home by transforming the interior to please his new wife.

Braddon creates the ideal home that prevents the stranger from entering, to show that only an invited guest or impostor could pass through the doors, making it the perfect hiding place for Lucy. Audley Court had previously been a convent, with its high hedges and meadows used as borders and barriers. The narrator emphasizes this seclusion and adds, "for there was no thoroughfare, and unless you were going to the court you had no business there at all" (1). This remark along with the hedges suggests that strangers and uninvited guests cannot and will not sneak their way into the grounds or home. The grounds provide the seclusion most Victorian families were seeking, and even the door "was squeezed into a corner of a turret at one angle of the building, as if it was in hiding from dangerous visitors, and wished to keep itself a secret" (2).

The value of privacy extends into the house itself. Michael McKeon extensively describes at length the ideal separation that shapes the home. He discusses the family

members need to be separated from the servants but also segregated from each other (238). Apart from Lucy's maid, Phoebe Marks, the scarce mention of servants imply that the Court succeeds in keeping them separate from the family. This home consolidates the idea of privacy "in which no room had any sympathy with another, every chamber running off at a tangent into an inner chamber" (2). The servants can make their way through the home without being seen by guests. Lucy's step-daughter, Alicia finds one of the many secret chambers in the Court that she later uses to bring her cousin Robert Audley, and his friend George Talboys into Lady Audley's room. The narrator implies that these secret chambers should guarantee privacy, so that this intrusion into Lucy's private sanctum proves to be the turning point that leads ultimately to her exposure. To avoid a confrontation with Robert's friend (and her former husband), Lucy fakes an errand that necessitates a trip to London with Sir Michael, locking her room so that there is no way that George can see the recently painted portrait of her. Lucy does not realize that Alicia knows a secret passage to her bedroom, which she uses to take Robert, a family member, and George, a new acquaintance (or rather a stranger) to enter her step-mother's room and penetrate her privacy. At this moment, the very secrecy and privacy that this home established for Lady Audley is breached, demonstrating again the logic behind the precautions that allow only invited guests to penetrate this sphere.

It is important that Lucy's origin be significantly problematic and socially low, because in order to make this new position at Audley Court so evidently advantageous, there must be a clear distinction between her true family's social class and the Audleys'. Before her change in her identity, Lucy Talboys represents the ideal Victorian woman, except that she lacks two very important features: social class and wealth. She is

introduced to the reader as a daughter of an alcoholic father and insane mother—a most difficult combination to surpass. Her father is described by George as a "shabby old father, a half-pay naval officer; a regular old humbug, as poor as Job, and with an eye for nothing but the main chance" (18). Lucy's father, Mr. Maldon, is not only a drunk, but does not desire to be any more than the "shabby old father" he has become, unless he can find a quick and easy solution to his problems.

As George continues to narrate the story of his marriage to Lucy during his return from Australia, he explains that her father was ready to sell her to the highest bidder. Like many families of the time, her father looked to gain wealth from his daughter's marriage with little concern for her happiness. It's interesting that Maldon seeks his fortune vicariously and selfishly, a model that his daughter later adopts. George cares little about her lack of fortune because Lucy's beauty immediately catches his eye and heart. Significantly, Lucy's beauty and femininity make possible the success of her later impersonation. Fortunately for Lucy, George comes from a wealthy family, and she thinks that through him she will escape her impoverished life and achieve the comforts and security for which she yearns. At this moment, she does not have to lie or steal to obtain the social position and luxury that she desires. However, they both quickly learn that his father will not provide for them, since George has married socially and economically beneath his family. George's disinheritance forces Lucy back into her original identity and status. Even though she may have physically embodied the qualities of a wealthy woman, her humble family secured her identity elsewhere. With Lucy's first failed attempt to raise her social status, Braddon shows the many obstacles for lower

class families that hinder climbing the ranks of Victorian society and altering society's perception of an identity.

Nevertheless, Braddon's anti-heroine overcomes the social and physical hurdles and temporarily succeeds in raising her status. Lucy is able to penetrate Audley Court by asserting her feminine qualities. Rather than by simply her beauty, she receives her first job as a governess to a respected doctor through her feminine accomplishments, and perceived altruism implying that her identity is more than just skin deep. With no alcoholic father and insane mother damaging her credibility, she appears as an acceptable role model for the children. Nancy Armstrong describes the parameters of the new curriculum of female ideal behavior as "a woman whose value resided chiefly in her femaleness rather than in traditional signs of status, a woman who possessed psychological depth rather than a physically attractive surface, one who, in other words, excelled in the qualities that differentiated her from the male" (20). She teaches the daughters to play the piano, and walks them to the "out-of-the-way village, to the humble little church three times on Sunday" (5). Although uninterested in doing any charitable actions before, Lucy exhibits an essential characteristic of an ideal Victorian woman, which is to assist the unfortunate. To appear as a lady of the house, she must value and represent angelic qualities. Interestingly, at this moment Lucy so easily alters her persona to represent the Victorian woman that she wins Sir Michael's affection. Beauty and compassion become her tools in this venture, just as they are the qualifications for the idealized angel of the house. No one would suspect a woman of her apparent moral standing and benevolence capable of deserting her child; she appears as the angelic lady

of the home. Lucy performs the role and becomes the young wife of Sir Michael Audley; in so doing she discards her life of poverty and pulls herself into a new social stratum.

