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Dogs and Domesticity Reading the Dog in Victorian British Visual Culture

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**RESEARCH
DEGREES
WITH
PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY**

Dogs and Domesticity

Reading the Dog in Victorian British Visual Culture

by

Amy Robson

A thesis submitted to Plymouth University

in partial fulfilment for the degree of

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Author's Signed Declaration

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Sub-Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at the Plymouth University has not formed part of any other degree either at Plymouth University or at another establishment.

A programme of advanced study was undertaken and relevant seminars and conferences were regularly attended at which work was often presented; including the University of York, The Wellcome Collection, and the University of Edinburgh.

Presentation and Conferences Attended:

'Class Contagions and Canine Culprits: Rapid Representations and the Middle-Class Imagination in Victorian Britain', *A Picture of Health, AAH New Voices Conference*, 2014, The Wellcome Collection.

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Abstract

The central aim of this thesis is to critically examine the values associated with dogs in Victorian British art and visual culture. It studies the redefining and restructuring of the domestic dog as it was conceptualized in visual culture and the art market. It proposes that the dog was strongly associated with social values and moral debates which often occurred within a visual arena, including exhibitions, illustrated newspapers, and prints. Consequently, visual representations of the dog can be seen as an important means through which to study Victorian culture and society.

Historians have agreed that the Victorian period was a significant turning point for how we perceive the dog. Harriet Ritvo, Michael Worboys and Neil Pemberton cite the Victorian period as founding or popularizing many recognisable canine constructs; such as competitive breeding; a widespread acceptance of dogs as pets; and the association of particular breeds with particular classes of people. Phillip Howell defines the Victorian period as the point at which the domestic dog was conceptually established. The figurative domestic dog did not simply exist in the home but was *part* of the home; an embodiment of its core (often middle class) values. As such, the domestic dog became the standard by which all other dogs were perceived and the focal point for related social debates.

Yet most studies concerning the Victorian dog overlook the contribution of visual culture to these cultural developments. William Secord compiled an extensive catalogue of Victorian dog artwork and Diana Donald examined Landseer and the dog as an artistic model yet neither have fully situated the dog within a broader Victorian social environment, nor was their intention to critically examine the dog's signification within the larger visual landscape. Chapter One provides this overview, while subsequent chapters provide studies of key canine motifs and the manner in which they operated in art and visual culture.

Underpinning this thesis is a concern with the Victorian moral values and ideals of domesticity in urban environments. These values and their relation to the dog are explored through the framework of the social history of art. Seen through this methodology, this thesis allows the relationship between canine debates, social concerns, and visual representations to be understood. It will argue that the figure of the dog had a significant role to play both socially *and* visually within Victorian society and propose a reappraisal of the dog in art historical study.

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Figure 161: *Brave Defenders’ adversity, is our great opportunity*, 23 January 1900, The National Archives, COPY 1/444/449.

Figure 162: *Photograph of “Help” the Railway Dog of England*, 10 November 1892, The National Archives, COPY 1/410/165.

Figure 163: Station Jim’s Twitter Page, <<https://twitter.com/stationjim>> [Accessed 7 June 16]

Figure 164: *Charles Dickens with His Favourite Dog, Turk, At His Side*, c.1860-65, Private Collection.

Figure 165: *Young Lady With Dog*, c.1880-90s, Libby Hall Collection, London.

Figure 166: *Dog on Chair*, c.1880-90s, Libby Hall Collection, London.

Figure 167: *Gold Medallist*, c.1889, Libby Hall Collection, London.

Figure 168: *Mother, Child, and Dog*, c.1880-90s, Libby Hall Collection, London.

Figure 169: *On Guard*, 8 October 1891, The National Archives, COPY 1/405/272.

Figure 170: *Saying Grace*, 13 December 1894, The National Archives, COPY 1/418/895.

Figure 171: *A Respite From the Muzzle*, 30 July 1897, The National Archives, COPY 1/431/466.

Figure 172: *'Ben and Jack, From a Photograph'*: *The Strand Magazine*, 1894, p. 401, Author's Collection.

Introduction

The Role of the Dog in the Victorian Cultural Imagination

In the Royal Academy show of 1849, two paintings caused a particular stir among critics and audiences alike. One of these paintings, *Isabella* (1849), was John Everett Millais's (1829–96) inaugural display of Pre-Raphaelite rebelliousness. The painting took inspiration from John Keats's (1795–1821) rendition of a tale of lovers presented by Boccaccio (1313–75) and was, to many at the time, seen as 'eccentric and characterized by a rebellious disregard of the canons of Art'.¹ This, of course, was the intention of the Brotherhood at the time and Millais represented their intentions well. The crowded composition of the dinner guests, the medieval setting, the drastic thrusting of the foot at the forefront of the canvas, each aspect of the painting was an act of artistic defiance, which captivated and infuriated the art world in equal measure.

The work has been studied in detail for its stylistic and symbolic elements but the object of one of the brother's violent leg thrusts, Isabella's hound, is typically only paid a cursory glance in modern interpretations of the painting. Albert Boime describes this dog as 'a displaced sign of her tender affection for [Isabella's lover] Lorenzo'² while Tim Barringer simply notes that 'one of her murderous brothers furiously cracks a nut and tries to distract her dog with the extended foot that makes such a dramatic horizontal feature'.³ The action of the brother, described by a reviewer in the London periodical *The Examiner's* fine art section as 'spurning Isabella's hound' was considered a caricature in its dramatism but 'a vigorous conception' nonetheless, signalling its centrality to the work.⁴ Although the brother does not make contact in the artwork the general agreement

¹ *Art Journal*, 1882, p. 188.

² Albert Boime, *Art in an Age of Civil Struggle, 1848–1871* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 259.

³ Tim Barringer, *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1998), p.8.

⁴ 'Fine Arts', *Examiner*, 12 May 1849, p.293.

of Victorian commentators was that Isabella's hound was being subjected to a kick, and a spiteful one at that.

Figure 1 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 1: Sir John Everett Millais, *Isabella*, oil on canvas, 1849, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

The presence of Isabella's hound (not once mentioned in Keats's or Boccaccio's renditions of the romance between Isabella and Lorenzo) is a very telling aspect of the narrative that Millais presents. Possessing multiple meanings the hound represents first and foremost fidelity in the traditional sense. It is a symbol of the affection felt between Isabella and Lorenzo and, therefore, is logically in place as the representative victim of her brother's murderous attempts. Seen as fawning on Isabella's lap, her hound could easily be considered as a proxy for Lorenzo himself and, thus, an embodiment of his affections. Isabella's brother, then, is stabbing at Lorenzo as he stabs at the hound. Yet the hound also clearly belongs to Isabella and is situated, as the whole scene is, within the domestic sphere. In this we could perhaps take a more modern reading of the piece: considering both Isabella and her pet dog as representative of the interior and its associate virtues. In this reading the impending actions of Isabella's brother may be implied as having a violent impact on the life of Isabella and the stability of the home, warning against violence and its place in the home (and, in Lisa Surridge's reading, alluding to domestic or familial violence).⁵ Then, of course, there is the question of the other dog, placed directly under the brother's chair. Is this dog, as some contemporary US critics identified, the peacefully resting hound of the brother's, sleeping securely,⁶ or is it, too, part of the greater narrative of the painting? As Chase Pielak has noted:

⁵ Lisa Surridge, *Bleak Houses: Marital Violence in Victorian Fiction* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2005), p. 77.

⁶ 'Table-Talk', *Putnam's Magazine*, April 1869, p. 513.

Both dogs ... are threatened: Isabella's dog by the brother's kick, and another sleeping just behind his chair that will be crushed when the kick is finished and the brother's chair, tipped forward by the kick, returns to all four of its legs on top of the dog's feet.⁷

Is this dog then expected to be considered in addition to Isabella's dog as a prefiguring presence in the canvas: one further pertaining to the crushing of Lorenzo (an action also implied by the crushing of nuts) and the eventual disruption of the lover's happiness? Or is this simply one among the many of the plays on perspective recognised in modern readings of this canvas? Giving consideration to the placement of the dogs—one by Isabella and one under her brother—it seems more likely that a sense of unified meaning was planned for them as a greater part of Millais's careful composition.

Amidst all of this there is an appeal towards civility too. Isabella's hound—dainty, domestic and frail—is strikingly contrasted against the one intending to strike it. Isabella's brother, with his muscular kick and clenched fist, is a disruptive force in the canvas. Taking on a brutish appearance he even bares his teeth, as if he himself were a snarling animal, presenting the only form of animalistic aggression in the composition. Without the presence of Isabella's own delicate hound, so eager to shy away from the violence, the clear brutishness of this painting would not have been as emotively charged, nor as evocative of the uncomfortable divide between civility and savagery. As James Hamilton observes 'The vicious kick at the hound in Millais's *Isabella* (1848–9) would not be half so dramatic were it not for the snarl of the young man who delivered it'.⁸

Through this brief analysis of Millais's work the central argument of this thesis comes to light. Namely that dogs in Victorian painting, and visual culture as a whole, were often much more prominent figures than a passing analysis of their presence in such

⁷ Chase Pielak, *Memorializing Animals During the Romantic Period* (Oxford: Routledge, 2016), p. 44.

⁸ James Hamilton, *A Strange Business: Making Art and Money in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Atlantic Books, 2014), p. 189.

paintings would suggest. Capable of conveying multiple meanings, and a key figure in the visual and symbolic disruption depicted in the work, Isabella's dog provides us with a glimpse into this insight and is representative of a broader social change. The Victorian period has been identified by historians as a significant turning point in the development of the domestic dog. Driven by changes of treatment in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, pet ownership and the appropriate stewardship of pets became a mark of national and personal pride.⁹ The queen herself was celebrated as an animal lover and acted as a pet-keeping exemplar for many fancy dog owners. Simultaneously the presence of animals in urban environments due to rapid urbanisation became a point of concern.

Clustered together within the modern metropolis people were given more opportunities to consider what animals meant to them and what role and function animals had within an increasingly urbanised and industrial landscape. In this the dog, already a pet through the aristocracy and already frequently viewed through its uses as a labouring animal, became a point of particular consideration. What role did the dog have in the modern metropolis? What spaces should it occupy and why? Answers to these implied questions began to surface in the mid-nineteenth century with the emergence of dog shows and a formalized set of breeding standards. Situated in the sphere of middle-class hierarchies and values, the dog gained increasing worth as a social signifier. Discourses concerning the worth and character of a dog were created and contested, as dogs were presented as bastions of morality, acted as allusions to thinly veiled anxieties and, in many instances, had a strong visual presence. Through these multivalent canine constructions the Victorian middle classes were not only figuring out the placement and assigning value to dog but also constructing and reinforcing their own identity within society. Such representations, and their cultural interactions and social significance, are the focus of

⁹ The early modern period has been studied by Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (London: Penguin Books, 1984) and expanded by other academics.

this thesis, which will be informed by high art, visual culture, and, to some extent, literature.¹⁰

The mediating influence of the dog in this period has recently become well-documented by academics. This interest in the histories and cultural impact of animals has flourished in the last two decades.¹¹ The utilisation of animal studies for a historical analysis of Victorian society came to the foreground in the 1980s but did not gain widespread attention until the 2000s.¹² Since then the dog has attracted multidisciplinary interest. Animal studies, history, literature studies and social geographies have been the main disciplines through which most academics have approached the topic so far, though other disciplines have also explored this field of study. This move towards validating the dog's role in historical, cultural and social examination has been a difficult one. There was a time when academics believed that there was 'no mention of pets in the English women's magazines and manuals of the nineteenth century' whatsoever,¹³ and that the historical potency of the dog was mostly non-existent. This has long since proven to be inaccurate. The Victorian period was, in fact, brimming with cultural references to pets, and dogs in

¹⁰ Although some may consider the terms 'high' art and 'visual culture' as divisive or incompatible, this thesis strives to utilize the conventional lexicon of art history while embracing the renewal of the social history of art as John A. Walker and Sarah Chaplin have identified. In this inherently multidisciplinary approach to reading canine imagery it considers the dog to merit more than 'a history of images', instead embracing 'a broader understanding of their cultural significance for the historical circumstances in which they were produced as well as their potential meaning within the context of our own historical situation' as proposed by Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, Keith Moxey, eds., *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretation*, (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University, 1994), p.xvi. This is in keeping with the findings of academics in other fields (as this literature review has demonstrated) but is in need of consideration in the discipline of art history. Such consideration will thus be offered through the broad examination of visual culture, in which conventional art practices are strongly situated.

¹¹ Helen Rogers, 'Victorian Studies in the UK', in *The Victorians Since 1901: Histories, Representations and Revisions*, ed. by Miles Taylor and Michael Wolf (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp.244-259 (p. 245).

¹² In fact this shifting focus on the animal's impact on human history has become so noticeable as an academic phenomenon that the new agenda for the *Journal of Victorian Culture* in 2012 was considered to be Victorian Animals, with a selection of seven articles dedicated to this agenda. *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 17 (2012). Most recently Peter Yeandle has also readdressed this trend considering it as an 'animal turn' in Cultural History, stressing that 'Nowhere in which has this trend been more apparent than in studies of human-animal relations in the Victorian period'. Peter Yeandle, 'Exhibiting Animals in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Empathy, Education and Entertainment: Animal Histories as Victorian Studies? The "Animal Turn" in Cultural History', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 20 (2015), 258–260.

¹³ Charles Phineas, 'Household Pets and Urban Alienation', *Journal of Social History*, 7 (1974), 338-343 (p. 338).

particular and this very abundance of material has turned many scholars in the humanities towards the canine as a topic for rigorous academic examination. Previous dismissal of the dog as a subject of academic interest in the humanities (and specifically art history) has more to do with modern preference rather than an absence of resources.

A cursory glance at animal art in modern galleries and exhibitions suggests a move towards the postmodern that, as Steven Baker puts it, ‘says a great deal about how far artists’ attitudes to domestic animals have changed since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries’.¹⁴ Postmodernism as a movement is marked by the rejection of conventional art practices, theory, and definition and specifically aimed at defying the domination of modernism. Modernism was understood in the representation of animals (and dogs more) as an exploration of the otherness of non-human animals, a questioning of the conventional boundaries between human and non-human animals, and the ‘mental confrontation between sentimental compassion and aesthetic satisfaction’.¹⁵ Core to Victorian values surrounding the dog, yet presented as the antithesis of postmodern thinking, the moral and sentimental are disregarded in the postmodern approach to art and art criticism. In this manner approaches to animals in postmodernism can even be critiqued as indulging in merely ‘modernism’ rather than postmodernism—as their dismissal of sentimentality is strongly in keeping with the approach of the Bloomsbury group and their similar backlash against Victorian conventions and sentiments.¹⁶ Baker encapsulates this attitude in his assertion that ‘Not to sentimentalize; not to moralize; these are the imperatives of the postmodern artist and writer’ but should it be?¹⁷ Baker’s proposed approach to postmodernism trivializes the contribution of Victorian canine

¹⁴ Steve Baker, ‘The Refusal of Sentimentality in Postmodern Animal Art’, in *Hounds in Leash: The Dog in 18th and 19th Century Sculpture*, ed. by Johnathan Wood and Stephen Feeke (Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 2000), pp. 62–71 (p. 62).

¹⁵ Steven Baker, *The Postmodern Animal* (London: Reaktion Books, 2000), p. 7.

¹⁶ Katherine Mullin, ‘Victorian Bloomsbury’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Bloomsbury Group* ed. by Victoria Rosner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 19–32 (p. 21).

¹⁷ Baker, ‘The Refusal of Sentimentality’, p.69.

representations to our current understanding and mediation of the animal, suggesting that these have ‘reasonably secure hold on [symbolic] meaning’ and not much more.¹⁸

A comparison of these two approaches can be perfectly encapsulated in the sense of self. Victorian canine representations were strongly invested in the anthropomorphic: the relationship forged between dog and owner and the impact that it had in both instances. This was a fundamental element of the readability of dogs, who were physically aligned with their owners, but also tied in to larger notions of national and individual identity. People loved their dogs and enjoyed seeing the similarities between dog and owner championed: whether it be in grand pet portraiture, scathing social satire, or a well-placed charitable plea. Within this structure of canine representations a focus on the human / canine relationship was pivotal, and a reciprocal identification with the dog was imperative.

Nowhere is this more apparent than when animal painters, such as Sir Edwin Landseer (and Hogarth before him),¹⁹ chose to represent themselves with their own pets and in Landseer’s *The Connoisseurs: Portrait of the Artist with Two Dogs* (1865) this becomes explicit. While the artist gazes up at the viewer his dogs, their own faces level with his, place their gaze firmly on the image he is working on.²⁰ The message conveyed is one of mutual affection and dependence: Landseer may champion the dog in art but his artist identity is defined by his relationship with the two ‘connoisseurs’.

Figure 2 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 2: Sir Edwin Landseer, *The Connoisseurs: Portrait of the Artist with Two Dogs*, oil on canvas, 1865, The Royal Collection, London.

¹⁸ Steven Baker, *The Postmodern Animal*, p. 20.

¹⁹ William Hogarth, *The Painter and his Pug*, oil on canvas, 1745 (London: The Tate Collection).

²⁰ The subject being a dog, adding additional elements of playfulness to the work in keeping with the Victorians’ general attitude to canine subjects.

Figure 3 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 3: Jordan Baseman, *Be Your Dog*, dog's ears, plastic, 1997, Private Collection.

Contrast this to a postmodern approach to the canine subject, as presented by the London-based artist Jordan Baseman (1960–). A single pair of canine ears hang in the gallery space with the title (and invitation) of *Be Your Dog* (1997). While the focus of this artwork continues to address the issue of identity with what it means to be one's own dog, the dog itself is near-completely omitted, circumvented to address what it means to be a human animal rather than to embrace the sentimentalised relationship between dog and owner. As is to be expected, gallery-goers were eager to take up Baseman's suggestion, and many tried to position themselves as if they were wearing the fragmented remains of the canine element, however in this exchange of human /canine representations the role of the dog has clearly undergone a dramatic shift.²¹

In these changes the dog and notions of what constitutes a dog have become a point of both focus and distance, however the ultimate assertion remains the same: in order for canine art to be considered 'meaningful' it must reject sentimental associations with the animal. As Baker observes, younger artists 'must at all costs avoid the accusation of sentimentality' in order to be taken seriously and that 'almost *any* imagery of pets risks being dismissed' by institutions of art unless the sentimental is expunged from their

²¹ Lucian Freud's work also presents an example of the human/dog relationship and the notion of similarity between dog and owner as explored through portraiture. 'Double Portrait' (1985), for example creates a clear parallel between dog and owner as they both share a restful moment, seemingly exhausted. Yet Freud's most prominent canine depictions involve stripping owner bare through their nudity. In this Freud is clearly interested in concerns of the postmodern, post-human canine that underpins recent artistic depictions. And, although the art critic Robert Hughes stated that 'Perhaps no one has brought more feeling to the scrutiny of dogs since Landseer', he states that Freud has done so by creating 'all objective animal, no phoney "humanism"', exposing further the rejection of Victorian anthropomorphism and sentimentality in the elevation of modern canine depictions. Robert Hughes, 'The Master At Work', *Guardian*, (2004) <<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2004/apr/06/art.saatchigallery>> [Accessed 15 August 2016]

work.²² The most prominent element of Victorian canine representations is seen as something to automatically reject in modern approaches to the dog, with any associations to anthropomorphically-driven sentiment being considered as void of serious artistic interest. This rejection of the artistic merit of depictions of the dog stands in stark contrast to the Victorian era: where the public would expect at least one canine inclusion in most big exhibitions, in which they could even steal the show or receive prestigious prizes and awards.

Figure 4 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 4: Grayson Perry, *The Vanity of Small Differences: The Annunciation of the Virgin Deal*, wool, cotton, acrylic, polyester and silk tapestry, 2012, Victoria Micro, London.

Yet if we expand representation of the modern dog—addressing, as this thesis does, visual culture rather than simply the world of high art—then we are presented with a different picture altogether. Dogs remain a daily part of our modern consumption of images, coming in multiple forms that would have been familiar to the Victorian observer. Whether it be the tiny toy dog under the arms of the latest celebrity, the spike-collared Staffordshire terrier that many associate with danger and class tensions, the pair of pleading eyes looking up from behind the bars of a dog shelter in charitable appeals, or the undeniably sentimental Labrador puppy that tries to sell toiletries to the masses, a vast array of our current canine representations are indebted to the developments of the nineteenth century and still bare many of their social connotations. The cultural potency of such dogs also has not escaped every artist’s lexicon of valuable signifiers, as Grayson

²² Baker, ‘The Refusal of Sentimentality’, pp.62-63. Although it should be noted that some postmodern artists have actively chosen to deny this approach. Take, for example William Wegman’s *Spelling Lesson* (1973-1974), which could easily be read as a partial appeal to the absurdity and comical nature of trying to convey human language to a family pet (as Wegman’s Weimariners famously were). Jeff Koons has also taken a light-hearted approach to how the dog should be represented in postmodernism in both *Puppy* (1992) and *Dog* (1994) which also arguably appeal to a sense of ‘cuteness’ and ‘kitsch’ which borders on the sentimental.

Perry's (1960–) tapestries, *The Vanity of Small Differences* (2012), illustrate. Addressing class mobility and inspired by Hogarth, it is no wonder that Perry acknowledges the narrative importance of the dog and employs them within several of the tapestries.

Figure 5 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 5: Grayson Perry, Details from *The Vanity of Small Differences: The Annunciation of the Virgin Deal*, wool, cotton, acrylic, polyester and silk tapestry, 2012, Victoria Micro, London.

As in the Victorian period, the visual ubiquity of the modern dog is intrinsically linked to canine concerns and broader social conflicts. The association of certain dogs (particularly Staffordshire terriers) with lower-class owners still embeds within the public perception a sense of the animal's readable status and acts as a warning to other people that such individuals may be dangerous—and, indeed, there is evidence to suggest that some owners employ their dogs for just this purpose.²³ Meanwhile Crufts, the world's largest dog show, has encountered controversy over recent years for the apparent deformity of some of the winning show dogs.²⁴ In an ironic twist critics of breeding methods often use images of Victorian breed examples to demonstrate the drastic changes in the breed standard, even though, by all accounts, Victorian breeding valued similar aesthetic criteria.²⁵ At the same time, people still see Britain as a nation of animal lovers, yet the RSPCA has recently published a report revealing that 57% of the abuse cases it attending to in 2015 were dog-related.²⁶ Given these current concerns it is perhaps as

²³ Lauren Potts, 'Staffordshire bull terriers: A question of class?', *BBC News*, (2015), <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-30902078>> [Accessed 31/01/16]

²⁴ Samuel Osbourne, 'Crufts accused of cruelty after German Shepherd with sloped back wins best in breed', *Independent*, (2016), <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/crufts-accused-of-cruelty-after-german-shepherd-with-sloped-back-wins-best-in-breed-a6930546.html>> [Accessed 31/01/16]

²⁵ Jemima Harrison, 'How dog breeds have changed', *BBC News*, (2008), <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7569592.stm>> [Accessed 31/01/16]

²⁶ 'Dogs are the most persecuted pet, our new figures reveal', *RSPCA*, (2016), <http://www.rspca.org.uk/utilities/aboutus/news/details/-/articleName/2016_03_23_News_cruelty_stats> [Accessed 31 January 2016]

pertinent a time as ever to acknowledge the historical and social potency of the visual canine.

Still, changes in taste, whether encouraged or ignored by postmodernism in theory and art practice, offer one explanation for the lack of academic attention afforded to Victorian canine representations within recent years. Seen through a methodology that views a sentimental approach to animals as decidedly kitsch and woefully out of fashion it is easy to trivialize the accomplishments of Victorian painters. But the ‘imperative’ of the postmodern writer to avoid the sentimental and moral is not the imperative of art historians as a whole, neither is it wholly in keeping with the postmodern practice of artists such as Jeff Koons (1955–) in indulging the ‘kitsch’ as part of their practice. By considering the dog within the methodology of social art history it becomes apparent that the Victorians valued the sentimental and moral appeal of the dog, and that such features played a large part in its artistic and social constructions. Consequently to omit feeling from Victorian representations of the dog does them a grave injustice.

The hesitancy of art history to examine in depth the dog may also be attributed to our familiarity with the species as a whole. The ubiquity of the dog as beloved family pet, experienced by Victorians as a fairly new phenomenon, is something that we now assume as part of our daily lives. When the dog’s many meanings have reached the point of trope then it can perhaps be difficult to imagine a time when such representations were still undergoing a formative shift in their social and cultural meaning. Outside of art history sentimentality still reigns supreme in many of our canine representations too. While there have been no iconic animal painters in the same vein of Landseer in recent years, the dog’s visual role has arguably shifted to one that is more culturally dispersed, particularly through media consumption and the internet. Every time we view the Andrex puppy (a beloved British icon) on TV it is an appeal to sentiment which draws us in, many animated movies from film studios such as Pixar give their animal sidekick canine mannerisms to

appeal to audiences, and the internet has seen dogs become memes due to our affection and attachment towards the animal.²⁷ Each of these examples reflects a visual appeal towards sentimentality, conveyed through the dog and revealing of our own social preferences; operating much in the way that Victorian canine representations did but increasingly removed from conventional gallery spaces. Still with any body of evidence there should be a strong sense of critical examination and questions about the significance of canine sources are still being asked to this day. How should we interpret canine content?

Animal studies began in parody, with a spoof article in the *Journal of Social History* by Charles Phineas. Titled ‘Household Pets and Urban Alienation’, Phineas’s article read as a call to arms for academics to study the history of pets with more rigour, lest pets rise up against humanity. Phineas’s article was clearly lampooning the actions of social historians, and specifically those that followed Marxist methodologies. When justifying his faux study of pets his views on the topic’s frivolity come across with perfect clarity:

It seems brash to suggest that pets become the next “fad” subject in social history, but, after running through various ethnic groups (and now women), historians need a new toy. There are other promising possibilities. Homosexuals deserve a history, but a movement in this direction has not materialized ... Left-handers, another large group long subject to tense social discrimination, merit attention, but again their collective consciousness has lagged. So why not pets? Here, clearly, would be the ultimate in the history of the inarticulate.²⁸

²⁷ For a particularly interesting exploration of the manner in which canine memes operate and the extent to which they interact with the meme’s ability to provide an ‘index of the ways in which ideas, texts and image are adopted, adapted and shared through social media networks’ please see Victoria Esteves and Graham Meikle, “LOOK @ THIS FUKKEN DOGE”: Internet memes and remix cultures’, in Chris Atton [ed.], *The Routledge Companion to Alternative and Community Media* (Aldershot: Routledge, 2015) pp. 561-570.

²⁸ Phineas, ‘Household Pets’, p. 339.

Phineas makes his best case against studying animals in history by providing what he perceived to be an absurdist romp through all the issues that might appeal to the aspiring social historian. However, in so doing, he perhaps offered the strongest case at the time as to why animals were worthy of academic recognition. In between comments about the pets developing ‘a growing consciousness that could easily be turned against their putative masters’²⁹ and the ‘barely-veiled contempt’ that dogs had for us ‘beginning with resistance to housebreaking’³⁰ Phineas actually touched upon multiple points of significance.

For example, Phineas’ article managed to address issues of class, sexism, and social ranking; all legitimate areas of examination. Noting the rise of middle-class pet ownership Phineas observes that ‘the middle-class view of the pet came to prevail’ throughout the period and, subsequently, ‘the history of pets is the history of middle-class standards for pets’.³¹ Phineas also accurately identified working-class pets as ‘a veiled tool for class warfare’; animals set in contrast to the middle-class ideal.³² These are all points which Phineas raised as examples of how common analytical categories of the social historian could be applied to the dog. However, by doing so Phineas actually predicted the popularity of animal studies, and some of the core issues concerning the Victorian dog.

Erica Fudge has also highlighted the unintended accuracy with which Phineas predicted other areas of legitimate study. Although she acknowledged that Phineas’ article was ‘an attack on social history’ she also asserted that:

²⁹ Phineas, ‘Household Pets’, pp. 338-339.

³⁰ Phineas, ‘Household Pets’, p. 343.

³¹ Phineas, ‘Household Pets’, p. 341.

³² Phineas, ‘Household Pets’, p. 340.

... it is also strangely prophetic in its recognition of possible developments within the discipline; the history of homosexuality is currently being debated; and, of course, the history of animals is now emerging.³³

Phineas' work also predicted the difficulty that animal studies would have in escaping the human element of animal histories. 'The history of pets remains too much the history of their masters, revealing more about the owning society than the owned,' he states.³⁴ In Phineas' rhetoric of the subjugated domestic animal this was a negative outcome for animal studies, however to historians the ability of the 'owned' to speak of the 'owning society' through the cultural and social mediations of the dog is invaluable.

Phineas' spoof was an unintentional prompt for some academics. In fact, just a few years after Phineas' article, one of the first serious articles on canine studies by John K. Walton was published. In his article, 'Mad Dogs and Englishmen', Walton acknowledged that his work was 'satirised before I begun' but, regardless, set out to give merit to what Walton termed 'the changing distribution of dog ownership, and the emergence of a new set of attitudes to dogs, in Victorian England'.³⁵ Dogs, Walton argued, rose in popularity during the period as part of a wider increase in pet ownership. Walton's findings are a significant indicator of the measurable amount of registered dogs. In 1867, for example, the amount of dogs recorded was 830,000, however by 1878 this rose to 1,300,000 (with Walton acknowledging that even more would have been unlicensed).³⁶ This, Walton argued, was a measurable difference, with the growth and impact of dog ownership being worthy of academic examination.

³³ Erica Fudge, 'A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals', in *Representing Animals*, ed. by Nigel Rothfels (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), pp. 3-18 (p. 5).

³⁴ Phineas, 'Household Pets', p. 343.

³⁵ John K. Walton, 'Mad Dogs and Englishmen: The Conflict Over Rabies in Late Victorian England', *Journal of Social History*, 13 (1979), 219-239 (p. 219).

³⁶ Walton, 'Mad Dogs', p. 221.

The significance of Walton's work, however, was not simply in this quantitative data but also in the legitimacy he afforded to the social history of dogs. In his article Walton considers the types of people keeping dogs, the commercial impact that dog-keeping had on Victorian society, and the social constructions that began to form around dogs and canine enthusiasts. In these observations Walton addresses the importance of the emerging dog fancy, noting that:

The dog was becoming a status symbol, too, and his rising prestige probably did much to stimulate the expansion in the numbers of less exalted dogs further down the social scale.³⁷

The manner in which the pet fancy and breed categorisations functioned is also an important topic in this thesis, however Walton was one of the first to demonstrate how it could be implemented thematically. Applying the topic to concerns about rabies and the countermeasures taken against it, Walton's article concluded that 'the patterns of conflict [explored] reveal much about the preoccupations of late Victorian society' and that each issue he had uncovered 'had their echoes in other arenas of Victorian conflict'.³⁸

Through Walton's article the dog was legitimized not simply as a topic of individual study but also as a significant tool for uncovering the joint history of humans and canines, as well as its relationship to other Victorian conflicts. Dogs, Walton proposed, provide a microcosm of Victorian society as a whole.³⁹ While Walton's findings were, by his own admission, 'tentative' and his interpretations 'often speculative'.⁴⁰ This was due to the vast scope of the subject rather than a lack of source material. Walton's article was seminal and is often quoted in other publications on the topic. Though his work was limited, this thesis expands upon Walton's own conclusion that:

³⁷ Walton, 'Mad Dogs', p. 223.

³⁸ Walton, 'Mad Dogs', p. 229.

³⁹ Walton, 'Mad Dogs', p. 229.

⁴⁰ Walton, 'Mad Dogs', p. 220.

the study of Victorian attitudes to pets and pet-keeping, and specifically the changing place of the dog in Victorian society, can teach us a great deal about the wider social history of nineteenth-century England.⁴¹

Walton's assertions provided receptive animal historians with the groundwork for a more thorough examination of animal histories. The foundational work, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age*, enthusiastically took up the call of Walton's work (in addition to that of Keith Thomas) to expand upon the cultural impact of animals in nineteenth-century Britain. In a work that studied the general relations between Victorians and non-human animals, Ritvo's research enabled her to uncover the similarities and differences in how different species were perceived.

A desire to assert dominance over nature was one of the key factors which Ritvo attributed to the changing perspectives towards many animals throughout the period. Whether it be through breeding cattle, showing dogs, exercising compassion, or hunting exotic species the Victorians were invested in actively demonstrating their position as rulers of the earth and its creatures rather than victims of its natural forces.⁴² This sense of dominion, Ritvo argued, has its roots in Judaeo-Christian scripture and seventeenth-century ideologies concerning the zoological classification of animal species. By the eighteenth century taxonomic projects gained even more patrons and, by the nineteenth century the area of study was fully established and well accepted. Having classified animals, the Victorians felt that they were in a stronger position to begin utilizing their animal resources from a national and global perspective.

In this endeavour Ritvo proposes that dogs proved to be one of the most appealing animals, both for their malleability and their perceived willingness to serve. 'Even more eager and aware in accepting the bonds of servitude', Ritvo states, 'was the dog, the

⁴¹ Walton, 'Mad Dogs', p. 220.

⁴² Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 14.

favourite species of most naturalists as well as of their popular audience'.⁴³ Dogs, having been by man's side for many thousands of years over many different continents, had developed different features which would appeal to a taxonomist. The proclivity of the dog to be by man's side, coupled with its receptive nature, helped to make it the ideal animal for early nineteenth-century taxonomy.

This, Ritvo, suggests, is the root of the Victorian's interest in the dog, but the dog was not a purely scientific curiosity. Of course there were hunting dogs and mongrels, but the Victorian period also saw the dog of the show ring emerge, a topic that Ritvo eagerly explored. It is this unique niche which the Victorian dog came to fill that informs many of the canine developments of the period. On this Ritvo states that:

The British had owned dogs from the beginning of recorded history, but the relation of most Victorian fanciers to their animals, kept purely for companionship and amusement, was rather new, especially outside the highest social ranks.⁴⁴

Show dogs embodied the canine trends of the period and discourses related to the pet fancy were what shaped public opinions of the canine race. The emerging themes, Ritvo argues, were those of class and the display of good breeding. Pet dogs were not kept simply for affection, after all, but also for the prestige they could bestow upon their owners when ranked and displayed. Looking at the cost of dogs and dog-related items, Ritvo concludes that 'such carefully chronicled expenditure referred ultimately to the status of the owner rather than that of the dog' and that 'despite its genuinely sentimental roots, much middle-class pet keeping was shadowed by similar motivations'.⁴⁵

This categorisation of human status through canine display and possession is crucial to the understanding of the dog's role and subsequently how it was seen and represented.

⁴³ Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 20.

⁴⁴ Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 85.

⁴⁵ Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 87.

Ritvo concludes that ‘Like people ... dogs occupied the full range of social ranks’⁴⁶ and that:

If keeping a well-bred dog metonymically allied its owner with the upper ranges of society, then the elaborate structure of pedigree registration and show judging metaphorically equated owner with elite pet.⁴⁷

Such metonymical relations created a system by which humans could be viewed through their dogs and dogs could be viewed as near-human. After all, if dogs were able to elevate their owner through their own breeding and personal traits then some of those traits must have been considered at least partially human.

This line of enquiry was further taken up by Jonathan Burt in ‘The Effect of Pets in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century’. Presented in the catalogue of a canine sculpture exhibition, Burt’s essay also marks the first significant effort of academics to include artistic depictions in the social history of the dog. Burt’s article was part of a wider appeal for academics to look at the dog in art and sculpture, in *Hounds in Leash: The Dog in 18th and 19th Century Sculpture*, which argued:

The dog—animate, familiar, both generic and specific—is an excellent case study. Its more general meaning in our life—as an historic and as a contemporary signifier—is fixed in a specific way when rendered into sculpture.⁴⁸

This statement could be said about visual depictions as a whole, although the supposed ‘fixed’ status of the dog is worth contesting and will be challenged by this thesis.

In a very telling disclosure, the introduction of *Hounds in Leash* declares its rationale as reflecting ‘our admiration for an animal that is social, co-operative, faithful, dependable

⁴⁶ Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 91.

⁴⁷ Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 93.

⁴⁸ Penelope Curtis, ‘Preface’, in *Hounds in Leash: The Dog in 18th and 19th Century Sculpture*, ed. by Jonathan Wood and Stephen Feeke (Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 2000), p. 4.

and dependent—in fact almost human’.⁴⁹ This belief in the dog as ‘almost human’ formed the focus of Burt’s chapter.

Approaching the pet-keeping habits that developed in the period, Burt proposes that the Victorians helped construct an anthropomorphic identity for dogs which could be applied to greater social issues. For Burt, these identities came with a certain amount of anxiety. This is understandable; the Victorians were, most likely, the first group of British people to place such sentiments on dogs en masse. However, it is because of the prevalence of the dog and the intimacy that people developed towards their pets that such constructions were also ultimately unavoidable. Consequently the humanizing of pet animals is something Burt argued had pros and cons, stating that:

One possible source for ... anxiety, or discomfort [when looking at pets in Victorian Britain], is the ambivalent place that pets occupy in domestic life. They cross too many category boundaries as quasi-human, quasi-family members. They are not quite one thing or another ... However, on balance this ambiguity has done nothing but good for the status of the pet and its polymorphous position is precisely what satisfied pet keepers.⁵⁰

While some Victorians may have paid what was perceived by society as uncomfortably cloying attention to their dogs, due to their semi-human identity, the Victorians simultaneously endorsed the dog’s mutability and its social applications. Dogs became capable of representing many things in the Victorian period and were able to address many wider social issues. When asking himself, in relation to visual culture, ‘what is it that animals *say* to humans that humans do not or cannot say?’ Burt asserts that:

⁴⁹ Stephen Feeke, ‘An Introduction to the Exhibition’, in *Hounds in Leash: The Dog in 18th and 19th Century Sculpture*, ed. by Jonathan Wood and Stephen Feeke (Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 2000), pp. 5-11 (p.5).

⁵⁰ Burt, ‘The Effect of Pets in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries’, in *Hounds in Leash: The Dog in 18th and 19th Century Sculpture*, ed. by Jonathan Wood and Stephen Feeke (Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 2000), p.55.

the impact of animals on both sensibilities and practices in the nineteenth century had significant implications for an understanding of cultural and social life. The animal was present at all sorts of crucial points of change and development, both social and scientific, and had a significant impact on that change ... In this respect the animal fulfilled a role that was altogether more archaic: it remained a talisman. In the true spirit of a talisman it was, and still is, magically transformative.⁵¹

Burt concludes that the dog's importance for scholars was due to its ubiquity from the Victorian period onwards. Its existence within society, Burt proposes, was often carefully contrasted and frequently contested, providing a unique form of social commentary. Dogs were often the subjects of debate and, as Burt observes, 'pets remained a disputed expression of social categorisation in the nineteenth century and animals in general were more often the site of conflict than of agreement'.⁵² From this we can ascertain that dogs as a social and cultural object, were rarely neutral figures in the Victorian imagination and they were often employed to engage with various social issues. Some of these issues would be framed within canine fields of interest—pet shows, dog thieves, the rabies question—but most canine discussions were indicative of greater social discourses.

The dog's mutability assisted this discursive role. Dogs could be tied to specific issues or speak of broader social values. Dogs could mean different things to different people. While certain representations of the dog acted as recognisable icons and common motifs the meaning prescribed to them could vary drastically depending on the personal affiliations of the viewer. This created images of the dog that were widely recognisable yet never truly stable in their meaning, giving them a strong sense of social potency. This is not unique to the dog but it does prompt academics to give canine representations more consideration due to their complexities. Burt himself states that dogs typically became

⁵¹ Burt, 'The Effect of Pets', p.60.

⁵² Burt, 'The Effect of Pets', p.58.

linked to issues such as class, purity and nationhood and that ‘as the dog became increasingly locked into particular forms of social symbolism...its oscillation between human and non-human qualities was in turn intensified.’⁵³ The stronger the social and visual link the greater the link between the dog and larger social issues. This makes the dog’s identity and subsequent associations worthy of academic identification and exploration. For, as Burt suggests, their existence—simultaneously at the fringe and the centre of important social movements—often allowed their representations to convey things that may not have been articulated as coherently (or in quite the same way) without the canine intermediary.

Neil Pemberton and Michael Worboys expertly demonstrate the potency of the dog as a mediator of social issues in their study of the rabid dog. Rabies is a topic that both Walton and Ritvo touched upon but Pemberton and Worboys’s monograph, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen: Rabies in Britain, 1830–2000*, demonstrates the rich material that academics can uncover from explorations into canine culture. Pemberton and Worboys approach the rabid dog in terms of the relationship between human and veterinary medicine, interactions between professional and popular understandings of the disease, the role of the state in controlling disease, and (most importantly for this thesis) the changing place of the dog and dog ownership in British society.⁵⁴ Like Burt, their work demonstrates the representational potential of the dog by exposing just how much the dog permeated Victorian society.

Rabies concerned not only veterinarians, Pemberton and Worboys show, but also:

the police who had to control dogs on the street, social reformers who saw the disease as a metaphor for the cultures of the poor, animal welfare activists who were certain it was caused by cruelty, dog fanciers and owners who saw

⁵³ Burt, ‘The Effect of Pets’, p.55.

⁵⁴ Neil Pemberton and Michael Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen: Rabies in Britain, 1830-2000* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 4.

rabid dogs as a proxy for actual or potential social disorder, and, of course, the public who knew, it seems, a ‘mad dog’, when they saw one, and almost certainly knew someone who had an infallible remedy.⁵⁵

Consequently, the rabid dog can be seen as an effective intermediary for many other social issues, beyond those obviously concerning dogs.

What is most interesting about Pemberton and Worboys’s study, though, is that it reveals the sheer diversity of the views and debates represented through the dog. In what is, essentially, a single topic of concern—the rabid dog—Victorian society was able to project and navigate a myriad of social and cultural issues because the way society mediated it as an icon was, itself, diverse. As Burt first observed, while the dog was representative of many issues throughout the period, the dog’s position as social indicator and the issues themselves were often a point of debate. As such, the dog was a fluid entity in the Victorian period, charged with a social potency that academics had not grasped before.

Although Pemberton and Worboys were restrained in their visual engagement with the rabid dog their comments on the participants in the rabies debate inadvertently highlights the significance of the visual dog as it existed in the period: as Pemberton and Worboys note, the public ‘knew, it seems, a ‘mad dog’, when they saw one’.⁵⁶

Pemberton and Worboys touch upon this in varying ways: the mongrel dog that could send people running once they glimpsed it; the visual cues that were ascribed to rabid dogs (and contested as heat exhaustion or distemper); the horror of seeing a ‘mad dog’ beaten to death; and the politically-charged symbolism of a muzzled dog. However, the contribution of visual culture and its participation in such issues is not the focus for

⁵⁵ Pemberton and Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, p. 5.

⁵⁶ Pemberton and Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, p. 5.

Pemberton and Worboys, allowing room for other academics to take up the topic of the rabid dog as it was visualized.

Pemberton and Worboys's work can also be seen as indicative of a shift in the academic approach to canine histories. Having been thoroughly explored, the question of *why* dogs in Victorian Britain are worth studying is no longer the central debate. Instead the topic of *how* the dog was important has become the current concern. As the dog of Victorian Britain is firmly established as an important figure, academics are now able to approach the topic with more focus on specific themes or cultural concerns. And, as Pemberton and Worboys's book demonstrated, focusing on a specific aspect of the dog offers a unique vantage point from which to examine specific cultural phenomenon and wider social issues simultaneously.

The prevalence and success of this approach can be seen in the work of Ivan Kreilkamp, Grace Moore, and Teresa Mangum in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*. This focused on what it considered to be “dreams” of animals; that is, they represent attempts to imaginatively appropriate the realm of the “animal” for widely divergent aesthetic and political ends⁵⁷. Again, in this research we see the emphasis on the identity of animals and the extent to which such representations were socially charged and contested. Kreilkamp and Moore's attitudes to the dog signify an attempt to turn the academic interest in dogs towards literary studies. They are significant for their interdisciplinary approach and their attempts to emphasise the importance of cultural forms to the social history of the dog.

Moore's work explores the extent to which human and dog were surrogates for each other in contemporary literature. Studying *Oliver Twist*, Moore highlights the

⁵⁷ Deborah Denenhols and Martin A. Danahay, 'Introduction', in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. by Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 1-12 (p. 5).

metonymical relations between Sikes, Bull's Eye and Nancy. Moore situates this in the period's wider anthropomorphism, through which the dog operates as a representative of complex human interactions. As Moore puts it, 'united in their hopeless loyalty to Sikes, Bull's-eye and Nancy form two corners of a triangular relationship, in which the dog frequently mediates between the two humans'.⁵⁸

The convergence between human and dog in Moore's argument is certainly a pertinent point to consider when studying the cultural history of the dog. While the figure of the dog often spoke of wider social concerns it could also, just as easily, represent the complex emotions of a single human, or of humanity as a whole. However, the animality of dogs often sat uncomfortably with this, and was often a topic that Victorians explored in relation to their own animality and potential mortality. Kreilkamp's essay considers such anxieties. Kreilkamp's area of interest is representations of dogs in Charles Dickens' (1812–70) *Great Expectations* (1861). His work serves to highlight the variability of language concerning dogs in the Victorian period and the dog's associated connotations. To exist in a 'dog like' state, as Magwitch did, is to evoke sympathy but also to live a life of degeneration and be exposed to social humiliation. This is the case in Dickens' work, despite the typical tropes of fidelity and grace attributed to dogs.⁵⁹ To 'die like a dog', as Pip is threatened with, is to lose all humanity and to be disregarded. Again, this highlights the paradoxical existence that dogs sometimes occupied as they could be 'granted the right to be "one", to possess a name and character and history like any other whole subject' but could also have that position taken from them in an instant and be 'transformed into grease or vapor'.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Grace Moore, 'Bestly Criminals and Criminal Beasts: Stray Women and Stray Dogs in *Oliver Twist*', in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. by Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 201-214 (p. 201).

⁵⁹ Ivan Kreilkamp, 'Dying Like a Dog in *Great Expectations*', in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. by Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 81-94 (p. 88).

⁶⁰ Kreilkamp, 'Dying Like a Dog', p. 92.

The dog's permanence, or lack thereof, was certainly a concern for Victorians, and Victorians were sentimental about the death of their pets. As such, in contrast to Kreilkamp's depictions of dogs forgotten and thrown to the abyss, Teresa Mangum tells us of the extent to which dogs were memorialized and celebrated throughout the period. In cityscapes full of animal activity Mangum explores the 'emotional call and response'⁶¹ of domestic animals, specifically in relation to their demise.

The desire of some Victorians to mourn their dogs is something that Mangum considers to be compensatory. The metonymical value of the dog is studied in her essay as an expression of the human desire to be memorialized too: to rebel against the traditional connotations of 'dying like a dog' and to give both dogs and humans a sense of memorialisation after death. By analysing the mourning rituals of bereaved pet owners Mangum also shows that Victorian pet owners were trying to justify their own feelings of loss over what others might see as a piece of property. In keeping with this, Mangum exposes the uncomfortable boundaries that dogs often occupied in the Victorian imagination: asking 'How could one *own* a being and yet refer to it in equal phrases such as "man's best friend"?'⁶² Within the context of mourning culture, Victorians reconciled these emotions by creating a justification in which the dog was worth mourning because it would mourn the loss of its owner. In Mangum's own words 'in order to accept grief as a legitimate response to an animal's death, Victorians first needed to believe that animals themselves were capable of love'.⁶³

⁶¹ Teresa Mangum, 'Animal Angst: Victorians Memorialize their Pets', in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. by Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 15-34 (p. 16).

⁶² Mangum, 'Animal Angst', p. 18.

⁶³ Mangum, 'Animal Angst', p. 18.

Mangum's work exposes two significant aspects of Victorian pet ownership of value to this thesis. The first is that visual culture enabled the Victorians to achieve their desired social and culture goals. By Mangum's own estimations:

the nearly obsessive depictions of dogs overwhelmed by grief for their lost masters and mistresses or faithfully attached to places associated with the dead may be the most powerful, if also the most oblique, animal memorial projects of them all.⁶⁴

While Mangum notes some of the most prominent examples a deeper examination of the dog's visual role as mourner is undertaken in Chapter Two of this thesis. The second aspect of note within Mangum's work is the recognition of the dog's emotional impact throughout the period. While we may not be able to record with complete accuracy the lived experiences of dog and owner in the Victorian period we are able to ascertain the impact that they had on their owners, and this impact was often great. By Mangum's own estimations, the attachment of Victorians to their dogs was so powerful that they created a cultural phenomenon of canine mourning and mourning canines which still prevails.⁶⁵ Therefore the sentimental appeal of the dog and the human attachment to canines will be considered within this thesis as an important aspect of Victorian canine representations.

