The Homoerotic Architectures of Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Samuel McIntyre

William & Mary

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The Homoerotic Architectures of *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English from The College of William and Mary

by

Samuel McIntyre

Accepted for Honors

Deborah D. Morse

Deborah Morse, Thesis Director

Kim Wheatley

Kim Wheatley, Examination Chair

Simon Joyce

Simon Joyce

Leisa Meyer

Leisa Meyer

Williamsburg, VA
May 7, 2020
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How am I to sing your praise?
Happy chimney-corner days,
Sitting safe in nursery nooks,
Reading picture story-books?

—“Picture-Books in Winter” (17-20)

The closet is an architectural space: enclosed, self-contained, and concealed. In his groundbreaking architectural treatise _Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire_, design critic and curator Aaron Betsky passionately describes the closet as:

the ultimate interior, the place where interiority starts. It is a dark space at the heart of the home…It contains the building blocks for your social constructions, such as your clothes. The closet also contains the disused pieces of your past. It is a place to hide, to create worlds for yourself out of the and past and for the future in a secure environment. If the hearth is the heart of the home, where the family gathers to affirm itself as a unit in the glow of the fire, the closet contains both the secret recesses of the soul and the masks you wear. Being in the closet means that you surround yourself with the emblems of your past and with the clothes you can wear, while covering yourself in darkness. (Betsky 17)

The closet, here, is a space not only for secrecy and repression, but also for becoming; it is the space in which queer identities build themselves up from “disused pieces” and attempt to discover the strength needed for presentation to the world. The closet is both a space of profound fear and profound courage—of potentiality and actualization.

In _Epistemology of the Closet_, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick argues that “‘closetedness’ itself is a performance initiated as such by the speech act of a silence—not a particular silence, but a silence that accrues particularity by fits and starts, in relation to the discourse that surrounds and
differentially constitutes it” (“Introduction: Axiomatic” 3). As it might be applied to literature
and the uncovering of queer narratives, Sedgwick’s construction of closetedness holds the reader
responsible for making these silences speak by bringing them to light through close reading and
careful analysis.

In this thesis, I will examine the homoerotic architectures of Robert Louis Stevenson’s
Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1886). In its most general sense, “architecture” can be
defined as “construction or structure generally; both abstract and concrete” (“Architecture, n5.”).
By “homoerotic architectures,” I mean not only the literal architectural presences in the novel
(houses, by-streets, theatres, etc.), but also the formal structures of the narrative itself, the queer
scaffolding that underpins the novel’s depiction of community, and the architectures present in
Stevenson’s own life. Additionally, I will consider nontraditional architectural constructs such as
bodies, letters, and relationships between and among men. Essentially, this thesis will present a
study of the homoerotic underpinnings of Stevenson’s novel.

Stevenson biographer Claire Harman contends that Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr.
Hyde (1886) is “now so embedded in the popular culture that it hardly exists as a work of
literature” (Harman 301). Indeed, the reader opens the novel for the first time already with a
basic—but always flawed—expectation of what lies within.¹ It is impossible to imagine how
Stevenson’s earliest readers would have experienced the narrative, but it is certain that none of
them would have experienced it in the same way. Writing about this slim but enigmatic novel is
a unique challenge, for Stevenson’s singularly complex and overdetermined narrative seems able

¹ In his virulently critical review of Victor Fleming’s unfaithful 1941 film adaptation Dr. Jekyll and
Mr. Hyde, Jorge Luis Borges forcefully demonstrates how the experience of the text is altered by premature
knowledge of the plot: “I don’t think anyone would have guessed that [Jekyll and Hyde were the same man].
Have you ever suspected that Sherlock Holmes was the Hound of Baskervilles? Well, no, you haven’t…Have
you ever suspected that Hamlet may be Claudius?” (qtd. in Harman 307).
to sustain almost any interpretation, allegory, or critical framework that can be thrust upon it.

With that in mind, I will attempt to present here what I find to be a particularly compelling reading of *Jekyll and Hyde*.

In this thesis, I operate with the understanding of close reading “as a redemption of the past” that is offered by queer theorist Kevin Ohi in the introduction to his 2015 book *Dead Letters Sent: Queer Literary Transmission* (Ohi 29). In the best theorization of close reading that I have encountered, Ohi writes:

> to understand close reading as a redemption of the past is to understand it as a mode of recovering the potentiality sheltered within actualization, and such reading must therefore be structured by something other than the fantasy of an accuracy that could, at last, be true to the text. Close reading therefore offers a way to access the potentiality of the literary work—not to settle it, once and for all, in a meaning that masters it, but to rewrite it, perpetually. (29)

Indeed, *Jekyll and Hyde*, is a text that has been rewritten perpetually whether on the stage, in Hollywood, or in the popular imagination. It is also a text that can weather such constant reinterpretation and that becomes more fascinating with each subsequent rereading and each new discovery. As J. Jack Halberstam observes in an analysis of the novel through the lens of the late-Victorian Gothic, *Jekyll and Hyde*’s strength “emanates from a vertiginous excess of meaning… rhetorical extravagance that produces, quite simply, too much” (Halberstam 2).

In my first chapter, I will analyze John Singer Sargent’s portrait *Robert Louis Stevenson and His Wife* (1885) to contextualize Stevenson within his queer milieu, and I will consider the influence of degeneration theory on the novel’s conceptions of queer bodies, morality, and urbanity in the *fin de siècle*. My second chapter pays close attention to “The Story of a Door”
and “The Carew Murder Case” in an attempt to locate and understand the dynamics governing the novel’s queer community. My third chapter will turn attention toward the Victorian home and its subversion in *Jekyll and Hyde* through the depiction of Dr. Jekyll’s house, surgical theatre, and cabinet. My fourth chapter will consider the influences of Stevenson’s life—especially his childhood bedroom, his relationship with his father, and his sojourn at Skerryvore Cottage in Bournemouth—upon the creation of *Jekyll and Hyde*. If Stevenson writes like an architect, it is because he is descended from a family of Scottish lighthouse engineers and received training in architecture during the summers of his youth. Finally, I will conclude with a brief epilogue considering the novel’s inheritances.
CHAPTER ONE: “It looks dam queer as a whole”

Nobody heard him and nobody saw,
His is a picture you never could draw,
But he’s sure to be present, abroad or at home,
When children are happy and playing alone.
– “The Unseen Playmate” (5-8)

In an 1895 essay remembering the life and recent passing of Robert Louis Stevenson, noted fairy-tale collector Andrew Lang wrote of his fellow Scotsman: “Mr. Stevenson possessed more than any man I ever met, the power of making other men fall in love with him” (Lang 191-192). Stevenson’s charm and magnanimous personality are well documented by his biographers, correspondents, and close friends, but this analysis will pay close attention to Lang’s particular phrasing: “making other men fall in love with him.” Andrew Lang’s own sexuality was ambiguous at best, and in his biography of RLS, Frank McLynn identifies several queer men who were attracted or otherwise drawn to the author of Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: “Stevenson had a great appeal both for self-confessed homosexuals (like John Addington Symonds) and repressed ones (like Henry James and Edmund Gosse)…RLS was able to evoke strong responses – which it seems prissy not to recognise as sexual – in people of both sexes” (McLynn 93-94). Whether or not Stevenson himself was bisexual or otherwise non-normative is not of particular value (although it is worth noting that there has been significant biographical and critical speculation regarding “homosexuality, impotence, a passionate feeling for his stepson, submission to a wilful and predatory wife,” etc. [qtd. in Showalter 107]), but the writer

2 From a 22 October 1885 letter from Robert Louis Stevenson to Will Low (Letters of RLS v.5, 137).
3 Showalter cites from Karl Miller’s 1985 study Doubles: Studies in Literary History. Notably, Miller sets precedent for many queer readings of Stevenson that deny the passionate physicality of his marriage by taking personal letters out of context. Such biphobic and/or misogynistic readings frequently excerpt an 1886 letter to W.E. Henley to suggest that RLS “came out as limp as a lady's novel” from his marriage to Fanny: “I
certainly associated closely with a queer artistic milieu throughout his life and exhibited traits of the aesthetic lifestyle that would be epitomized by Oscar Wilde in the 1890s. Whatever can be said of his own sexual preferences or activities, Robert Louis Stevenson was certainly steeped in a queer artistic subculture of late-Victorian London before, during, and after the publication of his greatest masterpiece of duality, *Jekyll and Hyde*.

In the chapter on *Jekyll and Hyde* from her book *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle*, Elaine Showalter contextualizes the same circle of artists within the framework of their double lives, contrasting the homosexual proclivities of men like Symonds and Gosse with the respectability of their literary and academic reputations (Showalter 106). The duality at the heart of these men’s sexual lives both predates and predicts Wilde’s concept of “Bunburying” as a metaphor for the straight-passing behaviors required of gay men in his 1895 play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and Showalter identifies Stevenson as “the fin-de-siècle laureate of the double life” (Showalter 106). Showalter’s exact meaning here is obscure, although she points to Stevenson’s 1888 essay “A Chapter on Dreams” as exemplifying duality. In that short work, Stevenson writes that, before *Jekyll and Hyde*: “I had long been trying to write a story on this subject, to find a body, a vehicle, for that strong sense of man's double being which must at times come in upon and overwhelm the mind of every thinking creature” (“A Chapter on Dreams” 100). Even if Stevenson’s own “double being” were not one of a Bunburyist, he had at

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4 See, for example, Algernon in Act I: “Nothing will induce me to part with Bunbury, and if you ever get married, which seems to me extremely problematic, you will be very glad to know Bunbury. A man who marries without knowing Bunbury has a very tedious time of it” (*The Importance of Being Earnest* 79).

5 In his 2015 edition of *Jekyll and Hyde* for Broadview, Martin Danahay also makes a case for the duality of “A Chapter on Dreams;” he writes: “Stevenson coyly writes as if it is about someone else, and then reveals that he himself is the subject. In a small way Stevenson thus duplicates the uncertainty about identity found in the tale of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*” (*J&H* 91).
least secondhand familiarity with such lifestyles, for he was made aware of the “peculiar arrangements” between J.A Symonds and his wife as early as 1885, which apparently garnered the ire of Mrs. Symonds (McLynn 189). Regardless, Stevenson and Symonds were close and affectionate correspondents until 1892, one year prior to the latter’s death in Rome on 19 April 1893. In a letter dated 24 April 1882, Symonds writes wistfully and with great affection regarding Stevenson’s recent departure from Davos: “I was sad-hearted after leaving you that night, and lunged into work. The place will be very different to me without you…Very thankful I am to the place for bringing us together” (Letters of JAS v.2, 747). Stevenson’s letters in response tend to be somewhat less frequent but equally enthusiastic, although they often lack the abounding affection which characterizes Symonds’s tone and style of correspondence.

Upon reading Jekyll and Hyde, Symonds wrote to Stevenson in March 1886 that the work “has left such a deeply painful impression on my heart that I do not know how I am ever to turn to it again. The fact is that, viewed as an allegory, it touches one too closely. Most of us at some epoch in our lives have been upon the verge of developing a Mr Hyde” (Letters of JAS v.3, 121). To whom exactly Symonds refers with the phrasing “Most of us” is unclear, but the work obviously resonated with him on a deeply personal, even identificatory level, with regard to his feeling of nearly “developing a Mr Hyde” of his own. One might easily imagine that Symonds referred to those Bunburying homosexuals, like himself, who were forced to conceal their non-normative sexual proclivities beneath a veil of heterosexual respectability. However, for well over a century, readers and critics have uncovered their own meanings in Stevenson’s Jekyll and Hyde, from the simplistic allegories of good-versus-evil that saturate cinematic adaptations in

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6 Cf. the relative sterility of Symonds letters either jointly-addressed to RLS and Fanny or to Fanny alone. See Letters of JAS v.3, 46-48, 118-119.
7 See, for example, Letters of RLS v.5, 220-22, 406-407.
Hollywood and beyond, to temperance readings of Jekyll/Hyde as an addict, to the homoerotic interpretations that have surged among queer theorists more recently.

Since its publication in January 1886, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* has remained ever the enigmatic and elusive text, but it is difficult to ignore the fact that it emerged amid a watershed moment in Victorian sexual history. In 1885, British Parliament criminalized all homosexual activities with the Labouchère Amendment of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which went into effect the very month of *Jekyll and Hyde*’s publication in January 1886 and would be used to prosecute and imprison Oscar Wilde in 1895. Also in 1886, German sexologist Richard von Krafft-Ebing published his seminal volume *Psychopathia Sexualis* (not translated into English until 1892), representing one of the earliest sexological studies of homosexuality. My reading of *Jekyll and Hyde* intends to reveal the inherently queer undertones of Stevenson’s masterpiece by examining architectures which alternately mediate, contain, and express the homosexual tendencies and desires of a queer coterie of professional men occupying the novel’s center. It will become clear that the characters of Jekyll/Hyde, Utterson, Enfield, and Lanyon form a queer community of professional men, not unlike Stevenson’s own milieu.

In October 1885—about four months before the publication of *Jekyll and Hyde*—the American expatriate painter John Singer Sargent completed an oil portrait of RLS and his wife, Fanny Osbourne. The painting, plainly titled *Robert Louis Stevenson and His Wife* (see figure one below), depicts the writer pacing nervously in his parlor at Skerryvore, while his wife is relegated to the periphery both in the painting’s title and in the composition itself, sprawled

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8 Stephen Heath offers a provocative early analysis of the homosocial and homoerotic undertones of *Jekyll and Hyde* in an article which borrows its title from Krafft-Ebing: “Psychopathia sexualis: Stevenson’s Strange Case.” Heath’s article itself (published a century after Stevenson’s and Krafft-Ebing’s works in 1986) remains somewhat coded, for the argument suggests homosexuality in the novel by invoking of Krafft-Ebing, Gosse, Symonds, James, etc. without making explicit reference to suggestions of homosexuality in the text.
across a shadowy armchair while cloaked in a lustrous gold shawl. In a letter to the artist Will Low dated 22 October 1885, Stevenson writes of the portrait:

It is, I think, excellent; but it is too eccentric to be exhibited. I am at one extreme corner; my wife, in this wild dress and looking like a ghost, is at the extreme other end; between us an open door exhibits my palatial entrance hall and a part of my respected staircase. All this is touched in lovely, with that witty touch of Sargent’s; but of course it looks dam queer as a whole. (*Letters of RLS* v.5, 137)

This portrait was the second of three which Sargent attempted of RLS, but it is certainly the most remarkable. The first, completed in 1884, was deemed unsuccessful by both artist and subject, and Stevenson wrote in a letter to W.E. Henley dated 17 December 1884: “[Sargent] represents
me as a weird, very pretty,\textsuperscript{9} large-eyed, chicken-boned, slightly contorted poet” (\textit{Letters of RLS} v.5, 50). This original portrait is now lost. The third portrait was commissioned by Stevenson’s Bostonian admirers Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fairchild, and it offers an interpretation of RLS in a somewhat more impressionistic style; he seated more traditionally in a wicker chair, casting “an amused and quizzical glance at Sargent” (Fairbrother 83). However, neither of these other portraits—which are both interesting and remarkable in their own right—is as rich nor as culturally significant as Sargent’s “dam queer” second attempt at distilling Robert Louis Stevenson’s essence onto canvas.

John Singer Sargent first came to Stevenson’s residence at Skerryvore in Bournemouth in late 1884, and according to a letter from Stevenson to W.E. Henley dated 17 December 1884: “We [RLS and Fanny] both lost our hearts to him” (\textit{Letters of RLS} v.5, 51). By the time of his Stevenson portraits, Sargent was already infamous and controversial for his \textit{Portrait of Madame X} (a scandalous 1884 depiction of French socialite and American expatriate Madame Pierre Gautreau), and over the course of his career, he would produce portraits or sketches of notable queer artists in Stevenson’s circle, including Edmund Gosse and Henry James. For decades, Sargent was largely dismissed as a “remarkably gifted” artist who elected to squander his prodigious talent on “fashionable portraiture,” ignoring the erotics of his work in favor of crafting a portrait of the artist as a “milquetoast” (Fairbrother 9, 19). In recent years, however, important scholarship has been done to assert the complexity and sensuality of Sargent’s oeuvre, including the exhibition “John Singer Sargent: The Sensualist,” organized by art historian Trevor Fairbrother at the Seattle Art Museum from December 14, 2000 through March 18, 2001.

\textsuperscript{9} Note that Stevenson also uses the word “pretty” to describe the effeminate Sir Danvers Carew in the novel, during a scene in which it is implied that Carew has made a sexual proposition to Hyde: “the older man bowed and accosted the other with a very pretty manner of politeness” (\textit{J&H} 47).
(Fairbrother 4). In addition to his generalized fortifications of Sargent’s reputation, Fairbrother contributed to the important work of reclaiming Sargent as a queer artist, calling attention to his understudied and underappreciated male nudes, as well to his “active associations with men” as reported by his contemporary Jacques-Émile Blanche and by the Wertheimer family, who commissioned a series of twelve portraits from Sargent (155). To borrow Frank McLynn’s phrasing, Sargent becomes yet another homosexual to succumb to Stevenson’s “great appeal” (McLynn 94). Sargent’s *Robert Louis Stevenson and His Wife* might be read as a portrait that queers its subject, revealing aspects of Stevenson’s marriage and sexual life that complicate (or perhaps radically reframe) his stale reputation as a “boys’ writer.”