Although Lucy departs from feminine ideals in some intrinsic ways, she still represents the very woman the numerous conduct books of the century were seeking to alter.³ These conduct books were in contrast to the bourgeois families of the Victorian period, finding that idle hours should be spent teaching moral principles, rather than spending money on unnecessary items. These books implied that women were far more complicated than the fluffy beautiful exterior layer, and below lay the intelligence and power that was scratching to surface. This idea could alter the collectivity's perception of the value of merely being the object of adoration. Women were beginning to break free of the feminine gender roles that had controlled their lifestyle, while still maintaining their composure and sophistication. Based on these conduct books, Armstrong states:

A woman was deficient in female qualities if she, like the aristocratic woman, spent her time in idle amusements...such activities always aimed at putting the body on display...For a woman to display herself in such a manner was the same as saying that she was supposed to be valued for her body and its adornments, not for the virtues she might possess as a woman and wife. (75)

But Lucy secures the admiration of Sir Michael Audley the same way she acquired the admiration from George Talboys, with her exceptional beauty. Braddon spends a great deal of time describing her beauty, for Lucy's reputation and ability to socially advance

³ Nancy Armstrong details *The Young Ladies Companion or, Beauty's Looking Glass, The Compleat Housewife or, Accomplished Gentlewoman's Companion*, and a few other conduct books in *Desire and Domestic Fiction*.

depends upon it. However, Lucy certainly asserts more than her beauty to gain and maintain the admiration of Sir Michael.

Sir Michael's infatuation for Lucy demonstrates how a woman can so fully impersonate a lady of the house that a man of rank can be susceptible to her charms. Lucy can deceive the collectivity into believing that she is deserving of this admiration. This deception is shown by Sir Michael's inability to resist her "soft and melting blue eyes; the graceful beauty of the slender throat and drooping head, with its wealth of showering flaxen curls; the low music of that gentle voice; the perfect harmony which pervaded every charm, and made all doubly charming in this woman; than he could resist his destiny"(6). When he requests her hand in marriage, he cannot understand why a woman of her beauty and grace is not already married, but never considers that she has concealed her complicated and appalling past or that she is *performing* to appear innocent and naive. He falls for her convincing performance, and she soon gains all the respect and admiration she has so long desired.

Lucy becomes the wife of Sir Michael Audley, and because he completely accepts her identity, she can assume with ease her position as the Lady of Audley Court where she can enjoy the luxurious lifestyle that she had been seeking. As mentioned in Chapter One, *Wuthering Heights*' Catherine accuses herself of being an impostor in her attempts to conform to her era's gender and class ideals. Her very acknowledgement of this shows her awareness of the distinction of the two homes, and the difficulty she has in reconciling her two natures, which prevents her from assimilating fully to Thrushcross Grange. But Lucy intentionally performs as the ideal woman to assimilate into the home; she wishes to have the position that Catherine refuses or rather cannot perform. She feels

no difficulty in changing her characteristics as circumstances demand. The narrator states Lucy would:

loll on one of the sofas in her luxurious dressing-room discussing a new costume for some coming dinner party, or sit chattering to the girl (Phoebe), with her jewel box beside her, upon the satin cushions, and Sir Michael's presents spread out in her lap, while she counted and admired her treasures. (53)

It is not the opportunity to do good deeds that entices Lucy to become Lady Audley, but rather the objects she possesses, her leisure and security that makes her content in her marriage.

Is Braddon implying that the women of the privileged class were more than just beautiful faces wishing to acquire objects? Rather, she might be critiquing how women equivalent to Lucy's new social class spent their time. Langland suggests that "the nineteenth-century novel presented the household as a moral haven" (8) and that "genteel women oriented themselves toward specific goals of class hegemony, their actions were rarely the product of conscious deliberation and calculation, rather the result of an unconscious disposition...to act in certain ways" (10). Yet Lucy intentionally performs as a charitable person before she marries Sir Michael and later sheds that identity once she has acquired her desired arrangement. Lucy seems to be aware of certain ways that would help her appear as an aristocrat, and Sir Michael provides anything she wants and is only too happy to do everything she requests. Lucy enjoys the lavish lifestyle at Audley Court with extravagant gowns, a beautiful home, dinner parties and anything else

she desires. She enjoys being the center of attention and in complete control of the house and Sir Michael, as she fully immerses herself in the role of a Victorian angel.

Lucy's new social position still requires the domestic qualities of the "Angel in the House." According to Armstrong, the lady of the home exercised "authority over the household, leisure time, courtship procedures, and kinship relations, and under her jurisdiction the most basic qualities of human identity were supposed to develop" (3). Braddon makes it clear that Lucy succeeds in her imposture and is "better loved and more admired than the baronet's daughter" (52). She appears as a woman deserving of respect and admiration—the very creature the conduct books hoped for, but the narrative indicates that she only masks her selfish intentions and desires. On numerous instances she alters the family's plans for various ostensible reasons, but it turns out, chiefly to avoid George Talboys, and later her nephew Robert. Sir Michael jumps to her commands early in the novel:

it was very rarely that the baronet's eyes were long removed from his wife's pretty face...it needed but the faintest elevation of Lucy's eyebrows, with a charming expression of weariness and terror, to make her husband aware that she did not want to be bored by an introduction to Mr. George Talboys. (55)

Several dinners with Robert are cancelled, and Lucy even convinces her husband that Robert's infatuation with her should keep him out of the house. Lucy has no qualms in asserting her influence in order to prevent George from ruining the life she means to keep.

Although Lucy already manifests some of the qualities necessary to appear as an upper-class woman, she exploits her beauty and still uses the traditional signs of status to her advantage. Her friendly and benevolent personality surpasses that of the simple wife and is the epitome of all the women in her new community. Lucy Graham has ascended from a governess to wife of Sir Michael Audley and has "made one of those apparently advantageous matches which are apt to draw upon a woman the envy and hatred of her sex" (5). However Lucy is still described as beyond beautiful, preserving a quality that was rare: "For you see Miss Lucy Graham was blessed with the magic power of fascination by which a woman can charm with a word or intoxicate with a smile. Every one loved, admired and praised her" (6). Even though she excelled as a governess, her beauty and charm, rather than teacherly accomplishments, are what is needed to maintain her position as Lady Audley.

