HOME ECONOMICS
For my parents, Annette and Mel, who make all the world a home
Illustrations

FIGURE 1.1 Sir Roger Charles Doughty Tichborne, 1853 (Photograph) in Woodruff, *The Tichborne Claimant*, 1957, 140. Courtesy Farrar, Straus & Giroux, LLC. 21

FIGURE 1.2 The Tichborne Claimant, 1872 (Photograph) in Woodruff, *The Tichborne Claimant*, 1957, 140. Courtesy Farrar, Straus & Giroux, LLC. 23


FIGURE 2.1 Charles Booth’s Descriptive Map of London Poverty. Booth Poverty Map 1898–99 Number 6—West Central. Courtesy of The London School of Economics. 54

FIGURE 2.2 George Cruikshank, “Oh ah! Let ’em ring again!” Illustration for Mayhew and Mayhew, *The Greatest Plague of Life*, 1847. Courtesy of Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina. 72

FIGURE 2.3 George Cruikshank, Mayhew and Mayhew, *The Greatest Plague of Life*, 1847. Courtesy of Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina. 73

FIGURE 2.4 Henry Heath, from *One With An Excellent Character*. Bod. Vet. A6 d.8, no. 5. Courtesy of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. 78

FIGURE 2.5 “The Cook’s Rout; or, High Life below Stairs.” John Johnson Collection. Courtesy of Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. [Trade in Prints and Scraps 4 (134)]. 83
Illustrations

FIGURE 2.6  Henry Heath, from *One With an Excellent Character*. Bod. Vet. A6 d. 8, no. 6. Courtesy of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.  84

FIGURE 3.1  John Leech, “The Use of Adulteration.” *Punch* (4 August 1855).  95


FIGURE 4.2  “Major Yelverton’s First Thought of Dishonour.” *Yelverton Marriage Case* (1861), 72.  133

FIGURE 4.3  “Visions of Gentle-Blooded Life.” *Yelverton Marriage Case* (1861), 145.  138


FIGURE C.2  Arthur Boyd Hilton, “My Treasure.” *Good Words* 3 (1862). Courtesy of Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina.  152
Acknowledgments

As good fortune would have it, completing a book about fraud means that I have a great many upstanding and outstanding people to thank. In abandoning my dissertation to begin work on Home Economics, I kept with me the indispensable wisdom of Helena Michie, Bob Patten, and Marty Wiener, who trained me to be both an ambitious reader and a respectful historian. At Rice University and since, I have benefited immensely from the intellectual rigor, good humor, and camaraderie of Caroline Levander, Chuck Jackson, Andrew Yerkes, Louise Penner, Jill Cartoll, Myanna Lahsen, Mitra Emad, and Padmaja Challakere. To Eileen Cleere, I owe a special debt of gratitude for being so smart and inspiring, for reading drafts of chapters, and for being so much fun.

An NEH Summer Stipend, and Andrew Mellon Fellowships at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center and the Huntington Library were instrumental to conducting the research for this book. The University of South Carolina provided crucial travel support and the release time that allowed me to complete this project; before that, Ball State University provided much-appreciated summer funding for research and writing. Among the many librarians who have helped me over the years, I am particularly grateful to Julie Anne Lambert at the Bodleian Library’s John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera. Without her wide-reaching knowledge and deep generosity of resources, I might never have “met” the Tichborne Claimant, nor have encountered the rich wealth of ephemera and ballads that fill out
Acknowledgments

these pages. Pat Fox at the Ransom Center in Austin was unerringly cheerful as I submitted a barrage of pink, yellow, and blue slips. My time in Austin was joyful and productive, and I am grateful to the staff at the HRC for their part in that joy. In getting this manuscript “between boards,” I have taken real pleasure in working with The Ohio State University Press; particular thanks to Eugene O’Connor for helping me navigate the perilous waters of copyedits, and to Sandy Crooms, my acquisitions editor, who gave this book a home.

I could not have written Home Economics without the smart insights, sustained encouragement, and capacity for laughter of many friends and colleagues. I began my work at Ball State University, where Lauren Onkey, Bob Nowatzki, Kecia McBride, and Pat Collier offered this book its first feedback. Chris Thompson, Beth Campbell, Eric Lassiter, Frank Trechsel, Carolyn Mackay and Larry Nesper fed me well, both literally and intellectually, and kept me laughing. To Tom Koontz, Patti White, Joe Trimmer, and Paul Ranieri, I offer sincere thanks for being so wonderful and so understanding.

The gang at the Dickens Universe heard and responded to early portions of the introduction, and provided encouraging words at key moments. Sincere thanks to John Jordan, John Bowen, Jim Buzzard, Joe Childers, Amanda Claybaugh, Carolyn Dever, Natalka Freeland, Eileen Gilloy, Gerhard Joseph, Priti Joshi, Sally Ledger, Carol Mackay, Teresa Mangum, Andrew Miller, Catherine Robson, Hillary Schor, Carolyn Williams, Alex Woloch, Robyn Warhol, and Susan Zieger. The insights, scholarship, and evolving work of fellow Victorianists Emily Allen, Nancy Henry, Tim Alborn, George Robb, Jen Hill, Leila May, John Plotz, Marlene Tromp, and Tammy Whitlock have helped me to develop my own ideas, and inspired me to attempt intellectual feats that, if not readily attainable, have nonetheless led me to climb. I have deeply enjoyed sharing with Ellen Rosenman attachments to both the Yelvertons and Mary Price. Maria LaMonaca was my writing buddy for the crucial years of completing the manuscript; for her camaraderie, generous readings, and good humor, I am thankful. Celeste Pottier was a wonderful research assistant and friend as I prepared, at long last, to let the manuscript out of my hands.

I will tell anyone who asks how much I adore my colleagues at the University of South Carolina. The book owes a great deal to the rigor and acumen of Greg Forter, Susan Courtney, Nina Levine, Mindy Fenske, John Muckelbauer, Carol Harrison, Tony Jarrells, Gretchen Woertendyke, Holly Crocker, Dan Smith, and Ed Gieskes, many of whom participated in the colloquium that helped me to sort through my most recalcitrant chapter. As I worked towards completing the manuscript, they were steady sources of support and
inspiration. And Steve Lynn was the best Chair ever, in the whole history of the world.

To my dear, dear family and friends who are family, I offer deep gratitude. Laura Helper deserves special mention as my writing comrade of over a decade now—in the darkest nights of revision, she was shiny and bright, a warm and wonderful star. I couldn’t have done it without her. Rachel, Laurie, Leah, Stephanie, Sara, Jeanne, Max, Thelma, Suki, and Becky: you women rock my world and I love you for it. Annette and Mel; Liz, Michel, Alexander, and Aidan; Jon, Elisa, and baby Leo; Kenny and Beth; Evan; Benjy and Toni—I love you all so much. Thank you.

Introduction

Fraud at Home
The Private Life of Capitalism

Thus fraud is the order and hum of the day,
While honesty’s kick’d like a strumpet away,
Pimps, sharps and pickpockets join hands with defaulters
Some waiting for places—and others for halters
Sing Tantarara Rogues all!
—“Frauds and Pickpockets, or Rogues All!”

John Sadleir was a household name even before his body turned up on
the Heath. A major player in a number of banks, Chairman of the Royal
Swedish Railway Company, and a former Junior Lord of the Treasury, Sadleir
held a choice position in Britain’s economic pantheon. He was no angel, to
be sure—he resigned his ministry post after revenging himself against a man
who had failed to support him—but the public had nonetheless learned to
respect him as a financial genius. That public paid attention, therefore, when
the London Times reported on February 18, 1856, that Sadleir’s body had
been found at dawn on Hampstead Heath, next to a bottle and a silver cream
jug that bore his crest. The slippery traces of essential oil of bitter almonds
on both the bottle and the jug added intrigue to the story: despite its fragrant
potential to invoke homey memories of marzipan and pear cakes, essential oil
of bitter almonds contains prussic acid, better known today as hydrogen cy-

nide. The bottle was labeled with the word “poison” in at least four different
places, thereby eliminating any doubt, and allowing the Times to pronounce
Sadleir a suicide, even before the inquest.

That the story would be a sensation seemed a foregone conclusion, but
the terms of that sensation shifted the following day as the nation began to
discover why so successful a financier had sought so gruesome and solitary an
end. Initially, the Times recorded “an impression that the deceased had dis-
ordered his mind by over-speculation” (“Suicide of Mr. John Sadleir” 1856). Within a week, it became clear that the extent of that “over-” was staggering, and that the financial and mental “disorder” the deceased had left in his wake was enormous. Revelation piled on revelation: Sadleir’s securities for loans and businesses proved to be fraudulent, and the Tipperary Joint-Stock Bank, of which he was the primary creditor and to which he had appointed his brother James as chairman, failed. Sadleir had transferred money from rightful accounts to his own. He had manufactured counterfeit deeds, prying wax seals from legitimate documents and pasting them onto forgeries (The Times, 26 February 1856). In a shockingly blatant memorandum, he had instructed James how to doctor the books so as to feign the solvency of a bankrupt bank. In the end, it became clear that Sadleir’s suicide dovetailed with the imminent discovery that he had “swindled the public to an amount little short of half a million” (ibid.). The Times noted wryly that “as a forger he seems to have been remarkably successful. . . . At the close of last week it was added that many forgeries on private individuals had been already made out, and that the discovery of many more was anticipated. On the whole, this seems the greatest crash made by any individual in recent times” (“Adjourned Inquest”). As the ensuing weeks brought to light balance sheets that were outright lies, falsified books, and a barrage of phony titles and securities, a national panic ensued. One of the great frauds of the century, Sadleir brought down with him businesses, banks, and innumerable private citizens.

The individual investor garnered what may seem a surprising proportion of the press coverage. For example, the Times printed the full account of the inquest and various articles on the large-scale implications for the banking industry and the stock market, but it also granted substantial space to Sadleir’s ruin of private shareholders, some of whom were so fortunate as to recoup two shillings to the pound, but most of whom lost everything. On February 28, the correspondent from Ireland concentrated almost entirely on personal stories, including an extract from the Kilkenny Moderator that detailed Sadleir’s ruin of “a struggling farmer, residing near Annamult,” and of “a humble publican in Thomastown [who] was a depositor to the amount of about 500L., the savings of his whole life. Many similar cases,” the journalist noted ruefully, “might be recounted.” According to an extract from the Waterford Mail, those “similar cases” involved even more tragic subjects: “We regret to find so many of the shareholders described as widows and spinsters. These ladies have, we fear, invested all their property in such shares, and they will not be able to book up to meet the claims of depositors” (“Suicide” 1856). On March 10, another journalist remarked that Sadleir “was a national calamity,” in part because “the social position of the majority of the sufferers has been more
clearly ascertained. We hear of small farmers, traders, clerks, assistants, police-officers, &c., who have lost their little accumulations from the thrift of many years. The provision for families is gone—the fund which had been provided for the support of declining life in many instances is gone too” (*The Times*, 10 March 1856). In conveying the personal details of the financial disaster, the journalism took on an emotional, novelistic tone that had far more to say about the social ramifications of Sadleir’s fraud than about its strictly financial elements.

A wide array of weekly and daily papers published excerpts from Sadleir’s final letters, the melodramatic tenor of which reinforced how literally his swindling hit home. “I have committed diabolical crimes unknown to any human being,” he wrote in one published letter. “They will now appear, bringing my family and others to distress—causing to all shame and grief that they should have ever known me.” Another selection portrays him wishing, “Oh, that I had never quitted Ireland—Oh that I had resisted the first attempts to launch me into speculation! If I had had less talents of a worthless kind and more firmness I might have remained as I once was honest and truthful [sic]—and I would have lived to see my dear Father and Mother in their old age—I weep and weep now but what can that avail” (“Suicide” 1856). Coupled with the sad tales of widows and spinsters, of humble publicans and struggling farmers, the swindler’s laments for the familial happiness he had forfeited, for the “distress . . . shame and grief” he would bring to his “family and others,” rendered his corporate deceit a drama of private, emotional suffering. Throughout the journalistic coverage, the technicalities of his swindles remained amorphous and nondescript, but their effects on private lives appeared in vivid detail.

This tendency to concentrate on fraud’s personal consequences conformed to a more general trend that emphasized the perils of commercial enterprise for the home, its contents, and its inhabitants. The press was only one form of popular culture that, in cautioning against the dangerous effects of speculation, turned to the emotive power of ruined widows, children, and hardworking fathers to render its pathos complete.2 *Fraud and its Victims*, for example, performed at the Royal Surrey Theatre in 1857, closes with a remonstrance to remember that many of the “poor wretches in the streets” are “honest fathers of families, trembling widows, and helpless orphans, who have been robbed of their all [by] . . . smooth frauds of men—who dare to stand erect amongst their fellow men—while their victims perish in the streets or die unthought of in their miserable garrets” (Coyne 1857, 49). Representations of the middle classes worked within similar parameters: William Powell Frith’s *The Race for Wealth* (1877–80), a Hogarthian series of five narrative paintings that depict “the career of a fraudulent financier, or promoter of bubble companies,”
Introduction

includes as its centerpiece a dramatic portrait of a family gathered in their well-appointed breakfast room at the moment they learn of their impending smash (Frith 1888, 2:141). While the series includes a diversity of settings, including the Old Bailey and Newgate prison, Tom Taylor’s 1880 exhibition pamphlet advises viewers that “These five pictures are to be looked at as the five acts of a domestic drama dealing with the real life of the day” (Taylor 1880, 2; emphasis added). Together, these texts exemplify a general rule wherein both fictional and nonfictional representations of fraud stressed its power to reverse the proper relationship between private and public space, to expose the vulnerable members of the home to threats that lay beyond its doors.

Or, I should say, that ideally lay beyond its doors: the threshold of the home hardly kept the marketplace at bay. Although Victorian England is famous for revering the domestic realm as a sphere separate from the market and its concerns, this book follows the past two decades of scholarship in feminist and cultural studies in taking the Victorian ideology of separate spheres as precisely that—an ideology, one that operated alongside, and crucially depended for its popularity on, a reality that offered no such clear separation. That is not to say that “public” and “private” did not operate as recognizable categories of knowledge or fields of action; it is, however, to assert the fact that daily life frequently involved the public and the private impinging on, operating within, and conflicting with one another. “Domestic fraud,” the focus of this book, depends for its surprise and its cachet on a formal tenuousness of categorization in which the separation of public from private inevitably, predictably, and consistently fails. While that failure may have helped nominally to bolster the appeal of political projects that promised to erect better fences between difficult neighbors, it also paradoxically cultivated a marked appetite for narratives of invasion, seepage, and contamination that asserted the impossibility of maintaining firm boundaries. The most frequently cited of sources, Ruskin’s famous paean to the home in “Of Queen’s Gardens,” contends that “so far as the anxieties of the outer life penetrate into it, and the inconsistently-minded, unknown, unloved, or hostile society of the outer world is allowed by either husband or wife to cross the threshold, it ceases to be home; it is then only a part of that outer world which you have roofed over, and lighted fire in” (Ruskin 1891, 115–16). Here, Ruskin’s “inconsistently-minded, unknown, unloved, or hostile society” references the increasingly complicated milieu that was “the outer world,” in which fraud was one of the more popular quandaries. As one early-nineteenth-century tour book of sorts, The Frauds of London, observed, “Petty forgeries and frauds . . . seem to multiply and advance with the opulence and luxury of the country; and to branch out into innumerable shades, varying as the fashions of the year” (1826–27, 3).
Fraud at Home

leading “anxieties of the outer life” that both sustained the fantasy of hermetically separate worlds, and proved its utter impracticability.

Far from being an isolated haven of fiscal safety and ignorance, even the most modest home was a site of purchase, exchange, and employment. Within its walls, men and women hired or worked as servants, contracted marriages, managed children, and obtained furniture, clothing, food, and labor. While popular representations of market fraud reinforced the fact that domestic life was vulnerable to the stings of the marketplace, Victorian culture at large identified the home itself as a place of business. The household was subject, therefore, not only to the effects of fraud in the “outer world,” but also to swindlers who worked within its perimeters, taking advantage of its vulnerabilities just as market swindlers manipulated traders in banking, commerce, and other ostensibly “public” fields of exchange. Herbert Spencer remarked in “The Morals of Trade” (1859) on the gigantic system of dishonesty, branching out into every conceivable form of fraud, [that] has roots which run underneath our whole social fabric, and, sending fibres into every house, suck up strength from our daily sayings and doings. In every dining-room a rootlet finds food, when the conversation turns on So-and-so’s successful speculations, his purchase of an estate, his probable worth—on this man’s recent large legacy, and the other’s advantageous match; for being thus talked about is one form of that tacit respect which men struggle for. Every drawing-room furnishes nourishment in the admiration awarded to costliness—to silks that are “rich,” that is, expensive; to dresses that contain an enormous quantity of material, that is, are expensive; to laces that are hand-made, that is, expensive; to diamonds that are rare, that is, expensive; to china that is old, that is, expensive. And from scores of small remarks and minutiae of behaviour, which, in all circles, hourly imply how completely the idea of respectability involves that of costly externals, there is drawn fresh pabulum. (Spencer 1892, 146)

Spencer notes the widespread “roots” of fraud that found nourishment and bore fruit in every Victorian house. The expensive material goods that raised the costs of admiration rendered the home a commercial site, a fact that even a cursory glance at a Victorian housekeeping book made clear.6

Domestic fraud was both a fact of daily life and a primary ingredient of Victorian popular culture: nineteenth-century texts are crowded with impostors who come to the door assuming the shapes of tradesmen, reputable doctors, or long-lost relatives; with servants who misrepresent their credentials, make off with personal property, and otherwise compromise the economic
integrity of the household; with food that is not nearly so wholesome as it appears; with false suitors who threaten the stability of normative domestic relationships; and with two-faced acquaintances who undermine the social and fiscal credit of friendship, romance, and the family. In the face of such figures, which provide the subject matter of the pages that follow, this book argues that domestic fraud was a fundamental component of the Victorian imagination.

Because my chapters provide a history of cases and categories of fraud that operated within locations that have traditionally been construed as domestic, my definition of “domestic fraud” is partially spatial. More significantly, it is conceptual. Alongside the multiplication of joint-stock corporations and the rise of a credit-based economy, which dramatically increased swindling in the Victorian money market, the threat of fraud took shape both in actual household commerce and in popular ideas about ostensibly private, more emotive forms of exchange. For example, while the Sadleir case in and of itself does little to illuminate swindles that happened within the home and among domestic relationships, it does establish how powerfully fraud operated as a cognitive, affective trope. As I’ve already noted, the journalistic coverage departed repeatedly from the world of legislation, agencies, and banks to focus on sentimental and domestic components of both Sadleir’s and his victims’ lives. Furthermore, it insistently rendered Sadleir’s fraud a social problem, by attending assiduously to his debasement of the public’s personal—as well as financial—investments in him. According to the Victorian economic journalist David Morier Evans, Sadleir “had the power of impressing upon others a high opinion of his own value” (1859, 227). His election to Parliament and his appointment as Junior Lord of the Treasury derived almost entirely from his capacity to promote himself as a financial Midas—to prompt outlays not only of money, but of trust. One Times writer observed that Sadleir’s fraud was unparalleled, because “The present period, for the majority of Englishmen, is one of economy, not speculation. In the midst of all our caution, however, of all our thrift, of all our circumspection, a knave slips unawares into the camp and swindles his fellow-subjects out of the enormous sum of 1,000,000l. sterling” (The Times, 10 March 1856). Sadleir’s swindling, then, had the potential to affect even those subjects who had not entrusted him with their money; the writer speaks for “the majority of Englishmen,” who, despite “all our caution, . . . all our thrift, . . . all our circumspection,” had allowed the “knave” to enter “the camp” and had believed his fiction of respectability, even if they hadn’t bought into his ventures. Some months later, when rumors began to circulate that the financier had been seen walking the streets of New Orleans and Paris in an Elvis-esque afterlife, many people suspected that he
had even counterfeited death by “simply . . . playing the trick, so well known both in history and romance, of a pretended death and a supposititious corpse” (“Curious Speculation” 1856). Although subsequent articles argued convincingly that Sadleir was decidedly dead, the gist of these stories suggests the ways in which Sadleir had compromised personal as well as fiduciary trust.7

In other words, although Sadleir's operations had financial aims and effects, the costs of his swindles were not simply economic. The media consistently emphasized that Sadleir had culled and therefore compromised more intimate forms of capital, suggesting, as the parodist Douglas Jerrold wrote in 1839, that “swindling . . . has indeed a far more comprehensive meaning than that superficially awarded to it” (7). Within the British legal system, it is in fact startlingly difficult to exaggerate the breadth of that meaning. To this day, “No precise legal definition of fraud exists. In the public service, the term is used to describe such acts as deception, bribery, forgery, extortion, corruption, theft, conspiracy, embezzlement, misappropriation, false representation, concealment of material facts and collusion” (Great Britain 2007, 123).

