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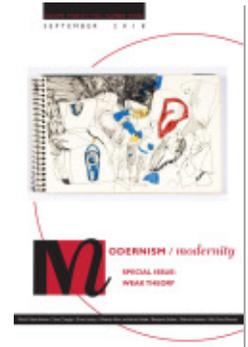
On Being Criticized

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Modernism/modernity, Volume 25, Number 3, September 2018, pp. 499-516
(Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/mod.2018.0037>



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Grace Lavery

Several of the Essays which are here collected and reprinted had the good or the bad fortune to be much criticised at the time of their first appearance. I am not now going to inflict upon the reader a reply to those criticisms; for one or two explanations which are desirable, I shall elsewhere, perhaps, be able some day to find an opportunity; but, indeed, it is not in my nature,—some of my critics would rather say, not in my power,—to dispute on behalf of any opinion, even my own, very obstinately.

—Matthew Arnold¹

But all his homeless reverence, revolted, cried:
 “I am my father’s forum and he shall be heard,
 Nothing shall contradict his holy final word,
 Nothing.” And thrust his gift in prison till it died,

And left him nothing but a jailor’s voice and face,
 And all rang hollow but the clear denunciation
 Of a gregarious optimistic generation
 That saw itself already in a father’s place.

—W. H. Auden²

In Criticism

A history of literary criticism derived from the “Acknowledgements” pages of the genre’s major texts might tell us a number of things we already know. Chiefly, it might confirm that while the particularities of marital devotion with which such encomia traditionally conclude have changed since F. R. Leavis reported

MODERNISM / *modernity*
 VOLUME TWENTY FOUR,
 NUMBER THREE,
 PP 499–516. © 2018
 JOHNS HOPKINS
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

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500 writing out of a “sense of my immeasurable indebtedness” to his wife and colleague Queenie, and our more familiar paeans to *my most assiduous reader*, the couple form itself has proven more durable than readers who skip over the paratext may have felt inclined to predict.³ Yet the language of *debt*—which Leavis, conventionally enough, treats as a prior condition of writing literary criticism—conceals as much as it reveals. Since the body of *The Great Tradition* concludes with a celebration of the “really great” Joseph Conrad, for instance, a reader might be interested to learn that the phrase “sense of immeasurable indebtedness” is taken (presumably unwittingly—but, seriously, who knows?) from Conrad’s 1919 essay “The Crime of Partition,” an encomiastic acknowledgement of what the *Collier’s* editor calls “the ‘irrepressible vitality’ of the Polish nation.”⁴ In that case, however, Conrad insists that “a sense of immeasurable indebtedness” will *not* serve as a basis for self-determination, since any such gratitude “is always at the mercy of weariness and is fatally condemned by the instability of human sentiment to end in negation” (“The Crime of Partition,” 40). Leavis, no doubt, can hardly be faulted for having failed consciously to register any wariness around the language of debt in Conrad’s argument. Leavis’s flagging, paratactical syntax seems to know as his lexis does not that criticism has not been born, sinless, from a sentimental attachment: “my sense of my immeasurable indebtedness, in every page of this book, to my wife cannot be adequately expressed, and I cannot express it at all without an accompanying consciousness of short-comings—no one but myself has any part in them—that makes me insist at the same time on my claim to all the responsibility” (*The Great Tradition*, 7).

Any attempt to embed the work of criticism in the social and psychic network glimpsed, disavowed, exhibited, or peacocked in such textual acknowledgements would inevitably have to confront a countervailing account that might call itself “Arnoldian”—an account according to which any critical project worth the name must begin by divesting itself of such “interest” in the pursuit of “the object as in itself it really is.”⁵ The source for such an argument would likely be Matthew Arnold’s essay “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time,” which is generally taken to argue (to two readerships: poorly-read but sentimental romantic poets and philistine British liberals) that the critical enterprise must absent itself from practical concerns. “[L]et criticism leave church-rates and the franchise alone,” as Arnold puts it (“The Function of Criticism,” 273). The purpose of this article, however, is to render such a rebuttal more difficult by demonstrating that Matthew Arnold *himself*, relentlessly and at substantial psychic expense, understood criticism as a socially embedded act of responding to the more primary condition of being—and, no less importantly, *feeling*—criticized. The two steps of reasoning here will sometimes blur in my own argument, but they can be logically discriminated: (1) Arnold’s language of objectivity only thinly veiled a set of social and subjective conditions that variously enabled and disabled possible critical interventions; (2) the thematic substance of those conditions is felt as a governing sense of persecution and, in the extreme, offense—that Arnold criticized because he felt himself already *in criticism*. Pursuant to the latter of these claims, it will already be noted that I take Arnold’s use of the word “criticism” to be far less specialized and

technical than is generally held—as we will see, his personal correspondence composed around the time of the *Essays in Criticism* uses the word in its most conventional sense, of being mean about somebody, of grousing.

My rebuttal is not purely preemptive: it is necessitated by a set of mischaracterizations of criticism as naively objectivist or unfashionably confident in the correctness of its opinions. Distaste for critical writing has been evinced most forcefully by Sharon Marcus and Stephen Best's co-authored essay on "surface reading" and by Rita Felski in her recent monograph *The Limits of Critique*.⁶ Arnold is not mentioned by name in those works; his style is too obviously affirmative ("the best that is thought and known") to lend itself to the de-dramatizing arguments of Best and Marcus or to Felski's anti-context historiography. And in certain senses, the account of Arnold's *Essays in Criticism* I am going to offer resembles Felski's own method: her premise that "arguments are a matter not only of content but also of style and tone" enables her to treat the "hermeneutics of suspicion" as a particularly pervasive kind of rhetorical mood without "peering into or diagnosing anyone's state of mind" (*The Limits of Critique*, 4). This latter phrase discloses Felski's impatience with psychoanalytic (or other "depth") conceptions of a writing subject and aligns the "affect" of a text—the way it feels—with what Best and Marcus understand as a textual "surface." So, Felski's prescribed method allows readers to speculate about the way a writer or a text feels, but without assuming that such feelings can produce knowledge about the *interiority* of text, author, or context. The language of "affect" conveniently relocates psychological speculation from the *psyche* to the *soma*.