The 'emotional capital' of the dog also informed the work of Philip Howell's 'Flush and the Banditti: Dog Stealing in Victorian London'. Looking at examples of dog theft within the metropolis Howell considers that this crime was so anxiety-inducing primarily because 'pet-stealing encompassed and linked the worlds of affection and commerce.

⁶⁴ Mangum, 'Animal Angst', p. 19.

⁶⁵ Such canine constructions are also perfectly in keeping with more general mourning practices from the period. Pat Jalland has also addressed this in a more general survey of Britain's attitudes towards death—considering it to be indicative of the 'excessive pathos' of late nineteenth century mourning imagery. Jalland highlights Landseer's *The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner* in particular which 'far from being considered excessively maudlin' was given 'gushing praise'. Pat Jalland, 'Victorian Death and its Decline: 1850-1918', in *Death in England: An Illustrated History*, ed. by Peter C. Jupp and Claire Gittings (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp.230-255, p.211.

This was, quite literally, trading in affection'.⁶⁶ Howell makes a strong argument for both the frequency of dog theft and the reaction to it being closely tied to the emotional attachment the Victorians had to their dogs. The resulting feelings of anxiety, Howell proposes, are subsequently rooted in attachment: the position of dog as both property and priceless; the negotiation of feelings and loss; and, of course, the metonymical boundaries that the dog of the home, and its theft, embodied.

Within the realms of sentiment and attachment, anthropomorphism was even more frequent. As Mangum proposed, domestic dogs were expected to love their owners just like their owners loved them. However, as Burt observes and Howell exposes, they were also tied to greater issues of social and cultural boundaries. By exploring the emotional investment in dog's academics can subsequently gain even more insights into the anthropomorphic roles that they fulfilled and their impact on Victorian society. Howell's monograph demonstrates this. In perhaps the most extensive study of canine cultural geographies to date, Howell's book, *At Home and Astray*, explores the formation of human/canine relations in the Victorian period.

Howell's book is mostly concerned with the conceptual and literal geographical boundaries that the dog occupied and what they can tell us about Victorian society and the legacy that they left behind. Much like other works in this literature review, Howell agrees that 'while the Victorians may plausibly have invented the modern dog, the struggle over the dog's *place* was never decisively settled in these years'.⁶⁷ This geographical positioning (contested or otherwise) of the dog is what comprises most of Howell's research and, as he sees it, this exists at the centre of the 'dog question'. It is

⁶⁶ Philip Howell, 'Flush and the *Banditti*: Dog-Stealing in Victorian London', in *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations*, ed. by Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 35-55 p. 38.

⁶⁷ Philip Howell, *At Home and Astray: The Domestic Dog in Victorian Britain* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2015), p. 2.

something that Howell explores in depth when looking at dogs through their relationship with Charles Dickens in the public imagination, through dog theft, Battersea Dogs Home, Darwinism, animal memorialization, rabies and dog-walking.

These topics would be familiar to the scholar of canine histories. However, Howell's work shines new light on the subjects—demonstrating how there are still many ways that the dog in the Victorian period can be approached by the academic. The study of the dog as historical figure in human cultures has, as Howell states, 'reached a maturity and acceptance that could barely be imagined a few decades ago'.⁶⁸ No longer the subject of parody, the social and cultural potency of the dog is now substantiated through a large body of multidisciplinary research and cultural trends and phenomena are beginning to emerge. Yet, as Howell's study shows, there are still important questions to answer and fresh perspectives to be taken when considering the dog. As such, while this thesis is greatly indebted to the research Howell has undertaken, and will explore some of the same areas of research, the reading that this thesis takes will be distinctly different.

While Howell's book is rooted in historical geography and, as such, is strongly concerned with defining the geographical spaces that the dog occupied. Still, in doing this, Howell employs only sixteen images in the text. In fact many of the works of literature above deploy dogs in images generally as illustration and not a central point for discussion. This thesis, approached from the discipline of art history, necessarily places the dog in art in the foreground with recognition to the validity of visual culture in the discipline.⁶⁹ It argues that art, and visual culture were agents in the shift in canine

⁶⁸ Howell, *At Home and Astray*, p. 3.

⁶⁹ In doing so this thesis does appeal somewhat to radical notions of visual culture—which rejects the inherent superiority of any given visual form in creating or controlling social change and, instead, positions it as part of a broader visual dialogue occurring within temporal, geographical, and social boundaries—but only in agreement of this rejection. The notion that visual culture should subsume or in some way make art history obsolete is not accepted. This thesis speaks specifically of artworks as considered by artist, viewer, and institute with hopes of providing the necessary framework to enrich such artworks. This is presented as *in dialogue* with the ways in which they were constructed, read, and disseminated instead of being subsumed by such discussions or broader visual constructions. Art's production and impact is tied to a

representations rather than simply being indicative of it. I endorse Burt's assertion that the intersectionality of the dog in such visual representations provides art and visual culture historians with a unique means of exploring Victorian society.

This approach can arguably yield just as rich an understanding of the Victorian dog's impact and place as can animal histories, literary studies or cultural geographies. But Victorian art history is multidisciplinary too, even more so when addressing visual culture.⁷⁰ Dogs as they were visualised did not exist outside of other cultural and social concerns and, as such, the work of other disciplines is fundamental to the research of this thesis. Howell's work on the domestic dog, for example, is crucial to the framing of this thesis.

Previous scholarship has focused on the middle-class dog within the Victorian period, from Walton's work onwards. But, while previous academics have acknowledged the importance of the middle-class dog, and have typically chosen to focus on it in some way, it is Howell's research which reinforces the importance of such choices. Howell's research divides and defines the two main types of dog in the Victorian period as the domestic dog and the stray—hence the title of his book. The domestic dog, within Howell's geographical framework, was the dog increasingly included in Victorian domestic spaces.⁷¹ However, with this inclusion came the exclusion of the dog's former place on the streets. Stray dogs were viewed in relation to their human counterparts on the streets and the respectable dog in the urban environment was primarily contrasted against them in terms of domestic spatiality.

broader visual landscape. The *intersection* of art and this landscape which is where this thesis can be situated and where its key contributions lie. For more see Jonathan Harris, *Art History: The Key Concepts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp.333–334.

⁷⁰ For more on this (and debates on visual culture) see Deborah Cherry, 'Art History Visual Culture', *Art History*, 27 (2004), 479–493.

⁷¹ Howell, *At Home and Astray*, p. 3.

These geographies are what inform Howell's work and they are also what informs this thesis. Howell's reasoning for choosing the domestic dog as a topic is one worth quoting in full, as it addresses the question of canine inclusion (and exclusion):

The most important of the *placing* processes discussed in this book is the attempt to domesticate, to provide a home for, the Victorian dog. There are other stories about the animal to be told—as hunting companions, for instance, as working dogs, as entertainers, and so on—but I want to concentrate on the dog's role as a companion animal, installed so apparently comfortably in the family home. The central premise of this study is that it was only in the nineteenth century that the dog began to be “domesticated” in this modern sense, and only ever incompletely, provisionally, or perhaps better still, proleptically.⁷²

Whereas Howell's work is concerned with the formation of the domesticated dog the domesticated dog is of interest to this thesis not simply because of its domestication but because it *became domestic*—embodying the virtues of the middle-class home through its placing in the Victorian household.⁷³ As such, this thesis accepts and develops Howell's theory that the domestic dog was the primary model of canine respectability in the Victorian period and the standard against which most other dogs were measured and contested.

Although there have been few explorations of the Victorian visual dog in art history several are worthy of examination. The work of William Secord is indispensable for this thesis, in its focus on the history of dog painting in Britain, America and Europe. Secord was the first director of the American Museum of the Dog and established a gallery that specializes in nineteenth century dog paintings. As a result of this background,

⁷² Howell, *At Home and Astray*, p. 11.

⁷³ Specifically this thesis addresses the romanticized domesticity and the represented ideal as presented in works such as Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) —particularly as explored on p.219—and John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (London: Yale University Press, 2007)—particularly in chapter two.

Secord has produced the most comprehensive publications on canine paintings to date. Most notable for this thesis are *Dog Painting, 1840-1940: A Social History of the Dog in Art*, *A Breed Apart: The Art Collections of the American Kennel Club*, *Dog Painting: A History of the Dog in Art* and his contribution to *The Dog in Art from the Renaissance to the Present*.

These books are suitably filled with examples of dog paintings and antiquities from the nineteenth century and have been invaluable when trying to gain an appreciation of the scope of the dog as a topic for artistic examination. Secord's preference towards macrohistory and the examination of multiple nations has also provided this thesis with an international understanding of the dog's visual development, however such explorations do not play a large part in this thesis. In works such as *A Breed Apart* Secord also provides detailed artist biographies, cataloguing the works of multiple artists and establishing their oeuvre. Secord's books demonstrate an unrivalled understanding into the connoisseurship and iconography of the Victorian dog. Secord himself is an expert when it comes to nineteenth-century canine artworks and his expertise shines through within his work. However, Secord's perspective is largely concerned with high art and the tracing of pure bred representations. While this is helpful for cataloguing the Victorian dog (an important endeavour in its own right) it is quite different from the academic inquiry into the social and cultural formation of the dog that this thesis aims to provide. As such his books rarely give a comprehensive view of Victorian caninicity as it would have been represented at the time.

Secord does claim, in many cases, to employ social history, and his publications often touch upon the history of the dog, as part of his survey of various breed, artists, and changed in painterly techniques. Many of the facts needed for an understanding of dogs in society are present, but they are typically taken at face value. Secord provides us with the dog's history but they are often *assumed* histories not *explored* histories; information

lacking in interpretation. As such, Secord's publications are a valuable source for anyone interested in the history of canine art and artists, but not necessarily in the interpretation of them.

Martin A. Danahay's essay in *Victorian Animal Dreams*, 'Nature Red in Hoof and Paw: Domestic Animals and Violence in Victorian Art', is a much more pertinent example of how art history can contribute to the fields of both animal and Victorian studies. Also interested in negotiations of space, Danahay addresses the problematic reality that domestic animals could be violent and seeks to explore how this was within the arts—a useful approach to the topic.

Danahay looks first to the social and cultural climate impact animals regarding his chosen theme of violence before focusing on two artistic case studies—*The Awakening Conscience* (1853) by William Holman Hunt (1827–1910) and *Work* (1852–1865) by Ford Madox Brown (1821–93)—and interprets the works within this framework. Danahay then reads the paintings and situates the subjects, animals and objects depicted in them within their social setting to reveal their implications, which, he argues, are about 'deep-seated anxieties about the relationship between classes, gender and violence in the Victorian period'.⁷⁴ In considering paintings as intrinsically linked to their social and cultural landscape, rather than simply demonstrating it, Danahay reveals how representations of animals throughout the period were often *participants* in greater social discourses rather than reactions to them. This is not only important in terms of giving painters more agency, and dogs more potency but also in revealing the readability of canine representations among the Victorian public. The inclusion of a dog on the canvas would impart no meaning, after all, if no one understood the animal to be

⁷⁴ Martin A. Danahay, 'Nature Red in Hoof and Paw: Domestic Animals and Violence in Victorian Art', in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. by Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 97-120 (p. 103).

representative of something greater (and may not have been included at all if this were the circumstance).

Although significant for art historians, Danahay's work is still primarily concerned with the cult of the pet rather than the cult (or formation) of the dog. While Danahay's work does spend a reasonable amount of time exploring the dog, it seems to be primarily because of its ubiquity in the period, rather than due to any desire to isolate and examine canine representations alone. Danahay's intention is to look at domestic animals and contrast them with non-domestic ones; as such the article requires a broader scope than examinations of the dog alone. Danahay called for art historians to look at the history of animals in relation to society but, also, to expand upon his research with their own approaches and insights.

Danahay's work also brings to attention something that I have already alluded to in this introduction, and that is the marginal canine. In his article Danahay acknowledges the significance of animals within the canvas, even if they exist on the fringes, outside of conventional consideration. To quote Danahay's account of *The Awakening Conscience* and *Work*, 'In each case an apparently minor subplot enacted by domestic animals comments on and radically reorients the apparent moral of the painting'.⁷⁵ In Danahay's work there is a focus on literary sources and a lack of visual material outside of paintings. However, this thesis will propose that by synthesising various cultural forms, especially art and literature, we can gain even greater insights into the animals that exist in artistic peripheries.

The most substantial treatment of the representation of animals in British art has been undertaken by Diana Donald in *Picturing Animals in Britain: 1780–1850*.⁷⁶ This

⁷⁵ Danahay, 'Nature Red in Hoof and Paw', (p. 109).

⁷⁶ Diana Donald, *Picturing Animals in Britain: 1750-1850* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 127.

ambitious and highly important publication dedicates a chapter to the depiction of dogs through the artwork of Landseer.

Landseer is typically the focus for many academics when looking at Victorian animal painters. He is the only Victorian animal painter with texts dedicated solely to his work and life⁷⁷ and is treated as the chief representative of animal painting within the period due to his pre-eminence in the early nineteenth century art world.⁷⁸ James Hamilton also addressed Landseer in his study of art production and this is often the case when discussing art, print culture and financial success.⁷⁹ As such it is not surprising that Donald also selected Landseer for her canine chapter.

Of most significance to this thesis is Donald's approach. While Danahay presented social context and the art as side-by-side in some regards, Donald combined multiple social and cultural sources from the period into a cohesive whole that conveys an account of Landseer's practices and their importance without demanding a ranking of cultural forms. Donald does not restrict herself to paintings but, instead brings in other forms of visual culture—including sculpture, book publications and even newspaper illustrations—in order to convey her arguments. The reception of Landseer as presented by his peers, contemporary critics and the public are also discussed, merging artistic depictions of the dog with the broader cultural climate of the period. In so doing Donald provides the most balanced approach to observing canine visual culture available. As such, although Donald's approach still only sporadically incorporates other forms of visual culture, it is the research most in keeping with the intended approach of this thesis to the topic of the visual dog in Victorian Britain.

⁷⁷ Richard Ormond, *Sir Edwin Landseer* (London: Tate Publishing, 1981).

⁷⁸ Matthew Craske, 'Landseer, Animals and the Russel-Cotes Collection', in *Art in the Age of Queen Victoria: A Wealth of Depictions*, ed. by Mark Bills (Bournemouth: Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, 2001), pp. 88-103.

⁷⁹ Hamilton, *A Strange Business*, p. 94.

Donald's work is also noteworthy for challenging modern perceptions of Victorian animal paintings, in particular works by Landseer. Observing that Landseer's works have 'lost all respect and serious consideration accorded to them by Victorian intellectuals and critics'⁸⁰ Donald challenges the current estimation of Landseer and his work:

In an age like our own, when anthropomorphic animals are everywhere...it might be expected that Landseer's pictures would enjoy a revival of favour. Instead, they are routinely derided for their falsification of nature. Their offense must lie, not in giving animals human traits, but in representing those traits as real, and in treating them as 'high' art. Properly understood, however, these works are anything but glib; they are complex and imaginative—sites of hidden conflict, which afford some insight into the anxieties of the age.⁸¹

This was true not just of Landseer, but of many canine artists, and is something that this thesis will aspire to address.

While highly valuable in approach and essential for re-examining the importance of animal painting, Donald's interpretation also offers some challenges. Although Donald's chapter starts by asserting that Landseer's dogs 'afford some insight into the anxieties of the age', Donald herself is actually very sceptical of the 'lens' approach to animal representations. In her book's preface Donald makes an explicit reference to this stating that, in other studies, animals have generally been depicted as 'a "lens" ... through which to view 'interhuman structures'.'⁸² This approach is something that Donald wants to move away from, stating that 'There is, then, a great need for studies—a succession of studies—which at least attempt an adjustment of focus' from an approach that considers the histories of human society to one that focuses more on the human/animal relationship and the animal's role within it.

⁸⁰ Diana Donald, *Picturing Animals*, p. 127.

⁸¹ Donald, *Picturing Animals*, p. 127.

⁸² All quotations in this and the following paragraph are from Donald, *Picturing Animals*, p. vi.

However, Donald's criticism of this approach is not altogether dismissive. Rather, Donald wishes to create a form of historical study in which animals take centre stage in historical research 'as they surely have been central in human history'. To this end Donald is not trivializing academics who wish to approach the dog (and other animals) in such a manner but is simply trying to create another way through which academics can mediate the relationship between humans and animals. Ironically, in this ambition Donald herself is not necessarily immune from using animals as a lens either; as her approach includes analysing animals 'for what they truly contain: evidence of human convictions and emotions about other species'. As Donald herself observes, 'anthropocentrism may seem inescapable, since the thoughts and subjective experiences of animals themselves can never be known to us'. In line with her proposed restructuring, Donald's chapter on Landseer's dogs provides an admirable attempt at exploring dogs as they were depicted and perceived within the period. Yet, in so doing, Donald often only touches upon greater Victorian concerns and values, never lingering upon them, as was her intention. By framing her chapter around Landseer Donald's work also omits much of the broader landscape of canine visual culture, instead limiting itself primarily to a single artist.

In contrast to Donald's approach, this study looks at canine visual culture more extensively: Looking at canine visual culture through broader artistic and visual developments, instead of through a single artist; addressing the animal motif instead of attempting to uncover true human/canine relations; and considering the dog as a unique lens through which various social issues were intersected. This doctoral study is the first attempt to examine canine visual culture in depth as a way to approach Victorian art history and Victorian culture and highlight the importance of art in particular to the construction of the Victorian domestic dog and its related social concerns.

Figure 6 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 6: William Powell Frith, *A Private View at the Royal Academy, 1881*, oil on canvas, 1883, The Pope Family Trust.

Through examining the current literature I have identified three main areas of research that have academic merit, which this thesis will subsequently address. These are the lack of art historical research in to the dog, the operation of the dog within a social context, and the identification of common canine representations in high art and visual culture. In addressing these areas of research I will expand upon the findings of the scholars explored in this introduction to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dog as it was employed visually throughout the Victorian period.

The first area of interest is one that Donald identified: namely the lack of rigorous research in regards to animal painting or animals in paintings. Challenging the assumption that animals in paintings are glib, simplistic or simply space fillers in a canvas, this thesis instead aims to resituate animal painters and animal paintings as a significant part of the Victorian art world and a lucrative aspect of the Victorian art market. When telling its readers of the growing collection of artworks in Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery, the *Magazine of Art* not only praised Millais's *Isabella* but also J.C. Dollman's (1851–1934) *Table d'Hôte at a Dogs' Home* (1879) as holding 'a high place' as 'a delightful subject'⁸³ in addition to mentioning the gallery's Landseer holdings in a similar manner.⁸⁴ When the *Art Journal* reflected on the paintings displayed in that year's Royal Academy they asserted that 'It is an animal painter that we must most admire,' as a work by Briton Rivière was considered by them to be 'one of the most winning pictures in the

⁸³ E. Rimbault Dibdin, 'The Liverpool Corporation Collection: The Walker Art Gallery', in *Magazine of Art*, 1889, p. 16

⁸⁴ Dibdin, 'The Liverpool Corporation Collection', p. 14.

exhibition'.⁸⁵ In William Powell Frith's (1819–1909) work *A Private View at the Royal Academy, 1881* (1883) he also chose to prominently feature a canine artwork, continuing to demonstrate the clear horizon of expectation that the exhibition-viewing public had for such artworks. A study of the prominent art and cultural publications, such as *The Art Journal* or *The Athenaeum*, and newspapers (both national and provincial) demonstrates that animal paintings, canine artists, and canine works of art alongside those that we would conventionally consider as gaining higher prestige.⁸⁶

Interest in the dog in art may have been fuelled by personal interest but it eagerly intermingled with notions of national identity and was shaped by the cultural climate of the Victorian art world. As Paula Gillett notes, in comparison to other nations Britain often struggled to carve out its own artistic identity, and this became a particular point of contention in the early-to-mid-nineteenth century. Lacking the grand narrative works that underpinned French artworks or a historical Renaissance comparable to Italy, British artists and critics would often lament the stagnation of the British art world.⁸⁷ However there is no denying that the Victorian period was, as Gillett observes, a 'golden age' for living painters, especially from the mid-century onwards. 'The level of public interest in art that began in the mid-century and continued well into the eighties,' she highlights, 'was unprecedented'.⁸⁸ Notably this came not from the elevation of high art above all others in the gallery but of a diversity of works which centred on moralistic themes. These included portrait paintings, landscapes, domestic scenes, and animal painting. Each of these genres would be hung in prominent shows and galleries, among any other, and

⁸⁵ Mary Cecil Hay, 'The London Royal Academy II', *Art Journal*, 1880, p. 252.

⁸⁶ *The Art Journal* is particularly notable for this. In every discussion of the year's Royal Academy show it would have a segment specifically addressing animal painters which would typically include a canine work. Artistic discussions of animal painters often considered them in relation to other painters too with a sense of collegiality rather than inferiority. In 1879, for example, *The Art Journal* ran an entire three-part segment dedicated to Landseer and Hogarth's interrelated styles whereas animal painters such as Richard Ansdell were readily featured alongside other contemporary painters in the 'British Painters' series. In the Victorian art climate animal painters and canine subjects were not only present, it seems, but expected.

⁸⁷ Paula Gillett, *The Victorian Painter's World* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1990), p. 1.

⁸⁸ Gillett, *The Victorian Painter's World*, p. 12.

would typically be well received if painted well and presented with a readable moral tale. This is reflected in the writings of the *Art Journal* which observed that ‘of the notable peculiarities of the English school of painting is, that...it includes every phase of Art; history, genre, landscape, portraiture, animals, fruit, flowers—all are represented, and all right worthily.’⁸⁹ It is within this diverse artistic landscape that the dog found itself placed and praised.

Gillett aimed to reposition the treatment of Victorian artworks, asserting that the ‘new interest in English art has not yet been reflected in broader works of historical interpretation.’⁹⁰ Her aim is ‘to provide a detailed picture of important aspects of the Victorian art world, drawn from a wide variety of contemporary sources, and to show how this knowledge enriches and deepens our understanding of social history’.⁹¹ Gillett’s aims have direct parallels to that of this thesis, and its desire to revise our current understanding of canine representations and their relationship to the Victorian art world. In contrast to our modern treatment of animal paintings in the rankings of great artworks, canine subjects were frequently discussed and well received by Victorian art critics and had an appeal that is worth being afforded revised attention.

T.J. Clark’s notions on social art history and the role of the artist, the critic, the audience and the public are crucial to my approach. Clark makes a distinction between these social groupings, particularly the audience and the public. The audience, by Clark’s terms, is that which:

can be examined empirically, and should be. The more we know about the audience—about the social classes of Paris, the consumption habits of the bourgeoisie, how many people went to exhibitions—the more we shall

⁸⁹ J. Daffrone, ‘British Artists: Their Style and Character with Engraved Illustrations, No. 1 Richard Ansdell’, *Art Journal*, July 1860, p. 233.

⁹⁰ Gillett, *The Victorian Painter’s World*, p. 11.

⁹¹ Gillett, *The Victorian Painter’s World*, p. 11.

understand the curious transformation in which it is given form, imagined by the critic and by the artist himself.⁹²

By contrast, the public is an unmeasurable entity; a collective consciousness made most clear by the approval and lamentation of critics, in the art world and beyond. By studying these elements Clark hoped to explain ‘the connecting links between artistic form, the available systems of visual representation...other ideologies, social classes, and more general historical structures and processes’.⁹³ By tracing (where possible) the market for paintings and prints, the intentions of the artist, and the words of the critic, this thesis shall demonstrate the extent to which the dog operated socially within the artistic landscape of Victorian Britain, resituating such artists and artworks within the current canon of art history.

Intrinsically tied to this research goal is the next area of interest for this thesis—namely the social potency of the dog and the channels through which dogs acted as sign. As previous literature has demonstrated, the dog was a considerably charged social icon, however the role of imagery in these social attributions has been largely overlooked. This thesis will challenge this oversight by asserting that visual culture had a prominent part to play in the broader cultural and social appropriation of the dog. In this assertion the social prominence of art is assumed and, as such, this thesis adopts the social history of art as its primary methodology. Clark’s remit for this methodology is worth highlighting:

When one writes the social history of art, it is easier to define what methods to avoid than propose a set of methods for systematic use ... So I begin by naming some taboos. I am not interested in the notion of works of art ‘reflecting’ ideologies, social relations or history. Equally, I do not want to talk about history as ‘background’ to the work of art—as something which is

⁹² T. J. Clark, *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982), p. 12.

⁹³ Clark, *Image of the People*, p. 12.

essentially absent from the work of art and its production, but which occasionally puts in an appearance.⁹⁴

Art is not reflective of the society in which it is produced but is, instead, a vital component of a society's cultural production and as such, a prominent tool through which we can understand the attitudes of the period.

This intermingling of art and other cultural forms is something which I particularly want to stress. Studies of the dog in the Victorian period have favoured texts when addressing the dog's social significance. However in the Victorian period the importance and hybridity of text-and-image has been well-documented. Kate Flint has made a strong case for the view that Victorian audiences would read paintings and expected a narrative element to them, which clashed, in some cases, against the desires of critics and this is well-known among other art historians who study the Victorian art world.⁹⁵ Julia Thomas has highlighted the complex relationship between text-and-image in the Victorian period. When addressing illustration and narrative painting for instance (two important genre of this thesis), Thomas asserts that:

Victorian narrative painting and illustration crossed the boundary between text and image. This overlap was even more explicit because words themselves were frequently part of images, whether as writing that accompanied an illustration, the title of a paintings, or texts that appeared in the picture and told its story ... The construction of narratives is not just a textual activity but one that can take place in a visual arena, while the inclusion of writing within the space of an image emphasizes its own graphic nature. Even the interpretation of such pictures depends not solely on perception or reading, but on an interaction between them that throws into question any idea that either process should be seen as self-contained.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Clark, *Image of the People*, p. 9.

⁹⁵ Kate Flint, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 197.

⁹⁶ Julia Thomas, *Pictorial Victorians: The Inscription of Values in Word and Image* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2004), p. 5.

These interactions, in Thomas's estimations, are not clear-cut, with one reflecting the concerns or values of the other. Instead they represent a dialogue between different forms of cultural output and expose the significance that art had to play in instilling, reinforcing and exposing Victorian values and expectations.⁹⁷ Equally this thesis will utilize word and image in order to produce its findings, considering the two in an active dialogue with each other and demonstrating, where necessary, the extent of this dialogue. This is not to devalue the study of the dog in other forms of Victorian culture, neither does it argue that artwork took prominence over text in anyway. Instead I aim simply to bring artwork into the equation as part of the broader dialogue of the place and meaning of the dog in Victorian Britain, explore the debates that took place in these visual arenas, and highlight the representative values inscribed upon them.

The dog is a prime example of art and visual culture acting as 'iconotexts' within society. Landseer's artworks arguably signalled a rise in the interest of canine subjects—acting as exemplars of the domestic nature of the Queen and reviving old parables with an increased anthropomorphic presence. While Landseer was producing his artworks in the first half of the nineteenth century and during the beginning of Victoria's reign the dog was also undergoing a shift of purpose. Legislature reduced the capacity for the dog to be used as a labouring animal in cities, whereas the mutability of the dog's physical form saw a rising interest in breeding for show. But while Landseer was a prominent figure in the world of Victorian animal painting his contributions to the genre were not the only reason for its increasing public popularity. Instead, this came along at the same time as the foundation of the canine fancy and the rising interest in breed standards. With the dog conceptualized for show, canine imagery became a large part of what constituted a well-bred dog and, therefore, became much more of a concern for eager participants. This increase in breed standards, during the middle of the nineteenth century, coincided

⁹⁷ Thomas, *Pictorial Victorians*, p. 8.

with developments in the print market and thus dogs became much more of a public visual icon rather than a high artistic figure.

Dogs were visualized most prominently in illustrated newspapers, periodicals, literature, and guidebooks. Paintings were created, but also prints from these paintings, with a market for them to decorate many middle class walls. Topics concerning the dog were represented in the *Illustrated London News*, and *Punch* regularly mocked and vexed the public with its candid canine imagery. In these representations word and image existed side-by-side to give each other meaning; neither being wholly representative of the other and both conveying their own version of events, to be consumed by those who read them. Through such representations the active dialogue between cultural forms is not only apparent but so, too, is the audience. While papers, periodicals and prints could be purchased by some other classes, the intended audience is clearly the middle classes; as such representations often cater to or criticise their proclivities. It is not until the latter half of the century that dogs reappear frequently on the canvas and new prints find their audience, but these artworks are clearly informed by the ubiquity of the dog in the public imagination, as facilitated by popular visual culture. Though unintentionally, through their presence and mannerisms dogs act to reinforce the expectations of their audience, giving representations of them new or further meaning. Artists (operating in a variety of genres) were keen to harness the public's understanding of what a dog might mean and to use it to their benefit. Through this dogs become a significant visual entity throughout the Victorian period; one in which text and image, the gallery and the home, and high art and visual culture came together in a cultural and social exchange of meaning.

It is this status of the dog as a mutable but readable icon which constitutes the final research aim of my thesis; namely to identify key representations of the dog in the Victorian period and to explore how they operated within the period. Previous literature on the dog has revealed some common representations of the dog which acted as focal

points for Victorian values to be asserted and contested and exploring the dog through these representations has proven to be a successful method of academic examination. Consequently this thesis will also be taking a thematic approach to the dog—examining common visual motifs and associated values. In this I feel the need to stress, as Thomas does, that:

It is not so much that these genres were distinctly Victorian, but that the Victorians attempted to create a distinct identity for them, to differentiate them from their appearance in other times and cultures.⁹⁸

While many of the motifs that I explore in my thesis did not originate in the Victorian period it is the identity that the Victorians imposed upon these representations which is of significance. Considering the previous literature, and the bourgeois nature of art and image production I propose that the motifs explored in this thesis are tied together by two key Victorian values: respectability and domesticity. These two values run intrinsically through the thesis and function as the central themes of many of the images that I will address. The mediation of these values and the presence of the dog converged most prominently in urban environments (as did many of the most prominent exhibition spaces attended by the public). Because of this the majority of my research will address these themes with a particular focus on urban living environments, with the epitome of British urbanisation and its discourses, London, acting as a focal point.

Archives are a crucial part of any research project, but the conventional lines of what defines ‘the archive’ has recently been a point of debate among archivists. Technological changes are chief among current reconsiderations of what constitutes an archive. In an age where information is readily available at the click of a mouse, digitisation is not only possible but also expected of many record offices. As Louise Craven observes, ‘The notion that archives are about identity, heritage and culture is

⁹⁸ Thomas, *Pictorial Victorians*, p. 3.

certainly a prominent one,' and is still central to many archives, conventional or otherwise, but beyond this the traditional boundaries of the archive are being constantly challenged in new literature.⁹⁹

The expanding availability of data, digitised by various repositories, has been of particular use to locating and examining sources that may have otherwise been inaccessible. Online repositories—such as the *Art Journal*—were highly significant for providing a broader artistic landscape in which to situate the dog as an artistic and cultural subject.¹⁰⁰ Galleries are equally inclined to post digitised versions of their collections online, and these were invaluable in terms of identifying and examining images that otherwise may not have been accessible without specialized applications or a designated research trip. This was particularly crucial when examining the collection of the Tate and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Contemporary commentaries, sitter and pricing information, satirical magazines, and newspaper repositories are all available through digital means, all of which were analysed for this thesis.¹⁰¹

When conventional archives were utilized the motivation behind the collections were oftentimes as meaningful as the material itself. The inherent desire of archives to compile, effectively record, and ultimately preserve significant historical data lead to considerations of where the visual dog might fit in such desires. If dogs were insignificant in their cultural merit then it would stand to reason that their archival footprint would be relatively obscure, yet the opposite was often the case. A study of the Copyright Office archive of registered images, now in the National Archives, reflected a demand for images

⁹⁹ Louise Craven, 'From the Archivist's Cardigan to the Very Dead Sheep: What are Archives? What are Archivists? What do They Do?', in *What are Archives?: Cultural and Theoretical Perspectives: A Reader*, ed. by Louise Craven, Abingdon: Routledge Press, 2008), pp. 7–30 (p. 8).

¹⁰⁰ The *Art Journal* being the longest running and contestably most significant art periodical of the Victorian period, popular from its foundation in 1839 until the 1880's, where competition saw a dwindling in its popularity. It is no small feat that animal painters and works of canine art were mentioned in such periodicals.

¹⁰¹ The British Newspaper Archives, the British Periodicals (ProQuest), and Google Books being regularly referenced.

of dogs and a nineteenth century boom in canine tropes which motivated their reproduction. The result of this archival visit is of particular interest in Chapter Five, which will emphasise how the advent of photography was integrated into the visual proliferation of well-recognised (and culturally expected) canine images.

Study of the Libby Hall Dog Collection in the Bishopsgate Institute enriched the exploration of the role of photography by including the archive of photograph of dogs from the 1850s onwards, collected by the twentieth-century dog-lover, Libby Hall. Between 1966 and 2008 Libby Hall collected thousands of photographs of dogs and their owners driven, primarily, by her love for dogs. But the nature of the collection reflects more than her own admirations—providing further glimpses in to the photographs that Victorian dog lovers would demand, display, and perhaps even distribute in the form of postcards.¹⁰² In discovering such items, Libby Hall has isolated a sub-category of imagery that had been deemed worthy of production, distribution, and preservation.¹⁰³ The ultimate acceptance and official archival decision to maintain the collection in its own category was further telling of the value that dogs have been given in regards to heritage and the preservation of historical phenomenon, further validating the academic engagement of this thesis.

Resources such as the Art Journal were invariably of particular note – its audience being those actively engaged in the arts and, thus, of direct interest to art historians wishing for a concise survey of the professional consensus of the time. The unprofitable nature of the Art Journal during its run has done little to devalue it among contemporary art historians, and the journal is, for all its financial failings, an invaluable resource.

¹⁰² Tom Potter, 'Photographic exhibition demonstrates our enduring love of dogs', *East Anglian Daily Times*, (2016),

<http://www.eadt.co.uk/news/photographic_exhibition_demonstrates_our_enduring_love_of_dogs_1_4538705> [accessed 13.03.17]

¹⁰³ The unfortunate omission being photographs of the lower classes (and only rarely of aristocrats and the monarchy): This being reflective of the rarity of photography in its foundational years and the primary status of its patrons.

Providing a survey of the art world of the nineteenth century, the *Art Journal* provided reviews of exhibitions, the sales of engravings, and profiles of artists of prominence to be examined. The resulting discovery of the regular inclusion of canine subjects, and features on animal painters (Landseer and beyond) is therefore of interest to art history.

Punch Magazine and graphic journals, such as the *Illustrated London News*, gave coverage to the dog to and, thanks to digital repositories such as Proquest and the British Newspaper Archives, can be fully exploited for their insights into the significance of these references. This availability we can attribute to the high demand for these publications among a prevalently middle-class readership (thus targeting the bourgeois dog-lovers that this thesis concerns itself with) which, itself, is of note.

Writing on the state of comic periodicals J. Don Vann rightly observes that ‘The histories of most Victorian comic periodicals have yet to be written’ with *Punch*, *Fun*, and *Judy* being the main exceptions.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, he brings attention to ‘the larger number of titles with very short runs’ that occurred. His conclusion as to this dissonance is significant:

The initial and continued success of *Punch* was that, in addition to appealing to all lovers of wit and satire, the magazine appealed to ‘gentlemen of education’ and thus found a place in the library and drawing room.¹⁰⁵

In other words, the audiences of the periodicals examine in this thesis can be identified as those with an assumed knowledge of political affairs (to understand the content presented), and a desire to be seen as of a ‘gentlemanly’ class, and canine content would have catered to such desires.

¹⁰⁴ J. Don Vann, ‘Comic Periodicals’, in *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society* ed. by J. Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), pp. 278–290 , 289.

¹⁰⁵ J. Don Vann, ‘Comic Periodicals’, 290.

Specialized audiences were also kept in mind when looking at the archives of the Kennel Club – an exclusive, middle-class establishment that preserved texts catering to their personal identification as such. It is therefore pertinent that at the Kennel Club copies of *Teufel the Terrier* and other dog biographies (popular children’s canine literature) abounded. Dog biographies were also preserved and accessible in the British Library. Given their preservation and quantity, one can readily speculate that such publications equally found their place ‘in the library and drawing room’.

The sources examined typically reinforce the thematic approach that this thesis will take but that does not mean that chronology will be dismissed. Instead each chapter presents the chosen themes with a sensitivity towards developments over time; revealing how representations of the dog were revitalised and reshaped to fit the many ideals of the Victorian era and reinforce middle-class identities.

For the purposes of this thesis it is useful to define two key terms that underpin many of the discourses in which dogs were included—domesticity and respectability. We associate the Victorian period with a cult of middle-class domesticity: with the gender norms that expressed the ideal of the angel in the house (to refer to Coventry Patmore’s famous image) and the prescriptive language of separate spheres.¹⁰⁶ Most definitions of domesticity stem from this categorisation of space and the idea of the ‘separate spheres’ of familial living; where the woman was expected to stay in the home (and tend to its internal duties) while the man would venture forth into the often overwhelming realm of the modern metropolis, returning to the home as a place of respite rather than as a place for full-time occupation. Such geographical definitions of domesticity certainly had an ideological impact on the working middle-class man, and a ‘flight from domesticity’ in

¹⁰⁶ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 1987), p. xx.

the twentieth century has been examined by John Tosh as a rebellion against this regulation of space.¹⁰⁷

The true extent to which this ‘flight of domesticity’ and the public/private divide was actualized is a point of debate. As Jane Hamlett has asserted, although domestic division was imagined in a variety of manners, practical divisions were not always possible nor desirable. The construction of a domestic interior was often a joint endeavour and, as Hamlett proposes, the ‘arrangement of space within the home was designed to create not just individual privacies but relationships between family members,’ used to ‘create intimacies and distances’ rather than fitting neatly in to a clear public/private divide.¹⁰⁸ Such dichotomies are thus to be considered only in terms of their usefulness as a method of understanding certain ideologies, rather than taken as a precisely enacted method of Victorian living.

Yet there is still importance in observing these frameworks, especially when considering the mentality of many Victorians of a middling social status. Studies of the period have concluded that the construction of the descriptive framework of the public/private divide, at least, was a potent conceptual marker by which the complexities of middle-class living can be explored and contested. Whether complying to the prescriptive literature of the ‘separate spheres’ or acting in defiance of them, many Victorians were aware of, and approved of, their usefulness in describing the order of the home and social life outside of its boundaries, though caution must be taken in the academic analysis of such paradigms. The biggest concern when approaching such a framework might be considered as the extent to which the ‘domestic’ was strictly ‘private’. As Hamlett proposed, although the home was certainly the bastion of domestic

¹⁰⁷ John Tosh, ‘Home and Away: The Flight from Domesticity in Late Nineteenth-Century England Revisited’, *Gender & History* (2015), 561–575 (p. 569).

¹⁰⁸ Jane Hamlett, *Material Relations: Domestic Interiors and Middle-Class Families in England, 1850-1910* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 9.

ideals, evidence now strongly suggests that the separation of these ‘private’-based ideologies was inextricably tied to one’s public identity too. An ideology is not separated through the simple division of space, after all, and is internalized in all aspects of personal conduct, affecting, as Simon Morgan suggests, public relations, the individual, and wider society.¹⁰⁹

Thinking in this broader sense, Victorian domesticity could be considered, in Monica Cohen’s words, as a ‘systematized body of concepts about human life and culture’¹¹⁰ and, as Tosh argues:

a web of cherished relationships – with wife, children and other resident kin...invested with a moral weight, as both the site of the breadwinner’s moral recharging and the context in which he could guide and discipline his dependants.¹¹¹

This definition by Tosh denotes an understanding of domesticity in which gender, space, and morality all played their role to provide an inward sense of familial (and personal) order and an outward sense of societal conformity and approval. This is the most commonly agreed upon definition of domesticity when it comes to its conceptual framework and is, as Alina Pintilii surmises, synonymous with home and family life.¹¹² It is in this same context that ‘respectability’ can be considered as synonymous with the outwards display of domesticity. Given this, we might include the rough/respectable

¹⁰⁹ Simon Morgan, ‘Between Public and Private: Gender, Domesticity, and Authority in the Long Nineteenth Century’, *The Historical Journal*, 54, 4 (2011), 1197–1210 (p. 1210).

¹¹⁰ Monica Cohen, *Professional Domesticity in the Victorian Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 10.

¹¹¹ Tosh, ‘Home and Away’, 561–575 (p. 565).

¹¹² Alina Pintilii, ‘Literary Representations of the Victorian Middle-Class Domesticity’, *Cultural Intertexts*, 1 (2014), 217–226, (p. 218).

dichotomy to other Victorian discursive antinomies, including home/work, public/private, and masculine/feminine.¹¹³

Respectability, in its broadest sense, can be defined as the quality of being socially acceptable, yet Victorian respectability meant much more and was given extensive discussion. Ross observes that Victorian respectability ‘was attached to fairly specific behaviors, possessions, and associations which functioned symbolically to indicate both moral excellence and social status’ with strict ideological distinctions from the contrast provided by the ‘rough’ elements of city living.¹¹⁴ Yet what constituted respectability, although easy to define in dictionary terms, was not as easy to define in one single manner or category.¹¹⁵ This is something Ross herself has observed, noting that ‘respectable’ as an ideological distinction is, in many ways, ‘too elusive and shifting in nineteenth-century language to function as a descriptive term with concrete sociological meanings’ but that does not mean that we cannot speculate, given certain social indicators.¹¹⁶

In the case of Victorian domesticity, we might consider it as the ordering, cleanliness, and functioning of the home and one’s adherence to the domestic ideal as perceived and asserted by those around you (adhering to its symbolic nature). In this manner respectability is a dependent term—defined by the opinions of the society in which one occupies and never truly self-affirming. To strive for respectability is to, by definition, seek the outward approval of those around you, and thus to look to that outwards presentation of value for your own markers of respectability. To this end we can consider domesticity the social ideal to which the middle classes aspired to and respectability the marker by which it was appraised and confirmed. Katherine Ellis

¹¹³ Ellen Ross, ‘Not the sort that would sit on the doorstep: Respectability in Pre-World War I neighbourhoods’ *International Labor and Working Class History*, 27 (1985), 39-59, p. 40.

¹¹⁴ Ellen Ross, ‘Not the sort that would sit on the doorstep’, p. 40.

¹¹⁵ As attested to in *The Monthly Christian Spectator* (London: Arthur Hall, 1851), pp. 347–350, in which the colloquial agreement of ‘keeping a gig’ to be ill-fitting and concluding that ‘Respectability is in the *man*, not in the *circumstances*’, complicating things further.

¹¹⁶ Ellen Ross, ‘Not the sort that would sit on the doorstep’, p. 41.

considers respectability among the Victorian bourgeois to be ‘a haven built upon the not altogether unshakeable foundations of economic security’ and it is due to the significance of worth that prices around the pet fancy, the commission of artwork, and the production and purchase of prints and frequently mentioned in this thesis.¹¹⁷ Their inclusion speaks not only to the display of economic wealth among those seeking respectability, but the perceived return that the middle classes must have invariably expected from such visual displays. If respectability is something gained through another’s estimation bolstered by economic security, then monetary investments involved a sense of tangible return in addition to being emotionally satisfying. Therefore the volume and quality of canine imagery in this thesis shall demonstrate the value that visual engagement with the dog was afforded, and therefore its significance to art history.

However, it is reductive to consider respectability as simply marked by the economic status of any given familial structure. As we have now defined, domesticity was marked by ‘a fusion of the emotional, moral, spatial and material’¹¹⁸ which included home life in relation to religion, education, nationality, and other values of social worth.¹¹⁹ This thesis will therefore consider all of these elements in relation to domesticity and its perceived approval through the notion of respectability when moving through each chapter.

Chapter One aims to foster an understanding of how canines were represented in and how they might have been read by middle-class viewers. Looking deeper into the position of the dog throughout the Victorian period, it will identify and explore some of the key factors that helped make canine imagery popular and widespread. In doing this I

¹¹⁷ Katherine Ellis, ‘Paradise Lost: The Limits of Domesticity in the Nineteenth-Century Novel’, *Feminist Studies*, 2 (1975), 55–63, p. 58.

¹¹⁸ Tosh, ‘Home and Away’, 561–575 (p. 570).

¹¹⁹ For more information on the various factors to which ‘respectability’ was appraised please see F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain, 1830-1900* (London: Fontana Press, 1988).

aspire to place canine representations within the social and cultural circles that they occupied so that we might move towards a deeper understanding of how the Victorians viewed their dogs (and other dogs). In this Landseer's royal commissions will be considered, as will the initial impact they had on how the dog would come to be viewed and represented throughout the rest of the century. As Landseer's canine images were highly accessible in Victorian society it seems only fitting to consider how and why he found success in order to gain a notion of his audience and their own values. Chapter One also considers the pet fancy when it came to the proliferation of the visual dog. Tracking displays of canine affluence it argues that breeding facilitated a form of canine physiognomy, which readily tied in to Victorian notions of readable human types. Establishing the importance of a visually well-bred dog it then goes on to look at the characteristics that dogs were expected to possess, how these were represented and what they signified. Throughout these examinations it proposes that dogs came to possess three key components within the Victorian imagination: status, character and morality. Through addressing the foundation and implementation of these traits in a visual context Chapter One argues that these traits were prescribed to the dog in order to make it a tool through which the middle classes could display their own admirable traits, and to act as lessons in acquiring or maintaining these three key aspects of middle-class identity.

Explored in tandem with these themes is the success of prominent canine artists throughout the period and the prominence of the animal painter within the Victorian art world. Considering this in depth Chapter One also looks at the popularity of canine imagery, the success of animal painters, and the influence and proliferation of the print market. This is achieved by addressing the demise of Landseer, the impact of the artist's work, and the importance of canine meaning in the arts more generally. Chapter One concludes by expanding outwards from the world of animal painters to look at how other artists (popular in our current canon) viewed and represented the dog in their own work.

In doing this Chapter One aims to expose the interconnected world of animal painters and their peers and to highlight the proximity in which they were working and, as such, the inevitable understanding of canine meaning within the Victorian art world among artists, critics, buyers, and the public.

Canine class, character and morality, their visual prominence, and the intent of artist when depicting the dog feeds in to every other chapter in this. Embodying this intent Chapter Two addresses the interrelated representations of the dog as saint, mourner and protector (specifically of children). Having established these canine traits of character and morality, certain breeds became associated with a sense of saintliness. This saintliness was certainly apparent in literature and canine guidebooks of the time, however it is within imagery that it was invariably most captivating (and most sentimental). The Saint Bernard, the Collie dog and the Newfoundland came to act as prominent saintly representatives in this role, allowing Victorians to elevate the dog into the role of literal and figurative saviour. Interestingly, this was the case regardless of the dog's typical geography in Victorian Britain, which would usually be in the domestic sphere.

Expanding on Mangum's research, Chapter Two then studies the dog as mourner in relation to sentimentality and the Victorian cultures of mourning. Within a visual landscape this chapter proposes that canine representations fell into two categories: the dog as guardian of the dead and the dog as active mourner. The active canine mourner was anthropomorphically represented to understand the death of its owner and therefore was able to mourn with clear intent and grief. Such images tied into the motif of canine saintliness, providing Victorian viewers with a sense of moral affirmation at the sight of a mourning dog. These representations interlinked with notions of morality and the saintly traits that were associated to the dog, constructing the figurative domestic dog as exemplary of the values that people should hold in life in order to be mourned (and rewarded) in death.

Chapter Two also addresses the issue of child mortality and the manner in which the visual dog could help alleviate its associated anxieties. It argues that, through placing the dog at the side of children, the dog was framed as a physical and moral protector of children. The dog's capacity in this role was multifaceted. On one level the dog was positioned as being physically capable of, and willing to, protect children if they found themselves in dangerous situations. But, on another level, the dog's saintly status also allowed it to instruct children on morality through virtue of its mere presence. Ultimately, the dog and child genre tried to present a safe and sentimental motif which would alleviate the concerns of their parents and warm the hearts of others. However, through these images viewers were also encouraged to imagine that the dog would protect their children even in the face of death. This is presented in a particularly sombre manner when looking at the dog as active mourner of deceased children.