According to Sargent biographer Stanley Olson, the painter referred to the portrait of Stevenson as “the caged animal lecturing about the foreign specimen in the corner,” suggesting not only that Stevenson may have been suffocated or otherwise stifled by his wife, but that the two were a species apart (Olson 114). Significant interest and scholarship has been devoted to the marriage of Robert Louis Stevenson and Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne (which lasted from 1880 until his death in 1894), yet no clear consensus exists surrounding the relationship; Fanny alternates in critical estimation among having been Stevenson’s muse, his overbearing wife, his passionate lover, or his indifferent spouse. In Sargent’s portrait, however, she is relegated to the periphery, and her body is fragmented by the frame, suggesting her insignificance to the

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10 Fairbrother cites Blanche’s reference to Sargent as a “‘frenzied bugger’ who was most active in Paris and Venice” (220n).

11 By all accounts, Fanny Osbourne was an extremely comely woman. The chapter “Fanny Osbourne” from McLynn’s biography of R.L.S. documents her reputation as a beauty and her desirability as a model for portraiture across both Europe and the United States, but McLynn unfairly condemns Fanny for manipulating and creatively stifling her husband (108-129). The other biographer whom I cite frequently is Claire Harman, whose 2005 *Myself & the Other Fellow: A Life of Robert Louis Stevenson* is more objective in its depiction of Fanny. For a less strictly academic interpretation, see also Alexandra Lapierre’s popular novelized biography *Fanny Stevenson: A Romance of Destiny* (published in 1993 as *Fanny Stevenson: Entre passion et liberté* and translated from the French in 1995 by Carol Cosman) and Nancy Horan’s bestselling 2014 novel *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*. 
composition, the portraitist, and the author. The painting makes literal the idea of the marginal feminine, as if predicting the virtual absence of women in *Jekyll and Hyde* (which contains only five explicit female characters—none of whom are named, and all of whom are victim or witness to Hyde’s violence) and in Stevenson’s other fiction (most notably, his famous adventure novels, *Kidnapped* and *Treasure Island*). Draped in a glistening shawl and sinking deep into her reddish chair—which itself blends into the red hue of the wall—Fanny appears to be part of the room’s furnishing more than a person, an ornament akin to the framed paintings above her head. Notably, her chair formerly belonged to Stevenson’s grandfather, but became known as “Henry James’s chair” after the two novelists struck up a close friendship and James became an almost nightly visitor at Skerryvore (Harman 278). The portrait is utterly disinterested in Fanny’s feminine body, for her gaudy, gold-trimmed covering disguises any hint of shape and reveals only a glimmer of her face. There is an overwhelming sense that Fanny Osbourne does not belong here—at Skerryvore, beside Stevenson, in Henry James’s chair—which is reinforced by her marginalization and exotic drapery.

Her dress lies in stark opposition to Stevenson’s sleeker, form-fitting garb, calling attention to the male body as the object to be looked at. This construction is reinforced by the unadorned walls which frame Stevenson’s silhouette, in contrast with his wife’s bifurcated figure, which is crowded into a much tighter space. Sargent exaggerates the space between Stevenson and his wife through his division of the composition by an open doorway, separating husband from wife and evoking a level of secrecy within the marriage. The opened closet-like doorway intimates a revelation of secrets or undoing of repression, perhaps mirroring or predicting the contemporary metaphor of a queer person’s “coming out.” The closet metaphor did not exist as we know it in the Victorian Era, but closet-like spaces would already have
signified repression or furtiveness, for the verb “to closet” bore connotations of secrecy as early as the sixteenth century (“Closet, v.”). The door itself, painted behind Stevenson, is reminiscent of the multitudinous doors within *Jekyll and Hyde*—especially of Hyde’s entryway with “neither bell nor knocker” to Dr. Jekyll’s laboratory, which will be considered later in this thesis for the evocative symbolism of its ornamentation and rear positioning (*J&H* 34). Doors—in both Stevenson’s fiction and his portrait—convey secrecy and intrigue through their active association with non-normative relationships.

Stevenson’s body is spindly and decidedly feminine, and the exaggerated length of his limbs and other features suggests—in Stevenson’s own words—something decidedly “queer” about the writer. His self-conscious style is not unlike that of the Victorian dandy (a figure long associated with homosexuality), and there is a man-about-town quality to his restlessness and movement. Whereas the positioning of Fanny’s hands evokes something like distress, there is an eroticized quality to the haptic curiosity of Stevenson; the long fingers of his right hand nervously fondle the curled end of a moustache, while the left rests gently just beside the groin. Ann Colley writes that the portrait “captures his fragility,” suggesting that Stevenson’s hands probe the “lank and almost transparent body” as if to confirm its “actuality” as he advances “through the shadows into darkness” (Colley 135). His body is turned away from Fanny, and his gaze is directed plainly toward the (presumably male) spectator, if not toward the portraitist himself. In Sargent’s rendering, Stevenson is more interested in other men than in the withering figure of his wife. Furthermore, the very act of reading a male body—whether in literature or portraiture—is inherently homoerotic. Why was Sargent so concerned with Stevenson’s body, and why are characters in the novel so concerned with Hyde’s? The answer, this thesis will argue, lies in a queer-coding that structures both Sargent’s portrait and Stevenson’s novel.
In the analysis of *Jekyll and Hyde* contained in his book *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian* *Fin de Siècle*, Stephen Arata foregrounds attempts to read Hyde’s body in the novel, considering them in the context of degeneration theory. Arata synthesizes writings by nineteenth-century thinkers like Bénédict Morel, Max Nordau, and Cesare Lombroso\(^\text{12}\) to comprehend late-Victorian anxiety that man was undergoing a Darwinian-inflected process of devolution or degeneracy—an individual process of decline with potential to infect the larger community. Jekyll himself describes Hyde as a regression or degeneration of himself, identifying Hyde as “less developed” and thus “smaller, slighter and younger than Henry Jekyll” (*J&H* 78). In consequence, a hermeneutics of the male body emerges through which external deformities or behaviors could be interpreted as evidence of internal failings. Bolstered by pseudo-science, degeneration theorists saw individual experiences of “poverty, malnutrition, crime, alcoholism, pollution” as driving social problems of “sterility, madness, imbecility, suicide, revolution” (Arata 3). Lee Edelman writes that:

> homosexuals themselves have been seen as producing—and, by some medical ‘experts,’ as being produced by—bodies that bore a distinct, and therefore legible, anatomical code…thus allowing the nineteenth century’s medicalization of sexual discourse to serve more efficiently the purposes of criminality and the law. As a result, John Addington Symonds would be able to invoke the received idea of the homosexual man as a man with ‘lusts written on his face.’ (Edelman 5)

Crucially, degeneracy was seen as a distinctly professional-class phenomenon, and Nordau believed that the degenerate population “consists chiefly of rich educated people” (qtd. in Arata

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\(^{12}\) Britain lacked its own prominent degeneration theorist, but fears of degeneracy were widespread across the island. Arata writes: “The relative absence of sharply defined schools of thought in Britain was a further reason that degeneration ‘theory’ there was less a coherent system than a form of common sense” (3).
35), such as the professional coterie of Utterson, Jekyll, Lanyon, and Enfield that forms the novel’s core and is epitomized by Jekyll’s almost parodic signature on the holograph will: “Henry Jekyll, M.D., D.C.L., L.L.D., F.R.S., etc.” (J&H 38-39). Intimations of homoerotic undertones abound among these men, from Lanyon and Jekyll’s “Damon and Pythias”

14 relationship to the “nut to crack” of Enfield and Utterson’s “Sunday walks” (J&H 40, 33). However, Hyde’s appearance disrupts carefully contained desires and practices, threatening to infect the group with his own homosexual degeneracy. Fewer than ten years later, Wilde would be arrested and imprisoned for similar crimes—not of homosexual but of homosexuality as a lifestyle. Arata writes that in the fin de siècle, “the homosexual was defined primarily by his character rather than by his practices,” and I will contend that Hyde is not a sodomite, but a prototype of the modern homosexual male, in anticipation of Oscar Wilde’s stylized model

15 made notorious in 1895 (Arata 56). This is what others him in relation to those who merely practice sodomy/homosex in the professional circle, and it is also why this queer coterie will try to contain Hyde by physically encircling him or by enshrining him in silence throughout the novel. They aim to protect their

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13 Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Civil Laws, Doctor of Laws, Fellow of the Royal Society

14 Often understood simply as an indication of close friendship between Utterson and Enfield, the “Damon and Pythias” allusion is ripe with homoerotic undertones. The reference taps into the use of Hellenism to encode homosexuality among artists and intellectuals (see Linda Dowling’s Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford), and this “celebrated pair who came to signify the willingness to sacrifice oneself for the sake of a friend” provides a model for understanding the kind of intense male homosocial bonds that would blossom into modern homosexuality (“Damon and Pythias”). Similarly, Deborah Denenholz Morse examines the homoeroticism of “Crimsworth’s complicated, intense feelings toward Hunsden” in Charlotte Brontë’s The Professor (1857) through the lens of another Greek allusion: Orestes and Pylades. In her essay “Queer Charlotte: Homoerotics from Mina Laury to The Professor,” Morse suggests that “this Greek allusion in the framing document of The Professor is the key to interpreting the novel as the confession or autobiography of a repressed homosexual man” (Morse). Joseph Bristow writes that the Old Testament myth of David and Jonathan was employed by one “propagandist of manliness” in the 1850s to justify the “model of dignified friendship” presented in Tennyson’s In Memoriam (1850), and the same allusion was taken up in court by Oscar Wilde to justify his own relationship to Lord Alfred Douglas (Bristow 6).

15 Nordau takes aim at the aesthete à la Oscar Wilde, describing “predilection for strange costume” as a “pathological aberration of racial instinct,” and characterizing aestheticism as “a purely anti-socialistic, egomaniacal recklessness and hysterical longing to make a sensation” (qtd. in Bristow 20).
own proclivities toward same-sex desire, their ability to engage in homosex under certain urban conditions, and their very reputations.

Hyde’s body is a text that the novel’s professional men repeatedly try but fail to interpret, and no character is able to isolate the supposed deformities of his figure. The reader too is implicated in this homoerotic curiosity through Stevenson’s careful ambiguity of language, complex narrative structure, and obfuscation of description, for we are drawn forward in part by a consistently unfulfilled desire to comprehend Hyde by seeing him. Encounters with Hyde are filtered through the dialogue or consciousness of other characters, such as in the novel’s earliest description of him, supplied by Mr. Enfield:

[Hyde] is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something down-right detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn’t specify the point. He’s an extraordinary looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way. No, sir; I can make no hand of it; I can’t describe him. And it’s not want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment.

(J&H 37-38, my emphasis)

Here—as is the case also in descriptions supplied by Mr. Utterson (43), Dr. Lanyon (72-73), and Dr. Jekyll (78-79)—Hyde is “something down-right detestable,” but Enfield is unable to isolate the features that make his appearance remarkable.

What is off-putting about Hyde is not his otherness, but rather his uncanny similarity, and as Arata observes: “the noun used most often in the story to describe Hyde is not ‘monster’ or ‘villain’ but – ‘gentleman’” (38). In most ways, he is one of them. Jane V. Rago writes:
What makes Hyde so threatening within this schema is that he is not an atavistic other but rather he is a gentleman…There exists, on the part of the professional order (personified by Utterson), at once a paranoid and a cynical response to Hyde: a deliberate misrecognition of Hyde in the various attempts to interpellate him as ‘other’…Hyde defies visual description in the narrative and disrupts the authoritative gaze, so he remains deliberately unspoken; yet there is a discursive explosion that frantically and obsessively tries to fix Hyde’s identity as deviant. (Rago 277)

Rago argues that Utterson and the others “won’t speak him [Hyde]” because to do so would be “to re-present themselves as part of this scheme of invisibility and silence” (Rago 282, emphasis in original). Because Hyde is so much like the novel’s professional coterie, association with his unspeakable sins carries the insidious threat of self-implication, which I will explore more deeply in the subsequent chapter. If homosexuality and other symptoms of degeneracy were seen as infectious, then there is a real (if unfounded) fear that Hyde’s homosexual degeneracy could generate an outbreak across London.

Such fears carry broad implications for the wellbeing of the English capital, perhaps nowhere more so than in Hyde’s own neighborhood of Soho, where the East–West division\(^{16}\) of London partially breaks down (J&H 42). Rebuilding after the cholera outbreak of 1854, Soho became a haven for immigrants, the theater, restaurants, and, more insidiously, prostitution, gin palaces, gambling, and other vices until the 1980s, and it is still recognized as a center of London’s gay community (Weinreb and Hibbert 794). Jekyll seems obliquely to acknowledge London’s regional divisions in his Full Statement of the Case with the declaration: “I hazard the

\(^{16}\) Whether the East versus West dichotomy of London is entirely true is not of particular concern; as architectural theorist Kevin Lynch argues in *The Image of the City,* “the mental image of that city which is held by its citizens” is often more important than the physical cityscape (Lynch 2).
guess that man will be ultimately known for a mere polity of multifarious, incongruous and independent denizens” (J&H 76). London, one could argue, had become something similar by the fin de siècle: a fractured city of dualities mirroring the Jekyll/Hyde relationship with its “provinces of good and evil” (J&H 76). Because this relationship is one of containment (as I will demonstrate in my third chapter), I propose that it is better juxtaposed with the enclosure of Soho inside of the West End rather than with the East–West divide. After the Carew murder, for example, an endangered Hyde imagines Jekyll to be “my city of refuge” (J&H 85). According to Robert Mighall: “Soho’s relation to respectable London resembles Hyde’s relation to his more upright twin Dr. Jekyll…Soho’s relation to respectable London is therefore a topographical replication of the Hyde within the Jekyll” (Mighall 151). If the degenerate Hyde can overwhelm and overtake the respectable Jekyll, might not it be possible that Soho could do the same to West London?

A process of othering related to that which was practiced by degeneration theorists emerges across fin de siècle representations of the urban poor.¹⁷ In Woman and the Demon, Nina Auerbach describes a process by which “the foreign is domesticated” through its containment in Victorian art and literature, writing: “in Dracula, Trilby, and the fin-de-siècle Never-Never-Lands of Robert Louis Stevenson, James Barrie, and Oscar Wilde, even the domestic is made foreign through the power of transformation that infuses it” (Auerbach 43). When Enfield returns “from some place at the end of the world,” it is entirely possible that “the end of the world”¹⁸ for

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¹⁷ See Robert Mighall A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: “The ‘anthropological’ focus of late-Victorian Gothic involved a double movement: outwards to the margins of the Empire, and inwards to the focus on the domestic ‘savages’ which resided in the very heart of the civilized world” (Mighall 136). Likewise, David Punter refers to Jekyll and Hyde as “an urban version of ‘going native’” (qtd. in Mighall 139).

¹⁸ This phrasing may echo a line passed between a homosocially bonded pair of West End public school men in Dickens’s Our Mutual Friend. During a journey to some unfamiliar location in the East End along the Thames, Mortimer Lightwood says to Eugene Wrayburn: “‘This is a confoundedly out-of-the-way place’” (Dickens). In a 1998 BBC adaptation of that novel, the line becomes even more reminiscent of Jekyll and Hyde “We shall fall over the edge of the world if we don’t stop soon” (Farino).
him means only London’s East End—a region in which he might have found unfettered access to cruising spaces, prostitution, and other iniquities (J&H 34). Enfield’s assertion that he was in “a part of town where there was literally nothing to see but lamps” blatantly reveals his dismissive attitude toward that region of the city and its inhabitants, while obscuring his own potentially reprehensible activities (J&H 34). Although *Jekyll and Hyde* is concerned with the slums, the novel is a far cry from Dickens’s socially minded exposés in *Oliver Twist* (1839), *Bleak House* (1853), or *Our Mutual Friend* (1865). However, a related tradition of masculinist sociology emerged in the late-nineteenth century, employing racialized language to mark East London and its inhabitants as other—aligned more closely with the savagery of darkest Africa than with Englishness. George Sims’s *How the Poor Live* (1883) describes East London as “a dark continent that is within easy walking distance of the Post Office” (qtd. in Joyce 8-9), while William Booth’s *In Darkest London and the Way Out* (1890) questions: “As there is darkest Africa is there not also a darkest England?” (William Booth 11). Clearly, something about the other is conceived as transgressive and even dangerous in late-Victorian imagination, and this is the context from which Edward Hyde is born.