In a practical sense, the fluidity of Victorian law reflected ongoing parliamentary debates about governmental interference in a market that boasted both unprecedented success and increasingly endemic dishonesty. As George Robb has noted, “Even safeguards against fraud were regarded as undue restrictions of freedom. Fraud, or no fraud, the disciples of Adam Smith resented all state interference in the economy. The government could not, so the argument ran, make people honest by act of Parliament” (1992, 25). Ideologically, the cultural evidence of the period, from art to literature to street ballads, from journalism to political economy to parliamentary debates, testifies to a correspondingly flexible sense of what it might mean in the popular imagination broadly construed to be a fraud, or to be defrauded.

In this context, then, a comprehensive understanding of the scope of fraud requires conceiving of investment in the nonfinancial, as well as financial, senses in which it operates in capitalist culture. Victorian popular texts emphasize the desires, risks, fears, and hopes involved in investment, rendering it a practice far more complex than the simple outlay of cash. To invest is to extend credit, or faith, with the implicit understanding that the sum of one's capital, energy, and trust may be lost. That is not to say that nineteenth-century Britons conceived of financial and social speculation as the same thing; it is, however, to insist that less material forms of exchange work like, on, and alongside the exchange of financial capital.8 As Pierre Bourdieu argues, “It is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory” (1986, 243).
The other forms of capital to which Bourdieu refers are powerful components of both “the structure and functioning of the social world” and of Victorian popular culture. For example, in Julia Pardoe’s *Speculation* (1834), the well-to-do Nichols advises his friend Frank that “matrimony . . . is the best speculation extant; ay, it beats the joint stock companies hollow; for you may embark in it with no other capital than good eyes, ready wit, and unabashable impudence” (1: 6–7). Each category of capital carries its own potential for investment; each involves its own series of risks, losses, and rewards. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, each category intersects complexly with the others. The nineteenth-century credit system, for example, relied so heavily on the properties of education, social connections, and self-presentation that it was nearly incomprehensible when divorced from them. As Anthony Trollope’s Robinson in *The Struggles of Brown, Jones, and Robinson* (1861–62) playfully notes, the social and economic fields shared various significant features, not least of which was a susceptibility to fraud:

Credit I take to be the belief of other people in a thing that doesn’t really exist. When you go to Smith’s house and find Mrs S. all smiles, you give her credit for the sweetest of tempers. Your friend S. knows better; but then you see she’s had wit enough to obtain credit. When I draw a bill at three months, and get it done, I do the same thing. That’s credit. (9)

As Trollope’s speaker draws a bill, grants Mrs S. credit for a good character, and then winks at the reader about the false promise behind both, he suggests how less material, more portable, forms of capital not only circulated more easily than land or gold, but were also considerably more vulnerable to counterfeiting.

The acquisition of cultural capital ostensibly requires the investment of time, energy, or other forms of libido (Bourdieu’s central examples of cultural capital are education and “self-improvement”), but the proliferation of quack doctors, false gentlemen, and characters who feigned educational and professional acquisitions that they never actually possessed suggests the ease with which a savvy swindler might counterfeit, rather than actually obtain,
various cultural, social, and affective assets. The situations in which domestic assets changed hands might also be duplicitous—as in the cases of servants who purposefully soiled clothes so as to claim them as perquisites, which I discuss in chapter 2, or of men who seduced young women by staging fake wedding ceremonies, which I discuss in chapter 4. Because Victorian England employed such a broad vocabulary for the category of personal property (including such “goods” as “good eyes, ready wit, and unabashable impudence”), the situations in which one might be swindled were both diverse and widespread. Most significant to my argument here is that the stakes of domestic exchange, and hence of domestic fraud, might involve money or material goods, but were by no means restricted to them. Not all interpersonal scams fell within the province of the home, of course, but the majority of Victorian popular representations locate fraud within the confines of domestic relationships.

The articles, ballads, novels, poems, melodramas, illustrations, and paintings that provide the cultural evidence for this book illustrate how the social aspects of a potentially abstract economic system permeated the plots and thematic concerns of a wide array of nineteenth-century British print culture. As these archival materials make clear, narratives of domestic fraud appeared in many disparate sorts of texts. Because Victorian communities tended to read widely across genres, consuming literature alongside other popular forms that negotiated economic debates, tensions, and fantasies, my methodological commitments in this book follow the generic distribution of the evidence, situating literary works more familiar to modern readers among texts that are now less recognizable, because they are noncanonical or nonliterary. More cultural history than literary criticism, *Home Economics* engages a diversity of primary material both to demonstrate the breadth of Victorian interest in the risks attending fiscal and personal investing, and to offer a significant context for the tensions, commitments, and tropes that readers of Victorian literature encounter regularly. Where I generally forego extended analysis of canonical texts, I hope that readers will not find it difficult to extrapolate useful connections to them.

To be sure, the tendency to represent economic trouble in social terms was not an exclusively Victorian phenomenon. Puns on words like “counterfeit” in early modern culture confirm that the perils of the marketplace have both been operative within British popular consciousness and figured within social contexts since the advent of capitalism (see Robb 1992). In *Henry IV, Part One*, for example, Falstaff puzzles the link between counterfeiting and life itself, as he rises like Lazarus after his battle with Hotspur:
Introduction

'Sblood, 'twas time to counterfeit or that hot termagant Scot had paid me scot and lot too. Counterfeit? I lie; I am no counterfeit. To die is to be a counterfeit, for he is but the counterfeit of a man who hath not the life of a man; but to counterfeit dying when a man thereby liveth is to be no counterfeit but the true and perfect image of life indeed. (5.4.120–26)

The endearing convolutions of Falstaff's logic signal some of the basic fascinations that arise in a society with developing forms of capitalist endeavor and expanding domains of mass culture. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the hazards of private banking, of the emerging credit economy, and of the stock market reinforced a set of perceptual paradigms based in risk that increasingly governed popular representations of ostensibly private, more emotive, forms of exchange. In *Pamela*, for example, Richardson's heroine famously deems her "virtue" more valuable than jewels, land, or money, and the drama of the novel's first half depends almost entirely on Mr. B's increasingly spectacular attempts to swindle Pamela of that prized property. *Moll Flanders* similarly derives much of its piquancy from Moll's sly, *social* depredations and from the various erotic and romantic deceptions practiced on her. Yet Falstaff, Mr. B, and Moll circulate within a wide array of storylines to which swindling contributed but was not yet so ubiquitous a plot element as it became in the nineteenth century. By the mid-Victorian period, that is, the figure of the fraud was a stock character of the novel; of both high art narrative paintings and cheap illustrations; of the various newspapers, which had multiplied in both number and readership since the early modern period; and of the parlance of the law courts. One feature unique to the Victorian fraud plot, therefore, is its prevalence. It is difficult, in fact, to identify a single Victorian novel that does not engage in some way with the potential for social or emotional swindling.

More significantly, Victorian texts take a distinct approach to the problems of counterfeiting and duplicity with which Falstaff engages so playfully. Nineteenth-century popular discourse nearly universally characterizes fraud as an inexorable component not only of some abstract, far-off market, but of daily life. In 1858, the minister at Lambeth Chapel preached to his congregation,

Walk through our streets in this great city: you have lies on either side of you, compelling attention in every window. Scarcely an announcement will bear the test of simple truth. Things are declared to be what the author of the declaration knows them not to be. You know not whom to trust, or what to trust. You submit to fraud as an unavoidable necessity, and accept falsehood as a part...
Fraud at Home

of the established order of things. Truth you know of in the abstract, but truth practical you despair of. It is an attribute of God, a heavenly virtue,—impracticable in this ungodly world. This is the miserable inference you are tempted to draw. (Shepherd 1858, 9)

Victorian representations reflect various attitudes toward the persistence of fraud. Some are sardonic about honesty in general, and so take an entirely ludic perspective on swindling; others regard fraud as a deplorable inevitability but rely on the fake to establish the “true gold” of some exception to a disheartening rule. Regardless of attitude, regardless of form, the preponderance of Victorian cultural texts not only characterize fraud as a social menace far more prevalent than any purely economic problem but also maintain that fraud is integral to the field of social exchange—that it is not only inescapable but, potentially and paradoxically, a necessary evil.12

To illustrate, consider one resurrection of John Sadleir in popular literature. In Charles Dickens’s Little Dorrit (1857), Sadleir appears as the isolated, guilt-wracked Mr. Merdle, a swindling financier who ruins entire communities and eventually takes his own life. The early numbers of Little Dorrit were already in print when Sadleir committed suicide, and the plans for the novel reveal that Dickens had already determined that his hero, Arthur Clennam, would suffer a financial smash. However, when he began writing the novel’s sixth number, just two days after Sadleir’s death, Dickens drew on the incident to add currency and depth to his novel’s fraud. His letter to John Forster about the number confirms direct influence: “I had the general idea of the Society business before the Sadleir affair,” Dickens writes, “but I shaped Mr. Merdle himself out of that precious rascality” (Forster 1874, 3:159). As Norman Russell observes, “Dickens’s depiction of Mr Merdle was coloured in some part by recollections of George Hudson, the ‘Railway King’”; and the fall of Strahan, Paul & Bates in 1855 “could certainly have suggested an effective means of effecting [Clennam’s] ruin”; but Sadleir provided a more specific and sensational anchor for the novel’s plot of market fraud (1986, 134).13

However, although Little Dorrit certainly attends to the disastrous effects of financial speculation, domestic fraud in both its spatial and ideological contexts dominates the novel’s concerns. As in the press coverage of the Sadleir case, the particulars of Mr. Merdle’s business remain obscure and inaccessible. “Nobody knew with the least precision what Mr. Merdle’s business was, except that it was to coin money,” Dickens writes. His Sadleir takes shape in “a jungle of overgrown sentences” in which he is “Gigantic Enterprise, The Wealth of England, Elasticity, Credit, Capital, Prosperity, and all manner of blessings” (Dorrit, 331, 578). “The City” appears briefly, but then only to emphasize
Introduction

that Merdle’s business is precariously mobile. When Mrs. Merdle complains that her husband carries his “business cares and projects about, instead of leaving them in the City, or wherever else they belong to,” she emphasizes his propensity to carry fraud directly into domestic space and the field of private life (333).

Correspondingly, Dickens bestows the finest precision on his portraits of individual homes. The novel is full of exact and exhaustive descriptions not only of the Merdles’ overstuffed house, in which “there was so much Powder in waiting, that it flavored the dinner” (209), but also of William Dorrit’s cozy jail cell in the Marshalsea prison; of Arthur Clennam’s funereal manse; and of the Plornishes’ parlor, including its delightful faux pastoral mural. By the novel’s close, each of these sites has served as a backdrop for interpersonal swindles, many of which intersect with, but are not reducible to, the crash of Mr. Merdle’s enterprise. Little Dorrit, in short, might be summed up as a horror story about the ubiquity of fraud.

The Times’s remark that Sadleir “had disordered his mind by over-speculation” recurs in Little Dorrit in the trope of speculation as disease. This analogy was already a well-established component of a larger anti-capitalist rhetoric, in that it underscored the porosity of supposedly “separate” spheres: the metaphor of illness suggests the potential for a “sick” marketplace to infect the home and its inhabitants. An early humorous pamphlet entitled A Cure for Deceit, for example, describes the symptoms that signal the onset of deprecation: “An intense itching in the skin to do as much mischief as possible to everyone about you, a total absence of all good feeling for others, and a great desire to ‘SWIM’ yourself at the expense of ‘SINKING’ your friends—A love of FLATTERING every one and an entire absence of one good requisite for an honest character.” Elsewhere, John Lalor’s Money and Morals, published in 1852, worries in similar terms about the “highly contagious passions of the human mind which prompt men to seek sudden accessions of wealth” (84). In keeping with the representational strategies I have been discussing here, the rhetoric of economic ailment stressed the potential for misguided speculation and greed to contaminate investors’ relationships not only to the marketplace, but also to their friends and families.

In Little Dorrit, Mr. Merdle’s “Complaint” is apparently a mysterious medical condition; after his suicide, however, it becomes clear that “the late Mr. Merdle’s complaint had been, simply, Forgery and Robbery” (Dorrit, 593). Much earlier in the novel, Dickens sets up the metaphor of contagion that eventually structures the mania for misguided investing, associating it with the danger of allowing disease to cross boundaries with impunity. In a chapter entitled “The Progress of an Epidemic,” he postulates,
That it is at least as difficult to stay a moral infection as a physical one; that such a disease will spread with the malignity and rapidity of the Plague; that the contagion, when it has once made head, will spare no pursuit or condition, but will lay hold on people in the soundest health, and become developed in the most unlikely constitutions; is a fact as firmly established by experience as that we human creatures breathe an atmosphere. (476)

The ailment in question in this passage quite explicitly has nothing to do with the Plague proper; this is the fever for speculation. “Bred at first, as many diseases are, in the wickedness of men, and then disseminated in their ignorance,” Dickens writes, “these epidemics, after a period, get communicated to many sufferers who are neither ignorant nor wicked” (487–88).

Significantly, this same chapter suggests the means of communication, as Dickens brings his reader into a scene of domestic warmth, namely the Plornishes’ shop-parlor. It contains a trompe l’oeil (“a little fiction,” Dickens calls it) painted to resemble the exterior of a Happy Cottage replete with sunflower and hollyhock, a faithful dog, and a pigeon house.

No Poetry and no Art ever charmed the imagination more than the union of the two in this counterfeit cottage charmed Mrs. Plornish. It was nothing to her that Plornish had a habit of leaning against it as he smoked his pipe after work. . . . To Mrs. Plornish, it was still a most beautiful cottage, a most wonderful deception; and it made no difference that Mr. Plornish’s eye was some inches above the level of the gable bedroom in the thatch. (478–79)

The Plornishes’ “little fiction” seems safe enough—delightful, even—but prophetically, the implications of this passage are decidedly more ominous. The Plornishes prove to be key actors in promoting the name of Merdle among the working-class denizens of Bleeding Heart Yard.17 “Mrs Plornish,” Dickens writes,

habitually held forth about him over the counter, in conversation with her customers. Mr. Plornish, who had a small share in a small builder’s business in the neighbourhood, said, trowel in hand, on the tops of scaffolds and on the tiles of houses, that people did tell him as Mr. Merdle was the one, mind you, to put us all to rights in respects of that which all on us looked to, and to bring us all safe home as much we needed, mind you, fur toe be brought. (476)

As Mrs. Plornish chats up the name of Merdle in her shop room, Mr. Plornish endorses him from the very rooftops of the homes he builds in Bleeding Heart
Yard, exemplifying the novel’s deep connections between domestic exchange and corporate fraud, and reinforcing its anxiety about the propensity of fraud to compromise the “safe home.” More subtly, however, the Plornishes reinforce *Little Dorrit*’s general concern with forms of fraud that have nothing whatever to do with investment proper. Indeed, Merdle and the financier who inspired him are completely extraneous to the novel’s central plot, which involves the romance between Amy Dorrit and Arthur Clennam, a man raised in a house so riddled with familial fictions—a sham marriage, a sham mother, a stolen legacy—that it literally implodes in the novel’s climax.

The plotting becomes quite convoluted, and here I map only the ways that *Little Dorrit*, despite its status as Dickens’s longest and most overt study of the Victorian money market, renders swindling a domestic (in this case, familial), as well as a financial, problem. At the novel’s moral center is Amy Dorrit, a veritable homemaking wonder who can turn even a prison cell into a site of domestic comfort. In fact, Amy paints pretty murals of domestic felicity from the novel’s start. She supports her father’s tranquility, first by maintaining his fantasy that neither she nor her sister works; and later, when he falls into dementia, by taking to an “imaginary pawnbroker” his “pompous gold watch,” his sleeve-buttons, his finger-rings, and his clothes. As Janice Carlisle notes, “She is the one who maintains the ‘pious fraud’ that her brother Tip is a visitor, not an inmate, in the debtor’s prison” (1975, 200). More significantly, Amy begins her life with Clennam “with the inception of a new fiction, a new instance of secrecy” (ibid., 203).

Within the novel’s overt logic, Amy offers a promising alternative to its unhappier homemakers: in particular, she seems well equipped to create an honest abode for Arthur, her employer’s son, who eventually becomes her husband. The reader learns, however, that Amy’s capacity to keep things tidy has its darker side. Amy’s relationship to the Clennam family involves a codicil that is meant to leave her a substantial inheritance. The codicil derives from her uncle’s patronage of Clennam’s real mother, a beautiful young singer with whom Arthur’s father had the misfortune to fall in love. Despite the fact that Clennam senior is devoted to and secretly has a child (namely, Arthur) with the unnamed singer, he is coerced into marriage with a severe, cold woman whose father is in business with his family. Within a year of her marriage, the severe, cold, woman (now Mrs. Clennam) learns that the man she has married is not the man she had bargained for: she had been promised a husband of strict religious upbringing, whose “uncle’s roof had been a sanctuary to him from the contagion of the irreligious and dissolute” (*Dorrit*, 644); she gets instead a man who has fathered a child and is in love with another woman. When she learns that the contract into which
Fraud at Home

she has entered is based on a series of lies, Mrs. Clennam is outraged and deems herself “the instrument of... punishment” for her husband and his lover (648). She demands of them compensation that, she feels, will distribute the sense of loss more evenly among “investors.” That payment takes the material form of young Arthur Clennam’s body. Confronting the singer, Mrs. Clennam demands,

You have a child; I have none. You love that child. Give him to me. He shall believe himself to be my son, and he shall be believed by everyone to be my son. To save you from exposure, his father shall swear never to see or communicate with you more; equally to save him from being stripped by his uncle, and to save your child from being a beggar, you shall swear never to see or communicate with either of them more. (648)

In other words, her solution to the fraud that has been practiced on her is to compound deceit, to add the fraud of maternity to the fraud of her marriage. And she never reveals the codicil, which Arthur’s uncle had intended to atone for the singer’s suffering, until the blackmailer, Blandois, threatens to expose her.

Ironically, therefore, the novel’s conclusion depends not on the resolution of domestic fraud, but on its perpetuation. Well after Merdle’s suicide and the fall of his “Wonderful Bank,” Mrs. Clennam brings both codicil and confession of Arthur’s true parentage to Amy Dorrit. “I will restore to you what I have withheld from you,” Mrs. Clennam declares. “Forgive me. Can you forgive me?” (658). As the reader has been taught to expect, Amy has nothing but compassion for the woman who has robbed her of her legacy and the man she loves of his true mother. But in coming into possession of her own property (which at that point is only knowledge, the fortune having gone the way of Merdle), Amy accrues Arthur’s as well—and she keeps it, just as Mrs. Clennam had kept it before her. Because the series of lies that defrauded Arthur of his true birthright remains in Amy’s possession, the happy close of the marriage plot reiterates the terms of the family swindle that structures the novel’s central story. While Little Dorrit would readily give over her available economic capital to her husband when she marries, she keeps to herself the social and emotional property of his parentage (681).

Amy’s behavior may not fit the convenient American definition of fraud as the intentional deception of a person for the purpose of depriving that person of property or causing that person injury in other ways—and certainly, one may choose to distinguish between the pious and the less pious strains of swindling. Nonetheless, Arthur and Amy’s “modest life of usefulness and
happiness” is predicated on the *very same duplicity* that characterizes Mrs. Clennam as a swindler. Thus this novel, which transmogrifies John Sadleir into Mr. Merdle and treats speculation as a species of Plague, represents the home as infected space even after both Merdle and Mrs. Clennam have fallen. The happy home, in fact, is presumed to be happier for the fraud Amy Dorrit maintains.

At the novel’s close, a minor character, Ferdinand Barnacle, argues, “We must have humbug, we all like humbug, we couldn’t get on without humbug” (616). Although Dickens guides his readers to reject such explicit cynicism, one cannot help but wonder whether, living in the age of Sadleir, he found it difficult to imagine even a domestic contract free from humbug in some shape or form. And, to be sure, Ferdinand Barnacle has a point with regard to Victorian culture: “we all like humbug” concretizes a crucial component of the popular appetite.

The following chapters trace “humbug” through the rooms of the Victorian home, to examine literal occurrences of swindling that plagued family legacies; master–servant relationships; the trade in food and drink; and the business of marriage. Chapter 1 examines the case of the Tichborne Claimant, a butcher from Australia who claimed to be the long-lost heir of the Tichborne estates in Hampshire. His legal trials in the 1870s—at that time the longest in British legal history—generated an abundance of printed materials, including ballads, cartoons, melodramas, alphabets, and parodies. These texts establish the enormous popularity of the case, but they also underscore the importance of narrative to both economic and social processes of investing. I argue that mid-Victorian popular culture offered a significant opportunity to engage with risk within a virtual, if not an actual, context. The Tichborne case in particular negotiated contemporary debates about speculation, particularly about the discrimination between who had the right to access the risks and thrills of the market, and who did not. Clearly situating economic dishonesty within a family setting, the Tichborne Claimant emphasized the subjective profits that an audience might accrue in engaging with domestic fraud. Thus the case operates more broadly to illustrate the concomitant social forces that worked both to discipline actual frauds and to distribute and promote stories about them.