From saintly dogs, Chapter Three turns to the representation and role of disreputable or disgraced dogs. Although there were certainly supernatural hounds and canine spectres, the Victorian imagination was much more captivated (and terrified) by rabies on the streets. As Pemberton and Worboys have already observed, there were many self-made authority figures when it came to the rabies virus and, in turn, there were many visual commentaries too. This chapter explores prevalent representations of the rabid dog and what they can tell us regarding greater Victorian concerns of class, moral corruption and ardent criticisms of the police force and legal system. Chapter Three also considers the rabid dog as not simply the perceived antithesis of the domestic dog (as suggested by Howell) but as a creature capable of threatening the morals of middle class society. Expanding upon research by Ritvo, and Pemberton, Worboys, it will examine the manner in which imagery proliferated the notion of rabies as a conceptual disease; a class contagion.

Chapter Three provides the most extensive case that this thesis has to offer regarding Victorian artists' participation in the proliferation of common canine representations. Ford Madox Brown's *Work* is the focus. Through scrutinizing the dogs depicted in this painting this chapter addresses the peripheral canine as it existed within the larger scheme of Victorian high art. Examining an unexplored dog within the painting's narrative this chapter argues that, far from representing standard symbols of fidelity, sagacity, etc., dogs in Victorian artwork were often much more intrinsically tied with the social issues of the day, even in larger narrative paintings. This chapter demonstrates that this was the case whether the artist in question was specialized in canine portraiture or not. Consequently, within this case study the dialogue between various cultural forms also becomes a point of focus, demonstrating the extent to which artist and audience were aware of canine representations and the effect of their employment. Chapter Three subsequently asserts that by understanding the social significance of canine motifs we can also gain a richer and more comprehensive understanding of well-examined Victorian 'masterpieces'.

Chapter Four addresses direct forms of class conflict by looking at dog stealers and sellers, doing so from a gendered approach. As Philip Howell has already observed, these criminal types were seen as so invasive specifically because of their ability to invade the domestic sphere. Their modus operandi often involved scoping out a house, luring dogs away at opportune moments, or perhaps even bribing servants of the household to help them in their ill-doings. Obfuscation was the modus operandi of the dog thief and the police were, for the most part, unable to take an active role in the retrieval of the dog or the actions of this criminal class. Subsequently, while many dog owners were well acquainted with the actions of dog thieves their visual construction was much more problematic. In looking at how Victorians visualized the dog thief we are able to gain a greater understanding of the anxieties associated with them and the clearly diametric and

didactic contrast between the activists of respectable society who owned and defended dogs and the unscrupulous dog thieves of the streets. In doing this it will reveal that such a division was not simply class-based but also shaped by gender roles, middle-class masculinity, and the man's role in relation to the domestic interior.

The theft of a dog was not simply distressing due to the presence of a dog thief. In fact many lamented the fact that dogs were so willing to approach the thieves that lured them away from the home. For all of the domestic rhetoric associated with them dogs were liable to stray. Exploring this premise, the second focus of Chapter Four is the formation and function of Battersea Dogs Home within greater canine debates. Philip Howell has done an excellent job of exploring how Battersea Dogs Home can be associated with class divisions and social degradation. However, this chapter instead adopts a gendered approach to the visual constructions that emerged from the foundation of this charitable organisation; looking at fallen dogs as metonyms for fallen women and their potential for redemption through their resituating in the domestic sphere. This assertion will be considered in relation to conventional gender roles and the extent to which the Home subverted expectations of middle-class femininity or conformed to them.

Chapter Five concludes by addressing in further depth themes of morality and religious virtue that run throughout the thesis. In particular it addresses philanthropic giving and the dog as beggar for either an individual or a charitable organisation. Making a case for philanthropy with their visual presence, this chapter explores the notion of canine philanthropy as presenting the dog (even the blind beggar's dog) as a middle-class representative in such a manner that its position was rarely contested. Through looking at railway dogs—dogs that would collect money from train patrons—this chapter argues that philanthropic dogs represented a turning point in canine representations. Faced with little debate or controversy (due, in part, to the nature of their 'work'), donation dogs were, perhaps, one of the first instances in which the role of the dog as a creature of class,

character and morality were wholly accepted. This would not have been possible without the often contested and frequently depicted visual roles that the dog existed within throughout the Victorian period, which created a new form of canine visual literacy. This the chapter explores in its final section through the introduction of photography and the ways in which the Victorian public consumed this new medium of visual display and participation.

Of course the dog was still evolving in meaning by the turn of the century and new battlegrounds of canine place and representation were constructed in keeping with the topical issues of the period. However, it is through the Victorian period that the dog was able to become such a complex and multifaceted representative of so many different and intrinsically social concerns. Through the dog we have a unique position to examine this melting pot of Victorian society; the values the Victorians placed on dogs and the values they hoped others placed on them.

Chapter One. Constructions of the Dog in Nineteenth-Century Artistic Practice

Introduction

In the year 1892 the first director of Birmingham Museum, Whitworth Wallis, planned a collection of works by living English animal painters for a special exhibition. Wallis secured fourteen works by the eminent animal painter Briton Rivière (1840-1920) and works by other renowned animal painters such as Charles Burton Barber (1845–94), John Sargent Noble (1848–96) and Walter Hunt (1861–1941). This involved several important painting loans, including one from the Prince of Wales.¹ The run-up to the exhibition received considerable attention by many local newspapers, as well as securing the attention of the prominent art journal, the *Academy*.² So confident was Wallis in the impending success of the exhibition that in August he boldly stated in the *Times* that the exhibition was sure ‘to rival the Pre-Raphaelite collection of the previous year, which during three months was visited by 260,000 people’.³

In reality Wallis’s exhibition actually exceeded these numbers and by the time the exhibition had closed it was visited by no less than 282,852 people (more than half the population of Birmingham at the time), 25,000 penny illustrated catalogues had been sold, and a total Sunday afternoon attendance of 28,870 was estimated. Average attendance during the three opening hours each Sunday alone was 2,220.⁴ These attendance numbers may seem surprising today, but they were not unusual for the late Victorian period. In fact, in the same year an exhibition in Whitechapel saw canine-related artworks by

¹ Whitworth Wallis, ‘Art in Birmingham’, *The Times*, 20 August 1892, p.11.

² ‘Notes on Art and Archaeology’, *Academy*, 1 October 1892, p. 292

³ The exact figure for the attendance of the Pre-Raphaelite exhibition was actually 258, 589, but this was still a formidable number to contend against. ‘The Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery’, *The Times*, 6 January 1892, p. 10. Wallis, ‘Art in Birmingham’, p.11.

⁴ *Nottingham Evening Post*, 11 January 1893, p. 2.

Charles Burton Barber and Briton Rivière ranked higher for the title of ‘Best Picture’ than artwork by the Pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones (1833-98). The honour itself was bestowed to Rivière for his canine-related painting *Requiescat* (1888). Burne-Jones was awarded fourth place.⁵ Canine-exclusive painters such as Maud Earl (1864-1943) and James Yates Carrington (1857-92) would have regular solo exhibitions or have their works consistently displayed on the line at the Royal Academy.⁶

What can these successes tell us about the role of the dog in Victorian visual culture? To look at the prominence of animal painters in the mid-to-late Victorian period is to question the conventions of our modern art canon. While we esteem the works of the Pre-Raphaelites highly the reality of the situation was that animal painters were often viewed as peers to such artists, gaining material success and professional esteem as well as being an expected and much desired inclusion in annual exhibitions. That the Birmingham exhibition of animal painters not only matched but exceeded Pre-Raphaelite attendance is testament to this. As such a scholarly study of animal painters does more than give us insights into the practice of these painters and the implications of their works; it also allows us to re-examine the place of such works in the history of art, restructuring the artistic landscape of the Victorian period.

Within the sphere of animal painting there were certain species that held prestige over others—the noble stag and the powerful horse being prime examples. But the dog offered more variation and was therefore open to more possibilities. Whereas the stag depicted the raw power and majesty of nature, and the horse became associated with human might and sporting prowess the dog came with a broad range of meanings and associations. The dog could represent nobility, villainy, faithfulness, charity, fear, resilience, luxury, poverty and more. The dog was also given a position of artistic

⁵ ‘Art Notes’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 4 May 1892, p.1.

⁶ ‘Death of Mr. Yates Carrington’, *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 3 May 1892.

importance, sometimes even becoming a marker for artistic excellence. When looking at Venetian art, for example, John Ruskin (1819-1900) used the lens of the dog to examine the artwork's quality.⁷ His reasoning was simple: Ruskin considered dogs to be 'the animals which have had more influence over the human soul, in its modern life, than ever Apis or the crocodile had over Egyptian' possessing 'the connecting link between men and animals; in whom the lower forms of really human feeling may be best exemplified'.⁸ However, Ruskin was less favourable towards contemporary canine works, considering them to be 'a somewhat trivial mingling of sentiment, or warping by caricature'.⁹ There was some truth to Ruskin's observations; many canine representations depended on the sentimental attachment of their audience, or practiced anthropomorphism to a large extent. Yet despite Ruskin's displeasure, and his fame as a critic, the dog continued to be a considerable figure in art throughout the period and successful animal painters flourished in their chosen market. Canine art appealed to a large audience of admirers for a variety of reasons.

As explored in the Introduction to this thesis, the reading of paintings was a major aspect of the popularity of images among the Victorian public and dogs were a potent signifier. In her discussion of the crinoline, Julia Thomas (inspired by Roland Barthes) identifies three different aspects to the garment: the written or textual garment, the image garment as it is visualized in paintings and prints, and the real garment to which the others refer. Within this tripartite the 'textual and visual representations of the crinoline are reliant on the actual object [but] the real item of clothing and how it is viewed in the social world are determined by the plural meanings that the crinoline acquires'.¹⁰ Such

⁷ John Ruskin, *Modern Painters, Vol. V* (London: Smith, Elder, 1873), p. 260.

⁸ Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, p. 260.

⁹ Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, p. 262.

This was due, it seems, to the attention of canine paintings shifting from the human figures to that of the dog. Ruskin considered this to overstep 'the absolute facts of nature' in regards to the dog's position in nature and art. However, Ruskin would concede to a fondness for the *Shepherd's Chief Mourner*.

¹⁰ Thomas, *Pictorial Victorians*, p. 79.

interrelations can also be seen with the dog. In a period when dogs were undergoing a drastic shift in purpose and cultural meaning visual landscapes often became the battlefield for canine debates, gaining multiple meanings relating to the wider social discourses to which they associated. In forming the modern domestic dog, dogs were typically never just an animal. Instead, like the crinoline, they functioned as proxies through which greater social and cultural concerns were addressed. The meaning of a dog was determined by society's social and cultural values, which then fed back into Victorian understandings of the animal. As attitudes towards the dog changed throughout the decades (as they certainly did) so did the potential of the dog and further meanings were projected onto the animal, constructed and reinforced by the circulation of yet more words and imagery. Holding a position of textual and visual power, representations of the dog thus became a vessel through which different social issues could be identified and discussed as a readable aspect of Victorian society.

The dog came to possess a visual effectiveness throughout the Victorian period that was, in most cases, informed by these issues and sustained by its mutability. The dog enabled a commentary on a multitude of debates and represented intersecting points of public opinion. To ascertain the process through which the dog gained this emblematic status it is necessary to identify key moments in the dog's social progression and to identify what made the dog such an enticing focal point for various public concerns and debates. In doing this, we are able to better situate canine representations within the social and artistic climate in which they operated and were employed, consequently uncovering more about both.

Urban Canines and Modern Creations

The Mediation of Canine Clutter

Dog-related artworks and prints peaked in popularity in the late nineteenth century. The growth and importance of the cityscape in the earlier half of the century facilitated the

construction of the domestic dog. The development of the modern metropolis prompted the reconsideration of many things, including the dog.

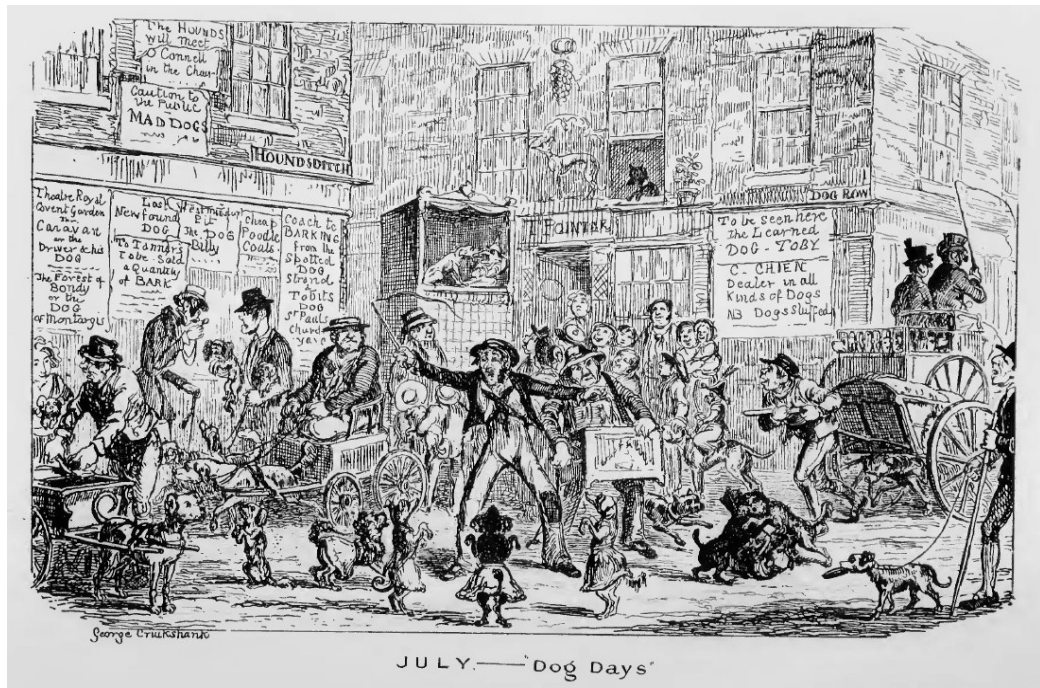


Figure 7: George Cruikshank, “The Dog Days”, 1836’, in *The Comic Almanack: First Series 1835-43*, 1871, p.59, Author’s Collection.

Long kept as pets of the aristocracy and labouring animals of the working classes, dogs had a clear presence in most cities, but their conceptual placement was still undefined. This led to an unmediated and undeniably messy cluster of canine characters in early urban environments. Dog carts, strays, lower-class companions and entertainment; the streets of most Victorian cities were typically littered with dogs, some of which were undesirable. The implied disarray of such a disorganised canine presence was the choice of illustration for George Cruikshank (1792-1878) in 1836 in his image *July—Dog Days* (1871) which illustrates the chaos of the supposed ‘dog days’ (when dogs were said to be more prone to rabies and other forms of madness). Cruikshank plays on the canine presence in the cityscape, turning it into a mass of canine clutter. Cruikshank was a prolific and very well-known illustrator and this image came from the *Comic Almanack*, which contained illustrations primarily concerning important London events or incidents linked to the month he was illustrating. Cruikshank’s choice of dogs in the

city as a topic highlights it as an issue that most Victorians would have to deal with when venturing the street.

Visibility was a key concern in relation to the canine population of popular cityscapes. Although fouling and noise complaints presumably occurred, dogs, if not seen, were not given much attention in the public eye, but dogs ever-present and unregulated on the street became an issue. In 1830 a writer in *The Times* considered dogs of the street, or curs, to be ‘the fruitful source of all mischief’ in the cityscape.¹¹ To this commentator the presence of such dogs was not only unwonted but also dangerous, allowed to ‘roam at large, partaking of the most putrid food, not worth stealing, they infest our streets unmolested, creating noise, filth, and general annoyance’.¹² The problematic nature of such dogs to the general public can also be gleaned in Cruikshank’s illustration, as a group of dogs are seen locked in a fight. However Cruikshank also alludes to the perceived solution to urban canine clutter: domestication.

The growing presence of the middle classes in Victorian society led to an emphasis on many ‘Victorian values’ of which respectability and social order were ranked quite highly.¹³ As such the urban dog of the streets was simply not an acceptable part of modern city living. However the dog contained, the dog on a leash, the dog domesticated: these were notions that appealed to the middle classes. One such dog can be found in the Pointer establishment from an upper window in Cruikshank’s illustration. Presented as a small terrier type, popular among the middle classes, and seen within a domestic interior, this dog is represented as both safe from the urban clutter below and prevented from becoming part of it. The increasing prevalence of the domestic dog amongst the middle classes occurred for many reasons and had a profound effect on the meaning and

¹¹ Samuel Miller, ‘Hydrophobia’, *The Times*, 10 June 1830, p. 2.

¹² Miller, ‘Hydrophobia’, p. 2.

¹³ John Tosh, *A Man’s Place*, p. xi.

representation of the domestic dog, but the separation of the respectable dog from the streets was one of the most significant reasons.

However, the growing interest in the middle-class dog fancy was not the only method through which the dog's presence on the street was mediated. The visibility of labouring dogs (among other animals) contributed towards the emergence of anti-cruelty movements and a call for an end to dog carts, in addition to the fighting rings—in which dogs were pitted against each other or set on rats also became a target. Dog fighting was outlawed in 1835, two years before Victoria ascended the throne, although dog carts endured, being restricted within a 15 mile radius of Charring Cross in 1839 before eventually becoming a country-wide ban in 1854.¹⁴

In both these instances these bans were not simply fuelled by compassion but also a specific ideology. Dog carts were a primary source of income for many lower-class families, meanwhile dog pits were 'said to not only be immoral, but also worked upon those who observed them to enfeeble and to coarsen their moral sensibility'.¹⁵ In lobbying for such laws, then, interested protest groups were declaring a desire for safer streets and for a certain type of canine character, as well as a certain type of owner. Dogs were no longer considered as belonging to the streets or to the unruly lower classes. Instead the dog was reimagined as an animal meant for the home. An animal whose improper use could 'enfeeble' someone's morality in the wrong context was suddenly considered to elevate them if occupying the correct urban spaces, and these spaces were the domestic interior.

Lynda Nead has argued that the visual impact of the modern metropolis and its impact on the lives of its occupants is hard to exaggerate: 'Modernity in the 1860s forced

¹⁴ Pemberton and Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, p. 48, pp. 52-53.

¹⁵ Pemberton and Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, pp. 32.

itself on the eye; it had to be grasped visually'.¹⁶ The dog was equally an inescapable visual entity in the early nineteenth-century streets and later defined visually through breeding. To conceptualize the dog of the Victorian cityscape was to visualise it. As such the shifting positions and re-imagined roles of the dog were intimately linked to the dog's own visibility. The result is a cultural reforming of the dog's purpose and potency which is richly embedded in the visual culture of the period, reaching its peak in the 1890s but informed by the earlier canine mediations of Queen Victoria's formative years.

Royal Influences

The Queen's own influence on the representation and rhetoric of the dog in Victorian Britain cannot be overlooked. The Queen was not only a lover of the arts but also a canine devotee and, through her, the world of artists and canines unified to bolster the visual importance of constructions of the domestic dog. This we can see in an anecdote recounted by the English genre painter and author, Charles Robert Leslie (1794–1859). At the Queen's coronation Leslie was entrusted to capture the event faithfully as royal painter-elect. The resulting picture is a grand display. However, in addition to his writings on the coronation and painting itself, Leslie recalled that as soon as the Queen returned to the palace she was greeted by the bark of her beloved dog, Dash. At the dog's barking the Queen declared 'There's Dash' before removing her royal attire and heading off to give her beloved dog a bath.

Art, royalty and dogs are also all united within this narrative retelling of the coronation and this intermingling was often propagated by the Queen. Victoria did not shy away from creating a persona for herself as an animal (and specifically dog) lover, but this persona went beyond just an affiliation with animals. Additional elements to this narrative also allude to the idealised domestic female. Even after her coronation the

¹⁶ Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (London: The British Library, 2000), p. 14.

Queen returns home for the domestic act of cleaning her favourite animal. Presenting the Queen as humble, kind, and loving, this story reinforces values of domesticity and morality through the central figures of Queen and dog. Leslie's decision to retell this scene subsequently indicates the desire for such scenes to be visualized within the public imagination, and perhaps even complements Leslie's more regal painting of the Queen; creating an image of her as ruler, domestic icon and notable canophile.

Queen Victoria's love of animals was informed from a very early age, as was her appreciation for the then rather rare genre of British pet portraiture. When Victoria was young, Dash, a King Charles spaniel, was her favourite pet, and he would often be dressed up by her in her youth. On her sixteenth Birthday the Queen recounted Dash giving her presents, and Prince Albert's treatment of Dash was part of what endeared him to the young Princess.¹⁷ Albert also had a favourite dog named Eos and the two shared their love of canines personally and publicly. Throughout her life the Queen kept her favourite pets in her home and multiple dogs in royal kennels, which would hold fifty dogs or more at any given time.¹⁸ Even on her deathbed the Queen showed her affection for her canine companions; as one of her last requests was to have her favourite Pomeranian, Turi, sit on her bed.¹⁹

Animals such as dogs had long been kept by the aristocracy as pets, as canine accompaniments in eighteenth-century genre paintings demonstrates.²⁰ However, Victoria's love of animals was something that she made a matter of public and political interest. It was Victoria who awarded the SPCA its royal title (along with giving many

¹⁷ 'The Girlhood of Queen Victoria: A Selection from Her Majesty's Diaries between the years 1832 and 1840', *Academy and Literature*, 16 November 1912, p. 633.

¹⁸ 'The Queen's Pet Animals', *Review of Reviews*, April 1893, p. 414.

¹⁹ M.H. Spielmann, 'Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria and the Fine Arts', *Magazine of Art*, February 1901, p. 194.

²⁰ Matthew Craske, 'Representations of Domestic Animals in Britain 1730-1840', in *Hounds in Leash: The Dog in 18th and 19th Century Sculpture*, ed. by Jonathan Wood and Stephen Feeke (Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 2000), p.55.

other canine products her royal seal of approval) and she abhorred cruelty to animals, especially towards dogs.²¹ The Queen refused to have mutilated dogs in her presence²² and would regularly send memoranda to officials concerning the treatment of ‘her poor dear friends the dog’.²³

This ardent approach to the treatment of dogs by the Queen certainly contributed to political and social change in relation to animals, including their treatment in art. Indeed, the Queen kept her passion for dogs close to her heart when it came to her patronage of the arts and, particularly, when it came to that of Landseer. Her mother’s gift in 1836, Landseer’s portrait of Dash, inspired Victoria to engage in pet portraiture herself.²⁴ The portrait itself was notable in that it simply showed Dash in profile, without a human counterpart or any other accompaniment typical of Eighteenth-century canine depictions. Part of this may have been practicality, as the gift was meant as a surprise Victoria herself could not be a sitter. However this style, so rare in the former century, seemed to capture the Queen’s imagination. As a result the Queen herself commissioned similar portraits, creating a boom in the market. Having been enthused by Landseer’s depiction of Dash, the Queen went on to commission a picture of her favourite pets the next year.²⁵

Figure 8 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 8: Sir Edwin Landseer, *Hector, Nero, and Dash with the parrot, Lory*, oil on canvas, 1838, Clarence House, London.

²¹ Hilda Kean, *Animal Rights: Political and Social Change in Britain Since 1800* (London: Reaktion Books, 2000), p.82.

²² Meaning, in this instance, no dogs with cropped tails or ears. Kean, p.82.

²³ *The Letters of Queen Victoria*, ed. by George Earle Buckle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 176.

²⁴ William Secord, *Dog Painting: A History of the Dog in Art* (Woodbridge: Antique Collector’s Club, 2009), p. 286.

²⁵ Ormond, *Landseer*, p. 144.

Because the British genre of pet portraiture at this point was in its infancy the artists and their royal patron had important roles in the overall intent of the genre. Portraits of Hector, Nero and Dash are particularly telling of the initial ideological intent behind such canine depictions. It is notable, then, that the overall aesthetic of the piece is one of domesticity. While Hector and Nero serve as allusions to the traditional aristocratic pursuit of hunting and other field sports Dash serves to depict the domestic sphere and all of its trappings. With Dash positioned in front of Hector and Nero (and with his status in life as Victoria's favourite) the domestic dog of the home is, in some ways given prominence over the sporting dog of the field. Even though Hector and Nero are ostensibly hunting dogs they have also been placed in the domestic interior, positioned as part of the home.

This focus on the domesticity of dogs and their ability to be represented without their master by their side would blossom in the mid-to-latter half of the century and, in this, Queen Victoria and Landseer's influence is apparent. Secord also argues that Victoria's taste for animal portraiture stimulated interest in the genre for her subjects, noting that:

Queen Victoria's love of dogs is legendary, as was her regard for all dumb creatures. This sentiment was directly translated to her patronage of the animal artists of the day ... The artist Edwin Landseer ... was to stand head and shoulders above the rest.²⁶

Hilda Kean has also noted that dogs became popularised 'in particular in the work of one of Queen Victoria's favourite painters, Landseer'.²⁷ Secord argues the royal influence on British taste for this genre of artwork cannot be overestimated, asserting that Victoria's

²⁶ Secord, *Dog Painting*, p. 283.

²⁷ Kean, *Animal Rights*, p.80.

‘great love of animal portraits, can only have served to instil similar interests in her subjects’.²⁸

While most of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert’s commissions to Landseer maintained an element of hunting conventional to field paintings it was the inclusion (and character) of the royal family’s cherished pets which defined the parameters of most of the commissions. These works by Landseer, and later other artists, would often be exhibited and reproduced for a wider audience and (as observed by Secord and Kean) shaped the way that the Victorian public perceived their dogs both at home and in the arts. The dog, by Victoria’s reckoning was part of the home, part of society, and part of the visual sphere and her representation within it. Victoria’s desire to have her dogs represented went beyond Landseer and became, in many ways, part of her cultural image; a notable aspect of how she chose to represent herself and her family. As artists placed most of the Queen’s canine commissions in the domestic interior, such paintings acted as an embodiment of the values of home and hearth. As such these royal commissions provided a domestic ideal to which viewers could aspire towards or in which their own beliefs were reinforced.

Creating Meaning and Conveying Values in Pet Portraiture

Queen Victoria’s decision to patronize Landseer was perhaps the most significant when concerning how the dog would be seen and depicted in pet portraiture. Landseer was not only talented at depicting dogs but also had a particular penchant for anthropomorphism, bringing out the humanity in many of his canine subjects. This particular strategy by Landseer also helped to popularize him as an artist, with the *Magazine of Art* noting in 1891 that ‘Landseer certainly showed, as no artist has done before, the sympathy existing between animals, especially dogs, and mankind’.²⁹ Because

²⁸ Secord, *Dog Painting*, p. 284.

²⁹ Gruny, ‘Animal Painters Past and Present’, p. 393.

of this the journal states that ‘from 1819 to 1873 he never ceased to be the most popular of British painters’.³⁰

The ‘sympathy’ provided in Landseer’s works made them so distinctive. Sydney Smith coined the well-known observation that Landseer was ‘the Shakespeare of the world of dogs’.³¹ In actuality it was sentimentality that Landseer was appealing to, of which sympathy was but one result. The *Spectator* considered Landseer’s dogs to be ‘overflow[ing] with sentiment and fine feeling’, an expression which they acknowledged was not entirely true to the nature of dogs.³²

More so than artists before him Landseer placed the dog in the foreground of his canvases, thus allowing for this sentiment to take centre stage. This decision was both vital to his popularity and highly significant to the development of canine art. In a retrospective defence of the artist, the American writer James A. Manson acknowledged this, stating that:

Looking at animals from an altogether fresh standpoint, and detecting in them qualities and investing them with attributes which none of his forerunners had had the wit to observe or devise, Sir Edwin became the founder of a new school.³³

The teachings of Haydon, Landseer’s childhood mentor, also seemed to give Landseer’s work a grander sense of historical narrative and social relevance. Such is the case in *Laying Down the Law* (1840) and *Alexander and Diogenes* (1848) where the grand and ambitious narratives with multiple figures to portray evoke some of Haydon’s own works.

³⁰ Gruny, ‘Animal Painters Past and Present’ p. 393.

³¹ ‘Sir Edwin Landseer’, *Every Saturday*, 8 November 1873, p. 510.

³² ‘Sir Edwin Landseer’, *Spectator*, 11 October 1873, p. 1274.

³³ James A Manson, *The Makers of British Art: Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A.* (New York: Walter Scott Publishing, 1902), p. 8.

Figures 9–10 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 9: [Left] Sir Edwin Landseer, *Laying Down the Law (or Trial by Jury)*, oil on canvas, 1840, Private Collection, Chatsworth.

Figure 10: [Right] Sir Edwin Landseer, *Alexander and Diogenes*, oil on canvas, 1848, The Tate Collection, London.

However, although dogs function as the central figures observed in these artworks, it is really humans that are represented. *Laying Down the Law* caricatures the legal profession through the representation of different dogs with different expressions on their faces (meant to correlate with members of the court). Meanwhile, *Alexander and Diogenes* is a historical anecdote simply re-enacted through dogs instead of humans.

The anthropomorphic aspect of Landseer's work was recognised throughout the period and was acknowledged to be one of the factors in his popularity. This was noted by the *Spectator* which observed that:

It may be doubted, however, whether Landseer's popularity is not due in a greater degree in which animals are treated in an ideal fashion, and instead of being painted as they really exist, are invested with human expression and represented as endowed with ideas and emotions proper to man.³⁴

In representing dogs in a semi-human manner Landseer helped create a strategy through which dogs could be painted by artists (and read by audiences) as representatives for a variety of human emotions and traits. Such methods are significant when considering his role in shaping pet portraiture and the cultural and social role of the dog via his royal commissions.

Figure 11 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

³⁴ *Spectator*, 1873, p. 1274.

Figure 11: Sir Edwin Landseer, *Eos, A Favourite Greyhound, the property of H.R.H. Prince Albert*, oil on canvas, 1841, The Royal Collection, London.

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were avid patrons of the arts, and their shared appreciation for it is generally credited to their ultimate union.¹ As an extension of this passion for painting would often gift each other portraiture and other forms of conventionally appealing painting. In this manner Queen and Prince Consort became patrons and collectors of the arts and their commissioned pieces were typically linked to their affection for each other—their shared love not just of the arts but of each other. Paintings commissioned by either party can therefore be read by art historians with an eye towards this affection—which was inherent in the couple’s intent and which the Victorian public would become acquainted with through the proliferation of print works that disseminated some of the royal couples’ most cherished pieces. Chief among such paintings were those works by Landseer, who was one of the few artists who worked with Princess Victoria before her marriage and continued to be patronised by the queen throughout his lifetime.³⁵

Landseer’s style allowed for a dog’s human counterpart to be readily inferred from his paintings without much difficulty. The most pertinent royal example of this was that of *Eos*, Albert’s cherished hound. *Eos* (1841) was composed as a relatively straightforward portrait but includes many broader visual indicators. As *Eos* is shown from the side her full confirmation of breeding is presented to the viewer; her body is clearly well toned and her coat has a healthy sheen. *Eos* looks up eagerly, outside of the confines of the canvas to her master. However, the master is also present on the canvas through the hat, gloves and deerskin stool, items which tell the reader who *Eos* belongs to. Even *Eos* herself is, in this context, simply another piece of property, intended to

³⁵ Jonathan Marsden, ed., *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (London: Royal Collection Enterprises, 2010), p.75.

represent her owner instead of being presented as an autonomous entity in the picture. This portrait of Eos can, instead, be read as a portrait of Albert: a display of his passions and an accreditation of his kindly nature, as shown through Eos' implied devotion to her off-canvas master. This linking of Eos to Albert was a deliberate choice. It was, in actuality, the Queen's idea to have Albert's hat and gloves included. To this end she sent them to Landseer's studio to make sure that they were recreated faithfully.³⁶ When Eos died in 1844 the Queen admitted that the two were so connected in her mind that 'I cannot somehow imagine him without her'.³⁷

Reflecting on Landseer's work in 1879 Moses Foster Sweetser stated that:

The favourite point of view in which Landseer regarded the dog was as the attendant of man ... and he seldom found satisfaction save in grouping the two ... If the dog is portrayed alone, he is accompanied by a helmet, a glove ... or some other accessory suggesting his master.³⁸

This comment seems to hold true in the portrait of Eos, which was engraved and was sold at £3 3s.³⁹ It was later considered to be 'the finest example of the finest strain of Landseer's Art'.⁴⁰ In a published memoir to the artist it was stated that the work helped make Eos moderately famous.⁴¹ The emblems of Prince Albert in this image, then, would not have been overlooked.

However, in addition to representing the Prince Consort as a sporting gentleman of fashion, Landseer's *Eos* also situated him in the domestic sphere as a family man. Eos is, after all, depicted in Buckingham Palace instead of out on a hunt and the trappings of domesticity surround Eos: the table covered in a rich red cloth, the contrasting green chair

³⁶ Manson, *The Makers of British Art*, p. 108.

³⁷ Queen Victoria, *Diary Entry*, 31 July 1844.

³⁸ Moses Foster Sweetser, *Landseer* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1879), p. 60.

³⁹ 'Choice and Important Engravings', *Book Catalogue: Willis's Miscellaneous*, March 1854, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Fredrick George Stephens, *Memoirs of Sir Edwin Landseer: A Sketch of the Life of the Artist* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1874), p. 111.

⁴¹ Sweetser, *Landseer*, p. 78.

and (to some extent) the deerskin stool, which may have made reference to Germanic furniture. Each of these items hint at the domestic life that Albert would return to after hunting in the field. Even Eos' rich red collar blends in with the red of the tablecloth, linking her further to the domestic interior.

Figures 12–13 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 12: [Left] Sir Edwin Landseer, Detail from *Hector, Nero, and Dash with the Parrot, Lory*, oil on canvas, 1838, Clarence House, London.

Figure 13: [Right] Friedrich Wilhelm Keyl, *Tiny, Nino, Fermach and Minka at the Kennels, Windsor*, watercolour, 1848, The Royal Collection, London.

Figures 14–15 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 14: [Left] Friedrich Wilhelm Keyl, *Dacko*, oil on canvas, 1871, The Royal Collection, London.

Figure 15: [Right] Otto Webber, *Dot and Carinach, Skye Terriers*, oil on canvas, 1848, The Royal Collection, London.

Figure 16–17 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 16: [Left] Robert Reuben Cole, *Noble, and Spot*, oil on cardboard, 1887-90, The Royal Collection, London.

Figure 17: [Right] Charles Burton Barber, *Waldmann*, oil on canvas, 1881, The Royal Collection, London.

These efforts to capture the interior lives of the royal family were seen in many commissions made by the royal family, starting with Landseer but including other artists such as Charles Burton Barber, Friedrich William Keyl (1823–71), Otto Webber (1851–1923) and Robert Reuben Cole (1850–1919). Queen Victoria commissioned such paintings continually throughout her reign, in addition to keeping a photo album of her favourite pets, mostly placing them in domestic spaces. While the photos of Victoria's pets were mostly private, the paintings of the royal pets could vary in display practices, with some remaining intimate while others were sent to be displayed in various

institutions and galleries. In both instances it is the positioning of the dogs in the home that matters; an attempt to position them, and consequently the royal family, as the quintessential example of domestic bliss. This is further strengthened by the fact that most of these dogs would not be naturally housed in the domestic interior but, instead, in the royal kennels, making their visual placement in the domestic sphere for portraits a very deliberate move.

Such artistic choices also appealed to a broader artistic phenomenon in the nineteenth century intended to create a certain moralistic and desirable persona for one's self (or one's patrons) through the use of the interior. As noted by Anca I Lasc, interiors were (and continue to be) highly visual spaces in their own right, and decisions about what items to be employed in the interior could speak for a specific ideology or intent.⁴² This is apparent in *Eos*, for example, where the very deliberate use of red fabrics has already been discussed. Further royal commissions (as seen in Figures 12 to 17) maintained a similar trend when it came to the inclusion of red fabric or upholstery—highlighting both the regal nature of the owners of such dogs and the distinctly domestic nature of these royally-aligned domestic items. This allowed for an exchange between dog and domesticity on the canvas, in which dog and furniture complemented each other to create an overall impression of an aspirational and meticulously managed home life. This is reinforced in modern readings of these paintings. In his appraisal of *Hector, Nero and Dash with the Parrot Lory* (1838) William Secord notes that 'Except perhaps for the court pet portraits by the eighteenth century French painters Oudry and Greuze, the dog had never before been depicted in such a luxurious domestic interior.'⁴³

⁴² See Anca I. Lasc, 'Angels and Rebels: The Obsessions and Transgressions of the Modern Interior', in Georgina Downey, *Designing the French Interior: The Modern Home and Mass Media*, ed. by and Mark Taylor, pp. 47-58, (p. 49).

⁴³ Secord, *Dog Painting*, pp. 287-288.

This ‘regal canine domesticity’, as Secord labels it, is even more apparent in Landseer’s painting, *Windsor Castle in the Present Time* (1840–1843). The painting was inspired by a genre of painting known as a ‘conversation piece’, that is, a fabricated incident made to seem realistic. In such a composition the appeal to the domestic becomes direct.

Figure 18 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 18: Sir Edwin Landseer, *Windsor Castle in the Present Time* (also known as *Windsor Castle In Modern Times*), oil on canvas, 1840–1843, The Royal Collection, London.

A tribute to home, hearth and hounds, *Windsor Castle in the Present Time* presents the royal family alongside their canine companions in a touching domestic scene. Prince Albert has returned from a shooting excursion with many different game birds to present to his family. Queen Victoria lovingly greets him with a bouquet of flowers. The couple both complement and contrast each other—the Queen presented as the epitome of feminine virtue and purity and Albert presented as the masculine hunter and hero.⁴⁴ Each dog depicted plays a role in this domestic narrative. Eos, Albert’s favourite, sits faithfully at Albert’s feet while he strokes her approvingly. Meanwhile the black terrier Dandie licks his hand in a show of faithfulness. Islay begs playfully to the couple (a pose that was seen in other renditions of Islay by Landseer), while Cairnach watches over Victoria, the Princess Royal, who is playing with a dead kingfisher.

The adoring or otherwise affectionate gaze was a common inclusion in Victorian artwork and was typically used to reveal any deeper emotions felt between the figures shown in a piece. Although the gaze was most commonly exchanged between human sitters it could also be extended to dogs too, as Stephen Kern observes of exchanges such

⁴⁴ Ormond, *Landseer*, p. 150.

as that seen in *Effie Deans* (1877), in which Effie's 'faithful dog looks up at [their owner] helplessly with a patient stare that counter poses the man's impatient gaze'.⁴⁵ Kern also observes the relationship between Bullseye and Nancy in *Oliver Twist* (to later be explored in Chapter Three), in which 'the eyes of a fatally faithful dog...derive their ultimate moral energy from the haunting eyes of the murdered woman herself'.⁴⁶

In both of these instances the dog's gaze is used to reflect negative connotations, but the loving stares of the dogs in *Windsor Castle In Modern Times* can be read as more emblematic of the positive familial affection felt between the royal family unit. Most of the dogs featured look lovingly up at Albert—mirroring Queen Victoria's own adoring expression as she looks to her husband. The one dog to look away, Cairnach, does so only to oversee the activities of the young princess as she goes about her playful acts. The gaze of these dogs thus works to underpin the central theme of the painting—reinforcing the overall familial ideal presented on the canvas.

Landseer was paid 800 guineas for the royal commission and it could be purchased by the public as an engraving for £2 2s from the successful publishers Henry Graves & Co.⁴⁷ Both gained acclaim and of the engraving of *Windsor Castle in the Present Time* one publishers boasted that it '[could not] fail to become popular in all circles, from the Palace to the Cottage'.⁴⁸ In an advertisement promoting the print by Graves the painting itself was said to bring focus to the royal couple 'seen emphatically AT HOME—appealing with gentle eloquence to those domestic sympathies of which all her subjects, from the highest to the lowest, are rightly and justly proud'.⁴⁹ Such a statement reveals not only the lucrative business found in canine depictions, but also the artistic intent and

⁴⁵ Stephen Kern, *Eyes of Love: The Gaze in English and French Paintings and Novels, 1840-1900* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996), p. 156

⁴⁶ Kern, *Eyes of Love*, p. 151.

⁴⁷ George Willis, *Willis's Price Current Catalogue* (London, 1855), p. 10.

⁴⁸ Willis, *Price Catalogue*, p. 10.

⁴⁹ *Bent's Literary Advisor: Register of Books, Engravings, Etc.* (London: Thomas Hodgson, 1851), p. 169.

public reception of such pieces. The middle classes sought to emulate the domestic ideal and the Queen was presented as an icon of domesticity.⁵⁰ As such Landseer's royal engravings served not only as an attractive display piece but also a visual guideline of the domestic ideals, 'appealing with gentle eloquence to those domestic sympathies' that one should aspire to; central to which was the dog.

Consequently, the proliferation of such royal commissions elevated the status of the royal couple, the domestic ideal, and the popularity of the dog as a representative of the home throughout the period. Such developments were at least partially deliberate—as the Queen was noticeably engaged in canine culture. As such Landseer and the Queen's broader patronage of pet portraiture had a significant impact on the way in which the dog was perceived throughout the period. No longer simply a hunting or working animal, the dog was a central representative of the domestic sphere and the ideals it embodied; not simply domesticated but also domestic through-and-through. This shift, and the associated social rhetoric, was marketed towards the middle classes, both acting as supplementary material to other forms of cultural and religious instruction and confirmation for their own values and cultural identity.

A Matter of Breeding

Breeding, Status and Visibility in Middle-Class Pet Keeping

While the Queen popularized both pet portraiture and a broader love of dogs in a domestic setting the acquisition of her canine collection was not entirely ruled by sentiment. As dogs were often gifts from members of state or other royal families, the owning and displaying of such dogs also represented the Queen's national and international power. Dash himself was a gift from Sir John Conroy, for example, and Hector was given to

⁵⁰ Margaret Homans, *Royal Representations: Queen Victoria and British Culture, 1837-1876* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 7.

Victoria by Lawrence Dundas. In one royal commission by Thomas Musgrove Joy (1812-66) an aspect of imperialism becomes apparent too, as the three dogs shown have been claimed from various expeditions: the Eskimo dog having been given to the Queen in 1843 by Captain Wemyss, and the Basenji coming from a 1842 Niger expedition (and being named 'Niger' accordingly). Dogs were another display of the Queen's far-reaching influence: a symbol of status.

Figure 19 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 19: Thomas Musgrove Joy, *Three Dogs: An Eskimo Dog, A Basenji from the Niger and Nelson, a Poodle*, oil on canvas, 1843, The Royal Collection, London.

The most prominent example of this was the Queen's prized Pekingese, Looty, whose name indicates the situation through which he was acquired. Discovered by Captain John Hart Dunne of the 99th Regiment during the burning of the Summer Palace near Beijing, Looty was presented to the Queen in April 1861 as a gift. As a novelty Looty was declared the smallest dog in the kingdom and his portrait and biography were circulated in *The Field* on 23 May by the Queen's desire.⁵¹ Facsimile prints of Looty were made available to the public through the *Lady's Weekly Journal*, purporting to be a life-sized representation of the tiny dog.⁵² The image circulated through print media was one by artist William Fredrick Keyl in 1861. Surrounded by items evocative of orientalism, Looty's picture made clear allusions to the Queen's imperial might and status. In addition to prints the painting was also exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1862, highlighting the degree to which the displaying of dogs and the displaying of status were synonymous.

⁵¹ *Saturday Review*, 23 May 1863, p. 680.

⁵² 'Her Majesty's Pet Dog Looty', *The Times*, 25 June 1862, p. 13.

Figure 20 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 20: Friedrich Wilhelm Keyl, *Looty*, oil on canvas, 1861, The Royal Collection, London.

Such displays were appealing to the growing middle classes from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. In fact, by the final years of the nineteenth century the positioning of dogs (particularly well-bred dogs) as visual indicators of status was very apparent. A canine manual of 1890 gives testament to this by asserting that:

It is a fact which can hardly be disputed that nobody now who is anybody can afford to be followed about by a mongrel dog. Since the institution of dog shows in this country, knowledge concerning the points of the different breeds has been gradually disseminated among the people.

Such appeals to social affluence were also seen in the *Strand Magazine*'s exploration of the Dog Toilet Club of New Bond Street. In this exploration into the growing canine fashions of the 1890s the author William G. Fitzgerald explored (with some disbelief) the extent to which status had become a prominent aspect of pet ownership, noting that 'there are fashions in ladies' dogs just as there are in dresses and millinery'.⁵³ Interestingly Fitzgerald also notes that 'in this, as in other matters, Royalty leads the way'.⁵⁴

Describing the Toilet Club Fitzgerald observed that:

Everything about this club is of the daintiest ... The reception room—as one may judge from the illustration—is quite a sumptuous apartment. The pictorial art of this handsome apartment is distinctly canine; so, too, are the contents of the glass-topped table seen on the left. This contains an interesting—not to say surprising—collection of requisites for fashionable dogs.⁵⁵

⁵³ William G. Fitzgerald, 'Dandy Dogs', *Strand Magazine*, January to June 1896, pp.538-550 (p. 545).

⁵⁴ Fitzgerald, 'Dandy Dogs', p. 545.

⁵⁵ Fitzgerald, 'Dandy Dogs', p. 538.

The extent to which breeding became a marker for social class has become as well-known now as it was in the 1890s. Burt considers this, noting that, in the case of the dog:

whose, increasing popularity as a pet and fancy animal during the second half of the nineteenth century was institutionalised by the rapid increase in the number of dog shows and societies, there was indeed a definite set of associations made between well-bred dogs and well-bred humans.⁵⁶

Within these developments the prominence of visual culture cannot be ignored, as it played a key part in the shifting status and associated social indicators of the dog. One need only consider the image circulation of Looty in order to get a sense of this but more can be found in Fitzgerald's description of the Toilet Club. Interior aesthetics merges with fashionable attire, which merges with the canine body which is then placed on display through 'distinctly canine' pictorial art, all of which is then conveyed in the article through illustrations, and photography. The interwoven pictorial aspects of canine culture were inescapable and the social prominence of the dog was clearly mediated through such exercises: through its ability to be displayed and looked at, adorned with clothes or painted for the world to see. Canine status in the Victorian period was a visual affair. However, dogs in the early years of the pet fancy did not need to be in dandy attire in order to display their owner's affluence. In this endeavour it was breeding which was key.

By the mid-nineteenth century the breeding of dogs was not simply a recreational affair but also a deliberate attempt at showing the owner's social superiority. Compared to other domesticated animals, dogs were very diverse in appearance and more receptive to changes through breeding. Breeding dogs allowed the fanciers of the middle classes a relatively easy way to declare their aptitude when it came to physical and social refinement. Dog keeping was, after all, chiefly associated with the aristocracy up until this point. As such to own a dog of pure breeding was to elevate one's own position in

⁵⁶ Burt, 'The Effect of Pets', p. 55.

society. But in order to maintain and properly grade such social structures the previously under-developed definitions of dog breeds needed to be standardised and rigorously enforced. Thus dog shows and breeding standards were widely introduced.

The first official dog show was held on 28 and 29 June 1859 in Newcastle upon Tyne town hall. It was a very modest show, displaying only pointers and setters and with just sixty entries.⁵⁷ The first recognised breed standards laid out for a dog were in 1867 for another Pointer by the name of Major. While these initial attempts at canine display were situated in the field of sporting and practicality, the practice of canine categorisation was proliferated as time went on. The Kennel Club was founded in 1873 and dog shows became massive public events with hundreds or even thousands of entries.⁵⁸ As dog shows became increasingly associated with the middle classes a sense of animosity towards these fanciers grew among traditional sporting breeders, too. In their mind the dogs of the middle classes were impractical, poorly bred, and intended for display instead of functionality.⁵⁹ They were often justified but their hostility provides one more instance of the shift in the intentions of dog shows and the dog's shifting role in society as a whole.

Figures 21–22 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 21: [Left] Attributed to Alken, *Billy, the celebrated rat killing dog, killing 100 rats*, c.1823.

Figure 22: [Right] R. Marshall, *An Early Canine Meeting*, oil on canvas, 1855, The Kennel Club, London.

Visual culture played an important role in observing these changes, as the dog's points were marked in an aesthetic manner. The changing function of dog-based gatherings were also documented through imagery which provides one historical source for appreciating the changing remit of such events. In an image of Billy (a celebrated rat

⁵⁷ C.H. Lance, *Dog Shows and Doggy People* (London: Hutchinson, 1902), p. 263.