If London is a synecdochic representation of society in the British literary imagination, then the novel’s concentration of iniquity within Soho reflects a nationalized effort to impel homosexuality to the peripheries of Victorian society by aligning it with prostitution and other vices. Just as Dr. Jekyll contains his homosexual desire to the being of Mr. Hyde, so London contains homosexuality and other vices to Soho.19 Indeed, Eve Sedgwick argues in *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* that the existence of gay spots (e.g. molly houses or gay neighborhoods) contains homosexuality by delineating the spaces in which it

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19 See George Moore’s 1894 fallen woman novel *Esther Waters* for a similar vision of “the labyrinth of Soho”: a neighborhood marred by an excess of crime, gambling, prostitution and drink (Moore 257).
exists and by stigmatizing those spaces; in effect, homosexuality can exist largely without interruption and without general notice within certain condensed pockets of the city (Sedgwick 88-89). Dubious entertainments and vice, including those Sedgwick describes, are referenced obliquely in *Jekyll and Hyde* as endemic to the general profligacy of “the dismal quarter of Soho…with its muddy ways, and slatternly passengers, and its lamps which had never been extinguished or had been kindled afresh to combat this mournful reinvasion of darkness…like a district of some city in a nightmare” (*J&H* 49). Crucially, this “city in a nightmare” is “home to Henry Jekyll’s favourite; of a man who was heir to a quarter of a million sterling” (*J&H* 49). Hyde’s own home lies on “a dingy street” adorned with “a gin palace, a low French eating house, a shop for the retail of penny numbers and twopenny salads, many ragged children huddled in the doorways, and many women of many different nationalities passing out, key in hand, to have a morning glass” (*J&H* 49). These are the transgressive architectures from which Hyde emerges, and these are the same transgressive architectures which haunt and are haunted by the novel’s queer coterie of professional men.
CHAPTER TWO: Cruising in Darkest London

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

—“My Shadow” (1-4)

As in Sargent’s depiction of Robert Louis Stevenson and Fanny Osbourne, the “queer” relationship between Gabriel John Utterson and Edward Hyde finds its locus around one of Jekyll and Hyde’s myriad doors, and the novel opens with “The Story of a Door” recounted by Mr. Richard Enfield—“[Utterson’s] distant kinsman, the well-known man about town” (J&H 33). From its earliest sentences, the novel frames Utterson as a complicated and unsettling vision of the professional man and bachelor in late-Victorian London. Stevenson’s descriptive opening paragraphs obscure the lawyer’s character through a deliberate obfuscation of language and the inclusion of peculiar details, and what emerges is a man of seeming contradictions. The entryway from Enfield’s story—which introduces Hyde to the novel and establishes his complicated relationship to Utterson—is not the novel’s first door; Stevenson’s architectural concern begins with his opening description of Utterson, and doors are immediately linked with repressed desire through Utterson’s refusal to attend the theatre, having “not crossed the doors of one for twenty years” despite expressed pleasure in theatre-going (J&H 33). Utterson’s refusal to enter the theatre (a symbolic space wherein gender, identity, and sexuality are performed) crystallizes the novel’s tendency toward containment, and this chapter will analyze Stevenson’s ambiguous and suggestive language to reveal the unspoken code which governs the novel’s queer coterie and serves to minimize Hyde’s visibility, especially considering the ways in which such regulations are articulated through or mediated by urban spaces and architectures.
The narrative juxtaposes the theatre door with other vices, including Utterson’s propensity for gin—a spirit which would have carried definite lower-class associations for the novel’s contemporary readers. During Victoria’s reign, “gin palaces” rose up across unsavory London neighborhoods (later to be replaced by more enduring public houses), becoming known for ostentatious facades that projected an air of decadence in stark opposition to the low nature of the activities housed within. The duplicity of gin palace architecture might be construed as a metaphor not only for the Jekyll/Hyde persona, but also for Utterson’s private vs. public-facing tendencies. That he drinks gin “when he [is] alone, to mortify a taste for vintages” injects a repressive, almost masturbatory\(^{20}\) quality into the act, and the verb “mortify” operates with a double meaning to suggest both embarrassment and death related to alcohol (\(J&H\) 33). “Death,” of course, is the common metaphor for sexual climax in English poetry since at least the Early Modern era,\(^{21}\) suggesting forbidden sensual pleasure tied to the act of drinking—a pleasure with destructive or degenerative possibilities, however (“Death, n11.). Unsurprisingly, \textit{Jekyll and Hyde} has been read as a temperance novel, but such readings tend to ignore the intense and humanizing pleasures which Stevenson’s characters sometimes derive from alcohol and other substances; as Nabokov notes in his classic lecture on \textit{Jekyll and Hyde}: “There is a delightfully winey taste about this book” (Nabokov 9). The novel does not pass simple moral judgment on alcohol nor on homosexuality, but the two are related in Stevenson’s coded rendering of London’s queer professional coterie.


\(^{21}\) See, for example, Benedick in \textit{Much Ado About Nothing} (c. 1598): “I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes” (Shakespeare 5.2.101-102).
Utterson’s reluctance to drink wine as a respectable alternative to gin suggests his willingness to substitute the profane in place of the sacred, for his financial security would not inhibit his access to fine wines nor require him to frequent the low neighborhoods in which gin palaces would have stood among brothels, molly houses, gambling spots, and other disreputable haunts—low neighborhoods like Soho (Weinreb and Hibbert 794), in which Hyde lives upon a “dingy street” in close proximity to a gin palace (J&H 49). However, the text expresses a longing for transgressive experiences among déclassé people and environments, and Utterson finds himself “sometimes wondering, almost with envy, at the high pressure of spirits involved in their misdeeds” (J&H 33). Utterson’s contained homoerotic desire is crucially tied to alcohol and its clear associations with crime, sexual indiscretion, and other forms of sin in the Victorian imagination; paradoxically, then, alcohol becomes linked with both repression and freedom. The narration notes: “when the wine was to [Utterson’s] taste, something eminently human beaconed from his eye; something indeed which never found its way into his talk, but which spoke not only in these silent symbols of the after-dinner face, but more often and loudly in the acts of his life” (J&H 33). This man known to be “cold, scanty and embarrassed in discourse; backward in sentiment” becomes “eminently human” after indulging his taste for wine, suggesting an element of self-chastening in his refusal to partake. This relationship finds a parallel when Jekyll takes the chemical drug that empowers his transition to Hyde, and one might read the sensual pleasure from this substance as evoking oral sex:

There was something strange in my sensations, something indescribably new and, from its very novelty, incredibly sweet. I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a millrace in my fancy, a solution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an
innocent freedom of the soul. I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil; and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine. I stretched out my hands, exulting in the freshness of these sensations; (J&H 78)

Jekyll experiences orgasmic pleasure and feelings of being “younger, lighter, happier in body” that are akin to Utterson’s eminent humanity. His “heady recklessness” and those sensations that “braced and delighted me like wine” strengthen alcohol’s symbolic liberation of the homosexual self, fostering what Jekyll refers to as “an innocent freedom of the soul.” References to “original evil” and to “the first breath of this new life” invoke and rewrite the creation of man in Genesis 2-3, as if to suggest the creation of a new homosexual way of being—one that exists outside of but in relation to Judeo-Christian norms.

Both Utterson and Jekyll/Hyde revel in the “solution of the bonds of obligation” that comes from their substance use, but these sensations are complicated by perceptions of their own wickedness. Jekyll and Utterson—unlike Hyde—are troubled by social mores during their periods of sobriety, and Jekyll fears that he will be trapped in the Hyde persona. Jekyll comes off sounding quite like an addict in the novel’s third chapter when he insists: “‘the moment I choose, I can be free of Mr. Hyde’” (J&H 46), and again when mere sight of the chemical causes Hyde to “utter[] one loud sob of such immense relief” (J&H 73, my emphasis). The echo of Utterson’s name here (“utter”) seems to suggest that the lawyer is in similar danger of sliding too far into sexual or oenophilic indulgence, especially given the verb’s obsolete connotations of revelation or disclosure (“Utter, v1.”). Forms of the word “utter” appear twice elsewhere in the novel: when Utterson and Enfield witness the Jekyll-to-Hyde transformation (“But the words were hardly uttered, before the smile was struck out of his face and succeeded by an expression of such
abject terror and despair, as froze the very blood of the two gentlemen below” [J&H 59, my emphasis]) and when Jekyll describes being usurped by the “inorganic” Hyde (“This was the shocking thing; that the slime of the pit seemed to utter cries and voices; that the amorphous dust gesticulated and sinned; that what was dead, and had no shape, should usurp the offices of life” [J&H 88-89, my emphasis]). In each of these moments, language implicates Utterson in Jekyll/Hyde’s excess, bolstering the conflation of alcohol and homosexuality. The novel’s pervasive fear—and Jekyll/Hyde’s most damning sin—is not of indulging desire for alcohol or desire for homosexual experience, but of becoming defined by his desires and indulgences.

In an essay titled “Epidemics of the Will” from her book Tendencies, Eve Sedgwick tracks a parallel development of the homosexual and the addict as identity categories during the Victorian era, arguing that: “Under the taxonomic pressure of the newly ramified and pervasive medical-juridical authority of the late nineteenth century, and in the context of changing class and imperial relations, what had been a question of acts crystallized into a question of identities” (“Epidemics of the Will” 130). A new pathology emerges that differentiates an act itself and the identity that emerges from a compulsive proclivity toward that act: a man commits sodomy when he has sex with other men, but homosexuality is something more than sodomy; likewise, addiction is something more than the mere act of drinking or opium-eating. Sedgwick paraphrases Foucault’s description of the “invention of the homosexual” from The History of Sexuality to suggest that conceptions of homosexuality/addiction shift from “relative homeostatic stability and control” toward “a narrative of inexorable decline and fatality” in the late nineteenth century, enfolding these developments within a larger narrative of degeneracy in the fin de siècle (“Epidemics of the Will” 130-1). The homosexual and the addict are not only dangerous to themselves, but also have the potential to infect those around them.
Later in the essay, Sedgwick writes: “In *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as in, for instance, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, drug addiction is both a camouflage and an expression for the dynamics of male same-sex desire and its prohibition” (“Epidemics of the Will” 135). Sedgwick oversimplifies Wilde and Stevenson here, but she highlights their shared conflation of homosexuality and substance abuse. Utterson enjoys fine wine, but “mortifies” this desire with déclassé gin, constructing a complicated analogy in which sodomy is to homosexuality as gin is to vintages. This emerges at one of Jekyll’s private dinners, wherein he hosts “five or six old cronies, all intelligent, reputable men, and all judges of good wine” (*J&H* 45). Occasional use of drugs or alcohol might be normal or even acceptable, but abuse is abnormal, transgressive or degenerative; likewise, sodomy might be normal and even acceptable in some circles, but open homosexuality is abnormal, transgressive or degenerative. *Abuse*—of drugs or of men—is linked not only with the abnormal, but also with the *ab*-human in the late-Victorian imagination. Implicit in this pathology is an erosion of choice, for the homosexual and the addict are both compelled toward actions perceived as immoral.

Wine even becomes something of a litmus test in the novel to determine a character’s sexual interests, and thus to discover whether he belongs inside or outside of the novel’s queer coterie. In a moment of profound domestic intimacy, Utterson seeks advice from “his head clerk” Mr. Guest while the two sit before Utterson’s hearth “gay with firelight” (*J&H* 51). The centerpiece of the scene is “a bottle of a particular old wine” resting “midway between them, at a nicely calculated distance from the fire,” which Stevenson describes with sumptuous language and sacralizing imagery:

> In the bottle the acids were long ago resolved; the imperial dye had softened with time, as the colour grows richer in stained windows; and the glow of hot autumn afternoons on
hillside vineyards, was ready to be set free and to disperse the fogs of London. Insensibly the lawyer melted. There was no man from whom he kept fewer secrets than Mr. Guest; and he was not always sure that he kept as many as he meant. (J&H 51, my emphasis) Wine encourages intimacy between the men, and the narrator reveals the great openness and trust Utterson exercises with his clerk. The orgasmic verb “melted” links this incident with Hyde’s sexualized imbibing of the coveted substance in front of Dr. Lanyon: “A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with an open mouth…he seemed to swell—his face became suddenly black and the features seemed to melt” (J&H 74-75, my emphasis). This scene before the hearth is replicated later when Mr. Poole comes to Utterson’s home for assistance; to the lawyer’s great surprise, Poole does not partake of the offered wine, betraying his ignorance of the novel’s queer coterie: “[Utterson] observed with wonder the greatness of the relief that appeared upon the butler’s face, and perhaps with no less, that the wine was still untasted when he set it down” (J&H 60). Poole, as an upper domestic servant, is outside of the circle, whereas Guest, who partakes of the wine, reveals himself to be in, for he is sensitive to the coterie’s particularities of language, behavior, and silence. As “a great student and critic of handwriting,” Guest identifies Hyde’s script as “differently sloped” in relation to Jekyll’s, reminding one of the slang terms “straight” and “bent”22 for heterosexual and homosexual, respectively (J&H 54). Handwriting—as in Jekyll’s holograph will or in the novel’s multitudinous letters—is a marker of identity that emphasizes the erotic potential of the haptic.

22 See Joseph Bristow’s Effeminate England: Homoerotic Writing after 1885 for a discussion of how the coded meanings of words such as “queer,” “bent,” or “homo” evolve differently among various groups: “Cultural transformation in the naming and perception of dissident sexualities, therefore, is certainly uneven in the period I am studying” (Bristow 3). Using “queer” as a primary example, Bristow demonstrates that a word with clear “homophile inflection” for James or Forster “in the 1890s and early 1900s” could be utterly without homosexual undertone for T.C. Worsley in the 1930s (Bristow 3). In accordance with Bristow’s argument, it is entirely possible that words or phrases in Jekyll and Hyde that had clear homosexual suggestion to readers like James, Symonds, or Gosse might have been utterly unremarkable to a general Victorian readership.
Guest’s observations on handwriting draw him into the fray of the novel’s eponymous “Strange Case,” and both Guest and Utterson refer to the situation as “rather quaint” before agreeing never to speak of it again (J&H 54). Poole, notably, will later fail to distinguish between the two scripts (J&H 63).

The “quaintness” of Jekyll/Hyde’s handwriting hearkens back to the novel’s opening paragraph, in which Utterson encapsulates the moral decline at the heart of degeneration through a troubling subscription to “Cain’s heresy”:

“I incline to Cain’s heresy,” he used to say quaintly: “I let my brother go to the devil in his own way.” In this character, it was frequently his fortune to be the last reputable acquaintance and the last good influence in the lives of down-going men. And to such as these, so long as they came about his chambers, he never marked a shade of change in his demeanour. (J&H 33, my emphasis)

A variety of critical interpretations accompany this strange declaration, which is generally understood in relation to Utter son’s failure to interfere appropriately with and to help “down-going” men. Martin Danahay suggests that Cain’s heresy is an unwillingness to take responsibility for one’s actions, as Cain does not admit to Abel’s murder in Genesis 4:9 (J&H 33n), whereas Stephen Arata posits Utterson’s “commitment to silence” as a strategy to “protect [his] own by stifling the spread not of crime or sin but of indecorous talk” (Arata 41), and Richard Dury frames “Cain’s heresy” chiefly as an “inaccurate allusion, since it is Cain not his brother who ‘goes to the devil’ through sin,” thereby revealing the novel’s “provocative

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23 “Quaint” appears once more in the novel in a description of Hyde’s approaching footsteps: “In the course of his nightly patrols, he had long grown accustomed to the quaint effect with which the footfalls of a single person, while he is still a great way off, suddenly spring out distinct from the vast hum and clatter of the city. Yet his attention had never before been so sharply and decisively arrested; and it was with a strong, superstitious prevision of success that he withdrew into the entry of the court” (J&H 41-42, my emphasis).
indifference to citation of the book on which morality is supposed to be based” (Dury 7n). Given a cultural propensity to read otherness onto queer bodies, irony arises from contrasting the mark set upon Cain to make him visible and the unremarkability with which Utterson and Enfield traverse London during their “Sunday walks,” for the men arouse no suspicion and even “hail with obvious relief the appearance of a friend” (J&H 33). Profound uncertainty accompanies Utterson’s relations with “down-going men,” for it is deliberately unclear whether he dissuades such men from fallenness or if his supposed “good influence” accelerates a down-going man’s fall. Relationships with these down-goers depend on a willingness to “c[o]me about his chambers,” ostensibly referring to Uterson’s legal chambers and to legal services rendered, but evocative also of bedchambers, which suggests intimacy and the possibility of discreet sexual encounter (which is to say nothing of sexual innuendo implied by the phrase “down-going”). This bizarre biblical allusion conflicts with an urge to interpret Uterson’s activities in general, as well as his rambles with Enfield (“the chief jewel of each week”), as entirely innocent (J&H 33). A distinct textual problem remains: has Uterson failed in his philanthropy, or was philanthropy never his true aim?

In his historical work *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London*, Seth Koven interrogates charity and other forms of class condescension as pretense for more insidious and sexually motivated desires:

> Was philanthropy a laudable form of self-denial, an expression of deep human impulse to witness and enter sympathetically into the suffering of others in order to diminish it? Or was benevolence merely a cover for egoistic self-gratification, a means imaginatively and

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24 For a related argument, see Oscar Wilde’s “The Soul of Man Under Socialism” (1891): “the people who do most harm are the people who try to do good…such charity degrades and demoralizes…Charity creates a multitude of sins” (“The Soul of Man Under Socialism” 128).
literally to enter otherwise forbidden spaces, places, and conversations, to satisfy otherwise forbidden desires? What was the right relation between serving others and pleasure? Was eros compatible with altruism?” (Koven 14).

Koven illuminates a phenomenon of slumming in London and documents the desire of the upper classes to transgress boundaries and rub elbows with the poorest of London, mainly in the East End. He criticizes philanthropic acts done solely for access to the lower classes, suggesting that “claims to respectability are compromised by their desire and willingness to enter, imaginatively or literally, into the contaminated space” of the slum (Koven 42). Koven analyzes a series of 1866 articles for the *Pall Mall Gazette* titled “A Night in a Workhouse” in which journalist James Greenwood (under the pseudonym “Amateur Casual”) disguised himself as a laborer and spent a night in the Lambeth Workhouse in order to write an exposé in the tradition of Dickens or Mayhew (Koven 26). In the process, Greenwood purports to uncover a cesspool of vice, culminating with the “supposed transformation of the male casual ward of the Lambeth Workhouse into a male brothel” (Koven 26-27). The problem with Greenwood’s charity, according to Koven, is that he “moved beyond the position of observer…to become a participant, one who knows through touch and intimate proximity,” and one contemporary critic insinuated that the article’s intimate descriptions of a “‘lanky boy of about fifteen’ to whom Greenwood is

25 Slumming became so normalized among the wealthy and curious that Baedeker began to include a guide to touring the slums of London’s East End (Koven 1).