My second chapter examines the context in which anxieties about domestic fraud became most visible, namely middle-class Victorian attitudes toward servants. Domestic administration was a particularly volatile activity in that it foregrounded the home as a site of employment, as its own marketplace perhaps different but in no way divorced from the world of commerce. Themselves forms of capital, servants had capacities for mobility and circulation that
replicated the operations of capital beyond the home. A plethora of ballads and chapbooks relate the escapades of footmen who make off with the good silver, and various other domestics (such as “The He-She Ladies’ Maid”) who prove not to be what they seem. This chapter concentrates on the complicated distribution and management of property within the home, demonstrating through “character” plots, “eye-service,” and the perquisite system the integration of business and domestic perspectives about the rights of access I discuss in the first chapter.

Chapter 3 turns to the problem of food adulteration and the crisis it raised in the 1850s as increasing numbers of merchants were found to be cutting flour with alum, for example, or enhancing the appearance of potted vegetables with copper or lead. In this case, the market entered the home both literally, in the shape of adulterated foodstuffs, and more metaphorically, as individuals carried the principles of microscopy (instrumental in detecting food fraud) into social interactions, minutely evaluating one another for authenticity. The scandal of food adulteration was thus manifold in its effects: at the same time as it generated parliamentary inquiry and public education, it was also part of a larger social transformation by which the domestic population was taught domestic suspicion. I include here a close reading of Christina Rossetti’s “Goblin Market” and a broader discussion of Mrs. J. H. Riddell’s 1866 novel *The Race for Wealth*, which features a food adulterator as one of its two male protagonists. Although this character initially enters the adulteration business to the honorable end of reclaiming his family’s estates, Riddell suggests that fraud is perilously contagious. Lawrence becomes increasingly involved with dishonest practices, slipping easily from adulteration to adultery in a double tragedy of market and marital deception.

*The Race for Wealth* provides the transition into the fourth chapter, which argues that the rise of popular interest in failed marriage plots in the mid-Victorian period owes as much to the prevalence of domestic fraud as it does to the oft-cited Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857. The former raised issues of fiscal and personal responsibility, while the latter stimulated and reflected a growing skepticism about the value of marriage as an institution. Narratives of false marriage, bigamy, impersonation, and gold-digging grew increasingly popular. I argue that this fascination testifies to a crisis within the family: no longer certain what constituted “real” or “true” connubiality, the public sated both curiosity and anxiety with narratives of swindlers whose schemes for economic, social, or physical profit worked by manipulating the tenuous values of the marriage plot. Drawing evidence from historical and cultural materials including literature, legal cases, newspaper accounts, illustrations, and ballads, I focus in particular on the wildly popular Yelverton marriage case. The public
fascination with the trials of Major William Charles Yelverton, who staged not one but two dubious marriage ceremonies to Marie Theresa Longworth, is emblematic of a larger appetite for narratives of marital deception and depreciation.

My conclusion turns to futures both economic and temporal. In closing this book, I engage the rise of economic lingo in nineteenth-century mothering manuals alongside legal debates about the Victorian futures market, both of which took on a peculiar urgency in the 1860s. At the same time as domestic pundits were emphasizing the need for rigorous childhood training in order to prevent a future riddled with economic dishonesty, Parliament was voting to make the market even more free by legitimizing futures trading, which had long been illegal because of its susceptibility to fraud. From that discussion, I turn briefly to more recent history, to Martha Stewart and Enron, to Hustle and The Riches, to consider the enduring appeal of domestic fraud in current popular media.

The appetite for quick riches, alongside the tales of impersonation and duplicity more central to this study, combined to furnish British culture with innumerable fraudulent narratives and narratives of fraud. Tracing these stories, this book examines how economic dishonesty permeated widely held conceptions of public and private life, personal value, work and familial roles, and the character of intimate relationships. Throughout, I aim to elucidate not only the salient details of particular plots, but also the wider concerns about capital, value, and social exchange that structured their relationship to Victorian popular consciousness.
Conclusion

Child Rearing, Time Bargains, and the Modern Life of Fraud

In closing this book, I turn to two pasts and two futures. The pasts are those of the pages that precede this one and of the historical moment those pages consider. The futures are the oddly domestic permutations of, first, the Victorian futures market and second, the emergent forms of fraud that continue to fascinate consumers of twentieth- and twenty-first-century popular culture.

I have been arguing that fraud was a vital component of the Victorian home, basic to its daily operations and to its contours in the imagination. In reviewing influential legal contexts for imposture, domestic employment, food, and marriage, I have sought to establish the complexities of duplicity and of the diverse forms of capital that were at risk within even the most secure household. Further, I have been suggesting various of the structures of reading that popular culture offered for the consumption of its own goods. Pleasure, danger, possessiveness, detection, play, and rueful detachment all emerge as salient perspectives in Victorian texts, although they hardly exhaust the possible modes by which Victorian subjects might engage the proximate valences of risk. I return to the past to consider how, sometime around 1860, Victorian mothers became responsible for the economic future of England. I then turn from that past to its futures, in part to note the endurance of its principles (the home produces the nation), and in part to remark how powerfully recent incarnations of swindling work to invest the con with a startlingly cozy and ethical family life.
The future is almost inevitably a space of investment in which one may hedge one’s bets, speculate with measured optimism, or venture full hope that the harvest will be good. It is also, as Lee Edelman has argued, “kid stuff” (2004, 1). Childrearing is a future-oriented pursuit, a sustained practice that engages with time both concretely, in the often rigorous schedules of children’s daily activities, and speculatively, in the hopes that motivate those schedules—namely that the measured disbursement of hours and energy will equip the home’s future adults with desirable sets of skills, attitudes, and ethics. The abstract temporality of investment emerges with particular clarity in a European television spot that won a Silver Lion award in Cannes in 2003. Originally produced in Belgium, the ad depicts a handsome young father shopping with his son in the supermarket. The child is young, perhaps six years old, but he is already very much his own person, at least in the consumer sense of things. Walking to a shelf, he selects a large bag of candy and, looking hopefully up at his father, places it amongst the leeks and celery and oranges in the cart. His father removes the bag and replaces it on the shelf. The child again picks up the bag, returns it determinedly to the cart, and crosses his arms, regarding his father impudently. The father only raises an eyebrow in response and undauntedly subtracts the bag of candy from his groceries. With a defiant gleam in his eye, the boy begins to scream. “I want those sweeties!” he insists in French, “I want those sweeties!” Running through the aisles, the child throws merchandise from the shelves, throws himself on the floor, and makes such a scene that the other customers look reprovingly at the father. The shot closes in on his exhausted face, as the tagline for the ad appears below: “Use condoms.”

Not surprisingly, this commercial sets up a very different perspective on the future than one finds in Victorian England, but it nonetheless helps to define the terms of the argument I’ll be advancing here. In the logic of the brand (Zazoo condoms), to spend in the present is to look forward to profits that accrue deductively, as both libidinal and economic savings in the future: with the wise purchase of condoms, there will be no need to buy big bags of candy, no need to engage with the personal costs of exhaustion or public humiliation. Depending on a logic of regret to promote an investment in the future, Zazoo advocates spending a little money now so as to circumvent a potential tomorrow characterized by shame in the supermarket and the unreasonable (and significantly commercial) demands of a child.

While Victorian popular materials were significantly less contraceptively oriented, the Zazoo ad’s emphasis on quality of life factors into much mid-Victorian discourse about financial and reproductive futures. In fact, throughout the 1850s and 1860s, there was a marked spike in conversation about...
the risks involved in both fields and the urgency of policing them. Bringing together the language of economic futurism with the discourse of childrearing, various advisors urged and sometime pleaded with Victorian parents to consider England’s future as they tended their tender crops. The rhetoric in childrearing manuals stands in radical contrast to the message of the condom ad: for the Victorians, the life to be protected was that of the nation, rather than the potential parent, and the savings that might ensue depended on properly dedicated (that is, unselfish) investments in raising up children who would have a similarly unselfish perspective. Mid-Victorian popular culture also regarded the child as a problem, but its vision of a profitable British future depended on properly managing these little crops, not on avoiding planting them in the first place.

The financial futures market also encouraged speculation on as yet unharvested crops. Futures in cotton, for example, were particularly popular and profoundly risky in the 1860s, when the American Civil War produced a cotton famine in England and prices went through the roof. Futures trading was already well established by then and had in fact been in place almost since the stock market was in its infancy. One of its most popular forms was the time bargain, a promise to buy stock at a specified price on a specified date. As Stuart Banner observes, futures trading was largely virtual, in that “one did not need to transfer any stock, or indeed to own any stock, in order to speculate in the market. . . . Neither [party] even needs to be wealthy enough to buy any shares, because the most either could lose from the transaction is the difference in share prices between the two dates” (1998, 28–29).

Despite, or perhaps because of, its uniquely democratic access to speculation, the futures market was riddled with fraud—as Banner notes, “Stock jobbers soon discovered [that] the price of stock was much more easily manipulated than the price of anything previously known” (30). It was remarkably simple to drive prices up or down by forming consortia of speculators who would either puff worthless shares, or buy or sell large numbers of them, in order to skew the stock price for the moment of settling. Apparently the state of affairs was quite bad quite early, for in 1734 Parliament passed Sir John Barnard’s Act, which prohibited trade of stocks that a person did not already own; forbade contracts for trading stock in any time other than the present; and finally, refused to protect, and indeed imposed fines on, those who violated these prohibitions.

The Act was ambitious, but not entirely effective. Futures trading continued but gained the reputation of being the riskiest field for speculation. Over a hundred years later, John Francis’s *Chronicles and Characters of the Stock Exchange* warned readers away from the market and the jobbers who
Conclusion

ran it. “The great mass of their transactions are without the pale of the law,” he cautioned. “All their time-bargains . . . are illegal. . . . The tricks which are resorted to are numerous. . . . The public cannot be too decidedly warned against the dangers to which they may be exposed [even] in legitimate transactions (1850, 329–30).” Despite the continued relevance of such warnings, Parliament repealed Barnard’s Act in 1860, and futures trading ceased to be illegal. In some senses, the repeal functioned as a kind of surrender to the existence of fraud—which is not to say that fraud became acceptable in 1860, but rather that it was sufficiently commonplace to be set aside in favor of the practicalities of the modern exchange. The rollercoaster of price indexes and price fixing that characterized the 1860s futures markets—most notably in cotton but in myriad other commodities as well—reminded the public of the dangers involved in futures investing, and of the continued presence of sharp characters in what was now a legitimate field of exchange.

Speculation, Hope, and the Future

As I have been arguing throughout this book, speculation involved more intimate forms of capital than just money, and angled at profits that were social as well as economic. Dreams of the good life generally took shape against happy domestic backdrops, in which perfect families might caper among perfect furnishings with perfect upholstery. Varieties of perfection were individual, of course, but these fantasies were key elements of both economic and libidinal investing. Such dreams, however, were not always so wise, and Victorian popular culture worked to reinforce that point. In Richard Redgrave’s “Waking Dreams,” for example, the pretty maid’s reverie, coupled with her complete inattention to the eggs at her feet, suggests how irresponsible and self-centered flights of fancy might muddle one’s focus on the present, and hence, make a mess of one’s future (see figure C.1).

The young woman’s desire for upward mobility appears in both the direction of her gaze and her overly pretty attire, the latter contrasting explicitly with the humble condition of her surroundings (note the spider web and the visible shovel and broom). The broken eggs resonate with the notion of smash suggested by the handbill for the lottery on the wall behind her, and suggest too that the engraving offers a double message about wasted assets. To read the broken eggs within the context of reproduction is, admittedly, something of a stretch, but her languid, open posture suggests a susceptibility to seduction that portends a potentially tragic childbearing future, reminiscent of the fate of Hetty Sorrell in George Eliot’s Adam Bede. It is, I think, fair to say that
those eggs dictate the viewer’s perspective on the young woman’s dreams, by suggesting her inattention to the impact of her present actions on the profits or losses of her future.

In contrast, I’ll offer another image, Arthur Boyd Hilton’s 1862 woodcut for the monthly magazine Good Words. Entitled “My Treasure,” the tableau signals a more appropriate system of feminine investing (see figure C.2). The treasure in this image is not suspended, virtual, or unlikely; rather, it is very much present, filling the lap of the pretty young mother. These are expensive children, if their grasping hands tell true; but, the title suggests, they are decidedly valuable. That value, of course, is affective, rather than monetary—the young mother is not planning to sell her children. Their worth is an abstraction of “treasure” rather than a specific figure in pounds and pence.

Our own culture, too, generally thinks of children as expensive little creatures, rather than as means of accruing economic profit. We are in that way indebted to the nineteenth century’s various movements to reframe the child in the popular imagination. The Victorian period witnessed the birth of an imperative to cease thinking of children as so much working capital and to
conceive of them instead as investments in, and beneficiaries of, the nation’s future. Child labor laws and education bills recontextualized the economics of and investments in childbearing, anticipating Lee Edelman’s theory of “reproductive futurism,” which locates the Child as the embodiment of the expectant logic on which Western capitalist society depends, and by which it reproduces both its structures and its subjects. Sustaining and rationalizing the suffering of the present with the promise of a better future, the Child, Edelman argues, “remains the perpetual horizon of every acknowledged politics, the fantasmatic beneficiary of every political intervention” (2004, 3). The political potential behind the implicit nihilism of Edelman’s theories merit more and different discussion than my work in this chapter allows. Here, I draw far too briefly on his notion of reproductive futurism to articulate how Victorian market anxieties found their way into the discourse of childrearing. The title of Edelman’s current project, Bad Education, allows me to begin that work.
Child Rearing, Time Bargains, and the Modern Life of Fraud

Bad Education

As Susan Zieger notes in her reading of Nicholas Nickleby, “a child can only signify as a desirable commodity when it becomes expensive” (2006, 12). There were monetary expenses to Victorian childrearing, of course, but it more crucially involved investments of time and energy in the interests of producing a desirable product. As Edelman’s work would suggest, that product might better be termed a subject or, within Victorian discourse, a pupil. Surprisingly, then, sources such as Eccles Household Guides, popular in the 1870s, figure children as stocks, and their education a form of futures trading in which present costs are sustainable because they promise deferred profits: “No time, expense, or zealous care is too great to bestow on the culture and correct training of our children. There is no office higher than that of a teacher of youth, as there is nothing on earth so precious as the mind, soul, and character of a child” (1877). That child was to be profitable not in and of himself, but as part of a larger community: the nation. However, investments in children could prove rather a bad bargain. Nicholas Nickleby nicely illustrates the rationale behind this logic: in the sadistic passages of Dotheboys Hall, the boys are supposed to receive education; instead, the Squeers family abuses them, starves them of both food and information, and forces them to work. As Zieger notes, these boys present an ominous glimpse at a blasted and potentially violent future. In a moment of odd agriculture, late in the novel, Ralph Nickelby passes a burial ground: it is “a rank, unwholesome, rotten spot, where the very grass and weeds seemed, in their frowsy growth, to tell that they had sprung from paupers’ bodies [who] lay thick and close—corrupting in body as they had in mind; a dense and squalid crowd” (750). The weeds that symbolize the harvest of a neglected pauper class correspond with a thornier plant in the novel, namely little Wackford Squeers, son of the one-eyed schoolmaster who runs Dotheboys Hall. Explaining why he has hired Nicholas Nickleby as an assistant, Wackford Sr. contends that he needs a second, a “man under him . . . till such a time as little Wackford is able to take charge of the school.”

“Am I to take care of the school when I grow up a man, father?” said Wackford junior, suspending, in the excess of his delight, a vicious kick, which he was administering to his sister.

“You are, my son,” replied Mr. Squeers, in a sentimental voice.

“Oh my eye, won’t I give it to the boys!” exclaimed the interesting child, grasping his father’s cane. “Oh, father, won’t I make ’em squeak again!”

It was a proud moment in Mr Squeers’s life to witness that burst of
Conclusion

enthusiasm in his young child’s mind, and to see in it a foreshadowing of his future eminence. He pressed a penny into his hand, and gave vent to his feelings . . . in a shout of approving laughter. (108)

The penny pressed into little Wackford’s fleshy hand echoes the irony of impression on which this passage depends: Squeers has impressed his values on his son, who is well prepared to take in hand both paternal economy and paternal cane. Squeers’s pleasure derives from a sense of profit in his child, whose vicious avarice confirms that Squeers has raised him right—for the business of Dotheboys Hall, in any case.

The lesson of the Squeers patrimony suggests that children will learn all too well the lessons of their youth. Those lessons impinge not only on the future happiness of the family, but on the economic future of the nation. As The Training of Young Children suggests, “The habit of pilfering any thing, however slight, blunts the sense of honour, and leads to fraud and dishonesty. These are solemn reflections, and should lead you to see how important it is to sow the good seed early, and not to make excuse that you have not sufficient time for these things” (1863, 32). The necessity to invest in children, to see them as the nation’s future harvest, suggests how maternal education was increasingly responsible for nipping bad economic traits in the bud. In 1844, Sarah Ellis wrote to the women of England: “You have deep responsibilities; you have urgent claims; a nation’s moral worth is in your keeping” (1844, 18). In 1872, Mrs. Henry Wood’s Our Children reiterated Ellis’s message with renewed urgency, suggesting that England’s future was in peril. Wood argues that the parent who will “wink at . . . the slight moving of a ball on the croquet lawn into a more advantageous position for its owner, or the sly peep at a companion’s card, or the dexterous abstraction of a counter from the heap of a next neighbour” will reap an unhappy harvest for the country. “From whence,” she asks, “come the clever forgers, the sharp practitioners, the unscrupulous speculators, the men and women who borrow without the intention of paying again? . . . Are they not . . . the fruit ripened from seed which has been for long years slowly but surely growing out of those small acts of dishonesty in the little child?” (135). Redefining the meaning of profit by encouraging parents to invest responsibly in a vision of responsible future traders, these works argue that both fraud and its prevention begin at home.

Thus for Wood, and for many of the manuals alongside which her book appeared, sound parental investment, in contrast to foolish speculation or benign neglect, offers a prophylactic approach to the perils of futures trading. Good education was a necessary preventative to the kinds of bad education
Child Rearing, Time Bargains, and the Modern Life of Fraud

that might produce little schoolboys like Wackford Jr.; or big business boys like Nick Leeson, whose duplicitous futures trading brought down Baring’s Bank in 1995; or Jeffrey Skilling, whose inventive mark-to-market accounting allowed the Texas energy company Enron to count expected future profits as present assets throughout the 1990s. Obviously, a moral education was not adequate to counteract the lures of a capitalist society that increasingly measured value by the capacity to purchase consumer goods. The options market and the fraud that characterized it became the wave of the future, while the bad education of profiting by others’ losses brought about the harvest we’re still reaping today. In the shadow of Enron, in the company of bad children in supermarkets, the only truly safe investment in the future of nineteenth-century markets may have been latex after all.

Reading the Present

While writing this book, I have been living simultaneously in nineteenth-century Britain and twenty-first-century America. The recent scandals involving Enron and Martha Stewart suggest the enduring relevance of the paradigm I’ve been modeling in the preceding pages: it is significant that, as the biggest corporate swindle in recent years unfolded, both the government and the popular media turned their attention to the specter of a fallen domestic angel. Throughout the 1990s, Martha Stewart built an empire as a modern Mrs. Beeton. A successful television show, an international magazine, and product lines that included cookware, linens, and fresh flowers all helped to consolidate Stewart’s reputation as America’s reigning homemaking queen. However, when Stewart was indicted in 2003 on charges of obstruction of justice, conspiracy, making false statements and securities fraud, she toppled from her pedestal. By 2004, she had become the new poster child for corporate fraud.

The charges of economic malfeasance resulted from Stewart’s sale of ImClone stock on December 27, 2001, one day before its value plummeted when its cancer drug, Erbitux, failed to obtain regulator approval. By selling on December 27, instead of the December 28, Stewart saved just over $50,000. ImClone CEO, Sam Waksal, also sold large quantities of ImClone stock on December 27. His broker, Peter Bacanovic, was Stewart’s broker as well. Questioned by authorities, Stewart adamantly denied having received a tip, but when Bacanovic’s assistant admitted to telling Stewart to sell, the indictments followed.
Conclusion

But, as Diane Brady reported in *Business Week*, “The trial of Martha Stewart was always about more than telling the truth” (2004). In the wake of the Enron scandal, Brady felt it necessary to remind her readers that Stewart’s case “was no Enron, laying waste to billions of dollars of shareholder value. Martha Stewart didn’t cook the books. She didn’t loot her company. Nor did she set out to dupe her investors.” Nonetheless, Stewart emerged as the most celebrated fraud of all—and this despite the fact that the securities-fraud charge against her was dropped.