⁵⁸ 'The Crystal Palace Dog Show', *Edinburgh Evening News*, 10 June 1874, p. 3.

⁵⁹ Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 88.

dog, who once killed a hundred in one ‘show’) we see that the former function of a ‘dog show’ was much more brutal and, in many ways, chaotic. In this image the dog, Billy, is rather nondescript in breed. He is a terrier but there is no desire for him to conform to a standard. It is, instead, his ability as a prized rat catcher which is valued and, consequently, displayed in this image. The audience, is presented as a mingling of classes with the event open to all.

This picture provides a striking contrast to that of *An Early Canine Meeting* (1855), which acts as a group portrait of members of the soon-to-be canine fancy seating is repose and gazing at the viewer. In this picture each individual is depicted in a calm and orderly manner (as opposed to the comparative ruckus of the rat catching scene). Not a single dog is shown as functional, they are simply displayed, with more attention given to the breed of the dog than their practical function. The shift in class accessibility is also very apparent. In a public rat killing show anyone could theoretically attend, however in the confines of a club house only those elected would be welcomed.

Figures 23–24 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 23: [Left] Attributed to Alken, Detail from *Billy, the celebrated rat killing dog, killing 100 rats*, c.1823.

Figure 24: [Right] R. Marshall, Detail from *An Early Canine Meeting*, oil on canvas, 1855, The Kennel Club, London.

Yet *An Early Canine Meeting* embraces the past by reproducing an illustration of Billy on the wall alongside other images of rat catching. Additional representations of rat catching and activities such as boxing also serves to align these canine meetings in the realm of the masculine. The attitude being presented is that of a restructuring of canine / human relations in the recreational sector, addressing civility, and social standing in a specifically masculine sphere. The focus of the painting was also on the owners as much

as the dogs, whereas, as we noted in the last case study, this would not continue to be the case.

By this period, pet portraiture was a very popular genre, and the canine fancy would often use this in order to display their well-bred specimens. Although featuring an absence of the owner, Landseer's *Eos* reminds us that such canine imagery served to represent them in an easily recognisable manner. Some of these images further adopted recognisable symbols used in the royal portraiture; situating the dog in the domestic sphere and including items such as canes and clothing, which would allude to the owner. *Maltese on a Table* (1850), for example, not only makes references to the pose, gloves and cane included in Landseer's *Eos* but also emulates another painting of Landseer's titled *The Cavalier's Pets* (1845). This desire to emulate the style and composition of prominent animal painters demonstrates both the artistic awareness of dog fanciers but also their desire to situate their dogs (and themselves) within such artistic trends.

Figures 25–26 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 25: [Left] English School, *Maltese on a Table*, oil on canvas, 1850, Private Collection.

Figure 26: [Right] Sir Edwin Landseer, *The Cavalier's Pets*, oil on canvas, 1845, The Tate Collection, London.

Such imagery gives us a taste of the visual language of the pet fancy, however further uses of the visual are found in the show rings themselves. The desire for dogs to speak of human class and breeding grew into an increasingly strong desire to match canine points and visual features with that of the class they belonged to. As such dog shows and the visual form of canines quickly became linked with the growing social divisions of various breeds. The resulting imagery acted to create a structure in which dog and owner could be matched visually, typically in terms of physiognomy.

Capturing Canine Class

In the Victorian period dogs came with an inexorable social narrative. As breeding and breeds became more refined so, too, did the system through which canine and owner were judged. Harriet Ritvo explored the construction of these social indicators, noting that ‘As most fanciers were, in this sense, self-created, so their exploration of the physical malleability of their animals was extremely self-referential’.⁶⁰ With everyone aware of these self-referential constructions the dog became endowed with personal rank, and, in this, imagery was essential.

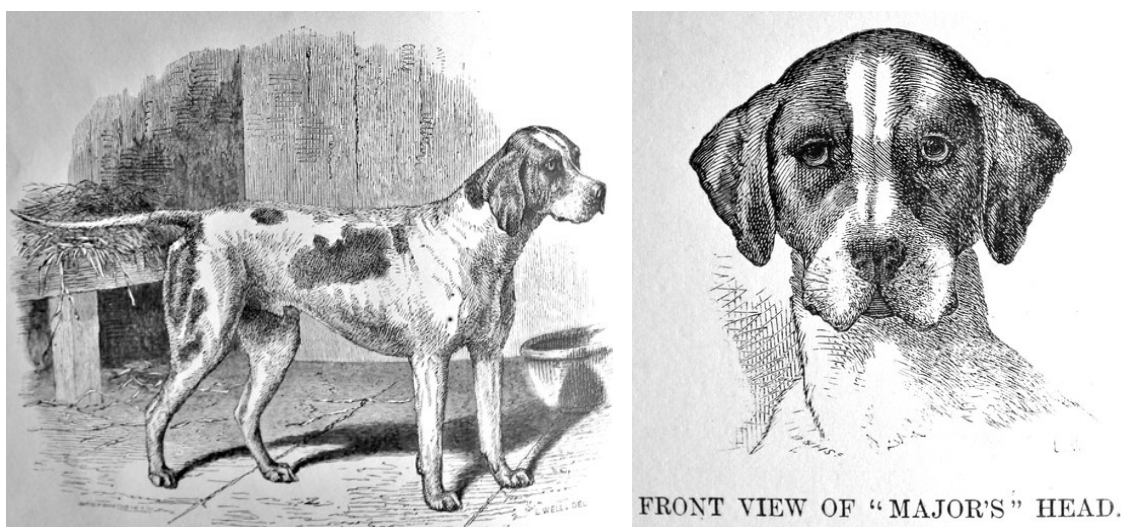


Figure 27: Depictions of Major, in *The Dogs of the British Island: Being a Series of Articles and Letters by Various Contributors Reprinted from the “Field” Newspaper*, 1867, p. 50, Author’s Collection.

Dogs in the show ring were, after all, judged on points; the visible traits of the animal which were expected to be seen in person and on the canvas. The manner in which these points were conveyed were also widely dependent on illustrations to convey what was visually desirable. Even the first breed standards for Major came with illustrations and, while the *Field* asserted that ‘our critique on the portrait of dogs must scarcely be looked upon as a criticism of the dogs themselves’ it still, through necessity, continued to compile portraits to judge and disseminate the breed standard.⁶¹ As Julia Thomas

⁶⁰ Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 115.

⁶¹ ‘Stonehenge’, ed., *The Dogs of the British Island: Being a Series of Articles and Letters by Various Contributors Reprinted from the “Field” Newspaper*, (London: Horace Cox, 1867), p. 3.

observed with the crinoline, in such judgments the real, textual and visualized come into dialogue with each other to inform how the public perceived the dog.⁶² Consequently, audiences often judged such images as if they were speaking of the actual animal represented, in lengthy discussions about the shape and stature of the chosen canine, engaging in a performance of social prestige.

This was not an exception to the rule but rather the norm and dogs shows would typically have illustrations created—both of the participating canines and the subsequent winners. Through such artistic renditions the connection between the dog and their painted (or illustrated) persona were strengthened in the eyes of the Victorian canophile. Prominent animal artists, such as George Earl (1824–1908) or Louis Wain (1860–1939) were often employed to undertake these renditions, too, suggesting a degree of significance to the quality of the finished work. Dog fanciers wanted what they considered to be true and ‘faithful representations’⁶³ of the dogs shown and commissioned artists that they believed would be capable of achieving the accuracy desired. In this, dog fanciers were creating a complex structure in which breed and imagery became intrinsically linked; demanding illustrations of dogs which would then be used to determine the points of the next generation of show winners, which would then be immortalised in illustrations themselves. No canine illustration was truly without the social constructions of breed purity in which the fancy participated.

⁶² Thomas, *Pictorial Victorians*, p. 79.

⁶³ Stonehenge, *The Dogs of the British Island*, p. 3.



DOG SHOW AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE: PRIZE DOGS, DRAWN BY LOUIS WAIN.

Figure 28: Louis Wain, *Dog Show at the Crystal Palace: Prize Dogs*, print on paper, c.1880s-90s, Author's Collection.



A DOG SHOW AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

Paxton's great building at Sydenham is admirably adapted for big exhibitions such as the annual Dog Show of the Kennel Club. The animals are benched all along the nave, which is 1,608 feet long; and even this space is insufficient for all the competitors, while there is plenty of room in the Central Transept for the judges' rings, one of which is shown in our picture. Moreover, the Palace is light and airy, and the barking of the dogs is not so deafening here as in smaller buildings. To these shows the best bred dogs in the country are sent, of almost every known variety, and to win a prize in such company is praise indeed. The Kennel Club, which was founded in 1874, has much the same authority in the "doggy" world that the Jockey Club exercises on the Turf.

From Photo by Currier & Co., Ltd.

Figure 29: 'A Dog Show at the Crystal Palace', in *The Queen's London: A Pictorial and Descriptive Record of the Streets, Buildings, Parks and Sceneries of the Great Metropolis*, 1896 (London: Cassell & Company, 1896), Author's Collection.

As the frequency and esteem of dog shows grew so, too, did the platform in which they occurred. Many dog shows would take place in the Crystal Palace, for example, a building with significant social meaning. Originally housing the Great Exhibition of

1851, the Crystal Palace represented to many innovation, national prestige, cultural significance and industrial superiority. To situate dog shows in the restructured Crystal Palace was to show a desire among fanciers to be aligned with the technological sophistication that the Great Exhibition was attributed too. By the 1890s the days of quaint local shows were a thing of the past, replaced with grand displays of the affluence and prestige of certain dogs and the people who participated within them. One such dog show even featured in *The Queen's London: A Pictorial and Descriptive Record of the Streets, Buildings, Parks and Sceneries of the Great Metropolis*.⁶⁴ Presented as an exemplary of the modern great Metropolis, the illustration and its significance create quite a striking contrast to the early canine meeting of Marshall's painting.

The balance between scientific endeavours and aesthetic majesty also aligned the Great Exhibition and the dog fancy together. While both ultimately stated that they had a basis in scientific excellence (the Great Exhibition through its showcase of industrial might and dog breeding through its breeding practices) both ultimately constituted an artistic and cultural display, as much as they did a technological or scientific one.

Yet despite some critics' insistence that they were not swayed by interchangeable use of canine imagery and living dogs many fanciers considered themselves well-trained in judging the quality of a canvas as well as a canine. The *Field*, for example, although eager to dismiss illustrations insisted that they had 'carefully criticized' each portrait they included in the magazine to determine their accuracy.⁶⁵ Those who frequented the show ring considered themselves to be, in many ways, canine connoisseurs—able to judge a dog and, subsequently, its owner, through just a few simple clues.

⁶⁴ *The Queen's London: A Pictorial and Descriptive Record of the Streets, Buildings, Parks and Sceneries of the Great Metropolis*, 1896 (London: Cassell & Company, 1896).

⁶⁵ Stonehenge, *The Dogs of the British Island*, p. 3.



Figure 30: ‘The International Dog Show at Islington’, in *Illustrated London News*, 1865, p. 548, Author’s Collection.

The extent to which these trends of physically analysing dog and owner prevailed can be seen in an illustration for ‘The International Dog Show at Islington’. In this illustration each breed of dog is linked to a breed of owner, alluding to a shared physiognomy between dog and owner. This can also be seen in high art, such as with William Powell Frith’s *Derby Day* (1856–8) in which the people of the country are paired with a Collie whereas the unscrupulous characters of the city possess a bulldog. Such allusions were certainly in keeping with Frith’s artistic practices, as a painter highly associated with the study of human character and the *Derby Day* itself being considered as ‘a virtual microcosm of contemporary society’ which Frith ‘exploited...to the full’.⁶⁶ Physiognomic types and practices of phrenology were often employed when matching dogs to their human counterpart; as demonstrated through the disreputable bulldog type (a character explored further in Chapter Four).

Figures 31–32 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

⁶⁶ Mark Bills, Vivien Knight, eds., *William Powell Frith: Painting the Victorian Age* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 59.

Figure 31: [Left] William Powell Frith, Detail from *The Derby Day*, oil on canvas, 1856-8, The Tate Collection, London.

Figure 32: [Right] ‘Bull-Dog Type’, in *Fun*, 1862, p. 98, Private Collection.

The Victorian public was aware of these associations between dog and owner. In *Punch* an image by George du Maurier (1834-96) comically depicts a case of mistaken identity, in which a terrified old lady has confused the physical type of a young man following her and tries to report this ultimately feeble boy to a nearby policeman. Such an image appeals to the popular Victorian belief in physiognomy and phrenology, as Cowling notes that Victorian viewers believed that ‘the physical type [of a person] indicates the moral; a belief as central to Victorian illustration as to its painting’.⁶⁷ The illustration is demonstrative of the prevalence of physiognomy and the ease with which the public recognised such visual indicators.

Figure 33–34 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 33: [Left] George du Maurier, ‘Mistaken Identity’, in *Punch*, 1862, p. 58, Private Collection.

Figure 34: [Right] George du Maurier, ‘The Letter of the Law’, in *Punch*, 1875, p. 236, Private Collection.

We can thus consider it significant that George du Maurier revisited (or perhaps drew inspiration from) this work in another image he drew—in which an equally alarmed old lady complains that a suspicious looking dog is following her. In this illustration the dog’s physical features are noticeably meant to be read in equal measure to any of the other characters shown. Subsequently it becomes clear that people were not only capable of reading the character and social background of a canine but were also expected to do so as part of their regular media consumption. Canine physiognomy became just as readable in the Victorian period as human physiognomy did. This supports Cowling’s

⁶⁷ Mary Cowling, *The Artist as Anthropologist: The Representation of Type and Character in Victorian Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 113.

contention that ‘even the animal world was regarded with an eye ready to discriminate on grounds of class,’ and that ‘In their paintings of animals, artists did not ignore the question of class distinction’.⁶⁸ However the increasing practices of canine physiognomy did not just provide the dog fancy with visual identifiers of class but also with a justification for their judgements. As physiognomy gave legitimacy to the examination of social ranks among humans so, too, did it validate the appraisal of dogs and their owners.

These social structures in the identification of dogs began in the mid-to-late Victorian period but, as the increasing popularity of dog shows demonstrates, were still prevalent by the end of the period. They were not only at the height of their popularity but built up through half a century’s worth of visual and cultural encoding. Through the frequent use of imagery in both the judging of breeds and the displaying of the fancy the dog fancy was considerably engaged with the arts and, as such, subconsciously collaborated in the construction of dogs. Not only this but such class-centred associations seem to have been so prevalent that they were readily readable by the public.

Canine Character and the Appeal to Moral Decency

As the dog developed into an indicator of class and social propriety from the middle of the century onwards so, too, did concepts of what a dog could and could not feel in terms of emotions and morality. The result was the heavy employment of anthropomorphism in relation to the dog, ascribing human traits and characteristics to canine representations. The proliferation and popularity of such anthropocentric representations of canine character can be easily identified in the words of Landseer’s critics, who were often eager to point, as the *Spectator* did to Landseer’s use of ‘sentiment and fine feeling’ in his canine portraits.⁶⁹ However, while Landseer may have (by Manson and the *Magazine of Art*’s account) created a new type of canine character in the

⁶⁸ Cowling, *The Artist as Anthropologist*, p. 161.

⁶⁹ ‘Sir Edwin Landseer’, *Spectator*, 11 October 1873, p. 1274.

arts, the employment of anthropomorphism was not restricted to his artworks and nor were the ‘fine feelings’ that were culturally prescribed to the dog. Artists such as Charles Burton Barber and Briton Rivière flourished by centralizing their works around loving canines possessing sympathetic feelings.

Figure 35 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 35: Briton Rivière, *Envy, Hatred, Malice*, oil on canvas, 1881, Private Collection.

Rivière’s particular interest in exploring emotions in dogs can be seen quite clearly through his work *Envy, Hatred, Malice* (1881) in which a group of dogs express various different emotions in reaction to being rejected in favour of their owner’s cherished pug. The painting was exhibited in Gallery No. 1 at the Royal Academy in 1881 alongside works such as William Powell Frith’s *For Better, for Worse* (1881). The *Saturday Review* considered the painting to be compelling, noting that ‘the dogs are true and as well painted as one would expect them to be by Mr. Rivière’.⁷⁰ The *Magazine of Art* gave equal praise to the work noting that ‘Mr. Briton Rivière has as usual signalled his talent by admirable, solid, and characteristic studies of dogs of various races and temperaments’ asserting that:

Mr. Rivière draws in a masterly way which few of his contemporaries can equal, and his intelligence in the finer appreciation of animal character is something quite exceptional even among distinguished painters of the “gentle beasts”.⁷¹

Frederick Stacpoole published an engraving of the work in 1884, signalling its success.⁷² That the dogs depicted in Rivière’s works received high praise from such a well-regarded art magazine is also indicative of the extent to which both canine painters and anthropomorphic canines had a place in the Victorian art market. Also noteworthy is

⁷⁰ ‘The Picture Galleries’, *Saturday Review*, 30 April 1881, p. 559.

⁷¹ Marion Harry Spielmann, ‘Pictures of the Year-I.’, *Magazine of Art*, 4 January 1881, p. 305.

⁷² ‘New Prints and Etchings’, *The Times*, 27 March 1884, p. 10.

the language employed in reviews. Both the *Sunday Review* and the *Magazine of Art* praised Rivière for the truth and appreciation of canine character; as if Rivière were accurately depicting the emotions of the dogs shown rather than affording them an element of humanity. The painting also received a very serious appraisal, despite the seemingly light-hearted topic of the piece. Rivière's paintings and canine expression were, it seemed, a balancing acts of various aspects: seen as appealing to both truth and comical sentiment, finding the perfect balance to charm the public without seeming outlandish in their canine expressions. In this painting Rivière is not simply playing with emotion in dogs, either, but also what emotions different breeds of dog may experience when confronted with a perturbing situation. This suggests just how receptive Victorian artists and audiences were to the endowment of complex emotions in dogs, and the nuances that such representations entailed.

The popularity of such paintings and the readiness of the public for such imagery should come as no surprise considering the social climate that the dog came to occupy from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Brought into the home as a partial member of the family it was perhaps inescapable that emotions would be applied to man's best friend. The cultural, as well as domestic placement of the dog also came into play here. With class and morality firmly established within the conceptual domestic dog, 'character' seemed to be a necessity, being intrinsically tied to them. These emotional depictions of dogs served not only as confirmation of their place in the home but also as a display of the dog's capacity to uphold domestic values and convey moralistic messages. If dogs were perceived as representative of their owners then there needed to be a sense of shared character traits, beyond simply the physical. This was especially the case when shared values were involved.

Figures 36–37 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 36: [Left] Sir Edwin Henry Landseer, *High Life*, oil on mahogany, 1829, The Tate Collection, London.

Figure 37: [Right] Sir Edwin Henry Landseer, *Low Life*, oil on mahogany, 1829, The Tate Collection, London.

For the middle classes the capacity of dogs to have character would have indicated a shared sense of morality among pure bred dogs and their owners. By contrast the mongrels of the street were expected to be as currish as their owners. Such contrasts can be seen, for example, in Landseer’s *High Life* (1829) and *Low Life* (1829), in which the traits and implied personality of a medievalised hunting dog are contrasted with an uncouth terrier. Imagery of this kind helped further assert the boundaries of space in which urban and domestic dogs existed while also helping to further propagate the value (and values) of well-bred dogs.

In Landseer’s instance (one of the earliest explicit examples of its kind) the aristocratic hound of *High Life* worked in tandem with *Low Life* to offer up a moral meaning centred around the class background and presupposed traits of these dogs. The hunting dog, attributed to the aristocracy, may have been of better breed than the lowly dog (credited as a butcher’s dog by many) but the two were often considered as ‘equated in moral depravity’—sharing in a similar status a morally devoid compared to the ideal of the middle classes.⁷³ Stemming from this, the true nature of these two dogs became a point of debate among critics, with some further implying that the butcher’s dog from *Low Life* was the true protagonist of these paintings and a potential moral exemplar.⁷⁴ One such commentator emphasised the varying associations made with *Low Life* in particular

⁷³ Diana Donald, *Picturing Animals*, p.332.

⁷⁴ J. Keri Cronin, “‘Popular Affection’: Edwin Landseer and Nineteenth-Century Animal Advocacy Campaigns”, in *Animal Subjects 2.0*, ed. by in Jodey Castricano, Lauren Corman, (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), pp. 81–108, p. 92.

when assessing the dog as of ‘unmannerly bearing, untutored disposition, uncontrolled passions, and vicious self-indulgence’ yet considered the dog as only having ‘borrowed the fierceness and vulgarity of (his owner’s) disposition’ making reference to the varying parallels between dog and owner while also querying the true vulgarity of the dog that Landseer presents us with.⁷⁵

The personality infused into his canine subjects was so compelling that the English novelist Sarah Tytler later published a book titled *Landseer’s Dogs and Their Stories*, in which character studies were given for some of Landseer’s most famous dog paintings.⁷⁶ Through *Landseer’s Dogs* it also becomes apparent that the Victorian public not only saw dogs as having human characteristics but also as having their own story to tell. This particular interest in the represented character of dogs, and the moral values they could convey, became apparent in the mid-to-late nineteenth century as authors increasingly chose to publish stories solely focusing on the dog’s life.⁷⁷ These stories were either recounted by the owner (creating a shared representation through the ‘dogography’) or were spoken entirely from the dog’s imagined perspective (an autodogography). In this the textual and visual aspects of the dog came into dialogue to create a shared sense of character.

Such dogographies confirmed, and conformed to, constructions of canine class and moral character as presented for a middle-class audience. In one such book, for example, a poodle recounts how his father ‘came of a high-born race, who for generations had ranked first among their fellows’.⁷⁸ Meanwhile the high-born poodle’s wife was

⁷⁵ John Cassell, *John Cassell’s Art Treasures Exhibition* (London: W. Kent, 1858), p. 34.

⁷⁶ Sarah Tytler, *Landseer’s Dogs and Their Stories* (London: Ward, 1877).

⁷⁷ More information on the emergence and proliferation of animal biography can be found in the works of Tess Cosslett, *Talking Animals in British Children’s Fiction, 1786-1914* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006) and Julie A. Smith, ‘Representing Animal Minds in Early Animal Autobiography: Charlotte Tucker’s *The Rambles of a Rat* and Nineteenth-Century Natural History’, *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 43 (2015), 725–744.

⁷⁸ Lucy D. Thornton, *The Story of a Poodle by Himself and his Mistress* (London: Sampson Low, 1899), p. B.

‘small and lithe, and, to his eye, possessed of all qualities necessary to make her a good and loving wife to him’.⁷⁹ Familial ties, class, and a discerning character were recurring themes in such dogographies. For example, in *The Autobiography of a Bulldog* the canine protagonist tells the reader that since his mother ‘moved in the upper circles’ of society he was unable to ‘speak with any of the common dogs we met in our walks abroad’.⁸⁰ The increasing exploration of semi-human character in the canine race, humorous and satirical at first, became so widespread that even books on dog fancying or scientific texts⁸¹ were willing to take up such anthropomorphic readings of the dog; recounting anecdotes along with advice on care and breeding. The Victorians were subsequently very familiar with projecting traits and characters onto dogs, and they would try to read them for such traits. In these developments, through both illustration and paintings, art strongly interacted with the construction and proliferation of canine character. Landseer, as we have seen, played a major part, but the pervasive idea of canine character was apparent in the works of many other canine artists.

⁷⁹ Thornton, *The Story of a Poodle*, p. B.

⁸⁰ Neville Peel, *The Autobiography of a Bulldog* (1899), p. 7.

⁸¹ George John Romanes, *Animal Intelligence* (London: Kegan Paul, 1882), pp. 437-470.

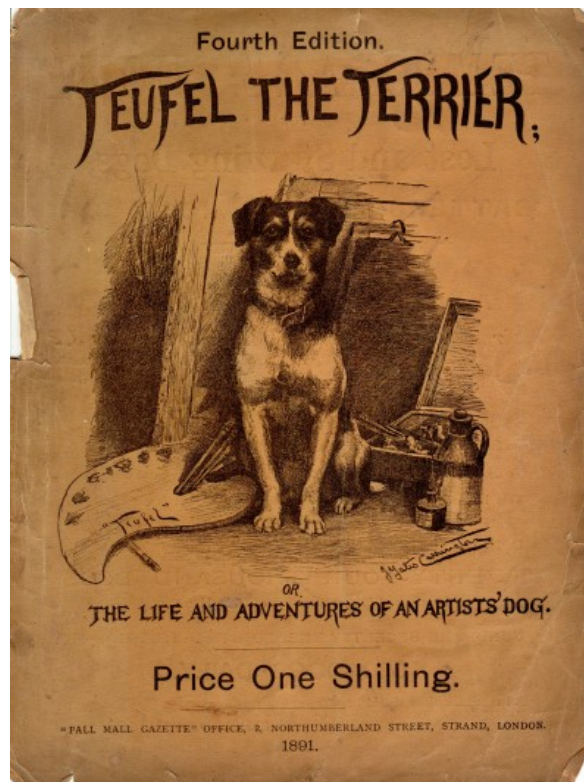


Figure 38: ‘Teufel the Terrier’, in James Yates Carrington, *Teufel the Terrier; Or the Life and Adventures of an Artist’s Dog* (London: Pall Mall Gazette, 1890), Cover, Author’s Collection.

The coupling of class and morality in canine imagery shall be further explored in Chapter Two but, for now, it is important to recognise how influential the employment of character could be within Victorian canine culture. Chief amongst the artists using canine character is James Yates Carrington through his pet terrier Teufel. Carrington had gained little success in his early years as a landscape painter but his career was launched when he decided to turn to painting his faithful companion; a story told to the public in his own book about Teufel’s life. Combining artist biography, dogography, art and canine character, Carrington’s success was such that his stories were serialized in the *Pall Mall Gazette* leading to the eventual publication of *Teufel the Terrier* by the *Pall Mall Gazette*.



Figure 39: ‘Show Day’ in James Yates Carrington, *Teufel the Terrier; Or the Life and Adventures of an Artist’s Dog* (London: Pall Mall Gazette, 1890), p. 66, Author’s Collection.

Teufel the Terrier, became so popular that it was reprinted in multiple additions for a variety of audiences and a copy was even presented to the Queen by the author in November 1890.⁸² Some of the editions were presented as luxury items—bound in ‘handsome and substantial form and printed on specifically made paper’ as Christmas presents—cheaper editions sold for one shilling.⁸³ Considering the multiple print runs and varying prices of these books it can be considered that Carrington earned a sizable amount from them. The symbiotic relationship that Carrington forged between canine character, dogographic publications, and artistic output also seemed to translate to financial and artistic success. Carrington’s initial tableaux paintings of Teufel were submitted in 1883 at the Royal Academy and were hung on the line.⁸⁴ Another three paintings in 1885 were given the same prestigious position.⁸⁵ This became a common occurrence; as Carrington’s last painting before his death, *The Strolling Players* (1890), was also on the line.⁸⁶ At times Carrington’s artworks were in such demand that he sought to defend the copyright

⁸² <https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/1083764/teufel-the-terrier-life-and-adventures-of-and-artists-dog-told-by-j-yates> [Accessed 7 June 2016]

⁸³ ‘Teufel the Terrier’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 3 November 1890, p. 8.

⁸⁴ ‘Death of Mr. Yates Carrington’, *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 3 May 1892.

⁸⁵ ‘An Animal Painter and His Models’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 26 May 1886, pp.1-2.

⁸⁶ ‘To Every Lover of a Dog; The Late Mr. Yates Carrington’s Pictures’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 28 May 1892.

of his paintings in court from fraudulent distributions.⁸⁷ In 1891 Carrington was even able to hold a solo exhibition of artworks primarily dedicated to Teufel. There are also indications that Carrington also had solo shows before this, as Teufel is shown in another exhibition prior to his death in 1889.

Carrington serves to demonstrate the effectiveness of tapping into the public's interest in canine character and artist biographies through engaging in a collaboration of art and literature. In a study of serialized artists' biographies, Julie F. Codell notes that 'Victorians consumed mass quantities of biographies and collective lives'.⁸⁸ Moreover:

Perhaps no single figure was more scrutinized and surveilled than the artist, whose production, daily life, personality, and role as bearer of national character were inextricably tied to the valuations of art works in particular and of cultural production in general.⁸⁹

It is therefore no coincidence that Teufel's tales began as a serial in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Carrington can be seen to invert the public's expectations of an artist's biography by recounting his life through the life of his canine subject and, thus, invoking the Victorians' affection towards canine character. This significant decision by Carrington merged the cult of the celebrity with the cult of the dog, creating a phenomenon in which both dog and artist became 'bearer of national character', whose personalities were simultaneously (and enthusiastically) consumed. Yet none of this would have been possible if not for the drastic changes that dogs underwent. Through a combination of legal changes, spatial shifts, royal patronage, class assimilations, and moralistic impositions the dog became a multifaceted, highly visible and receptively anthropomorphic entity through which various issues could be mediated and made manifest. If artist biographies were

⁸⁷ 'Yesterday's Police Intelligence', *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 7 February 1891, p. 10.

⁸⁸ Julie F. Codell, 'Serialized Artists' Biographies: A Culture Industry in Late Victorian Britain', *Book History*, 3 (2000), 94-124 (p. 94).

⁸⁹ Codell, 'Serialized Artists' Biographies', p. 94.

‘inextricably tied to the valuations of art works in particular and of cultural production in general’ then consideration must also be given to the canine character, as it was also frequently reproduced and readily purchased. Canine representations thus held a significant place within the Victorian art world—inspired by social connotations and made palatable through character—proving to be popular among the public and a lucrative source of profit for artists.

Artist, Dogs and the Art Market

Landseer’s Demise and the Dog’s Place in Art

Carrington’s successful career—built upon his dog’s literary and artistic character—perfectly illustrate the artist’s awareness of the dog’s cultural popularity and the profitable outcome of utilizing it within their work. However for a moment let us turn away from what representations of the dog symbolised in Victorian society and, instead look at their implications for the Victorian art world and market. While the inclination in previous studies has been to section animal paintings off into their own little world the truth is that they often fit within the popular Victorian field of the ‘narrative painting’: ‘an umbrella term for what the Victorians called “scenes from everyday life,” “literary,” “genre,” “historical genre,” “anecdotal,” “domestic,” or “subject pictures”’ as Thomas describes them.⁹⁰ Possessing the capacity to exist in many of these categories, dog paintings and painters were often hung in the same galleries as what we now consider to be ‘the greats’, as Frith’s painting of the Royal Academy show alluded to. Animal painters were not the strays of the art world either, rather they were contemporaries (or sometimes even champions of) the world of narrative painting. As such the full scope to which animal painters interacted with their contemporaries in the art world is something worth exploring in depth and shall inform the final section of this chapter.

⁹⁰ Thomas, *Pictorial Victorians*, p. 4.

When Sir Edwin Landseer died in 1873 the news sent shockwaves throughout the Victorian art world and society as a whole. The day of his funeral was an occasion of national mourning. Houses and shops had their blinds closed, flags flew half-mast and his lions at Trafalgar Square were decorated solemnly with wreaths.⁹¹ Landseer was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, described by *The Times* as 'our Painter's Valhalla', where Turner, Reynolds and Lawrence were also laid to rest.⁹² The print media marked his passing and in 1874 his executors arranged a five-day sale of his paintings, drawings and prints, which sold for a total of almost £70,000. His will was proved at £160,000.⁹³ Landseer's dying wish was for his good friend Sir John Everett Millais (and no one else) to complete the paintings that he had not been able to, a request that Millais took on with a 'sacred trust'.⁹⁴ When Millais himself died in 1896 his success and popularity was considered by the *Academy* to be comparable only to that of Landseer himself.⁹⁵

Yet Landseer's status as an eminent British painter did not happen in spite of his reputation as a painter of dogs but because of it. In one obituary for Landseer in the *Times* the author saw fit to start with the assertion that 'This great painter did so much with the deerhound, the bloodhound and the shepherd's colley that he was long spoken as "the dog painter"'⁹⁶ whereas the *Illustrated Review* concluded its tribute with the closing remarks that:

As Hogarth takes rank above all as a delineator of human character, and as Turner is peerless for his sea views and his river landscapes, so Landseer is above all and beyond in this capacity as an animal painter.⁹⁷

⁹¹ Richard Ormond, *The Monarch of the Glen: Landseer in the Highlands* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2005), p. 127.

⁹² 'Sir Edwin Landseer', *The Times*, 11 October 1873, p. 8.

⁹³ Richard Ormond, *Landseer*, p. 22.

⁹⁴ John Guille Millais, *The Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais* (London: Methuen, 1899), p. 45.

⁹⁵ 'Obituary: Sir J.E. Millais', *Academy*, 22 August 1896, p. 134.

⁹⁶ 'Sir Edwin Landseer', *The Times*, 6 October, 1873, p. 7.

⁹⁷ 'The Late Sir Edwin Landseer', *Illustrated Review*, 9 October 1873, p. 310.

The *Art Journal* had equally high praise of Landseer's capacities as eminently a canine painter in its dedication, with a tribute worth quoting at length:

Animal-painters appeared, in other countries, if not our own—before him: Reubens, Snyders, Desportes, Morland, and others, painted animals, but not as did Landseer—his are essentially his own. Yet however much one may admire his deer and even horses, it is the dog, that “friend of man,” with which his art is most closely identified, and on which he seems to have exhausted all the resources of his great genius. Marvellous is his delineation of this favourite creature, and marvellous the character with which he endowed it. His dogs are not mere portraits only, they are thinking, almost rational creatures, wanting only the gift of speech to hold converse with us. We believe the canine race never had, as a teacher of humanity, one who has so well befriended them as the painter whose loss we are, unhappily, called upon to record.⁹⁸

Landseer's career and artworks were firmly tied with his depictions with dogs and his own actions had a noticeable impact on the way dogs were treated and perceived. This was acknowledged by contemporary audiences as the Reverend J.A. Hessey who at Landseer's funeral said that his paintings ‘might second the efforts of the Society for the Protection of Animals, if, indeed it had not mainly conducted to the establishment of it’.⁹⁹

The *Times* went a step further:

By Reynolds, to whose pencil we owe a more living knowledge of the men of this generation than any pen has given us or may give, may fitly claim to rest this portrait painter ... the first who, in painting dumb beasts, felt and made us feel their brotherhood to ourselves of love and faith, as well as of use and service. This was the great work, which art had left to be done; and it is Landseer's glory ... to have done it.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ ‘Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A.’, *Art Journal*, November 1873, p. 327.

⁹⁹ Campbell Lennie, *Landseer: The Victorian Paragon* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1976) p.239.

¹⁰⁰ ‘Sir Edwin Landseer’, *The Times*, 11 October 1878, p. 8.

In this account the *Times* not only considered the redefining of dogs in Victorian society to have connections with Landseer but also seemingly hailed it as the artist's (and art's) vocation to lead in these changes. By this account, to create a connection between humans and dogs was art's 'great work'. The extent to which artists could be seen to occupy such a remit and the thematic and social implications of such works comprise the rest of this chapter.

Art, dog and painter came together in the public perception of Landseer and with good reason. Just as Landseer's works were connected to the treatment and perception of animals so too were they immersed within the Victorian art world. Landseer was made an Associate of the Royal Academy at the young age of twenty four (a feat which was only matched by Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830) and Millais at the time of Landseer's death) and since he had first exhibited there in 1815 his name was only missing from the roster seven times.¹⁰¹ If not for turning down the position Landseer would have become the president of the Royal Academy in 1866, having been elected for the role. Between 1818 and 1865 he exhibited no less than ninety pictures at the British Institution in addition to exhibiting with the Society of British Artists and others.¹⁰² He was good friends with Millais and Frith, among other well-recognised painters of the period, with the *Times* observing that 'many of the members of the Academy will have to make long journeys in order that they may stand by the grave of Landseer. Yet from the letters which have already been received it is certain there will be very few absentees'.¹⁰³ In his obituaries Landseer was considered comparable to artists such as Turner, Reynolds and Hogarth. Never was he considered as an exception to the rule due to the genres in which he worked.

¹⁰¹ 'Sir Edwin Landseer', *The Times*, 2 October 1873, p. 10.

¹⁰² 'Sir Edwin Landseer', *The Times*, 2 October 1873, p. 10.

¹⁰³ 'The Funeral of Sir Edwin Landseer', *The Times*, 9 October 1873, p. 9.

Figure 40 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 40: Letters from Landseer to Millais, in John Guille Millais, *The Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais*, (London: Meuthen, 1899), pp. 42–43.

The awareness of Landseer’s animal affiliations by both the public and Landseer’s fellow artists reveals the extent to which all those interested in art would have been conscious of the dog as Landseer presented it—anthropomorphised, full of character, and capable of pertaining to topical social issues. Yet these narrative aspects, now seen as out of favour, were at the time a part of why he received nation-wide professional and public praise and this is worthy of recognition today.

Landseer’s success because of his championing of canine depictions provides us with a picture of a public and art-world eager to see and consume canine representations. Much like Landseer himself, the success of canine artworks were not marginalized in terms of artistic excellence in Victorian society but, instead, demonstrative of it, as any other great artwork of the period may have been. Critics of the time were never afraid to admit the humour or sentimentality of such paintings but this did not seem to detract from their appraisal of the works themselves and was, as the *Art Journal* noted, part of the appeal.¹⁰⁴ In this Landseer was a clear focal point but he was not the only artist being considered with such veneration, with artists such as Briton Rivière, James Yates Carrington, and Charles Burton Barber enjoying their own accolades at the Royal Academy and beyond.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A.’, *Art Journal*, November 1873, p. 327.

¹⁰⁵ The art sales for Barber over his career are incomplete, but Algernon Graves records seven of Barber’s works selling for a total of £1,088. Algernon Graves, *Art Sales from Early in the Eighteenth Century to Early in the Twentieth Century, Vol. 1* (New York: Franklin, 1970), p. 19.

Print Proliferations and the Demand for Dogs

The success of Landseer and later canine artists was not simply defined by their submissions to the Royal Academy. Landseer also had a prolific presence in the print market and the many ‘marvellous prints’ done after his work, chiefly by his brother, were considered by some to have ‘carried Landseer’s fame further than his pictures alone could ever have done’.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Landseer’s presence in the print market arguably propelled not only his own career but also those of all other artists aspiring to make a name for themselves through the depiction of dogs.

The massive growth of the print market is one of the hallmarks of Victorian culture and enterprise. Taking advantage of innovations in technology, the growth in engravings was facilitated by the transition from copper to steel plates. Steel was much sturdier during a print run and was therefore capable of producing more prints before eventually breaking down. This significant development in printing led to an explosion in illustrations, with illustrated journals and newspapers being produced and novels employing illustrators with more frequency. It also facilitated a rapidly growing market for fine art engravings, particularly among the middle classes. Within this visual landscape the copyright to engrave a painting could oftentimes sell for an equal or higher amount than the painting itself and institutes rose up to regulate engravings, such as the Art Union, founded in 1837.

Coming from a family of engravers, Landseer was in a prime position to recognise the potential of prints. His father, John Landseer (1769–1852) was receptive to the increased popularity of prints (backing the Art Union in its earlier years)¹⁰⁷ while Landseer’s brother, Thomas Landseer (1794–1880), personally undertook many of the engraved reproductions of his work. The print potential that this familial approach

¹⁰⁶ ‘Sir Edwin Landseer’, *The Times*, 30 October 1873, p. 7.

¹⁰⁷ Hamilton, *A Strange Business*, p. 63.

fostered has been recognised as beneficial by Edward Fenton, who noted that ‘It was not long before many paintings—Landseer’s notably—were, more or less, merely a stage in the publication of a popular print’.¹⁰⁸

Landseer also had a guiding hand from the chemist Jacob Bell, who took a major role in Landseer’s business practices after his nervous breakdown. With Landseer’s family background and Bell’s guiding hand Landseer was able to become one of those painters whose print rights succeeded the price of his paintings: with 1846 seeing Landseer earn £2,400 for his paintings and £4,450 for their copyrights.¹⁰⁹ At one time Henry Graves alone paid Landseer £60,000 in copyright fees (roughly £2,586,600 today), signalling his immense success as a painter.¹¹⁰ As the popularity of engravings rose so, too, did prices for the original pieces and Landseer’s works saw a noticeable boom in the sale prices of his works which could be attributed to this. For example at the Bicknell sale of 1863, paintings by Landseer which had been purchased for 300 to 400 guineas in 1850 and 1859 sold at the price of 1,800 to 2,300.¹¹¹ To put this into perspective Ford Madox Brown’s iconic painting *Work* was purchased for only £1,320,¹¹² with a replica painting in 1859 costing much less at £315 to commission. To quote Edward Fenton, by the height of the Victorian period ‘[Landseer’s] name was literally a household word. Few middle-class homes, in that great period of middle-class prosperity, were without those well-known animal pictures, rendered in enormous steel engravings’.¹¹³

Other artists soon followed where Landseer had led and the popularity of engravings of canine art reached its height in the late nineteenth century. Briton Rivière,

¹⁰⁸ Edward Fenton, ‘Portrait of a Victorian Painter, With Dogs’, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 1 (1952), 154-164 (p. 162).

¹⁰⁹ Hamilton, *A Strange Business*, p. 63.

¹¹⁰ Campbell Lennie, *Landseer: The Victorian Paragon* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1976) p.244.

¹¹¹ Fenton, ‘Portrait of a Victorian Painter’, p. 162.

¹¹² K. Theodore Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 407.

¹¹³ Fenton, ‘Portrait of a Victorian Painter’, p. 154.

being one such example, was considered by the *Times* to be a successor of Landseer, if not able to surpass him in a ‘dramatic element in which one part is played by man and the other part by animal’.¹¹⁴ Rivière was regularly praised at the Royal Academy with paintings such as *Sympathy* considered to be ‘one of the most successful’ of both the artist and the exhibition, and ‘a very attractive object in the exhibition’.¹¹⁵ This work was reproduced in engraving by Frederick Stacpoole (1813–1907) for Thomas Agnew and Sons. Stacpoole was frequently employed to do reproductions for canine painters such as Briton Rivière and Charles Burton Barber and was well known for them, but was also made popular through his reproductions of works such as Holman Hunt’s *Shadow of Death* (1870–3), highlighting the extent to which these artists’ work were often closely affiliated. As with Landseer, the popularity of Rivière’s engravings afforded him considerable monetary success, as in 1883, *Sympathy* (c.1878), ‘a picture well-known by the engraving’ became the shock feature of an auction of artworks, selling at £2,625 (£126,814 today). Still, even when such breakaway prices were not achieved an average work by Rivière could sell at over £1,000, especially if copyright was included in the sale.¹¹⁶ Stacpoole’s other client, Charles Burton Barber, was an unexpected success due to his canine subjects, as the *Times* observed that:

Few of our painters have achieved a more rapid popularity than Mr. Barber, whose name was almost unknown two years ago, and whose pictures of animals and children are now in great demand and regularly brought at high prices.¹¹⁷

The success of these artists and their engravings had as much to do with the narrative of their works and the cultural climate as it did with the artists’ presence in the Royal Academy and negotiation of the print market. Landseer was credited with changing

¹¹⁴ ‘The Royal Academy’, *The Times*, 11 May 1883.

¹¹⁵ ‘Mr. Briton Rivière’s *Sympathy*’, *The Times*, 3 June 1881, p. 8.

¹¹⁶ ‘Art Sales’, *The Times*, 24 March 1884, p. 7.

¹¹⁷ ‘Some New Etchings and Prints’, *The Times*, 3 January 1884, p. 4.

the way the British art world and public viewed dogs, paving the way for dogs to be recognised as worthy subjects of sentimentality, domestic values and morality. His artworks and prints both informed the public's taste and met the growing demand for representations of the domestic dog, indicating a symbiotic relationship between dog painters, dog owners, and visual culture which cannot be neatly traced but instead grew together. The resulting successes of artists such as Rivière and Barber in the late-nineteenth century were clearly facilitated by Landseer's status (and the artists themselves were often compared to Landseer) but that is not to say that their paintings did not also have unique elements which drew in potential buyers. In a market oversaturated by prints, artists had to have a distinctive take on the dog which appealed to the public so that their prints were deemed worthy of hanging in their homes. This was something that Rivière and Barber were clearly able to achieve. Yet running through each of these artists' work was an appeal to the gentler aspects of Victorian society and domesticity. Fenton considers this in relation Landseer's own success. Asserting that Landseer's pictures were respectable, Fenton notes that:

Respectability was a quality which could not be overestimated. Victoria's was an era when the high moral character of a work of art was a prime consideration of judgement. "Vulgarity" was the one thing above all others to be eschewed.¹¹⁸

Public taste was guided by concerns about morality.

It is important to ask why the dog was such a popular print subject in the Victorian period and to consider possible reasons. The most obvious of these answers is supply and demand. Artworks by Landseer and Rivière had, through the treatment of their subjects, gained considerable acclaim and such acclamation would also reflect upon the middle-class house owner who chose to hang their works upon their walls. Those who could not

¹¹⁸ Fenton, 'Portrait of a Victorian Painter', p. 160.

afford £2,625 for Rivière's *Sympathy* (for which Rivière would not paint a replica) could buy a print of it for considerably less. Artists' prints were a way for the middle classes to display their enthusiasm for their pets and their knowledge of the art world. Through taking this approach middle-class households could mirror the chic displays of places such as the Dog's Toilet in New Bond Street, which were considered the height of sophistication and affluence among those privy to canine luxuries. Artistic and canine connoisseurship also came together in prints themselves, as viewers could judge the line work and fine details of a print for its quality and supposed 'truth to life'.

For an artist such as Charles Burton Barber success in the art world did not always come before success in the print market, and print sales could sometimes shape the opinions of gallery critics rather than the words of the critic drive the success of an animal painter's sales. In such cases we come to a vital reason for the success of these paintings: the values expressed in the artwork. Respectable, moral, domestic: these values were tied to representations of the dog through all cultural forms in the Victorian period and came with a clear social rhetoric. Having situated the dog as a domestic entity, indicative of bourgeois status and culturally-approved values, the middle classes were attracted by any representations which both supported and strengthened their constructions of canine respectability. In this aspiration prints became yet another way for the middle classes to situate dogs within the domestic sphere. Dogs were not just paragons of the home, and a piece of living property that existed within it; they were also visual objects which could adorn walls, and decorate nurseries, conveying further meaning through their illustrated lessons. Subsequently, paintings and prints of dogs in the Victorian period were not simply capable of conveying moralistic and domestic values but were, instead, complete embodiments of the ideal domestic dog. As items of domestic display which represented domesticity, Victorian paintings and prints provided one of the most overt methods for

the middle classes to frame the dog's place in the home while simultaneously underpinning its associated values.

Canine Canons: The Dog as a Topic for Other Painters

In a cultural climate where canines could be seen through every form of visual outlet most artists were well aware of their representative values and social potency. But, beyond that, it is also important to highlight again that, much like art itself, artists did not live in artistic isolation and many artists were social as well as professional peers. Millais, as we have already seen, would visit and exchange letters with Landseer, but he was also acquainted with Rivière. Millais and Rivière's relationship seems to have gone beyond the confines of the art world too; as the two were listed as being present at a deputation from the Society for the Prevention of Hydrophobia on the subject of muzzling in 1889.¹¹⁹ Both were interested in the social issues brought about by the dog and the stray/domestic divide.

Much the same can be said for Frith, who had admired Landseer from as early as 1835¹²⁰ and who was with him and Ruskin shortly after Ruskin's marriage to Effie Gray.¹²¹ It was implied in Frith's memoirs that he later kept a friendship with both Landseer and his siblings¹²² and considered Landseer to be possessed of inherent artistic genius, along with Millais.¹²³ In his memoirs he praised him as part of 'the society of what is commonly called "the great," to a degree equalled only perhaps by Sir Joshua Reynolds' and considered this to be both the public and artistic consensus.¹²⁴ On a more personal note he confessed that:

¹¹⁹ 'The Muzzling of Dogs', *The Times*, 16 December 1889, p. 7.

¹²⁰ William Powell Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences* (London: Richard Bentley, 1888), p. 139.

¹²¹ Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences*, p. 136.

¹²² Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences*.

¹²³ Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences*, p. 241.

¹²⁴ Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences*, p. 242.