At this point in the story (and truly earlier in her life), Lucy presents herself as deserving the respect and admiration she received. She uses the female traits that she already has (beauty, intelligence and kindness) to appear to be a woman of prestige and refinement. Lucy not only easily deceives the Audley family, but also the entire town, by manifesting the superficial qualities that separate the upper class. Braddon is showing how easily Lucy can impersonate a woman of wealth and superiority when she has an excellent last name. After her marriage to the baronet, Lucy is considered "the belle of the country," receiving the admiration and position she so intensely desired (53). Simultaneously, Braddon creates an interesting connection between Lady Audley and her maid, Phoebe Marks. Lady Audley remarks on their physical similarities, and as Phoebe denies the impossible resemblance, Lady Audley adds that "with a bottle of hair dye,

such as we see advertised in the papers, and a pot of rouge, you'd be as good-looking as I any day" (58). The only thing that truly distinguishes Phoebe from Lucy is money and class, proving how easily one can reflect a transformation that can convince others of her identity.

Although Lucy makes it look easy, she has worked hard to resemble to ideal Victorian woman—she will do anything to maintain that position. Her more desperate actions transgress the boundaries of predetermined gender roles, and these very actions allow her to secure her new life. British sensation novels of the 19th century focus on women performing acts outside society's previously determined gender roles. Behind the feminine and dainty exterior, Lucy proves to be extremely cunning, manipulative, and ruthless. Lucy left her maternal position as the first step in her path, but her escape from her impoverished family is aggressive and, hence, unfeminine. After George leaves Lucy and their newborn son to seek his fortune, she too escapes her life and seeks to raise her status. Yet George's flight is less problematic for society than Lucy's. George can no longer face his own disappointing life, and leaves to improve the fortunes of *his entire family*. But Lucy with little remorse leaves her son behind to obtain a better life *for herself*, thus rejecting the predetermined gender roles of the maternal woman during the Victorian period. In a letter she writes to her father about fleeing her current situation, she states:

I am weary of my life here, and wish, if I can, to find a new one. I go into the world, dissevered from every link which binds me to the hateful past, to seek another home and another fortune. Forgive me if I have been

fretful, capricious, changeable. You should forgive me, for you know *why*

I have been so. You know the *secret* which is the key to my life. (250)

Lucy feels she deserves more and therefore thinks she is justified in abandoning her son and hiding her past.

Lucy is able to balance these predetermined feminine and masculine traits when necessary to deceive and complete her goal. According to Elizabeth Langland, "Sensation novels set the stage for the 'new woman' novels concluding the century, novels that resolve the paradox of the managing angel by investing her traits in two characters; one, a reinscription of the passive, dependent angel and the other, an independent, self-reliant woman who is represented as a mannish, aggressive, proto-professional" (23). These binary representations of women appear in Lucy, because although she does not show any overtly "mannish" characteristics, she is aggressive and not afraid to seek the life she desires. Although she acts as a submissive female, Lucy secretly takes control of her life. Although her actions are somewhat disturbing, Lucy refuses to settle for her life as a single mother living with her alcoholic father and waiting for her husband to return or for the inherited traits of insanity to appear. Similar to many men, she seeks her own fortune. But when her deception and aggression are exposed and shown to contradict the collectivity's validated identity, she is ostracized and removed from society.

If Lucy limited herself to what was expected of women, she would never have been able to leave her child behind and seek a new life. Lauren Chattman argues that Victorian novelists "seemed to know: namely that gender does not emanate from a subject's inviolable core, but is part of an assumed identity and is performed according to

culture's script" (85). Lucy alters her actions, whether considered feminine or masculine, to suite her needs. Mary Poovey agrees with Chattman and Jenkins that "the practices and social institutions that govern people's social relations" only confirm these social roles, and that the previous assumptions that gender traits are inherent is false (2-3). Lucy believes that if she leaves her past behind, primarily referring to her insane mother, that she will avoid the same fate. She thinks that money and social class will prevent her inherited insanity from surfacing. Women were expected to be maternal and understanding, but Lucy is angry with George for abandoning her. She does not understand his motives to seek a fortune for the family. Yet Braddon urges the reader to feel sympathy for George because he felt compelled by necessity and regrets his choice, whereas Lucy does not, and even attempts murder to keep her past hidden.

Furthermore, there are several moments when the typically masculine initiative that takes the form of dishonesty comes so easily to Lucy. Sir Michael imagines that Lucy would marry him for nothing more than love. Based only on her exceptional beauty and her apparent kindness, he imagines she is a woman that she is not. The narrator states:

I do not think that throughout his courtship the baronet once calculated upon his wealth or his position as a strong reason for his success...his hope was [that] by a love which should recall to her the father she had lost, and by a protecting care that should make him necessary to her, win her young heart, and obtain from her fresh and earliest love along the promise of her hand. (7)

Sir Michael is convinced that the woman he has fallen in love with is honest, thoughtful and deserving. She deliberately impersonates an eligible young woman, and the very reason he believes she is not marrying him, is her *primary* reason. Lucy marries the baronet to get what she wants: status, protection, adoration and wealth. Yet Lucy even warns Sir Michael of her past to gain sympathy:

Remember what my life has been; only remember that. From my very babyhood I have never seen anything but poverty. My father was gentleman; clever, accomplished, generous, handsome—but poor. My mother—But do not let me speak of her. Poverty, poverty, trials, vexations, humiliations, deprivations! (10-11)

He still believes her love to be based only upon their affinity and her benevolence. He believes that based on these qualities that she has so skillfully mastered—kindness and a dominant presence—she is the exemplary woman that she is not.