Although this kind of writing has been called "nondualistic," the conception of the world upon which it depends is profoundly dualistic. There is mind, and here is matter; we cannot deduce anything about the former from the latter. What Arnold has in mind when using the word "criticism," is, I think, a much bolder non-dualism, whose "function" (which, indeed, serves as a decent synonym for "symptom") is to toggle *between* mind and matter, to externalize the affective condition of feeling criticized, and thereby to recirculate that affect and stimulate other affective productions elsewhere. Criticism, in other words, has always been both more excruciatingly pained and more exultantly joyful than Arnold's readers have been prepared to believe: neither a rhetorical operation for denuding ideological structures, nor a vehicle for disseminating moral and cultural lessons, but a mechanism for managing and weaponizing a particular kind of shame. In the case of Matthew Arnold, a foppish son of an eminent Victorian and his fond widow, the melodrama of criticism frequently entailed a trio of stock characters: hopelessly embattled effeminate boy (author); malicious masculine authority figure (interlocutor); and caring but inadequate maternal auditor (reader). My purpose in describing the critical scene in such terms is not to make Arnold more palatable to readers for whom affect/description will always best critique/conceptualization, but rather to suggest that the latter-day polarization of those positions (ahistorically) presupposes their ontological differentiability.

I do not wish too quickly to assimilate "critique" (the object of Rita Felski's study) with "criticism" (the practice advocated by Arnold): despite their convergence in the

502 adjective “critical,” opponents of the former rarely object explicitly to the latter—a position synthesized and elaborated in Heather Love’s essay “Close but not Deep.” What Love calls the “opacity and ineffability of the text and the ethical demand to attend to it” has sustained a “close reading” practice that, although its methods were formulated by modernist New Critics, has been continually nourished by a Victorian humanist tradition whose touchstone, explicitly for the modernists and implicitly for their inheritors, is Arnold.⁷ Yet in the postcritical re-enchantment of a criticism deprived of critique, the distinctive value of Arnold’s criticism has been first mischaracterized then abandoned. Mischaracterized by the modernists, as an alibi for an objectivist critical stance that would “see the object as in itself it really is”; abandoned by the posteritics, as a strong epistemology entailing an unseemly penetration into the ethically and erotically (im)permeable object. What might we gain by reversing these terms, and treating the (Arnoldian) critic as the (im)permeable object, already violated and writing out of a sense of that violation? This, I think, is the weak position in which Arnold found himself; I also hope that, through the elaboration of what I take to be that position, I can make a case for its utility as a contemporary heuristic, capable of renegotiating the subject/object relations that govern our contemporary critical practice.

One’s Victorian Daddy

Arnold’s reputation as a critic is founded largely on the short pieces collected in *Essays in Criticism*, many of them initially delivered as lectures or published occasionally elsewhere. The most exemplary of these remains “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time,” whose title joins Sigmund Freud’s “Civilization and Its Discontents” and Walter Benjamin’s “The Work of Art in the Age of its Mechanical Reproducibility” among the most adaptable and flexible formulas for generating new work. That very flexibility, which I take to indicate the openness, clarity, and ambition of Arnold’s piece, is nonetheless supervened at the very start of the essay, which immediately confronts readers as more querulous, brittle, contradictory, and playful than the essay’s many commentators generally acknowledge.⁸ “Many objections have been made to a proposition which, in some remarks of mine on translating Homer, I ventured to put forth,” Arnold opens, wearing his litotes heavily and awkwardly, molding a proper noun (“On Translating Homer”) into a regular modifying clause with a cumbersome irony (*Lectures and Essays*, 258). His critics are not named, though they are further characterized (again with a pungent vagueness): “[m]ore than one rejoinder declared that the importance I here assigned to criticism was excessive” (258). In any case, the objections had been dealt with quite thoroughly by the time a reader of Arnold’s *Essays in Criticism* made it a few paragraphs into the preface. The second paragraph of that preface, indeed, nominates “Mr. Wright” to stand in as the stooge for all that is wrong, having himself taken too much offense at one of Arnold’s jibes in *On Translating Homer* (1861). Arnold had written that Wright’s translation, which “repeat[ed] in the main the merits and defects of Cowper’s version” had therefore “no proper reason for existing”; Wright swiped back that Arnold had “declared with much solemnity that there is not

any proper reason for his existing"; Arnold therefore takes pains to note "not that Mr. Wright, but that Mr. Wright's version of the *Iliad*" etc. (287, 286). The preface to a collection of obvious intellectual ambition *opens*, remarkably, by reassuring the reader that one translator of Homer does not, in fact, wish another dead.

The reason quickly becomes clear, with a decisive shift in tone away from the lightly ironical engagement with Mr. Wright—an irony, nonetheless, that does not succeed in sanding down the passage's sharp edges—to a lyrically apocalyptic defense of the author's frivolity: "My vivacity is but the last sparkle of flame before we are all in the dark, the last glimpse of colour before we all go into drab,—the drab of the earnest, prosaic, practical, austere literal future" (287). Such a rejoinder against literality will chafe against the injunction "to see the object as in itself it really is," but placed in the preface it possesses at least a rhetorical, and surely an affective, priority, over that commonplace. Especially since, as we learn from R. H. Super's meticulously edited *Complete Prose Works*, that sentence beginning "My vivacity is but the last" is the only remaining vestige of three anti-Wright paragraphs excised from the manuscript, in which Arnold's deep anger and frustration had been vented at much greater length: "He has held me up before the public as 'condemned by my own umpire'; 'he has himself made game of me'; 'Partly, no doubt, from being crest-fallen . . . I will not raise a finger in self-defence'" (536). These, too, culminate in the histrionic protestation that, after all, the critic is guilty merely of "the unpardonable crime of being amusing" (537). Privately, in letters, Arnold would describe his vivacity in erotically lucent terms: "my sinuous, easy, unpolemical mode of proceeding."⁹ An obliquely sexy description of a style that bears the woundedness of its heart on its sleeve, this is both an apt and an incomplete description of the campiness of Arnold's writing, its inability to perform the gentlemanly equanimity required by his father's forum when confronted with criticism: its refusal not to get upset.¹⁰

Before launching into its counterargument to the totality of critics for whom Wright has served as synecdoche, "The Function of Criticism" further goes on to praise "Mr. Shairp's excellent notice of Wordsworth," adding in a footnote the observation that "a notice by a competent critic" should be appended to new editions of the works of eminent authors (Arnold, *Lectures and Essays*, 258). Specifically, Arnold suggests, the notice should be written by "a critic, a man of letters, not, as too often happens, some relation or friend with no qualification for his task except affection for his author" (258). The critic here is distinguished both from the creative artist (as he had been in the Homer essay), but also from the affectionate or personal relation. The commonsensical character of this division notwithstanding, Arnold passes into citation and argument without having offered any positive description of "criticism" or "critic" whatsoever; we have these two distantiations and then a gush of commendation. The sheer repetition of the word "criticism" produces an anesthetic effect, as if the concept could be defined by insistence alone: "Wordsworth was himself a great critic, and it is to be sincerely regretted that he has not left us more criticism; Goethe was one of the greatest of critics, and we may sincerely congratulate ourselves that he has left us so much criticism" (259).