I wish I could find words strong enough to express my love and admiration for Landseer as a man and an artist. I owe him warmest thanks for many, many hours of delightful social intercourse, and sincere gratitude for his warm-hearted and generous encouragement in all my artistic doings.¹²⁵

This sincere declaration of gratitude signals more than gratitude for Landseer but also situates one of the most well-known painters of canine expression and morality into a broader artistic landscape. The camaraderie and open dialogue between these painters makes their awareness of canine motifs an inevitability and, since Landseer had some conceptual input in the works of his friends, it can be assumed that artists who we now consider to be eminent were also receptive to utilizing the dog in their own artworks.

In the case of Frith, the champion of the social panorama, his admiration for Landseer's moralistic canines can be seen to combine his interest in human physiognomy with the class associations of the dog. This we have already touched upon, in relation to *Derby Day*, but Frith also included dogs in works such as *The Railway Station* (1862) and *A Private View at the Royal Academy*. Frith's inclusion of dogs in his paintings often tied in with the social commentaries that he prescribed in his paintings, and his dogs often conformed to the physiognomic type expected of them.

Figure 41 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 41: William Powell Frith, *The Times of Day 2: Noon—Regent Street*, oil on canvas, 1862, Private Collection.

Frith's awareness of various canine signifiers and their associated meaning also becomes apparent in his work *Times of Day, 2: Noon* (1862), in which a dog seller is depicted in addition to a blind man and his dog. While the full significance of these dogs

¹²⁵ Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences*, pp. 247-248.

will be explored further in Chapter Four, their position as the ideological antithesis of each other (with the dog seller often known to steal dogs, thus causing corruption, and the blind man's dog acting a focal point for philanthropy, thus encouraging moral elevation) was well-known to Frith and readily employed in this painting.

Frith's Times of Day, 2: Noon was influenced by a similar series of works by Hogarth—which also documented the moral activities of the streets based on the time of day—and although such dedications may seem today to be an indicator of artifice, for Frith this could not have been further from the truth. The artistic appeal of Hogarth to Victorian social painters was his satirical intent. Bitingly realistic, the Hogarthian model presented many moralizing opportunities which easily appealed to Victorian tastes. As Mark Bill observes:

Morality in painting for the mid-Victorians meant fidelity to truth in both depiction and narrative, truth in terms of morality, and truth also in being an accurate mirror to the visible world around them, a belief in realism above artifice. Hogarth represented for them a cornerstone of this belief ... Consequently Hogarth's paintings were seen as an accurate portrayal of the life around him.¹²⁶

And, to this end, Frith sought to create the most accurate physiognomic and moral rendition that he could possibly convey through a close study of his subjects, including dogs.

Of keen physiognomic interest is the breed of the dog which is squaring off with the blind beggar's one, being a bulldog type. The reaction of the middle-class woman and her young female daughter also tie in to this social painting and demonstrate Frith's

¹²⁶ Mark Bills, Vivien Knight, eds., *William Powell Frith*, p. 43.

awareness and use of canine signs. Showing an interest in one of the small terrier type dogs belonging to the dog-seller, the young girl looks curiously down on the dog, which reciprocates her gaze. Yet the mother seems cautious, potentially aware of the associated dangers of dog-sellers and seems to be drawing her away. Women and the corruption of the city in relationship to the faithful dog seems to have been Frith's preferred use of canine representations, as it was something he employed in *The Derby Day*, *Times of Day, 2: Noon*, and *A Dream of the Future* (1865). In the latter painting a woman and her dog are the only two subjects. As the woman looks longingly at the metropolis in the distance her Collie dog acts as a tie towards the country and a more idealized and morally pure lifestyle (a topic explored further in Chapter Two).

Figure 42 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 42: William Powell Frith, *A Dream of the Future*, oil on canvas, 1865, The Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate.

The Pre-Raphaelite employment of the dog (while rather infrequent) also either conformed to or actively contrasted modern canine representations as they functioned within society. Millais, being the most acquainted with both Landseer and issues concerning the dog (having attended committee meetings regarding canine-related issues), was the most overt of the founding members in his employment of the dog. While *Isabella* followed in the vein of classical canine symbolism it is apparent through the sketches of *The Order of Release, 1746* (1852–3) that Millais developed aspirations to make his dogs conform to the public's breed expectations in order to convey the message of his paintings with further clarity. *The Order of Release* itself was part of Millais' series of paintings that addressed faith and fidelity among lovers (often in tragic

predicaments).¹²⁷ In this painting a barefooted woman delivers to an English jailer the order of release for her Jacobite husband. The reunion between the two is the intimate moment that we are made privy to, and which went on to be his first large popular print of one of his paintings.¹²⁸ In this painting, which spoke much more of modernity in a very deliberate move, the familiar faithful hound of his sketches for *The Order of Release, 1746* (reminiscent of *Isabella*) is replaced in this painting with a dog more suited for the Scottish highlands, reflecting an awareness of the importance of appropriate breeds.

Figure 43 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 43: Sir John Everett Millais, *Two Sketches for the Order of Release*, pencil on paper, c.1852, Private Collection.

Figure 44 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 44: Sir John Everett Millais, *The Order of Release, 1746*, oil on canvas, 1852–3, The Tate Collection, London.

This awareness of the dog’s social and visual implications, and particularly the potency of breeding, was a common aspect of Millais’ paintings, and even featured in what were considered to be some of his most artistically mature works, such as *The Black Brunswicker* (1860).¹²⁹ According to Debra Mancoff, Millais took a turn towards more ‘popular’ artworks—artworks appealing to the most common audience of art as a whole—in 1852, which is notably the year that *The Order of Release, 1746* was begun. Yet although popular may be considered in most contexts to address the content of the work was notable geared towards domestic themes which would have been most appealing

¹²⁷ Jason Rosenfeld and Alison Smith, eds., *Millais* (London: Tate Publishing, 2007), p. 76.

¹²⁸ Jason Rosenfeld and Alison Smith, eds., *Millais*, p. 76.

¹²⁹ Debra Mancoff, ed., *John Everett Millais: Beyond the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 183.

to the middle classes. In *The Black Brunswicker*, for example, Millais demonstrates his knowledge of the association between lap dogs and young ladies as the lady says farewell to her lover, who will most likely perish in the battle of Waterloo. In this Barlow observes ‘the death of domestic dreams’, such is the tragedy about to befall the couple, and this is shown in every element of the painting:

The emotional conflict [of the painting] is visualized in the dramatic contrast of black broadcloth and white satin. Details reveal the vulnerability through artefacts rather than nature...The girl’s ball-gown is heavily ceased from its long sojourn folded unused. The wallpaper bubbles up, betraying damp, and, most poignantly, a puzzling object lies draped in deep purple cloth, betraying beneath its form an empty cradle.¹³⁰

If almost every aspect of this painting is an analogy of the scenes ultimate domestic tragedy then so is the noticeable unity between the sorrowful woman and her pining lapdog. Both the woman and her pet dog plead to the man in a moment of unity. By wearing the same red ribbon the two have been deliberately linked by Millais in a plea for the Brunswicker to remain in the domestic interior, where they are clearly situated. Shown in the broader visual lexicon of the painting, the dog becomes apparent as another highly recognisable symbol among many other popular Victorian tropes.

Millais was not the only Pre-Raphaelite keen to employ canine motifs. The painter Ford Madox Brown enjoyed using overt and distinctly contemporary canine motifs in order to further the narratives of some of his paintings. Inspired by both Hogarth and other Pre-Raphaelites, Brown’s *Stages of Cruelty* (1856–90) is direct in its use of the dog in order to convey a moralizing message to his viewers. This message (paying homage to Hogarth’s own works on cruelty) is simple: those who show cruelty to animals in

¹³⁰ Elizabeth Prettejohn, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 145.

childhood are liable to do the same to people in their adult years. Interestingly Brown considered this message to be so vital to convey that it featured his only example of an outwardly cruel or vicious female (and not just one, but two). The imagery of a cruel child was also incredibly striking for the period for, as Kenneth Bendiner notes, ‘It is hard to think of any other nineteenth-century image of a cruel child’ making the work even more socially striking and culturally pertinent in terms of its symbolism.¹³¹ It was also a work that Brown worked on for over forty years, clearly considering it as worth significant artistic and personal investment in which the inclusion of a dog was crucial to convey the wicked aspects of both child and woman.

Figure 45 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 45: Sir John Everett Millais, *Black Brunswicker*, oil on canvas, 1860, Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight.

The focus of a case study in Chapter Three, Brown’s painting *Work* also makes explicit use of dogs, and the three shown in the centre of the canvas are even highlighted in Brown’s accompanying explanation of the artwork. Brown’s interest and appreciation of dogs can not only be seen on the canvas but also in his own personal sketches, in which he comically inks a dog as one of his viewers for *Work*. His recognition and employment of the dog illustrates a clear understanding of contemporary issues and moralizing messages concerning the animal.

Figures 46–47 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

¹³¹ Kenneth Bendiner, *Art of Ford Madox Brown* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), p. 97.

Figure 46: [Left] Ford Madox Brown, *Stages of Cruelty*, oil on canvas, 1856–1890, Manchester City Galleries, Manchester.

Figure 47: [Right] Ford Madox Brown, *Sketch Showing the Artist Painting Work from a Letter to Lowes Dickinson*, ink on paper, Princeton University Library, Princeton.

Figure 48 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 48: Ford Madox Brown, Detail from *Work*, oil on canvas, 1856-1890, Manchester City Galleries, Manchester.

While references addressing the dogs directly in art reviews are sparse, the employment of the domestic dog in this manner by Frith, Millais, and Brown provide prominent demonstrations of the readability and frequency of such motifs. Not simply confined to canine portraiture or genre pieces, the figurative domestic dog and its associated social signs were recognised as valuable tools for all artists.

The dog—represented as an individual genre and as a figure in other genres such as portraiture or historical paintings—could be used to express national artistic identity. As the *Art Journal* noted in 1860, animal painting was not just a triviality among the British art world but a fundamental aspect of the ‘notable peculiarities’ which help it stand out from the artwork of other countries and Britain’s own national identity. Dogs were framed (quite literally) as part of the public’s cultural and gallery-going experience, ‘[finding] favour with us in England because, as a nation, we are lovers of horses and dogs’.¹³²

Such associations with the British art style were so well-recognised that in an article exploring French perspectives on English art, paintings of the dog were not simply highlighted but considered inescapable. In the English Gallery of the Exposition of 1855 ‘Not a picture could be found in which a dog does not feature, and almost uniformly to

¹³² Daffrone, ‘British Artists’, p. 233.

the most advantage'.¹³³ This frequent depiction of dogs was directly linked by the French critic to the 'taste so prevalent in England' of its dogs (and of Landseer) as was one that was considered as something that could never gain prominence in the French school 'for our admiration is reserved for great works—historic subjects—classic scenes, where man alone plays part first'.¹³⁴ Yet, despite excluding this British tradition in the ranking of great artworks, the *Art Journal*'s critic could not help but concede that the British had claimed their own artistic space through representations of the dog and the rhetoric and meaning that they attached to them: 'In a word, as far as animals are concerned, the school of France is materialist—that of England spiritual'.¹³⁵

Frequent, lucrative, readable and often employed, depictions of the dog flourished in the Victorian period becoming the topic for artists across the spectrum; from 'the Greats' of the Academy to the rebels of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Whether by the side of a Pre-Raphaelite figure or acting as the centre piece of a sweet child and dog genre painting it is clear that pictures of dogs intended to embody values and sentiments rather than merely act as portraiture.

¹³³ 'French Criticism on English Art', *Art Journal*, 1855, p. 281.

¹³⁴ *The Art Journal*, 1855, p. 281.

¹³⁵ *The Art Journal*, 1855, p. 281.

Chapter Two. Virtue, Death, and Guardianship in Canine Representations

Introduction

To the readers of Carrington's book Teufel was a true character in every sense of the term. Described comically as 'a Fox Terrier with a bit of Bull in him' Carrington had considered the tenacity that came with this mixture of breed traits to be core to Teufel's personality and even considered including it in the book's title.¹ Eventually dissuaded (in preference of capitalizing on the success of serialized artist biographies and the pleasing combination of the three T's in *Teufel the Terrier*) Teufel was often referred to in this context as a comically rogue and affectionately mischievous character. This was not simply observed in literature but was considered to be inherent in the visual aspects of Teufel, as noted in 1891 by a critic of the publication:

[Teufel] was not a thoroughbred terrier and a touch of the "bull" species is observable to a dog fancier, but we do not often see more beauty or more intelligence in the face of a dog; the expression is peculiar, and without any knowledge of Teufel's history one might almost imagine that he would have strong individuality, if not eccentricity.²

This individuality, eccentricity and 'touch of the "bull" species' had, as Codell might observe, an intrinsic appeal to notions of national character. Emphasized by Carrington's allusions to the iconic British Bulldog, Teufel's success is a career built on character.

Yet national character, an appeal to the sweeping traits of the British stereotype, was not the only manner in which Carrington presented Teufel. Having eaten paint at a

¹ James Yates Carrington, *Teufel the Terrier; Or the Life and Adventures of an Artist's Dog* (London: Pall Mall Gazette, 1890), p. 2.

² 'Teufel the Terrier', *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 16 January 1891, p. 8.

very young age and gained a literal taste for the arts Teufel was presented as a creature that had integrated into Carrington's career, studio, life and home.³ To Carrington Teufel was not simply an artistic subject but also a domestic pet and it is the merging of these two worlds which gives Carrington's story public appeal. In the latter chapters of *Teufel the Terrier* the dogography moves away from the subject of art and comes to consider canine character in general. Images of Teufel on the canvas and in painterly situations become infrequent and are, instead, replaced with images of him accompanying Carrington's daughter or moving about the home. When the time comes to tell of the death of Teufel the writing transforms into a very intimate, very family-centric recounting. Carrington recalls his first morning without Teufel and how 'The house seemed empty and desolate without him'.⁴ A funeral is held and the grief of Carrington's daughter becomes a focal point for the tale. Her dutiful prayer is observed alongside the dedication inscribed on Teufel's memorial canvas:

HERE LIE THE REMAINS OF DEAR OLD TEUFEL,
THE FAVOURITE DOGGIE OF HIS MASTER

Born: September 1880. *Died:* September 15th, 1889.

The poor old dog! In life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, the foremost to defend;
Whose honest heart is still his master's own;
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone.
The faithful dog, alone his rightful master knew;
Him, when he saw, he rose and crawled to meet;
'Twas all he could, and fawned, kiss'd his feet.⁵

³ Carrington, *Teufel the Terrier*, p. 7-8.

⁴ Carrington, *Teufel the Terrier*, p. 88.

⁵ Carrington, *Teufel the Terrier*, p. 89.

Compared to the ‘eccentric’ and comical nature of Teufel provided previously in Carrington’s book, this sober turn of events may seem outlandish or over sentimental by modern standards. However for a Victorian audience such a heart-breaking conclusion to the tale of *Teufel the Terrier* would have been just as compelling as the life of the dog itself and create an equally compelling read. This is because of the appeal to character mentioned in Chapter One. By the late nineteenth century Victorian consumers of canine culture expected dogs to be imbued with characters which were perceptible and appealing and Teufel’s memorial canvas underpins many of the traits that this would include. Faithful, domestic and devoted, Teufel is presented as a dedicated creature who worshipped at his feet and who, in turn, inspired traits in his owner ‘whose honest heart is still his master’s own’. In his memorial the implication is not only that Teufel had these traits but that these traits had a beneficial effect on his owner and the domestic interior; one whose absence was felt in the household and that inspired Carrington’s daughter to properly and politely undertake prayers to the passing of her faithful friend. By Teufel’s example at the turn of the century a good dog shared characteristics with the good human.

Of course dogs were not the only instructors of good moral values in the Victorian period, nor the dominant method of inscribing these values in the middle-class Victorian family, and religion had a large part to play. ‘Despite the mounting challenges to orthodox religion from modern science and a gradual secularisation of many aspect of life’, Barringer observes, ‘the Victorian age remained profoundly Christian’.⁶ Good moral values for most middle-class families meant ‘good Christian values’ and these were promoted in the family unit and the domestic interior. Victorian domesticity was

⁶ Tim Barringer, *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 110.

intertwined with Victorian religious practice and both were linked to the notion of the home as a place of devotion and moral instruction.⁷

Artists were equally introduced to religion from a young age and their religious background was often conveyed in their artwork.⁸ The *Art Journal* (and high art society as a whole) considered one of the highest forms of British painting to be that of the Christian or religious scene and artists who took note of this often prospered.⁹ Muscular Christianity is an artistic phenomenon much discussed to this day the religious dimension to Victorian Protestant culture inevitably meant that serious art included 'sacred' subjects from scripture. To take but one example of the participation of artists and art in the religious culture of Victorian Britain the success of Holman Hunt's work can be considered. These works were of course explicitly religious in their subject matter and titles and the success of Hunt's work speaks of the Victorian demand for imagery that conformed to the values that they wished to foster in their families:

Gambart paid him £5,500 for *The Finding of the Saviour* and he received the vast sum of £10,500 for *The Shadow of Death*. The dealers recouped their outlay through ticket receipts from exhibitions and from the sales of engravings. Very large numbers of prints of each image were made and, like those of *The Light of the World*, they circulated internationally. Displayed in schoolrooms and nurseries, church halls and parlours, Holman Hunt's were the most powerful religious images of the Victorian era.¹⁰

The art world and the religious values of the Victorian middle classes can subsequently be taken as highly interwoven and the dog intersected both of these points. Furthermore, as an entity in the home the dog was, at all points, visually aligned with the

⁷ See Monica F. Cohen, *Professional Domesticity in the Victorian Novel Women, Work and Home* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998), pp. 73-74.

⁸ William Holman Hunt, in particular, was very religious and even travelled the Holy Land to better depict Jesus Christ and his presumed geographical and cultural settings.

⁹ J. Daffrone, 'British Artists', p. 233.

¹⁰ Barringer, *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 133.

values that a household embodied and, as such, was considered in terms of how it, too, exemplified them. Consequently the domestic dog in the Victorian period not only became imbued with notions of status among the various classes but also with the moral piety of the class with which it was most prominently associated. This personification was apparent in Victorian culture through the characteristics and traits prescribed to the dog. As such when writers such as William Gordon Stables, wrote on the virtues of certain dogs in their response to human suffering, danger, or distress, they spoke on behalf of a broader perception of dogs throughout the Victorian period:

A wise and affectionate dog, such as a Newfoundland, collie, or retriever, if well brought up and kindly treated, evinces his gratitude by showing affection for the whole human race, especially for children, and those in suffering, danger, or distress.¹¹

Such statements (which are typical, particularly of the late nineteenth century) underline a growth in demand for the dog to be seen as an active comforter and protector of those in danger, dying, or deceased. This canine figure acted much in the same way as the family unit itself to provide a sense of protection and security when combined with religion, subsequently becoming a prominent figure throughout the period.

Landseer seemed to recognise the rising popularity of the near-saintly hound from an early age, and encouraged its development in his own artwork while still quite young. His work, *Alpine Mastiffs Reanimating a Distressed Traveller* (1820), serves as but one example of this and was arguably a strong participant in the glorification of certain canines and their supposedly virtuous traits.¹² But the saintly dog did not exist in isolation

¹¹ William Gordon Stables, 'Gratitude in Dogs', *Leisure Hour*, 1886, p.60.

¹² In fact Landseer's work inspired John Landseer's *Some Account of the Dogs and of the Pass of the Great Saint Bernard; Intended to Accompany an Engraving After a Picture by Edwin Landseer, R.A. Elect, of Alpine Mastiffs Extricating an Overwhelmed Traveller From the Snow* (London: John Landseer, 1831) in which John Landseer confidently declares that 'Who shall say that the arts which adorn social life are unworthy or unwisely employed in asserting the claims to human regard...of a noble creature, to whom, if the faculty of speech has been denied, other modes of acquiring and exerting...benevolent motive, efficient power, and sagacious conduct have been freely and abundantly imparted, so as to vindicate at once the

and Landseer also produced heart-wrenching images of a dog clinging to his lost master's grave. Images such as Rivière's highly regarded *Requiescat* also paid similar attention to the dog as mourner, that is to say nothing of the wider culture for canine mourners and canine mourning, of which Teufel was just a single example, as is the iconic Greyfriar's Bobby who remains well-known today. At the same time that these striking images of heroism and grief were being produced, Charles Burton Barber and other animal painters were indulging an eager middle-class market with sentimental imagery of faithful hounds standing by the side of chubby-cheeked children.

Such romanticised scenes of children and canines in the Victorian household hardly seem to have a place next to dramatic images of dogs saving lives or losing them. But, when situated in a wider framework of Christian family values, canine character and domestic interiors, the rising popularity of these three diverse canine representations becomes much more understandable and their interconnections apparent. Through looking at the construction and employment of the dog as saint, as mourner, and as the protector of children, this chapter will analyse the complex signs that were developed around these reimagined canine archetypes throughout the Victorian era and their overarching social implications.

Virtuous Embodiments and Sainly Servants

Elevating the Dog in Victorian Visual Culture

If the dog of the Victorian middle-class home became a favourite moral exemplar of its Christian values then it must have been rather distressing for the Victorian dog lover to discover what had previously been said about man's best friend. As the growth of the dog fancy and the establishment of breed standards came in to force some writers decided to

divine dispensations, and the various relations of the...systems of providence', p. 3. This early painter's call to arms is arguably what we see unveil in this chapter and embodies the importance of both Landseer and art is general throughout such cultural developments.

comprehensively examine the history of the dog and found that it had not been well favoured. When in 1862 *The Sunday at Home* presented a compilation of references to the dog in the Bible to its readers, it had no choice but to conclude that ‘In no case is the dog spoken of in the Bible but as the vilest of the vile’.¹³ The Anglican Archbishop of Dublin came to similar conclusions in the very same year, confessing that in the Bible:

extreme contempt was involved in the title of “dog” given to any one, the nobler characteristics of the animal, although by no means unknown to antiquity, being never brought out in Scripture.¹⁴

Clearly identifying a lack of affection for the dog in previous historical periods and religious texts, these examinations come not only from a place of incredulity but also of Christian expectation. In a time when affection towards the dog was growing the notion that its finer traits had not been acknowledged seemed unlikely to the modern Victorian reader. These revelations from the Archbishop and *The Sunday at Home* reveal a desire for the dog to be seen as a virtuous entity. This desire could even be considered in terms of an expectation; as encountering descriptions of the dog as ‘the vilest of the vile’ is seen as a surprising point by *The Sunday at Home*.

The perceptual reclamation of the dog as a creature infused with virtuous character was consequently a phenomenon that may have initially happened subconsciously but which did not escape the notice of those who wished to give it attention. The 1860s may have represented a surge in interest into the holy historiography of the dog but careful attention was consistently paid throughout the remainder of the period to the exaltation of the dog’s more favourable traits and how they compared to the treatment of previous

¹³ ‘Dogs’, *Sunday at Home*, 15 November 1862, p. 733.

¹⁴ Richard Chenevix Trench, *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lords*, 6th edn. (London: Parker, Son, and Bourn, 1862), p. 346.

centuries. Looking back on other periods of British history in 1900, this enabled one C. Trollope to assert that:

When we remember how much men have loved dogs, and how much dogs have loved men, it is at least surprising that we have so comparatively few dogs of any individuality in poetry or fiction. Through all the many centuries in which men have employed themselves in writing, and dogs have employed themselves in worshipping men ... very few dogs have been engraved on the heart of literature. As a rule they are but trifling accessories, like the quaint hounds who play in the foreground of old pictures; they are not endowed with individuality, the human personality, of dogs we have known and loved¹⁵

Making his own allusions to the divine, Trollope presents the dog as an entity that is full of character, faith and as a creature which is worthy of cultural acknowledgement, as was the case throughout the Victorian period. Significantly these personality traits, which Trollope is sad to see neglected in previous centuries, are not considered to be purely animalistic but, instead, reflective of 'human personality'. Of even more note is the language that Trollope used to describe the neglect that dogs had faced. Creating his own link between the visual and the textual Trollope wished for dogs to be 'engraved on the heart of literature'. Contrasting the dog at the turn of the century with those from antiquity he turns to imagery and considers the failure of former paintings to be the absence of (a specifically religious) personality in the 'trifling accessories' that were the 'quaint hounds' of old.

Such statements underpin the desire throughout the Victorian period for dogs to be considered as virtuous entities, possessed of a variety of personality traits which made them worthy not just of acknowledgement but of emulation. Trollope's text echoes the degree to which visual culture also had a prominent role to play in this overall cultural phenomenon through the use of pictorial language. The visual proliferation of the dog as

¹⁵ C. Trollope, 'The Dog in Literature', *Gentleman's Magazine*, March 1900, p. 280.

a saintly entity in Victorian society ran parallel to contemporary ambitions to highlight the dog's nobility and contributed its own language of saintly allusions. These representations came before the revivalist attitude of the 1860s and continued to gain strength as demonstrations of the divine worth of the dog throughout the period.

Observed broadly, these visual developments can be considered to include two different facets: the dog as a literal life-saver of man, through efforts at sea or in the mountains and the dog as a figurative saviour of man, whose God-given sagacity was a point of nature from which man could learn how to get closer to God. Combined these visual constructions enabled the dog to be positioned as an entity of moral instruction which acted in the home to supplement the Christian instruction which middle class families typically benefitted from. In this the dog gained potency not simply as an embodiment of these traits but as an easily accessible entity through which families could cultivate their own Christian values. In this cultural framework three specific breeds of dog were afforded more divinity than others: the St. Bernard, the Newfoundland and the Collie dog. This was due, primarily, to the characteristics projected onto these animals in literature. The terminology used in regards to these breeds included remarks that the St. Bernard and Newfoundland were 'surrounded ... with almost a religious halo in the popular mind'¹⁶, and seen as having a 'grand appearance, noble mien, and majestic bearing'.¹⁷ Subsequently examining the visual construction of these three breeds provides a comprehensive account of how these icons were created and what specific effect and impact they had throughout the period.

The Dog as Literal Saviour

As interest in the individuality possessed by creatures which had previously been 'quaint hounds' increased, lifesaving dogs became gradually more individualized and

¹⁶ Vero Shaw, *The Illustrated Book of the Dog* (London: Galpin, 1881), p. 53.

¹⁷ Shaw, *The Illustrated Book of the Dog*, p. 64.

glorified in the public eye starting from the earlier half of the century. The exploits of the dogs of St. Bernard are a perfect example of this. Although the life-saving role of St. Bernard dog was known before the nineteenth-century, it was previously the monks that had gained the primary attention in most reports. In 1833 an article in *The Saturday Magazine* illustrated this attitude. While the article was titled ‘The Dogs of St. Bernard’, the attention of the article was much more concerned with the efforts of the monks, recounting that:

If the Marionier meets with any person bewildered or exhausted, or if his sagacious companion indicates ... that any unfortunate being is under the snow, he returns with all speed to the Hospital to give the alarm. Several of the monks then instantly set out with restoratives, to be used, if the object of their care is not too far gone.¹⁸

By 1892, another essayist, looking at a photograph of a St. Bernard, painted an entirely different picture. Published in *The Strand*, the 1892 article declared with certainty that:

Everyone has heard of the magnificent dogs of the St. Bernard monastery. The manner in which they are trained to search for snow-bound travellers has gained for them and the good monks, their teachers, such a world-wide fame that a few words of reference are all that are necessary to introduce the most interesting photograph from real life which we are here able to present.¹⁹

With the monks demoted from lifesavers to the trainers of ‘magnificent’ animals it becomes clear that dogs became the focal point of such lifesaving tales; presented as active agents, literal life savers, and the centre of the public’s imagination.

The visual depiction of dogs played no small part in this growing development. Artworks such as Landseer’s first exhibited work *Alpine Mastiffs Reanimating a*

¹⁸ ‘The Dogs of St. Bernard’, *Saturday Magazine*, 11 May 1833, p. 178.

¹⁹ ‘Found in the Snow’, *Strand Magazine*, vol. iii, Jan-Jun, 1892, p. 323.

Distressed Traveller helped champion the idea of dogs as lifesavers in the public eye. Landseer exhibited *Alpine Mastiffs Reanimating a Distressed Traveller* at the British Institution in 1820.²⁰ In 1831 this was engraved by Thomas Landseer.²¹ By 1873, it was considered ‘the first of all his works that really sprang into celebrity’ which ‘enabled him at a single bound to achieve a reputation’.²² By 1889 it had sold for £1,942 10s.²³

Figure 49 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 49: Sir Edwin Landseer, *Alpine Mastiffs Reanimating a Distressed Traveller*, oil on canvas, 1820, The Warner Collection of Gulf States Paper Corporation, Tuscaloosa.

The composition of the artwork places the lifesaving efforts of the St. Bernard’s centre stage—with the St. Bernard licking the man’s hand in the midpoint of the canvas. The monks are hardly noticeable, as sketchy figures in the top right section of the canvas. The relegation of the monks in this painting is a telling sign of the desire to depict dogs as direct lifesavers. Circumventing any human influence in order to strengthen the relationship between dogs and lifesaving duties, this artistic subgenre began to typify Victorian associations between the dog and the physical act of rescuing a person in distress.

Pictures of St. Bernard dogs rescuing people began to develop themes which acted as standardized indicators of their saintly nature. The dogs would usually be standing strong and bold, usually in a snowy environment, and would be looking upwards, as if to represent some divine intervention or guidance in their actions. This, in many ways, helped elevate dogs (and the St. Bernard specifically) in regards to its life-saving capacity.

²⁰ Also known as ‘The Dogs of St. Bernard’, and reproduced in oil-colours by George Baxter in 1860. ‘The Dogs of St Bernard’, *Examiner*, 31 March 1860, p. 198.

²¹ ‘The Alpine Mastiffs discovering the Traveller’, *Athenaeum*, 29 October 1831, p. 708.

²² ‘The Late Sir Edwin Landseer’, *Illustrated Review*, October 1873, p. 308.

²³ ‘The Dogs of St Bernard’, *Examiner*, 31 March 1860, p. 198 (approximately £116,336.33 in 2013).

In contrast to being trained like other animals, the dog was propagated as possessed of a God-given instinct towards saving people. The *Strand Magazine* echoed these developments, considering the courageous canines to be guided by a ‘wondrous instinct with which they are endowed’.²⁴

Figure 50 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 50: Maud Earl, *I Hear a Voice (CH Frandley Stephanie)*, oil on canvas, 1896, The American Kennel Club Art Collection, New York.

The culmination of these visual indicators of saintly guidance in the case of the St. Bernard may be Maud Earls’s painting, *I Hear a Voice* (1896)—a portrait of a champion show dog, Frandley Stephanie. Frandley is depicted as a pillar of strength, embodying integrity amidst a wispy, turbulent, white and blue background—clearly meant to evoke a snowy storm in the mind of the viewers. Standing resolutely against the force of the wintery storm, Frandley looks up to the sky. A light shines down gently on her face, as if to suggest a divine communion that will eventually enable the dog to save a life near-lost in the snow. That Frandley was much more likely to conquer Crufts than snowy cliff faces was irrelevant to the artist and the audience. Frandley’s portrait served to reinforce the St. Bernard as a literal life-saving breed with God-given instincts. Depictions of the saintly dog were often also intertwined with the rigorous breed standards and status indications of the dog fancy. Combining status symbol with saintly symbol, such portraits alluded to the divinity of the owner who could possess such a truly virtuous dog.

Figure 51 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

²⁴ ‘Found in the Snow’, *Strand Magazine*, 1892, p. 323.

Figure 51: Sir Edwin Landseer, *A Distinguished Member of the Human Society*, oil on canvas, exhibited 1838, The Tate Collection, London.

Similarly, the Newfoundland gained a popular association as a saviour of men throughout the Victorian period which came to the foreground in visual depictions of the breed. As with the St. Bernard, the Newfoundland had credentials as literal lifesavers, which were depicted in various visual forms. Yet, as Frandley's portrait demonstrates, in the cultural imagination the notion of dogs as virtuous lifesavers did not require the dog to be depicted in the act of lifesaving for the animal to be evocative of it. Landseer's well-known work, *A Distinguished Member of the Humane Society* (1838), can be seen to demonstrate this in regards to the Newfoundland.

Much as with its saintly predecessor, the Newfoundland depicted in this painting is the calm, strong centre for what seems to be a storm developing in the background. Showing its divine instincts the Newfoundland looks up to the sky, as if for guidance. The clouds depicted around its head are lighter—acting almost as a halo. In paintings such as this a religious rhetoric was placed on artworks that transcended the literal. Dealing with traits such as virtue, sagacity, and divine guidance the visual markers which came to show the dog's life-saving capacity became less about the action of the dogs depicted and much more about the implied character and guidance of the dog. Landseer's work indicated that already in the early Victorian period a visual language was being developed that could not be untangled from the implied saintly features of the animal. These structures, sometimes tentative or non-inclusive in some texts, were typically overt in Victorian paintings and illustrations, providing from an early stage the visual markers needed to elevate the dog beyond the role of literal life-saver to that of figurative religious saviour.

The Dog as Figurative Saviour

Reviews of *A Distinguished Member of the Humane Society* are indicative of the developing intentions behind these life-saving canines, and reveal how they became one that was not merely literal in nature. Reviews were eager to praise the ‘benevolence’²⁵ and ‘sagacity’²⁶ of the animal, confidently claiming that the Newfoundland was ‘keeping a look-out for such objects as may have an especial claim on his attention as a member of the Humane Society’.²⁷ A review from the *New Monthly Magazine* was particularly telling about the intention of this elevation. Adopting a playful attitude, the review remarked that the animal depicted was ‘A magnificent Newfoundland dog, with a humanity in his canine face that would put to the blush many a sharp solicitor—many an inventive stockbroker’.²⁸ While this appraisal was intended as a humorous take on the painting, this piece of light-hearted social satire also reveals the moralising agenda behind the rising interest in depicting dogs as lifesavers.

This moral message was also expressed in a sculpture of the 1st Earl of Dudley’s Newfoundland, Bashaw. The sculpture depicts Bashaw’s paw solidly placed on the throat of a snake, holding itself in a resolute manner as the snake struggles under its grip. The Earl of Dudley died before the sculpture’s completion, but the artist decided to exhibit the piece at the Great Exhibition of 1851, aptly titled *The Faithful Friend of Man Trampling Underfoot his Most Insidious Enemy* (c.1832–1834).²⁹ In this exhibition, Bashaw’s sculpture was said to have ‘excited universal admiration’³⁰ but it is the renaming of the sculpture when displayed at the Great Exhibition which is of most interest. Given an overt religious narrative and a clear character trait, no one who read the

²⁵ ‘A Distinguished Member of the Humane Society’, *Literary Gazette*, 16 November 1839, p. 731.

²⁶ ‘Fine Arts Exhibition of the Royal Academy’, *Literary Gazette*, 6 January 1838, p. 315.

²⁷ *New Sporting Magazine*, 14 January 1838, p. 426.

²⁸ ‘From Gustavus Nibs to Cimabue Carmine’, in Theodore Hook, ed., *New Monthly Magazine and Humourist*, (London: Henry Colburn, 1838), p. 249.

²⁹ *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations 1851-Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue*, 2, (London: Spicer Brothers, 1851), p. 854.

³⁰ ‘Obituary. Mr. Matthew Cotes Wyatt’, *Art Journal*, 1 March 1862, p. 86.

name given to this sculpture could ignore Bashaw's saintly connotations, nor misinterpret his actions as anything short of the protection of humanity in general. The exhibit conveyed a clear message, declaring that dogs were not only lifesavers but, more poignantly, saviours; the protectors of man against threats to their religious piety. Had the Earl of Dudley not passed away he was willing to pay £5,000 for the sculpture; a significant sum for the saintly memorialisation of a family pet.

Figure 52 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 52: Matthew Cotes Wyatt, *Bashaw (The Faithful Friend of Man Trampling Under Foot his most Insidious Enemy)*, coloured marbles and hardstones; eyes of topaz, sardonyx and black lava; snake of bronze, with ruby eyes; cushion mounts of gilt bronze, c.1832–1834, The Victoria and Albert Collection, London.

Figure 53 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 53: George William Horlor, *Guarding the Flock*, oil on canvas, 1876, Private Collection.

Figure 54 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 54: George William Horlor, *The Protectors*, oil on canvas, 1872, Private Collection.

Yet it is the third breed afforded saintly status in Victorian imagery, the shepherd's dog, which permits the best insights into how the dog functioned as a figurative saviour of man. Standing in contrast to the St. Bernard and Newfoundland as being afforded divine features through its role a literal life saver, paintings of the shepherd's dog emphasised the animal's rural duties, and the devoted manner with which the Collie dog guided its flock. The most notable examples were by George William Horlor (1823–95). In his numerous paintings of Collies, the dogs can be seen watching over their flock whilst seeming to gaze off into the distance with an expression of calm contemplation on their

face. In its master's absence, the Collie dog becomes the shepherd, embodying the role of its master and fulfilling it with equal wisdom.

The association of the shepherd and his flock is longstanding in Christian iconography. Eminent paintings such as John Everett Millais' *Christ in the House of His Parents* (1849-50) depict flocks of sheep in the background, in order to allude to religious symbolism. However, in such imagery, the sheep acted as part of a larger, more complex piece (in terms of iconography, style, etc.). In contrast, the sheep in images such as Horlor's paintings of Collie dogs become just one of a few iconographical elements, with the main focus being afforded to the dogs themselves. Guiding the Christian flock, the Collie comes to represent virtues that dutiful Christians should strive for in order to gain a sense of grace—be dutiful, be faithful, appreciate the humble aspects of life, and carry out your work well. These moralizing messages were almost entirely depicted as a visual phenomenon, and little attention is afforded to the Collie in the same way that it was conveyed visually throughout the period.

The emphasis on the Collie's appeal to duty meant that it came to represent another moral example for Victorian audiences too, with regards to religious devotion and worship. The unwavering devotion of not just the Collie dog but all dogs was a prevalent belief throughout the Victorian period. In 1901, in an essay on dogs, one writer recounted the origins of the dog, which were notably Biblical in nature:

Adam, when turned out of the Garden of Eden, was deserted by all the animals ... he sat down upon a rock, hiding his face in his hands in deep abasement. Then he heard a rustling amongst the bushes, and, looking up, he met the liquid eyes of a dog brimming over with love and compassion for his fallen master ... Ever after, through succeeding ages, the dog has been, of all animals, pre-eminently the friend of man.³¹

³¹ 'A Dissertation on Dogs', *Ludgate*, February 1901, pp. 316-317.

The notion that the dog was the only animal that refused to forsake Adam was not an uncommon tale.³² This story was accessible to the Victorian public as early as 1842, where one article on the origin of dogs not only acknowledged the fable, but also professed that some people considered the original dog to have been the shepherd's dog.³³ This concept of the saintly and devoted Collie was easily accessible in literature and imagery, to the point where even well-regarded authors entertained the thought. This is apparent in Vero Shaw's notable publication *The Illustrated Book of the Dog*—where Shaw speculated that 'second to dogs used in the chase ... the Sheep-dog must have been one of the earliest to come under man's dominion and form part of his home stock.'³⁴ Placing the Collie as either the biblical or historical servant of man held significance in the Victorian period because it appealed to a growing ideological belief; a belief that, in the eyes of dogs, the dog was not simply the servant of man, but that man was the God of the dog. One review of George R. Jessie's book pertinently demonstrated this growing school of thought, when it quoted (with praise) assertions that:

Man ... is the god of the dog. He knows no other, he can understand no other; and see how he worships him! with what reverence he crouched at his feet, with what love he fawns upon him ... His whole soul is wrapped up in his god; all the powers and faculties of his nature are devoted to his service, and these powers and faculties are ennobled by the intercourse. Divines tell us that it ought to be just so with the Christian; but the dog puts the Christian to shame.³⁵

This supposed worship of man shown by the Collie became such a pervasive construction in the period that it even permeated some scientific texts and was discussed with interest

³² To this end, it is also interesting that, on the page where Glenavon recounts her tale of man's best friend, there is a picture of a breed of dog typically associated with shepherd's—an old English sheepdog.

³³ H.D. Richardson, 'Dogs', *New Sporting Magazine*, March 1842, p. 151.

³⁴ Shaw, *The Illustrated Book of the Dog*, p. 73.

³⁵ 'Art VI- The Dog: His Intelligence', *Westminster Review*, October 1866, p. 414.

in the field of theology.³⁶ A significant example of this came in 1872, when social reformer and anti-vivisectionist Frances Power Cobbe (1822–1904) explored ‘The Consciousness of Dogs’, asserting that:

a dog's nature will best be understood by reverting to the analogy drawn a few pages back between his devotion to his master and human religious feelings towards God. The dog's virtues and vices are all those of a faithful worshipper who has no other law beside the arbitrary will of his Deity.³⁷

Following this article Charles Darwin (himself a friend of Cobbe’s) took the time to personally write to her and express that he had found her work to be ‘the best analysis of the mind of an animal which I have ever read’ with Darwin considering the topic of the dog’s morality to be ‘One of the most interesting subjects’.³⁸ Considering Darwin’s own active engagement in debates of canine worship it is noteworthy that in his own work exists a pertinent visual example of such, published in the same year as Cobbe’s own canine doctrine.

Figure 55 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 55: A. May, ‘Fig. 8—The same caressing his master’, in Charles Darwin, *The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (London: John Murray, 1872), p. 55.

In Charles Darwin’s *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, we find an engraving of a collie ‘fawning’ at a man’s leg, almost as if he were bowing in religious worship. In addition to this imagery, the caption reads that the collie is ‘caressing his

³⁶ The work of Romanes, for example, also indulged in such anecdotal employment of the dog’s supposedly virtuous traits in George John Romanes, *Animal Intelligence* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, 1882).

³⁷ Frances Power Cobbe, ‘The Consciousness of Dogs’, *Quarterly Review*, 133, October 1872, p.440.

³⁸ Charles Darwin, ‘A Letter to Frances Power Cobbe Concerning “The Consciousness of Dogs” (1872)’, in *Dogs and Society: Anglo-American Sociological Perspectives (1865–1934)*, ed. by Michael Hill and Mary Jo Deegan (Lincoln, NE: The University of Nebraska, 2016), pp.33-34 (p. 33).

master'.³⁹ Such imagery—which spoke of a sense of worship endorsed and explored by some of the great Victorian thinkers of the time—entailed a strong message and that message was one of visual instruction. Through the devotion of the Collie dog, whether guiding the flock or fawning over its perceived God, those who observed the Collie were being visually advised that they could look to dogs as moral emblems and entities which could affirm their own religious values and perhaps even act as prompts for further improvement. For, although dogs were considered to have man as their God, saintly dogs such as the St. Bernard, the Newfoundland and the Collie dog were seen in their morals to be more virtuous than some humans—so much so that they 'put the Christian to shame' with their worship, as Jessie proposed.

Salvation and the Canine Saviour

While the saintly trio of dogs enhanced the public's perception of the benevolence of man's best friend, the 'sublime virtues'⁴⁰ of dogs became something that was not limited to a select choice of breeds. This seems logical. Considering the growing desire for a variety of dog breeds would mean that only a select few would specifically own a St. Bernard, Newfoundland or Collie, meant others sought reassurance that their dogs were also virtuous entities which could enable moral instruction and the reinforcement of Christian values in the home. The *Bow Bells Journal*, in 1870, considered that 'The dog possesses, incontestably, all the qualities of a sensible man; and, I grieve to say, man has not, in general, the noble qualities of a dog'⁴¹ they stated so irrespective of the dog's breed. While it was believed that the virtuosity of the dog was 'never ... concentrated in a single dog' (so people could 'find comfort under our own shortcomings'⁴²), it was

³⁹ Charles Darwin, *The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (London: John Murray, 1872), p. 55.

⁴⁰ George R. Jesse, *Researches into the History of the British Dog*, Vol. 1 (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1866), p. vi.

⁴¹ 'The Dog', *Bow Bells*, 1 June 1870, p. 448.

⁴² 'Art VI- The Dog: His Intelligence', *Westminster Review*, October 1866, p. 413.

subsequently thought that any dog had the capacity to be gifted with the saintly instincts that were so often praised in relation to the virtuous trio. Acting in unison to reassure owners, this can also be seen in visual culture, as features typically formed in saintly depictions of the virtuous trio became discernible in other breeds too.

Although the visual depictions of dogs saving people or demonstrating virtuous behaviour were primarily depicted through the saintly trio, many illustrations broke the visual norm. In particular the duties of saviour at sea were particularly prone to variation. Equally significant were images that depicted quite the opposite. Contrary to the many images of the dog's saintly capacity, one such image depicts a Collie dog who has slain a young lamb, blood still dripping from its muzzle as it looks onwards to its next victim. The melodramatic illustration, 'The Criminal Dog', serves to convey a pertinent message in a manner that the saintly hound alone could not. Amongst the myriad of images which depict the dog as saintly, this image stands as a complimentary contrast—suggesting that anyone, even the most noble of people, has the capability to fall from grace and face damnation. This conversely implies that everyone also has the potential to rise up and achieve salvation—employing the dog as a sign for moral redemption.

Figure 56 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 56: Harrison Weir, 'A Swimming-Match', in *Chatterbox Album of Animals* (London: W.W. Gardner, 1880), p. 71, George A Smathers Libraries, Gainesville.

Figure 57 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 57: Harrison Weir, 'The Criminal Dog' in *Chatterbox Album of Animals* (London: W.W. Gardner, 1880), p. 35, George A Smathers Libraries, Gainesville.

Victorian art frequently portrayed themes of salvation; notably in works by the Pre-Raphaelites, and especially Holman Hunt. In addition to traditionally religious paintings, the Pre-Raphaelites utilized modern settings in order to impart religious and moral messages of salvation. As observed by Alison Smith:

Pre-Raphaelite pictures of the social scene tend to take the form of modern parables, being premised on an evangelical awareness of the fallen condition of man and a need for salvation, together with an emphasis on duty and self-help.⁴³

This is most easily recognised in the complementary pieces *The Light of the World* (1851–6) and *The Awakening Conscience* (1853), both by Holman Hunt.

This Pre-Raphaelite interest in art depicting salvation is indicative of the wider social climate of the time. As Smith notes ‘The juxtaposition of religious painting with images of contemporary life ... shows the extent to which the moral language traditionally associated with religion permeated all aspects of Victorian society’.⁴⁴ Artwork of the saintly dog acted in a similar way, to reflect the religious ideals of the time and provide instruction on one’s religious salvation.

Looking back, in 1866, at the way dogs had been treated in culture George R. Jesse condemned historical quotations damning the dog. For, as Jesse considered it:

What more forcibly demonstrates the debasement of humanity than the ... general cruelty of language made use of towards a creature whom the Mighty and Beneficent Creator of all things brought into being to be the friend and companion of mankind, and whose unswerving fidelity, intense affection, and unselfish character, courage, gentleness, and a host of virtues claim the utmost tenderness and gratitude from man?⁴⁵

⁴³ Tim Barringer, Jason Rosenfield, Alison Smith, *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde* (London: Tate Publishing, 2012) p. 115.

⁴⁴ Barringer, Rosenfield, Smith, *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde*, p. 115.

⁴⁵ George R. Jesse, *Researches into the History of the British Dog Vol. II* (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1866) p. 278.

Study of the dog in Victorian art indicates that the dog in visual culture became a large part of this cultural redemption of the dog's qualities. Further than just placing the dog in the position of a gift from God, cultural depictions of the dog employed the dog as a symbol for the virtuous behaviour needed to achieve salvation in God's eyes, in addition to representing the relationship that should ideally exist between mankind and God. Visual culture took a prominent place in these developments—constructing the dog as a point of visual guidance for man's religious redemption. The formation of this narrative—from a trio of saintly hounds into a recognisable symbol, regardless of breed—allowed for further facets to be added to the symbolism of the divine canine. These developments went beyond the framework of saintliness, set through the symbols of the saintly trinity of dog breeds, and influenced other artworks. Eventually, the capacity for the dog to circumvent the trio of saintly dogs in canine imagery became embodied through any dog—constructing the dog as an emblem for redemption. Through this cultural motif the trustworthy and obedient dog could be seen as an exemplar for human behaviour. In rescuing a drowning or 'fallen' man, the dog prefigured the divine rescue of fallen mankind.