The Enron debacle entered the public eye in late 2001, when the company’s creative accounting practices finally failed to cover the fact that it was bankrupt. Although the Justice Department announced a criminal investigation in early 2002, it handed down no indictments of Enron’s chief executives until early 2004. In the meantime, the Department indicted Martha Stewart. Martha’s story was simpler, more homey, than the mess of Enron. As *The Guardian* reported, Stewart’s own lawyers “asked if the justice department was attempting to deflect public attention from its failure to bring charges against senior executives of the firms involved in the most calamitous scandals of last year: Enron and WorldCom” (Teather 2003). Although Justice vehemently denied the allegation that they were attempting to distract the public, many media commentators opined otherwise.

I’m not a Martha defender, nor was I ever a member of Save Martha, but I watched with fascination as she took the hit for Enron, both publicly and legally. And I was hardly alone. The world responded with alternate horror, indignation, and delight as the domestic goddess, who seemed always to have a hot-glue gun at the ready, fell from grace. As Enron shareholders reeled from their losses, the public found Martha Stewart on the cover of every magazine and in the coverage of innumerable television programs. Enron was, it seems, too complicated, too terrible for popular engagement. Martha offered the opportunity to domesticate economic dishonesty, to take the frightening and confounding questions of fraud home for private consumption. Her sentence echoed that impulse, beginning with six months in a minimum-security prison, and concluding with a return to the domestic space on which she founded her empire. The specter of her house arrest was deliciously ironic.

I find an irony closer to my own work in the remarks U.S. Attorney James Comey offered at the press conference following her indictment. “This criminal case is about lying,” he said, “lying to the FBI, lying to the SEC, and lying to investors. . . . It’s a tragedy that could have been prevented if these two people [Stewart and her broker, Peter Bacanovic] had done—only done what parents have taught their children for eons. Even if you’re in a tight spot, lying is not the way out” (“U.S. Attorney Makes Statement” [2003]).
Turning from the chaos of the stock market to the straightforward logic of childrearing, Comey implied that at least some responsibility for the corrupt state of modern economic practices lies with parents. In seeking answers to the densely complicated questions of commerce, it seems that, even now, there’s no place like home.

The home is a space of cultivation and imagination in which one inevitably encounters the conflicts of the outer world. In my own home, in 2007, in the final stages of writing this book, I’ve been indulging myself by watching two recent television series about fraud: the BBC-produced Hustle and FX’s The Riches. Both the British and the American shows give swindling a domestic life. The Riches does so most obviously, in that it is about a literal family of cons who take illicit possession of a deceased wealthy couple’s home and property. The British actors Eddie Izzard and Minnie Driver play the American Wayne and Dahlia Molloy, parents of Cael, Di Di and Sam. Together, they are a family of “travelers,” or grifters, who at the season’s start have been surviving on picking pockets and running short cons (in the pilot episode, the family crashes a high school reunion, stealing name tags and wallets in a dizzying spree of impersonation and theft). When first we meet the Molloy’s, they are part of a much larger band of “travelers,” an extended family unit whose speech, style, and RV-living habits mark them out as stereotypical redneck trash. By the end of the pilot, however, the Molloy’s have stolen the “family” money and fled the “family” camp. When another pair of “travelers” pursues them in a high-speed chase, the result is the car accident that kills Doug and Cherien Rich, a wealthy couple on their way to a new million-dollar home in a new gated community. The Molloy’s take their keys, their papers, their laptops, and their identities, thereby grifting their way into the American dream. The show encourages its audience to side with the Molloy’s, not against them, cueing viewers to celebrate even as the family fleeces “buffers,” or regular folk—folk like most of us. Illegitimately seizing the lifestyle to which many Americans aspire, the Molloy’s become con artists we learn to love.

It’s easy to root for the Molloy’s, though, especially because the writers grant them far more ethical probity than their marks. Wayne and Dahlia are considerably more appealing than both the sleazy millionaires whose lives they assume, and the almost universally obnoxious wealthy characters that surround them. In one episode entitled “X Spots the Mark,” for example, “Doug’s” reprehensible boss insists that he bring in a wealthy investor or lose his job. “C’mon family, lots of easy marks around,” Wayne cajoles, as he, Dahlia, and their children pore over recent newspapers in search of a likely dupe. Son Cael sums up the qualities of the ideal mark: “They can’t know us,
they can’t be too smart, and they’ve got to be greedy as shit.” The Molloy’s eventual target compounds the moral reprobation of greed with statutory rape. A washed-out baseball player, Rudy Blue, has just finished doing time for seducing an underage girl when the Molloy’s seduce him, in turn, into an elaborate long con involving insider information, extortion, and the illegal development of environmentally protected land. Given that Rudy finds none of these ethical obstacles sufficient to offset the promise of exorbitant investor profits, it’s hard to have much sympathy for him as the Molloy family (in concert with the residents of a local trailer park) stage a dramatic investors’ meeting that ends in a fake murder. As Rudy flees the scene, leaving behind a supposedly dead supposed FBI agent (actually, the Riches’ pool guy) and half a million dollars, the Molloy’s celebrate only briefly, as does the audience. Going directly into “Doug’s” boss’s coffers, the money does support a corrupt real-estate firm, which does build illegally on environmentally protected land, so that the swindle itself does little to advance the moral high ground. In effect, it allows the Molloy’s only to sustain their imposture, not to abandon it. At the close of the episode, Wayne and Dahlia discuss the scam as they make love. “Next time, we should keep the money,” he says, musing. “I wouldn’t have to pretend to be a lawyer.” Dahlia’s response sums up both the pleasures inherent in watching The Riches and various of the reasons it has less pleasure than it might. “Well,” she says, “you got a job. I got a job. The kids are in school. We live here now.” The Molloy’s have, in effect, become The Riches, and while the audience has learned to prefer the impostors to the originals, the Molloy’s have nonetheless acquired the domestic and professional headaches (household budgets and unpleasant dinner parties, job anxieties and unpleasant social obligations) that mark the daily lives of many modern Americans. In The Riches, after the fun of watching the cons infiltrate the gated community, the lines of impersonation begin to blur. “We’re buffers now, baby,” Dahlia says, and in that, the Riches are a little too close to home (“X Spots the Mark” [2007]).

The alternative family of Hustle has more style and fewer familiar threats than The Riches, in part because the writer, Tony Jordan, elected to leave domestic life off the screen. Inspired by old-school films like The Sting and newer heist movies like Ocean’s Eleven, Jordan also did his homework, reading stacks of books on the art of the con. Fascinated by “the way that the knowledge of the long con had been passed through generations,” Jordan elected to create a metaphorical grandfather, father, and son, so as to convey “this sense of someone passing it on to someone, passing it one to someone” (Jordan 2004). Early on, he says, he knew that he
didn’t want . . . to see any of their domestic lives. I didn’t want to see where they li— it was all going to be hotels and all about, you know, cool . . . . So I didn’t want to go and suddenly see ‘em pull off this great long con, and then going home and cook an egg and chips. It just wasn’t going to work. So then I thought, well, I’m going to have to replace that with something . . . [and] I realized that basically what I was doing was constructing a family. (ibid.)

Hustle’s family isn’t the couple with three kids who’ve moved in down the block. They are adults, and there’s no blood between them. Beautiful and stylish, the show’s characters, sets, and fashions are almost unrelentingly sleek. That shiny veneer not only works to cover over the games they play; it also belies the profound moral dedication they have to one another and to those for whom they care (one episode in the first season involves a major grift so as to help a fellow con artist who requires medical care). Behind the glamour and the dazzling sleights of hand, that is, Hustle offers some old-fashioned family values.

More broadly, Hustle’s agenda addresses directly the issues of personal and corporate greed that were so familiar to the Victorian public. There is a strict ethical code behind their choice of marks. “You see,” the cast repeatedly reminds the audience, breaking the frame so as to create the connection and identification essential to the show’s success, “The first rule of the con is, you can’t cheat an honest man. It’s never been done.” One week, they scam a greedy government minister. In another episode, they take down a pair of corrupt investment bankers. As the executive producer, Simon Crawford Collins, remarks, “Our characters are not in the business of tricking defenceless old grannies out of their life-savings. Indeed when they learn they might have made an error of judgement—they are mortified and swift to take action to put the natural order back to rights. The ‘marks’ they target are given their just comeuppance” (“Producing Hustle” 2007). Expert acting, clever scripts, and slick cinematography together have made Hustle’s unusual “family” welcome in millions of British living rooms each week.8

These modern progeny of the Victorian domestic fraud plot transform the swindlers into families—families that many viewers might think they’d like to have to dinner. Yet, twenty-first-century consumers are generally a cagey bunch—and no wonder. We live in a world in which only the spam filter stands between us and the daily barrage of emails soliciting the unwary into more and less elaborate cons. Nor do recent events on the national stage do much to inspire confidence. Since I began my research, the Enron boys have been convicted, but Ken Lay died before going to prison and before hand-
ing over the Enron cash, which estate laws safely secured to his family. Paul Wolfowitz has been forced out of the World Bank, Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez seems to have no memory of how “mistakes were made,” and many of my compatriots share with me a distinct suspicion about the electoral process. As these names become history, I have little doubt that others will replace them, bringing fresh scandals to the international stage.

On the one hand, modern audiences can share with their nineteenth-century predecessors the pleasures of fraud safely packaged for entertainment, welcoming the opportunity to process virtually the events and circumstances that comprise the modern landscape. Yet, fraud is now so ubiquitous as to be de rigueur, and it is significant that the swindlers of The Riches, Hustle, and the latest Ocean’s film encourage affiliation rather than rejection. Various Victorian authors (Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens, in particular) had already begun to experiment with domesticating their con artists, making pets or, in rare cases, heroes of them. The resulting serials, from Collins’s No Name to The Riches, from Our Mutual Friend to Hustle, consistently remind their audiences that swindling permeates modern life, but they also complicate their basic premise that there’s a sucker born every minute by underscoring the fierce loyalty among their family units. This new breed of popular swindlers promotes not only honor among thieves but also—ironically—a rare sense of secular faith.

And on that note I conclude. Throughout this book, I have been mulling the relationship between real events and popular representations. I have collected thousands of Victorian ballads, tales, melodramas, novels, illustrations, and legal records, all of which declare openly the enormous potential for fraud in the world. More recent forms address a world even more pandemically corrupt than its nineteenth-century counterpart. Yet, while suspicion offers at least a chance to avoid bad surprises, unrelenting vigilance seems not to be a particularly appealing psychological perspective. Thus, where earlier Victorian texts about swindling allowed their readers to practice accommodating themselves to risk, more modern domestic fraud plots offer something more. Rather than simply reiterating and reinforcing the values of wariness, they offer the rare, surprising, valuable capacity to practice trust.

160
Introduction

1. See the testimony of Josiah Wilkinson, of the firm Wilkinson, Gurney, and Stevens, at the inquest:

   The security he [Sadleir] lodged with me purported to be a deed given on the purchase of an estate in the Encumbered Estates Court. It was signed by two of the commissioners of the court and by two attesting witnesses in two different parts of the deed, and not a single signature was genuine. (Sensation.) It had a genuine seal of the Encumbered Estates Court attached to it, and the commissioners themselves admit the seal to be genuine. That seal might have been transferred from some other genuine deed to the spurious one, because the seal of the court is not impressed on the document or in wax, but on a large wafer, and attached to it. (“Adjourned Inquest” 1856)

2. In “Impressions of Theophrastus Such,” George Eliot uses the benchmark of familial pity to evaluate a young lady’s response to Sir Gavial Mantrap, a fraud who has been found out. When Melissa expresses her pity for Mantrap, Eliot’s narrator responds,

   I should have thought you would rather be sorry for Mantrap’s victims—the widows, spinsters, and hard-working fathers, whom his unscrupulous haste to make himself rich has cheated of all their savings, while he is eating well, lying softly, and after impudently justifying himself before the public, is perhaps joining in the General Confession with a sense that he is an acceptable object in the sight of God, though decent men refuse to meet him. (Eliot 1887, 386–87)
3. For a concise discussion of recent scholarship on separate spheres, see Levine 2006.

4. “In lived experience the norms and values of domesticity and privacy were found to be capable of obstructing one another” (McKeon 2005, xxi). As McKeon has recently, exhaustively, and brilliantly demonstrated, to argue that the separate spheres were not so separate is not to deny the historical division of knowledge, but rather to reinforce it: the very capacity to recognize the public in the private is to depend on definitions of public and private “as such.” Leila Silvana May is presently at work on a project about the dangers of dismissing the power of separate-spheres ideology, even as we recognize its limited correlation with the actual functioning of Victorian households.

5. Until relatively recently, Ruskin’s formulation was critical gospel. Fundamental to a wide swath of second-wave feminist criticism, the doctrine of separate spheres provided a foundation for critiquing various gendered inequities (wages, political rights, career opportunities, sexual freedoms and protections, and so on). However, as third-wave feminism substantially complicated too-easy generalizations of such categories as “woman” and “man,” the rise of cultural criticism called attention to the too-easy distinction between spheres. Among the most influential of the many works that disassembled the commonplaces of separate spheres ideology are Mary Poovey’s Uneven Developments (1998), Nancy Armstrong’s Desire and Domestic Fiction (1987), Jeff Nunokawa’s The Afterlife of Property (1994), and Catherine Gallagher’s The Industrial Reformation of English Fiction (1980).

6. The Stowe papers at the Huntington Library include the accounts of the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos during and just prior to 1848, when the duke’s estates were dissolved for debt. He accrued many of the massive bills he was ultimately unable to pay during a visit from Queen Victoria in 1846. His extravagances during that period were so great as to ruin him. The duke’s interest in keeping up appearances was hardly an anomaly confined to the ruling classes, however; as Spencer’s remarks indicate, the issue of domestic debt was pressing for the middle classes as well.

7. Robert Nichol, the surgeon who performed the postmortem on Sadleir’s corpse, wrote to the Times declining to “occupy your valuable space by replying to the various other arguments by [those] … who believe that John Sadleir’s very suicide was a swindle and that his last public act was a forgery of the hand of death itself. I believe in no instance has the identification of a body been more complete” (18 June 1856).

8. Catherine Gallagher’s recent work (2006) on the relationship between “bioeconomic plots,” which focus on circulation, and “somaeconomic plots,” which focus on the ratio between pleasure and pain, brings narratives of political economy into conversation with popular Victorian fiction.


10. Feminist sociologists use the category of “emotional capital” to address some of the gendered omissions in Bourdieu’s schemata, wherein women appear more frequently as objects than agents of exchange. While, as Diane Reay observes, “Bourdieu himself never mentions emotional capital,” it is basic to his contention that the family is the primary medium of cultural reproduction (2004, 57). Most of this scholarship concentrates on the emotional labor of mothers and has little to say about the affective investment of romantic love that so dominates the field of popular culture and therefore comprises a central concern of this book.

11. “The historical situations in which the artificially maintained structures of the
good-faith economy break up and make way for the clear, economical (as opposed to expensive) concepts of the economy of undisguised self-interest, reveal the cost of operating an economy which, by its refusal to recognize and declare itself as such, is forced to devote almost as much ingenuity and energy to disguising the truth of economic acts as it expends in performing them” (Bourdieu 1990, 114). For more on the relationship between credit and social forms of capital, see Finn 2003.

12. “Frankness, candour, sincerity, within the limits of good taste and justice, are fine and noble characteristics. Cunning, sly, suspicious, mysterious and equivocating people are not amiable; but the power to conceal one’s own affairs, or the secrets of others, is a necessity—a very urgent need in our present state of individual and, consequently, social imperfection and discordance. ‘Be ye therefore as wise as serpents and harmless as doves.’ Every faculty is right when it has its right uses. None are evil but in excess, in lack, or in discordant or unbalanced action. The true character results from the healthy development and harmonious action of all the faculties, and the result of this harmony is true life.” (S. Beeton 1875, 80)

13. In recent years, the Sadleir case has garnered considerable critical attention from economic historians, in part because it is frequently cited as the inspiration for Mr. Merdle and in part because of its intersections with recent scholarly interest in both literal and literary issues of value. Various critics have also linked Sadleir to Augustus Melmotte of Anthony Trollope’s The Way We Live Now, although George Robb finds his specific context in the person of Albert Grant, who “would promote anything if he thought that it would bring him a profit and most of his floatations were trash foisted on a gullible public.” According to Robb, “Augustus Melmotte, was almost certainly modeled after Albert Grant” (1992, 102). Russell finds more abstract forebears in the proliferating popularity and acceptance of credit companies that had little or no accountability to complete projects or to satisfy investors with either remuneration or explanation. As Russell notes, the Trollope who writes The Way We Live Now is “keenly aware that credit and credit financing, coupled with the feverish company promotion following the establishment of limited liability, have become acceptable to the higher ranks of society, and that the class from which Britain had for centuries derived its moral and social values was affected and corrupted by the new order of things” (1986, 152). Both texts, in short, have literal economic bases that make them as much historical adaptations as fictional narratives. These contexts are popular focal points for critical evaluations of these novels; because they have been so well documented by other authors, I give them little attention here.

14. The pamphlet offers a remedy as well: “Take enough of the Spirit of Fellowship to mix with an equal quantity of Truth and purity of feeling. Add to these two ounces at least of Goodwill for others and a little Respect for yourself. Drink often of this & mix with a few leaves of Proper respect and carefully skim therefrom all Personal feeling and wicked intent.”

15. The financier’s tendency to keep “his hands crossed under his uneasy coat-cuffs, clasping his wrists as if he were taking himself into custody” (Dorrit, 331) becomes one of the novel’s dominant symptoms of Merdle’s criminality. This mysterious “disease” illustrates the capacity of economic deceit to move freely among spaces and people and indeed to move right into that most intimate of domiciles, the body. The novel emphasizes that Merdle is no more at ease in the house he shares with his wife than he is in his own body. “Let Mrs. Merdle announce … that she was At Home ever so many nights in a season,” Dickens writes, “she could not announce more widely and unmistakably than Mr. Merdle
did that he was never at home” (335).

16. One might thus look back to that which the authorities sought to detain at Mar-

seilles, when the Meagles party and Clennam meet in quarantine in the novel’s second
chapter. There, the Plague is the illness in question, but it resonates retrospectively with
France’s speculating mania under the reign of Credit Mobilier and other such companies.

17. I am indebted to the faculty workshop at the 2005 Dickens Universe, in which we
discussed an earlier version of this argument. As Alex Woloch and Natalka Freeland noted
then, Dickens has an odd and troubling tendency to implicate the working classes in the
perpetuation of corporate fraud.

18. Martha Stewart’s stint in jail provided a new, rich context for duplicitous homemak-

ing behind bars. Some of the spoofs—for example, Living … In Prison—are powerfully and
hilariously reminiscent of Dickens’s novel. My conclusion deals briefly with Martha within
the context of the Enron scandal.

19. The novel is vague about whether or not Arthur’s father has committed bigamy.
Mrs. Clennam refers to a “desecrated ceremony of marriage,” but it is not at all clear when
that ceremony takes place, nor whether it is “desecrated” because it is bigamous, unofficial,
or simply in conflict with Mrs. Clennam’s severe religious morality.

20. My thanks to Jim Buzard for his insight into the concordance between Mrs. Clen-
nam’s lies and Amy Dorrit’s “gift” to her husband.

21. That Dickens wrote this novel in the final stages of his disintegrating marriage to his
wife Catherine, whom he famously berated as a poor housekeeper, may help to account for
his fixation on the virtues of peaceful domesticity, embodied most forcefully in Amy Dor-
rit. But the novel’s plotlines depend on those figures—Blandois, Flintwinch, Mrs. Clen-
nam, Mr. Merdle—who function to infect the domestic lives and spaces they encounter
with economic and interpersonal deceit.

Chapter One

1. For more on the tensions between investment and speculation, see Itzkowitz 2002.

2. Fudging the Victorian distinction between terms, furthermore, allows me to avoid
cosmetically the awkward substitution of “libidinal speculation” for the standard psycho-
logical term, “libidinal investment.”