504 The middle part of the “Function” essay offers two further discriminations of criticism—without, again, offering much by way of positive definition. First, Arnold distinguishes between creative and critical faculties, arguing that while the former constitutes “the highest function of man,” creativity exudes from “materials and a basis”—those being a broader intellectual culture that has been furnished by the latter (260). Criticism, which appears as mere commentary on and transmission of preexisting matter (“the best that is thought and known”) in fact *precedes* creativity and serves as its ground: it is the uncompensated reproductive labor that enables the creative power.¹¹ Arnold is careful to distinguish criticism as a logical ground—with its two attendant metaphorical repertoires of *nature* and *nation*—from the mere fact of established institutions of learning. The romantic poets lacked power, but not because they lacked books and reading; because they did not live “in a current of ideas in the highest degree animating and nourishing to the creative power” (Arnold, *Lectures and Essays*, 263). The vitalist imagery associated with the establishment of a state of criticism is neither, then, arboreal nor rhizomatic, but rather liquefacient, ambient, and rhythmic: a “current;” the “nationally diffused life;” “a national glow of life.” The political complexity of Arnold’s determinations seems to land most forcefully in his phrase “the general march of genius and of society,” where “march” hews most closely to the meaning listed in the *OED* as n. 5—“an intention; the tendency or drift of thought”—that is up the etymological stream from the more familiar meaning of military maneuver or rhythmical collective walking (261).¹² Arnold means to indicate a weakly determinist causality, but one on the cusp of becoming militarized.¹³

The essay’s third and longest movement is from “immediate political and practical application”—that is, from policy (Arnold, *Lectures and Essays*, 265). It is in this movement that we become aware of the presence of Arnold’s gentlemanly critics, who are introduced and rebutted in sequence: “A member of the House of Commons said to me the other day”; “the Englishman in general is like my friend the Member of Parliament”; “He is like the Lord Auckland of Burke’s day”; a string of newspapers—and then Sir Charles Adderley, whose appearance marks the essay’s turn into its own version of practice (265, 268).¹⁴ Much has been written on the aversion to politics in Arnold’s criticism, but less on the rhetorical mode in which he responds to his own dismissal in advance: cagey citation and ambivalent repetition.

Joubert has said beautifully: “C’est la force et le droit qui règlent toutes choses dans le monde; la force en attendant le droit.” (Force and right are the governors of this world; force till right is ready.) *Force till right is ready*; and till right is ready, force, the existing order of things, is justified, is the legitimate ruler. But right is something moral, and implies inward recognition, free assent of the will; we are not ready for right,—*right*, so far as we are concerned, *is not ready*,—until we have attained this sense of seeing it and willing it. The way in which for us it may change and transform force, the existing order of things, and become, in its turn, the legitimate ruler of the world, should depend on the way in which, when our time comes, we see it and will it. (Arnold, *Lectures and Essays*, 265)

This blizzard of deconstructive nuance, nestled within which is one of the more frequently excerpted *dicta* from Arnold's prose, has been taken to argue that the world of politics ("force") should not be influenced by the world of morality and culture ("right") until a deferred future.¹⁵ Bending the syntax to extrapolate that motto is impossible, however, without ignoring the complex position of the "we," which is introduced only belatedly and only through a further twist of Joubert's French—which Arnold has already bent a little out of shape.¹⁶ "Till right is ready" does not equate to "we are not ready for right," and by the end of the passage, the "we" has been transformed from mere bystander to active *determinant* of right: "the way in which *for us* [right] may change and transform force, . . . should depend on the way in which, *when our time comes*, we see it and will it" (Arnold, *Lectures and Essays*, 265, emphasis added). Arnold has transformed an objective statement into a subjective one, through the interposition of a pronoun that, earlier on in the same paragraph, he had used to designate "the English" as distinct from "the French." It is not at all clear, in other words, on which side of any number of binaries—public/private, English/French, force/right, we/they, see/will—Arnoldian criticism will finally come to rest.

Private letters, too, amplify Arnold's sense of "criticism" as something liable to be misread, a process whose apparent objectivity broadcasts what it was, indeed, never intended to conceal: the vulnerability of the critic. Invited by J. Dykes Campbell to supply a review of Tennyson's "Enoch Arden" (1864), Arnold pulls his pen up from "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" to talk of criticism rather more secretively: "is it possible for one who has himself published verses to print a criticism on Tennyson in which perfect freedom shall be used?" (Arnold to Campbell, *Letters*, 1:239). (The letter is dated September 22, 1864; "The Function of Criticism" was delivered at Oxford on October 29, the following month.) Arnold makes clear to Campbell that he does not "think Tennyson a great and powerful spirit in any line," but worries that saying so publicly "would inevitably be attributed to odious motives" (1:239). Tennyson and, later, Browning were cast by Arnold himself as the greater men from whose shadow he might retrieve some dignity and even glory: as he wrote to his mother in 1869, "[i]t might be fairly urged that I have less poetic sentiment than Tennyson and less intellectual vigour and abundance than Browning; yet because I have perhaps more of a fusion of the two than either of them, . . . I am likely enough to have my turn as they have had theirs."¹⁷ That poignant self-laceration has been affirmed by at least one of his critics.¹⁸ In the case of poetry, Arnold could allow posterity to make its final judgment on his merit—in the sphere of criticism, however, the social contingencies of opprobrium and suspicion held sway. He never wrote publicly against Tennyson. We may note, however, that in his letters to his mother, Arnold did write himself into *her* place; distinctively, amidst an admittedly limited correspondence, he signs his letters to his closest confidante with his initials, or her own pet name, "your ever most affectionate, M.A."

The psychic space through which the parade of gentlemanly *eminences grises* (Wright, Tennyson, etc.) passes, in Arnoldian criticism, might be designated that of "the Victorian daddy." And in a sense, it is ironic that any authorized style should bear the eponym "Arnoldian" since, as both his contemporaries and later commentators

506 have noted, the poet-critic bore heavily the weight of a patronym associated with his father Thomas, the grand Victorian educationalist. Thomas was the very archetype of Victorian “eminence”: Lytton Strachey barely glances at the career of Arnold *filis* in the chapter of *Eminent Victorians* dealing with Dr. Arnold, and the essay’s glib appreciations of Thomas seem to mock Matthew by ignoring him. “He held decided opinions upon a large number of topics; and he enunciated them—based as they were almost invariably upon general principles—in pamphlets, in prefaces, and in magazine articles, with an impressive self-confidence. He was, as he constantly declared, a Liberal.”¹⁹ To others—including, as we will see, Charlotte Brontë—the foppishness and frilliness of the son shamed the father. If it is an irony, however, it is of the kind that affirms the ostensive rather than negates it: if “Matthew Arnold” was understood as, in some sense, a bad copy of “Thomas Arnold”—an embodied threat to the version of narcissistic reproduction entailed by patronymy itself—that structure could also be made to characterize Arnold’s version of criticism as such: a generalized secondariness. More pressingly, the overbearing presence in Arnold’s essays of authoritative men—of whom Mr. Wright is the first of many examples—might, on first glance, be grafted onto a conveniently reworked but nonetheless recognizable Oedipal scheme. Unable to displace the tough guy from his perch of ontological security, Arnold generates a secondary terrain—criticism—in which the manly virtues of Rugby School and orthodox liberalism might be more subtly thwarted. Criticism not on the other side of weakness (or surface, or description), but *as* the position of weakness itself.