No Sirius but, Hopefully, Still Heaven-Bound

The Dog as Mourner in Victorian Visual Culture

Carrington's memorialization of the dog that had made his career was typical of the period, and acted on a growing phenomenon of Victorian canine mourning which, itself, had grown out of a wider mourning culture. In the earlier half of the century Victoria and Albert's reactions to the passing of their dogs provide exceptional examples of the extreme reactions Victorians could have to the departure of their canine companions. When Dash, died in 1840 the Queen wrote a personal message for her beloved pet, which was inscribed on Dash's tombstone at Adelaide Lodge. It spoke of Dash's 'attachment

without selfishness' and 'fidelity without deceit' before suggesting that if the reader wished to 'live beloved and die regretted profit by the example of Dash!'⁴⁶ Albert reacted with similar grief when his favourite dog, Eos, passed away. When she recalled the day Albert received the news in her diaries Queen Victoria wrote that 'It makes me too sad to think we shall never see her again & I was quite upset. As for poor dear Albert, he feels it too terribly, & I grieve so for him. It is quite like losing a friend'.⁴⁷ To Victoria, and presumably Albert, Eos had been a notable part of Albert's own character and Victoria noted that 'She was connected with the happiest years of his life, & I cannot somehow imagine him without her'.⁴⁸

The Royal couple were not shy in displaying their grief for Dash and Eos. Dash's gravestone was advertised in *The Royal Companion to the "Sights of London"*, with the description that 'In this vicinity [the Slopes] several of her Majesty's favourite dogs are interred'⁴⁹ and a bronze version of John Francis Bell's (1790–1861) sculpture of Eos was displayed at the Great Exhibition in 1851.⁵⁰ But such open displays of grief were not isolated to the Royal couple, and the Victorian public were increasingly inclined to openly admit their feelings of bereavement at the death of their dogs.

Obituaries in newspapers lamented the loss of a favourite dog, elaborate canine coffins were constructed, and Hyde Park included a canine cemetery after 1881. Despite all of this, visual depictions of the dog scarcely highlighted dogs mourned but, instead, placed their focus on the dog mourner. It is this lack of interest in depicting the grief that

⁴⁶ *The Royal Companion to the "Sights of London" and within twenty-five miles of St. Pauls* (London: Joseph Clayton and Son, 1850), p.16.

⁴⁷ Queen Victoria's diary, 31 July 1844.

⁴⁸ Queen Victoria's diary, 31 July 1844.

⁴⁹ *The Royal Companion to the "Sights of London"*, p.16.

⁵⁰ Carol A. Grissom, *Zinc Sculptures in America, 1850-1950* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2009), p. 413.

dog owners felt, in favour of imagining the grief that dogs might feel, which reveals what images of mourning canines came to represent.

Developing the Mourner

The dog as a guardian of the dead was a long-standing narrative which continued into the Victorian period. While this particular canine narrative is sure to have influenced the Victorians' interest in seeing the dog as mourner, the role of the dog as guardian over the deceased has a few notable differences. One such example can be seen through the treatment of Charles Gough's demise.

In 1805 the Mancunian youth, Charles Gough, disappeared during a hiking holiday in Helvellyn. His terrier dog was discovered still alive and guarding over his corpse, three months later. For added pathos some versions chose to say that, not long before Gough's death, the dog had given birth to a pup which had not survived.⁵¹ The incident inspired poems by Wordsworth (*Fidelity*)⁵² and Scott (*Helvellyn*)⁵³, as well as a visual depiction by Landseer entitled *Attachment* (1829).⁵⁴ In *Attachment* we see Gough after he has fallen to his death. The youth's arms seem to be contorted in an unnatural manner, indicating the fatality of his accident. While the youth is clearly deceased, we see his terrier dog (the focus of the painting) dutifully guarding its owner. The dog has a sorrowful look on its face, nudging its master with its paws—hoping, perhaps, to nudge him into consciousness.

Though glorified in cultural manifestations, the dog as guardian was not necessarily synonymous with the dog as mourner that came to dominate the last half of

⁵¹ Robert Rosenblum, 'From the Royal Hunt to the Taxidermist: A Dog's History of Modern Art', in *Best in Show: The Dog in Art from the Renaissance to Today* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2006), ed. by Edgar Peters Bowron, Carolyn Rose Rebbert, Robert Rosenblum, and William Secord, pp.39-99 (p. 63).

⁵² *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth in Five Volumes: Vol. IV* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1827), pp.254-256.

⁵³ *Works of Walter Scott*, pp. 248-250.

⁵⁴ *The Sporting Magazine*, 1830, p. 177.

the century. The latter evinced the awareness of death whilst the guardian dog—such as Gough’s terrier—was not aware of its owner’s death, for it was widely believed that the terrier had been guarding its master’s body in the mistaken belief that it was still alive. This is made abundantly clear in Scott’s poem, as he asks of the dog ‘How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber? When the wind waved his garments, how oft didst thou start?’⁵⁵

Landseer’s painting mirrored this lack of awareness from the dog with the positioning of the terrier’s paws. The dog’s expression is not one of grief but of sorrowful expectancy, as it looks on at its master with hopes that he will rise up.

Figure 58 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 58: Sir Edwin Landseer, *Attachment*, oil on canvas, 1829, Private Collection.

In contrast, the dog as mourner was in most cases distinctly, indisputably, depicted as aware of its master’s passing. This awareness was ideologically important not simply in regards to the construction of the sagacious, semi-human hound but also in the religious implications that it provided. If the dog was not aware that its master had died, then it could not grieve and if it did not grieve for its owner than an absence of moral sense could be implied. Visual depictions of the dog as mourner always made it abundantly clear that the dog understood that the individual they were mourning was dead, in order to fully convey the emotions that were expected from such an outcome.

In other cultural forms, such as literature, the construction of canine awareness and character in relation to death and mourning culture was also cultivated, but was visual culture that most fully acknowledged the dog’s understanding of death. This is

⁵⁵ F. Campbell, *Beauties of the British Poets: With Notices, Biographical and Critical, Vol. II*, 1824, (London: Richard Edwards), pp. 4-5.

highlighted by Teresa Mangum, who has extensively studied the history of canine memorialisation and asserted that such examples were ‘articulated with special force in visual representations’. In this Mangum highlights the domestic entanglements that prefigured this move towards the active canine mourner, considering such representations (and dog portraiture in general) to signal ‘the transformation of the domestic animal into the animal companion, even the animal family member’.⁵⁶ Ultimately Mangum considers the character afforded to the dog by the Victorians as part of a cultural transition which ‘recurs in image after image of the Victorian dog’ placing dogs ‘as not merely as one mourner but chief mourner’.⁵⁷

Uncertainty about how aware a dog was regarding its owner’s death could lead to the dog losing its status as mourner, or holding it only in the most precarious of senses. This is seen through Francis Barraud’s (1856–1924) depiction of Nipper, in the now iconic *His Master’s Voice* (1899). Nipper had originally belonged to Barraud’s brother, however when Barraud’s brother died he inherited Nipper and a phonograph with some recordings of his brother’s voice. When Barraud realized how Nipper seemed to listen to the phonograph recordings with some curiosity, he decided to immortalize Nipper’s reaction in the now famous painting. Considering the motivations of the painting, and the shiny, wooden surface on which Nipper is seated, it has been proposed that this picture shows Nipper perched on his master’s coffin, while listening to his voice—the last remnant of his deceased master.⁵⁸ However, the original painting is lacking many of the emerging tropes which allowed viewers to understand the dog as a mourner.

⁵⁶ Teresa Mangum ‘Dog Years, Human Fears’, in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), pp.35-47, (p. 37).

⁵⁷ Mangum, ‘Dog Years, Human Fears’, p. 38.

⁵⁸ Jonathan Sterne, ‘Preserving Sound in Modern America’, in *Hearing History: A Reader*, ed. by Mark M. Smith (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), p. 304.

Figure 59 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 59: Francis Barraud, *His Master's Voice*, 1899, Private Collection.

Nipper may look somewhat curious as he stares into the phonograph, but he is not clinging to his master's coffin, nor does he possess an anthropomorphised look of inconsolable grief or unwavering loyalty on his face. Instead, Nipper displays curiosity as he listens to the recordings of his master's voice. Canine character is present in this manner, but not with regards to the virtuous traits that exalted the dog to its position as moral (and moralizing) family member. This work was not initially successful neither with the Royal Academy and public, nor with the phonographic trade; only when Barraud replaced the phonograph with a gramophone was Barraud able to find a suitable buyer.⁵⁹ This arguably eliminated the deathly associations that the work had failed to monopolize on. Although gramophones did still have some deathly associations they lacked the pertinence of the phonograph.

This example of an unsuccessful dog mourner highlights the importance of awareness when it came to this particular employment of the dog. In order to successfully mimic the capacity to grieve that was so coveted by Victorian audiences, artists had to be explicit in their insinuations and present the dog as a dramatic mourner.

Figure 60 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 60: Sir Edwin Landseer, *The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner*, oil on canvas, 1837, The Victoria and Albert Collection, London.

⁵⁹ 'The Nipper Saga', *Designboom*, (2014) <<http://www.designboom.com/history/nipper.html>> [Accessed 2 February 2014]

One of Landseer's most famous pictures *The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner* (1837), is an example of an explicitly grieving canine. Showing the shepherd's Collie dog by the side of the coffin, the scene appears so unambiguous that the title is almost redundant. Hugging his master's coffin closely with its body, and resting its head firmly on the coffin, the dog's expression is one of almost human heartbreak, as it dutifully mourns at its master's coffin.

In such paintings a language of grief was developed which made the dog as mourner an easily recognisable motif to the Victorian viewer. This is stated by Ruskin who, when writing on *The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner* praised it as a painting which was also, interchangeably, a visual poem. When looking at what made the painting ekphrastically readable as a cultural sign, Ruskin went into great detail:

Here the exquisite execution of the glossy and crisp hair of the dog ... the clear painting of the wood of the coffin and the folds of the blanket are language—language clear and expressive in the highest degree. But the close pressure of the dog's breast against the wood, the convulsive clinging of the paws, which has dragged the blanket off the testel, the total powerlessness of the head laid, close and motionless, upon its folds, the fixed tearful fall of the eye in its utter hopelessness, the rigidity of repose which marks that there has been no motion nor change in the trance of agony since the last blow was struck on the coffin-lid ... ; these are all thoughts—thoughts by which the picture is separated by hundreds of equal merit.⁶⁰

With such symbolic cues established in the artwork of the period—differentiated visually from the dog guardian—the dog mourner was free to operate in wider social and cultural issues of the period as an iconic symbol of family mourning. However while Mangum considers such imagery to be representative of the absent human companion or the dog's existence as an inarticulate, irreconcilable entity in the home, more can be said

⁶⁰ John Ruskin, *Selections from Writings of John Ruskin* (London: Elder Smith, 1871), p. 94.

about these images; specifically in relation to the virtuous dog. Tied, as Mangum highlights, to the realm of the domestic and the middle-class familial structure, the religious implications of the mourning dog provided Victorians with a distinct way to reconcile their own impending death.

Examinations of the Mourner

Examining the manner in which the canine mourner was employed throughout the period reveals the extent to which this image captured the Victorian imagination. Mourning culture has obvious connections to the active canine mourner, but perhaps less expected is the ability for this representative figure to exist in a variety of cultural and stylistic movements. The Gothic revival provides just one example of this.

Victorian culture was characterised by stylistic revivals, which often had a moralistic or nationalistic aspect rather than merely aesthetic. The Gothic revival was but one of these. Prevalent in literature, architecture and art, the desire of the Gothic revival was a return of supposedly medieval values—whether of chivalry, of relations between the classes, or in religious organisation and practice. The revival was readily endorsed by the monarchy and aristocracy through such manifestations as Landseer's *Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at the Bal Costumés* (1842–6). In this revival animals played a role through heraldry, such as in Pre-Raphaelite representations of 'noble hounds'⁶¹, and in such cultural forms as funerary art (such as through Eos at the footrest in Baron Henri-Joseph-François de Triqueti's cenotaph of Albert seen in the Albert Memorial Chapel, Windsor).

Integrating the canine mourner into the Gothic revival Briton Rivière's *Requiescat* applies this medievalizing to the dog mourner. In *Requiescat* we see a loyal

⁶¹ For example, Sir Edward Burne-Jones, *The Tomb of Tristan and Isolde the fair, from 'The Story of Tristan and Isolde'*, stained glass, 68 x 60.5cm, Bradford Art Galleries and Museums, Bradford.

hound mourning by his master's side. The painting is reminiscent, in many ways, of chivalric sculptures and memorial tombstones, as opposed to being of a purely painterly tradition, and Joseph A. Kestner compares it to the tomb effigy of the Black Prince in Canterbury Cathedral, in addition to having links towards statues of iconic representatives of masculinity, such as General Gordon.⁶² Choosing to omit a modern setting in favour of appealing to medieval sentiments, *Requiescat* is able to combine the Victorian interest with both the dog as mourner and romanticised ideals about Gothic chivalry.⁶³ Depicted as incontestably loyal, this dog is the knight's last mourner. The knight's armoured remains lie in the shadows, the light falling against his right side, whilst the dog, raised on his forelegs, in the foreground is lit to reveal a musculature which echoes the now departed strength of the dead knight. Both dog and knight might be taken to exemplify physical perfection and nobility; but the living dog also expresses loyalty.

Figure 61 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 61: Briton Rivière, *Requiescat*, oil on canvas, 1888, Art Gallery New South Wales, Sydney.

The bloodhound's body and the knight's corpse share visual similarities. The muscular physique of the dog also bears strong similarity to the way that the knight's armour is depicted. Through such visual similarities it becomes apparent that the dog, in some ways, has come to embody the knight, whose chivalry lives on through his faithful hound. For some the hound was even the primary focus of masculinity and morality in the image, with one appraisal from the Athenaeum noting that 'No picture in this exhibition will be more warmly admire...than Mr. Briton Riviere's *Requiescat*' with the only criticism, ironically, going to the physiognomy of the Knight, which was considered 'not quote

⁶² Joseph A. Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1995), p.103.

⁶³ A theme which Briton Rivière also explored in previous works, such as *The Empty Chair*, which was exhibited in the Dudley Gallery in 1869 and sold for £199 10s. C. Reginald Grundy, ed., 'In the Sale Room', *The Connoisseur: An Illustrated Magazine for Collectors*, May-August 1921, p. 173.

noble enough in type' for the morality and masculinity implied by the loyal posturing of the bloodhound.⁶⁴

Through looking at *Requiescat* it becomes clear that the dog as mourner was used as a symbol; meant to guide viewers on a righteous path through leading by example. Robert Rosenblum notes this in his examination of *Requiescat*: 'If only, the message reads, human beings, in this or any other age, could be counted for such selfishness and prayerful devotion!'⁶⁵ Such employment of the dog as a medieval mourner underpins the overall religious and moralizing intention of the dog mourner, and can be seen to have a profound influence on depictions of the dog and its relation to death.

This chapter has already argued that estimable canine 'character' allowed the Victorians to justify the presence of the dog as a beloved and moralistic presence in the Victorian home. However this cultural and emotional construction came with some unanticipated downsides, which the Victorians were ill-equipped to deal with. Mangum provides some interesting insights into the motivation behind the employment of the visual dog mourner. She proposes that, faced with the then unusual grief as the loss of their beloved pet people needed to reconcile their feelings and create a new culture of acceptable canine mourning.⁶⁶ In the face of such grief, constructions of the dog as mourner acted to alleviate the feelings of unease that Victorians had at their own surprising despair. Employing the dog as a mourner allowed grieving owners to feel as if their feelings were warranted. For, as Mangum states:

in order to accept grief as a legitimate response to an animal's death, Victorians first needed to believe that animals themselves were capable of

⁶⁴ 'The Royal Academy', *Athenaeum*; 5 May 1888, pp. 572-574, p. 573.

⁶⁵ Robert Rosenblum, *The Dog in Art: From Rococo to Post-Modernism* (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1988), p.67.

⁶⁶ Teresa Mangum, 'Animal Angst: Victorians Memorialize their Pets', in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. by Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 15-34 (p. 18).

love—that should “we” be the first to go that the animal would grieve the loss of “us”.⁶⁷

However, this need for the dog to feel grief also allowed for inverted memorialisation. If a dog was immortalised through a memorial, then so too was the owner it grieved for. The dog as mourner also allowed Victorians another outlet through which to explore human morality and qualities such as loyalty. Integrating the positioning of dogs as virtuous and morally instructive figures Victorian audiences can thus be seen as using the figurative dog as mourner to provide religious reinforcement and social instruction to those who viewed them. This can be seen in Carrington’s memorialisation of Teufel (a dog whose epitaph was published for the world to see) and in Victoria’s dedication to her dog Dash who, in death, functioned as a moral exemplar. For, after Queen Victoria had listed all of the positive traits she saw in her beloved dog, she encouraged readers to ‘Profit by the example of Dash!’ if they wished to ‘live beloved and die regretted’.⁶⁸ Victoria’s choice of words and the public display of Dash’s gravestone make it clear that Victoria was not only aware of the dog’s employment as a moral messenger but was also deliberately utilizing this trope.

This use of the dog as a moral exemplar was also manifest in one of the most famous dog memorials; that of Greyfriars Bobby. Though the well-known story of Bobby had variations, it primarily concerned the dog’s loyalty after the death and burial of his master John Grey, at Greyfriar’s churchyard. Bobby sat dutifully at Grey’s grave, or lingered nearby, every day until he died. After Bobby’s death Angela Burdett-Coutts (1814–1906) erected a modest fountain to honour his memory. However, many depictions hailed Bobby’s faithfulness, his dedication, and his unwavering worship of his master. The *London Journal* suggested that the fountain read ‘My dog shall mortify the pride, Of

⁶⁷ Mangum, ‘Animal Angst’, p. 19.

⁶⁸ *The Royal Companion to the “Sights of London” and within twenty-five miles of St. Pauls*, p.16

man's superior breed'. While these words were not elected in the final statue it was believed that they were 'more applicable to a dog who had loved his master so well when no longer visible to him as quite to shame the affections of average human kind'.⁶⁹

The Dog as Saviour and the Dog as Salvation

Whilst it was widely debated whether dogs could reside in heaven it was generally agreed among animal lovers that, for their virtuous nature, dogs *deserved* a place in heaven. This school of thought was mirrored in cultural forms of the period. In a poem mourning the loss of one man's dog it was recounted in various ways that:

Such Tomb as I could give to thee, my faithful dog, I gave, Though worthier
Thon by far the gift of Heaven than of the grave.⁷⁰

This was the case despite the author's own assertion that his dog 'was no Sirius' at times.⁷¹ Commonplace as part of the wider trend for canine memorialisation, such debates about a dog's worthiness for a place in heaven were clearly related to the idea of human salvation. As such, in these discussions the dog's actual entry into heaven was secondary to its status as deserving of the right. It was the dog's moral traits that afforded it a position as a moral exemplar and it was in this capacity that the dog as mourner functioned.

In life, imagery of dogs as saviours gave audiences a level of virtue that could 'put Christians to shame'.⁷² Imagery of dogs in mourning continued this theme. If a person was expected to emulate the dog's virtuous characteristics whilst living, a dog standing vigil at its owner's grave suggested that the deceased owner was morally worthy of the dedicated mourning they were receiving. Because the dog's traits made it worthy of heaven, paintings depicting the dog grieving a deceased master might suggest that the animal had actively deemed this person worthy of mourning. In this we see one of the

⁶⁹ 'Miscellaneous', *London Journal*, 9 December 1871, p. 383.

⁷⁰ *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 1838, p.559.

⁷¹ *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 1838, p.558.

⁷² *Westminster Review*, 1866, p. 414.

most pertinent reasons for canine character and intelligence to be popularized in the Victorian eye. Since the dog was depicted as making this decision, it was further implied that the person receiving its lamentation had followed the dog's example and acquired the traits that made domestic canines so deserving of heaven. Consequently, a dog mourning its master could be seen as symbolically confirming one's place in heaven.

While, of course, acting in a complementary role to the vigorous religious rituals and instruction that devout families would undertake, this employment of the dog provided audiences with an appealing supplementary method to alleviate their own fears of death and the afterlife. After all, if the viewer followed the moral example of dogs (examples of behaviours and characteristics already proposed within orthodox Christian texts) then such images confirmed that a position in heaven was obtainable. The dog's place in the home was thus further framed in notions of the domestic and religious ideal.

This is particularly prominent in *The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner*, which presented the dog as mourner in the most explicit manner. Of the three major saintly breeds, it was the Collie that was most closely aligned with lessons about taking the dog's example, and diligent religious worship. Thus *The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner* acted to demonstrate the moral example that dogs set for viewers through recognition of its breed and implied character. However, in its mourning capacity, the dog in this painting does more than just give an example to its audience. As the dog leans on the coffin light shines down on them from above, symbolising the shepherd's ascension to heaven. Landseer has placed a bible in the right hand side of the painting—only slightly in the light, but shining prominently nonetheless. This visual cue acts to further underline how the man was able to secure his place in heaven and warrant such a noticeable light shining down on his coffin. Just as his Collie dog had worshipped him the man had worshipped his God with devotion, and thus would be rewarded in the afterlife.

The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1837 and met with critical acclaim, considered by Ruskin to be 'One of the most perfect poems or pictures (I use the words as synonymous) which modern times have seen'.⁷³ Its popularity at the Academy meant a successful print run⁷⁴ and was later considered to have 'a genuineness of grief about it, far more touching than the majority of graver and more direct appeals' when exhibited again in 1859.⁷⁵ This ability of such works to appeal specifically to the thoughts and emotions of the reader can be found again in Frederic George Stephens's memoirs of Landseer's life, where he also considers the work to be 'far more touching than more direct appeals to the imagination'.⁷⁶ Landseer's appeal to religious sentiments would have therefore been apparent within the minds of the viewer when reading his painting.

In the placement of these prints the moral and religious instruction of such works becomes even more apparent; for, as Jan Bondeson observes, they typically found their home 'in many a classroom and Sunday school' in addition to hanging in domestic spaces.⁷⁷ Through such placements *The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner* associates between the dog as saintly and the dog mourner, and underpins some of the social and religious motivations behind these representations. With the dog acting as a moral example, it provided Victorian caninophiles with a reassuring confirmation regarding the religious instruction that they already received in life and which could be seen to work for the figurative people in the illuminated graves that dogs mourned over. While such paintings relied upon pathos and sentimentality it was clear that there was an audience

⁷³ John Ruskin, *Selections from Writings*, p. 94.

⁷⁴ One such engraving could be purchased in 1844 for 12s (or £1 1s. for artist proofs). 'Advertisement', *Art-Union*, 64, April 1844, p.101.

⁷⁵ 'The Brompton Museum', *National Magazine*, Vol. v, 1859, p. 231.

⁷⁶ Stephens, *Memoirs of Sir Edwin Landseer*, p. 99.

⁷⁷ Jan Bondeson, *Greyfriars Bobby: The Most Faithful Dog in the World* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2012), p. 100.

for such paintings, as they continued to have a prominent place in homes and minds throughout the period.⁷⁸

Guardian in Life, Guardian in Death

The Dog as the Guardian of Children in Victorian Visual Culture

It is of interest that when Teufel was laid to rest Carrington swiftly moved past his own grief and shifted the reader's attention to that of his daughter. At first unable to comprehend Teufel's passing (being only four years old), Carrington's daughter then attends his funeral where she stood 'with a most pensive face, saying not a word, but dropping a flower upon his grave'.⁷⁹ It is not until later, when she is saying her evening prayers that the finality of Teufel's passing strikes Little Dorothy. Her moment of realisation at the loss of Teufel is what makes up the last line of Teufel's tale.

The focus on the realisation of death in the mind of a four-year old girl provides, in *Teufel the Terrier*, a distinctly sorrowful manner in which to bookmark 'The Life and Adventures of an Artists' Dog' and highlights the Victorian fascination with both death and companion animals. Presented through the eyes of a young child realizing that she will no longer see her daily friend Teufel's death gains added poignancy. Yet in this conclusion to Teufel's life the religious role of the domestic dog is also made abundantly clear, as in the individual who may most benefit from a dog's presence. Greeted with Teufel's death Dorothy is also initiated into mourning practices. Dutifully performing the ceremony, even though she does not fully comprehend it, Dorothy recreates the funerary rituals that she will one day have to perform for human relatives.

⁷⁸ Fenton, 'Portrait of a Victorian Painter', (p. 160). See also Emma Mason, 'Feeling Dickensian Feeling', pp.1-19.

⁷⁹ Carrington, *Teufel the Terrier*, p. 2.

The usefulness of the dog as an entity through which children could learn responsibility and future practices in morality was highly valued.⁸⁰ Imbued through culture (through dog biographies and other animal literature in particular) with virtuous values to impart, the manner in which children treated dogs and observed their actions became a point of instruction in the minds of many middle-class adults. Indeed, the act of using a dog for this purpose would later be taken up in the role of Nana from J.M. Barrie's 1904 play and 1911 novel *Peter Pan; or, the Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*. Presented as the family nanny, Nana is characterised as aware of her role in the household and eager to fulfil it. While Nana is a somewhat comical entity in the play there is evidence to suggest that J.M. Barrie (1860–1937) personally valued the role of dogs as childhood mentors and carers, as Nana was inspired by Barrie's own dog, Luath. Barrie's ex-wife Mary Ansell also recalled that Luath's proper place was in the nursery.⁸¹ In keeping with conventional notions of virtuous breeds both Nana and Luath were Landseer Newfoundlands.

The visual aspect of both the dog's breed and behaviour was evidently an important aspect of their capacity to act in this role. Because the dog was increasingly domesticated it was also increasingly present in the home and, therefore, an easily accessible indicator for children to view and take lessons from. Dogographies and animal anthologies also helped to emphasise the dog's potential in this role. These stories were often aimed at children and in these tales word and image worked in tandem to present treatment of the dog as a conduit for moral improvement. Many books would often state as such in their introduction, with one from 1899 declaring that 'The object of this book is to teach children to treat all living creatures with considerable kindness' believing that

⁸⁰ The moral and instructional value of which can be linked back to eighteenth-century notions of 'Natural Theology'—learning of the goodness of God through the actions and observable virtues of God's creations. For further reading see Tess Cosslett, *Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction, 1786–1914* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), p.17, in which this link is made by the author.

⁸¹ Mary Ansell, *Dogs and Men* (London: Duckworth, 1924).

‘The thoughtless child makes the selfish man or woman and selfishness lies at the root of crime’.⁸² The link between a child’s relationship with its pet and the way such pets were seen and depicted was thus a highly valued and commonplace aspect of Victorian society.⁸³

However, beyond simply the visual aspect of the dog being present in the home additional visual elements helped to underpin the dog’s position as childhood instructor. To return to a previous point *The Old Shepherd’s Chief Mourner* was, as Bondeson notes, ‘in many a classroom and Sunday school’ acting as a visual supplement for the lessons that children were being taught.⁸⁴ Not only does this relate to the construction of the virtuous dog in visual culture but it also mirrors the manner in which Holman Hunt’s works were also ‘Displayed in schoolrooms and nurseries, church halls and parlours’, revealing the wider artistic and cultural trends in which such imagery operated.⁸⁵ Given this positioning of such imagery and its acknowledged capacity for religious education in the period relevant canine prints also warrant attention and by examining the association of dogs with children we are consequently able to address broader social phenomenon. Such motifs of the dog and child can be seen to relate to three specific aspects of human life: the physical vulnerability of children; the moral peril faced by children; and the emotional trauma of infant death.

Developing the Dog as Literal Saviour of Children

Victorians knew the tale of Gêlert well; in the twelfth century prince Llewelyn the Great decided to go hunting, leaving his beloved hound Gêlert behind at home. When the prince returns his dog came rushes out to greet him, but all is not well. Covered in blood

⁸² Sarah J. Eddy, *Friends and Helpers*, (London: Ginn, 1899), p. iii.

⁸³ In particular the relationship between cruelty to dogs and cruelty to men was often linked. This is what Eddy was hoping to counter in her book but it was also the topic of Hogarth’s, *The Stages of Cruelty*, which then inspired Brown’s artwork *Stages of Cruelty* creating a cultural and temporal dialogue concerning dogs, morality, and childhood instruction.

⁸⁴ Bondeson, *Greyfriars Bobby*, p. 100.

⁸⁵ Barringer, *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 133.

and wounded, Llewelyn sees the state of his dog and fears for his child's life. He rushes into the room of his beloved baby boy, only to find that the room is also covered in blood, and his child is nowhere to be seen. William Robert Spencer recounted the result in his poem 'Beth Gêlert', in which the Prince, consumed with rage, kills his faithful hound only to discover the dead body of a wolf in the room that Gêlert has killed in order to protect his young ward. After Llewelyn had realized his dire mistake he decided to honour Gêlert by erecting a tombstone dedicated to his fallen hound.⁸⁶

Although this story was popular with Victorian audiences the visual depiction of the tale was often less violent than the original story and Victorian representations of Beth Gêlert provides us with a useful tool through which to view Victorian attitudes towards canine guardians and their young wards. Three different representations of the story provide us with an understanding of these public mediations.

Gourlay Steell (1819-94) produced one of the more popular (and earlier) renditions of Gêlert in 1857. Exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy in 1857 Steell's reproduction of the legend's events was so well-received by the Queen that in 1880 she paid the artist £105 to make a copy.⁸⁷ Focusing on the moments after his discovery, Steell depicted Llewelyn's grief at having killed his faithful hound. But the aftermath of this violent act is notably muted. The unbloodied corpse of the hound seems to glance up faithfully at his owner, even in death.

The violence and danger that befell Llewelyn's child is also obfuscated, as the child is seen as distanced from the former scene of violence by a nurse. Even the wolf and the sword used to slay Gêlert are partially concealed from the view of the audience; deliberately covered by blankets and robes. This, it seems, was a shrewd move on Steell's

⁸⁶ *Poems by the Late Hon. William R. Spencer* (London: James Chrane, 1835), pp.153-154.

⁸⁷ <https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/403634/llywelyn-1173-1240-and-his-brave-hound-gelert> [Accessed 15 March 2016]

part to appeal to his audience, as the *Journal of Archaeology, Science and Art* noted of the painting that ‘Close by is the boar lying dead in the chamber, covered with a hunting robe, which has, perhaps, saved the artist some trouble’.⁸⁸ The implication in this review is clear; while the public appreciated the tale of a faithful dog saving a child they did not want to see the bloody and violent scene itself. The dog in such contexts was wanted as a physical guardian of children but the danger itself was something to be avoided.

Figure 62 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 62: Gourlay Steell, *Llywelyn (1173-1240) and his Brave Hound, Gelert*, oil on canvas, 1880, The Royal Collection, London.

Figure 63 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 63: Richard Ansdell, *The Tale of Gelert*, oil on canvas, 1849, Private Collection.

This is also the case in Richard Ansdell’s (1815–85) rendition of Gêlert in 1849. Representing, again, the moment of mourning that Llewelyn experienced, Gêlert is even more animated than in Steell’s representation. Gêlert is depicted as looking up at his master and licking his hand. Shown as not yet expired the viewer is presented with an act of tender reconciliation rather than the tragedy of the original poem. While blood is actually visible in Ansdell’s rendition it is extremely muted in comparison to the rest of the red colouration presented on canvas through the depiction of fabric. The wolf, again, is also partially covered (so that he may not be seen by the prince) and has none of the wounds that would be expected of an animal that was mauled to death by a hound. In

⁸⁸ ‘Fine Arts’, *Journal of Archaeology, Science and Art*, 13 June 1857, p. 571 (the magazine mistook Steell’s wolf for a boar).

Ansdell's representation the inclusion of the child is also notable. Presented in a brilliant white shawl and looking out at the viewer it is implied that the child has a purity which Gêlert has managed to dutifully protect. Despite Ansdell's avoidance of violent details, his artwork was still considered too graphic by some, with the writer Edward Walford noting that Ansdell's picture was 'powerful' but, due to its subject matter 'distressing to nervous and passionate spectators'.⁸⁹

Figure 64 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 64: Sir Edwin Landseer, *Saved*, oil on canvas, 1856, Private Collection.

Figures 65–66 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 65: [Left] The Newfoundland Dog, Music Sheet, 1843, The Kennel Club, London.

Figure 66: [Right] F. Robinson, 'The Newfoundland Dog', in Thomas Varty, *Varty's Series of Domestic & Wild Animals* (London: Thomas Varty, c.1850), Author's Collection.

The desire to see dogs as the life-savers of children was a popular one, particularly from the 1850s onwards. The Newfoundland was usually depicted rescuing children at sea most frequently, and stories of a Collie dog nurturing a child in the wilderness until it could be saved became increasingly represented in word and imagery as time went on. This was seen prevalently through the increase in animal-centric children's literature and its accompanying illustrations but a growth in representations of child and canine based works can also be viewed in the art world and through other visual media. Such images reached their peak in the late-Victorian period (1880-1890 especially) and the public never seemed to lose their appetite for visual representations of life-saving canines.

⁸⁹ Edward Walford, *Representative Men in Literature Science and Art* (London: Bennett, 1868).

Figure 67 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 67: Charles Burton Barber, *Gelert*, oil on canvas, 1884, Reading Museum, Reading.

While Gêlert's tale exemplified the eagerness of man's best friend to strike out, without hesitation, against a perceived threat to the child it guarded, the violent nature of such defences was something that Victorian audiences clearly had a hard time reconciling with their image of the dog as a tender guardian. The ideal outcome of a dog's presence was, as such, to protect a child from danger by omitting its presence altogether and the prevalence of this attitude can be seen in the changing representations of Gêlert. By the 1880s, when it was Charles Burton Barber's time to take up the mantle of Gêlert's tale, this notion of the dog as preventative guardian is firmly represented.

Far from reflecting the tragic moral of the story of Gêlert (as previous artists had done), Burton instead presented Gêlert in a different light. Omitting the sorrowful ending altogether, Burton's painting paid full attention to the relationship between canine and child. Gêlert is seen tenderly licking the body of infant he has just so faithfully saved, and the child himself is sleeping peacefully, undisturbed by the violent scene that has just occurred. While Barber makes it clear that a fight between dog and wolf has just occurred, the aftermath of the violence is minimised. There is no blood on Gêlert, nor over the walls, and what violence is shown is done through the body of the wolf. Still the wolf is, once more, partially obscured and only a small amount of blood is shown to escape from its muzzle—symbolizing the intent of the wolf, perhaps, much more than its brutal. With such a scene audiences would be hard pressed to believe that Gêlert's owner could ever misconstrue this situation, or doubt that Gêlert himself had aggressively taken down the lupine intruder. Barber's attempt to obscure the harsher elements of this story was

observed by *Baily's Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*⁹⁰ but the endeavour paid off. In 1884 Barber's painting won a prize with his version and was exhibited in the Autumn Exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery.⁹¹

The changing depiction of Gêlert in art is in keeping with the changing role of the dog in the Victorian home and its growing position as a defender of childhood. A consistent desire to depict the dog as a saviour of children, without any ill effect, revealed in Victorian audiences a parental desire to see no harm come to their own children. With such visual attempts to assuage previously grim stories (coupled with the proliferation of life-saving scenes in other imagery), it becomes clear that Victorian audiences also hoped that such grim prospect could be erased in their own lives. Consequently the dog became not just a protector of children, but an alleviator of parental anxiety, providing an association between children and canines that would become widely employed as a visual sign of wellbeing.

Employing the Dog as Guardian of Children

Having established the dog as instinctively driven to save a child's life, the mere presence of a dog alongside a child came to imply a child's safety and wellbeing, and the notion of the dog as a guardian of children was particularly apparent in artwork commissioned by the royal family.

Three works may be studied more closely: *Victoria, Princess Royal, with Eos* (1841), *Princess Alice Asleep* (1843), and *Princess Alice and Eos* (1844), all by Sir Edwin Landseer. *Victoria, Princess Royal, With Eos* was commissioned by Queen Victoria⁹² for Albert's birthday. In this painting Albert's favourite dog, Eos, is stretched around the young Princesses' bergère, cradling Victoria's toes on top of her muzzle. Eos was

⁹⁰ *Baily's Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, 1884, p. 317.

⁹¹ *Artist and Journal of Home Culture*, 1884, p. 303.

⁹² At the cost of £200.

apparently very good with the children, and so this painting records Eos's guardianship of the young princess.⁹³

In 1843 Albert reciprocated the gesture with the birthday commission *Princess Alice Asleep*. In this painting one of Victoria's favourite skye terriers, Dandie Dinmont, can be seen by the side of Princess Alice's Saxon cradle. While Dandie Dinmont is not presented as closely to Alice as Eos was to Victoria, the expression painted for Dandie Dinmont is one of dutiful vigilance. This expression was recognised at the time for when it was presented to Victoria on her birthday, Lady Lyttelton commented that Alice was 'watched over by Dandie, the black terrier, with an expression of fondness and watchfulness such as only Landseer can give'.⁹⁴

Figure 68 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 68: Sir Edwin Landseer, *Victoria, Princess Royal, with Eos*, oil on canvas, 1841, The Royal Collection, London.

Figure 69 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 69: Sir Edwin Landseer, Detail from *Princess Alice Asleep*, oil on canvas, 1843, The Royal Collection, London.

The next year Albert gave Victoria another clear depiction of the dog as guardian, in the form of *Princess Alice and Eos*. In this painting Alice can be seen resting on Eos for comfort, while Eos looks devotedly at the child she guards and protects. That Alice is shown seeking comfort in Eos confirms the dog's position in these paintings as a reassuring figure, for both the child depicted and the viewers of the paintings. When

⁹³ 'Victoria, Princess Royal, with Eos', Royal Collection Trust
<<http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/401548/victoria-princess-royal-with-eos>> [accessed 10 February 2013]

⁹⁴ Richard Ormond, *Landseer*, p. 158.

contemplating these images it can be concluded that Victoria and Albert exchanged these child / canine representations with the intention of reassuring each other that their children had active guardians that would give them the unconditional love and loyalty that their parents had experienced with their own canine companions. It might be suggested too that canine companions fulfilled an overall maternal role in the children's lives, as Victoria was not fond of young children.

Yet these paintings did not just function as an intimate exchange between the couple, but also worked in the wider trend of royal artworks to be disseminated to the public in prints. The rhetoric created in such imagery harmonised with the pre-existing middle-class inclination to look to the monarchy for the domestic ideal and to reassure them of their own domestic actions. An emphasis on this sense of domestic bliss may have been deemed especially important given the poor reputation of royalty as exemplars of domestic harmony in the period. As such the positioning of the dog by a child's side provided a widely recognised sense of security which was approved by the monarchy and worked to reassure the anxieties of the middle classes. Such imagery, commissioned by the Royal Family, served to reinforce the already developing iconographies of the dog as protector of children, and it is in such representations that the oeuvre of Charles Burton Barber found its place as some of the most widely disseminated artwork involving children and canines.

Figures 70–71 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 70: [Left] Sir Edwin Landseer, *Princess Alice and Eos*, oil on panel, 1844, The Royal Collection, London.

Figure 71: [Right] Richard Josey (After Sir Edwin Landseer), *Princess Alice with Eos*, mezzotint on paper, 1844, The British Museum, London.

Figures 72–73 been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 72: [Left] Thomas Landseer (After Sir Edwin Landseer), *H.R.H The Princess Alice*, engraving, The British Museum, London.

Figure 73: [Right] Thomas Landseer (After Sir Edwin Landseer), *Princess Alice in the Cradle when nine days old, with Dandie*, mixed media on chine collé, The British Museum, London.

The unexpected success of Barber is something that has already been discussed in Chapter One, but the perspective of the dog as a guardian of children provides the necessary context for the popularity of Barber’s works. Known for scenes involving children and canines Barber’s compositions almost always located the child in a safe space, aided by the presence of a dog. As a result, Victorian viewers could look at such pictures—sentimental, playful, and sweet—and be put at ease, knowing that, no matter what the situation, child and dog would never come to any serious harm. The success of Barber attests to this, for, as the *Times* observed in 1891:

[Burton’s work] is one of a class that is always popular in England—animal pictures, half comedy and half sentiment. A collie and a pretty child—what more does the British public desire in the way of materials for a picture?⁹⁵

The constant sentiment and security provided by the works of Barber was also explored by Barber’s contemporaries, such as Lance Calkin (1859–1936) in his work *The Two Invalids* (1885), exhibited alongside Barber’s *Once Bit, Twice Shy* (1885) at the Royal Academy. In this work a child is feeling unwell but is still in good health enough to read her picture book. Her dog has been dressed up by the child (or, perhaps, a sympathetic adult) and joins in the child’s recovery. The sight of the dog bandaged in solidarity with its recovering owner also evokes the ‘half comedy and half sentiment’ that ran throughout works of this genre, nullifying any distress that childhood illness could possibly cause.

⁹⁵ ‘New Etchings and Engravings’, *The Times*, 19 October 1891, p. 13.

Figure 74 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 74: Lance Calkin, *The Two Invalids*, oil on canvas, 1885, Private Collection.

Such images are undeniably sentimental. However, it is because of this appeal to sentimentality that we are able to understand just how significant the employment of the dog as protector of children might have been. In her article, ‘Feeling Dickensian Feeling’, Emma Mason reminds us to approach Victorian sentimentality with sympathy or, at least, to acknowledge its significance in nineteenth-century culture. She proposes that, in order to fully understand the context of a historical work, we must also allow the inclusion of sentimentality and feeling; as it is to be expected that Victorian audiences would have allowed themselves such an experience.⁹⁶ To acknowledge the sentimentality of these pieces is to acknowledge that they also appealed to Victorian audiences on an emotional level, which is an important consideration too in assessing Victorian paintings.

This trend in the development of canine motifs related to wider cultural developments. Imagery of the safe and innocent child was frequently depicted in broader nineteenth-century visual culture.⁹⁷ In an article on Wordsworth, U.C. Knoepfelmacher describes these pictures as ‘frequently sentimental, even saccharine, portraits of divine and innocent children’⁹⁸ The *Pears’ Annual* is testament to this—as illustrations featuring children in seemingly safe environments were often depicted in the annual.⁹⁹ Among them Millais’s *Bubbles* (1885-6) was one of the most popular and, notably, this painting

⁹⁶ Emma Mason, ‘Feeling Dickensian Feeling’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 4 (2007) 1-19.

⁹⁷ Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.138.

⁹⁸ U.C. Knoepfelmacher, ‘Mutations of the Wordsworthian Child of Nature’, in *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*, ed. by U.C. Knoepfelmacher, G.B. Tennyson (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977), pp.391-425 (p. 400).

⁹⁹ Established by Thomas J. Battatt in 1890, with the intention of encouraging a relationship between the Pears soap brand and high culture, society, and the fine arts. The annual was sold for six pence until 1915 and came with presentation plates as an accompanying package with the manual—which would display popular artworks as chromolithograph prints.

also has a relationship to death. When painting *Bubbles* Millais was trying to replicate the seventeenth-century Dutch tradition of vanitas imagery. The bubble that the child has blown is meant to represent the transient and fragile nature of life. Such ominous undertones did not over-rule the sweetness of the image but they were nonetheless present, indicative of the tendency of childhood images to also consider mortality, if only to alleviate the fear of it.¹⁰⁰ Charles Burton Barber's *Suspense* (1894) was featured in the *Pears Annual* of 1894¹⁰¹—placing portraits of children and canines alongside similar representations of childhood as part of this wider cultural output. If Barber's popularity is any indication, such reassuring images were greatly desired, and came with a certain amount of potency. The guardian dog was a well-known motif in Victorian culture and Barber's clearly profited from this fact.

The Dog As Moral Guide

Just as with its adult owners, the dog as protector of children provided more than just assurances over a child's physical safety. While the dog served as an effective alleviation, parents were grimly aware that a dog could not stop the inevitable. Sometimes a child would die, whether or not they had a canine companion willing to protect them. This was rarely depicted in visual culture concerning the dog, but, when it was, the imagery was striking.

In *The Lost Playmates* an uncommon depiction of a dog mourning a child's death can be seen. This chromolithograph was taken from Gustave Henry Mosler's (1875–1906) *The Empty Cradle*—which was originally printed by Raphael Tuck & Sons. in London and Paris and widely disseminated in various forms. In contrast to the dog as mourner of adults, this dog does not cling to the deceased's grave or body. Instead we see

¹⁰⁰ Michael Benton, *Studies in the Spectator Role: Literature, Painting and Pedagogy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2000), p.110.

¹⁰¹ Susan Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), p. 385.

an empty crib, with flowers scattered over it, partially covered in darkness. The dog holds its head low; as if it has failed in its duties to protect the life it had been charged with guarding. The scene is simple but conveys a strong message: sometimes even the best intentions and care will not be enough to save a life, even one so young.

Figure 75 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 75: After Gustave Henry Mosler, *The Empty Cradle (also known as The Lost Playmate)*, chromolithograph, Private Collection.

Human demise and life after death weighed heavily on the minds of Victorians (as the dog-as-mourner demonstrates), but the death of a child was seen as much more tragic. In the Victorian period child mortality rates were high, and did not notably decrease until the twentieth-century. The death rate in England and Wales per live births for infants was 154 in 1840, 148 in 1860, 153 in 1880, and was back to 154 by 1900.¹⁰² This constituted one-quarter of all deaths—over 100,000 infants not making it to their first birthday.¹⁰³ However, while parents were likely to face the tragedy of losing an infant or young child, this did not mean that they were prepared for the worst. Pat Jalland argues that parents still felt considerable distress at the loss of a child, despite the bleak survival rates, and the survival of other children in the family did not alleviate this loss or act as a consolation.¹⁰⁴ The living conditions of the middle classes meant that mortality rates for children under 5 years were around 7-8% lower than that of the lower classes¹⁰⁵ but this did nothing to eliminate the pain that those who did lose a child experienced, nor the overall fear that the middle classes held when it came to the potential of child mortality.

¹⁰² Patricia Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.120.

¹⁰³ Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, p.120.

¹⁰⁴ Pat Jalland, 'Victorian Death and its Decline: 1850-1918', in *Death in England: An Illustrated History*, ed. by Peter C. Jupp and Claire Gittings (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 230-255 (p.237).

¹⁰⁵ Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, pp.120-121.

Consequently imagery such as *The Empty Cradle* came with strong emotional implications, strengthening the already potent pathos of the representational canine mourner guarding its master even in death. Yet, while sentimental imagery of children and canines tried to avoid the reality of infant loss, there is evidence to suggest that such images also attempted to alleviate the possibility of child mortality. These assuagements came in the form of the dog's capacity as a moral saviour.

Figure 46 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 46: Ford Madox Brown, *Stages of Cruelty*, oil on canvas, 1856–1890, Manchester City Galleries, Manchester.

By the Victorian period, it was generally accepted that if a child was cruel to animals, then they would grow up to be cruel in other aspects of their lives. This was most popularly depicted in William Hogarth's *The Four Stages of Cruelty*; in which the main character tortures a dog in his youth and in adulthood murdered his lover, getting hanged and publicly dissected as a 'reward' for his cruelty. Ford Madox Brown revisited this message in 1856 with *Stages of Cruelty*. In this painting a young girl can be seen whipping a dog with love-lies-bleeding, showing her cruelty from a young age. As the composition progresses up the stairway the result of this cruelty is shown; the young girl has grown into a forbidding young woman, who treats lovesick admirers with equal cruelty as the young girl does to the dog, and smiles gleefully at her malicious promiscuity.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Julian Treuherz, *Ford Madox Brown: Pre-Raphaelite Pioneer* (London: Phillip Wilson, 2012), p. 186.



Figure 76: Artist unknown, *Victorian Merit Card*, mixed media on card, c.1870s, Author’s Collection.

Conversely, it was considered that if a child treated animals with kindness and compassion, then they would develop a good character. As has already been stated, books teaching children kindness to animals were popular throughout the period and were used to teach children morals in addition to Sunday school and other conventional methods of moral instruction.¹⁰⁷ *The Duty of Kindness to Animals*, for example, was made specifically for use in schools.¹⁰⁸ The popularity of such books was concurrent with the notion of the dog as a moral and religious supplement in the religious Victorian household. This integrated with a school of thought that the moral instruction of children should involve examples animal kindness in order to foster kindness to one’s fellow man. Kindness in practice was even more desired and children were encouraged to treat the

¹⁰⁷ For further insights into the extent of this instruction see Monica Flegel, ‘Everything I wanted to Know About Sex I Learned From My Cat: Animal Stories, Working-Class “Life Troubles,” and the Child Reader in Victorian England’, *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly*, 41 (2016), 121–141.