26 I have encountered no evidence of Stevenson’s direct familiarity with “A Night in a Workhouse,” but Koven notes the “volcanic impact” that Greenwood’s work had on J.A. Symonds, who wrote in his diary that the articles brought: “the emotional tumour which was gathering within me to maturity” (qtd. in Koven 70). Given the intimate friendship between Symonds and Stevenson, it is possible to imagine that the latter might have gleaned some knowledge of “A Night in a Workhouse.” Lynda Dryden notes Stevenson’s familiarity with another sensationalistic exposé of the day: W.T. Stead’s “The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon” (1885), which “Henley had forwarded…to Stevenson” (Dryden 254-255). Dryden contends that “coincidences” between the sexual abuse depicted in “The Maiden Tribute” and in *Jekyll and Hyde* are “too compelling to ignore (Dryen 255), and Walkowitz highlights significant impact of “The Maiden Tribute” upon passage of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, which enclosed the Labouchère Amendment recriminalizing homosexuality (Walkowitz 82, 103-104).
deeply attracted” could only come from “enjoyable compensation for the night’s discomfort” (Koven 48, 44). Simon Joyce puts forward a similar argument about sinfulness and charity in relation to literature: “Just as attention begins to focus on charity as a potentially ‘criminal’ act (or, at least, one that might ultimately encourage crime), so the wealthy and privileged emerge in late-Victorian fiction as a new class of criminals” (Joyce 164). As Joyce suggests, this is the context from which *Jekyll and Hyde* emerges.

The classed construction of slumming problematizes the saviorhood of those described by Enfield—especially Henry Jekyll—in a phrase laden with critical insincerity as “fellows who do what they call good,” suggesting that those who traverse the slums to engage in charity often desire or even expect (homo)sexual encounter (*J&H* 36). In this context, one might question the sincerity of Jekyll’s being “known for charities” and “distinguished for religion” (*J&H* 55), or of Utterson’s relation to “down-going men,” but both escape reproach within society (*J&H* 33). In the same vein, Enfield’s three a.m. return “from some place at the end of the world” is vexed by the possibility that peregrination through an unsavory neighborhood in the dead of night—alone or with Utterson—might align him with the sins of Hyde (*J&H* 34). Slumming provides a framework through which the mobility of bourgeois professionals can be interpreted in relation to homoerotic desire, and the pretense of altruistic class condescension offers a readily available cover for ulterior motives. After all, who would be likely to question the propriety of an “M.P.” like Sir Danvers Carew or a “well-known man about town” like Enfield cruising London after dark (*J&H* 53, 33)?

Among the novel’s professional class, elite status and a reputation for philanthropy confer the privilege of unquestioned mobility, so long as one does not invite unnecessary

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27 For an example of this dynamic at play, I point to Utterson’s identification of himself upon first meeting Hyde as “‘Mr. Utterson of Gaunt Street’” (*J&H* 42). There was no Gaunt Street in London in 1886,
scrutiny. Accordingly, Joyce argues: “Jekyll emerges as the consummate Victorian hypocrite, who aims to conceal his desires through his standing in the community and the commission of philanthropic deeds, only to find them effectively desublimated in the person of Mr. Hyde” (Joyce 154). The presence of Hyde has an unsettling effect upon both Enfield and Utterson as well, drawing them toward potential scandals that require careful containment. Jane V. Rago suggests that what is threatening about Hyde is his visibility, arguing that violent outbursts make him “perpetually observed” and draw attention both to himself and to the group as a whole (Rago 279). Hyde embodies a “threat of self-implication” that provides “the crux of the narrative structure of the text” (Rago 277); because his indiscretions are more widely known than “the capers of [Jekyll’s or Utterson’s] youth,” association with Hyde threatens to sully their good reputations by inviting unwelcome surveillance that could shine light on past indiscretions (J&H 36). From the first chapter, the novel’s driving force is this desire to contain and control Hyde’s open homosexuality, but Utterson’s famous declaration that “If he be Mr. Hyde, then I shall be Mr. Seek” encapsulates the problem of self-implication outlined by Rago (J&H 41). No matter one’s stated purpose, the desire to seek immorality threatens to implicate one in that very same immorality, just as the desire to view and define queer bodies implicates one in that very same queerness.

Although the novel’s first chapter is titled “The Story of a Door,” it is really the story of very many doors. Stevenson fosters connections between what lies on the other side of Hyde’s “blistered and distained door” and what lies on the other side of theatre doors, gin-palace doors, chamber doors, and, as the chapter progresses, the doors to Enfield’s own home and to Coutt’s bank—not to mention the “door covered with red baize” to Jekyll’s cabinet, which is perhaps the

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but this declaration of address seems to denote Utterson’s upper-class status as if to secure his permission to peregrinate in the London labyrinth in the dead of night (J&H 42).
most important door in the novel (J&H 51). From these early pages, the novel maps a queer, phantasmagoric vision of the city marked by secrecy and containment, akin to what Judith Walkowitz describes as “sexual danger in the dark corners and subterranean spaces of the London Labyrinth” (Walkowitz 122). Jekyll and Hyde’s myriad doors are neither portals nor entryways to homosexual experience, but rather serve as barriers to contain homosexual desire. In the opening chapter, Enfield’s story introduces the novel’s principal agent of homosexuality in Hyde, whose name evokes repression and secrecy (J&H 37). In the telling, Enfield sheds light upon the novel’s shadowy coterie of queer professionals: its movements, priorities, and system of protections. Importantly, Enfield absorbs Hyde into the fold of this coterie as “The Story of a Door” foments the tension between inside and outside—both literal and metaphorical—that is crucial to the novel’s conception of queer community.

Hyde’s act of peculiar violence against a young girl, “trampling calmly over the child’s body and [leaving] her screaming in the streets,” is met not with punishment from the other men, but with protection, as they keep women “wild as harpies” away from him (J&H 35). Referred to as “our friend,” Hyde passes the night in Enfield’s chambers and breakfasts with Enfield, the doctor, and the child’s father in the early morning in what can only be seen as a peculiar scene of

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28 Class plays an important role in the formation of early queer communities, not only for identifying likeness, but also in the exoticization of the lower and upper classes. Aaron Betsky argues that Oscar Wilde’s cruising experiences in London were inflected by class: “Wilde loved both working-class and aristocratic, but not lower-class men” (Betsky 11). The Wilde trials, of course, surrounded an affair with Lord Alfred Douglas, and cross-class relationships are highly visible in other early gay models, such as Maurice Hall’s ultimate attraction to and relationship with servant Alec Scudder in E.M. Forster’s Maurice (Forster 239), the relation of an experience with a male prostitute in J.A. Symonds’s memoirs (“The transition to Davos Platz” 253-255), and even the age/power imbalances of the Oxford pederastic model as analyzed by Linda Dowling in her book Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford. The relationship between Maurice Hall and Alec Scudder in Maurice is based upon the real-life relationship between Forster’s friend Edward Carpenter and his working-class lover, George Merrill, who “made a lasting impression on Forster by touching him ‘on the backside—just above the buttocks’ at Millthorp in 1913 (Bristow 80).
male domesticity\textsuperscript{29} (J\&H 36). Hyde’s sequestration within Enfield’s chambers serves three crucial purposes: 1) to limit Hyde’s menacing visibility to those outside the world of bourgeois professionalism by enclosing him within a contained architectural space, 2) to secure Hyde’s insider status among the novel’s queer professionals through physical proximity and by making him dependent on them to maintain his and Jekyll’s reputations, and 3) to shield potential homosexual activity that may occur among the men during the night. Furthermore, this act of containment mirrors that of Jekyll/Hyde in the cabinet later in the novel, which will be the subject of my next chapter.

The men express disdain for Hyde and his violence, but as in Utterson’s mortification of his desire for wine, death and killing metaphorize sexual gratification: “I knew what was in [the doctor’s] mind, just as he knew what was in mine; and killing being out of the question, we did the next best. We told the man we could and would make such a scandal out of this as should make his name stink from one end of London to the other. If he had any friends or any credit, we undertook that he should lose them” (J\&H 35). There is a homoerotic inflection to this desire to kill, complicated by “the next best” being blackmail rather than legal justice. The men may not be able to have sex with Hyde in this moment, but Enfield does note that they “screwed him up to a hundred pounds for the child’s family” (J\&H 36, my emphasis), amalgamating sexual and financial improprieties with the verb “screw,” which had existed as slang for sexual intercourse since at least the seventeenth century (“Screw, v7.”). In analysis of the novel’s discourse on

\textsuperscript{29} As will be shown more clearly in the following chapter, the novel’s bachelor houses operate against Victorian gender ideology through their conspicuous absence of women. According to an article by Ashleigh Prosser published in the Journal of Stevenson Studies, these bachelor houses “transgressed Victorian society’s dominant understanding of the gendered, spatial ideology of the domestic by supplanting the traditional concept of the feminine domestic home space with the exclusively masculine brotherhood of the ‘gentlemen’s club’, a private domestic space completely outside of the traditional home” (Prosser 112). William Veeder’s seminal study “Children of the Night: Stevenson and Patriarchy” opens with an interrogation of the marginality of women and predominance of bachelor men in the novel (Veeder 107).
blackmail, Wayne Koestenbaum emphasizes a need to interpret as its earliest readers might have in order to fully understand the threat: “the novel's opening pages suggest not that this is a scientifically transgressive story about fantastic chemicals and Faustian transformations, but a socially transgressive story about a Dr. Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde, two men from different social classes, who are involved in a shadowy, illicit relationship that is probably sexual, or at least involves blackmail” (Koestenbaum).30 Utterson and Enfield’s assumption that Hyde has blackmailed Jekyll (“an honest man paying through the nose for some capers of his youth”) appears to be colored by their own hyperawareness of and possible experience with blackmail, and Enfield defines Jekyll’s house accordingly: “Black Mail House is what I call the place with the door, in consequence. Though even that, you know, is far from explaining all” (J&H 36). Hyde, a gentleman himself, immediately recognizes the dangers of “scandal”: “‘If you choose to make capital out of this accident… I am naturally helpless. No gentleman but wishes to avoid a scene… Name your figure’” (J&H 36).

In Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle, Elaine Showalter forges a clear connection among homosexuality, the phrase “Black Mail House,” and the practice of blackmail, arguing: “For contemporary readers of Stevenson’s novel, moreover, the term ‘blackmail’ would have immediately suggested homosexual liaisons” (Showalter 112). Showalter’s argument hearkens to Eve Sedgwick’s suggestion in Between Men that the public strength of nineteenth-century homophobia derived from the threat of “blackmailability,” which was invigorated by passage of the Labouchère Amendment in 1885 (“Toward the Gothic” 89). Likewise, Joseph Bristow writes that the amendment became known as the “Blackmailer’s

30 As noted in my “Works Cited,” Koestenbaum’s article “The Shadow on the Bed: Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, and the Labouchère Amendment” originally appeared on pages 35 to 55 of a 1988 issue of Critical Matrix. However, the version of the article that I have accessed through an online database lacks appropriate pagination, so in-text citations do not denote page numbers.
Charter” almost “as soon as it went on the statute book” (Bristow 1), and the poet, philosopher, and early gay rights activist Edward Carpenter argues in his 1908 work *The Intermediate Sex:*

“[the Labouchère Amendment] has opened wider than ever before the door to a real, most serious social evil and crime—that of blackmailing” (Carpenter 74). In the context of *Jekyll and Hyde,* blackmail among gay men functions as a primary strategy of containment, ensuring their “commitment to silence” to stifle the spread of “indecorous talk” (Arata 41). When Utterson asks why Enfield did not press Hyde further for information, Enfield responds that he was preserving “‘a delicacy,’” pronouncing: “‘I make it a rule of mine: the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask’” (J&H 37). Utterson endorses this reticence (“‘A very good rule, too’”), and the men agree “‘never to refer to this again’” (J&H 38). Koestenbaum argues that “Homosexuality and language [in the novel] are inversely proportional: the queerer the desire, the less the novel's male narrators will say about it” (Koestenbaum). The popular phrase “Queer Street” ostensibly referred to financial difficulty or to bankruptcy (Martin), and although “queer” cannot be read as synonymous with “homosexual” until the 1920s, Koestenbaum suggests that both “faggot” and “queer”31 already “coruscate with meanings that they cannot yet boldly claim” in the minds of Stevenson’s late-Victorian readership (Koestenbaum).

As Enfield’s tale draws to its close, the bourgeois men travel “in a body to the bank,” symbolizing that they have merged into one, as if to embody the “polity of multifarious, incongruous and independent denizens” that Jekyll describes later in the text (J&H 36, 76). Unlike servants such as Poole and lower-middle-class professionals such as the aptly named Inspector Newcomen, Hyde is incorporated into the fold out of necessity, becoming intimately linked to the novel’s central male characters. In *Nostalgia and Recollection in Victorian Culture*,

31 “Queer” appears on pages 39 and 64 of the novel, while “faggots” appears on 77.
Ann Colley considers the myriad ways in which the child in Stevenson’s *A Child’s Garden of Verses* “identifies with other children” to become part of an “ubiquitous body” (Colley 136, 125). This ubiquity of the body is the norm throughout much of *Jekyll and Hyde*, not only in the complicated Jekyll/Hyde relationship. Merely seeing Hyde causes Utterson to reflect on “the many ill things he had done” (*J&H* 45), and witnessing the Hyde-to-Jekyll transformation both “fr[eezes] the very blood” of Utterson and of Enfield and sets in motion the death “in less than a fortnight” of Dr. Lanyon (*J&H* 59, 57). One might also identify bodily ubiquity in the mass of fearful servants “huddled together like a flock of sheep” around Jekyll’s hearth (*J&H* 60), or in the hellish image of beetles “leaping on the floor” in Jekyll’s “great kitchen” (*J&H* 61). As I shall demonstrate in my final chapter, however, this ubiquity becomes fragmented by Jekyll/Hyde’s containment within the cabinet.

The novel’s central anxiety is not that homosexual desire and activity exist, but rather that they will come violently to light when inadequately contained, leading to the ruin of bourgeois professionals such as occurs through the sexually charged violence of “The Carew Murder Case” (*J&H* 47-50). Hyde’s brutal killing of the upper-class gentleman Sir Danvers Carew can be interpreted as an act of rape in which a cane “of some rare and tough and very heavy wood” operates as a displaced phallus used to commit the assault (*J&H* 48). Carew is another “friend and client” of Utterson (*J&H* 53), suggesting his imbrication within the novel’s queer coterie, and he is feminized by descriptions of him as “beautiful” and “very pretty” that emphasize his “white hair” (*J&H* 47). That the murder occurs on the street in the dead of night insinuates that Carew himself may have been cruising for some lascivious activity when he “bowed and accosted” Mr. Hyde (*J&H* 47), and William Veeder observes that “Stevenson’s verb ‘accosted’…can mean to assault as well as to greet and to proposition” (Veeder 127). Suggestion
that Carew may have propositioned Hyde further implicates him in the novel’s homoeroticism and highlights the hypocrisy of British laws on homosexuality by incriminating someone in the “high position” of an M.P. (J&H 47). In Stevenson’s Notebook Draft of Jekyll and Hyde, the character of Sir Danvers Carew is replaced by the “young, weak characterized Mr. Lemsome” (Dury xxii). Accounts of the novel’s inception between August and October 1885 differ greatly; Lloyd Osbourne contends that the first draft was written in only three days (perhaps under the influence of cocaine to treat respiratory problems) (McLynn 254), while Stevenson wrote to F.W.H. Myers in March 1886 that “Jekyll was conceived, written, rewritten, re-rewritten, and printed inside ten weeks” (qtd. in McLynn 254), and Dury maintains that it was composed in six weeks (Dury xix). Regardless, the final draft of the novel was sent to publisher “on or just before October 28 [1885]” and was published in January 1886 (Dury xxii). This timeline firmly entrenches the novel within a crucial moment in the history of homosexuality in England: the passage of the Labouchère Amendment on 15 August 1885 and its implementation in January 1886—the very month of Jekyll and Hyde’s release. Somewhere along this timeline, Stevenson made the crucial substitution of Mr. Lemsome with Sir Danvers Carew. Delayed revelation that Carew was an M.P. disrupts the law’s hegemonic power (represented in another key by Utterson), and I suggest that Hyde’s assault on Carew represents a vicious rebellion against Parliament’s crackdown on homosexuality.