Lucy departs most from the feminine ideal in her cunning and murderous actions. Whenever necessary, Lucy creates tales, distractions, and obstacles to hide her identity, and even finds in another young woman's death an opportunity to make George believe she is dead. Elaine Showalter remarks, "The dangerous woman is not the rebel or the bluestocking, but the 'pretty little girl' whose indoctrination in the female role has taught her secrecy and deceitfulness, almost as secondary sex characteristics" (165). Showalter finds that these presumably anomalous characteristics that Lucy asserts to gain her position are rather just secondary and inherent in all women. When pushed to desperation, Lucy balks at nothing and even attempts murder two separate times. After George has seen her portrait and confronts her, Lucy pushes him down a well. Later she

also attempts to murder the amateur detective, Robert Audley, because he has discovered her identity and threatens her exposure. Robert narrowly escapes the fire, only to finally put an end to her rampage.

Nevertheless, once Robert begins to unravel her past, Lucy's performance and actions not only expose the Audley family's vulnerabilities but also eradicate the ideal lady of the home. Her presence in (and ultimate expulsion from) the Audley home reveals a weakness in the domestic fortress, and the likelihood that the femininity that won her entrance into the home can be appropriated for pernicious ends. Fisk states, "Although Lady Audley is not guilty of murder, she is guilty of overstepping a woman's boundaries, and is therefore dangerous to patriarchal society" (25). Lucy fears no boundaries and no limits of her social and gendered identity, because she has so easily acquired it, and uses these traits to gain whatever she wants. Langland argues that "We must recognize...that domestic ideology is an unstable amalgam of at least two other major ideologies: a patriarchal ideology regulating interactions between men and women and a bourgeois ideology justifying the class system and supporting the social status quo" (18). Lucy masquerades as a single educated woman to find a place in her collectivity. She also marries the gentleman of Audley Court, ultimately disrupting the Victorian class standards.

Lucy Audley transforms to become a "partial" ideal lady of the home to gain acceptance from a new social environment, but as Jenkins states, "selfhood is thoroughly socially constructed" (19). Although Lucy Audley's identity as a sophisticated wealthy woman is accepted initially, her actions and her inherited traits from her mother eventually force her to leave it all behind. But Lucy Audley's characteristics represent

what Andrew King determines the sympathetic sensation novels readers would see as "a mad woman whose abandonment by a man forces her into crime and who is eventually imprisoned" (72), rather than a deliberate and conniving woman using her skills to reach her goal. She stops at nothing to achieve what she feels is her rightful position as a lady. But in the end, Robert ruins her reign, and she is banished to a madhouse on the continent, ending her life in the very position she has worked so hard to avoid.

The doctor, Dr. Mosgrave, initially finds that she is not insane—that her actions of desperation and bigamy do not constitute madness. Not until Robert confesses that Lady Audley is also suspected of killing her first husband does Dr. Mosgrave diagnose her as exhibiting signs of insanity, or rather Robert reveals the predetermined masculine characteristics that also helped her gain her position. He finally establishes that her "latent insanity" linked to her mother's madness could be threatening and decides she is better locked in an asylum. However, Fisk argues that:

Most critics agree that Lady Audley, Braddon's transgressive heroine, is 'contained' at the end of the novel, thereby allowing the boundaries of female limitation, which she has attempted to destroy, to re-establish themselves. Whether one is meant to read Lady Audley's containment as Braddon's approval of conservatism, and therefore patriarchal power, or as Braddon's recognition of a woman's disadvantage in patriarchal society, the general consensus is that, in the end, the transgressive woman is successfully suppressed. A more careful textual reading, however, reveals that women are not suppressed at the end of the novel; on the contrary,

they are able to cross the boundaries imposed by patriarchal society quite easily and to relocate themselves in a new, genderless society. (24)

Fisk discusses this further by finding that the other women of the novel, Clara Talboys and Alicia Audley escape the patriarchal limits and successfully obtain an ideal relationship and home. Ultimately, Fisk's assumptions are accurate, because Lucy's attempts at murder and bigamy while disregarding the social boundaries of Victorian society pave the way for the other characters in the novel to become more assertive and seek their own happiness.

Nonetheless, Lucy's impersonation and entrance into the home demonstrates the vulnerability of Audley Court, which like Thrushcross Grange took precautions to prevent the entrance of a stranger. Audley Court possesses all the barricades and necessities to ensure privacy, so that only a person posing as someone from an acceptable social class could enter the home. Accordingly, Audley Court represents another example of the Victorian home's thin veneer that separated the family from the outside world. Lucy's combination of feminine and masculine behavior aids in her success in becoming the Lady of Audley Court. However, unlike Catherine and Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights*, Lucy went to extremes to impersonate a woman of high social standing and education because she desired complete assimilation.

Epilogue
The Moonstone's Gathering of Outsiders

Wilkie Collins states in his preface to *The Moonstone*: "The attempt made, here, is to trace the influence of character on circumstances" (27). The novels previously discussed focus on how domestic space influences characters. However, in Collins' novel the characters, or the individuals, appear as the most significant component. Heathcliff and Catherine's inability to assimilate is produced by the circumstances of their childhood, and their failure and refusal to adjust to the refined social standards of Thrushcross Grange exposes the Lintons to chaos. Lady Audley begins her social climb based from a meager economic background, but based on her determination, can assimilate as the lady of the house. Collins provides a complicated view of the insider/outsider characters that do not share the same values of the families upon which they intrude. The characters in *The Moonstone* are plagued with these same identity problems as the characters in *Wuthering Heights* and *Lady Audley's Secret*; however, Collins addresses the question: how do the intruding characters problems with identity alter the circumstances of the novel?

Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* includes the colonial other, impostor, and detective, demonstrating several different outsiders who penetrate the home. With the exception of the Brahmin Indians, Godfrey Ablewhite, Ezra Jennings, and Sergeant Cuff's social identities contrast with the community or family's perception of their intentions and actions. Charles H. Muller states that "each character is the voluntary agent in his or her own undoing, and no supernatural fatalism obtrudes into the story" (2). Sergeant Cuff offers a good example of Muller's point, because he threatens the familial

structure of the Verinder home by questioning Rachel's silence and Rosanna Spearman's loyalty to the family and is therefore disliked. And unlike Thrushcross Grange, Wuthering Heights, and Audley Court, the servants in the Verinder fortress are visible in the home and provide the strongest protection for the family members, with the exception of Ablewhite. He appears as a benign friend and servants succeed in inhibiting the Brahmin Indians. While not all of these characters enter the Verinder home, (the Brahmin Indians never actually enter the home) their very presence near the home and in the city threatens the family members. Ablewhite's identity as a philanthropist is accepted until his true behavior and intentions are revealed at the end. Sergeant Cuff maintains honest intentions of solving the mystery, but his suspicion of Rachel threatens her character and the family's exposure. Even though the search for the stolen diamond appears to be the focus of the story, Roy suggests that these identities are problematic. He states:

The problem [identity] afflicts every stratum of its social hierarchy, from Rosanna Spearman to Franklin Blake, from Godfrey Ablewhite to Ezra Jennings and John Verinder. But whatever their specific circumstances and syntagmatic position, all these cases propose that even as the dispossession of identity suggest an usurpation of inside by outside, sacred by profane, or domestic by alien, its investigation must remain within the domain of the self. (669)

The Brahmin Indians pose a threat based on their racial and religious identity, Sergeant Cuff enters and leaves the home as an unwanted detective, and Ezra Jennings appears as a foreigner with a mysterious background. But the very presence of the diamond also acts

as an intruder in the Verinder home. Betteredge states, "here was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond—bringing after it a conspiracy of living rogues, set loose on us by the vengeance of a dead man" (67). Each of these characters in *The Moonstone* penetrate the Verinder fortress in several different ways, demonstrating another Victorian home that was vulnerable to outsiders.

The Verinder home upholds the same Victorian ideals of privacy and isolation visible at Thrushcross Grange and Audley Court, but this home differs from the others because the servants secure the home and are the main guarantors of its seclusion. Brian McCuskey discusses that although servants threatened the family's privacy, they also physically secured it. As seen at Thrushcross Grange in *Wuthering Heights*, the servant might hold a visitor in the foyer while the family prepares for their entrance:

"Servants...acted as a buffer between the family and the street, helping the family to screen visitors and to stall intruders" (McCuskey 360-361). The family butler, Gabriel Betteredge, recounts the first attempted intrusion of the Brahmin Indians into the Verinder home. Posing as performers, the Indians appear with "the most elegant manners" (49). Despite the strangers' honest appearance, he tells them that the lady of the house is gone and to leave the premises (49). While Nelly and Joseph's presence in *Wuthering Heights* and Thrushcross Grange are an essential tool of the plot, there are few other servants in the novel. Thrushcross Grange mentions a few handymen who watch young Cathy evade the boundaries of the grounds, but the other servants go unmentioned. Phoebe Marks and her husband are servants that also drive the plot of *Lady Audley's Secret*, but they do not carry a primary role in the novel and do not serve as protectors of

the home.⁴ Betteredge is given the power and capability to make decisions for the family concerning who can enter the home. Penelope, Betteredge's daughter, even warns him of the Indians possible mischief after seeing them perform "tricks" with the black ink on her way home from the city. Thrushcross Grange and Audley Court are kept private by gates, hedges and physical isolation, but this home has protection *because of the servants*. Without Betteredge's reliable and honest devotion to the Verinder family, the Indians could have instantly penetrated the home to recover their diamond, the moonstone. Betteredge acts like more than just a servant, and because of his consistent loyalty, he is perceived as a member of the family.

Betteredge continues to protect the family in response to the Sergeant Cuff's accusations towards not only the daughter of the house, Rachel, but also Rosanna Spearman, the maid. McCuskey explains, "Servants...perform a policing function in the home—guarding valuables, sizing up strangers, escorting their employers—that necessarily but not offensively encroaches upon the family's privacy" (361) and further states "The tension between the detective work of servant and Sergeant arises from the crucial difference between them: personal loyalty, or the lack of it, to the family itself" (365). After the Superintendent attempts to question Rachel about the missing diamond, Betteredge states, "I told the Superintendent it meant that Miss Rachel's temper was upset by the loss of the jewel. Being anxious for the honour of the family, it distressed me to see my young lady forget herself—even with a police-officer—and I made the best excuse I could accordingly" (123). Betteredge provides an excuse for her actions or rather inactions, because he realizes that to the stranger's eyes Rachel appears guilty. He

⁴ Phoebe's husband, Luke, a servant of Audley Court, catches Lucy Graham pushing her husband, George Talboys down the well and later blackmails her. But his intentions are not to help the Audley family; but rather exploit them.

feels he can better judge her silence, and knows her personally. He believes that if Sergeant Cuff knew her as he did, she would never be suspected of stealing her own diamond. Betteredge is actually angered when Sergeant Cuff reveals his suspicion of Rachel (171). As her mother also reacts, Betteredge finally begins to sense the detective's intrusion upon the home's privacy and manner. Unlike the detective, Betteredge does stand for the same values and principles as the family.

The detective has benign but professional intentions as he enters the home, but public interest for order run counter to regulatory practices of law. According to Anthea Trodd, policeman presented "a threat to the privacy of the middle-class home" (7). With the development of London's Metropolitan Police in 1829 and the Detective Department in 1842, the detective represents an individual with official sanctions that enable him to breach this domestic sphere. Detectives could enter a home, and impose a new set of regulations supported by the state law and government that were previously controlled by the patriarchal figure of the home. While the detective was not a new element of Victorian society, he was despised as a professional spy; often people were uncooperative, and afraid of the violation of privacy. Fiction of this period reflects the unease produced by the detective.