Murmur, Mama, Murder

Arnold does not permit his readers to make a fetish of such weakness, however; rather, he equips them with a set of rhetorical techniques with which to make both pleasure and political virtue of the abjected position. The final section of “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time” draws together many of the rhetorical and formal techniques we have been discussing in the operationalization of criticism *against* the masculine figures of orthodoxy and tyranny whose presence has hitherto been sensed only at the margins. There are many more such personifications of masculine intimidation than Mr. Wright. In his essay on “Arnold and Pater,” published in *The Bookman* in September 1930, T. S. Eliot notes a couple, admitting “[w]here Sir Charles Adderley and Mr. Roebuck appear, there is more life than in the more literary criticism.”²⁰ Those two are the primary antagonists of “The Function of Criticism,” whose animalish names are arrayed among other, equally repugnant (and, as Marc Redfield points out, suggestively anal) English names (“Higginbottom, Stiggins, Bugg!”) as counterevidence to their chauvinistic, and no less animal, assertion that the “old Anglo-Saxon breed [is] the best in the whole world!”²¹ It is against that bestializing assertion that Arnold begins not merely to mobilize but also to theorize the function of criticism, which has hitherto been felt primarily either as evasion or as a subtle tonal shift operating at the level of repetition; this, Arnold comes to understand, is the condition of the *murmur*. Towards the end of the essay, Arnold begins to imagine the voices of these antagonists

converging in a “dithyramb,” a choric and collective enunciation to which the voice of criticism must find an alternative. “Criticism”—here the subject of the action, though Arnold will reappear to take its place in due course—should “leave church-rates and the franchise alone, and in the most candid spirit, without a single lurking thought of practical innovation, confront with our dithyramb this paragraph on which I stumbled in a newspaper immediately after reading Mr. Roebuck:—” (*Lectures and Essays*, 273). At this point, cataclysmically, Arnold introduces a short item from a newspaper:

“A shocking child murder has just been committed at Nottingham. A girl named Wragg left the workhouse there on Saturday morning with her young illegitimate child. The child was soon afterwards found dead on Mapperly Hills, having been strangled. Wragg is in custody.” (273)²²

It is then these last words, “Wragg is in custody”—“[t]he sex lost,” he adds—that Arnold proposes “murmuring under his breath” in response to the coryphaeic Mr. Roebuck (*Lectures and Essays*, 274). Note, too, the weirdness of Arnold’s “with,” positioned before “our dithyramb” so as to leave bizarrely open the question of where exactly Arnold stands during the confrontation between dithyramb and paragraph: reading alongside the Roebucks, in a spirit of winsome discord, or presenting the paragraph, as though it were a sick note justifying his perversity, to frustrate them.

The anagogical pressure placed on this anecdote cannot but recall *Adam Bede* (1859), George Eliot’s novel-manifesto for “seeing the object as in itself it really is” that, likewise, derives from a narrative of maternal infanticide its fullest articulation of the moral complexity of realism.²³ Yet, where that novel invests in the capacity of the real to save readers from brutish condescension, Arnold’s position is in one sense much more radical than Eliot’s. More radical, because the virtue of the Wragg anecdote is, in a sense, its inability to function as an anecdote: it will not be allowed to *prove* anything, lest it be dragged thereby into the circuit of pragmatic reformism from which criticism, at all costs, must be exempted. The meaning of the words “Wragg is in custody” is, in this sense, phonic rather than semantic, performative rather than constative; they vibrate with half-articulated suggestiveness. As the choric set-up might have led us to expect, its importance is in the sounds of the words themselves and in the affective disposition (“murmuring”) with which they are articulated. In the address to Mr. Wright excised from the preface, Wragg reappears (despite, one presumes, her having yet to be introduced to the proposed reader) and again Arnold emphasizes the vocal quality of the story, framing whatever “Wragg” has become by this point, the object of a murmur, almost as a kind of vomit: “I will not even ask him,—what it almost irresistibly rises to my lips to ask him when I see he writes from Mapperly,—if he can tell me what has become of that poor girl, Wragg?” (*Lectures and Essays*, 536).

The murmuring, however, encapsulates if not criticism’s practice, then at least Arnold’s conception of its utility. It is an oddly masochistic operation, which takes alien language and merely repeats it; indeed it is the *mereness* of the repetition that distinguishes its affect as such. It is a technique without efficacy, a rhetorical device

508 designed to minimize, through its minor-keyed reproach, the subjective presence of the rhetorician. It was a strategy Arnold used elsewhere: to theatrical effect, for example, in the introduction to *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, written when he collated his articles for the *Cornhill* into a monograph for Smith and Elder in 1867. The introduction begins by setting up the familiar chorus of Philistines, whose mouthpiece this time is the *Times*, which has attacked Arnold's Philoceltism "in its usual forcible style," and addressed him specifically as "a sentimentalist who talks nonsense about the children of Taliesin and Ossian, and whose dainty taste requires something more flimsy than the strong sense and sturdy morality of his fellow Englishmen" (*Lectures and Essays*, 391, 392). In the remaining few pages of the introduction, Arnold repeats "strong sense and sturdy morality" six times, the proper masculinity gracelessly entailed by the *Times*'s effeminization of the Celts getting stuck in his mouth in much the same way as the word-woman Wragg: "Did any one ever hear of strong sense and sturdy morality being thrust down other people's throats in this fashion?" (392).

Criticism, then, may be "powerless to aid or to harm," as T. S. Eliot suggests, but for Arnold it is eminently capable of vocalizing the conditions of its own powerlessness, a wound that it opens over and over again (2). And, although the murmur in "The Function of Criticism" and the repetition in the introduction to *On the Study of Celtic Literature* are more self-consciously performative than most of Arnold's prose, the subvocal murmur lurks within most, if not all, of his acts of "situating." This "murmur," with its phonic associations (via Wragg) of both "mama" and "murder," serves as a name for Arnold's own critical affect, the shadow state that occupies the position in relation to "theory" that has been vacated by "practice." It is a word that Arnold gravitates towards in the many citations in the *Essays*: from "Marcus Aurelius," "art thou compelled, through being defectively furnished by nature, to murmur"; from "Maurice de Guérin," "a melodious murmur, which dies away in the soul," "the murmur of that world of thought and feeling," and "the murmur of night" (150, 27, 35, 38). (Arnold himself characterizes Guérin's writing as like "the sounds of the murmuring forest itself" [87].)