The Carew murder is the incident that makes Hyde wholly detestable to the novel’s queer coterie, for he turns his “singular ferocity” against the group itself, putting each of them at risk by becoming not only visible but notorious (J&H 47). Carew’s solicitation casts the street as a cruising space,32 but Hyde eschews this dance of gestures and non-verbal communication to

32 Aaron Betsky describes “the space of cruising” by the complex network of locations, individuals, and gestures that make ephemeral gay connections possible (Betsky 142). He maintains that cruising usually
create a spectacle of violent sexuality. In his notorious visibility, Hyde might be read alongside the dandy—a figure invoked by some of the novel’s early cover art (see figure two). Oscar Wilde brought new homoerotic significance to the long-standing figure of the dandy in the *fin de siècle*, and Aaron Betsky suggests that Wilde “articulated a space for what now is called homosexuality” through his “expression of a newly free individual who lived in a world not of sordid reality, but only of appearances” (Betsky 79). The dandy’s bodily exterior becomes artifice—not unlike architectural façade—to be decorated and adorned with fine clothes, jewelry, canes, top hats, and other flamboyant articles. According to Richard Dellamora, the dandy is “too relaxed, too visible”; he “consumes to excess while producing little or nothing” (Dellamora 198, 199). Unlike bourgeois professionals in the novel, Hyde does not work, producing nothing but his own sexuality and reputation. Both dandyism and unemployment are inflected by effeminacy in the Victorian age, and Seth Koven identifies a “widespread belief that unemployment unsexed a man” (Koven 72). There is a distinct element of performativity to Hyde’s dandyism that demands an audience and makes him difficult to contain, and his dandyism might be read as an act of falsity and performance that dovetails accusations of forgery against him. Halberstam identifies the dandy as a “Gothic monster…marked by its desire to be noticed” and embodying “the threat of idleness and a delinquent femininity” (Halberstam 62). Halberstam argues: “He represents too much and too little, excess and paucity. The dandy represents the parasitical aristocrat and the upwardly mobile bourgeois. He obviously also represents the homosexual

takes place at night and in labyrinthine spaces devoid of functionality or productivity: “parks, the places we reserve as respite from urban reality within the city itself, or cracks within the fabric [of the city] itself, such as dark alleys or unused buildings” (Betsky 147-148).

To varying extents, other characters in the novel exhibit aversions to work. Utterson and Enfield “even resisted the calls of business” during their Sunday walks in order “that they might enjoy them uninterrupted” (*J&H* 34), and Utterson misses work during peaks (“at noon when business was plenty and time scarce”) in order to wait by the laboratory door in hopes of meeting Hyde (*J&H* 41).
male” (Halberstam 62-63). Hyde embodies the kind of dandyish visibility that would define and stereotype gay men after the Wilde trials. Detectability makes him vulnerable to judgment from those outside the novel’s queer coterie.

The presence of a “romantically given” maid to witness the Carew murder has a bifurcating effect on the reader’s experience and the interpretation of the characters within the scene, for we view the murder both from the perspective of curiosity that has been cultivated by Utterson and from the maid’s perspective of moral outrage (J&H 47). Her elevated view from an enclosed architectural space implies security and a moral superiority that may align her with

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34 Alan Sinfield argues in The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde, and the Queer Moment that effeminacy, dandyism, and aestheticism were not clearly associated with same-sex desire until after the Wilde trials: “To be sure, the aesthete was regarded as effeminate—but not, so far as I can see, as distinctively homosexual. That was lurking in potential; for some people it was more; but excessive concern with women was still the mainspring” (Sinfield 90). As with words like “queer,” “bent,” and “faggot,” the dandy seems to “coruscate with meanings that [it] cannot yet boldly claim” (Koestenbaum)
Stevenson’s beloved childhood nurse Alison Cunningham (“Cummy”), whom he refers to in verse as “My second mother, my first wife, / The angel of my infant life” (“To Alison Cunningham” 9-10). The maid’s perspective is reminiscent of Stevenson’s recollection from childhood of staring out the sickroom window with Cummy:

hours together she would help console me in my paroxysms; and I can remember with particular distinctness how she would lift me out of bed and take me, rolled in blankets, to the window, whence I might look forth into the blue night, starred with street lamps and see where the gas still burned behind the windows of other sickrooms…where also, we told each other, there might be other sick little boys and their nurses waiting, like us, for the morning. (qtd. in McLynn 14)

This fondly remembered image may suffuse Stevenson’s depiction of the “romantically given” maid, which might also imbue her with Cummy’s singular Calvinism. In summarizing the influence of Cummy’s fervent religiosity on the young writer, McLynn writes: “RLS was therefore someone who ‘knew the worst too young’ because of a system (Calvinism) that saw no difference between the worst and the moderately bad” (McLynn 262). Cummy read the entire bible to Stevenson “three or four times,” and her moralistic stories of “hell-fire and the noonday demon…ghosts, body-snatchers, and Covenanters” haunted a young RLS and infuse his literary output. Through this oblique reference to the childhood nurse, Jekyll and Hyde brings morality to the forefront, interjecting Cummy’s Calvinistic judgment as a reminder of the ever-present threat of eternal damnation.

This scene of moralizing disapproval is reversed in “Incident at the Window” when Utterson and Enfield call up to the “disconsolate prisoner” Henry Jekyll through a window in his cabinet (J&H 58). Shortly after exchanging pleasantries, Jekyll undergoes an involuntary
transformation to become Hyde: “But the words were hardly uttered, before the smile was struck out of his face and succeeded by an expression of such abject terror and despair, as froze the very blood of the two gentlemen below. They saw it but for a glimpse for the window was instantly thrust down; but that glimpse had been sufficient, and they turned and left the court without a word” (J&H 59). In this scene, judgment is cast from the outside looking in (as well as upward), and the silence maintained by Enfield and Utterson “until they had come into a neighbouring thoroughfare” suggests Jekyll’s newfound exclusion from the queer coterie (J&H 59). As transformations become sporadic and Hyde overpowers the composite being, Jekyll cannot leave the sanctuary of his cabinet, for enclosure there has become his sole method of containment. He cannot accept visitors (shifting blame onto the architecture itself: “the place is really not fit”), and Jekyll/Hyde loses access to the entire London labyrinth with its cruising spaces, homosocial opportunities, and other homoerotic pleasures. Utterson and Enfield regard whatever they see through the window as unspeakable, but it seems to implicate them both: “‘God forgive us, God forgive us,’ said Mr. Utterson.” (J&H 59).
Chapter Three: An Englishman’s Home Is His Psyche

There, safe arrived, we turn about
To keep the coming shadows out,
And close the happy door at last
On all the perils that we past.

–“Northwest Passage” (33-36)

The proverbial expression “an Englishman’s home is his castle” reflects the enduring primacy of home, hearth, and domesticity in the English cultural and literary imagination—a doctrine which arguably reaches its apex in the Victorian era and its fiction. Memorable homes abound in nineteenth-century fiction; Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange in Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Thornfield Hall in Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847), the Small House and the Great House in Anthony Trollope’s *The Small House at Allington* (1864), and Gardencourt in Henry James’s *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) are but a few prominent examples. Likewise, ideals of the English country home reverberate among modernists and into the present: Howards End in E.M. Forster’s *Howards End* (1910), Pointz Hall in Virginia Woolf’s *Between the Acts* (1941), Darlington Hall in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *The Remains of the Day* (1989), and Downton Abbey in Julian Fellowes’s *Downton Abbey* (series 2010-2015; film 2019). Each of these rural homes—ranging from an ancient yeoman farmer’s house to the palatial estate of the Earl of Grantham—come to typify some form or ideal of Englishness through their very existence, and the home metonymizes Englishness up to the present moment.

The proverb is adapted from a line in Sir Edward Coke’s 1644 legal treatise *The Third Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England*, which states: “For a man's house is his castle, et domus sua cuique est tutissimum refugium [and each man's home is his safest refuge]” (Coke 161). Coke’s vision of the home is driven by a concern for safety, comfort, and security; the
home as “refuge” highlights tensions between public and private spaces, while the aggrandizing use of the word “castle” evokes a luxurious sense of grandeur and physical strength, as well as a kind of English nationalism linked to the crown. In a speech against the Cider Bill of 1763, William Pitt adopts a similar philosophy of the English home with his famous declaration: “The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the Crown. It may be frail—its roof may shake—the wind may blow through it—the storm may enter—the rain may enter—but the King of England cannot enter!” (“William Pitt, Earl of Chatham”). According to Pitt, every home is a castle, each accorded protection and equality under English law.

Pitt reveals a sense of permanence and stability that would carry forth to influence “great Victorian men” such as John Ruskin and Thomas Carlyle. In “The Lamp of Memory” from his seminal architectural treatise *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Ruskin offers permanence as a central tenet of domestic architecture, arguing that Englishmen should “buil[d] [homes] to stand as long as human work at its strongest can be hoped to stand; recording to their children what they had been, and from what, if so it had been permitted them, they had risen” (“The Lamp of Memory” 167). For Ruskin, the home embodies and transmits memory in a distinctly patriarchal fashion, and remembrances of former inhabitants become literally embedded in the walls. In the fourth stanza of “My Own Four Walls,” which has been described by biographer James Anthony Froude as “the only poem, perhaps…which is really characteristic of him,” Thomas Carlyle celebrates the simple comforts of domesticity:

A home and wife I too have got,
A hearth to blaze whate'er befals!

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35 The Cider Bill of 1763 (also referred to as the Cider Excise) was introduced by Sir Francis Dashwood as a tax on all cider production in Britain. Its significant opposition from cider producers and from those opposed to the growing power of excise commissioners has sometimes been compared to the American colonists’ reaction to the Stamp Act of 1765. The tax was reduced by half in 1764 and repealed in 1766—but not before causing significant fracturing among members of the Whig party (“The Cider Excise, 1763-8”).
What needs a man that I have not
Within my own four walls? (Carlyle 9-12)

In this undated poem (probably written around 1825), Carlyle celebrates domestic and conjugal felicity, disavowing desire for anything outside of the core symbols of Englishness. Yet again, the home emerges as a safe haven—a pillar of identity, morality, privacy, safety, and masculinity. The masculine gendering is distinctly Carlylean, however, and hearkens back to the proverb “an Englishman’s home is his castle.” More generally, the Victorian domestic ideology of “separate spheres” held up the home as a feminine space in which “love and charity replac[ed] the commerce and capitalism of the outside world” (Flanders 6). Accordingly, it was believed that men could take refuge in and become restored by the domestic feminine.

Walter E. Houghton writes in his germinal book The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870: “[the Victorian home] was both a shelter from the anxieties of modern life, a place of peace where the longings of the soul might be realized (if not in fact, in imagination), and a shelter for those moral and spiritual values which the commercial spirit and the critical spirit were threatening to destroy, and therefore also a sacred place, a temple” (Houghton 343, emphasis in original). He suggests that an idyllic conception of the Victorian home is born from “nostalgia” for the security and comfort of childhood: “The home became a place where one had been at peace and childhood a blessed time when truth was certain and doubt with its divisive effects unknown” (Houghton 344, emphasis in original). This conceptualization of the English home bears a religiously inflected longing for return to unity, safety, and perfection; in other words, to Eden. Each of the homes cited earlier in this section\(^\text{36}\) boasts a bucolic, almost

\(^{36}\) Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* subverts expectations of the Edenic by sacralizing the ancient yeoman farmer’s home, Wuthering Heights, over Thrushcross Grange, the more familiar home of landed gentry. Brontë offers a vision of Eden that is distinct to Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff. The Gothic-inflected *Wuthering Heights* enfolds cruelty and abuse for both characters (as well as others), but the rugged natural beauty of the moors amid the West Riding of Yorkshire creates a sacred space for Catherine and Heathcliff.
prelapsarian rural setting aligned with Eden. In an article titled “Houses and Home in Thomas Hardy,” Donald D. Stone describes what he calls the Victorian “home epic,” with Dickens’s *Great Expectations* (1860), Eliot’s *Middlemarch* (1872), and Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847) as primary examples. In Stone’s analysis, the “home epic” is inflected not only by the home as a locus of action but, more importantly, as a locus for desire; such novels pick up “where exile from Eden leaves off” in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667) with the “image of loving couples, hand in hand, heading homeward” (Stone 293). Like Adam and Eve in the ambivalent conclusion to Milton’s Christian epic, the Victorian novel is marked by an acute longing for the idealized home, replete with the comfort and sanctity of Eden, as well as the strength and protection of a castle.

*Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* introduces the reader to a number of proverbial castles belonging to the novel’s bachelor men: Utterson’s hearth, Lanyon’s parlor, Jekyll’s home, and Hyde’s residence in Soho. However, *Jekyll and Hyde* is a novel without the possibility of Eden—an allegory of male fallenness without the potential for redemption central to contemporary fallen woman narratives: the idyllic pastures of Talbothays dairy in Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* (1891) or the return to Woodview at the conclusion of George Moore’s *Esther Waters* (1894). Biographer Frank McLynn suggests that “Eden as an illusion” is a “typically Stevensonian theme,” and Stevenson does depict or imagine Eden, he does so through recollection, thus making Paradise unattainable in reality (McLynn 223). In “Farewell to the Farm,” a bittersweet poem about the end of childhood from *A Child’s Garden of Verses*, the speaker envisions Paradise as his rural childhood home: “To house and garden, field and lawn, /
The meadow-gates we swang upon, / To pump and stable, tree and swing, / Good-bye, good-bye, to everything!” ("Farewell to the Farm” 5-8). By contrast, Eden is profaned at Jekyll’s estate through the decay of “a yard which had once been a garden,” which the narration insinuates has declined under Jekyll’s ownership (J&H 51). This chapter will argue that Jekyll and Hyde’s intensely urban setting, architectural intricacy, and inversion of domestic ideals combine to foment a darker, more complex vision of the home that reflects fragmented psyches and contributes toward the containment of homosexual desire.

Depictions of house and home in Jekyll and Hyde function entirely apart from those commonly found in the Victorian novel, owing partly to “the tradition of the Gothic novel which associates the labyrinthine building with the mind of its perverse or degenerate inhabitant” (Dury xxxiv). The fallenness ascribed to professional men throughout the novel is frequently articulated through an architectural fallenness unique to the novel’s fin de siècle London setting. Take, for example, the depiction of Dr. Jekyll’s house and its situation in a “shady” neighborhood:

Round the corner from the by-street, there was a square of ancient, handsome houses, now for the most part decayed from their high estate and let in flats and chambers to all sorts and conditions of men; map-engravers, architects, shady lawyers and the agents of obscure enterprises. One house, however, second from the corner, was still occupied entire; and at the door of this, which wore a great air of wealth and comfort, though it was now plunged in darkness except for the fanlight, Mr. Utterson stopped and knocked. A well-dressed, elderly servant opened the door.

“Is Dr. Jekyll at home, Poole?” asked the lawyer. (J&H 43-44) Although Jekyll’s house itself is stately, giving off “a great air of wealth and comfort,” he resides in what is clearly a declining neighborhood; “handsome houses” are divided into apartment-style
arrangements for “all sorts and conditions of men,” implying fallenness of both the houses and their occupants. The fractured dwellings in Jekyll’s neighborhood problematize constructions of the home offered by Ruskin, Carlyle, and Coke, for the concept of a flat lies in fundamental opposition to the private ideal of an Englishman’s castle. In *Apartment Stories*, Sharon Marcus explores the parallel developments of urban housing in nineteenth-century London and Paris, employing literary and historical analysis to compare architectural ideals with their actualization. Citing an 1878 lecture by architect William H. White (“On Middle-Class Houses in Paris and Central London”), Marcus suggests that London’s insistence on the single-family home became “a demographic and economic impossibility in an increasingly dense metropolis,” leaving a booming urban population with a shortage of affordable single-family homes and a marked lack of communal living spaces (Marcus 94). The inevitable result was the subdivision of existing houses into individual and family lodgings, which were seen as “exemplars of urban dirt, disease, crowding, and promiscuity” (Marcus 104).

Marcus argues that the single-family home was meant to offer refuge from the “obscurity, terror, power” of the Victorian city (Marcus 87), which is consonant with Ruskin’s assertion in “Of Queens’ Gardens” (collected alongside “Of Kings’ Treasuries” in *Sesame and Lilies* [1865]) that neither “terror, doubt, and division” nor the “anxieties of outer life” should be allowed to penetrate the home (*Sesame and Lilies*). Could one imagine a less apt description for Henry

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38 White refutes contemporary critics of apartment-style living—who insisted that the Parisian model eroded privacy by promoting the intermingling of families—by pointing out that the subdivision of homes originally built for single families necessitated the sharing of common spaces (kitchens, washrooms, etc.), thus leading to far greater intermingling than would occur in a proper apartment building (Marcus 85).

39 *Sesame and Lilies* has been held significantly responsible for the proliferation of the misogynistic “separate spheres” ideology of Victorian life. In her introduction to a recent edition of Ruskin’s text, Deborah Epstein Nord complicates facile dismissal of Ruskin’s domestic gender ideology by highlighting internal contradictions and considering what they might have meant to Victorians. She writes that the “unequivocal message” of the text involves “undeniable condescension toward women on the one hand and the incitement to female seriousness and diligence on the other” (Nord xvii). Nord certainly acknowledges that Ruskin’s work is founded upon misogynistic beliefs, but she contends that his beliefs are more complicated than reductionist
Jekyll’s home than a place free from “terror, doubt, and division?” The houses in Jekyll and Hyde emerge from the fallenness of domestic architecture and ideals that Marcus describes as emblematic of London’s in the fin de siècle, and Stevenson’s urban novel challenges the possibilities of English homes and of Englishness itself by operating outside of the Victorian era’s idealized conceptions.