Sergeant Cuff is unlike the other intruders discussed previously because he has altruistic intentions and has no direct desire to ruin the family. Although Catherine's intentions in marrying Edgar and entering Thrushcross Grange are not malicious, she also deliberately marries him to help Heathcliff. Lucy Audley does not purposely expose the family to her acts of murder and bigamy, but her reasons for entering Audley Court are primarily selfish. In both cases the well-being of the family and the home entered is

secondary to the character. Sergeant Cuff, in contrast enters the home to help the family—not to advance his position or benefit personally from the experience. The detective is not a member of the family and has no allegiance to it. He does not abide by the same codes and limitations that the family agrees to, thus complicating his identity as a valuable individual. The family reluctantly allows Sergeant Cuff into the home to find the missing diamond and restore moral order. The middle-class families wanted policemen to supervise the lower-classes, but, according to Trodd, "When policeman's enquiries took him to the door of the middle-class home, however, he became a different figure....[the middle-class homes had] fears of police intrusion and surveillance" (7). They are concerned with the loss of the diamond but do not realize that they will soon be subjects under suspicion too. Betteredge states, "...a person less fond of Miss Rachel than I was, might have seen his drift. My lady's horror of him might (as the scripture says) 'in a glass darkly.' I didn't see it yet—that's all I know" (149). He is initially tolerated because Betteredge is responsive to him, and a modern reader would feel sympathy for him because he is doing his job. But Cuff has been brought into the home to find the diamond, and he feels no loyalty to any member of the home. The family never imagines that the detective will begin to question Rachel or any other family member.

Even with his benign intentions, Sergeant Cuff's suspicion of Rachel threatens to impose outside regulations on the Verinder family and home. McCuskey states, "Loyal servants know their place in the family; suspicious police officers cannot be trusted to do so" (365). After years of service and acquaintance, Betteredge would never suspect Rachel of any crime, but the detective has no connection to the family or reason to exclude anyone from the search. Ian Duncan states, "The loss of the diamond soon

becomes secondary to a more urgent concern with the loss of character. This urgency is expressed by the heroine, Rachel Verinder, whose own character falls hostage to the regime of suspicion instituted after the Moonstone's disappearance" (306). Sergeant Cuff has different motives in his search for the diamond. His intention is to uphold the laws of the British government, but the family would like the diamond found without involving or upsetting any of its members. Because of her silence, Rachel quickly becomes Sergeant Cuff's primary suspect in the robbery. Trodd notes, "In particular the police, inept at solving genteel crime in general, are shown as completely incapable of reading genteel female character" (7). This tense relationship between Rachel and Cuff disrupts the family structure by threatening to further involve the law. Although Mrs. Verinder is aware that her daughter's actions are suspicious and even warns her of these concerns, there is not one moment when she distrusts her. Mrs. Verinder refuses to believe that her daughter has anything to do with the diamond's theft, and explains to Sergeant Cuff that he has made a mistake. Cuff is unable to solve the mystery as his pursuit of justice solidifies his identity as a threat to the family. However, eventually, "Because the family has failed to police itself properly, Cuff arrives at the scene of the crime; because his powers of detection threaten to place the domestic sphere under state surveillance and control, the police must be sent away" and the mystery of the stolen diamond continues (McCuskey 365).

The Moonstone also includes the true, malicious impostor; he blends so well that he almost succeeds in marrying Rachel Verinder. Godfrey Ablewhite masquerades as a wealthy philanthropist in love with Rachel and skillfully escapes the suspicion of all the family members and Sergeant Cuff. Ablewhite's character is visibly different than Lucy

Audley's, because he already maintains a high social position. Ablewhite is capable of deceiving Miss Clack and the Verinder family, because unlike Lucy, his character is already respected and has no social barriers to keep him separate. Betteredge remembers Godfrey pronounce to him, "Dear old Betteredge, I have the truest regard for him!" and Betteredge responds in his narrative, "He was embracing his sisters, ogling Miss Rachel, while he honoured me with that testimony of affection. Something like a stock of love to draw on *there!* Mr. Franklin was a perfect savage by comparison with him" (97).

Ablewhite appears as a wealthy man in good social standing, and convinces Miss Clack that he is a "Christian Hero" who "never hesitates where good is to be done" (239). The end of the novel reveals that the object of his philanthropy is himself and his mistress. Even after the three Indians attack Ablewhite, Miss Clack believes that it was a threat or "a warning it is to the rest of us to be unceasingly on our guard!" (241) rather than an indication of his involvement in the crime. Miss Clack states, "Mr. Godfrey followed the announcement of his name—as Mr. Godfrey does everything else—exactly at the right time....It is in the completeness of his daily life that the true Christian appears. This dear man was very complete" (245). She feels that Ablewhite, an outstanding citizen, deserves better than Rachel. His identity and character is never questioned, and not until late in the novel does Collins even hint that his character is flawed.

Nevertheless, Ablewhite's true identity is eventually revealed. Unlike Lucy Audley, he has not changed his name or falsified family connections; he has simply hidden his debt from everyone and stolen the diamond to repay it. But like Lucy Audley, his desperate actions eventually lead to the exposure of his true identity. His identity is not questioned until the end of the story. Yet he cannot trade the diamond in or redeem

its value immediately because of its legendary status, so he later attempts to marry the wealthy Rachel to appease his creditors. Contrary to Braddon's character, the reader is lead to have the same perception of Ablewhite as the rest of the characters in the novel. According to Muller, the reader likes Ablewhite based on Betteredge's opinion, and not until later in the story do we find out his true identity (12). Collins wants the reader to suspect each of the characters in the novel as the thief, and to show how their identities and actions can manipulate and define the circumstances of the novel. However, the reader does learn that Ablewhite actually steals the diamond from Franklin and later, in his state of desperation, wears a costume to move the diamond from the bank. But it is more than just a costume; he masquerades as the racial other by dressing up like an Indian sailor to throw (unsuccessfully) the Brahmins and the reader off track.