The ambivalent rhetorical power of Arnold's murmur may go some way to explaining an oddity within his reception, especially among the modernists to whom he appeared an early advocate for critical objectivity. Despite the frequency with which he has been treated as the originator of that tradition, his critics have generally experienced their own kind of tremulousness when describing his work, as if feeling keenly the inadequacy of his criticism. Lionel Trilling calls him "the great continuator and transmitter of the tradition of humanism," and goes on to further define this category—it entails urbanity, sociality, and intelligence—in terms strikingly similar to those that appear within T. S. Eliot's essay (introduction to *Portable Matthew Arnold*, 3). Eliot exhibits Arnold as the "forerunner," "ancestor," and, again, "father" of humanism.²⁴ For Eliot, as for Freud, the paternal relation was nonetheless founded on a kind of miscomprehension and competition, and so Arnold's fatherliness is a sign of his inefficacy and impermanence: "He was a champion of 'ideas' most of whose ideas we no longer take seriously" ("Arnold and Pater," 2). Trilling grants that Arnold has "stayed . . .

fresh,” but muses that “it is not entirely easy to understand why this should be so,” and opens the introduction to his 1949 *Portable Matthew Arnold* with an awkward list of Arnold’s defects as a man and as a writer (1). Harold Bloom, another of the twentieth century’s most vocally Oedipal theorists of criticism, was simply scornful of Arnold, the inadequacy of whose Oedipalization derived from a refusal to avow his filial relation to the Romantic poet that (in Bloom’s view) endowed Arnold with his model. As a result, there is no creative misprision, only a “highly derivative” poetic practice that remained “embarrassingly close to Keats.”²⁵

These evaluative oddities make manifest, among other things, a profound uncertainty in Arnold’s critical essays about how readers are supposed to relate and rank the terms in circulation, some of which feel at times interchangeable: “culture,” “Hellenism,” “criticism,” “objectivity,” “disinterestedness,” “the best that is thought and known,” “humanism,” “sweetness and light,” etc. This thread of positively-valued but hazy categories does not, as Amanda Anderson argues persuasively, amount to a system. It amounts, rather, to a “range of forms of detachment” in merely “loose relation to one another.”²⁶ (Funnily enough, it was only when the critical essays were collected into a single volume that their introductory piece, hitherto “The Functions of Criticism at the Present Time,” was reconceptualized in the singular.) These blurs, I would add, are not the accidents of a haphazard mind, but foundational features of Arnold’s conceptualization of criticism as entailing an affective asymmetry to which the murmur is the most dynamic possible response: criticism is eminently more fun for one to do than to have done to one.

I am in love with Arnold’s inadequacy and with the rage and wit he musters against it. It is this glass-jawed grandee, the dullest of dullards, who among nineteenth-century prose writers most inflames my narcissism, whose bloodless commitment to learning “the best that has been thought and known” and to murmuring it into the granite faces of power, most intensifies in me the dubious feelings of insuperability and isolation. No less so since, to date, I have yet to persuade a single person that this version of him exists. Most readers and biographers have found grounds to affirm the judgment passed by his friend Benjamin Jowett, who believed himself to be eulogizing Arnold when he wrote, “He was the most sensible man of genius whom I have ever known, and the most free from personality.”²⁷ Of course, as everybody (here, Trilling) points out, “it was not our present sense of the word ‘personality’ that Jowett intended—he meant that there was no impulse in Arnold to make any special claim for himself” (introduction to *Portable Matthew Arnold*, 2). But just as I have been attempting to drag Arnold’s “criticism” back to the colloquial mode of chiding and griping that, as we have seen, preoccupied him deeply, I will take Jowett at his word that a lack of personality is precisely what it sounds like—an antisocial vagueness, distinguishable but finally inseparable from the function of criticism.

The idea that criticism is written out of a condition of being criticized will feel achingly familiar. Situating one’s intervention in the terms established by those one wishes to engage has become, for those of us Trilling and Eliot would place in Arnold’s line, such an indispensable element of the scholarly essay that we have missed the complex

510 rhetorical work the *Essays in Criticism* do with it, the wound it opens up for their author. The work's composition raised, for Arnold, the problem of how to nominate and nominalize its objects; how to *intervene* into a critical field that, he also felt, did not yet exist and it was the collection's task to convene. The collection was assembled in 1865 *inductively*: mostly from pre-existing work, with Arnold adding an introduction (the "Functions" essay, which he also delivered as a lecture at Oxford, and published in *The National Review* in November 1864) and the above-quoted preface. Letters to its publisher, Alexander Macmillan, reveal Arnold's doubts and hesitations about the piece, which is conceived with the same kind of querulousness he brings to the dispute with Wright: he would prefer a cheap edition because "I am the most unpopular of authors, but I think this volume will pay its expenses." More striking yet is the difficulty Arnold has titling the collection. His first suggestion, "Orpheus," is abandoned for similarly defensive reasons ("I shall certainly be torn to pieces for presumption by the Thracian women of the periodical press"), but finally it is the prepositional problem of criticism that detains him: "I had thought of 'Essays of Criticism' in the old sense of the word *Essay*—*attempt*—*specimen*; but perhaps this would hardly do. What do you think of 'Essays in Criticism'?"²⁸ The "of" title would have sounded strange, as Arnold realized, but would have preserved one of the essays' foundational curiosities: that they are attempts both to *reach* "the best that is thought and known" and to operationalize that knowledge against an array of third parties, from the Philistines to the various Mr. Wrights who personify that class. On the other hand, to be *in* criticism is to be, in some sense, already in the wrong.