Jekyll’s house stands alone as the only dwelling on the square “still occupied entire,” evincing an impression of grandeur and respectability amid an environment marked by decay. However, a close study of this house’s uncanny structures and confused interiors will reveal its own fragmentation, and the house becomes a reflection of Henry Jekyll’s complicated sexual identity and efforts toward containment (J&H 43). There is something almost performative about this noble façade standing amid decay that reminds one of the gin palace’s deceptive exterior, and the fact that the house “wore a great air of wealth and comfort” and is “plunged in darkness except for the fanlight” betrays an initial note of falsity or duplicitousness that will only become heightened within (J&H 43, my emphasis). By contrast, Hyde’s laboratory door, with its “blind forehead of discolored wall” bearing “the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence,” seems at home among its surroundings (J&H 34). The doorway merges with the “florid charms” of the “by-street a busy corner of London,” becoming a refuge for the “ravages” of random visitors including “tramps” and “children” (J&H 34). The laboratory’s façade embraces the fallenness of its environment, while the façade of the house itself pretends to superiority.

summaries often suggest and that women gained significant new freedoms and respect. In addition, work by contemporary scholars of Victorian masculinities such as James Eli Adams, John Tosh, and Ed Cohen has done much to erode the perceived stability of the Victorian home and of the separate spheres doctrine, which, according to Tosh in A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England: “has been more dogmatically asserted by modern scholars than it ever was by the Victorians themselves” (Tosh 77).
As several critics have noted, this duality of the house’s exterior seems to embody the Jekyll/Hyde relationship, constructing a tension between the house’s front- and rear-facing façades that serves effectively to underscore the public v. private tendencies of Jekyll/Hyde. In his classic lecture on the novel at Cornell University, Vladimir Nabokov argues: “Just as Jekyll is a mixture of good and bad, so Jekyll’s dwelling place is a mixture, a very neat symbol, a very neat representation of the Jekyll and Hyde relationship” (Nabokov 14). Nabokov’s popular reading is astute and a useful launching point from which to consider the novel’s central domestic architectures, but its greatest shortcoming is the neatness upon which it insists. Even if the exterior distinctions between Jekyll and Hyde appear to be clear, something much more muddled exists within.

Both Richard Dury and Elaine Showalter push the symbolism of these exteriors further to suggest that the backdoor “could be associated with the anus, the part of the body that is denied” (Dury xxxvi). Showalter goes one step further with a more overtly homosexual reading that offers a clear suggestion of anal sex: “Jekyll’s house, with its two entrances, is the most vivid representation of the male body. Hyde always enters through the blistered back door, which, in Stevenson’s words, is ‘equipped with neither bell nor knocker’ and which bears the ‘marks of prolonged and sordid negligence’” (Showalter 113). Elsewhere in the novel, Enfield heightens this sexual innuendo by proclaiming to Utterson: “‘what an ass you must have thought me, not to know that this was a backway to Dr. Jekyll’s!’” (J&H 58, my emphasis). In Enfield’s grammatical construction, “backway” is an implied reference to the rear entrance to Jekyll’s home; however, the ambiguity of the possessive “Jekyll’s” with no explicit object leaves open alternative possibilities, such as that Enfield may be referencing a “backway” to Jekyll’s body itself (i.e. the anus). Furthermore, the OED recognizes “ass” as referring to “a person's buttocks;
the bottom, the backside. Also: the anus; the rectum” as early as 1672 ("Ass, n.2."). Given the primacy of dreams as a source of inspiration for Stevenson’s fiction, this anal imagery brings to mind Freud’s suggestion in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (published in the German *Die Traumdeutung* in 1900; first translated into English in 1913) that “every door suggests a bodily aperture” and that “penetration into narrow spaces and the opening of locked doors are among the commonest of sexual symbols” sometimes to represent “coition from behind” (Freud). If the front entrance represents the façade that Jekyll/Hyde puts out to the world for respectability’s sake, then this back doorway might be understood as the rear end put out to the world for sexual gratification.

The third door of interest at Jekyll’s estate—and perhaps the most important—lies at the top of a staircase and separates the old surgical theatre (now Jekyll’s laboratory) from his private cabinet (*J&H* 51). This cabinet is not only the central room of Jekyll’s house, but it is also, in many ways, the center point of the novel; the entirety of the plot moves toward the revelation of Henry Jekyll’s doings and the nature of his relationship to Hyde, which can only become known after Utterson and Poole have violently forced their way beyond this “red baize door”—the metaphorical beating heart of Jekyll’s house and of the novel itself (*J&H* 66). In “The Last Night,” which is the final traditionally narrated chapter of the novel before the documentary conclusion formed by “Dr. Lanyon’s Narrative” and “Henry Jekyll’s Full Statement of the Case,” the narrative follows Utterson and Poole’s movement gradually toward this mysterious door: through the front entrance, past the hearth surrounded by fearful servants, across the theatre, and up the stairs to the blood-soaked and sexualized red portal. This door and the cabinet itself represent the locus of mystery and anxiety throughout the chapter and, later, the site of

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40 The dream under analysis in this quoted section is about a man’s sexual desire for woman, but the principle of doors representing “bodily aperture[s]” might just as easily be applied to male homosex (Freud).
revelation. It is here that Utterson and Poole uncover Hyde’s dead body and find an envelope containing three crucially important documents: Jekyll’s updated will, his instructions to Utterson, and the “considerable packet sealed in several places” that contains Jekyll’s final testimony (J&H 69).

Stevenson writes like an architect, and Jekyll’s house is carefully conceived and depicted in such a way that even allows it to be mapped—it is a structure as overdetermined as the narrative itself. As a point of reference for the basic structure of the house, I turn to Richard Dury’s simplified diagram from his introduction to the Edinburgh UP centennial edition of *Jekyll and Hyde* (see below). Dury depicts the building as a series of concentric squares “around a mysterious centre” embodied by the cabinet, not entirely unlike the structure of Dante’s Inferno.

![Diagram of Dr. Jekyll’s home](image)

*Figure 4. Diagram of Dr. Jekyll’s home*

(Dury xxxv). I have suggested throughout this chapter that the architecture of Jekyll’s home is deeply imbricated with his psyche, and it is crucial to clarify my meaning before going further.
Dury suggests that the cabinet “clearly symbolises the most primitive, instinctive, and hidden part of [Jekyll’s] mind, and contains Hyde” in a reading that privileges Victorian repression and suggests that Jekyll’s cabinet holds and will reveal the darkest recesses of the doctor’s mind (Dury xxxv). Indeed, *Jekyll and Hyde* has frequently been read as a narrative of Victorian repression—and especially of (homo)sexual repression; however, my reading is somewhat more aligned with that offered by Richard T. Gaughan in his 1987 article “Mr. Hyde and Mr. Seek: Utterson’s Antidote.” According to Gaughan, Jekyll exhibits a “desire to dominate the ways others see him and the ways he sees himself,” so he attempts to create “a number of pure selves, all neatly compartmentalized, all with their own apartments and checking accounts” (Gaughan 184, 186). Gaughan’s reading asserts that “Hyde is not the product of repression” but rather “the embodiment or exertion of a physical will” (Gaughan 194). His being makes incorporate feelings or desires that already existed “in dead earnest” within Henry Jekyll, now chemically concentrated and “housed in separate identities” (*J&H* 76, 77). Like Gaughan, I avoid the word “repression” to describe Jekyll’s objective, and I prefer the word “containment” for its connotations of control or mastery rather than suppression. However, we diverge at my more decisive suggestion that what Jekyll seeks to concentrate and contain within Hyde is his own homoerotic impulse. I suggest that the creation of Hyde represents an attempt by Jekyll to isolate that part of his identity which is most transgressive by Victorian standards, thereby affording

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41 Gaughan interprets Jekyll as “far closer to being evil, in its most ordinary and consequently most potent form, than his alterego, Hyde” (Gaughan 184). I am less interested in this element of his reading than in how he understands the mechanics and intention of Jekyll’s transformations to Hyde as an attempt to distil a pure version of his fragmented self onto another form. In my interpretation, Hyde is created as a homosexual version of Jekyll within which the doctor might contain/control homoerotic desire rather than repress it. I am, however, puzzled by Gaughan’s “number of pure selves” theory (Gaughan 186), for Jekyll admits in his “Full Statement” that he believes himself to be composed of only two: “man is not truly one, but truly two. I say two, because the state of my own knowledge does not pass beyond that point” (*J&H* 76).
himself greater control over, to borrow from Gaughan, “the ways others see him and the ways he sees himself” (Gaughan 184).

The space in which this experiment is primarily attempted (and the space to which Jekyll retreats after it ultimately goes awry) is the doctor’s cabinet: the house’s most concentrated and contained space. To borrow Halberstam’s language, Jekyll and Hyde is marked less “by its fear of the other” than by its “paranoid terror of involution or the unraveling of a multiformed ego” (Halberstam 55), or according to Ronald R. Thomas, by a character’s “sudden disintegration” rather than by the more common narrative of “integration” (Thomas 75). In the infant stages of his experiments, Jekyll takes pleasure in the prospect of leaving the cabinet as Hyde: “I determined, flushed as I was with hope and triumph, to venture in my new shape as far as to my bedroom” (J&H 78). However, from the moment of his first involuntary transformation (during which he “had gone to bed Henry Jekyll” and “awakened Edward Hyde” [J&H 82]), the doctor feels himself “losing hold of my original and better self, and becoming slowly incorporated with my second and worse” (J&H 83). To frame this process in the context of sexual identity, I would suggest that the nascent involuntariness of Jekyll’s transformations to Hyde are akin to limited sodomous activity becoming homosexuality—a movement from actions to identity. In his efforts to contain these compulsions that have “[shaken] the very fortress of identity,” Jekyll makes the cabinet itself into the fortress of his own identity, sheltering himself within its walls to minimize his visibility to the outside world and to safeguard his own reputation (J&H 77). During initial periods of reprieve, he attempts “to redeem the past” through charity (J&H 85), but Hyde always returns, stronger and reinvigorated from his captivity: “My devil had been long caged, he came out roaring” (J&H 84). The cabinet is the refuge to which Jekyll/Hyde flees for safety. Upon returning to this room after the Carew murder, a newly restored Jekyll expresses tremendous
relief: “I was once more at home…gratitude for my escape shone so strong in my soul that it almost rivalled the brightness of hope” (J&H 88). By the narrative’s close, Jekyll/Hyde refuses to leave the cabinet at all, taking his meals in seclusion and hurling crumpled notes with chemical orders at his servants (J&H 62). Just as Jekyll “lay caged in Hyde’s flesh,” so Jekyll/Hyde becomes caged within the cabinet (J&H 89), which Jekyll describes as “my last earthly refuge” (J&H 90). As Henry Jekyll’s statement draws to a close, the doctor resigns himself to becoming fully Hyde, and the cabinet takes on purgatorial resonance when Jekyll/Hyde—“weeping” like a “lost soul”—begs Utterson for “mercy” and awaits death (J&H 65, 66).

The novel’s strategy of containment is symbolically reiterated throughout the narrative, with the cabinet as but the most prominent in a series of enclosures that mirror the relationship of Jekyll to Hyde. The urban landscape mirrors the compartmentalization of the domestic space, for the entire narrative (apart from a brief sojourn to Hyde’s residence in Soho) unfolds within a relatively small pocket of the West End. It is almost as if the city itself means to contain the spread of homosexual activity and other supposed vices. *Jekyll and Hyde* gives the feeling of a peripatetic novel through the mobility of its character, but their movements remain confined to a limited region of the city. The other dominant image for enclosure is that of envelopes and safes; there is the holograph will removed from the safe in Utterson’s office at the novel’s outset (J&H 38), the letter from Jekyll which Utterson keeps from Inspector Newcomen and conceals in the safe of his office after the Carew murder (J&H 54); the letters enclosed within letters that Utterson receives from Lanyon after his death, which also go into the safe (J&H 57); and the letters discovered inside of Jekyll’s cabinet to be read by Utterson in his own home (J&H 68). These letters, and the intense control over who reads them and when, embody a method of concealment and privacy—a strategy for exerting control over who gets to know what and when.
The novel’s careful style of containment and revelation harmonizes with Stevenson’s literary reputation, for he was an energetic writer of letters, as is made manifest by the novel’s epistolary traces; a meticulous stylist of prose, as is evident in the novel’s careful and complex formal structure; and a larger-than-life personality concerned with (and troubled by) his celebrity, as my final chapter will explore in greater detail.

A parallel structure exists at Hyde’s Soho dwelling; as Utterson and Newcomen observe while investigating the Carew murder: “In the whole extent of the house…Mr. Hyde had only used a couple of rooms” (J&H 51). The structure of Hyde’s house mirrors that of Jekyll’s through its emphasized containment; the novel implies that Hyde has several rooms, but he contains himself within only a few. Like Hyde himself, the house is constructed as a “concentration,” and the Russian-doll quality of his few rooms enclosed within a larger house mirrors Hyde’s small stature relative to Jekyll (Nabokov 14). Whereas Jekyll’s house aspires to respectability and traditional domesticity, however, Hyde’s home is a more earnest reflection of its owner. He lives in “the dismal quarter of Soho” on “a dingy street” replete with “a gin palace, a low French eating house, a shop for the retail of penny numbers and twopenny salads, many ragged children huddled in the doorways, and many women of many different nationalities passing out, key in hand, to have a morning glass” (J&H 49). This house does not pretend to distinguish itself from the fallenness of its environment, eschewing the pretense of Jekyll’s affected facade. Similarly, while Dr. Jekyll’s front door is attended by the affable butler Mr. Poole, the role of the servant is problematized at Hyde’s, for his door is answered by “An ivory-faced and silvery-haired old woman … She had an evil face, smoothed by hypocrisy: but her manners were excellent” (J&H 49). Like Hyde, this servant woman is described in contradictory terms; her “evil,” hypocritical face is complicated by “excellent” manners, recalling Hyde’s
gentlemanly status. However, the evil-faced woman expresses delight at her master’s having committed a crime, inverting the domestic ideal of faithful servitude: “A flash of odious joy appeared upon the woman’s face. ‘Ah!’ said she, ‘he is in trouble! What has he done?’ (J&H 50).

In his book *Life in the English Country House*, Mark Girouard expounds the numerous roles and expectations of servants in the Victorian era, citing morality and efficiency as the chief virtues of a good domestic servant—neither of which are exhibited by Hyde’s evil-faced servant woman (Girouard 276-281). By contrast, Jean Fernandez argues that Mr. Poole is a consummate servant because of his “complicity with [Jekyll’s] social ambitions” (Fernandez 106). Indeed, Poole is concerned throughout the novel with his master’s safety and reputation, compelling him to seek Utterson’s help when he suspects “foul play”:

‘I think there’s been foul play,’ said Poole, hoarsely.

‘Foul play!’ cried the lawyer, a good deal frightened and rather inclined to be irritated in consequence. ‘What foul play! What does the man mean?’

‘I daren’t say, sir,’ was the answer; ‘but will you come along with me and see for yourself?’ (J&H 60)

“Foul play” is a particularly vague phrase to describe the situation, especially given that Poole’s interlocutor is his master’s lawyer. Repetition of the phrase three times heightens this ambiguity, making visible Poole’s deliberate obfuscation. According to Sedgwick, the “unspeakable,” is imbued with homoerotic significance in the late-Victorian Gothic, with “namelessness” and “secrecy” operating in service of control (“Toward the Gothic” 94). Possibly, the butler has

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42 The “unspeakable” transcends the Gothic as a metaphor for homosexual desire and acquired new resonance with the Oscar Wilde trials in 1895. Lord Alfred Douglas’s poem “Two Loves” (1894), which was used against Wilde in court, famously refers to homosexuality as “the Love that dare not speak its name” (Douglas 74). Likewise, the eponymous subject of E.M. Forster’s *Maurice* famously declares: “I’m an unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort” (Forster 159).
become suspicious of his master’s bedroom activities, which could account for Utterson observing that Poole’s “manner was altered for the worse” (59). Furthermore, Poole may suspect that Utterson, too, has become entangled in these improprieties, for he refuses to “look[] the lawyer in the face” and does not partake of the wine offered to him (J&H 59). Nevertheless, Poole hails with obvious relief the lawyer’s agreement to help.

A succession of uncanny images accompanies Utterson and Poole’s trek to Dr. Jekyll’s house, beginning with an image of the London streets made unfamiliar through their emptiness: “[The wind] seemed to have swept the streets unusually bare of passengers, besides; for Mr. Utterson thought he had never seen that part of London so deserted” (J&H 60). The strangeness of this uncharacteristic desertion elicits “a crushing expectation of calamity” from Utterson, who immediately feels “so sharp a wish to see and touch his fellow-creatures” (J&H 60). As they approach the house, Jekyll’s garden has been profaned into a savage, irreverent space “full of wind and dust” in which trees are violently “lashing themselves against the railing” as if to anticipate Jekyll/Hyde’s own suicide.

The false domesticity of the house’s façade is consonant with the perversion of domestic ideals within. What was once a “comfortable hall paved with flags, warmed (after the fashion of a country house) by a bright, open fire, and furnished with costly cabinets of oak”—and which was even referred to as “the pleasantest room in all of London” (J&H 44)—is now marked by a mass of fearful servants “huddled together like a flock of sheep” around the very hearth that had focalized Jekyll’s wine-soaked “pleasant dinners” (J&H 60, 45). The vision of “a flock of sheep” is a sacred image here profaned, for Jekyll/Hyde is a shepherd who has abandoned his flock. Utterson immediately espies domesticity amiss and reacts in something like anger when the cook attempts “to take him in her arms”: “‘What, what? Are you all here?’ said the lawyer peevishly.
‘Very irregular, very unseemly; your master would be far from pleased’” (J&H 61). That servant woman’s domain—the kitchen—has been plunged into a hellish darkness: “the fire was out and the beetles were leaping on the floor” (J&H 61). According to Judith Flanders in Inside the Victorian Home, a lit fireplace was crucial not only as a source of heat and light, but also as the “idea” that would provide “the focus of the home” (Flanders 108). That ideal is clearly lost here, and the candle for which Poole calls seems hardly sufficient to light the entirety of Jekyll’s dark house. Nevertheless, butler and lawyer continue on with their journey to the center of the cabinet, directed forward by the “faces of dreadful expectation” borne by frightened servants, who perform in the strange unison of a Greek chorus as they “all started and turned towards the inner door” (J&H 61).