Although a true racial outsider, Ezra Jennings maintains the same values and ideals as the Verinder family and therefore earns their trust when Sergeant Cuff could not. He has a mysterious past and mixed race identity that separates him from the dominant white upper-class English family, but *he wants to assimilate* and be accepted by the community. Muller remarks that through Ezra Jennings' foreign physical appearance and "his sufferings from a mental disease only briefly alleviated by doses of opium and glimpses of happiness....[Collins] suggest[s] a convincingly pathetic character and situation" (19). The reader feels sympathy for Jennings and wishes to see him accepted by the Verinder family. Unlike Catherine and Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights*, Jennings wishes to be accepted and chooses to live by the same standards as the social community and the Verinder family.

Nevertheless, he cannot be completely accepted by society because of his foreign origin, appearance, and persecuted past which forces him to keep to himself and continue to feel like an outcast. Like Heathcliff, his odd physical appearance marks him as an outsider and makes him a figure of suspicion. Even in his attempts to help the family recover from the diamond's theft, Ezra is suspected by both Mr. Bruff and Betteredge who do not approve of the opium-induced reenactment. Mr. Bruff convinced the experiment is an act of trickery protests but goes along with it (452). Betteredge is much more vocal about his disapproval of the plans. He states, "...Mr. Ezra Jennings, in a conjuring trick being performed on Mr. Franklin Blake, by a doctor's assistant with a bottle of laudanum" (453). Betteredge completes the tasks requested because he is the servant of the home, and Rachel requests his cooperation. The objection to these proceedings comes as much from Jennings relatively low professional position as his racial and cultural differences. If Dr. Candy or another respected doctor had suggested these measures, would Betteredge's and Bruff's response be different? This is ironic because Dr. Candy is the one who set the theft in motion. Unlike the mischievous Dr. Candy, Jennings intentions are benevolent and he wishes to repair the damage Dr. Candy has made. Nevertheless, his physical appearance hinders the community's perception of his intentions, and therefore never fully assimilates.

Yet Franklin later appreciates and trusts Jennings as proven when he states, "I rose to take leave of him; and attempted to express the grateful sense of his kindness which I really felt" (446). Jennings has no prior knowledge of the family members and enters the home with the same perspective as Sergeant Cuff; with the intention to assist in their crisis. The detective's identity threatens to impose British law in the home, but at

this point Jennings does not threaten Rachel and Franklin. The opium-riddled evening reveals that Franklin did take the diamond to keep it safe, but also lost it sometime in his induced sleepwalking. Franklin and Rachel return to London with Mr. Bruff. Upon their departure, Franklin states, "Our one subject of regret, in going to London, was the necessity of parting, more abruptly than we could have wished, with Ezra Jennings...There was a prospect of our meeting again in a few months—and yet there was something very sad in seeing our best and dearest friend left standing alone on the platform" (485). Jennings approaches the point in which he is accepted into the family, but the subsequent events prevent his complete assimilation.

Interestingly, Jennings holds the key information about the night the diamond was stolen, which essentially aids in the pursuit of its thief. With the help of Dr. Candy's mumbling, he is the only person that can reveal the real actions of the night the diamond was stolen. Even with his outsider status, he can complete what Sergeant Cuff could not do. The family does require an outsider to solve the mystery, and based on his kindness and benevolent choice to help the family, he is accepted by Franklin and Rachel. However, he dies before he can completely assimilate into his new position with the family and dissolve the contradictory perceptions of his identity. Roy finds, "There are two sides to this symmetry. That this crucial event is entrusted to a being whose very lifeblood has been poisoned by yet another form of superfluity, a racial inmixing that no infusion or opium will cure, shows how an alien substance can become a gift when properly incorporated" (674). Unlike Heathcliff and Catherine, Jennings's outsider status is complementary to the family. Collins critiques the Victorian perspective of race and

outsider status by creating a character that has benign intentions and wishes to assimilate, but because of his racial identity, he cannot.

The most obvious intruding foreign characters are the Brahmin Indians, representing the colonial other, who are in search of the diamond. There is no mistaken identity in these characters. Although they never enter the home, their very presence in the city threatens the safety and privacy of the Verinder home. The Brahmin Indians wear disguises to gain entrance into places they suspect contain the diamond, but their intentions are always clear, at least to the reader. These Indians travel to Yorkshire to obtain an object that was stolen from the shrine they guard by John Herncastle, Rachel Verinder's uncle during the attack on Seringapatam. Mr. Murthwaite, an Indian traveler, finds their use of disguise troubling and states, "There is a mystery about their conduct that I can't explain. They have doubly sacrifice their caste—first, in crossing the sea; secondly, in disguising themselves as jugglers" (109). The Indians do not have the same values as the family; as Mr. Murthwaite later explains to Betteredge and Franklin, human life means little to them in pursuit of the diamond. Murthwaite makes it very clear that the Indians will stop at nothing to regain possession of the diamond. They wear disguises and later physically attack several characters in search of the diamond. The Indians presence does not threaten the values of the Verinder home, but rather the lives of the family members.