3. Even the most serious of scholars have been unable to resist the anecdotal allure
of the Tichborne affair: work on this case inevitably begins with novelistic fanfare. David
Richter (2002) writes, “Late in 1866 a man who had been a butcher in Wagga Wagga,
Australia, calling himself Tomas Castro, arrived in England claiming to be Sir Roger
Tichborne, the dissolute heir to a British baronetcy who had set sail from Rio de Janeiro
in 1854 on a ship that had gone down with all hands.” David Wayne Thomas commences
with the assurance that he presents “a true story: in 1866, one Arthur Orton, wayfaring
son of an East London butcher, quits his life of small adventure in Australia to return to
England and assume the identity of Sir Roger Tichborne, who was presumed lost at sea over
a decade prior” (2004, 83). And Janet Myers adds a holiday theme to the Claimant’s return:
“At Christmas day in 1866, an Australian immigrant arrived in London and claimed to
be Roger Charles Doughty Tichborne, Baronet and heir to the Tichborne estates” (1999,
111). Less academic works simply succumb to temptation: for example, Robyn Annear’s
popular The Man Who Lost Himself begins with the lines, “Nobody knew what Tom Castro
Notes to Chapter One

knew. And up until August of the year 1865 nobody much cared” (2002, 3). As these and
my own rendition demonstrate, this story is so ripe for colorful telling that it is almost
impossible to relate its basic facts without recourse to the conventions of the novel.

4. In flatly calling the Claimant Arthur Orton, I divulge my perspective on the Claim-
ant’s claim: after years of research, the preponderance of evidence that linked the Claimant
with Orton, and my sense that the real Sir Roger would most likely know how to spell his
own name, I have come to concur with the courts that he was an impostor. Various popular
sources, however, suggest that the case was never conclusively settled.

5. The civil case took 102 days, while the criminal case lasted 188 days; the latter
was the longest trial to that date in British legal history. Orton served just ten years of his
fourteen-year sentence.

6. See Thomas 2004 for a discussion of Tichborne as distraction from matters of
greater political import.

7. George Cruikshank, “The Last Man on the Tichborne Jury.” JJC Tichborne, Bodle-
lian Library, Oxford. The passage is on the reverse of a card bearing an image of the same
title.

8. Myers approaches the case from the perspective of emigration and the status of
emigrants—particularly Australians—as citizens in England. My thanks to her for sharing
her work with me.

9. This is true even of texts published early in the century. I attribute this discrepancy
to two primary causes. First of all, as Tim Alborn notes, there was plenty of unlawful activ-
ity—so much that by midcentury “episodes of wrongdoing began to crowd out examples
of smoothly-operating commercial principles in the bankers’ own publications. What was
‘pathological’ … started to appear normal and vice versa” (1995, 211). Furthermore, popular
accounts were less concerned with ensuring the success of the new financial endeavors
and hence served alternate purposes than the promotional tales of banking and investing
on which Poovey and Freedgood focus.

10. See also The Man of Business, originally published in the U.S. in 1857 before being
revised and reprinted for British audiences in 1864: “the community is startled when
some great swindler absconds, leaving hundreds of widows and orphans beggared by his
monstrous frauds” (1864, 40).

11. One exception to this rule was the futures market, which I discuss in my conclu-
sion.

12. Janette Rutterford and Josephine Maltby note that, in discussing Joint stock regu-
lation and issues of limited liability, legislators tended “to bracket together women, the clergy,
the reckless and the inexperienced in various combinations. . . . Women were portrayed as
being short of funds (like clergy on small stipends), and both groups were lacking in judg-
ment. They had little experience of the financial world and were likely to form unrealistic
expectations of risk and return when they made investments” (2006, 17).

13. There was definite moral outrage about this condition. Morier Evans asserted, “In
a commercial country such as England, no crime can be more heinous against society, as
constituted, than a breach of mercantile trust” (1859, 123). The Times observed, more
radically, “If the heinousness of crimes be measured by their consequences, the man who
carries disaster, if not absolute ruin, into a hundred families is stained with deeper guilt
than the mere ruffian who attacks life” (26 February 1856).

14. There were private wagers as well. Even Henry Hawkins, who later became famous
as lead counsel for the Crown, had initially “laid several bets on the Claimant being the
man he said he was” (Gilbert 1957, 75). According to Michael Gilbert, Hawkins changed his mind early on:

In 1867, he told one of his friends, a certain Mr Hodgman, that he had laid several bets on the Claimant being the man he said he was. Mr Hodgman was so impressed that he, and another sporting friend, took £400 to £200 to the same effect. Six months later the tide was on the change. Hawkins, meeting them, said “Bye the bye, did you back that man Tichborne?” “Indeed we did,” said Mr Hodgman, “and got 2 to 1.” “Then hedge it,” said Hawkins. “I was wrong. He’s an imposter, and I know just about enough to hang him.” Hodgman hurried off and hedged. He had no difficulty. The plaintiff still had plenty of supporters. (75)

15. There are alternatives here as well: “Summiteering … tends to highlight raw competition and struggle, while shadowing the conditions under which risk taking is carried out and individual effort supported. Mountaineering offers at least some preliminary clues as to how a deliberative public discourse about risk can be produced which empowers individuals and communities to respond to the risk that is often involuntarily imposed upon them” (Simon 2002, 182).

16. Cf. Christina Crosby’s argument that literature “helps to render intelligible the abstractions of money … [and] actively accommodates Victorians to the imaginary relations money effects” (1999, 226). See also Peter Brooks’s contention in *Realist Vision* that realist fiction “claims to offer us a kind of reduction—*modele reduit*—of the world, compacted into a volume that we know can provide, for the duration of our reading, the sense of a parallel reality that can almost supplant our own. More than most other fictions, the realist novel provides a sense of play very similar to that given by the scale model” (2005, 2–3). Brooks links that “sense of play” to the Freudian repetition compulsion so central to his *Reading for the Plot*, in which narrative rehearsal becomes a means of achieving at least the illusion of a mastery that might circumvent future trauma.

17. For more on the affective components of investment, see Jaffe 2002.

18. Lizzy remarks that “there was certainly some great mismanagement in the education of those two young men [Wickham and Darcy]. One has got all the goodness, and the other all the appearance of it” (*Pride*, 199). Freedgood argues that ballooning texts invited readers to engage in what she terms “cultural masochism” (2000, 104)—that is, in forms of self-imposed suffering that would accustom them to the trials of late-Victorian global culture—and that “literary adventures generally give pain the last word, ensuring that risk-takers, in fiction and in the culture at large, are morally entitled to their rewards” (96).

19. The difference here is one of degree: Willoughby has not seduced Marianne, and as Elinor avers, “he has broken no positive engagement with my sister” (*Sense*, 170). Henry Crawford’s affection for Fanny Price is true, despite the vanity that leads him to court a married woman with whom “he went off … at last because he could not help it, regretting Fanny, even at the moment, but regretting her infinitely more, when all the bustle of the intrigue was over, and a very few months had taught him, by the force of contrast, to place a yet higher value on the sweetness of her temper, the purity of her mind, and the excellence of her principles” (*Mansfield*, 318). And Anne Elliot had never been taken in by her cousin; although she “could just acknowledge within herself such a possibility of having
been induced to marry him, as made her shudder at the idea of the misery which must have followed” (*Persuasion*, 198), she had suspected early on “something more than immediately appeared, in Mr. Elliot’s wishing, after an interval of so many years, to be well received by them” (131). In none of these cases, that is to say, is there a loss of anything more than affectionate capital, which while hardly insignificant, is considerably more bearable when not compounded by the loss of significant personal property.

21. For more on *Nickleby*’s economic underpinnings, see Childers 1996. For an in-depth discussion of Victorian negotiations of capitalism within and around the nuclear family, see Cleere 2004.

22. He also testified that they had secretly been married by a Father Guido. The priest later took the stand and denied all knowledge of the Claimant and of the events he claimed to recall.


24. One could argue as well that the prosecution wielded sentimentality as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they used it in the sense that Laura Hanft Korobkin identifies in nineteenth-century adultery cases, as a “controlling mode for jury arguments that strive to convince jurors that their own deepest beliefs and emotions are at stake” (1998, 15). On the other hand, they drew upon the shift in attitudes toward emotional responsiveness that accompanied the decline of Romantic sympathy. As Barbara Benedict observes, “Sentimental literature, in rhetoric and structure, does not simply advocate feeling; it also warns the reader against some kinds of feeling or feelings associated with revolutionary or female culture. Sentimental fiction adheres to a dialectical structure that endorses yet edits the feelings in fiction” (1994, 1).

25. Anti-French sentiments in England run back to the seventeenth century, with nascent national and economic competition appearing in texts depicting the French as duplicitous and effeminate. Victorian popular texts reinforced the sense of duplicity in a tendency to characterize Catholicism as an irrational religion bound up with idol worship, materialistic interests, and a dubious sense of morality (the practice of absolution through confession, in particular, was regarded as a kind of free pass). See Charlotte Brontë’s *Villette*: “*J’ai menti plusieurs fois* formed an item of every girl’s and woman’s monthly confession: the priest heard unshocked, and absolved unreluctant” (82).


27. This element of the case actually bears a surprising resemblance to the triumphant exposure of Count Fosco at the end of *The Woman in White*, in which the corpse of Collins’s “great fat man” lies in the window of the Paris Morgue. “There he lay, unowned, unknown; exposed to the flippant curiosity of a French mob! There was the dreadful end of that long life of degraded ability and heartless crime! Hushed in the sublime repose of death, the broad, firm, massive face and head fronted us so grandly, that the chattering Frenchwomen about me lifted their hands in admiration, and cried, in shrill chorus, ‘Ah, what a handsome man!’” (*Woman*, 581). The displacement upward that this scene enacts (Hartright focuses his description on “the broad firm, massive face and head,” noting only secondarily that Fosco’s clothes hang above him; he is naked in the window), sterilizes the spectacle for popular novel readers, even as it effects the revenge on the villain that the novel’s conclusion requires. The exposure of Fosco’s body must stand in for the legal exposure that the novel so earnestly seeks. As Hartright remarks at the novel’s start, “The Law
is still, in certain inevitable cases, the pre-engaged servant of the long purse; and the story is left to be told, for the first time, in this place. As the judge might once have heard it, so the Reader shall hear it now” (1).

28. While his cause maintained a certain popular utility among the working classes, who drew on it to demonstrate the legal system’s inordinately harsh treatment of the poor, the Claimant’s radically diminished credibility made him significantly less helpful as an illustration of inequity—and it didn’t help matters that Thomas Keneally, Orton’s counsel, was disbarred shortly following the conviction. David Wayne Thomas (2004) notes that the Claimant’s conviction coincided with Gladstone’s defeat, and thus with the defeat of a Liberal platform that marked a shift in national concerns and allegiances.


30. In fact, the effort to generate an appealing illusion of creditability characterizes even agents of legitimate exchange, in both social and economic dealings. As Mary Poovey explains in *A History of the Modern Fact*, one of the earliest forms of business records, double-entry bookkeeping, originally included three books: the memorial, the journal, and the ledger. The memorial recorded each day’s transactions in a mixture of prose and numbers; the other two books, the journal and the ledger, progressively converted language into numbers so as to achieve “the rhetorical function of the ledger—to display the merchant’s honesty and thus his creditworthiness” (64). Ironically, the ledger recorded absent cash, in the forms both of debts owed and of credit extended, as if it were present, not only to make the balance sheet balance but also because “It was necessary … for the merchant to represent himself as solvent even if he was not in order to establish the credit necessary to make himself so” (1998, 64; emphasis in original). Thus even the earliest forms of a practice designed to establish the honesty of an economic trader relied on significant deviations from the truth. Ledgers regularly and of necessity manufactured desirable fictions so as to solicit credit from their readers. That practice has significant relevance to the dynamics I have been discussing here.

31. See Althusser’s famous argument about the relationship between the cognitive and the social in which he maintains, “It is not their real conditions of existence, their real world, that ‘men’ ‘represent to themselves’ in ideology, but above all it is their relation to those conditions of existence which is represented to them there” (1970, 164). His observation of the powerful influence of the “imaginary” on the “real,” of representation upon lived experience, informs my argument in this chapter.

32. There are obvious concordances with the rise of fiction here. For more on the relationship between the novel and economic conditions, see Lynch 1992, Brantlinger 1996, and Poovey 2002.

33. The grammar is precisely akin: “the trial of David Anderson came on at last Yorkshire Assizes, when he was indicted for uttering, knowing them to be forged, two notes” (Yorkshire Assizes, Bodleian JJC Crime 1–Smaller Broadsides). In fact, counterfeit notes and counterfeit stories shared a great many features, most notably their aims. In both circumstances, the fictions worked to generate the effect of veracity in order to prompt their recipients to invest in them by granting some form of credit—perhaps the pound amount of a forged note, or the opportunity to accrue debt, or an invitation to join a particular social set.

---

168
Notes to Chapter Two

Chapter Two

1. One such exception would be Nelly Dean of Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*, but she is one of the few major characters who is a domestic servant, rather than a governess (Jane Eyre), wet nurse (Esther Waters), or farm laborer (Tess Durbeyfield). For more on the structural antagonisms between minor and major characters, see Woloch 2003.

2. “Rich merchant families had traditionally mingled comfortably and intermarried with aristocrats and landed gentry” (Morgan 1994, 49).

3. The London School of Economics has a wonderful online site that allows for detailed exploration of Booth’s maps and classification systems. Available at http://boothlse.ac.uk/static/a/4.html.

4. Thorstein Veblen notes that many servants served as no more than “evidence of ability to pay” (1899, 55).

5. See Burnett 1997. Robbins 1993 traces the caricature of the servant (and its corollary, the servant so clichéd as to be characterless) back to *The Odyssey*.

6. See especially Poovey 1988, Armstrong 1987, and Langland 1995 on the ideology of separate spheres as a fiction convenient in its day for obscuring the capitalist division of labor, and still convenient in our day for its neatness and simplicity.

7. Recognizing this problem, Frances Power Cobbe reminds her readers that “a servant is not now or henceforth a retainer, a dependant, a menial who, in receiving from his master food and wages, becomes his temporary property—somewhat between a child and a slave—to be ordered in all things concerning, or not concerning the master’s service. He is simply a man who, instead of contracting to build a wall or make a pair of shoes, contracts to do certain indoor work, for whose performances it is generally desirable that he should eat and sleep under the employer’s roof” (1868, 132).

8. Bell, otherwise known as Cousin Kate, was author of various works of morality literature, including *Horace and May; or, Unconscious Influence* and *Margaret Cecil; or, “I Can Because I Ought.”*

9. Doors and windows often appear as portals through which the home may be sapped or contaminated. For example, of George Cruikshank’s twelve illustrations for *The Greatest Plague of Life*, three include doorways. The most alarming of these depicts a constable standing in the darkened bedroom of the central family, the Sk–n–st–ns, who, attired in their nightclothes, peer at him with dismayed surprise: “Do you know as your street-door is open?” the caption reads. In the corresponding text, Mrs. Sk–n–st–n sends her husband down with the policeman to “see whether the spoons and forks were all right” (1847, 278). He returns “with the gratifying information that my treasure of a footman, who had stipulated to go to church, at least twice every Sunday, and lived for the last eighteen years with one of the bishops of the land, had gone off with the whole of our silver plate, and left nothing but that bilious-looking ‘British’ behind him” (278–79).

10. Matty’s servant, Fanny, loses her post because “[s]he was forbidden, by the articles of her engagement to have ‘followers.’ … but a vision of a man seemed to haunt the kitchen” (Cranford, 65).

11. As Anthea Trodd notes, “The section on female servants in Mayhew’s *London Labour and the London Poor* voiced the general suspicion that the followers of maid-servants were often criminals seeking entry to the house” (1989, 53). Trodd goes on to discuss the alternate trajectory, in which the follower is not a criminal but a policeman. Both figures, she argues, jeopardize the ostensible privacy of the family.
12. Followers were frequently given the title of “cousin,” so as to allow them visiting privileges (see The Greatest Plague of Life and Cruikshank’s illustration “My cousin, m’am”). Variations on the discourse about servants’ followers appear in Reynold’s Mary Price, in which Mary’s bad brother Robert robs his sister’s employers.

13. Cf. “Wise Maxims” (1848): 60: “A good character is valuable to every one, but especially to servants, for it is their bread; and without it they cannot be admitted into a creditable family; and happy it is that the best of characters is in every one’s power to deserve” (60). For more on the general notion of character in Victorian culture, see Joyce 1994.

14. A statute enacted under George III still in place in 1888 imposed fines or imprisonment on masters who gave false characters to their servants. “An action for deceit will lie against a person giving a false character to a servant.” Wilkin v. Reed (1854) and Foster v. Charles (1830) were key cases in determining a master’s liability. See Paterson (1885), 35–37 for more on character in legal cases:

Any person giving a false character is liable to a penalty of £20, whether such character is written or verbal. Thus the defendant recommended an agent to the plaintiff, with the knowledge that his representation of the character of the agent was false. It was held in an action to recover damages arising from the misconduct of the agent, that it was not necessary by the plaintiff to prove a malicious or an interested motive by the defendant for the misrepresentation; if what the defendant said was false within his own knowledge and occasioned an injury to the plaintiff, it was a sufficient ground of action. (Hastings 1888, 39–40)

For a more humorous rendering of potential legal consequences, see The Greatest Plague of Life, in which Mrs. S. finds herself sued three times, once for giving a false character, then for libel when she gives an honest character, then again when she refuses to give a character at all (1847, 271–72).

15. Interestingly, Fielding and Defoe were at the forefront of the original hue and cry about false characters. Cf. Fielding: “one would imagine that half the Masters and Mistresses of this Kingdom, by the Characters they give of their Servants, live in fear of, and are dependent upon them” (quoted in Robbins 1993, 35–36). For more on the notion of character in fiction, see Lynch 1998.

16. For an actual case, see the ballads and broadsides concerning Mrs. Gurney, wife of an MP for Norfolk. Mrs. Gurney was independently wealthy and ran off to the Continent with her handsome footman. Popular materials include “The Blooming Lady Worth £500 and Her Footman,” “Mrs. Gurney, the Divorced Lady!” and “The Two Elopements! Parson and Footman, Female Depravity.” The Gurney case, while scandalous, did not involve fraud or theft, except from the perspective of some balladeers: “Oh the lucky lucky footman / He has done [a] trick so brown, / Got his masters lovely lady, / And five hundred thousand pound” (“The Blooming Lady”).

17. A satire from Punch mocks servant sloth as well as infection theory, advising, “When visitors are expected, and you are honoured with instructions to clear out a bed room closet, . . . do so in as gentle a manner as you can, and spread clean paper on the shelves without disturbing the dust which there has peacefully accumulated.” (“Hints to Make Houses Wholesome”).

18. My thanks to John for sharing the manuscript copy of this work. Cf. “To unde-
stand the concept of property it is decisive to recognize that the rigid demarcation between it and the self, between internal and external life, is quite superficial and that it should be made more fluid for the purpose of a deeper interpretation” (Simmel 2004, 322).


20. Derrida argues that any gift that is acknowledged as such inevitably enters a temporal contract of exchange and deferral. He writes, “For there to be a gift, it is necessary [il faut] that the donee not give back, amortize, reimburse, acquit himself, enter into a contract, and that he never had contracted a debt. . . . It is thus necessary, at the limit, that he not recognize the gift as gift. If he recognizes it as gift, if the gift appears to him as such, if the present is present to him as present, this simple recognition suffices to annul the gift” (1992, 13; emphasis in original).

21. Ironically, Martineau’s remarks on servants run directly counter to the calming effect she imparts in her writings about the marketplace proper. In Illustrations of Political Economy, Martineau conveys a “sense of a predictable and solid economic and social structure” meant to reassure her audience that the world is safe and benevolent. (quoted in Freedgood 2000, 29).

22. Following metonymic logic, those ladies who purposefully don the dresses of women beneath them inevitably wear those costumes to engage in behaviors that reveal their “real” nonaristocratic status, as in Charles Dickens’s Bleak House when Lady Dedlock visits the grave of her lower-class lover in the dress of her French maid, Hortense. Much later in the novel, when Lady Dedlock flees Chesney Wold, she trades dresses with Jenny, an impoverished woman, to whom Esther refers as “the mother of the dead child.” When Esther, Woodcourt, and Mr. Bucket finally find Lady Dedlock, lying dead at the cemetery gate in Jenny’s dress, all Esther can see is the poor, suffering woman who was the bricklayer’s wife. “She lay there,” Esther writes, “a distressed, unsheltered, senseless creature” (915), which is precisely what Lady Dedlock has become.

23. Nineteen year-old Parr was indicted for stealing 80 pence, and 80 halfpence; the monies of Isaac Mitchell, his master. Found guilty, he was confined for four days.