Between the front hall and the cabinet, Utterson and Poole pass through the old surgical theatre, which has the effect of dissecting the cabinet from the rest of the house. The relation of the theatre to the cabinet mirrors again the novel’s larger structure of enclosure and containment, and the narrator observes that “the far greater proportion of the building was occupied by the theatre, which filled almost the whole ground storey” (66). If one imagines the theatre as a space of performance (whether for surgery or other spectacle), then this layout may suggest that a large portion of Jekyll’s own identity is performed, which he himself reveals in his Full Statement: “Hence it came about that I concealed my pleasures…I stood already committed to a profound duplicity of life” (J&H 75-76). The narrator references “the shelter of the theatre” while Utterson and Poole hover just outside of the cabinet, which is later echoed in Jekyll’s reference to “the shelter of my cabinet” (J&H 65, 88). Clearly, these men are seeking different kinds of spaces for security and refuge; however, once Jekyll’s identity has been overtaken by Hyde, not even the theatre can offer asylum for him.
The enclosure of the cabinet within the theatre further symbolizes that Hyde is a part of Jekyll, subsumed by his performance of respectability and professionalism. Jekyll, in his Full Statement, even describes Hyde as a costume through the phrase “when I wore that form” (J&H 82, my emphasis). Ironically, however, the performative purpose of the theatre has been eroded by Jekyll’s transformation of the space for his “rather chemical than anatomical” purposes, and its emptiness elicits “a distasteful sense of strangeness as [Utterson] crossed the theatre, once crowded with eager students and now lying gaunt and silent” (J&H 51, my emphasis). In many ways, this is yet another fallen space such as the garden and the façade; the floor is “strewn with crates and littered with packing straw,” and the room is brightened only by dim illumination through a “foggy cupola” (J&H 51). Veeder observes that the adjective “gaunt” associates the surgical theatre with Utterson’s residence on “Gaunt Street,” thereby linking two spaces that had “seemed so safely apart” (Veeder 120). Building on Veeder’s analysis, I suggest that the verb “crossed” hearkens back to the novel’s opening paragraph, connecting this theatrical space to the theatre generally associated with Utterson’s repression. Without realizing it, Utterson crosses a theatre door for the first time in twenty years, a symbolic undoing of his own repression that suggests his own homoerotic desire may come violently to light.

Throughout most of the chapter, however, Utterson is more spectator than participant, for Jekyll/Hyde serves as this theatre’s star performer. While noting Jekyll’s changed appearance, Poole ironically cries: “Sir, if that was my master, why had he a mask upon his face?” (J&H 62) Utterson and Poole disagree in their interpretations of this mysterious player’s performance and his costume; the lawyer reasons that his “mask” reflects deformation from an unknown illness, but Poole insists that the man cannot be his master, for Jekyll “‘is a tall, fine build of a man, and

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43 Cf. “and though [Utterson] enjoyed the theatre, had not crossed the doors of one for twenty years” (J&H 33, my emphasis).
this was more of a dwarf” (J&H 62). Yet again, men try but fail to interpret Jekyll/Hyde’s body in the context of degeneration, and Poole’s emphasis on Hyde’s smaller stature calls to mind Robert Mighall’s assertion that “dwarfism and other deformities denoted degeneracy as deviations from the normal type of development. Hyde’s dwarfism represents his arrested moral development figured in somatic terms” (Mighall 148). Sedgwick’s conception of the Gothic “unspeakable” haunts the scene until Utterson all but demands that Poole identify the “masked thing” as Mr. Hyde: “‘It is well, then that we should be frank,’ said [Utterson]. ‘We both think more than we have said; let us make a clean breast. This masked figure that you saw, did you recognise it?’” (J&H 64). For the first time in this chapter (and, notably, the first time since Enfield proclaims “‘We shall never see more of Mr. Hyde’” [J&H 58]), Hyde’s name is spoken. As a result, J. Jack Halberstam’s prescription for the late-Victorian Gothic is realized: “The monster, such a narrative suggests, will find you in the intimacy of your own home; indeed, it will make your home its home (or you its home) and alter forever the comfort of domestic privacy” (Halberstam 15). Likewise, Jekyll’s conviction that he lives in “a house that is no longer mine” has been realized in the narrative present (J&H 79).

Although Utterson was unwilling to cross the theater door in the novel’s first paragraph, he and Poole resolve to break down the door in the surgical theatre that leads to Jekyll’s cabinet. After Utterson boldly decrees “‘I shall consider it my duty to break in that door’” (J&H 64), the roles performed in the theatre thus far are reversed; Utterson and Poole become the aggressors, launching an “attack” in order to “force our way into the cabinet” (J&H 65). Armed with the overtly phallic weapons of an axe and a kitchen poker (reminiscent of the cane used to murder Carew), the assault takes on symbolic resonances of a rape, strengthened by a feminizing image of Hyde “weeping like a woman or a lost soul” (J&H 65). Utterson’s repressed homosexuality is
channeled violently into the attack as he threatens Jekyll/Hyde: “‘I give you fair warning, our suspicions are aroused, and I must and shall see you,’ he resumed; ‘if not by fair means, then by foul—if not of your consent, then by brute force!’” (J&H 66). The language here is undeniably sexual and violent, for the strength of Utterson’s “arousal” encourages him to use “brute force” if he cannot obtain “consent.” The word “foul” recalls Poole’s earlier suspicions of “foul play” to emphasize the reversal of roles as Jekyll/Hyde has now become victim to Utterson and Poole’s sexualized aggression.

Poole thrusts the axe repeatedly, and his blows are met by Jekyll/Hyde’s “dismal screech, as of mere animal terror” from within the cabinet, as if his body were receiving the blows rather than the door (J&H 66). In this moment of tremendous sexual violence, the narrative conflates the man and his home. The red baize door glistens with the very lifeblood of Jekyll/Hyde, becoming linked with the “blood fouly shed in every step” of Jekyll/Hyde’s pacing and with “the blood-red liquor” that Dr. Lanyon obtains from Jekyll’s cabinet (J&H 65, 71). The moment in which Poole’s “blow shook the building” will be echoed twice in Jekyll’s Full Statement (J&H 66, my emphasis), for the doctor describes how the drug “shook the very fortress of identity” and “shook the doors of the prisonhouse of my disposition” (J&H 77, 79, my emphasis). In the final moments of Jekyll/Hyde’s life—while he dies “sorely contorted and still twitching”—the home becomes not only a reflection of the mind, but a manifestation of the body as well, revealing the depth of the novel’s investment in architecture (J&H 66). The narrative comes full circle with this focus on a door, which is a complex architectural structure in its own right. Unlike a wall, the door belongs neither to one room nor another, but instead forms a link between two discrete spaces. It is moveable, permeable, and designed to be infiltrated. In the previous chapter, I suggested that “Jekyll and Hyde’s myriad doors are not portals nor entryways
to homosexual experience, but rather serve as barriers to contain homosexual desire.” I have shown now that such barriers are not strong enough.

When the red baize door falls after the fifth blow, Utterson and Poole are “appalled by their own riot and the stillness that succeeded” as they uncover a scene of startling comfort and refinement (J&H 66):

There lay the cabinet before their eyes in the quiet lamplight, a good fire glowing and chattering on the hearth, the kettle singing its thin strain, a drawer or two open, papers neatly set forth on the business table, and nearer the fire, the things laid out for tea; the quietest room, you would have said, and, but for the glazed presses full of chemicals, the most commonplace that night in London. (J&H 66)

The tranquil domesticity of Jekyll’s cabinet seems almost to ameliorate the perverted domesticity scattered throughout the rest of house; fire has been restored to the hearth, papers are arranged neatly on the table, and Hyde has prepared for himself that “dependable,” “comfortable,” and even “mundane” ritual of an English tea" (Fromer 10). Disturbingly, an easy-chair is “drawn cosily up” by the fire and set for tea, waiting for a sitter that will never come. In many ways, this is perhaps the novel’s uncanniest tableau: the expectation of violent encounter repudiated by a domestic scene that focalizes around the unsettling presence of Jekyll/Hyde’s “sorely contorted and still twitching” body (J&H 66). The other notable feature of this cabinet is Jekyll’s cheval glass, which shall be discussed at length in my final chapter.

Utterson and Poole resume their search for Jekyll by scouring each of the surgical theatre’s many closets: “Each closet needed but a glance, for all were empty, and all, by the dust that fell from their doors, had stood long unopened” (J&H 67). These closets, however, are so

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44 Julie E. Fromer’s A Necessary Luxury: Tea in Victorian England provides an in-depth historical and cultural analysis of the simultaneously ritualistic and practical roles of tea in Victorian society.
long empty that the only thing uncovered is “the fall of a perfect mat of cobweb” that has accumulated over many years (J&H 67). Henry Jekyll is not to be found within any of these closets, for he has already emerged and acceded to that most visible identity of the homosexual male within the body of Edward Hyde.
CHAPTER FOUR: A Tale of Two Skerryvores

Armies march by tower and spire
Of cities blazing, in the fire—
Till as I gaze with staring eyes,
The armies fade, the lustre dies.

—“Armies in the Fire” (9-12)

In this chapter, I return to a somewhat biographical mode in order to contextualize Jekyll and Hyde’s complicated architectures within the framework of Stevenson’s own relationships with houses, architecture, and domesticity. Citing the carefully conceived structure of Dr. Jekyll’s home, I suggested in the previous chapter that Stevenson writes like an architect. In the following pages, I will further demonstrate the veracity of that claim by juxtaposing the interiors of childhood as depicted in A Child’s Garden of Verses (published in 1885 as Penny Whistles) with the interior of Jekyll’s cabinet, as well as by exploring the architectural prominence of Stevenson’s own family and its impact on both his private and artistic life. In doing so, I hope to make clear that the homoerotic architectures of Jekyll and Hyde are both intentional and worthy of attention. At the same time, I wish to acknowledge that Jekyll and Hyde is a work of imagination, and to reiterate an earlier claim that whether or not Stevenson himself was gay, bisexual, or otherwise queer is not of particular value or concern to this study. Stevenson was not a pirate, but Treasure Island (1883) remains a perennial favorite among readers nonetheless. And given what we know about Stevenson’s milieu, he was certainly more familiar with and could probably write more realistically about homosexuals than pirates.

Before going forward in my consideration of Stevenson’s architectures, I will briefly regress back to the childhood bedroom. Ann Colley’s work on A Child’s Garden of Verses offers a particularly evocative counterpoint to the structures at the heart of Jekyll and Hyde. In her
Colley considers Stevenson’s famous collection of poetry to interrogate the author’s relationship with childhood, memory, and nostalgia. She concludes that “each verse is a room shaped by the sick body’s desire to escape from itself” (Colley 135). Indeed, Stevenson was a sickly child, confined “whether from genuine danger, or from excessive solicitude” to spend “long stretches of time confined to bed” under the care of nurse Alison “Cummy” Cunningham (Harman 18). He was sick throughout most of his life, suffering from illnesses that sometimes defy diagnosis and sometimes suggest consumption, hypertension, cardiac arrest, or syphilis; his death in Valima, Samoa at age forty-four on 3 December 1894 was ruled a cerebral hemorrhage (Harman xvii).

Colley argues that “the interiors of the home [in *A Child’s Garden of Verses*] do not isolate the convalescing child,” but rather the child reimagines and reshapes rooms “so that they carry him to places beyond” (Colley 136). In “My Bed Is a Boat,” for example, the sickbed in which RLS was confined for much of his youth becomes transformed into a vessel that connects the sickly child with other youths: “At night, I go on board and say / Good-night to all my friends on shore” (“My Bed Is a Boat” 5-6). Colley argues that: “the desire of the sick child to find release from himself creates situations in which the child identifies with other children and, in that way, becomes part of an ubiquitous body. Within that larger perspective, he can, for a while, forget or lose his fragility and, perhaps more significantly, be less alone, excluded, and strange” (Colley 136). Through imagination, perception, and perspective, Stevenson’s child exists in a state of perpetual connection with the world around him.

Colley observes the omnipresence of windows and the conspicuous absence of mirrors in these poems, which she interprets as a suggestion that the child’s interests and desires are necessarily directed outward rather than toward itself. “The looking glass world is irrelevant” for
this child, who “does not need to see its own image in the mirror to gain a sense of totality, to understand, rightly or wrongly, a feeling of coherence” (Colley 138). Stevenson’s children are not interested in defining themselves as discrete entities separate from other people, and are instead desirous of connection. For them, “the self is not something to be seen” (Colley 139), for they “are not spectators of themselves” but of others, thus having no need for any mirror (Colley 143). In “The Lamplighter,” a young speaker “take[s] the window” to watch admiringly as the eponymous figure goes about his task: “For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door, / And Leerie stops to light it as he lights so many more” (“The Lamplighter” 9-10). Although Leerie does not notice the romantic child, the speaker feels no diminished sense of fascination with his subject, for his perception of unity with Leerie depends on seeing rather than on being seen.45 The child is “unreflected,” then, because nobody is “look[ing] back at him” (Colley 141).

However, the prominent windows and absent mirrors in A Child’s Garden of Verses are reversed inside of Henry Jekyll’s cabinet, which contains “three dusty windows barred with iron” and an eminent “cheval-glass” (J&H 51). Unlike the childhood interiors of Stevenson’s nostalgic poetry, Jekyll’s cabinet is a space defined by an obsession with the self, with identity, and with appearances. It is not a room for looking outwardly (as evidenced by the dirty windows), but for introspection—for deep understanding of one’s self as an individual within a protected setting. To safeguard his own reputation, Jekyll sequesters himself from the outside world and conceals “pleasures” that are “(to say the least) undignified” in that cabinet; it is a space of painful

45 Gas lamps and the image of the lamplighter were of perpetual fascination for Stevenson. Once electric lighting was threatening to become the norm in London, Stevenson wrote an essay titled “A Plea for Gas Lamps” (1881; collected in Virginibus Puerisque, and Other Essays), which presented an impassioned and romantic defense of the old method of light: “Mankind, you would have thought, might have remained content with what Prometheus stole for them and not gone fishing the profound heaven with kites to catch and domesticate the wildfire of the storm” (“A Plea for Gas Lamps”).

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isolation (J&H 79). Unlike the child speaker in “The Land of Counterpane,” who transcends his sickly body through a connection with his toys (“And sometimes for an hour or so / I watched my leaden soldiers go, / With different uniforms and drills, / Among the bed-clothes, through the hills” [“The Land of Counterpane” 5-8]), Dr. Jekyll wants desperately to become stable within his original form: “Yes, I preferred the elderly and discontented doctor, surrounded by friends and cherishing honest hopes; and bade a resolute farewell to the liberty, the comparative youth, the light step, leaping impulses and secret pleasures, that I had enjoyed in the disguise of Hyde” (J&H 83). There is a particular image he desires when he looks in the mirror, but that is not always the image he sees.

In his Full Statement, the doctor notes that “there was no mirror” in the cabinet during his first transformation to Hyde, for the cheval-glass that is present toward the end of the novel “was brought there later on and for the very purpose of these transformations” (J&H 82). Jekyll’s experiments are motivated by his deep investment in fracturing the self so that he can indulge homoerotic desires without being seen by others. As these transformations become involuntary, however, Jekyll/Hyde must consort with the mirror even to know whom he is; his sense of self is predicated on a singularity of identity rather than ubiquity. Jekyll’s apprehension regarding how he will appear in the cheval-glass reflects Stevenson’s own insecurities, and as McLynn writes: “Whenever he looked in the mirror—and Henley assures us that this was often—he saw ‘the other’: a bronchitic/ consumptive specimen; not the hero he imagined himself to be” (McLynn 262). Hyperawareness of reputation and a concern with how he will be perceived by the world have the effect of destabilizing Jekyll’s identity rather than granting greater control, and “the mirror seems to confirm (by representing and framing) and at the same time question personal identity (by doubling)” (Dury xxxviii, my emphasis). Stevenson’s attraction to and fear of the
othered image in the mirror is envisaged by Utterson and Poole’s trepidation in confronting their “fearful countenances” reflected in the cheval glass—a peculiar moment that seems to implicate them in the very misdeeds they purport to eradicate (J&H 68). Likewise, the very problem of Hyde is his visibility; his pervasive and public misdeeds, combined with a distorted appearance, call attention to the closeted homosexual buried in the depths of the mirror.

In contrast, Stevenson’s children in A Child’s Garden of Verses “do not participate” in the mirror’s separation of “the self from itself,” and thus do not experience the “moment of estrangement or divergence”—what is commonly called ‘otherness’” (Colley 141). In Colley’s estimation, no one and nothing can be “other” in the eyes of Stevenson’s child, for he envisions connectedness with all other beings:

> It is very nice to think
> The world is full of meat and drink,
> With little children saying grace
> In every Christian kind of place. (“A Thought” 1-4)

The child perceives here “a common physical rhythm” with other children, despite neither knowing nor seeing them (Colley 137). By contrast, Jekyll and Hyde, as I have read the novel, is largely about a fear of the other and of becoming the other. Colley argues that these poems function as mirrors in relationship to Stevenson, for as he encounters himself removed from the world of childhood and longing for return: “The isolation in the poems is, perhaps, not the child’s but that of the solitary figure who once was a child” (Colley 147).