Collins' *The Moonstone* provides a collection of outsider identities, but these characters maintain a true outsider status; they are not related to anyone in the Verinder home. Catherine, Heathcliff and Lucy Audley are invited into their homes by family members to become new "family members," but the characters in *The Moonstone* do not

enter the home with the intention of becoming intimate with the family. Sergeant Cuff enters the home with intention of assisting the family in finding the diamond. But his professional identity and suspicion of Rachel's role in stealing the diamond threatens to damage her social position. Ezra Jennings also wishes to help the family and despite his racial outsider status, comes very close to assimilating. Rachel and Franklin are grateful for his assistance in the mystery, but his death eradicates his total acceptance. Godfrey Ablewhite, the accepted outsider, is the only intruder that maintains selfish and malevolent intentions. He has no desire to assist the family and is the true diamond thief. Finally, the Brahmin Indians wish to recover possession of the diamond that was stolen from their imperial statute. Their intention to gain possession of the diamond by any means possible is the true physical threat to the family. Collins' novel demonstrates another example of complicated intruding identities that threaten to expose a family to the external world.

At the beginning of Moira Donald's essay, "Tranquil Heavens?: Critiquing the Idea of the Home as the Middle-Class Sanctuary," she asks the question:

What is a home? A possible answer to this apparently straightforward question might be: a physical structure which provides shelter and privacy for its inhabitants...the English term 'home' suggests something of deeper significance—a moral or emotional resonance attached to the particular building we inhabit.

(103)

The Victorian ideal of isolation and privacy was consistently sought after and necessary for the home. These homes may have appeared to be a fortress that was impenetrable to all strangers, but this was simply a façade in most. The boundaries, hedges and sturdy

doors only served as a sheer, thin veneer. Impostors, detectives, strangers, and servants were able to penetrate these homes, or as Donald labels them, "tranquil havens" because of various complications with conflicting identity perception. She continues: "In the wealthiest middle-class Victorian households, the domestic arena would have been populated by children of various ages, scullery maids, a cook, a butler, a lady's maid, a nanny, the master and mistress of the house and often a resident relative from beyond the nuclear family" (105). These homes were swarming with strangers upholding a constant threat to the family's ideals of privacy and standards of behavior. And as Brian McCuskey clearly argues, the many servants present in a Victorian home could never indicate privacy, but yet, these three novels demonstrate the many additional individuals who could penetrate the borders of a fortress.

Although *Wuthering Heights* displays many of the intentions for a secluded home, the seclusion is so extreme that it removes itself from the community as well as strangers. Privacy is not a veneer for this home, but rather a preventative in allowing social regulations and actions to enter the family's existence. *Thrushcross Grange* exemplifies the social standards of the community that Heathcliff and Catherine find impossible to exist in. Although they both easily enter *Thrushcross Grange*, their deep and passionate affinity will not allow them to assume the social conditions and parameters of this new home. Their passion and willful disrespect for social codes defines both their identities. Even after Heathcliff's two-year exile from Catherine's presence in which he gains an education and wealth, Edgar will not accept Heathcliff as anything more than a servant. For Edgar, Heathcliff's identity as a field hand will never dissipate. His subsequent actions of entering through doors and windows reveal his previous relentless desire to be

near Catherine. The border hedges and locked doors that were the Victorian prevention of outsiders are barely an obstacle for Heathcliff to overcome. Catherine, on the other hand, is invited into the home and attempts to assimilate as the lady of the house. Edgar does not initially require her to live by the Linton's standards of social decorum until she is forced to choose between her two lovers. Her passion spins out of control, and her death is the result of her inability to balance the expected identity of these two homes. *Wuthering Heights* is not only a tale about Catherine and Heathcliff's relentless love for each other, but an example of two 19th homes representing the impending concern for culture and privacy. The inhabitants of these homes cannot assimilate because the community's perception of their identities contradicts their own perception.

Whereas Heathcliff and Catherine resist conforming to middle-class notions of privacy and property, Lady Audley seeks to completely assimilate in her new home, but her entrance demonstrates the thin partition that separates this home from strangers. Audley Court resembles all the elements of a secluded fortress: privacy, elegance, beauty and embellishments. Braddon describes the home for several pages to demonstrate how exemplary this home truly was. Lucy successfully impersonates the true lady of the house using her beauty, talent, and grace to prove she deserves this new position. She threatens Audley Court because she can appear to belong in this home so well that it takes the amateur detective to discover her true identity. Her presence in Audley Court reveals how easily she can impersonate the subtle distinctions of Victorian class, but more importantly, that she could alter the collectivity's perception of her identity. The distinction between her new socially advanced position and her old position is a matter of

social class and money. But when she appeared to have all the elements required of a respectable lady, she was sought after and later accepted.

The Verinder home has an extra level of protection from strangers when the servants act as a shield, but the fortress is still penetrated. *The Moonstone* brings all of these identity problems into one novel, as the foreigner, impostor, and detective also successfully penetrate the Verinder home. Although the detective is invited in and has honest intentions, his concern is for order and law, no matter which family member is exposed or threatened. The Brahmin Indians represent the true colonial other as they attempt to enter the Verinder home in search of the diamond. Ezra Jennings also represents the alien outsider, who, unlike Catherine and Heathcliff, wishes to assimilate into the Victorian social standards. Because he is an outsider, class boundaries prohibit him from completely assimilating. However, he approaches the class and racial boundaries that determine social identity and essentially crosses them as Franklin and Rachel accept and desire him as a friend, though that desire never gets tested beyond words as he dies shortly after he helps them in finding the diamond thief. And finally, Godfrey Ablewhite represents the impostor who disguises his true identity so well that he is almost successful. He deceives Miss Clack, the Verinders and even the readers, but it is only the Brahmin Indians who can see through the masquerade and reveal he is the true diamond thief.

Anthea Trodd states "There are two opposing images of the Victorian home: the innocent home which justifiably seeks to guard itself against the intrusions of a hostile world, and the guilty home which requires the attentions of some benevolent Asmodeus to expose it to daylight and sanity" (5). She introduces the idea that some of these

intruders could have benefited the home; however, each of these novels falls into the first category described by Trodd. Although few characters wish to bring the homes harm, they all essentially do by exposing the families to the hostile worlds outside their fortresses.

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