¹⁰⁸ *The Duty of Kindness to Animals; A Selection of Interesting Anecdotes Interpreted with Religious and Moral Precepts in Prose and Verse, for the Use of Schools and Young Persons of Both Sexes* (London: Hatchard, 1853).

family pet with compassion and gentleness,¹⁰⁹ while also watching their behaviour as a form of moral instruction.¹¹⁰

Acting, again, in an intertextual capacity, imagery of the dog and child was also used in tandem with text for moral instruction, making an overt link between canine observations and moral and religious integrity. This is most explicitly demonstrated through an example of the merit cards that children could expect to receive for good behaviour. In the merit card shown in Figure 76, for example, the dog's role as a moral example for children to follow is explicitly stated, as the woman says to the child:

Dick, though you by-and-by will grow up to a man,
And Tray'll be a dog, let him grow as he can,
Remember my good little lad,
A dog that is honest, and faithful and mild,
Is not only better than is a bad child,
But better than men that are bad.
If you are a boy and Tray is but a beast,
I think it should teach you one lesson at least,—
you ought to act better than he;
And if, without reason, or judgement, or sense,
Tray does as we bid him and gives no offence,
How diligent Richard should be!

Sentimental imagery of children and canines conveyed significant messages about morality. By using the cultural employments of the dog's moralizing capacity in the intermingled genres of images of children and images for children alongside literature Victorian adults would have been very familiar with the representational implications of an affectionate child-and-canine relationship, in regards to the kindness and moral

¹⁰⁹ 'Josephine', *Our Children's Pets* (London: S.W. Partridge, 1865) pp. 1-2.

¹¹⁰ *A Mother's Lessons on Kindness to Animals* (London: S.W. Partridge, 1862) pp. 84-85.

development of that child. Those creating images of children and canines presumably also held these implications in mind, helping to alleviate fears that parents may have had concerning their children's moral instruction. As such images of child and dog at play (whether in illustrations, on merit cards, or displayed as grand works of art and prints) worked at a deeper level to assure viewers that, should their child die, their morality was secure—as demonstrated by the presence of the family dog and their treatment of it. Accordingly, imagery of children and canines not only offered a sense of security for the child's life, but also for the child's afterlife, in keeping with notions that a person mourned by a dog was worth mourning and, thus, heaven-bound. This additional use of the canine mourner thus had the potential to assure parent's that they would be able to be with their child when the time was right.

This desire for a family reunion in the afterlife can also be seen in more general representations of child mortality such as *The Doctor* (1891) by Sir Luke Fildes (1843–1927). Pat Jalland has identified this artwork—which is currently displayed with a description implying that the sick child depicted might survive the grave illness—as such an image with troubling connotations, namely that of child mortality. ‘Given the 1891 child mortality statistics’ such paintings were likely to have ‘signified the hope of eternal life’, she suggests, rather than the hope of survival.¹¹¹ In this context the dog's good moral example in imagery such as Barber's (superficially unproblematic but intrinsically linked to fears of mortality as a result of its sentimental nature) were just as likely to suggest a child's eternal life if they were to pass away, as they were to suggest that the child was safe from dying. This was certainly in keeping with the way the Victorian middle-classes hoped to be fashioned in many forms of imagery, too. Pamela Gerrish Nunn underpins the desire for the middle-classes to see their morality reflected in the galleries:

¹¹¹ Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, p. 241.

The middle classes thought of themselves as a model, believing their particular capacity for Christian virtue, social responsibility, self-improvement and public duty made them bound (in both sense of the word) to live better lives.¹¹²

Figure 77 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 77: Sir Luke Fildes, *The Doctor*, oil on canvas, exhibited 1891, The Tate Collection, London.

Images that deviated from this notion, especially with reference to the familial structure, often caused great distress and it is because of this that we can read images such as Fildes' (or Burton's) with a turn towards this middle-class familial ideal, if not in intent than certainly in reception.

Figure 78 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 78: Otto Wüstlich, *Princess Alice Asleep When an Infant*, enamel on porcelain, 1843, The Royal Collection, London.

Such allusions to the dog's saintly influence on children can be seen in Landseer's *Princess Alice Asleep* or, more specifically, in reproductions of the image. When this painting was etched for the public eye it took on an almost divine element. In an 1845 reproduction of the painting a light can be seen shining from above, casting itself down on the sleeping princess. Such an illumination was certainly a religious allusion: assuring viewers that the young Princess was already worthy of heaven, something that the dog's presence serves to reflect. The light is also reminiscent of *The Old Shepherd's Chief*

¹¹² Pamela Gerrish Nunn, *Problem Pictures: Women and Men in Victorian Painting* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1995), p. 57.

Mourner which used it to similar iconographic effect. This was also the case in a reproduction of the painting, created in enamel on porcelain in 1843 by the German artist Otto Wüstlich (1819–86). In Wüstlich’s reproduction, the light is so bright that it engulfs the Princess Alice in its brilliance—emphasising the purity of the young Princess. The exaggeration of the light in Wüstlich’s version, we must assume, was a deliberate decision.

With depictions of the dog as a moral exemplar well known, and with such imagery making direct connections with the divine, it becomes clear that the dog was the protector of the child’s purity. While such imagery could not alleviate the loss that families felt when a child passed they could, at least, provide a sentimentalized prospect of a family reunion in the afterlife, allowing the dog to act as a popular alleviation for deep-seated parental anxieties.

Carrington’s shift in focus to Dorothy’s grief over his own sorrow also suggests another motive present in such imagery. In the parting moments between Dorothy and Teufel, and through her realisation at her passing, the grief that Carrington himself felt over Teufel became legitimized. If the death of the family dog was hard to reconcile, as Mangum suggested, then imagery of dogs with children provided a viable way through which parents could reconcile their feelings. As with the muscular dog which held a symbiotic relationship with its owner in *Requiescat* the relationship between child and dog (both in home and on the canvas) represented an interlinked relationship which was justified through the moralizing and protective capacities of the dog. Although dogs were given the supplemental role of religious exemplar, moralizing mentor, and attentive nanny there is evidence to suggest that children and dogs were seen as occupying similar spaces in the Victorian family dynamic. Kathleen Kete notes that ‘Dogs were eternal

children, captive outside of narrative, without a past, a future, or a culture'.¹¹³ Through framing the dog as the familial childhood companion and bringing attention to the relationship between child and canine the grief felt by Victorian adults subsequently gained more pertinence. After all, they were not simply mourning their own loss, but also the loss of their child's closest companion.

Whatever the reason a Victorian family had for hanging the works of artists such as Barber in their household, it is undeniable that, by the end of the century, representations of the happy child and canine came to act as an emblem for the happy Christian family. As Susan Pearson notes, 'both domestic pets and children were positioned as family-constituting beings that attracted emotional investment and care and provided a channel for the middle-class family's purported *raison d'être*: nurturance'.¹¹⁴ The virtuous dog of the harmonious household offered up many ways for Victorians to display their position in society as well as negotiate the societal expectations that they would face. Consciously placed upon the dog, this role was emphasised through the personality it was afforded in parlour prints and sentimental canvases. Afforded character and a position not just in the home but also in the family, domestic dogs became an inextricable aspect of the middle-class ideal.

¹¹³ Kathleen Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), p. 82.

¹¹⁴ Susan J. Pearson, *The Rights of the Defenceless: Protecting Animals and Children in Gilded Age America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. 37.

Chapter Three. Rabies as Moral and Class Contagion in Victorian Imagery

Introduction

While the virtuous dog was popular in Victorian Britain there were also representations of less saintly canines. The dog's ancestral species, the wolf, was particularly stigmatised. The wolf 'when most civilized' was still seen as being 'incorrigible, cruel, and voracious, devoid of attachment, and every other kindred affection, which ennoble the canine race'.¹ From before the nineteenth century, the wolf represented a sense of savagery, as well as all of the 'feral' negative traits that were condemned in domesticated canines. This awareness of the devious aspect of canines persisted throughout the period, seen in the latter half of the century through paintings such as James McNeill Whistler's (1834-1903) *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl* (1862). In this society portrait a woman is dressed in white placed in front of a thick white curtain and standing on top of a wolf pelt. Already controversial for its experimental use of shade and textures the painting was also criticised for its brazen exploration of feminine sexuality.²

The model for the painting was Whistler's mistress, Joanna Hiffernan, and the confrontationally direct gaze of the white girl was received by some as a sign of female dominance.³ The employment of the wolf served to emphasise this further. Depicted as baring its fangs, the wolf comes to possess multiple meanings. On the one hand it is indicative of female sexuality and dominance over men; and in this endeavour the wolf is representative of the masculine force brought to heel. But on the other hand it can also

¹ 'The Moral Zoologist', *Lady's Magazine*, June 1800, p. 289.

² Rachel Teukolsky, 'White Girls: Avant-Gardism and Advertising after 1860', *Victorian Studies*, 51 (2009) 421-437 (p.423).

³ Robin Spencer, 'Whistler's 'The White Girl': Painting, Poetry and Meaning', *The Burlington Magazine*, 140 (1998), 300-311 (p. 310).

be read to address the feral nature of female promiscuity, a trait shared between both woman and wolf (the two even share a wide-eyed expression).⁴ Whistler's girl in white was also scorned for being conventionally unattractive and symbolically difficult to discern—the troublesome nature of the canvas permeating its technical aspects as well as the morals of the viewer.⁵ This was something that Whistler apparently took great pleasure in, additionally revealing the artist's desire to use such visual and technical methods to distress or otherwise disrupt the viewer's expectation.⁶

Figure 79 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 79: James McNeill Whistler, Details from *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl*, oil on canvas, 1862, The National Gallery of Art, Washington.

This parallel between licentious woman and feral beast was made even more evident with the rejection of this artwork for exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1862. Scholars such as Robin Spencer have speculated that this decision was made as a precaution by the Academy—who saw parallels between Whistler's work and Landseer's *The Shrew Tamed* (1861).⁷ *The Shrew Tamed* (exhibited the previous year) was equally condemned for its exploration of female sexuality—having depicted a young woman, modelled after a well-known courtesan, Catherine Walters, reclining next to a

⁴ It is also worth noting at this point that there is an ongoing ambivalence concerning the species of the animal depicted—with some scholars believing it to be a wolf and others a bear. This disparity is also noted in the National Gallery of Art's description of the painting, which describes it as 'a wolf or bearskin rug'. < <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/highlights/highlight12198.html> > [27.03.17] Given consideration to the painting, this thesis has elected to identify the rug as the former. This is partially due to the shape of its head, and the coloration of the fur, but also due to the thematic coherence that is given to the painting if considering it as a canine, which I hope this thesis demonstrates in terms of how the Victorians would read various animals, the feral counterpart of dogs included.

⁵ Joshua C. Taylor, *The Fine Arts in America: The Chicago History of American Civilization* (New Haven, CT and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 114-115.

⁶ Kimberly Wahl, *Dressed as in a Painting: Women and British Aestheticism In An Age of Reform* (Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire Press, 2013), p. 58.

⁷ Spencer, 'Whistler's 'The White Girl'', p. 310.

thoroughbred horse, in what Lynda Nead (and critics of the time) described as a bold display of female sexual dominance.⁸

Figure 80 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 80: William Morris, *La Belle Iseult*, oil on canvas, 1858, The Tate Collection, London.

This sense of the canine as representative of aggressive or carnal moral vices was not exclusive to the wolf, however, and even the most diminutive of lapdogs could come to represent something more insidious under certain circumstances. In a painting referencing the *Arnolfini Portrait* (1434), William Morris's *Guenevere* or *La Belle Iseult* (1858) represents one of the title's medieval figures (depending on the reading) and features the model Jane Burden, who is represented 'not only as a queen, but as an adulteress'.⁹ This is paralleled in her small greyhound who rests curled up in a dishevelled bed. Typically a symbol of marital loyalty in medieval imagery, the resting greyhound in this image instead contributes to the representation of this woman's moral degradation—a far cry from the small dog in the *Arnolfini Portrait*.

But (as with wolves) representations of the morally reprehensible dog were not confined to imagery of women. Not every canine depiction was saintly. In fact some were quite the opposite, and mongrel, low-bred, and homeless dogs gained a particular reputation at the time. The term 'currish' was one that the Victorians inherited in Johnson's definition as 'having the qualities of a degenerate dog; brutal; sour; quarrelsome malignant; churlish; uncivil; untractable; impracticable'¹⁰ and the streets of Victorian Britain were filled with many dogs who could be described in those terms. Such dogs were typically considered to be the 'Mongrel, mastiff, or Bull-dog, or other

⁸ Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1990), p. 61.

⁹ Elizabeth Prettejohn, *The Art of the Pre-Raphaelites* (London: Tate Publishing, 2007), p. 201.

¹⁰ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London: 1805).

dangerous Dog’. Categorised by visual breed indicators the visual presence of such dogs was actually abhorrent in certain sections of the modern metropolis, and such dogs were documented as needing to be muzzled (or to have a block of weighty wood attached to their neck) when within fifty yards of any public road. This was documented in the Public General Statutes of 1844¹¹ and onwards to 1851.¹²

The visual characterisations of dangerous dogs and ‘bad breeds’, so crucial to their regulation in the eyes of the public, can be seen in the contrasting painting to Landseer’s *High Life—Low Life*. The bull-terrier depicted in *Low Life* provides a stark contrast to the aristocratic and chivalrous hound of *High Life*; being a scruffy tyke, a wandering butcher’s dog which is known to have been in one too many scraps on the street and wears a collar typical of fighting dogs. Yet, while some writers of the time were willing to characterise the tyke in this painting as a gruff character with a heart of gold (having a ‘tolerably respectable character’ and being named Prince),¹³ other critics were not so keen and instead condemned Landseer for misrepresenting the true coarseness of curs. The *Athenaeum* commented accordingly in 1834 where they noted that ‘[While] we should have thought the clown is easier to represent,’ than the aristocratic dog of *High Life*, ‘‘Low Life’ is not quite so characteristic as its companion—and the shrewd, surly-looking tyke is rather homely than vulgar’.¹⁴ People, it seemed, fully expected the street-bound cur that contrasted the noble hound to be just that—currish—full of vulgarity and condemnable without doubt. The notion of the bad dog can consequently be seen as frequently recognised, with a public demand for clarity in terms of its associated moral characteristics and concordant physiognomic type.

¹¹ *A Collection of the Public General Statutes passed in the Seventh and Eighth Year of the Reign, on her Majesty Queen Victoria* (London: George E. Eyre, 1844), p. 661.

¹² N. Simons, ed., *The Statutes of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: George Eyre, 1851), p. 393.

¹³ Tytler, *Landseer’s Dogs*, p. 39.

¹⁴ ‘Fine Arts’, *Athenaeum*, 20 September 1834, p. 699.

Standing in a different light to the cur, the supernaturally diabolical canine of folklore and contemporary literature provided yet another example of the dog turned devilish. In 1902 Arthur Conan Doyle gripped people's attention using one such canine; with his story of a diabolical hound of supernatural origins, which stalked Dartmoor claiming victims. Yet in terms of the Victorian expectation regarding the visual typecasting of the diabolical dog it is worth noting that this spectral hound turned out not only to be an earthly-bound dog, but specifically bloodhound or mastiff-type (one of the dogs coupled with mongrels and curs in 1844). Claire Charlotte McKechnie identified a 'gothic' dog linked to tales of werewolves and vampires through fears of the dangerous or degenerative dog. This 'gothic dog', as McKechnie proposes, is linked to such supernatural creatures through fears of moral degradation, a return to more primal behaviours, and a transition back to the currish behaviour seen in the stray and suspicious dogs of the street. These anxieties were linked to a disease that, at the time, elicited a notable degree of public hysteria throughout the period: rabies. McKechnie suggests that such creatures were linked to the rabid dogs through means of bite transference, which eventually led to a transformation into a feral and morally condemnable creature.¹⁵ Indeed, rabies is perhaps the most widespread representation of the bad or corrupted dog in the Victorian period, and acts as the focal topic for this chapter.

Figure 81 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 81: 'The Were Wolves', in Sabine Baring-Gould, *The Book of Were-Wolves: Being an Account of a Terrible Superstition* (London: Smith & Elder, 1865), p. i, New York Public Library, New York.

The widespread notoriety of rabies was undoubtedly linked to its construction through the period as a symbolic disease, one which could interact with and comment on

¹⁵ Claire Charlotte McKechnie, 'Man's Best Fiend: Evolution, Rabies, and the Gothic Dog', *Nineteenth-Century Prose*, 40 (2013), 115-140.

a wide variety of social issues. In fact, in terms of its metonymical potency in the period the rabid dog was able to visually embody many of the representations of the corrupted or morally abhorrent dog (and human) already discussed in this chapter. As with the supernatural creatures, rabies resulted in certain dogs being demonized and came with a notable degree of uncertainty, fear and suspense. As with representations of curs, it was commonly assumed that rabies was most widespread among dogs of low origins—those ‘dangerous classes among the dogs...whose delight it is to bark and bite in an indiscriminate manner’.¹⁶ And, as with certain representations of females and canines, it was believed that rabies could cause moral degradation, corroding one’s virtues and principles until the victim became nothing but a callous, inhuman beast. Through exploring imagery of rabies it becomes apparent that all of these issues were on the public’s mind (especially the mind of the middle classes) and encapsulated a myriad of issues that were complex, ubiquitous, and regularly employed as focal points for moralizing discussions and social debates.

The notion of rabies acting as a corrupting force emerged from ideas of rabies belonging to street curs. As such rabies became a class contagion; taking all that was to be censured in the lower and dangerous classes and transferring it to unsuspecting middle-class victims. Such notions were represented and contested in visual culture, with vibrancy and frequency. Indeed, the moral panic surrounding rabies acted at all levels of society, culture, and politics, and the fear of rabies and its repercussions led to a measurable rise in laws and parliamentary committees founded to help counteract the adverse effect of the disease and the subsequent hysteria it caused. However, the Victorian public were notably unimpressed with the measures enforced to prevent rabies and found two ways to manifest this displeasure. Such dissatisfaction with anti-rabies legislation in the mid to late-Victorian era found a strong platform through representations in illustrated

¹⁶ ‘Dogs and Dog Law’, *All The Year Round*, 1886, p. 426.

periodicals, which frequently depicted the police as inept enforcers of an equally defunct political system. Ultimately implying a lack of understanding of the risks and dangers faced by the public in the growing metropolis, such criticisms can be read as a wider assault on the effectiveness of the police force to navigate the cityscape and prevent its dangerous characters from penetrating the domestic sphere.

The broad implementation of rabies laws also made the middle classes feel as if they were targeted for a problem that they maintained originated with the lower classes. Orders to muzzle dogs were considered to be misplaced and counterproductive and the muzzle itself became a politically charged piece of social imagery. Muzzles conjured up images of a victimized puppy or delicate show dog confined against its will and outside of reason. The defenders of the muzzle responded to middle-class fears by stressing its status as a rational response to rabies, but visual criticisms expressed a level of animosity among ideologically divided members of the public, exposing it for all to see. Representations of muzzling and police intervention brought forth torrid debates; involving class prejudices, the suppression of minorities, animal cruelty and the nature of criminals. This chapter will examine three visual representations of the rabid dog and explore their role as corrupted, corrupting and victimized role in Victorian visual culture.

Fearing the Dog: Canine Class Contagions

Canine Fears

In terms of infection and death, rabies was a relatively containable disease in the Victorian period. Neil Pemberton and Michael Worboys observe that, at its peak, incidence of hydrophobia (as rabies was then known in people) reached 79 notifications in 1877 and in total 1,225 cases of death from hydrophobia were recorded from 1837 to 1902.¹⁷ Yet,

¹⁷ Compare this to cholera, for example; a disease which also caused public hysteria but which claimed 32,000 people in 1831-32, 62,000 in 1848-49, 20,000 in 1853-54, and 14,000 in 1866-67 and yet was still also considered to have caused an unfounded panic in the nation when compared to other diseases. Mary

despite this small number of mortalities, the public reaction to rabies was both prolific and accessible—being discussed by many different social groups and inspiring frequent stories in newspapers and periodicals. Ritvo observes this disparity:

Rabies was only one of many contagious diseases that affected domesticated animals during the nineteenth century, and it was not unique in being transmissible to human beings. Its economic impact was limited, since its main victims were dogs, ... Yet it provoked a public response unparalleled in scale and intensity¹⁸

In fact (as Ritvo notes) while diseases such as rinderpest struck down over half a million animals a year from 1865 onwards, the severe outcry that followed only occurred in specific, specialized circles—such as farmers, merchandisers, veterinary experts and public health officials. In contrast rabies only killed hundreds of dogs at its very peak, but captured a significant place in the public imagination.

In his book, *Rabies and Hydrophobia*, the veterinarian and rabies specialist George Fleming asserted that:

There can scarcely be any doubt that [the] prevalence and extension of rabies is largely due to the ignorance prevailing with regard to its nature ... as well as to the existence of dangerous errors, which have become so deep-rooted in the popular mind¹⁹

Fear, public hysteria and misinformation among the general public allowed the threat of rabies to grow in the minds of the public, transforming rabies into more than just a medical concern among the masses.

Wilson Carpenter, *Health, Medicine and Society in Victorian England* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010), p. 43.

¹⁸ Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, p. 167.

¹⁹ George Fleming, *Rabies and Hydrophobia: Their History, Nature, Causes, Symptoms, and Prevention* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1872), p. i.

The importance of the animal largely afflicted by this disease, the dog, was a fundamental element in this fear and helps explain the extent to which its notoriety spread. This, too, did not escape Fleming's attention as he lamented that:

what renders the story of this malady still more sad and alarming is the fact, that it is generally derived from the most faithful and numerous of our domestic pets and servants—the dog—whose attachment to—I had almost said “veneration” for—man brings this animal at all times and everywhere to share his company, to join him in sport, pastime, toil or hardship, and whose motto justly deserves to be *semper fidelis*.²⁰

To have the devoted dog—who was seen to venerate mankind—suddenly become an enemy and an envoy of terror, dread, and certain death was a harrowing narrative which gripped the Victorian public like no other zoonotic disease. With this in mind the public, and, most notably, the middle classes, had to find a way to reconcile their own image of the virtuous hound (acknowledged even by Fleming) with the reality of the seemingly ever-present threat of the mad dog. To do so was to construct a visual and cultural narrative of what exactly constituted a mad or rabid dog, the result of which was a curish mongrel of the streets. Using notions of canine features and respectability middle-class dog owners were able to perceive the rabid dog as one of the lower and dangerous classes—a morally reprehensible creature which preyed upon both the pets and the people of the middle classes—alleviating their own anxieties while also creating a running commentary on the social structure of Victorian Britain.

Reading Canines

As I have previously examined in Chapter One and Two, the potency of canine character in the Victorian period, paired with an interest in canine physiognomies, enabled the Victorians to create readable traits and social debates through the use of

²⁰ Fleming, *Rabies and Hydrophobia*, p. 1.

certain breeds. However, the extent to which this was employed in regards to the lower classes is especially pertinent when considering rabies. With a notable reluctance to consider their own domestic dogs as the source of a rabies epidemic, middle-class dog owners, once again, returned to the dichotomy between the home and the cityscape in order to construct notions of the identifiable ‘mad dog’. The traits of the ‘currish’ dogs of the streets consequently became a pivotal aspect of the rabies narrative as it existed throughout the period.

In this regard, imaginative literature is also a valuable tool in terms of ascertaining the language (and attitude) imposed upon the ill-reputed dog. In her article ‘Beastly Criminals and Criminal Beasts’ Grace Moore provides one such reading of criminality and the corrupted canine through her exploration of *Oliver Twist*. In Moore’s interpretation Bull’s-eye’s treatment at the hands of Bill Sikes parallels that of his treatment of Nancy, with the resulting canine character being an unpleasant one. While the character of Sike’s dog was no doubt observed in a trivial sense by some readers, the narrative intent of Bull’s-eye underpins the significance of such canines: ‘United in their hopeless loyalty to Sikes,’ she observes, ‘Bull’s-eye and Nancy form two corners of a triangular relationship, in which the dog frequently mediates between the two humans’.²¹ In terms of breed Bull’s-eye was a bull terrier, one of the dogs considered at the time to be currish and liable for a muzzling, and is depicted throughout the novel as a vicious (if not abused) animal conforming to his type. Despite the parallels Moore explores between Bull’s-eye and Nancy, Bull’s-eye was also associated with Sikes in his temper and temperament. As Beryl Gray elaborates, ‘Bull’s-eye is a dog abused by his master, corrupted by his master, and condemned by its noble sense of attachment to die with, his master’.²² Trained to go for the throat and made malicious through the life he has endured,

²¹ Moore, ‘Beastly Criminals and Criminal Beasts’, p. 201.

²² Beryl Gray, *The Dog in the Dickensian Imagination* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014), p. 101.

Bull's-eye is a sympathetic canine in some instances but still falls into the public's expectations for what a disreputable dog should look and (consequently) act like.

In spite of Bull's-eye actions being prompted by a submission to his abusive master, the consensus among the Victorian public was that certain canines were undeniably fiendish—mirroring some of the most reprehensible behaviours among humankind. Despite some having sympathy for the curs and strays of the street, many continued to believe that their living conditions would still make them dangerous in behaviour and character. Because of this critics such as in the *Athenaeum* were more eager to see these characteristics properly depicted within canine representations. In this regard we can refer again to Landseer's depiction of the *Low Life*, which was perceived as too soft and sensitive in the eyes of the *Athenaeum*.

Ruskin also gave his appraisal of *Low Life* in relation to the degenerate street cur. However, unlike the critic in the *Athenaeum*, Ruskin believed Landseer had been successful in 'the intensest rendering of vulgarity absolute and utter with which I am acquainted'. Not only did Ruskin make the discernible link between recognisable canines and recognisable humans (notably 'vulgar' in this instance) but he also compared the dog in *Low Life* to depictions of Noah Claypole in Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, further signifying the integrated dialogue that canine depictions were afforded in Victorian culture.²³

Study of the rabies discourse indicates that the dog's status as socially lower-class and characteristically dangerous had developed by the 1830s, as Pemberton and Worboys observe:

All reports claimed that the nation's dog population was out of control ...
Canine madness had belonged to the working-class street dogs and the dogs

²³ John Ruskin, *Modern Painters: Vol. V* (New York: John Wiley, 1860), p. 281.

that infested them, though it was now spreading to respectable streets and squares.²⁴

The character and class origins of the rabid canine were frequently at the forefront of discussion from this time onwards, and when discussing the frequency of hydrophobia in June 1830 the former magistrate at Union Hall, Lancelot Baugh Allen stated that:

My own observation has gone to this extent, that there are a great number of loose dogs, who follow persons, particularly idle and disorderly persons, along the roads ... and a very considerable number of those dogs are set at horses, particularly young horses, and there is a great deal more mischief about the roads ... A great number of the lower classes keep them as companions, and a great number as mischievous companions.²⁵

Five years before this a commentator to the *Times* thought he had found a solution for rabies in the following suggestion, which was equally indicative of the class of dog associated with rabies: 'if these no-breed curs ... were destroyed, there would be little fear of hydrophobia, everyone [instead] being interested in and careful of a good and handsome dog'²⁶. Concerns about the rabid dog's temperament were intrinsically tied to concerns of the temperament of the working classes. Pemberton and Worboys assert this:

Such comments about the nature of [the] urban dog population suggest that the main fear [of the period] was less about rabies than a generalised anxiety about the moral status of the working class that was refracted through their dogs.²⁷

The character and class of the rabid dog became emblematic of the middle-class fears about the lower classes and the dangerous individuals that may have lurked among them.

²⁴ Pemberton and Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, p. 9.

²⁵ 'Minutes of Evidence on the Canine Madness Bill', *Selection of Reports and Papers of the House of Commons Vol. 35: Medical*, 1836, p. 10.

²⁶ *The Times*, 1825.

²⁷ Pemberton and Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, p. 26.

This was a feeling that persisted, and it is why, in 1886 people were still willing to assert that:

in all large towns there are dangerous classes among the dogs as well as among the human population ... whose delight it is to bark and bite in an indiscriminate manner, and who, if they are once affected by the fatal virus, become at once active propagators of it far and wide.²⁸

For those who sought to use rabies as a looking glass into the character of the lower classes the character and disposition of the rabid dog was undoubtedly significant. And, in this, the visualisation of the rabid dog made the figure notorious and ubiquitous: a seemingly ever-present threat.

Visualising the Rabid Dog

As the public's capacity to read canine imagery became more readily accepted so, too, did the analogies between dangerous canines and dangerous people. Subsequently it became common practice among Victorians to judge dangerous men and the canines they kept interchangeably. Nowhere is this perhaps more telling than in the twinned du Maurier illustrations explored in Chapter One.

What did the physiognomies mean? Whereas in the example of 'mistaken identity' explored in Figure 33, the old woman is mistaken in her identification of the libertine as a dangerous physiognomic type, the social criticism in 'The Letter of the Law' lies not at the feet of the mistaken old lady, but at that of the thwarted policeman. In 'The Letter of the Law's' visual narrative (made complete by its textual narrative) the woman is correct in her assertion of the dog as being a danger and a public menace. The policeman, mirroring the physiognomy of the libertine from 'Mistaken Identity' is ultimately depicted as a feeble force against the legitimate dangers of the Victorian

²⁸ 'Dogs and Dog Law', *All The Year Round*, 1886, p. 426.

cityscape, as conveyed by the presence of the dangerous dog. Notably seen below the dog, a disreputable (and notably lower-class) bull-dog type serves to further the message of the image. Disreputable dog and disreputable canine types consequently act as visual indicators in du Maurier's work of the dangerous types and dangers that lurk in the city.

Figures 33–34 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 33: [Left] George du Maurier, 'Mistaken Identity', in *Punch*, 1862, p. 58, Private Collection.

Figure 34: [Right] George du Maurier, 'The Letter of the Law', in *Punch*, 1875, p. 236, Private Collection.

The construction of the rabid dog in illustrations, the show ring, and beyond was invariably bound to low-class physiognomy as explored in high art. Implications of breed and refinement meant that mongrel dogs or dogs with no discernible breed were typically identified as potentially rabid animals. The low bred rabid dog surfaced in satirical magazines of the early Victorian era and became a strong contributor to the public notion of what a mad dog looked like. For example, in 'July: The Dog Days—Cold-Water Cure', depicting dogs pursuing the water cure for rabies, the scene is notably being played out on the streets and involves a pack of uncouth canines. None of the canines shown have an easily discernible breed and many can be assumed to be mongrels. The treatment itself is also presented as a failure as people in the background run in fear. Unable to see the mad dog from which this crowd is running we are left to view the implied suspects of canine madness as the dogs depicted.

Figure 82 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 82: 'July: The Dog Days—Cold-Water Cure', in *Punch*, 1842, p.7, Hathi Trust, Ann Arbor.

Figure 83 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 83: George du Maurier, 'Cave Canem!', in *Pictures from "Punch": Vol. II*, 1904, p. 219, Private Collection.

Other illustrations from the period were more direct in their link between street cur, criminal classes and the rabies threat, and depictions became increasingly more overt as the period progressed. Increasingly dogs with rabies were depicted in satirical illustrations as not only endangering the public but doing so with a sense of criminal intent. Dogs were deliberately breaking the law in these images, and cartoons such as the one by du Maurier eagerly propagated this attitude to the rabid canine. Depictions of dogs hounding people on the street further asserted the flagrant disregard that most dogs (either stray or belonging to the lower classes) had for canine muzzling and leash laws, and of course this was a commentary on the dog's owners (or perceived class of owner) rather than the animals themselves.

Figure 84 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 84: 'Force of Habit', in *Punch*, 1864, p 168, Harvard University, Harvard.

Figure 85 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 85: 'Self Sacrifice': *Punch*, 1864, p 254, Harvard University, Harvard.

At the height of hydrophobia many large cities were eager to implement muzzling laws, leash laws, and dog licencing. However, this increase in legislation, coupled with the continued visual presence of dogs on the streets on Britain (both rabid and otherwise) only served to further strengthen the link between law-breaking dog and owner. Subsequently any representation of a rabid canine not confined by these rules became an

instant indication of an intent to break the law. The meaning of such imagery indicated the degree to which this attitude was held by the Victorian public. From the mid-century onwards it was not uncommon to see mad dogs represented as strays trailing after a well-to-do business man, street-dwelling menaces whose mere presence caused distress, or even as active trouble makers, chasing after the wheels of a horse and carriage. In fact such incidents were seen as either so common (or perhaps so comical) by *Punch* that the periodical even published two such images within just two months.

Such images served to visually re-enact the accounts of those such as Lancelot Bough Allen, when they spoke of ‘loose dogs, who follow persons, particularly idle and disorderly persons’ with ‘a very considerable number of those dogs...set at horses’.²⁹ By showing such incidents the illustrated satirical magazines were not only validating the level of panic associated with stray, potentially rabid canines, but also their affiliation to ‘blackguards’ who were intent on mischief towards unsuspecting victims. Subsequently imagery of canines running at the heels of horses only served to further solidify the rabid dog motif as one of a lower class criminal.

There was another genre of mad dog imagery which explicated their criminal associations; the byelaw-infringing mongrel in a confrontation with the police. While there are many versions of this particular rabid representation the most explicit comes from *Punch* in 1867, illustrated by the principal cartoonist for *Punch Magazine*, John Tenniel (1820–1914). In this image, titled ‘Cave Canem, or Dog(Berry) Law’, a so-called ‘canine vagabond’ is in confrontation with an infuriated policeman. Responding to the police man (in defiance of any muzzling laws), the vagabond dog simply says “Shall bite if I pleases. Can’t conwict for a fust offence, yer know”. Every aspect of this anthropomorphic canine is depicted with reference to the lower and criminal classes—

²⁹ ‘Minutes of Evidence on the Canine Madness Bill’, p. 10.

from his scraggly fur down to his raggedy boots—signalling his unscrupulous background. Once again, this image shows the potency of text and image in dialogue; as the dog’s speech is given an obvious Cockney inflection, allying him to a very specific social group. His physical characteristics are literally depicted as those of a bulldog or terrier, confirming his physiognomic type even further. Behind the two, a group of dogs snap familiarly at the hooves of a gentlemen’s horse.

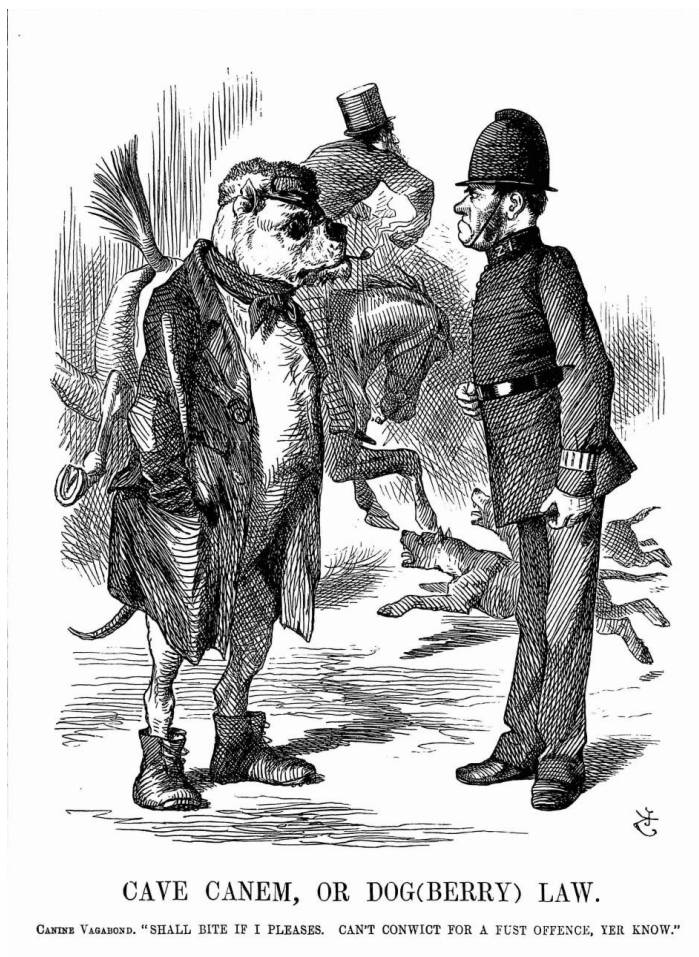


Figure 86: John Tenniel, ‘Cave Canem, Or Dog(berry) Law’, in *Punch*, 1867, p. 106, Author’s Collection.

The typecasting of the rabid canine as lowly criminal from the mid-nineteenth century onwards enabled representations of rabies to express middle-class concerns relating to morality, criminality, and the dangers of modern city living. The extent to which the rabid dog was visually constructed alludes to the usefulness of their employment in tandem with greater social issues and their use as a focal point for greater

social concerns is increasingly apparent throughout their visual employment and could provide many benefits for scholars of this topic. Looking further into discourses of the rabid dog reveals much about bourgeois attitudes to class, criminality, and the failings of the police. Much like the crime itself, the rabid dog was subsequently envisioned as an ever-expanding and ultimately uncontrollable source of public danger in the growing metropolis.

Cave Canem, Or Dog(Berry) Law

The Rabid Dog as a Conduit for Police Protest

By helping to proliferate social connections between the rabid dog and the criminal classes of the cityscape Tenniel's 'Cave Canem, or Dog(Berry) Law' also exposed other latent issues connected with public's fear of rabies and its title is pivotal in bringing these issues to light. Captioned as 'Cave Canem, or Dog(Berry) Law', this illustration alludes to a character in Shakespeare's play *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598–1599). In the play Dogberry is presented as a self-satisfied night constable who leads a group of maladroit watchmen. Shakespeare used the character of Dogberry to provide comic relief, as well as to mock the amateur forms of law enforcement as they existed at the time—which were comprised of respectable, but ultimately unqualified, people who were expected to spend a fixed number of nights per year protecting the public.

The naming of this illustration as 'Dog(Berry) Law' consequently reflects the readership of such images. Assuming, with its Shakespearian reference, a certain level of culture when it comes to its audience, this illustration was clearly targeted at those who would understand (and empathise with) the frustrating situation that this image conveys. The attitudes taken in this comic consequently speaks volumes about the middle-class attitudes to law enforcement not just in regards to the dog, but also criminality in general. This is further strengthened by the dialogue of the canine vagabond, who insists that the

policeman cannot prosecute him for a ‘first offence’, exposing the perceived weaknesses in the law that criminals were seemingly apt at exploiting. As if to drive the point home even further, the policeman’s powerlessness at the hands of the defiant criminal and a failing legal system can be seen as having a direct effect on the wellbeing of the middle-classes; as the rabid dogs in the background attack the gentleman depicted.

For those who were truly gripped by the public hysteria of the rabies threat many believed that the police were unable to effectively enforce the new-rabies laws. Many certainly were not incorrect in this regard either; as the logistics behind regulating an ever-growing population of stray dogs for a policeman among their other duties was ultimately unrealistic. Yet due to the rhetoric attached to rabies this implausibility was overlooked in the media and there was little sympathy for the increased workload of such policeman. Instead the new predicament that policeman found themselves in became an amplified and exaggerated way of indulging in police criticism through means of the rabid dog. If rabid dogs themselves were perceived as a serious threat among the public, the preventative methods created by law and implemented by the police seemed misguided at best, and ineffective or damaging at worst.

Conversely, for those who saw the rabies fear as hysteria, the policing demanded was disproportionate to the real danger. The targets of police action, namely the dogs of the streets, were also brought into question by critics from all angles of the rabies debate. Many middle-class dog lovers took issue with the way that their dogs were being forced to wear muzzles when rabies was clearly caused by the lower classes. Equally some people criticised the middle-class notion that their dogs could not be affected by the disease. Stemming from these debates another rabid representation emerged which furthered criticisms against the police—that of the dog who had been wrongly accused. As police were under increasing pressure to deal with rabies outbreaks (or, at least, the

public's perception that such outbreaks existed) some people believed that they had become reckless and hasty in their execution of suspected mad dogs.

Each of these issues, visualized through periodicals, expressed an intense scepticism of police actions, intrinsically tied to anxieties about rabies in dogs and, most significantly, criminality in humans. The resulting depictions subsequently were an explicit commentary on the role of the police, their ability to do their job, and the perceived hindrances that they faced from both the defiant criminal classes and the critical middle classes.

Periodical Parodies and the Incompetent Copper

By 1839 rabies was considered enough of a public threat that the Metropolitan Act was expanded to allow the banning of dog carts and potentially rabid dogs within a 15 mile radius of Charing Cross. With this action, the police were now able to destroy any dogs suspected of rabies and to fine owners who did not confine their canines to a leash. In 1854 the efforts of animal rights campaigners (such as the SPCA) succeeded in making the dog cart ban country-wide as part of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. In addition to causing controversy regarding the poor and their livelihoods, this Act also expanded police power—allowing all local authorities to kill mad dogs and to enact confinement and muzzling orders as they saw fit. Further laws also permitted the police more powers when it came to the regulation of mad dogs and the muzzling and confinement orders which were intended to act as preventative measures.

Yet, despite this, printed images lampooning the efforts of the police to counter the threat of rabies persisted (and increased) throughout the later decades of the nineteenth-century. Although images in periodicals were varied in their method of visual police criticism, one peculiar trend of imagery persisted in which neither the rabid dog nor the policeman were the main representative figure but, instead, the self-defending

middle-class dog lover. Dubbed *The Hydrophobia Craze* by one such example, such images would often depict a devoted dog owner (typically female) taking excessive means to protect themselves and their dogs against the perceived rabies epidemic. Such images did not always include a visual representation of a policeman, but criticism of the police was implicit. Despite additional police measures, there still seemed to be an underlying perception that neither they nor their dogs were safe on the streets and although these comics mocked those gripped with such concerns they also implied that the police were at fault for not being able to reassure them.

Figure 87 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 87: ‘The Hydrophobia Craze’, in *Funny Folks*, 1877, p. 148, Gale Digital Collections.

Figures 88–89 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 88: [Left] ‘A Woman Defending’, in *Funny Folks*, 1885, p. 332, Gale Digital Collections.

Figure 89: [Right] ‘The Coming Fashion’, in *Funny Folks*, 1889, p. 179, Gale Digital Collections.

‘The Hydrophobia Craze’ is by far the most outlandish of all of these depictions. In it a woman has her dog guarded through so many methods that readers could hardly doubt that she was being gripped by a craze. ‘A Woman Defending’ and ‘The Coming Fashion’ show further exaggerations of the measures that some dog owners might go to protect themselves and their furry companions. When depicted in relation to male pet owners, in ‘The Coming Fashion’, such depictions became even more extreme in terms of self-defence measures and their implication. Although female pet-owners and their toy dogs may have been considered as innately vulnerable to threats (and, perhaps, excessively pampered) the degree to which the man shown also felt the need to defend himself and his dog is disproportionate—as both are fully clad in armour. As is often the case with satirical imagery, this illustration invites multiple readings. Critics of rabies

hysteria among the middle classes could see this image as reinforcing their own attitudes. The people are presented as excessively decadent and helpless through their own self-imposed fears; gripped by an imagined fear rather than an actual threat. In such a reading the presence of the policeman in Figure 89 may actually serve to defend the police force; as if to say that there is no need for these measures when the police are already there to counter the threat. But, for those who felt that rabies was a serious threat, there was of course another way to read these images.

If the police had been afforded so much jurisdiction in the prevention and regulation of mad dogs then why, over thirty years after the first preventative Act, did people need to take matters into their own hands (even if presented in a hyperbolic manner)? If we are to read these images with an understanding that some people *did* feel the need to defend themselves against the rabid dog then the police presence in *The Coming Fashion*, and the notable lack of a direct police presence in the others, portrays a persistent insecurity among some social groups in the face of the rabid dog. For these viewers the armour-clad man can be said to wear his suit in spite of the policeman's presence as an act of visual criticism.

While the former reading might have appealed to middle-class critics, depictions of police inadequacy when confronted with mad dogs were much more common than their middle-class mocking counterparts. While satirical periodicals certainly did not shy away from opportunities to appeal to multiple audiences at once, their focus lay much more on validating (and even aggravating) the perceived threat of rabies rather than dissuading any of its critics from taking up a social stance to the disease. To this end, even images making general observations of rabies season were still likely to use such depictions as a chance to criticise police methods and attitudes. For example, *Fun's* 1892 'Tip-Topical Touches' incorporates a policeman alongside the public as fleeing from the threat that a rabid dog posed. The accompanying text, 'The wild dogs now begin with the

dog days To make the “best and bravest” run all ways’ acts as a direct criticism of the policeman’s lack of bravery.

Figure 90 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 90: ‘Fun’s Tip-Topical Touches: The Dog Days Begin’, in *Fun*, 1892, p. 1, Gale Digital Collections.

The characters in this comic not only serve to further highlight the cowardice of the policeman (whose fear is matched by women and children) but also serves to emphasise the core issues expressed in such illustrations. Among intended victims of the mad dogs, we see that a woman and her child are the prime candidates for pursuit. The single-mindedness with which the dogs pursue the middle-class mother and innocent child—emblems of domesticity—highlights the concerns of the middle-class reader. Such imagery played on fears of the urban criminality invading the domestic sphere and corrupting its values. Rabies itself was seen as such a class contagion, so to be confronted with such explicit visual depictions in satirical imagery would have been an undeniable (and anxiety-inducing) indicator of this possibility. In this context the policeman’s actions become further damning as the image can also be read to suggest that the police were unable to protect the domestic sphere and the moral fibre of society in any meaningful way.

An examination of periodical imagery throughout the late-nineteenth century reveals the frequency with which a link between rabid dogs, police failures, and the unchecked threat of the urban criminality were made visually. Typical in such imagery, was either a situation in which police ineptitude lead to a middle-class individuals coming under danger or where a single policeman was seen squaring off against a rabid dog (or dogs). In such instances the policeman was almost always depicted as ill-equipped to deal

with the threat; unable to regulate canines on the street, let along the criminal classes to which they belonged.

Figure 91 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 91: ‘The Beauty of the System’, in *Fun*, 1889, p. 234, Gale Digital Collections.

Figure 92 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 92: ‘The Dog Regulations’, in *Fun*, 1886, p. 260, Gale Digital Collections.

Some satirical imagery instead chose to take a more nuanced approach to the rabies debate in order to appeal to a broader audience. Aspiring to a broad readership, such images provide perhaps the most interesting instances of visual attitudes towards the rabies debate. Among these an image from *Funny Folks*, published in 1878, stands out in its contrasting appeals. It was a response to a statement appearing in the *Daily Telegraph*, typical of public feelings about hydrophobia:

The number of dogs allowed to go at large increases yearly with our population. The danger of hydrophobia grows in proportion, and with this the necessity for adopting adequate precautionary measures.³⁰

Figure 93 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 93: William Reynolds, ‘Hydrophobia: “Precautionary Methods”’, in *Funny Folks*, 1878, p. 229, Gale Digital Collections.

³⁰ William Reynolds, ‘Hydrophobia: “Precautionary Methods”’: *Funny Folks*, 20 July 1878, p. 229.

Echoing many of the concerns seen in the imagery we have explored so far the *Daily Telegraph*'s approach to hydrophobia reflects the fear of the middle classes in needing to protect themselves from an increasing threat. However the *Funny Folks* approach to this newspaper comment acts as a work of satirical disagreement.

Tropes of middle-class hydrophobia make up the image with final panel revisiting the motif of the incompetent police officer, with the extent to which the two police officers are outmatched is particularly absurd. Standing outside of the police office, two police men are met with a horde of rabid canines—eyes glowing under the light of a smiling moon and mouths open in a water-starved manner. The illustration is accompanied with the quote ‘But what adequate measures can guard the Forces against these ghostly horrors?’ In taking this approach *Funny Folks* not only demonstrates the ubiquity of these images but also, to some degree, criticises newspapers and periodicals for their interest in agitating the public’s fears through extreme visual means. By taking these rabid representations to their ultimate farcical conclusion *Funny Folks* questions the helpfulness of such fear-mongering visual depictions.

Figure 94 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 94: Detail from ‘Hydrophobia: “Precautionary Methods”’, in *Funny Folks*, 1878, p. 229, Gale Digital Collections.

What to Do About Dear Fido?

In 1886 the periodical *Fun* published an image by the well-known cartoonist and social satirist James Frank Sullivan (1852–1936)—titled ‘It’s Only Dear Fido’—giving its own stance on the hydrophobia craze. Depicted in this image is an elderly woman, keen to have her beloved Fido made the exception to the local muzzling regulations. This protest is made in spite of all dogs in the surrounding area being muzzled, including

unleashed street curs. The comic has a bloody conclusion; Dear Fido turns out to be mad but, at the woman's continued protest, people do not despatch her pampered pet, allowing him instead to terrorise the surrounding area before eventually finding a victim. In a biting critique of the owner's action the comic concludes with the bitten man suggesting that he shall 'enjoy' dying of hydrophobia, as it's only Dear Fido's bite. His expression is one that says otherwise.