Aside from the young girl who exists only to be trampled or the youths who haunt the recesses of doorways, Jekyll and Hyde is remarkably void of prominent children in any literal sense. However, as Veeder observes in his seminal study “Children of the Night: Stevenson and Patriarchy,” characters are often depicted as children or as childlike in relation to one another or
to the late-Victorian patriarchy in general (Veeder 114). In many ways, Edward Hyde comes closest to the ideal of childhood that Stevenson expresses in *A Child’s Garden of Verses* through Jekyll’s claim that “[Hyde’s] love of life is wonderful” (*J&H* 89). Hyde exists solely to partake in the pleasures of life that Jekyll denies himself, and Jekyll experiences a kind of childlike liberation in Hyde’s persona: “I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a millrace in my fancy, a solution of the bonds of obligation” (*J&H* 78). This childlike quality is reinforced by the fact that Hyde is “so much smaller, slighter and younger” and “less developed” than Jekyll, making him almost literally childlike in relation to his creator (*J&H* 83, 63). A father/son relationship emerges between Jekyll (the father and creator) and Hyde (the son), and the doctor writes in his Full Statement that “Jekyll had more than a father’s interest; Hyde had more than a son’s indifference” (*J&H* 89). Hyde bears “hatred” for his father figure, enacting the blatantly anti-patriarchal aggression of “destroying the portrait of [Jekyll’s] father”—a symbolic destruction of his own progenitor (*J&H* 89).

Inevitably, patriarchal tensions at the heart of *Jekyll and Hyde* will call to mind the relationship between Robert Louis Stevenson and his own father, Thomas Stevenson. Veeder describes RLS as “a third generation professional,” a reference to the fact that Thomas Stevenson and his father Robert Stevenson (as well as Thomas’s brother Alan Stevenson and Robert’s stepfather Thomas Smith) were all well-known and respected engineers of Scottish lighthouses (Veeder 111). Harman argues that “the paternal line dominates Robert Louis Stevenson’s family history,” suggesting that Robert Stevenson’s reputation as an architect of lighthouses had made theirs “one of the most respectable names in Edinburgh” (Harman 10). Building, architecture, and design were very much at the forefront of the Stevenson family—and very much related to
patriarchy. RLS himself was expected to become a lighthouse engineer and spent the summers of 1868, 1869, and 1870 studying architecture along the Scottish coast (McLynn 34-36). It quickly became evident that this vocation was not a fit for the young writer, however, and Thomas Stevenson allowed his son to switch to a study of Law at Edinburgh (McLynn 37). RLS completed his course of study with tremendous apathy and was admitted to the bar, but the far greater proportion of his effort was directed toward literary and social pursuits (McLynn 38-39). As biographer Claire Harman puts it: “wearing the wig and robes for this photograph was the high point of his legal career” (Harman; photograph below). In effect, Stevenson abandoned the lighthouses of his family for the dark houses of his fictions.

Figure 5. Stevenson donning legal robes and wig
In order to disinter the influence of Thomas Stevenson’s patriarchal presence in *Jekyll* and *Hyde*, I would suggest Utterson as a more useful door of entry than Hyde.\(^{46}\) Utterson’s name and occupation support myriad biographical connections with RLS, bringing into focus the writer’s relationship with patriarchy, professionalism, and the domestic space. “Gabriel John Utterson” is notably the only character in the novel associated with a tripartite name, which is revealed only after he displaces Hyde in Jekyll’s will (J&H 68). Deconstructed into its compound parts, the surname “utter son” can support numerous critical interpretations, but I will offer a biographical reading of “Utterson” as meaning something akin to “utterly the son.” As a lawyer, philanthropist, and a homeowner, Utterson represents a version of RLS who has succumbed to the forces of patriarchy and of professionalism embodied by Thomas.\(^{47}\) He is also severely repressed, and rebels against both the father’s law and architecture of the father at the

\(^{46}\) Allegorical readings of *Jekyll and Hyde* are frequently attempted with varying levels of success, but the relationships seem never to work out perfectly. A character who exposes hypocrisy in one scene might reveal himself to be a hypocrite in another, which may be symptomatic both of the theme of doubling and of Stevenson’s overdetermined formal structure. As Veeder notes: “The overdetermined nature of this indictment [of patriarchy] requires a comparable intricacy of response from readers” (Veeder 116). To mine the novel for its richest meanings, we must be able to see Utterson simultaneously as a patriarch and a victim of the patriarchy, or to see Hyde as both a prototype of homosexuality and an embodiment of atavistic rage. Perhaps nothing in this novel can be put to bed with a single valence of meaning.

\(^{47}\) One important facet of Thomas’s patriarchal influence and of Stevenson’s upbringing that I have considered only cursorily in this thesis is religion. The rift that opened between father and son when Stevenson abandoned the law was considerable, but not so disastrous as the religious conflict that came about from RLS joining his cousin Bob Stevenson’s “L.J.R. (Liberty, Justice, and Reverence) club,” which stood in support of “socialism, atheism, and the abolition of the House of Lords” (McLynn 60). Thomas’s discovery of the L.J.R. club’s constitution and RLS’s admission of disbelief tore open a violent breach in their relationship, and RLS was met with “fury” from his father and “hysterics” from his mother (McLynn 61). Their dispute lasted openly for months but was never fully resolved, and the father-son conflict became a hallmark of Stevenson’s fiction, but nowhere so vividly as in *Weir of Hermiston*’s (1896; posthumous and unfinished, but regarded by many as his masterpiece) adversarial relationship between the cruel judge Adam Weir and his sensitive son Archie, who challenges his father by speaking out against the death penalty at the public hanging of man called Jopp. The father declares: “You’re a young gentleman that doesna approve of Capital Punishment…Weel, I’m an auld man that does. I was glad to get Jopp hangit, and what for would I pretend I wasna?” (*Weir* 35). Robin Gilmour argues that *Weir* “owe[s] its power to the memory of [Stevenson’s] troubled but loving relations with his own father. Lord Hermiston is a magnificent creation, with a kind of coarse grandeur that is outside the normal range of characterization in Victorian fiction” (Gilmour 177-178). RLS’s troubled relationship with his father endured beyond Thomas’s death in 1887; Stevenson was working on *Weir* on the very day of his death, and the published novel ends mid-sentence (Harman 455).
narrative’s end when he penetrates Dr. Jekyll’s cabinet with Poole. In this light, Utterson oft-quoted declaration “If he be Mr. Hyde, I shall be Mr. Seek” takes on new expressiveness as the idealized “utter son” of the patriarchal order searches for the duplicitous homosexual son, only to discover his own image reflected in the closet (J&H 41).

Stevenson’s relationship to the lighthouse engineers in his family was far from being entirely derogatory. The writer took great pride in the architectural accomplishments of his kin, and he wrote romantically of his grandfather’s vocation in Records of a Family of Engineers (1896; published posthumously and unfinished):

The seas into which his labours carried the new engineer were still scarce charted, the coasts still dark; his way on shore was often far beyond the convenience of any road, the isles in which he must sojourn were still partly savage. He must toss much in boats; he must often adventure on horseback by the dubious bridle-track through unfrequented wildernesses; he must sometimes plant his lighthouses in the very camp of wreckers; and he was continually enforced to the vicissitudes of outdoor life. The joy of my grandfather in this career was as strong as the love of a woman. (qtd. in Harman 5)

Stevenson’s fondness for his family’s lighthouses is also evident from the fact that he named his house in Bournemouth “Skerryvore Cottage” after the tallest lighthouse in Scotland, which had been designed by his uncle Alan Stevenson and was erected upon a reef off the western coast in 1844 (“Stevenson Lighthouses in Scotland”).

On the advice of the writer’s London doctors, Stevenson and Fanny moved to the south of England in July 1884 for a period of convalescence, choosing Bournemouth in particular because Fanny’s son Lloyd went to school there (McLynn 232). The couple shuffled between hotels and lodging houses until April 1885, when Thomas Stevenson bought and furnished a
house for Fanny and RLS (“Robert Louis Stevenson in Bournemouth”). The exact reason for
which Thomas Stevenson purchased Skerryvore Cottage is unclear, and biographers frame the
gift with wide variation. One popular interpretation is that the house was an uncomplicated
wedding gift to Fanny (“Robert Louis Stevenson in Bournemouth”), whereas McLynn suggests
that that the gift was evidence that Fanny “was surely gaining the upper hand in her scheme to
make over the Stevenson parents” (McLynn 239), and Harman suggests that Thomas and
Margaret Stevenson purchased Skerryvore “as a bribe...too good to refuse” that would prevent Fanny and RLS from traveling abroad again (Harman 275). Regardless of details, Stevenson’s arrival at Skerryvore launched a defining period of literary output that reached its apotheosis with the writing of *Jekyll and Hyde* in fall 1885. However, Stevenson experienced a concurrent period of especial personal difficulty, marked by a dissolution of autonomy that was occasioned by compounding influences of illness, his father, and his marriage.

If houses in *Jekyll and Hyde* carry the symbolic resonances of imprisonment, this is probably because Stevenson himself felt trapped at the house in which that novel was written. Illness kept him indoors more often than not, and Fanny precluded visits from those among his friends whom she did not like, such as Gosse and Henley (McLynn 242). It is remarkable that Fanny disallowed visits from the more openly homosexual Edmund Gosse (which recalls Janet Symonds’s dislike for RLS [McLynn 189]) while welcoming almost nightly visits from the closeted homosexual Henry James (Harman 278). In exercising control as the Victorian “angel of the house,” it would seem that Fanny Osbourne might have taken the performance of sexual identity into account. As a result, Stevenson experimented with the use of architectural metaphor to express intimate relationships between men, and he mediates his deep admiration for Henry James through the conceit of Skerryvore in a private sonnet:

Who comes to-night? We open the doors in vain.  
Who comes? My bursting walls, can you contain  
The presences that now together throng  
Your narrow entry, as with flowers and song,  
As with the air of life, the breath of talk?  
Lo, how these fair immaculate women walk  
Behind their jocund maker; and we see  
Slighted *De Mauves*, and that far different she,

Gressie, the trivial sphynx; and to our feast
Daisy and Barb and Chancellor (she not least!)
With all their silken, all their airy kin,
Do like unbidden angels enter in.
But he, attended by these shining names,
Comes (best of all) himself—our welcome James. (“Henry James”)

McLynn suggests that, when it came to James, Stevenson prized “the man rather than the artist,” whom the poem regards as “the best of all” as he is trailed by his female characters (McLynn 243). Not unlike Jekyll’s house and cabinet, Skerryvore struggles to contain a prominent homosexual man: (“My bursting walls, can you now contain / The presences that now together throng / Your narrow entry…?”), and James is feminized through images of “flowers and song.” Just months before he would conceive of and write *Jekyll and Hyde*, Stevenson has already begun appropriating Skerryvore and architecture to convey homoeroticism.

Robert Louis Stevenson was confined to Skerryvore—which is in many ways the house of his father—by his father’s money. Financial dependence on Thomas Stevenson tormented RLS, and a letter to Gosse dated 12 March 1885 shows how deeply troubled the writer was by his new home at Skerryvore: “I am now a beastly householder, but have not yet entered on my domain. When I do, the social revolution will probably cast me back upon my dung heap” (*Letters of RLS* v.5, 85). As Arata observes, Stevenson “had never had a permanent address” before Skerryvore, and to live there was to repudiate the bohemian lifestyle he had chosen for himself by abandoning architecture and the law (Arata 44). Skerryvore represented both personal failure and a capitulation to the authority of the patriarchy, for reliance on Thomas Stevenson’s home ownership read interestingly against Oscar Wilde’s disavowal of private property: “For the recognition of private property has really harmed Individualism, and obscured it, by confusing a man with what he possesses. It has led Individualism entirely astray. It has made gain not growth its aim. So that man thought that the important thing was to have, and did not know that the

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49 Gosse, too, had a notably tumultuous relationship with his father, which he documented in his striking memoir *Father and Son: A Study of Two Temperaments* (1907).
50 Stevenson’s conflicted feelings about home ownership read interestingly against Oscar Wilde’s disavowal of private property: “For the recognition of private property has really harmed Individualism, and obscured it, by confusing a man with what he possesses. It has led Individualism entirely astray. It has made gain not growth its aim. So that man thought that the important thing was to have, and did not know that the
deep pockets seemed to confirm the father’s suspicion that RLS would not be able to make a life for himself as a writer. As he approached his forties, it had begun to seem as if Stevenson might be condemned to remain an utter son himself.

Ironically, at the same time that Stevenson was wrestling with the bourgeois nature of home ownership, he was also grappling with his emerging status as a professional writer after the popular success of publications such as *Treasure Island* (1883), “The Body-Snatcher” (1884) and “Markheim” (1885). Stevenson enjoyed the fame and financial earnings from these works, but he was troubled by the realization that “other works he labored over and considered more serious might never be bestsellers” (Brantlinger and Boyle 266). In an unpublished letter to Gosse, Stevenson described the life of the professional writer as one of prostitution: “We are whores; some of us pretty whores, some of us not: whores of the mind, selling to the public the amusements of our fireside as the whore sells the amusement of her bed” (qtd. in Arata 49).

Professionalism is linked with prostitution throughout *Jekyll and Hyde*, through Utterson’s relationship with the “down-going men” who “came about his chambers” (*J&H* 33), the “florid charms” of “rows of smiling saleswomen” displaying their “gains in coquetry” (*J&H* 34), and the woman whom Hyde “smote” when she offers “a box of lights” in what might be read as a sexual proposition (*J&H* 87). For Stevenson, “popularity and seriousness seemed antithetical” (Brantlinger and Boyle 266), and Dury summarizes his complicated relationship with the literary marketplace: “[Stevenson] was divided between pressure to write popular works (deriving in part from his desire to be read and to be financially independent of his father, but also an attraction to popular forms as a way of revitalizing literature) and encouragement…to concentrate on works...
of high literature” (Dury xlii). In fact, *Jekyll and Hyde* was partially conceived as a literary thriller after the popular model of the late-Victorian “shilling shocker,” which Stevenson planned to produce “very quickly to earn money” (Halberstam 56). When Stevenson arrived in New York on 21 August 1887, he was regarded as a literary celebrity from the tremendous success of *Jekyll and Hyde* and its ensuing stage adaptation (Danahay 13).

*Jekyll and Hyde* is a remarkable feat of literary architecture, for this slim but enigmatic volume incorporates and revises a plethora of Stevenson’s architectural influences. Childhood interiors and a lost capacity for uncomplicated connection, a strained relationship with his lighthouse-engineer father, and confinement at Skerryvore under the pressures of a bourgeois marriage and financial dependence are all combined in the novel to mediate and express homoerotic desire. Upon this foundation, the novel constructs the scaffolding for the new conception of male homosexuality that would emerge after Oscar Wilde. Aaron Betsky writes: “If queer space begins in the closet, it forms itself in the mirror” (Betsky 17). In literature of the Victorian *fin de siècle*, there is perhaps no queerer space than that reflected by the mirror in Henry Jekyll’s cabinet.
The problem of Edward Hyde both starts and ends with a will. Although Hyde is “co-heir with [Jekyll] to death,” Utterson becomes inheritor to both when he discovers his name inscribed as the beneficiary of Dr. Jekyll’s will. By implication, Gabriel John Utterson becomes the inheritor not only of Jekyll/Hyde’s property, but also of homosexual identity in what can be seen as a moment of peculiar futurity amid the novel’s destructive conclusion. José Esteban Muñoz writes in his introduction to Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity that “the here and now is a prison house” (Muñoz 1), which seems to carry the resonance of Jekyll’s metaphor “the prisonhouse of my disposition” for homosexuality (J&H 79). At the end of the novel, however, the red baize door to the cabinet has been broken down, destroying the “prisonhouse” in what is, perhaps, a symbolic liberation of the closet. Where Utterson goes next is unclear, but he will not contain his homoerotic desires in that miserable space. In 1897, about eleven years after the release of Jekyll and Hyde, Oscar Wilde would emerge from Reading Gaol a changed man, having suffered greatly during his imprisonment. Despite this, he came out into an England that was changing for queer people, largely because of his own influence and refusal to contain homosexual desire. The world, as Muñoz reminds us, is continually changing for queer people: “We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality” (Muñoz 1).
Thomas Stevenson died in Edinburgh on 8 May 1887, leaving a sizable inheritance to his son (Danahay 13). With money from Thomas and from his popular writings, Robert Louis Stevenson departed Skerryvore with Fanny before the end of August and set off on a long period of travel, the horizon of which was Vailima, Samoa. Stevenson made his final home in the comfort of Villa Vailima; after he passed away on 3 December 1894, he was buried atop spectacular Mount Vaea. The epigraph to this final section comes from Stevenson’s eight-line poem “Requiem,” which also serves as the writer’s epitaph (Harman 459). Like the closet, the grave is a dark, enclosed, and isolated interior; “under the wide and starry sky” of Samoa, however, Robert Louis Stevenson’s grave becomes a place of freedom, comfort, and rest (“Requiem 1”). The poem concludes:

This be the verse you ‘grave for me:
Here he lies where he long’d to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill. (“Requiem” 5-8)

For all its complicated architectural concern, Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde might be interpreted simply as a novel of longing for a prelapsarian home amid a fallen world of urbanity, in the same manner that the poems in A Child’s Garden of Verses long for the unity and connection of childhood amid the fallen world of adults. One cannot guess whether Stevenson discovered Eden restored at Villa Vailima, but the words on his grave suggest that the author eventually did arrive “home where he long’d to be.”
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