24. Reynolds’s novel stresses the dual culpability that many Victorian texts find in the perquisite system, arguing that the fraud inherent in it is as much, if not more, the fault of masters and mistresses themselves than of their servants. This system is known to exist: it is tolerated—it may even be said to be winked at and encouraged: seldom is it that ever an attempt is made on the part of masters and mistresses to put a stop to it; and by their very indolence in looking after their own affairs, or else through the ridiculous pride which makes them consider any such interference to be beneath them, they wilfully shut their eyes to what is going on, and thus tacitly assent to the practice. Thus is it that the laziness and absurd vanity of aristocratic and wealthy families are both alike most demoralizing in their effects, and at least as culpable as the knavery of the systems which they generate or allow to exist. (1852, 65–66)

Chapter Three

1. See, for example, Michie 1992.

3. Dante Gabriel Rossetti is credited with the title “Goblin Market.” Christina had originally entitled it “A Peep at the Goblins.”

4. Helsinger writes, “‘Come buy, come buy,’ the iterated cry of the ‘merchant men’ that punctuates the poem, has few parallels in English poetry in the nineteenth century” (1991, 903). Helsinger’s own reading of “Goblin Market” does focus on issues of buying and selling, but for her, the poem comments on how the market threatens to turn female consumers into products to be themselves consumed. “The story of survival offered in ‘Goblin Market’—consumer power achieved by withholding female desire—culminates in the production of its heroines as ‘public beings’ who can publish female difference. . . . Rossetti herself is finally less interested in exposing the fictions of separate spheres through the transgressive figure of the female consumer (and her shadow sister, the prostitute), than in rescuing the possibility of utopian places for women outside the marketplace” (926–27).

5. Holt’s focus on language and lack ultimately makes his reading more Lacanian than the cultural studies approach I offer here. For example, Holt observes that “the goblins’ bargain is a cheat” (1990, 56)—a proposition that informs the current reading—but he does so to foreground the play between desire and lack that plagues the poem’s female subjects.

6. On food adulteration, see Searle 1998, 91–97; Smith 1979, 203–15; and Wohl 1983, 52–55. Menke offers an interesting but different food-related observation, noting that the spring of 1859, during which Rossetti composed the poem, was a remarkably bad one for fruit. Early warmth and a late but severe frost made it unlikely that any but imported or engineered (that is, greenhouse-grown) fruit would have survived. “If the inventory of fruit in ‘Goblin Market’ seems dreamlike in its intense physicality,” Menke writes, “the reasons for this paradox may in fact be legitimately historical: at the time the poem was written, fresh fruit would indeed have been largely the stuff of fantasy” (1998, 109). This reading, however, doesn’t fully account for Laura’s illness beyond the realm of metaphor.

7. See Gordon Bigelow’s “Market Indicators” for a differently focused discussion of the relationship between the home and British market economics. Focusing on figurations of the Bank of England and the domestic woman, Bigelow argues, “We might conclude that the ideology of the domestic woman in the novel provides a space of essential value in a world of increasingly chaotic circulation” (2000, 600). However, as he demonstrates convincingly, the system of value under capitalism is representational; hence domestic value, like economic value, remains unsettlingly fluid.

8. My thanks to an anonymous reader for Nineteenth-Century Literature for noting the corollary with “Maud.”

9. Over twenty texts on food adulteration were published in the 1850s. See, for example, Adulteration of Food, Drink, and Drugs (1855), Bronner 1856; Dalton 1857; Marcet 1856; How to Detect Adulteration (1855), and Tricks of Trade (1856).

10. Accum comments further on the deleterious effects of adulteration on the market itself. These remarks again turn to private concerns, concentrating on individual immorality and vulnerability. He notes that “the eager and insatiable thirst for gain, is proof against prohibitions and penalties; and the possible sacrifice of a fellow-creature’s life, is a secondary consideration among unprincipled dealers” (1820, iv). In other words, “the eager and insatiable thirst for gain,” indeed the very principle of capitalist economics, encourages an unprincipled climate that produces the poisonous fruits of merchant greed. According to Searle, Accum’s work had been discredited by the 1850s (1998, 91 n. 85). However,
Notes to Chapter Three

a range of popular texts from that period continue to cite him (see Hassall 1855, iii and passim, and Goderich 1852, 76, among others). Regardless of his scientific prowess (or lack thereof), Accum’s comments on the private and moral implications of adulteration remained apropos to 1850s moral discourse on food adulteration.

11. See Hassall 1855, iii and passim; see also Searle 1998, 91–97.
12. See also Political Blunders (1872), which observes:

Tea is sold in this country, made up of chopped straw and iron filings. Some importers unblushingly attempt to pass the Customs’ officers with it, duty free; because, as they say, it is a manufactured article. This sort of stuff is sold in London at three to five farthings per pound. Butter is made out of Thames mud, swarming with worms and other loathsome things. It is also made at Dutch butter manufactories, out of measled port and flesh of still-born animals, and of rotten stuff that has been condemned by food inspectors as unfit for consumption, and which has been purchased for a halfpenny per pound. Other samples are mixed up with rags that have been reduced to a pulp; care has not even been taken to extract the colours out of the cloth. Such butter is sold to, and used by some confectioners in making up their morsels, which in the mouth are sweet, but in the stomach, a disease. Our flour and bread are mixed with alum and sulphate of copper. No wonder people are mumbling without teeth, and that the dentists and doctors drive a thriving trade. (13–14)

13. Laura ceases to sleep (“Goblin Market,” 269–71); she “would not eat” (298); and, no longer able to hear or see the goblins, she wonders if she has “Gone deaf and blind” (259).
15. Hillel Schwartz observes that “the more adept the West has become at the making of copies, the more we have exalted uniqueness. It is within an exuberant world of copies that we arrive at our experience of originality” (1996, 212). But this formulation is too exuberant to accurately describe Victorian culture. Even if Laura’s engagement with the goblins bespeaks fascination and desire, Lizzie’s attitude maintains the mixed suspicion and regret that also strongly characterize Victorian perspectives on mimicry.
17. Indeed, children who read such titles such as “She Who Would Help Others Must Be Self-Denying and Self-Watchful” were raised to be paranoid. The latter cautionary tale was collected in Horace and May; or, Unconscious Influence by “Cousin Kate” (Catherine D. Bell, the author of Lily Gordon).
18. The editor of the English Churchman wrote to Palmerston in 1854 about “the necessity of providing some machinery for preserving the poor from the evils of short weight, short measure, and the adulteration of their food. I venture to hope that your Lordship will consider that the duty undertaken by ‘The Lancet’ is one which belongs especially to the Government.” The editor included a recent clipping entitled “Detectives for the Poor,” which dramatically illustrated the pandemic nature of the problem. This correspondence seems to have led to the formation of the Parliamentary Select Committee in 1855. It is available in the Public Record Office at Kew Gardens in Home Office file 45/5338.
Notes to Chapter Three

19. For a thorough but quite different discussion of the Victorian interest in visual machinery, see Horton 1995. Of particular relevance here is the observation that the Victorian experience with new technologies of vision “was undoubtedly changing them” (13). Horton also links the growing realization that the eye could be tricked to narratives of the mystery novel.

20. Cf. my differences with Poovey and Freedgood in chapter 1, above.

21. My reading of this passage here reverses, to some extent, the reading I offer in the article-length version of this chapter, published in *Nineteenth-Century Literature* (Stern 2003). There I argued that Rossetti offered a logic of exception and singularity; the revision derives from the more complicated model of the relationship between reading and risk I developed while writing chapter 1.

22. Lizzie and Laura also share in this discourse; for all their likeness and for all ease of confusion between them, the two girls are quite different. Rossetti accentuates this after Laura’s commerce with the goblin men, whence we find “Lizzie with an open heart, / Laura in an absent dream, / One content, one sick in part; / One warbling for the mere bright day’s delight, / One longing for the night” (210–14). Helena Michie identifies this same characteristic of “Goblin Market” from a different perspective, arguing that “individualization threatens familial discourse” through a paradigm of sexual difference that includes a distinction between sexual purity and fall, and hence a distinction between women (1992, 34).

23. See Sedgwick 1997 for a more extended discussion of the psychology of avoiding the “bad surprise.”

24. See, for example, Holt 1990 and Helsinger 1991. I am willing to follow Holt, who argues that Laura’s “redemption offers a consoling fantasy of the subject’s escape from power relations—an impossible exemption, in other words, from the very forces that give the subject existence. The consolation of what follows in ‘Goblin Market’ is plain, but the wishful, fantastic nature of this consolation—its historical discontinuousness and the impossibility of its realization in Rossetti’s world—are equally apparent, as repressed threats return in the closing passages of the poem” (62). I find those “threats” more overt than repressed, which lends the poem an attitude more cautionary than fantastic.

25. Although Laura “Longed but had no money,” the goblins assure her she can buy nonetheless: “‘You have much gold upon your head,’ / They answered all together / ‘Buy from us with a golden curl’” (123–25). Like the system of credit on which the market operated, the wealth of Laura’s looks allows her to trade without coin. The poem may be read as well, then, as a sermon on debt and the gambling that forms its subtext in much anti-capitalist literature. See Searle 1998, 230–33.

26. In a bizarre echo of “Goblin Market,” many promoters used tropes of fertility and produce to denote the wary consumer’s duty to participate in the market economy, to enrich national ground with individual wealth, so that England’s bounty might increase. For example, *How to Obtain Wealth*, a sixpenny pamphlet, puffs “The Orchard Company,” designed to “lease all the surplus lands on the banks of railways, which could be had at a very low rental, for the cultivation and improvement of all kinds of Fruit Trees and Vegetables. The sale of the fruit, etc., would produce a very handsome revenue, and the produce being close to the railway, the markets could be cheaply and quickly supplied” (n.d., 3). The impetus to speculate in such potentially fruitful ventures receives further reinforcement from the introduction to these schemes, which reminds the reader that: “If a Tree after it has been nurtured brings not forth good Fruit, it is cut down because it only
cumbereth the ground; so a man born with intellect, wealth, etc., if he does not apply these gifts of Providence which are lent to him to improve and benefit himself and neighbours, he likens himself to the unfruitful tree, and recedes further from God his Creator” (1). In other words, the Victorian public had a moral and religious responsibility to enter the market, populated by “goblins” though it might be.

27. George Eliot’s short story “Brother Jacob” (1864; Eliot 1887) falls in this group. The aptly named David Faux steals from his mother, abandons his “idiot” brother, and reinvents himself as Edward Freely, a confectioner. While Eliot places him in close proximity to the sorts of confectionary that were notorious in her day, Faux is not an adulterator per se. Eliot writes, “A sharper can drive a brisk trade in this world: it is undeniable that there may be a fine career for him, if he will dare consequences; but David was too timid to be a sharper, or venture in any way among the man-traps of the law. He dared rob nobody but his mother. And so he had to fall back on the genuine value there was in him—to be content to pass as a good halfpenny, or, to speak more accurately, as a good confectioner” (506).

28. My thanks to Nancy Henry for bringing this novel to my attention. Page numbers refer to the double-columned American edition, published in the same year that the novel appeared in Britain.

29. Lawrence’s moral fiber is not exactly tightly knit to start; he enters the adulteration business without much hesitation at all and he readily divorces the benefits of his actions from their consequences for others.

Chapter Four

1. See her novel Martyrs to Circumstance. See also J. R. O’Flanagan’s Gentle Blood and Cyrus Redding’s A Wife and Not a Wife.

2. Many historians trace the case’s appeal to its engagement with the complications of marriage law in Great Britain. While the debates about Irish vs. Scotch vs. English marriage law certainly gave the case cachet within the legal community, popular materials about the case suggest a wider scope of public interest, concerned primarily with romantic betrayal.

3. A previous suit for Longworth’s debts had been filed in England. The civil suit for money was settled in this court when Yelverton agreed to pay, which established the precedent that allowed the Dublin trial to take shape. See Erickson and McCarthy 1971, 278.

4. See Hastings and Davenport 1872:

A husband married prior to the passing of “The Married Women’s Property Act, 1870,” still remains liable for his wife’s debts incurred before marriage, of whatever amount, and whether he had any fortune with her or not. And he is also answerable for a breach of trust committed by her before marriage. A husband, however, married subsequent to the passing of “The Married Women’s Property Act, 1870,” is not responsible for his wife’s debts contracted before marriage, her separate estate alone being liable for such debts. (41–42)

5. Henry Mansel famously critiqued the popular taste for sensation fiction, writing, “There is something unspeakably disgusting in this ravenous appetite for carrion, this vulture-like instinct which smells out the newest mass of social corruption, and hurries to
devour the loathsome dainty before the scent has evaporated” (*Quarterly Review*).

6. For nuanced discussions of the Matrimonial Causes Act and the complex economic debates surrounding it, see Shanley 1989, chap. 1, and Poovey 1988, chap. 3, and Poovey’s remark that, “Even though the 1857 Married Women’s Property bill did not become law, the controversy it aroused interjected the issues of women’s rights, property, and work into parliamentary discussion, quarterly review articles, and popular novels as well” (Poovey 1995, 173).

7. See also Craig 2000. Although breach of promise suits fall neatly within the provenance of fraud, they are less immediately relevant to the debates about the Yelverton case.

8. Cf. “After the 1856 passage of new company law, financial fraud almost certainly became more common still, with mismanaging company directors and embezzling clerks joining fraudulent promoters in the pantheon of iniquity” (Poovey 2003, 18).

9. Armstrong’s argument is more centered on issues of power than economy, largely due to her debt to Foucault. She notes of Richardson’s ledger, “Although this novel claims to deal only with the sexual contract, doing so in this instance also revises the way in which political relationships are imagined” (1987, 112). For my purposes here, I want to highlight how that revision articulates equivalencies between the desirable body and money, goods, and land. The negotiations between B. and Pamela redistribute the properties men and women bring to the table in a sexual contract newly envisioned under capitalism.

10. The mood of this illustration is more gentle than the more scathing tone of the ballads I discuss below: despite those figures I cite, the majority of Cruikshank’s lovers stand without monetary markers, and the overall effect is more comic than critical. There are sufficient smiles to moderate the sting of the illustrator’s wit, as less obviously mercenary suitors nicely balance the swains who cluster around the “10,000 a Year” beauty.

11. Satires and other traces of personal ads emerge early in the century, suggesting that actual advertisements were appearing. See, for example, “The Matrimonial Hoax,” a ballad that musically advises “Do not advertise for wives Sirs / For if you do as sure as fate / You lay yourselves to a pretty bait.” John Dinely, whose public advertisement inviting women to compete for his hand, apparently inspired someone to exhibit his likeness in wax. See “A Capital Likeness” and “Wonderful Museum!” in JJC Human Freaks 4.

12. Another variation involves a young woman, made up to appear quite pregnant, who “offers her gold wedding-ring for sale, as she wants to get back to her suffering kids to give them something to eat.” The ensuing conversation among the servant girls—“oh, you’ll want it, Mary, for John; and another ‘no, you’ll want it first, Sally, for William.’ But the woman has her eye on the one as says the least, as the likeliest of all to want it” (Mayhew 1861–2, 352), and so manages to elicit a healthy tip, if not half the ring’s alleged value, from her flattered and hopeful target.

13. Further, because Mr. Taylor’s interest in Mrs. Cooper emerges upon her mention of her “immense property,” his desire for her reiterates precisely his desire for her avowed estate. Note how this revises Catherine Peters’s evaluation of such desires: “Women in particular, both the downtrodden menials of the back-kitchens and their comparatively fortunate sisters in the back-drawing-rooms, could, except for a very few, hope to achieve status only through marriage, and the protective colouring of someone else’s name” (1989, xviii). Here Cooper plays on the greedy men’s interest in marrying up.

14. I am, with great restraint, leaving aside a potentially extended discussion of modern analogies to internet dating. I’ll simply say that to use a picture that is more than five years old is, while not outright lying, to misrepresent oneself.
15. In the 1860s, Dickens would mock this form of dealing through the Lammles in *Our Mutual Friend*, whose marriage shares a chapter with the novel’s famous passage on shares. “As is well known to the wise in their generation,” Dickens writes, “traffic is the one thing to have to do with in this world. Have no antecedents, no established character, no cultivation, no ideas, no manners; have Shares” (159–60). Just after the Lammles’ marriage, when the newlyweds discover that neither actually has any property, the “entrapped imposters” descend into a rattle of hostilities that ends in a pointed question: “Do you pretend to believe,” Mrs. Lammle resumes, sternly, ‘when you talk of my marrying you for worldly advantages, that it was within the bounds of reasonable probability that I would have married you for yourself?” (170). They ultimately agree only that they are both adventurers: as Alfred Lammle says to his wife, “we have both been deceiving, and we have both been deceived. We have both been biting, and we have both been bitten” (172). See also Poovey: “the John Harmon plot works to rewrite ‘value,’ to exchange the false currency of literal money for the ‘true,’ metaphorical coin of love” (1995, 165). Tara McGann observes that “Sophronia and Alfred Lammle stand for what the novel takes to be a morally bankrupt speculative economy as well as representing and multiplying a disturbing transaction between mercenary marriage and speculation” (2002, 4).

16. Cf. “In circumstances he was not very well off; … he had an uncle on whose bounty he very much depended, who would be annoyed if he married” (*Yelverton Marriage Case* [1861], 10).

17. I cite the 1852 version of this text. A later edition revises as follows: “A clandestine marriage should be peremptorily declined. In too many cases it is a fraud committed by an elder and more experienced party upon one whose ignorance of the world’s ways and confiding tenderness appeal to him for protection even against himself” (1865, 29–30).

18. J. L. Austin has compellingly discussed the performative nature of language with regard to the marriage ceremony: “I do” is a speech act that, when uttered under the proper circumstances, accomplishes what it describes (similar instances include “I promise” and “I bet”). However, he acknowledges that the “felicity,” or success, of speech acts, depends on a number of conditions, which include the following:

(A. 2) The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked.

(Γ. 1) Where, as often, the procedure is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must in fact have those thoughts or feelings, and the participants must intend so to conduct themselves, and further

(Γ. 2) must actually so conduct themselves subsequently. (1975, 15)

Austin’s formulation echoes nearly precisely that of the Scottish and English courts that subsequently heard the Yelverton case: As the Lord Ordinary, Lord Ardmillian, insisted,

Marriage is a consensual contract. Consent alone, if freely, seriously, and deliberately given, constitutes marriage. No ceremony, civil or religious, is necessary. The interchange of mutual consent is sufficient. The celebration of the ordinance of marriage in facie ecclesiæ is only the regular, and the most becoming, and the best mode of proving the mutual consent which constitutes marriage.

177
Notes to Chapter Four

But other modes of proof are recognized as sufficient,—the general and permanent rule being, that the serious and deliberate consent—the mutual intention of the parties to enter into the contract of marriage—shall clearly appear. Nothing less will suffice. Light words—words of doubtful import—words used merely to give a colour to cohabitation, to escape scandal, or to obtain access to lodgings or hotels,—these are not sufficient proof of that mutual consent to marry which the law requires, and which must be seriously entertained and deliberately expressed. (*Cases Decided* [1863], 112)

19. The statute in question was 19 Geo. II. c. 13, s. 1. Furthermore, under 23 Geo. II, c. 10, s. 3, any priest who performed such a marriage was guilty of a felony. See Erickson and McCarthy 1971, 287–88. A subsequent law under Victoria (5 & 6 Vic., c. 28) determined that any priest who performed such a ceremony was punishable by seven years transportation.

20. See note 18, above.

21. See *Cases Decided* (1863) for specific records of the appeals and verdicts.

22. See note 1, above.

23. The most notable of these accounts, Erickson and McCarthy 1971, continues to be the definitive historical account. Crow 1966 offers a more creative, but less historically reputable, interpretation.


25. See also Page’s introduction to Wilkie Collin’s *Man and Wife,* in which he argues that “The Yelverton case brought the questions of bigamy and of irregularly contracted marriages dramatically to public notice. . . . It has been estimated,” he continues, “that in the four years following the Yelverton trial, between twelve and sixteen ‘bigamy novels’ appeared each year” (1983, x).

26. The seduction plots of many nineteenth-century novels offer ready paradigms through which to interpret Yelverton’s behavior: Gaskell’s *Ruth,* Wood’s *East Lynne,* and Eliot’s *Adam Bede,* among others, feature a male protagonist who plays upon a woman’s romantic ideals, gets her pregnant, and disappears.

27. In the Scottish trial, the Lord Ordinary writes,

> The tone and tenor of these letters is very far from indicating those feelings and hopes by which the statements which she has put on record are true. . . . [T]he only passage of a more cheerful kind is that relating to “bon bons”—“not real ones,” which she hopes to get—words to which the defender attaches meaning of a kind which it is not necessary to mention, and which the Lord Ordinary, who does not adopt the defender’s meaning, does not at present understand, but of which the pursuer has offered no intelligible explanation. (*Cases Decided* [1863], 107)

28. It may do so inadvertently, for the Vickers report is explicitly sympathetic to Longworth. However, the illustrations, contributed by various artists, offer considerably more complicated renditions of Longworth than does the text. See also my discussion of the illustration “Visions of Gentle-Blooded Life,” below.