Unupbraided for Once

Thematically speaking, there is nothing remotely radical about Arnold's troping of the bad mother as a figure of ruin and disaster: it remains one of the most recurrent figures in European semiotics, as well as one of psychoanalytic theory's most persistent ghouls. Nothing radical either, to paraphrase Redfield again, in the anecdote's tremulousness about menstruation ("Wragg") and its anxiety over castration ("the superfluous Christian name lopped off" [*Politics of Aesthetics*, 90]). Yet it is worth noticing that Arnold's mobilization of maternal relation via Wragg against Roebuck and Adderley might also exemplify a shift in his relation to the figure of the bad *father* during the period of his major productivity.²⁹ Arnold contemplates the idea of *mercy killing* the father (putting him out of his misery) in a poem published in *Fraser's* in 1855 to mark the death at thirty-eight of Charlotte Brontë, predeceased by all three of her gifted siblings but survived by her father. After a brief reminiscence of a meeting with Brontë and Harriet Martineau, whom Arnold also believed to be close to death (she lived another twenty years), the poem comes to contemplate the sad condition of a "childless father":

See! in the desolate house
 The childless father! Alas—
 Age, whom the most of us chide,
 Chide, and put back, and delay—
 Come, unupbraided for once!
 Lay thy benumbing hand,
 Gratefully cold, on this brow!
 Shut out the grief, the despair!
 Weaken the sense of his loss!
 Deaden the infinite pain!³⁰

The poet was evidently self-conscious enough about appearing to express a sincere desire for the mental decline of Rev. Patrick Brontë that the passage was excised from the version of “Haworth Churchyard” that appeared in *Poems: Lyric, Dramatic, and Elegiac* in 1877.³¹ And indeed the passage seems scarcely in possession of its own marbles. The polysyndetonic “delay” enacted by the irruption at “Alas!” not only stutters and repeats, but also swallows its own subject: “Age” is *glossed* between the dashes, but then *apostrophized* after their closure. Awkwardly, too: “unupbraided” had appeared in Edward Young’s *Night-Thoughts* in 1745 (“Nor stands thy wraith depriv’d of its reproof / Or unupbraided by this radiant choir”); it would appear again in Swinburne’s *Atalanta in Calydon* in 1865 (in Althaea’s ironic description of a future in which she and her son might live “each unupbraided, each without rebuke / Convicted, and without a word reviled / Each of another”).³² The word was otherwise Arnold’s, and this is his only usage. There are other questions: why is the hand of age “grateful”—because it is unupbraided, for once? And what is to be said of the rhyme—visual, rather than phonic—of those verbs “weaken” and “deaden”?

Of Charlotte Brontë herself, Arnold had written less charitably in his private correspondence: writing to his future wife Frances Wightman in December 1850 to record the meeting he treats at the beginning of “Haworth Churchyard,” Arnold complained that Martineau “blasphemes frightfully” and that Brontë was “past thirty and plain, with expressive gray eyes, though” (Arnold to Wightman, *Letters*, 1:13). *Villette*, he wrote as late as 1853, was “hideous undelightful convulsed constricted” [*sic*].³³ It is indeed easy to find evidence of what Antony Harrison calls Arnold’s “notorious misogyny”—what he himself called his “feeling with regard to (I hate the word) women.”³⁴ (In the context of Arnold’s passionate letter to Arthur Hugh Clough, who is addressed throughout as “my duck” and “my love,” incidentally, that odd admission feels at least as seductive as symptomatic.) Brontë’s recollection of the encounter was no kinder:

Those who have only seen Mrs. Arnold once will necessarily, I think, judge of her unfavourably; her manner on introduction disappointed me sensibly, as lacking that genuineness and simplicity one seemed to have a right to expect in the chosen life companion of Dr. Arnold. On my remarking as much to Mrs. Gaskell and Sir J. K. Shuttleworth I was told for my consolation it was a “conventional manner,” but that it vanished on closer acquaintance; fortunately this last assurance proved true. It is observable that Matthew Arnold, the eldest son, and the author of the volume of poems to which you allude, inherits his

mother's defect. Striking and prepossessing in appearance, his manner displeases from its seeming foppery. I own it caused me at first to regard him with regretful surprise; the shade of Dr. Arnold seemed to me to frown on his young representative. I was told, however, that "Mr. Arnold improved upon acquaintance." So it was: ere long a real modesty appeared under his assumed conceit, and some genuine intellectual aspirations, as well as high educational acquirements, displaced superficial affectations. I was given to understand that his theological opinions were very vague and unsettled, and indeed he betrayed as much in the course of conversation. Most unfortunate for him, doubtless, has been the untimely loss of his father.³⁵

What is the connection, if any, between the recurring sense of Matthew Arnold as foppishly overshadowed by his eminent father and his having been established as the "father" of the poetastic style of culture-writing? In concluding this article, I will attempt to answer that question by aligning Arnoldian criticism with what I take to be a related phenomenon: the concept of narcissistic desire as it is understood in psychoanalytic theory. Narcissism will seem an odd context in which to describe an intellectual project so oriented towards (textual, cultural, human) objects as Arnold's. Yet the two concepts describe an allergenic response to the fact of one's own objectivity—to the empirical fact that one is, indeed, treated as an object by others.

Recently, Arnold has recurred in a different guise than as the patriarch of the New Criticism. In a recent essay entitled "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," Virginia Jackson contrasts Arnold's criticism with that she derives from Lauren Berlant, whom she calls "our Arnold in drag."³⁶ (We have already seen Arnold himself in full Norma Bates mode.) Jackson retrieves from Berlant a phantasmatic compensation for Arnold's melancholic condition: where the Victorian glumly remained on top of Pisgah, the "current diva performer of the function of criticism" dreams her way into the promised land, because "after all, what forms of desire are not fictive?" True, but it is not clear that Arnold's criticism is, precisely, a desire—or, at least, not in the psychoanalytic sense evoked by Jackson. (Criticism is, to be sure, introduced in *On Translating Homer* as "just that very thing which now Europe most desires," but there criticism is the *object* of desire, rather than a motivating force.) In the *Essays*, the critical power works to "make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself"; it is not, in itself, such an availing, or even an agency (*Lectures and Essays*, 261). Creative power is the source of "man's true happiness"; critical power seems, by contrast, a far more affectively ambivalent phenomenon.

There is one kind of psychoanalytically expressed desire that *does* suggest Arnoldian critical affect, though: narcissistic desire. Libido, as Freud develops the idea in "On Narcissism: An Introduction," is subdivided into ego-libido and object-libido, with the latter encompassing most psychic states commonly called "desires," and the former encompassing similar tendencies directed *towards the self* experienced either by the secondary (i.e., adult) narcissist or any subject in a narcissistic state.³⁷ (These "ego-desires" are nonetheless categorically distinct, Freud thinks, from the "ego-instincts" of self-preservation, which are emphatically non-libidinal.) The presence of ego-libido inhibits the subject's incorporation into normal object-relations because the narcissist

is uniquely capable of treating *himself* as an object, should an object seem like a useful thing to interact with. “The creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed elements, and those elements are not in its own control”: Arnold’s search for a spirit of criticism resembles Freud’s lifelong attempt to explain those cognitive states which do not tend towards the generation of new meanings, of *newness* in general (Arnold, *Lectures and Essays*, 261). Freudian narcissism, like the Arnoldian criticism, both *is* and *is not* relational: the symptoms of each are visible in the subject’s treatment of objects, but the condition of each is felt as the subject’s growing sense of his own objecthood.

One of the many ironies of Arnold’s famous formulation that “[criticism] obeys an instinct prompting it to try to know the best that is thought and known in the world” is that criticism must, perforce, recuse itself from the privileged field of “the best that is thought and known.” Yet we have seen that Arnold recognizes, in Burke, Joubert, and the other autoerotically charged objects Cain calls his “touchstones,” analogues to his own isolation and abjection; men into whom he may merge both himself and his antagonists. I offer this observation not in a spirit of diagnosis, but to return Arnold to the world of acknowledgement and reproof that left its lacerations on both his own prose and the critical style that continues to bear his name.

When the *Pall Mall Gazette* falsely attributed to him the view that Arnold was “a Philistine of the Philistines,” the philologist F. J. Furnivall wrote a letter of correction, reporting instead that he took his fellow Homerician to be “one of the larkiest writers I ever came across,” and added “[i]f I have mistaken so august and reverend a sage, he may, or may not, condescend to hold me up to ridicule in that delightful way of his, which the victim gets as much pleasure from as the writer himself.”³⁸ Some version of this Arnoldian frippery found its way into the modernist reception, in Stephen Dedalus’s fond Oxonian imaginings at the opening of *Ulysses*: “Shouts from the open window startling evening in the quadrangle. A deaf gardener, aproned, masked with Matthew Arnold’s face, pushes his mower on the somber lawn watching narrowly the dancing motes of grasshalm.”³⁹ With full Marvellian bathos (“the mower, mown”), Joyce plasters Arnold’s face onto a figure of architectural impermeability: the permanently bemused gardener, cognizant of but unmoved by the Schillerian play of nature in his wake. Auden’s imagination of an Arnoldian face-transplant (“left him with nothing but a jailor’s voice and face”) was, however, the commoner judgment: M. A. became, for Auden and his contemporaries, his “father’s forum,” morphing into his own Victorian daddy on account of the very narcissistic strategies he had deployed *against* him. Larkiness, perhaps, has a shorter half-life than seriousness; it’s also, perhaps, more difficult to retrieve once lost. But the problem with Arnold’s larkiness is something more than its tendency to degrade over time, even its tendency to self-erase in its own pompous projections; it’s that even the maximalist expressions of critical affect one encounters, in plain sight, miss their apparent object entirely and rebound on the wounded narcissistic ego itself. What could we learn from a history of literary criticism composed of acknowledgments, not of marital devotion or familial care, but of the spite, neglect, and resentment that propelled Arnold, madly, into his larks?

514 **Notes**

The present article was developed in two seminars, and I would like to express my thanks here to the participants in the 2014 ACLA seminar “Ornamentation, Utility, Waste: At the Limits of Aesthetic Capital”: Crystal Bartolovich, Stephen Best, Anne Cheng, Sophie Gee, Aaron Kunin, Jeanne Vaccaro, Ross Wilson, and Liz Young, and particularly to my co-organizer Jessica Rosenberg for the conversations that generated both that seminar and this article. I would also like to thank my fellow participants in the 2013 MSA seminar “Weak Theory”: David Ayers, Jennifer Cooke, Sara Crangle, and Mena Mitrano, and to Paul Saint-Amour for fostering that conversation. I am also grateful for the timely advice of Joshua Gang and Cliff Mak. Essay is for D.

1. Matthew Arnold, “Preface to *Essays in Criticism*,” in *Lectures and Essays in Criticism*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), 286–90, 286.

2. W. H. Auden, “Matthew Arnold,” in *Another Time* (New York: Random House, 1945), 54.

3. F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1954), 7.

4. Joseph Conrad, “The Crime of Partition,” *Collier's Illustrated Weekly*, June 14, 1919, 10.

5. These words are taken, as Arnold acknowledges, from the second of his three lectures *On Translating Homer*, in which the “critical effort” of European intellectuals is distinguished from the “eccentric and arbitrary spirit” of the English. However, as Arnold's editor R. H. Super acknowledges in his *Complete Prose Works*, “Arnold may not have been upon oath in describing the reception of his proposition. Only one reviewer of the Homeric lectures seems to have quoted his sentence, and that with approbation: the author of ‘Recent Homeric Critics and Translators,’ *North British Review*, XXXVI, 348 (May, 1862). Arnold had been much pleased with this article, as he told his mother on May 3” (Matthew Arnold, *Lectures and Essays in Criticism*, ed. R. H. Super [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962], 474). Such bad faith on Arnold's part is neither, as we shall see, unusual nor inconsequential. Further references to “The Function of Criticism” and the other *Essays in Criticism* will cite Super's edition.

6. See Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015). See also Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus, “Surface Reading: An Introduction,” *Representations* 108, no. 1 (2009): 1–21.

7. Heather Love, “Close but not Deep: Literary Ethics and the Descriptive Turn,” *New Literary History* 41, no. 2 (2010): 371–91, 371.

8. Lionel Trilling was the most vocal of Arnold's twentieth-century advocates and one of a handful cited here who treated him as the “father” figure of the new critical textual studies—we will see variations of the same idea in T. S. Eliot, William E. Cain, James Joyce, and others. Yet Trilling's ardor facing Arnold was deeply ambivalent, as he confesses in the introduction to *The Portable Matthew Arnold*:

Of the literary men of the great English nineteenth century there are few who have stayed quite so fresh, so immediate, and so relevant as Matthew Arnold. It is not entirely easy to understand why this should be so. For, as we usually judge power, Arnold is not the most powerful of his contemporaries—he does not make anything like, say, Carlyle's bold and dramatic claim upon our attention. Nor does he hold his position by reason of a massive and ranging body of work. His poetic canon is relatively small; and of this canon it must be said that some of its most ambitious items are failures, and that, although almost every one of Arnold's poems is in some way interesting, only a few are perfect in their kind. Of his more extensive prose works, a considerable part—that which deals with religion—is likely to be disregarded by modern readers, not because of its subject but because of its way of dealing with its subject. His writing on literature and politics was carried on in the free moments allowed him by his burdened life as a civil servant, and the larger part of it consists of occasional essays and lectures, forms which do not easily establish their authority. (Lionel Trilling, introduction to *The Portable Matthew Arnold*, ed. Lionel Trilling [New York: Viking, 1949], 1–36, 1)

9. Arnold to his mother, December 7, 1864, in *The Letters of Matthew Arnold*, ed. George W. E. Russell, vol. 1, 1848–1888 (London: Macmillan, 1895), 243.

10. For an account of the complex relation to manliness in Arnold's prose, see Heather Ellis, "'This starting, feverish heart': Matthew Arnold and the Problem of Manliness," *Critical Survey* 20, no. 3 (2008): 97–115. My argument differs from Ellis's in two particulars: first, while I agree that Arnold's writing retains a "sensitivity to gendered criticism," I do not think it allows us to diagnose "a desire to emulate his famously 'manly' father"; rather, I think Arnold's constant attempt was to make a virtue of his difference from that father (97). Second, and more consequently, I do not believe that *any* act of criticism can fully absent itself from the scene of penetration that seems to produce an imbalance in the relation between text and critic. I therefore take Arnoldian criticism to exhibit precisely the problematic features of criticism as such.