29. The *Full Report* quotes Brewster saying, “If he were forty times his client he would not stand up in that court to justify him” (1861, 53). See Rosenman 2003, 156–57 for
further discussion of Yelverton’s lawyers’ posture with regard to their client.

30. This interpretation may gain credence from the small prone figure that grips two sheets of paper at the bottom of the illustration, stabbed at the heart with a quill. The small letters identifying this figure as John Swain mark what seems to be a rivalry between engravers (Swain worked for and eventually became the head of engraving at Punch, while Julian Portch, whose signature sprawls beside the figure, was a less powerful, albeit still popular, illustrator).

31. See, for example, the Vickers report, which explicitly uses Yelverton’s term to describe Longworth’s family background:

The defendant was a man of noble family, the heir apparent to the peerage of Avonmore. Teresa [sic] Yelverton, his wife, whose maiden name was Longworth, was also of gentle blood. She belonged to an ancient and honourable family in England, and having lost her mother in early life, she was taken to France to be educated. . . . She had a sister married in France to the son of the Chief Justice of that empire. (Yelverton Marriage Case [1861], 9–10)

However respectable her family may have been, they did not come close to matching the Yelvertons in hereditary oomph.

32. Sergeant Armstrong took rather a different line: “To be told that [the Scotch marriage] was an honest marriage, or a marriage at all, would be a blow to virtue, to the security of families, to the peace, and honour, and tranquillity of married life greater than ever had been inflicted upon that sacred connexion. God forbid that such a transaction, even if it occurred, would receive the stamp of approbation from an honest jury” (Yelverton Marriage Case [1861], 140).

33. The full passage runs as follows:

The defender having thus informed the pursuer that he was a confirmed bachelor, and intended to remain so, proceeds in a subsequent letter to tell the pursuer what she may expect from him [from which he cites a long passage. . . . There is no deception or disguise in this. When a gentleman in the course of such a correspondence as this, resolutely refrains from responding to dexterous suggestions, and even direct invitations, to make proposals of marriage,—when he tells the lady that he is a confirmed bachelor, and yet has no Rubicon beyond which he does not mean to pass, if he can, then he has certainly given her no encouragement to expect marriage, but on the contrary has said enough to put her to some extent on her guard. (Cases Decided [1863], 96)

34. Arguments that the Longworth–Yelverton hearings foregrounded discrepancies among marriage laws within Great Britain are most pertinent to this phase of the case.

35. See the Lord Ordinary in the Scotch hearing:

Nor can this Irish ceremony receive effect as a renewal of a previous marriage, regular or irregular, in Scotland. Of such previous marriage there is no proof; and no acknowledgment of any such previous marriage was made by the defender to the priest; nor was any statement of such previous marriage so
made by the pursuer as to imply the acquiescence of the defender. If no such previous marriage existed, it could not be renewed; and whatever effect, as a renewal of a previous marriage, the ceremony might have had in Ireland if previous marriage had been proved, the Irish ceremony can have no effect in Scotland in the constitution of marriage, in regard to which there is no proof of previous interchange of matrimonial consent. (Cases Decided [1863], 108)

36. See Rosenman 2003, 129 on the transcript of Longworth’s appeal.

Conclusion

1. The Zazoo ad is easy to find by searching “Zazoo” at www.youtube.com.

2. Other forms included refuses and puts. A “refuse” was an option to buy a stock, a “put” was an option to sell stock, and a time bargain was a promise (and in this sense not an option) to buy stock at a fixed price; all on some set future date.

3. As David Itzkowitz has remarked, those “legitimate transactions” were also technically time-bargains. “Stocks bought or sold on the Exchange did not … have to be delivered or paid for at the time of purchase,” he writes (2002, 131). Because they would be held until the settling day, “Virtually all transactions on the Exchange were what we would now refer to as ‘futures,’ though the time between sale and delivery was relatively short” (ibid.). Furthermore, Teresa Michals notes that basically all credit transactions deal in unknown futures, because a “marketplace of credit is essentially a ‘futures’ market,” whereby the extension of credit is a gamble on the likelihood of future reimbursement (usually with interest) (1994, 8).

4. For Edelman, the productive characteristics of “futurism” so profoundly privilege heteronormativity as to render impossible a truly political homosexual identity. Edelman’s No Future (2004) works through the oppositional logic of homophobic rhetoric to extrapolate a broader homophobic logic behind the (Lacanian) Symbolic order. Edelman refuses the recuperative bent of liberalism, espousing instead a politics that is itself premised on refusal, particularly of the future:

Politics (as the social elaboration of reality) and the self (as mere prosthesis maintaining the future for the figural Child), are what queerness, again as figure, necessarily destroys—necessarily insofar as this “self” is the agent of reproductive futurism and this “politics” the means of its promulgation as the order of social reality. But perhaps, as Lacan’s engagement with Antigone in Seminar 7 suggests, political self-destruction inheres in the only act that counts as one: the act of resisting enslavement to the future in the name of having a life. (30)

5. My thanks to Susan for sharing her work with me.

6. The Guides unfortunately lack pagination.

7. I suspect that, in my addiction to serial forms, I am participating in a weakness to which Victorianists are especially prone.

8. The show is less popular in America (reruns air on AMC far too early in the morning for most viewers, and iTunes does not yet offer it). I was, however, happy to find the first three seasons readily available through Netflix.
Notes to Conclusion


10. Particular examples of the fraud-made-familiar include Collins's Captain Wragge and Dickens's John Harmon in Our Mutual Friend. Thackeray's Becky Sharp (Vanity Fair) would be another likely candidate, did not the author's punishment of his character (to say nothing of his illustration of her in ch. XLIV) suggest strongly his decided ambivalence about trusting the likes of Rebecca anywhere near his family hearth.
Works Cited


Adulteration of Food, Drink, and Drugs. Being the Evidence Taken before the Parliamentary Committee. 1855. London: David Bryce.


Works Cited


Bell, Catherine D. [Cousin Kate, pseud.] n.d. *Horace and May; or, Unconscious Influence*. London: Frederick Warne.


———. 1868. *Lily Gordon; or, the Young Housekeeper*. London: Frederick Warne.


Works Cited


———. 1847. Trial of Janet Rose and Mary McIntosh. Vol. XXVI. London: George Herbert.


Works Cited


*A Complete History of the Yelverton Family since the Reign of Edward II. To which is added some account of the Longworth family.* N.d. Manchester: Abel Hayward; London: George Vickers.


186
Works Cited


“Frauds and Pickpockets, or Rogues All!” N.d. 7 Dials, London: Pitts Printer.


Works Cited

Holt, Terrence. 1990. “‘Men sell not such in any town’: Exchange in Goblin Market.”


How to Detect Adulteration in Our Daily Food and Drink: A Complete Analysis of the Frauds and Deceptions Practised upon Articles of Domestic Consumption, by Tradesmen and Manufacturers; With Full Directions to Detect Genuine from Spurious, by Simple and Inexpensive Means. [1855]. London: Groombridge.


Jane Wright; or, The Young Servant. [1865]. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.


“Kate’s Young Man.” N.d. Ballad. Firth c. 17(141). Bodleian Library.


189
Works Cited


Works Cited

Mr. Timothy Wiggins. 1860. s.n. JJC The Social Day 2. Bodleian Library.
Works Cited


Practical Mistress of a Household. 1859. Domestic Servants, As They Are & As They Ought to Be. Brighton: Curtis.


Works Cited


Stern, Rebecca. 2003. “Adulterations Detected: Food and Fraud in Christine Rossetti’s...
Works Cited

“Suicide of Mr. John Sadleir, M.P.” 1856. The Times, 19 February.  
The Tricks of Trade in the Adulterations of Food and Physic; With Directions for the Detection and Counteraction. 1856. London: David Bogue.  

194
Works Cited

“We’ll Not Forget Poor Roger Now.” [1874]. London: Disley.
Index

accounting: corporate, 2, 155, 156, 162n6, 168n30; domestic, 5, 75–76, 81–82, 84–86; religious, 86
Accum, Frederick, 92, 172n10
administration, domestic, 5, 16, 50–86
adulteration of food and drink, 17, 86, 87–113
“Adulteration of Food and Drugs, The,” 102–4
Adulteration of Food, Drink, and Drugs, 94, 97, 172n9
adultery, 17, 68, 110–13, 117, 118, 119, 167n24. See also bigamy; The Race for Wealth
Adulterations Detected (Hassall), 91, 93, 96–97, 100–101
affect, economies of, 6–9, 15–16, 19–20, 25, 29, 31–42, 48, 162n10
Ahmed, Sara, 35
Alborn, Timothy, 165n9
Althusser, Louis, 168n31
American Civil War, 149
Annear, Robyn, 29, 49, 164n3, 168n29
Ardmillian, Lord (James Craufurd), 143–46, 177n18, 178n27, 179n35
Armstrong, Nancy, 119, 162n5, 169n6, 176n9
Armstrong, Sergeant, 132, 134–36, 137, 142, 179n32. See also Yelverton marriage case
Arnstein, Walter, 53
Assets. See property
Atlay, J. B., 34
Austen, Jane: Mansfield Park, 34, 166n20; Persuasion, 34, 166n20; Sense and Sensibility, 34, 166n20. See also Pride and Prejudice
Austin, J. L., 177n18
Australia, 22, 25, 43, 136
Bagehot, Walter 28, 135
Bailey, Peter, 53, 65
ballads. See street ballads
banknotes, 47–48, 168n33
Banner, Stuart, 149
Barnard’s Act, 149–50
Barrington, George, 121
Beeton, Isabella, 57, 67, 68, 155
Beeton, Samuel, 163n12
behavioral finance, 29
Bell, Catherine 169n8, 173n17; Kind Words to Domestic Servants, 70–71; Lily Gordon, or the Young Housekeeper, 58–59
Benedict, Barbara, 167n24
bigamy, 114–16, 118, 122, 124; as fraud, 116, 122. See also Yelverton marriage case
Bigelow, Gordon, 172n7
bodies, clothing as synecdoche for, 77,
80; and deception, 123–24; food as synecdoche for, 82–84; "gentle blood," 139–42; risks of food adulteration, 88, 92, 93–94, 101–2, 106; size, 22, 44; tattoos, 23, 44; threat of exposure, 36–38, 40, 43–45. See also seduction; sex
Booth, Charles, 53–55, 54, 169n3
Bourdieu, Pierre, 7–9, 36–37, 75, 162n10, 162n11
Bowen, John, 36
Braddon, Mary Elizabeth, 115; Lady Audley’s Secret, 42–43
Brady, Dianne, 156
Brantlinger, Patrick, 168n32
Brewster, Abraham (attorney for William Charles Yelverton), 142, 178n29
breach of promise, 118, 176n7
Bronner, Edward, 172n9
Brontë, Charlotte: Jane Eyre, 48, 169n1; Villette, 167n25
Brontë, Emily: Wuthering Heights, 169n1
Brooks, Peter, 16n16
Brown, Rev. J. Baldwin, 53
Burnett, Mark Thornton, 169n5
Burton, Bruce, 140–41
Business: As it is, and As it Might Be (Lynndall), 61
Buzard, James, 16n20
Campbell, Elizabeth, 171n2
capital, affective, 7–9, 15–16, 25, 31–32, 35–36, 39, 43, 162n10; Bourdieu’s theories of, 7–9, 36–37; children as, 151, 153–55; complexities of, 7–9, 25, 36–37, 40, 48–49, 147, 150; cultural, 8–9, 15–16, 25, 82–83, 139–42; economic, 8, 15, 25, 27, 31, 33, 35, 40; labor as, 70–74; and marriage, 116–17, 118, 126, 129–32; servants as, 16, 53–55; social, 8–9, 15, 25, 31–32, 35–37, 39, 43, 74–86, 139–42; symbolic, 15–16, 25, 29, 37. See also investing; property capitalism, 6–10, 26–28, 56–58, 75–76, 87–113, 116, 172n10
Carlisle, Janice, 14
cathexis. See investing
caveat emptor, 101–2, 106, 143–44, 179n33
Chancery, Court of, 37, 39, 123
character, servants’, 17, 52, 65–69; and forgery, 66–67, 68–69; history of, 67–68; and imposture, 66–69; need for, 66; and realism, 67; suspicions regarding, 66–69
charity, 85
Childers, Joseph, 167n21
child labor laws, 152
children, 15, 18, 42, 148–49, 151–55; as capital, 151, 153–55; and fraud, 153–54, 156–57; servants as, 58–59; as sites of investment, 148–49, 151–55; working classes as, 28
class tensions, 153–54; servants, 55–56, 59–60, 75–86; stock market, 27–28, 46–47; and Yelverton marriage case, 135–36, 139–42. See also The Race for Wealth; Tichborne Claimant
class transcendence, 26, 31–32, 47, 52–53, 150–51, 157–58; and gender, 53, 80; and servants, 80; and social geography, 53–54; and Yelverton marriage case, 126, 132, 137–39
Cleere, Eileen, 167n21
clerks, corporate, 60–62; servants as, 60–62, 66, 74–75
clothing, 50–51, 74, 76–80, 171n22; and class avarice, 78–80
Cobbe, Frances Power, on marriage and divorce, 114, 117; on servants, 59–60, 62, 65–66, 74, 169n7
Cohen, Monica, 58
Cohen, Paula Marantz, 88, 171n2
Collins, Simon Crawford, 159
Collins, Wilkie, 115; Man and Wife, 107, 129, 178n25; No Name, 160, 181n10; The Woman in White, 42–43, 123, 167n27
collusion, 41–42, 133–34, 149
Comey, James, 156–57
counter parts, 27, 35, 65, 77, 81, 126, 163n12, 177n17; on childbearing, 149, 153, 154–55; for servants,
Index

condoms, 148
contagion, 11–14, 16, 17, 57, 91–92, 96, 106, 108–9, 111
contracts: matrimonial, 116, 118, 141–46; servants’, 60, 70–71, 77
Cookmaid’s Complete Guide and Advisor, 84–85
cooks, 81, 82–83, 84–86
“Cooks Rout, or High Life below Stairs, The,” 82–83, 82
cotton, 149
counterfeiting, 2, 9–10, 47–48, 168n33; and servants’ characters, 65–69
courtship, conduct materials on, 126, 177n17; and flirtation, 110–11, 125; and food adulteration, 107, 110; and fraud, 107–10. See also false suitors; seduction
coverty, 116, 121
Coyne, J. Stirling, 3
Craig, Randall, 176n7
Cranford (Gaskell), 63, 169n10
credit, 6–8, 28, 33, 36, 65–66, 130, 135, 136, 162n11, 163n13, 168n30, 180n3; and credulity, 28, 32–33, 47–48
Credit Mobilier, 164n16
Crimean War, 125
crosby, Christina, 166n16
crow, duncan, 178n23
Cruikshank, George, 24; and The Greatest Plague of Life (Mayhew and Mayhew), 72, 73, 72–74, 169n9, 170n12; on matrimony, 119–21, 120, 176n10; and the Tichborne Claimant, 24, 165n7
“Cure for Deceit, A,” 12
Dalton, william, 172n9
David Copperfield (Dickens), 52
Darwin, Ellen, 55
debt, 32–33, 62, 75, 112, 115–16, 125–27, 135, 139–40, 162n6, 174n25
Defoe, Daniel, 9, 55
Derrida, jacques, 171n20
detection, 33–34, 90, 99–106; and the microscope, 87–100–101, 103–5; and paranoid reading, 92, 99–102, 105–7
Dickens, Charles: Bleak House, 171n22; David Copperfield, 52; Great Expectations, 48; Our Mutual Friend, 160, 177n15, 181n10; Tale of Two Cities, A, 85. See also Little Dorrit; Nicholas Nickleby
Dickens, Jr., Charles, 63
Dinely, John, 176n11
divorce, 114, 117–19. See also Matrimonial Causes Act
domestic labor, and “busyness,” 58; home as business, 5, 57–63; and management, 5, 16, 56–58, 70, 76, 81–82; and servants, 56, 59–60, 69–73
domestic fraud, definition of, 6
Domestic Servants (Practical Mistress), 58, 66–67, 81
Doughty, Katherine (Lady Radcliffe), 21, 34, 37–38, 40, 43–44. See also Tichborne Claimant.
Driver, Minnie, 157–58
Duke of Buckingham, 162n6
“Duty of Servants” (Garnier), 86
Eccles Household Guides, 153
Edelman, Lee, 148, 152–53, 180n4
education, 17, 152–55
Eliot, George: Adam Bede, 150, 178n26; “Brother Jacob,” 175n27; Impressions of Theophrastus Such, 161n2; Middlemarch, 48, 119
Ellis, Sarah Stickney, 77–78, 154
Ellis, William Fitz-Norman, 38
embezzlement, 62; and clerks, 61–62; and servants, 69–70, 74–86. See also Enron; John Sadleir; Walter Watts
Embezzlements Prevention Bill, 62
Encumbered Estates Court, 161n1
Enron, 18, 155, 156–57, 159–60
Erickson, Arvel B., 175n3, 178n19, 178nn23–24, 178n24
Evans, D. Morier, 6, 26, 31, 60–61, 165n13
“extreme sports,” 29–31
Index

Facts, Frauds, and Failures (Evans), 6, 26, 31, 60–61, 165n13
Fahnestock, Jeanne, 115, 123, 129
false suitors, 6, 9, 18, 32–34, 48, 64–65, 122. See also marriage
families: and melodrama, 2, 3, 42; as panacea for financial difficulty, 35–36, 57, 113; and pious fraud, 15–16; and servants, 58–59, 65–66; as sites of investment, 35–39, 46–47; of swindlers, 157–61; as victims of fraud, 3–4, 14, 16, 18, 36–38, 161n2. See also adultery; children; “Goblin Market”; marriage; Tichborne Claimant
Feltes, Norman, 58
feminist theory, 4, 162n5, 162n10
Fielding, Henry, 170n15
financial journalism, 5, 12, 26–27, 29, 31, 61, 135, 149–50. See also D. Morier Evans; Herbert Spencer; Times
Finn, Margot, 162n11
“Flying Artillery” (Cruikshank), 119, 120
food, 108–9; as cultural capital, 82–83; as intimate commodity, 82, 84; and perquisites, 74–76, 81, 86; as property, 84–86. See also food adulteration
food adulteration, 17, 86–110, 173n12; and adultery, 110–13; and appearances, 95–97; ballads about, 95–96, 104–5; candy, 93–94, 148; and chemistry, 87, 90, 92–94, 96–97, 100, 109–10; and consumer protection, 100–106; cutting, 91, 96; and food safety laws, 87, 101–2; history, 92–93; in Mary Price (Reynolds), 91; in “Maud” (Tennyson), 91–92; and merchants, 87–102, 105, 107–10; and microscopy, 87–100–101, 103–4; paranoid reading and, 94–96, 99–107; Parliamentary Select Committee, 92–94, 96–97; tea, 87, 91, 93, 95–96, 105. See also “Goblin Market” (Rossetti); Arthur Hassall; The Race for Wealth (Riddell)
forger, 2, 42, 136–37, 161n1, 168n33; and servants’ characters, 66–69
Forster, John, 11
Foucault, Michel, 46, 71, 99, 102–3, 176n9
France, 22–23, 42, 164n16, 167n25, 167n27
Francis, John, 149–50
fraud: attitudes toward, 11, 106, 108, 146, 147; and contagion, 12–13, 16; corporate, 2, 4–5, 6, 7, 11, 26–28, 108, 111 (see also John Sadleir); domestic, 1–181; and futures market, 147, 149–50; legal definitions, 7, 15, 28; mercantile, 87–102, 105, 107–100; and personalization, 2–3, 6, 104–5; physical risks of, 87–88, 90, 92–98, 101–2, 106 (see also illness); pious, 14, 15
Fraud and its Victims (Coyne), 3
Frams of London, The (Barrington), 3
Freud, Sigmund, 166n16
Freedgood, Elaine, 26, 29–30, 165n9, 166n19, 171n21, 174n20
Freeland, Natalka, 164n17
Frith, William Powell, 3–4
Frost, Ginger, 118
Fry, Stephen, 168n29
futures investing (Victorian), 18; and childrearing, 148–49, 151–55; and fraud, 147, 149–50; libidinal economics of, 148–49, 150–55; monetary, 147–50
Gallagher, Catherine, 162n5, 162n8
The Game of Speculation (Lewes), 59
gambling, 46–47, 116–17, 142–43, 165n14, 174n25
Garnier, Reverend Thomas, 62, 86
Gaskell, Elizabeth, 52, 63, 169n10, 178n26
genre, literary, 9, 19–20, 40–49; and containment, 45–49; and risk, 20, 46–49; sensation fiction, 41–45, 115, 123; sentimentality, 40–42, 167n24. See also melodrama
Index