11. My own evocation of the language of Marxist-feminism here takes its license from an implicit analogy, or echo, in Arnold's own prose, which distinctively recalls *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. "[P]owers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment; the creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed elements, and those elements are not in its own control" (Arnold, *Lectures and Essays*, 261). "Man makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth; he does not make it out of conditions chosen by himself, but out of such as he finds at hand" (Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, trans. Daniel de Leon [Chicago, IL: Charles H. Kerr, 1913], 9).

12. *OED Online*, s.v., "march, n."

13. In an eccentric, persuasive, and tantalizingly brief history of "anti-criticism," which he takes to be the position of critics who declare that literary criticism is "impossible," William E. Cain characterizes Arnold (whom he thinks "the father, or at least the presiding genius, of both criticism and anti-criticism") as standing in a position of "militant redundancy" ("Towards a History of Anti-Criticism," *New Literary History* 20, no. 1 [1988]: 33–48, 40). Arnold's frequent recourse to a set of "touchstone" writers, whose luminous truth neither requires nor brooks further elucidation, positions the critic outside the boundaries of that which he wishes to promote.

14. For an account of Victorian effeminacy as a failure or refusal to participate in the practical business of civil society, see Thais Morgan, "Victorian Effeminacies," in *Victorian Sexual Dissidence*, ed. Richard Dellamora (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 109–26.

15. Cain distinguishes this position from the politics of deconstruction in De Man (though he does so before *Specters of Marx* was written). Sebastian Lecourt takes this moment as a problematic acknowledgement on Arnold's part that "Culture cannot be disseminated until there is some degree of consensus established coercively" ("Matthew Arnold and Religion's Cosmopolitan Histories," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 38, no. 2 [2010]: 467–87, 475).

16. A perhaps pedantically literal translation would be: "it's force and right that govern all things in the world; force waiting for right." Both the introduction of an idea of "readiness"—a personification not present in the Joubert—and the decisively futurological "till" are Arnold's own. "La force en attendant le droit" implies a mood of (retrospective) delay, or drag, rather than (prospective) anticipation.

17. Arnold to his mother, June 5, 1869, in *The Letters of Matthew Arnold*, ed. Cecil Y. Lang, vol. 3, 1866–1870 (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 347.

18. See Stefan Collini, *Matthew Arnold: A Critical Portrait* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2008).

19. Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (Garden City, NY: Garden City Publishing, 1918), 222.

20. T. S. Eliot, "Arnold and Pater," *The Bookman*, September 1930, 1–7, 2.

21. Marc Redfield, *The Politics of Aesthetics: Nationalism, Gender, Romanticism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 89.

22. Arnold's source for this passage initially proved somewhat mysterious, but the matter has been solved, and it is clear that Arnold must have encountered the report in the *Carlisle Express* on September 17, traveling back to London from the Highlands of Scotland in 1864. The report in the *Express* is nonetheless subtly different:

A shocking child murder has been committed at Nottingham. A girl named Wragg left the Workhouse there on Saturday morning with her young illegitimate child. The child was afterwards found dead on Mapperley Hills, having been strangled. Wragg is in custody.

- 516 To this, Arnold added the intensifying adverbs “just [been committed]” and “soon [afterwards],” changed the spelling of “Mapperley,” and de-capitalized “Workhouse.” James Walter Caulfield has traced Arnold’s quotation to “General News,” *Carlisle Express*, September 17, 1864, 3. See Caulfield, *Overcoming Matthew Arnold: Ethics in Culture and Criticism* (London: Routledge, 2016), 175n56.
23. George Eliot, *Adam Bede* (London: Blackwood, 1859).
24. “The essay as an attack on Arnold is rather weak, both because it is late in the day, and because Mr. Eliot has no real point to bring out,—always excepting his own relation to Arnold, which is interesting” (M. L. S. Loring, “T. S. Eliot on Matthew Arnold,” *The Sewanee Review* 43, no. 4 [1935]: 479–88, 480).
25. Harold Bloom, *Poets and Poems* (Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House, 2005), 203.
26. Amanda Anderson, *The Powers of Distance: Cosmopolitanism and the Cultivation of Detachment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 93.
27. Benjamin Jowett, *Letters of Benjamin Jowett*, ed. Evelyn Abbott and Lewis Campbell (London: John Murray, 1899), 223.
28. Arnold to Macmillan, August 2, 1864, in *Matthew Arnold’s Books: Toward a Publishing Diary*, ed. William Earl Buckler (Paris: Librairie Minard, 1958), 67.
29. McLaughlin argues (relatedly) that “disinterestedness” in Arnold, which he characterizes as a return to Kant, also moves away from the lyrical mode (Kevin McLaughlin, *Poetic Force: Poetry after Kant* [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014], 81). That argument amplifies one element of Herbert Tucker’s influential critique of Trilling’s account of Arnold’s oeuvre as an organic whole: Trilling saw the prose as the “goal” of the poetry; Tucker as its lackluster “institutionaliz[ation]” (Herbert F. Tucker, “Arnold and the Authorization of Criticism,” in *Knowing the Past: Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. Suzy Anger [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001], 100–20, 114).
30. Matthew Arnold, “Haworth Churchyard, April, 1855,” *Fraser’s Magazine*, May 1855.
31. See Matthew Arnold, *Poems: Lyric, Dramatic, and Elegiac* (London: Macmillan, 1877), 239–44.
32. Edward Young, *The Complaint and Consolation, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality* (Boston, MA: Carter, 1837), 227–28; Algernon Charles Swinburne, *Atalanta in Calydon: A Tragedy* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1866), 90.
33. Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, March 21, 1853, in *The Letters of Matthew Arnold*, ed. Cecil Y. Lang, vol. 1, 1829–1859 (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1996), 258.
34. Antony H. Harrison, *The Cultural Production of Matthew Arnold* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009), 72.
35. Brontë to James Taylor, January 15, 1851, in Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (London: Smith, Elder, 1857), 512–13.
36. Virginia Jackson, “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time,” *Los Angeles Review of Books*, April 12, 2015, lareviewofbooks.org/article/function-criticism-present-time/.
37. See Sigmund Freud, *On Narcissism: An Introduction*, trans. James Strachey et al., in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 14, 1914–1916 (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1957), 67–102.
38. F. J. Furnivall, “To the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*,” quoted in *The Shelley Society’s Note-Book* 1, no. 2, pt. 1 (1886): 20.
39. James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Hans Walter Gabler (New York: Vintage, 1986), 7.