Gentle Blood, or the Secret Marriage (O’Flanagan), 140, 175n1

gift economies, 171n19, 171n20; and perquisites, 75–76, 77–78, 80, 82

Gilbert, Michael, 166n14

“Goblin Market” (Rossetti), 17, 88–106; erotic readings of, 88, 171n1, 172n4, 174n22; and food, 88, 171n2, 172n6; and food adulteration, 88–106; and logic of singularity, 105; and market economy, 88–91, 94–101; and mimicry, 97–99, 103, 174n22; and paranoid reading, 97, 99–106; and pleasure, 99–100; as religious allegory, 88; and sampling, 100–101

Goderich, Viscount, 172n10

Gonzalez, Alberto, Attorney General, 160

Gosford, Vincent (Tichborne steward), 37–38

Great Expectations (Dickens), 48

Greatest Plague of Life, The (Mayhew and Mayhew), 52, 56, 60, 68–69, 72–73

Green, Gretna. See Scotch marriage

Greg, W. R., 136

Hampshire, See the Tichborne Claimant

Hardy, Thomas, 115, 169n1

Harper’s Weekly, 131–32

Harris, Richard, 39, 40, 41, 43

Hassall, Arthur Hill, 91, 93–94, 96–97, 100–103, 172n10, 173n11

Hastings, Sidney, 170n14, 175n4

Hawkins, Henry, 39–42, 165n14

Heath, Henry, 78, 78, 83–84, 84

Helsinger, Elizabeth, 89, 171n2, 172n4, 174n24

Henry IV, Part One (Shakespeare), 9–10

Henry, Nancy, 175n28

Hilton, Arthur Boyd, 151, 152

Holt, Terrence, 88, 89–90, 171n2, 172n5, 174n24

homes, 5, 35–37; as prisons, 12–14, 156, 164n18; as sites of national production, 147, 149, 151–55, 156–57; thresholds, 57, 63–64, 67, 83–84, 86, 169n9; as workplaces, 57–63, 74–76, 81–82. See also Little Dorrit (Dickens)

homemaker, as manager, 57, 70, 76, 81–82

Horton, Susan R., 174n19

Household Work; or, The Duties of Female Servants, 84

How to Detect Adulteration in Our Daily Food and Drink, 90, 93, 94, 172n9

How to Obtain Wealth, 174n26

Hudson, George, 11

Hustle, 18, 158–60

Hyde, Lewis, 171n19

illness, 112, 126; fraud as, 12; and food adulteration, 90–91, 93–94, 97–99, 101, 106. See also contagion; disease

Illustrated London News, 41, 42

Illustrations in Advocacy (Harris), 39, 43

impostors, 5–6, 8, 10, 16, 17, 157–58; and servants, 66–69. See also the Tichborne Claimant

Impressions of Theophrastus Such (Eliot), 161n2

infidelity. See adultery

inventors, 109–10


investor confidence, 29–30

Ireland, 1–2, 76, 115, 125–46 passim

Itzkowitz, David C., 164n1, 180n3

Izzard, Eddie, 157–58

Jackson, Thomas, 116

Jaffe, Audrey, 166n17

James, G. P. R., 87
Index

Jane Eyre (Brontë, C.), 48, 169n1
Jane Wright; or, The Young Servant, 55
Jerrold, Douglas, 7
jobbers, 27, 149–50
Jordan, John, 57, 63
Jordan, Tony, 158–59
Joyce, Patrick, 170n13

“Kate’s Young Man” (ballad), 63–65, 76
Keneally, Thomas, 40, 43–44, 168n28.
See also Tichborne Claimant
Korobkin, Laura Hanft, 167n24

Lady Audley’s Secret (Braddon), 42–43
laissez-faire, 28, 102, 116–17
Lalor, John, 12, 26–27
Lambeth Chapel, 10
Lancet, The, 92–94, 100–101, 173n18
Langland, Elizabeth, 169n6
Lay, Kenneth, 159–60, 180n9
legal cases, 155–57, 170n14; Cornelius Parr, 81, 171n23; Jane and Eliza Robinson, 50–51, 77, 82; Janet Rose and Mary McIntosh, 69, See also John Sadleir; Martha Stewart; Tichborne Claimant; Yelverton marriage case
Leeson, Nicholas, 155

Levine, Caroline, 161n3
Lewes, George Henry, 59
liberalism, 24–25, 27, 28, 45, 168n28
limited liability, 27–28, 108, 118, 163n13, 165n11–12
Little Dorrit (Dickens), 11–16; and contagion, 12–13, 16, 163n16, 164n21;
domestic spaces in, 12–14, 164n18; and familial fraud, 14–16; and John Sadleir 11, 12, 163n13; speculation as disease in, 12–14
Litvak, Joseph, 33–34, 82
Loftus, Donna, 27
London Labour and the London Poor (Mayhew), 121, 169n11, 176n12
London School of Economics, 169n3
London Spy, The, or The Frauds of London Detected (Barrington), 121
Longworth, Marie Theresa, 18, 114–16, 141; and amorousness, 132–134, 136; as author, 127–28; and marriages to William Charles Yelverton, 125–26; religion, 125; as schemer, 132–35; suit for restitution of conjugal rights, 115–16; as wronged woman, 134–35. See also Yelverton marriage case
lotteries, 116, 150
Lynch, Deidre, 168n32, 170n15
Maceachen, Dougald, 178n24
Maltby, Josephine, 165n12
Manchester Guardian, The, 128
Man and Wife (Collins), 107, 129, 178n25
Man of Business, The, 165n10
Mansel, Henry, 175n5
Mansfield Park (Austen), 34, 166n20
mapping, 53–55, 54
Marcet, W., 172n9
marine shops, 82
Index

177n18, 179n32; and shopping, 119–21, 123–24; as speculation, 8, 114, 116–18, 142; and stock market, 111–12, 116–18, 141–43. See also false suitors; Matrimonial Causes Act; Yelverton marriage case

marriage plots, 114–15, 117–24, 140
Martineau, Harriet, 26, 59, 76, 171n21
Mary Price (Reynolds), 52, 60, 75, 80–82, 171n24
Master and Servant Acts, 62
Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857, 17, 114–18, 176n6
Married Women’s Property Act, 117, 175n4, 176n6
“Matrimony by Advertisement” (Crui-kshank), 120
“Maud” (Tennyson), 91–92
Mauss, Marcel, 171n19
May, Leila Silvana, 162n4
Mayhew, Augustus Septimus. See The Greatest Plagues of Life
Mayhew, Henry, 121, 169n11, 176n12. See also The Greatest Plague of Life
McCarthy, John R., 175n3, 178n19, 178n23–24
McCulloch, John Ramsay, 26
McCuskey, Brian, 62
McGann, Tara, 177n15
McKeon, Michael, 162n4
McWilliam, Rohan, 22–23, 24–25, 32
melodrama, Fraud and its Victims, 3; and Marie Theresa Longworth, 132, 134–35; Sadleir and, 3
Menke, Richard, 88, 171n2, 172n6
merchants, 66, 87–102, 105, 107–10
Michals, Teresa, 180n3
Michie, Helena, 171n1, 174n22
microscope, and pleasure, 105; as scientific instrument, 17, 87, 100–101, 103–4; as social metaphor, 17, 103–6
Miller, Andrew, 79
Miller, D. A., 102
Miller, George (matrimonial deceiver), 122, 123
mimicry, 96–99, 103, 105, 173n15
Miss Marjoribanks (Oliphant), 85
 mobility, class, 80; and servants, 55–56, 59–60, 65–66. See also class transcen-dence
Moll Flanders (Defoe), 9
monetary speculation, 7, 16, 40, 46–48. See also investing
Moore, George: Esther Waters, 169n1
morality, 5, 21, 41, 91, 109–10, 157–61
Morgan, Marjorie, 169n2
Morse, John, 22, 37, 40
mothers, 22, 34, 147–55; conduct materials for, 149, 153, 154–55; and Lady Tichborne, 36, 38–42
mountain climbing, 29–31
Mr. Timothy Wiggins, 121
Myers, Janet, 25, 164n3, 165n8, 167n26

narrative, 29, 43; and actual property, 20, 25, 34–35; and fraud (credulity), 28, 32–35, 44, 47–48, 135; paintings, 3–4; plots about plotting, 42–43, 48, 56, 106–7, 117–24, 157–61; as site of investment, 29, 32–34, 38–49; and speculation, 20–21, 24; and virtual investment, 19–21, 24, 29–35, 46–49. See also genre; sensation fiction; servants’ characters
Newgate prison, 3, 61, 68, 77
Nicholas Nickleby (Dickens), 35–36, 153–54, 167n21
Normandy, Alphonse, 97
Nunokawa, Jeffrey, 162n5
Ocean’s Eleven, 158
O’Flanagan, J. R., 140, 175n1
Old Bailey, 3
Oliphant, Margaret, 85
One with an Excellent Character (Heath), 78, 78, 83–84, 84
Orton, Arthur. See Tichborne Claimant
Osteen, Mark, 75
Our Mutual Friend (Dickens), 160, 177n15, 181n10
Our Own Times, 120
Overbury, Thomas, 140
Page, Norman, 178nn24–25
Palmerston, Lord, 52–53, 173n18
*Pamela* (Richardson), 10, 119, 176n9
paranoid reading, 92, 99–102, 105–7; inefficacy of, 104–5, 108
Pardoe, Julia, 8
Parliament, food adulteration, 17, 87, 92–94, 96–97, 101–2, 173n18; and futures market, 18, 149–50; *laissez-faire* 7, 102; limited liability, 27–28, 118, 165n12; marriage, 115, 117, 176n6; Sadleir in, 6; Yelverton marriage case, 115, 127, 128–29, 144
Parliamentary Acts. See Barnard’s Act; Embezzlements Prevention Bill; Joint Stock Companies Acts; Masters and Servants Acts; Matrimonial Causes Act
pastoral home, 13, 91, 98–99, 106
Paterson, James, 170n14
Pattison, George, 128
penis, retractable. See Tichborne Claimant
perjury, 20, 36–38, 40, 43, 45
perquisites, 9, 17, 74–86, 171n24; clothing as, 50–51, 74, 76–80; as commercial enterprise, 74; food as, 74–76, 81–86
personal ads (Victorian), 120–21, 176n11
Peters, Catherine, 176n13
plague, speculation as, 12–13, 16. See also contagion; disease
pleasure, 20–21, 26, 28, 29–34, 42–49, 158–59; and detection, 99–107; and food, 87–88. See also risk; virtual investing plotting. See narrative
Plotz, John, 74, 77, 171n18
poison, 1, 90, 93–96, 106
policing (Foucauldian), 70–71, 102–3, 160. See also detection
*Political Blunders and Public Frauds*, 173n12
political economy, 7, 26–29, 162n8, 171n21
Poole, Miss, 66
Poovey, Mary, 26–27, 29, 58, 162n5, 165n9, 168n30, 168n32, 169n6, 174n20, 176n6, 176n8, 177n15
popular culture, Victorian, 3–11; current, 18, 155–60; and passim possessions. See property
*Pride and Prejudice* (Austen), 32–33, 119, 166n18
prisons, homes as, 14, 164n16. See Newgate; punishment; Whitecross Street
property, material, 5, 31–32, 35, 38–39; and narrative, 20, 34–35, 43, 45–49; and servants, 50–51, 62–65, 68–74, 76–86. See also clothing; food
property, intangible, 5, 9, 15, 25, 51; familial affection as, 35, 38–39; and gossip, 36–37, 62; labor as, 71–74, 86; and marriage, 111–12; social reputation, 36–38, 43, 68; status, 25, 31–32, 82
*Punch*, 94–96, 95, 170n17
punishment, 59, 61, 65, 68, 76–77, 81, 156; and Tichborne Claimant, 19, 20, 23, 45
*Race for Wealth, The* (Frith), 3–4
*Race for Wealth, The* (Riddell), 17, 107–13; and adultery, 111–13; attitude toward fraud, 108, 109–10; and chemistry, 109–10; and food, 108–10
Radcliffe, Lady. See Katherine Doughty
railways, 1, 11, 26, 59–60, 68, 120
“Railway King” (George Hudson), 11
Reay, Dianne, 162n10
*Records of Whitecross Street Prison, The*, 122
Redding, Cyrus, 143, 175n1
Redgrave, Richard, 150, 151
religion, 10–11, 88, 91, 174n26; and business, 61, 62; Catholicism, 37, 42, 125–26, 130, 167n25; and “eyeservice,” 70–73; and marriage, 116, 125–28, 130, 145; and perquisites, 86; and servants, 55, 58–60, 62
repetition, 98–99. See mimicry
Reynolds, G. W. M., 52, 60, 75, 80–82, 171n24
Richardson, Samuel, 55; *Pamela*, 10, 119,
Index

Riches, The, 18, 157–58, 160
Richter, David, 164n3
Riddell, Mrs. J. H., 17, 107–13
ring dropping, 121–22, 176n12
risk, 8, 9, 29; and finance, 26–28, 29, 31; and extreme sports, 29–31; and marriage, 116, 118, 121; recreational, 19–20, 25, 29–35, 46–49. See also food adulteration; pleasure robbery. See theft
Robb, George, 7, 9, 163n13
Robbins, Bruce, 55, 66, 169n5, 170n15
Rose, T. H., 114
Rosenman, Ellen, 129, 134, 135–36, 178n29, 180n36
Rossetti, Christina, 17; “Goblin Market,” 88–106; and women, 172n4
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, 90, 171n3
Ruskin, John, 4–5, 56–57, 63
Rusell, Norman, 11, 163n13
Rutterford, Janette, 165n12
Sadleir, John, 1–3, 6–7, 11, 12, 16, 20, 52, 94, 161n1, 161n7, 161n13, 180n9
safety, 26–30, 56–57
Salis, Abbé, 40
Sandeman, Robert, 116
Saturday Review, The, 28
Schwartz, Hillel, 104, 173n15
Scotland, 125–29, 137, 144–45, 178n27, 179n35
“Scotch marriage,” 125–26, 128–29, 144, 175n2, 177n18, 179n32
Searle, G. R., 102, 172n6, 172n10, 173n11, 173n14, 174n25
Sedgwick, Eve, 99, 106, 174n23
seduction, 116, 119, 122–23, 127, 131–34, 136–37, 139–42, 144, 150, 178n26
sensation, genre of, 41–45, 115, 123
sensationalism, 1–2, 114–16, 130–32
separate spheres, as ideology, 4–6, 11–12, 16–17, 63–64; and safety, 56–57; seepage between, 91–92, 96, 106, 108–9, 111; and servants, 56–59. See also contagion
servants, 9, 16–17, 50–86; characters, 52, 65–69; as children, 58–59; as clerks, 60–62, 66, 69, 108; in David Copperfield (Dickens), 52; and “eyeservice,” 70–73; and feudal arrangements, 58, 59; and followers, 63–65; as forms of capital, 16–17, 55; and law, 62, 69–70, 76–77; as markers of class, 53–55; as minor characters, 52, 63; and mobility, 55–56, 59–60, 65–66; and perquisites, 74–86; and professionalism, 51, 55, 59–60, 65, 76; and religion, 55, 58–60, 62, 70–73, 86; and sex, 68, 170n16; as swindlers, 16–17; and theft, 50–51, 52, 63–64, 75–77, 81; and Vanity Fair (Thackeray), 79–80; as vehicles of exchange, 51, 62–64, 81–86. See also cooks; food; The Greatest Plague of Life (Mayhew and Mayhew); Mary Price (Reynolds)
Servants’ Magazine, The, 67, 70, 71, 75
sexuality, 116, 123–24, 125–26, 129–34, 136–37, 170n16; abstinence, 116, 126, 144. See also adultery; seduction
Shakespeare, William, 9–10, 55
Shanley, Mary, 176n6
Shall, Marc, 171n19
Shepherd, Charles Pitman, 11
Simmel, Georg, 170n18
Simon, Jonathan, 29–30, 166n15
Skilling, Jeffrey, 155
Smiles, Samuel, 65
Smith, Adam, 7
Smith, F. B., 172n6
South London Industrial Exhibition, 52–53
speculation. See investing
Speculation (Pardoe), 8
speech-act theory, 177n18
Spencer, Herbert, 5, 31, 162n6
spinsters, 2, 3, 161n2
Standard, The, 20
Sting, The, 158
stock market, 2, 3, 19, 108; and futures, 149–50, 180nn2–3; and risk, 26–28
Index

Stoker, Bram, 36–37
Strahan, Paul & Bates, 11
Stewart, Martha, 18, 155–57, 164n18
suicide, 1–3, 12, 61, 162n7
Susan Dering; or A Cook’s Perquisites (M. M.), 85–86
Sutherland, John, 115, 123, 129
swindling, economic, 1–10, 26–28, 108, 111, 149–50
Tale of Two Cities, A (Dickens), 85
taste, 74, 82
Taylor, Tom, 3
tea, 75–76, 87, 91, 93, 95–96, 105, 173n12. See also food adulteration
Teather, David, 156
Tennyson, Alfred Lord, 91–92
Thackeray, William Makepeace, 20, 79–80, 181n10
theft, 50–51, 63–64, 68–70, 154
Thomas, David Wayne, 25, 28, 164n3, 165n6, 168n28
Thompson, Deborah, 88, 171n2
Thompson, F. M. L., 80
thresholds, 4–5, 57, 63–64, 67, 83–84, 86, 169n9
Tichborne Claimant, the, 16, 19–49; background, 22–23, 37–39, 48–49; and class tensions, 24–25, 28–29, 36–37, 43, 45–47; as domestic fraud, 19, 20–21, 25; forms of evidence, 22–23; and insanity, 38, 40–42; and narrative, 19–22, 24, 28–29, 32–39, 41–42, 45–49; perjury, 20, 36–38, 40, 43, 45; and physical anomaly, 24, 40, 44–45, 48; popularity, 24, 28, 29, 38–41, 44–49; Tichborne bonds, 28–29, 46–47; and Victorian stock market, 19, 20, 28–29. See also Katherine Doughty (Lady Radcliffe); Tichborne, Dowager Lady
Tichborne, Dowager Lady (Henrietta Felicite), 21, 22, 36, 38–42
time-bargains. See futures
Times, London, 1–3, 6–7, 12, 122–23, 128
Tipperary Joint-Stock Bank, 2
Trollope, Anthea, 169n11
Trollope, Anthony, The Struggles of Brown, Jones, and Robinson, 8; The Way We Live Now, 119, 163n13
Trompe l’oeil, 13
utterances, 177n18
“uttering,” 48, 168n33
Vanity Fair (Thackeray), 20, 79–80, 181n10
Veblen, Thorstein, 55, 169n4
Vickers, George, 127, 133, 137, 145, 178n28, 179n31
Victoria, Queen, 55, 116–17, 162n6
vulnerability: and extreme sports, 30–31; of families, 46–47; of households to servants, 56; of investors, 26–28. See also risk; women
Watts, Walter, 60–61
Way We Live Now, The (Trollope), 119, 163n13
Westminster Review, 103–4
widows, 2, 3, 112, 118, 122–23, 126, 161n2, 165n10
Wife and Not a Wife, A (Redding), 143,
Index

175n1
Willcox, William, 53
wills, 14, 15

*Without a Character: A Tale of Servant Life* (Poole), 66

Wohl, Anthony, 172n6
Woloch, Alex, 164n17, 169n1

women, as commodities, 112, 139–42; fallen, 88, 144, 155; female redundancy, 135–36; and flirtation, 110–11; as investors, 2, 3, 28, 150–51, 165n12; as managers, 5, 16, 58–59, 69–70, 76, 81–82; and matrimonial deceivers, 122, 123–24, 132–35; as property, 36–37, 43; and property rights, 112, 114, 117, 135–36; and seduction, 37–38, 43–44; settlements, 41; and social reputation, 36–38, 43; types, 110–11, 112. See also Marie Theresa Longworth; mothers; sexuality; Yelverton marriage case

Woodruff, Douglas, 24, 29, 46–47

Yelverton marriage case, 18, 114–16, 125–46; background, 114–16; and bigamy, 114–16, 118; and debt, 115–16, 125–27, 139–40; Dublin trial, 115–16, 125–43; and fraud, 114–15, 129–39, 142–46; and “gentle blood,” 127, 139–42; illustrations of, 133, 133–34, 137–39, 138, 178n28, 179n30; letters, 125, 129, 132–33, 136–37, 144; and marriage laws, 126, 128–29; popularity, 115, 128–30; and religion, 125–28, 130, 145. See also Marie Theresa Longworth

Zieger, Susan, 153, 180n5