Tackled in this image are several qualms and concerns relating to the social rhetoric of rabies, but principal among them is the complaint that the middle classes are propagators of rabies themselves. Believing that their dogs, unlike plebeian pets, were incapable of developing rabies, many middle-class owners insisted that their dogs did not need to be muzzled (and some, in fact, took it as an insult and an attack on their rights). This was noted by Pemberton and Worboys who noted that the middle classes would often defend their dogs through an appeal to their own sense of responsibility, social dignity, and self-control.³¹

In such observations an underlying assumption of the benefits of the middle-class household were strongly implied. Middle-class dogs, 'controlled' and 'contained,' were thus supervised in towns and cities. The protective elements of domestication and domesticity were believed to accompany the dog, even when it did venture out, and the risk of contracting rabies was consequently assumed to be low.

Figure 95 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 95: 'It's Only Dear Fido', in *Fun*, 1886, p. 16, Gale Digital Collections.

³¹ Pemberton and Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, p. 75.



Figure 96: Details from 'New Regulations for Dogs', in *Graphic*, 1885, p. 697, Author's Collection.

This defence of living conditions, breed, and upbringing did not persuade critics, who argued that any dog had the capacity to contract hydrophobia. The *Graphic* in 1885 highlighted the ludicrous nature of such claims in its own illustration.³² Addressing a change in new police regulations, this illustration criticises the attitude of the middle classes in 'Our Dog Ought Not to be Muzzled' and 'Every Other Body's Dog Should Be'. Making reference to Landseer's famous depiction of Eos through its use of its recognisable iconography, 'Our Dog Ought Not to be Muzzled' challenges the assumption that aristocratic canine breeding was able to convey an immunity against rabies. The simple criticism of the phrase 'our dog ought not to be muzzled, but every other dog should be' highlights this further, adding credence to the visual codification of the image.

³² Details from New Regulations for Dogs: *Graphic*, 26 December 1885, p. 697.

Yet such renditions were not the only criticisms brought to bear against those in the pet fancy and people had associated grievances about middle classes and their canines. Such commentators condemned the middle classes for the affections they lavished upon their precious pets, sometimes at the expense of others.

Figure 97 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 97: ‘No Doubt’, in John Leech, *Pictures of Life and Character from the Collection of Mr. Punch* (London: Bradbury & Agnew, 1886), p. 67, Cartoon Stock, Bath.

Critics believed that middle-class owners mollicoddled their animals at the expense of practicing philanthropy to their fellow man and that this behaviour also damaged dogs. John Leech, for instance, depicted a stocky middle-class woman walking her dog while two working class men lament that their fortunes in life are not as prosperous as those of the lady’s canine companion. Although the woman’s face is turned it is reasonable to assume that she is linked to representations of the dog-loving spinster, a visual figure that was often criticised for over-pampering their dogs. Interestingly in the textual accompaniment, the beggar’s speech has also been elevated in terms of sophistication (as opposed to the typical cockney lilt given to other representations). This may perhaps allude to the injustice of ignoring humans that still have a chance of redemption in favour of an ‘air beast’.

Figure 98 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 98: ‘Interesting’, John Leech, *Pictures of Life and Character from the Collection of Mr. Punch* (London: Bradbury & Agnew, 1886), p. 148, Cartoon Stock, Bath.

Another explicit comment on canine care over philanthropy by Leech, ‘Interesting’, depicts a respectable lady returning to her pharmacist with a complaint that

her lap dog (most likely an Italian greyhound) is still ill despite taking his prescription. The greyhound's appearance is deliberately absurd—as it is dressed up in a thick (presumably expensive coat), has little canine booties on, and holds its head high in a self-superior manner. The woman and the canine completely overlook the young urchin girl at the counter, who is clearly in more need of help than the spoilt greyhound depicted. This forthright illustration from Leech was an attack on the priorities of middle-class dog owners.

Figure 99 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 99: George Du Maurier, 'A Malade Imaginaire': *Punch*, 17 December 1887, p. 278, Cartoon Stock, Bath.

Themes of sickness and imagined illnesses also played into canine-centric criticism regarding the amount of love that middle-class dog owners bestowed on their companions. In one of Maurier's illustrations this theme comes to the forefront as two middle-class women discuss the maladies that one of the women's dachshunds might possess. In response the woman explains that her dog is simply suffering from a *malade imaginaire* (an imagined illness); he simply thinks he is ill. The notion that a dog can be fawned upon so much that it begins to imagine more maladies than it possesses is a scathing enough comment on middle-class pet ownership as it is, but to have the owner happily allow her dog's imagined ailment to prevail and to treat it as if it were existent is even more damning and is in line with Du Maurier's well-known critique of upper middle-class indulgence.

Such images of overindulgent middle-class dog lovers were commonplace in the latter half of the century and many illustrations liked to comment upon the excessive affection of the middle classes for their dogs. One cliché of the middle-class dog lover

presented the elderly spinster and her pampered lap dog who had been rendered incapacitated through the lifestyle imposed upon it. The latter was so popular that it even surfaced in the high arts—playing on pre-existing Hogarthian humour as a light-hearted comment on the spoilt nature of middle-class canines.³³

Figure 100 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 100: Horatio Henry Couldery, *Victorian Pug Dog Feeling Poorly*, chromolithograph, 1875, The Amoret Tanner Collection.

Satirical images expressed underlying concerns about middle-class pet ownership linked to rabies debate. Another significant worry concerning rabies among dogs was the issue of cramped urban living spaces and its impact on dogs. As early as 1822 it was believed that rabies manifested ‘in dogs which exist in a state of confinement which are kept in towns and take little exercise’³⁴ and this notion continued to hold weight for decades. While the middle classes might read such statements as an indictment of the lower classes and their treatment of dogs, the same analysis could just as easily be held to criticise them. Through mollycoddling their canines—keeping them on a close leash or sat on a fancy pillow or lap for most days—some critics believed that the middle-class approach to pet keeping was also liable to drive a dog mad. Criticisms of middle-class dog handling habits tied into further debates about the need for those in the pet fancy to recognise that they also had a role in the spread of rabies. But this was an accusation that sat uncomfortably with the notion that only disreputable owners and canines could cause and spread such an unseemly disease.

³³ As explored by Monica Flegel in chapter 2 ‘Becoming Crazy Cat Lady: Women and their Pets in the Domestic Circle’, Monica Flegel, *Pets and Domesticity in Victorian Literature and Culture: Animality, Queer Relations, and the Victorian Family* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), pp.56–95).

³⁴ ‘Remarks on Hydrophobia and its effects on the Dog and the Human Race’, *Annals of Sporting and Fancy Gazette*, 1822, p. 5.

Brought under scrutiny by such criticisms, the willingness of the middle classes to cast a critical eye on police officers can be seen as a reactionary move, meant to deflect the blame cast on them and to help reconcile notions of the homely middle-class dog propagating a criminally-driven disease. Although dogs were often the focal point of such debates, policeman were positioned firmly as cultural scapegoats.

The Collie of Brompton Road

By the 1880s it has been widely recognised by scientists that rabies was a virus transmitted from animal-to-animal (as opposed to spontaneously occurring) and that the muzzling of dogs would significantly reduce the number of rabies cases in the UK. In response to this muzzling regulations were increased and more extensively enforced throughout this time period. Many welcomed the increased regulations and in 1886 the *Saturday Review* felt confident in commenting that:

... the enforcement of [muzzling regulations] has enabled the muzzle to live down the bad name which had been given it by ignorance and prejudice. Familiarity with it had bred at least acquiescence in the case of most intelligent dog-owners, who have at length been educated into candidly admitting that, if a little care is taken to fit a dog with a well-made muzzle, he ... will wear it without threat or fury.³⁵

However not everyone agreed with this assertion. Indeed as late as 1898 public outcry against the muzzle persisted. In one particular instance, the same newspaper had a very different approach when concerning a Collie killed in Brompton Road. In this incident the ‘unfortunate Collie, whose only crime appears to have been that it lost its muzzle and ran its hardest to escape’ was pursued and bludgeoned to death in the absence

³⁵ ‘In Defence of Muzzling’, *Saturday Review*, 22 May 1886, p. 712.

of a responsible policeman.³⁶ Many people wrote to the editor to complain about the incident and one person, C.A.M. Bailey, wrote in considerable dismay that:

One would think that our dogs, instead of being our best friends and companions, were dangerous wild beasts or poisonous vipers, that they are hunted down and brutally destroyed whenever seen without that useless, cruel and shameful instrument of torture the muzzle. Surely the people of England have lost their reason! ... The balance of their usually sensible minds has been upset by the absurd agitation against the very rare disease rabies, which has been kept alive by Mr. Long's needless, useless and tyrannical Muzzling Order ... and has resulted in indescribable suffering, by muzzling, to inoffensive dogs, in atrocious bludgeoning by the police of poor little animals found without muzzles...and in terrible scenes, alas! far too common, like that in the Brompton Road.³⁷

That the victim of the Brompton Road bludgeoning had been identified as a Collie—both a pure bred animal and one of the saintly canine icons—no doubt added to the agitation. However, as Bailey stated, this incident was not seen as uncommon, and the muzzling order was not as readily accepted as the 1886 report would have hoped. Muzzling Orders, and the way they were instigated, in fact came under heavy fire throughout the Victorian period. Cartoons in periodicals explored such controversies, in addition to the fears of innocent dogs being punished, proliferating such representations.

³⁶ 'Dog-Muzzling and Cruelty to Dogs', *Saturday Review*, 10 September 1898, p. 346.

³⁷ 'Dog-Muzzling and Cruelty to Dogs', p. 346



Figure 101: ‘New Regulations for Dogs’, in *Graphic*, 1885, p. 697, Author’s Collection.

In a comprehensive (if not semi-ironic) turn the image from the *Graphic* (‘New Regulations for Dogs’, Figure 101) criticising the middle-class desire to evade muzzling laws also serves well to highlight some of the chief concerns that anti-muzzling advocates consistently brought to bear. Many argued (as Bailey did) that the muzzle was a cruel instrument to force a dog to wear and that it would be a struggle to find the right muzzle for some dogs such as pugs. Others believed that muzzling dogs was futile, while cats still remained unmuzzled. In the *Graphic* (as with other illustrations of the time) the depiction of a cat muzzled was meant to emphasize how ludicrous the suggestion was in practice. However, in this image the depiction of the muzzled cat parallels that used on a

small, sweet looking, and diminutive puppy dog with the accompanying text ‘No Dog to be at Large Unmuzzled’. This image drew on many visual protests at the time regarding the issue of small family dogs being muzzled. At the root of such imagery was a desire to expose the harsh practices of muzzling in addition to trying to convey a sense of victimhood when confronted with the brutal enforcement of the law. Consequently images of puppies or small dogs muzzled and looking upwards or to the audience in dismay acquired a prominent place in the anti-muzzling protest.



Figure 102: Details from ‘New Regulations for Dogs’, in *Graphic*, 26 December 1885, p. 697, Author’s Collection.

Figure 103 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 103: E. Gilbert Hester (After E. Caldwell), *For the Safety of the Public*, etching on card, 1887, Private Collection.

Figure 104 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 104: William Henderson, *Muzzled Pugs*, oil on canvas, 1886, Private Collection.

This criticism also tied in with anti-muzzling speculations that any dog for which a muzzle was required (due to a heightened risk of rabies) would not be the kind to wear one, as it was believed that those who were already law breakers would not adhere to muzzling laws either. Taking this very stance, one anti-muzzling commentator reported

that the reduced rabies incidents in recent years were not due to muzzling regulations but, rather, had 'simply been caused by stray and starving dogs being caught and disposed of by the police'.³⁸ Pictures of muzzled puppies subsequently criticised, once more, the inappropriate powers of the police which would ultimately leave innocent people even more vulnerable to criminals.



Figure 105: Stephen T. Dudd, Details from 'The Police and the Dogs': *Illustrated London News*, 2 January 1886, p. 8.

³⁸ 'Dog Muzzling', *Saturday Review*, 12 November 1898, p. 641



Figure 106: Stephen T. Dudd, Details from ‘The Police and the Dogs’, in *Illustrated London News*, 1886, p. 8, Author’s Collection.

A different narrative was constructed for middle-class canines. Instead of being at fault and pursuing an actively criminal path it was believed that middle-class canines who were afflicted with rabies would, in fact, practice self-enforced exile from the home. ‘It is one of the first inclinations of a dog affected with the incipient rabies’ asserted one author, ‘to slip out of his master’s house when unobserved, as though unwilling to remain with friends he has loved so well after becoming to them a source of danger and disease’.³⁹ This selfless portrayal of the rabid middle-class canine stood in stark contrast to the mad

³⁹ ‘Dogs in Disgrace’, *National Review*, vol. x, 1887, p. 336.

dog motif of the lower classes, and was rarely depicted in visual imagery, instead allowing the saintly representative to speak for themselves in terms of middle-class canine respectability.

Nonetheless middle-class dogs were sometimes depicted as being part of a rabies-based escapade, though most typically as victims of the police or as comical foils to police action. S.T. Dudd's depiction from the *Illustrated London News*, titled 'The Police and Dogs', shows the adventures of an 'Inoffensive black & tan terrier' who is forced to wear a muzzle and, in an attempt to 'escape from such tyranny', runs away from home. This misguided (but not menacing) dog then gets pursued and captured by a policeman who takes him to an animal shelter where he 'suffers acutely' until he is retrieved by his owner.

In this series of images the difference between the terrier's size is contrasted with the enormous frame of the police officer. This disparity between the two is utilized to comedic effect, during the scenes in which the police officer ineptly fumbles to capture the diminutive and ultimately harmless terrier. This series of events may have had an amusing element to them, but the representations of the policeman as a menacing force, towering over the dog, in addition to the panel showing the terrier's suffering in the kennels, addressed a serious concern among some that the police missed the real canine dangers present in society.

The wrongly accused mad dog became a cliché in British culture from the 1830s onwards, as fears of such mistaken identities increased. On this topic Pemberton and Worboys observe that:

Many commentators quoted Goldsmith's poem of 1766, which told the story of a dog that was cruelly killed by a mob only for it to emerge that it was never rabid—a moral tale of the slaughter of the innocent. Such a tale was told in Volume II of *Mirth and Morality*, published in 1834, where a 'falsely

accused’ mad dog was chased and killed, before it became known that it had been provoked into a fit by children tying a kettle to its tail.⁴⁰

Such moral concerns can be seen in an illustration by Heath, titled *Hydrophobia*. In this image a distressed dog holds out a paw to the reader, pleading for release. The posters behind this canine victim decry this injustice as a ‘petty infringement on the liberty of the subject’, the ‘free country’ of Britain. An image of a ‘mad dog’ can be seen and is revealed to be yet another wrongly accused dog—with a kettle tied to its tail as in the *Mirth and Morality* publication. Lastly the muzzling order is signed by Dogberry, the iconic incompetent legal official later alluded to in ‘*Cave Canem, or Dog(Berry) Law*’.

Figure 107 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 107: William Heath, *Hydrophobia*, 1830, The National Library of Medicine, Bethesda.

Throughout the Victorian period such satirical images persisted, however their focus shifted to better reflect contemporary issues of the time. The wrongly accused dog was either a diminutive lapdog or puppy (as shown in the terrier’s case) or, as in the Brompton Road case, an innocent breed-turned-martyr due to public hysteria or police brutality. At the very least, as with ‘A Dogged Pursuit—(A Tragedy in Four Acts)’ the policeman was still in the wrong or inept while the dog, of true gentlemanly origin, is left dead from ‘sheer remorse’.

Figure 108 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 108: ‘A Dogged Pursuit.—(A Tragedy In Four Acts)’, in *Fun*, 1885, p. 262, Gale Digital Collections.

⁴⁰ Pemberton and Worboys, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, p. 27.

Yet the significance of anti-muzzling rhetoric and the prosecution of innocent dogs went beyond simple muzzling protests. As the Brompton Road case, and Bailey's response, reveals it was not uncommon for people to witness dogs being violently bludgeoned to death on the streets—either through lack of police intervention or at the hands of policeman directly. Such violent acts, executed in full visibility, exasperated concerns among the middle classes that rabies brought out the most barbaric of practices in mankind. Police actions also led them to worry about the police and government abusing their power in what was perceived to be 'an infringement of liberty' among the middle classes; a robbing of their freedoms and rights when, by all personal accounts, they were the wrongly accused.

The muzzled puppy and wrongly-accused dog consequently came to embody the plight of the middle classes. When confronted with the enforcement of legislation that invaded their observed rights such dogs became innocent victims when, by all accounts, the problem clearly stemmed from other classes of society, and this was a rhetoric that applied to the owners above all else. It was these strong parallels, drawn between wrongly punished dog and owner, which we can see in the depicted behaviour of infected middle-class dogs. Even if afflicted the wrongly accused canines continued to exemplify the more virtuous aspects that may still have resided in dogs in disgrace, as seen by their self-imposed exile. As Hilda Kean observes in the dialogue of anti-muzzling rhetoric 'The same qualities lauded in Gelert and Greyfriars Bobby stories were now placed in a context of resistance to state exploitation'.⁴¹ The sources explored in this chapter suggest that there was a rich visual component to these constructions and discourses which not only acted upon public opinion but also actively shaped it in an interwoven exchange of social issues and canine commentaries.

⁴¹ Kean, *Animal Rights*, p. 94.

The Rabid Peripheral

Picturing the Mad Dog in High Art

Despite the widespread depiction of rabies and related concerns in literature, periodicals and newspapers, and in various forms of visual culture, the rabid canine was rarely represented in high art. While it is fair to assume at this point that any homeless or stray dog could be perceived as a threat, or a potential mad dog, clear representations of mad or rabid dogs are difficult to identify when looking at high art. This is especially striking considering the amount of clear canine depictions that did exist throughout the period. With saintly hounds, and beloved status symbols abundant on the Victorian canvas, the absence of the mad dog creates a striking contrast. However, one could argue that this was the intention.

While canines were used to represent many different ideological themes in high art the majority of canine art patrons were concerned with field scenes, pet portraiture, or images elevating the noble status of the dog. Both artist and patron had a vested interest in depicting the nobler aspects of their canine, as seen through the popularity of works by Landseer, Barber and Rivière. Dangerous dogs were decidedly unpopular, both on the street and the canvas. As stray curs and their criminal allusions were a most undesirable aspect of urban living it is unsurprising that they were equally unwelcome in commissioned paintings, and a risky inclusion for artists hoping to exhibit and sell their works. The aversion of the British public to morally dubious artwork was demonstrated in Whistler's *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl*, after all, and from the condemnation of Landseer's *The Shrew Tamed* with no one, equally, wanting imagery of potentially rabid dogs hanging on their walls (despite the potential appeal to pathos that such a piece could convey). As Edward Fenton notes:

Respectability was a quality which could not be overestimated [when it came to the arts]. Victoria's was an era when the high moral character of a work of art was a prime consideration of judgement. "Vulgarity" was the one thing above all others to be eschewed.⁴²

Vulgar, devoid of moral character, and disrespectful of the law and the safety of others, the iconic rabid dog stood as a near-antithesis of the ideal Victorian subject.

Yet, despite this hesitation among the high art world to portray the mad dog, and the issues it afforded, representations of the mad dog still developed their own visual language. As this chapter has demonstrated common motifs were revived, constructed, and revisited in the representation of mad dogs allowing anyone who viewed such imagery the ability to read common pictorial cues and relate them to the issues previously explored in this chapter. This exchange of readable imagery can even be seen in images such as 'The New Police Regulations for Dogs' of 1885 and 'The Police and the Dogs' of 1886; two different images from two different newspapers with nearly the same image of muzzling.



Figure 109: [Left] Details from 'New Regulations for Dogs', in *Graphic*, 1885, p. 697, Author's Collection.

Figure 110: [Right] Stephen T. Dudd, Details from 'The Police and the Dogs', in *Illustrated London News*, 1886, p. 8, Author's Collection.

Rabid representations also did not simply borrow from each other to develop their pictorial language but from high art too—as the tendency of artists to employ

⁴² Fenton, 'Portrait of a Victorian Painter', p. 160.

physiognomy and phrenology into their work was also being practiced among various other forms of visual culture. Given this exchange of visual methods and the rich, interrelated development of the iconic mad dog and all it entailed, it becomes reasonable to assume that the Victorian public were well versed in the reading of such representations even without them being frequently depicted in high art. As such depictions of the mad dog were still able to gain significance as a sign outside of conventional forms of painterly practice.

However, the mad dog does appear in one work of ‘high art’, though this depiction has not been recognised; namely *Work* by Ford Madox Brown. Through exploring the inclusion and placing of this mad dog in *Work* further insights can be gained into the visual language of the rabid canine and the importance of these codes to the greater art world.

Canines on the Canvas

Ford Madox Brown’s painting *Work* is an image that has been, as Paul Barlow notes, ‘repeatedly, even obsessively, discussed but also regularly dismissed as a failure’, but it could be suggested that the failure lies in the reading of the modern critic, rather than in Brown’s execution.⁴³ Certainly when work does get recognition from academic advocates it gains remarkably high praise, with Tim Barringer considering it his curator’s choice for the 2013 *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant Garde* exhibit at the Tate and considering it to be a perfected form of ‘Pre-Raphaelite modern-life paintings’ as he conceived them.⁴⁴ Regardless of where one stands on the overall success of the painting, the grandiose nature of *Work* is hard to deny. Marked as Brown’s ‘Largest and most elaborate modern life subject’ the artist spent thirteen years on-and-off constructing the large-scale social

⁴³ Barlow, Paul, ‘The Ordering and Disordering of Work’, *Visual Culture in Britain*; 2014, 15, 3, pp. 258-276, p. 258.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Prettejohn, *The Cambridge Companion to the Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 148.

allegory, *Work*.⁴⁵ Bustling with various social characters and considered by Brown to be his magnum opus, *Work* is an intricate painting rich with social commentary.

Work stemmed from the gospel of work that eminent Scottish social critic and historian, Thomas Carlyle presented in *Past and Present* that all true work was sacred and noble whereas idleness was the enemy of hope and progression. Carlyle is depicted in Brown's *Work* in order to emphasise this message, while the social reformer, the Reverend Frederick Denison Maurice, stands next to him; two brain-workers, one theoretical and one more practical.⁴⁶ Brown inscribed the frame with biblical quotations which acted in dialogue with its themes, merging word and image.⁴⁷

Brown was so keen to have others read the finer details of his work that, when exhibiting it to the public, he issued a pamphlet describing its narrative details and how best to read the painting. Barringer describes the image as one that 'self-consciously presents itself as an intellectual statement'.⁴⁸ Given this, and the meticulous attention to detail that Brown afforded to both the painting and its catalogue, it is no surprise that the canine characters featured were also consciously tied in to the overall themes of the artwork.

Brown addressed multiple themes within this painting and, given the detail of the painting (and its textual accompaniments), was clearly eager to have them analysed. As Julian Treuherz observes:

Brown deliberately chose his characters to represent different types, bringing them together to make contrasts: work and idleness, poverty and wealth, physical work and mental work. He showed the rich that do not need to work

⁴⁵ Treuherz, *Ford Madox Brown*, p. 188.

⁴⁶ Barringer, *Men at Work*, p. 30.

⁴⁷ The quotations being as follows: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread (Genesis 3:19) Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught but wrought with labour and travail night and day (2 Thess 3:8) I must work while it is day for night cometh, when no man can work (John 9:4) Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before Kings (Proverbs 22:29)

⁴⁸ Prettejohn, *The Cambridge Companion*, p. 159.

and the unemployed who cannot find work; he showed manual workers, street traders, voluntary do-gooders and intellectuals who can influence society ... Brown's painting is deliberately complex and cannot be reduced to one simple explanation.⁴⁹

Brown was so keen to have others read the finer details of his work that, when exhibiting it to the public, he issued a pamphlet describing its finer details. Keeping this in mind, and the deliberation that Brown put into each character included in this painting, it is no surprise that the canine characters featured were also consciously tied in to the overall themes of the artwork.

Figure 111 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 111: Ford Madox Brown, Detail from *Work*, oil on canvas, 1852-1865, Manchester City Art Galleries, Manchester.

'In the most complex of all Pre-Raphaelite paintings', Tim Barringer observes, 'even the dogs contribute to Brown's social analysis'.⁵⁰ This is well demonstrated in the inclusion of a hunting dog that accompanies a Member of Parliament and his female companion. Commenting on these two figures Barringer observes that:

Madox Brown is indulging in a Hogarthian satire. Relegated to a shadowy position at the rear of the composition, unable to participate in the useful work in the foreground, the aristocracy is judged irrelevant.⁵¹

Made even more obscure than its owners, the black hunting dog blends in to the shadows, contrasting with the bright scene in the foreground. Panting from the heat, the dog has stuck its head through some fencing to further inspect the main scene. However, the

⁴⁹ Treuherz, *Ford Madox Brown*, p. 188.

⁵⁰ Barringer, *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 98.

⁵¹ Barringer, *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 101.

hunting dog is ultimately as irrelevant to the work which Brown depicts as its owners, its purpose as a hunting dog made redundant by the urban setting that it finds itself in.

Figure 47 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 47: Ford Madox Brown, *Sketch Showing the Artist Painting Work from a Letter to Lowes Dickinson*, ink on paper, Princeton University Library, Princeton.

Ford Madox Brown demonstrated his interest in using canines as a thematic motif in his work through the inclusion of dogs in other paintings, such as *Stages of Cruelty*. A comic sketch in one of Brown's letters shows his light-hearted awareness of the canines that occupied urban landscapes, with one dog shown sniffing at his trouser leg while another sits and observes his work with a group of small children. This willingness to include dogs in both serious artworks and small personal sketches indicated Brown's awareness of canine-related concerns, as well as his inclination to utilize them in his own artworks.

Figure 48 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 48: Ford Madox Brown, Detail from *Work*, oil on canvas, 1856-1890, Manchester City Galleries, Manchester.

Indeed the inclusion of the three dogs in the foreground of the painting reveals Brown's understanding of the canine iconography of the time; as represented are a small bull-terrier pup, a mongrel dog, and a fancy Italian greyhound. Examined by breed alone Ford Madox Brown's understanding of the canine hierarchy is instantly apparent. The bull-terrier pup, a working-class dog, is aligned with the navvies, the mongrel dog, lacking breed or purity, belongs to the ragamuffin children of the streets, and the fancy Italian greyhound, easily distinguished as being a pampered purebred, belongs to the

middle-class ladies who are practicing philanthropy in the left of the painting's composition.

However, in addition to these four dogs there is one other dog of significance in Ford Madox Brown's painting: a dog in the top far right background chasing after a horse and carriage. Ignored by previous commentators, this fifth dog is Brown's representation of a rabid dog and acts part of a wider canine commentary integrated into the painting's already extensive visual language.

Revealing the Rabid Canine in *Work*

Figure 112 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 112: Ford Madox Brown, Detail from *Work*, oil on canvas, 1856-1890, Manchester City Galleries, Manchester.

While the representation of the rabid motif in *Work* is not initially apparent it is arguably a significant aspect of canine codes included in the painting. The image itself is so small a detail that it is, for the most part, just an outlining of paint. Despite its size vigilant viewers would have still been able to identify its presence and regard it as a dog running at the heels of one of the horses (inferred to be pulling a carriage). The positioning of the dog in this image is made all the more noteworthy by Brown's use of dogs in later works. In *The Traveller* (1868–84), for instance, a dog is seen accompanying his owner, who rides a horse. Within this composition, in which the dog is owned by the horse-riding individual, the dog trails eagerly after the horse, maintaining a reasonable distance. In contrast the dog presented in *Work* is coming at the horses from the side, dangerously close to the horse's heels, conveying a very different narrative intent.

Figure 113 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 113: Ford Madox Brown, *The Traveller*, oil on panel, 1868-84, Manchester City Art Galleries, Manchester.

Figure 112 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 112: Ford Madox Brown, Detail from *Work*, oil on canvas, 1856-1890, Manchester City Galleries, Manchester.

In addition to the significant positioning of the dog in contrast to Brown's other artwork, another pertinent parallel can be drawn to common representations of the rabid dog of the street, evoking Lancelot Baugh Allen when he commented on dogs being set upon horses. Treuherz notes that in the background Brown included 'a variety of incidents, some barely visible,' one of which was 'a coach and horses which is just coming into view round the corner'.⁵² But this coach and horses is not unhindered—instead a dog can be seen approaching one of the horses from the side. As we have already explored the construction of rabid representations, canines chasing after horses and horse-and-carriages was a sign of the criminal cur; one associated, as 'Cave Canem, Dog (Berry Law' illustrated, with the lower and dangerous classes.

Work presents theme that can also be seen in the discourse stimulated by rabies. As rabies was associated with those that refused to take responsibility or ownership over their dogs, it drew parallels with living an idle life, or a life that forsook labour for criminal activities. Stray mongrels were also often considered as having no purpose and were therefore, by nature, idle beasts. Such dogs also acted as a notable antithesis to the activities of the saintly or sagacious canine, who had found a sacredness in their service to mankind. Such observations may or may not have been read by every Victorian

⁵² Treuherz, *Ford Madox Brown*, pp. 192-193.

observer of *Work*, however the fifth dog would have at least been seen as mad by virtue of its actions.

Yet, to look at the mad dog as an individual element of the canvas is to do Brown's canine inclusions a disservice. In order to appreciate the presence of the mad dog in *Work* it is also necessary to consider the three dogs in the foreground. Doing so provides an even more extensive picture of Brown's employment of canine motifs, in addition to illuminating further links to the issues associated with rabid canines. Within the three most prominent canines featured it is the exchange of glances that is most notable. Brown sketched out each dog and, while the pugnacious bull-pup was sketched as both looking away from and towards the Italian greyhound, the intense gaze between the ragamuffin's mongrel and the extravagant lapdog seems to have been more decisive in nature.

The body language depicted by these two canines is also noteworthy. The mongrel dog's tail is held high and upright—a sign of alertness and potential aggression—whereas the lapdog's entire body is held in a nervous position—its tail between its legs and a front paw held up in caution. Such canine body language is later echoed in Darwin's *The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals* which noted that a dog with a raised tail might have 'hostile intentions' whereas others are inclined to 'often lift up one paw and keep it doubled up, as if to make a slow and stealthy approach'.⁵³

Figure 48 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 48: Ford Madox Brown, Detail from *Work*, oil on canvas, 1856-1890, Manchester City Galleries, Manchester.

⁵³ Charles Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions*, p.43.

Figures 114–115 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 114: [Left] Ford Madox Brown, *Cartoon for the Bull-Terrier Pup*, pencil on paper, c.1850s, Manchester City Art Galleries, Manchester.

Figure 115: [Right] Ford Madox Brown, *Cartoon for the Mongrel*, pencil on paper, c.1850s, Manchester City Art Galleries, Manchester.

Figure 116 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 116: Ford Madox Brown, *Cartoon for the Greyhound*, pencil on paper, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

This slow and steady approach by the greyhound, not only indicates a level of awareness from Brown regarding the visual and social aspects of dogs, but also an attempt to challenge common canine icons as part of his greater artistic narrative. For example, in his own writings Brown identifies the ragamuffin's dog as 'of the same outcast as themselves'. But while he depicts this dog as 'sour' in temper and the type that 'frequently fights, as by his torn ear you may know,' Brown also inverts the public's assumptions of such a cur by adding that 'the poor children may dog as they like to him, rugged democrat as he is, he is gentle to them'.⁵⁴ Such a narrative for the ragamuffin's dog frames him not as a truly hardened cur, but as an individual who has been hardened by circumstance but is ultimately still redeemable and kind-hearted in nature. Given this insight the viewers can read the Italian greyhound's actions in a more comprehensive manner. Regarding the mongrel dog with uncertainty, apprehension, and a cautious body language the Italian greyhound is not privy to the true nature of the mongrel dog and, therefore keeps its distance. Acting as a proxy for the lapdog's owners, the greyhound thus comes to represent the middle-classes anxieties at the situations of the poor, whereas

⁵⁴ 'Ford Madox Brown Exhibition Catalogue An exhibition of Work and other paintings by Ford Madox Brown at the Gallery, 191 Piccadilly (opposite Sackville Street), 1865', provided by Manchester Art Gallery <http://manchesterartgallery.org/fmb/docs/fmb_catalogue.pdf> [Accessed 10 February 17]

the mongrel dog—harsh in appearance but ultimately kind—is a classic example of the mistaken physiognomic analysis that amateur readers of character were likely to commit. As such the rabid dog adds further credence to the cautionary tale of *Work*, as the lapdog judges the mongrel too harshly whereas the real source of danger occurs elsewhere.

Brown was further critical of this canine and the dog-loving middle classes through utilizing other canine representations and through his own writings. Observing that ultimately, neither the working bull-pup nor the mongrel dog trusted ‘outlandish-looking dogs in jackets,’ the implication of such attitudes is a disillusionment brought about by the behaviour of such dogs and, consequently, such owners. The common censure of canine caring over human philanthropy is expressed through the figure of the lapdog. For the ladies seen to be associated with the lapdog have clearly lavished more attention on their canine companion than on those truly in need, such as the street urchins shown. Brown lamented that:

In front of [the lady handing out tracts] is the lady whose only business in life as yet is to dress and look beautiful for our benefit. She probably possesses everything that can give enjoyment in life ... seeing all this, were you less engaged watching that exceedingly beautiful tiny greyhound in a red jacket ... I would beg to call your attention to my group of small, exceedingly ragged, dirty children in the foreground of my picture where you are about to pass.⁵⁵

Addressing the middle-class lady directly in this passage, Brown makes it clear that her attentions are currently more occupied by her ‘exceedingly beautiful’ dog rather than the ‘exceedingly ragged’ children in need that he wishes for her instead to address. However, rather than simply express this through written associations Brown also employs the visual language that periodicals of the time used when addressing the same theme; as the

⁵⁵ *Ford Madox Brown Exhibition Catalogue*
<http://manchesterartgallery.org/fmb/docs/fmb_catalogue.pdf> [Accessed 10 February 17]

appearance of the ladies, the canine, and the young girl depicted bear a striking similarity to the imagery appearing, as we have seen, in *Punch*. In this context, then, the addition of the rabid dog serves to further bring up such criticisms within the audience's minds.

Through the employment of such familiar canine imagery Brown's understanding of canine discourses, their social connotations and how to utilize them visually is demonstrated. Through examining Brown's approach clarity can also be given to the exchange of visual information in regards to such canine representations and the greater cultural exchanges in which canine representations existed. Such pictorial exchanges can consequently be seen as easily read and understood with their social political and cultural associations available to all that were willing to look.

Figure 98 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 98: 'Interesting', in John Leech, *Pictures of Life and Character from the Collection of Mr. Punch*, 1886), p. 148, Private Collection.

Further Canine Concerns

As detailed as the canine inclusions in *Work* are, it is significant to observe that their presence is not present in some of Brown's sketch work. In fact in an earlier sketch for *Work* we can see that Brown did not include the lapdog, the bull-pup, or the rabid dog. By examining these changes we can gain further insights into the exact significance of the role each played.

Figure 117 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 117: Ford Madox Brown, *Study of Work*, watercolour and pencil on paper, c.1864, Manchester City Art Gallery, Manchester.

Lacking the contrasting figure of the lapdog, the ragamuffin's mongrel in this piece has no clear intention with its gaze and is most notably lacking in some of its 'gruff demeanour'. With the rabid dog absent the horse and carriage is featured further down the artwork, not impeded by any interventions. Looking at this sketch it is clear that the rabid dog had a practical element to play in Brown's work. Brown seemed interested in having a horse and carriage in the composition, however by moving it back through the inclusion of a canine saboteur in the final piece he could use the road to showcase other characters; such as the procession of people with sandwich boards and (of additional significance) the aggressive policeman trying to push on a girl selling oranges. This policeman's actions are something Julian Treuherz has linked to *Punch* cartoons which, much like representations of the wrongly accused middle-class canine, criticised the competency of the police when choosing who to apprehend.

Despite this practical motivation, it is also worth noting how meaningfully the final inclusion of the five canines plays in to the overall themes of the work, made even more notable by subtle differences like the repositioning of the ragamuffin's dog. After all, once the lapdog was included Brown made the choice to include the exchange of gaze in his work. This choice ultimately allowed for the themes of middle-class anxiety and canine affection overtaking philanthropy to come into play, as Brown narrated in his own reading of *Work*. Keeping the implications of these changes in mind consideration should be given to another significant difference in this sketch work. In front of the middle-class women, instead of a chickweed seller in this sketch Brown has included a dog seller. This alternative arguably reveals Brown's intention when using canine symbols and is crucial to understanding the inclusion of the mad dog.

The dog seller was another figure associated with the dangerous classes. While further consideration will be given to this in Chapter Four it important for now to explain that this was due to dog sellers being equated with dog stealers: possessors of the bull-

dog character who threatened domestic safety by leading unsuspecting lapdogs out of their homes and into the criminal circuit. So Brown's removal of the dog seller and inclusion of a mad dog allowed Brown to gesture towards the threat of the dangerous classes explored originally by the dog seller. In doing this Brown arguably, created a more succinct canine commentary which worked in greater harmony with his ultimate narrative.

Brown's own public account of *Work* makes clear his intention to warn the middle classes not only to redirect their concerns from frivolous pursuits (such as making sure one's lap dog lived in the lap of luxury) but also not to confuse neediness with criminality. In the case of the canines this was achieved through the mongrel dog, who looked and lived gruff but who did so through the conditions of his life rather than through any innate inclination towards violence. However this lesson may have been watered down with the inclusion of the potential dog stealer being so close in proximity to the middle-class women depicted. After all, any dog lover would have understood the pictorial language that such a depiction represented and would have presumably found it distressing.

Consequently by removing the dog stealer and replacing him with the dubious (yet ultimately harmless) chickweed seller Brown removed this threat from the immediate proximity of the middle classes. This also offers a reason as to why the rabid dog is featured in such an obscure position, further reiterating the message that if one looks for dangers in a misguided or zealous manner one risks overlooking those in need and fail to detect threats in the distance (or, alternatively should consider such threats to be an unlikely distant occurrence). Thus the marginal rabid dog acts as a far better substitute to the dog seller and Brown's overall themes, as a subtly placed sign while still allowing the understanding observer to decipher the dog-based language of the painting.

This case study also makes the mad dog's general obscurity and the reasoning behind it more apparent. As is to be expected, people were uncomfortable with dogs in disgrace being the central theme of a painting (especially a socially-charged painting) but were much more accepting of such themes on the periphery of a work. As such most artists would be unlikely to pursue overt depictions of such canines; not because they were hard to read but because the narratives that they invited were so potent, so socially charged, and so easily recognisable in the Victorian imagination that to include a disreputable dog in the forefront of a painting would be to invite critical failure.

However, in the case of artists who did chose to include such representations, we can observe that images of the dog in disgrace were utilized, but not necessarily as the central focus of a work. Even then artists had to tread a fine line between including such dogs to illustrate their point without allowing them to be too prominent for the viewer's comfort, as seen by Brown's substitution of both the form and positioning of his own dangerous dog. Newspapers and periodicals did not have much to lose from placing a few illustrations in each publication addressing the current canine calamity of the day—especially as such social commentaries were expected from them as part of their role and actually seemed to help rather than hinder their sales. Artists were aware of the pictorial language of the dog since they sometimes took pains to include them in a painting. Very few artists would overtly showcase a dog in disgrace but some would chose to imply their presence in the fringes of their artwork and this shrewd negotiation of the placement of such canine depictions highlights their value to the Victorian painter.

Chapter Four. Dog Stealers, the ‘Fallen Dog’, and Gender Dynamics in Victorian Visual Culture

Introduction

Although human responses to the rabies virus involved notions of corruptibility and morality it did not, necessarily, evoke the same sense of latent corruptibility or sexual potency that artworks such as Whistler’s *Girl in White* or Morris’ *La Belle Iseult* were able to evoke in its viewers. The danger of rabid dogs was certainly one of moral contagion, but the rabid dog itself was afforded a much more masculine identity; typecast as a figure outside of the home which came to attack its female paragons and subsequent virtues. Females were typically the victims of such attacks, but not as a consequence of their own failings. Both the women, and the home, were exposed to rabies through dangerous characters attacking them, almost never having an active role in the attack itself.

However the act of dog theft created a much more dynamic exchange of both gender and corruptibility. The modus operandi of many dog stealers was to lure the unsuspecting dog outside of the confines of the domestic sphere and into its clutches. Furthermore dog stealers would sometimes have inside assistance, from incompetent or duplicitous servants, who would aid in the abduction of a family’s favourite pet. Here was a scenario where domestic dogs were not simply victims but were actively lured out of the house; their downfall coming from their lamentably weak nature. Thus the comment in the *Athenaeum* in 1844, complaining that:

the corruptibility of dogs in general is deplorable. From the following statements [concerning dog stealers] it would appear that dogs are nearly as

easily seduced from the path of duty as men ... When dogs are so demoralized and so corruptible, it is melancholy to think the enormous influence they exercise upon their fond owners.¹

Reading such comments it is tempting to view the domestic dog snatched from the home as an analogy for the iconic fallen woman of popular Victorian culture and there are certainly many comparisons to be made.² Placed within the domestic sphere as a moral exemplar, I have already demonstrated the shared association of dogs and women with the domestic sphere and morality. Following this the luring of a dog by a dog stealer was arguably analogous to the forlorn middle-class woman forsaking the home in favour of the excitement of the city. In both cases the ultimate outcome is presented as tragic.

Figure 118 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 118: English School, *Grey Italian Greyhound on a Red Cushion*, oil on canvas, c.1870, Private Collection.

The link between fallen woman and fallen dog is one that we can additionally identify in canine portraiture. In particular this portrait of a beloved Italian greyhound (c.1870) can be read in relation to such themes. Accompanied by the trappings of female domesticity and existing as one of the ‘lapdog’ breeds which were so often associated with women, this Italian Greyhound offers an image of sweet and dainty femininity in the home, as seen through a beloved pet but it also has a moralistic purpose.

If we contemplate the posture provided for the Italian Greyhound in *Work* we know that the dog in this painting is not settled but, instead, nervous, fearful and on edge. There is an undeniable anxiety in the raising of its paw and the rigid definition of its leg’s

¹ ‘Report from the Select Committee’, p. 767.

² As a visual archetype the ‘Fallen Woman’ also continues to have a lot of academic potency and was recently the topic of discussion for an exhibition at the Foundling Museum, *The Fallen Woman*, curated by Lynda Nead. <<http://foundlingmuseum.org.uk/events/fallen-woman/>> [Accessed 8 November 2016]

musculature. Considering *Work* further and the tactics employed by moralizing artists using the canine genre we are able to appreciate why this dog is so nervous; as, in the top right-hand corner, we catch a glimpse of another canine image depicting Battersea Dog's Home. Once this element is observed the narrative of the canvas and its moralising message become more apparent. The dog—adorned with a fancy collar, standing on a red velvet pillow, and complimented by a vase of flowers—is clearly a feminine force in the home, yet the security of this dog is provisional on its compliance with the domestic ideal that it embodies. The alternative provided should a fall occur (as signalled in the painting by the fallen flowers which have strayed from the vase) is what the pet would become: a social pariah living on the streets or in a hostel or workhouse.

Dog-theft and depictions of dogs in danger consequently afforded artists and commentators an opportunity to reinforce the separate spheres of city living and to dissuade women from abandoning the path of the angel of the home.³ Yet, surprisingly this was not always the case. As the commenter in the *Athenaeum* reveals, in the case of dog-stealing it was 'man' and masculinity that became a frequent point of discussion. Since most dog thieves were men most textual accounts of dog-theft are presented from the male point of view, and narrate the tale of a daring middle-class man willing to defy the dog-stealer and defend his dog (who is often also referred to with a masculine pronoun). Yet although dog-keeping was conventionally a masculine pursuit, the actions of middle-class pet-keepers had shifted the dog into the domestic interior where women and children were central figures (who frequently interacted with dogs in visual representations). Although the values afforded to the dog in such representations were

³ For examples of this domestic archetype in the depiction of middle-class human women particular attention should be paid to Figure 39 and Figure 135. Examples can also be found in Frederic George Stephens (1828–1907), *Mother and Child*, oil on canvas, c.1854, (London: The Tate Collection); William Nicol (active 1848–64), *Quiet*, oil on canvas, 1860, (York: York Museum Trust); and Charles West Cope (1811–90), *A Life Well Spent*, oil on canvas, 1862, (London: Christopher Wood Gallery) as examined in Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

rather masculine (concerning sagacity, muscular Christianity and medievalism, faithfulness to duty, etc.) their application was mostly in the instruction of children or as a cloying narrative for a decorative parlour print. And although the victims of dog-theft (and their owners) varied in terms of their gender two distinct forms of imagery emerged: one of the insidious male dog-thief and his conventionally masculine middle-class opposition, and another of dainty little hounds being helplessly lured away from the protective realms of the household. In the exploration of dog-stealing we are subsequently able to address the gendered association of urban dogs, and the various discourses that they embodied through their anxiety-inducing confrontations with dog-thieves.

Complicating issues further for canine commenters of the period was the emergence of the public woman dog fancier, who defied conventional associations of women and dogs and personally owned and displayed dogs both in shows and on the streets. Such figures were part of a broader move towards increased female rights and forced those opposed to their actions to consider the role of the woman and dog in society. In such debates the fallen dog, as a dog that is lured on to the streets, becomes yet another symbol for the dangers of such actions. The formation of Battersea Dog's Home provides an interesting commentary regarding how some female dog lovers chose to reconcile their desire to have more power outside of the home with their love of dogs and domesticity. Founded in 1860, the values associated with Battersea Dog's Home aligned perfectly with the rhetoric of the fallen canine and provided (through its practical function and cultural representations) a glimpse of redemption for both dogs and women who had strayed from the paths of virtue. Established by a woman, and home to many divisive female volunteers, Battersea Dog's Home could be read parallel to the rise of the female dog fancy in regards to women's rights and a growing sense of agency outside of the home. Since the foundation was styled a 'home', what is there to be said about the domestic desires of the Dog's Home? Was it a strong indicator of the women's rights movement

and early female empowerment or does it prescribe to a different, more conventional ideology?

In exploring representations of dog thieves, fallen dogs and the dog redeemed this chapter will examine the gender dynamic of dogs and what they can tell us about their owners' attitudes as they were visualized through such canine debates.

Dog Dealers and Dog Stealers

Introducing the Fancy

In a society where the visual presence of dogs seemed to be constantly growing the figure of the dog-stealer stood out from the crowd by vanishing from it. Because of their chosen 'profession' dog-stealers were well-versed in obfuscation and concealment. Although this skill was common in many criminal activities the problematic nature that it posed to its victims is obvious in the way that dog-stealers were explored in contemporary accounts.

The veterinary surgeon, William Youatt warned in 1855 that:

Dog-stealing ... is reduced to a perfect system in London, and carried on by a set of fellows who, by their cunning and peculiar knack, are enabled to avoid all detection in their nefarious traffic, and thus, by extortion of rewards or sales of stolen dogs, reap a rich harvest for the whole fraternity from the well-stocked pockets of the numerous dog-fanciers of the English capital.⁴

Youatt had good reason to be alarmed: reports from Mr Bishop of Bond Street indicated to him that the amount of money gathered by the dog-stealing fraternity was more than £1,000, and that was simply one account.

Another feature of the theft of dogs was the failure to prosecute. If a dog-stealer was caught he would often have to pay a fine for his actions and the apprehension of dog-thieves was lamentably low: the police rarely got involved in incidents of dog-theft. This

⁴ William Youatt, *The Dog* (Philadelphia, PA: Blanchard and Lea, 1855), p. 174.

was, in part, due to the actions of the dog-stealers themselves. When a gentleman determined to report his stolen dog to the police in 1844 the following exchange ensued:

The inspector listened attentively to my tale, noted down my description of the animal, and assured me that within twenty-four hours every policeman on duty in London should have instructions on the subject.

“But do you think there is any chance of their finding my dog?” I enquired ...
“None in the least, sir; we can do nothing with these dog fanciers—they are so sly. They would rather kill your dog for the value of his skin than let you have him again through our interference”.⁵

In the end the policeman referred the author to a well-known residence of dog-stealers (one that was available ‘at any police office’) and told him to simply pay the ransom sum of his dog. Similar reports were common throughout the period and it seemed that dog-stealers would rather kill the occasional dog rather than risk being captured, something which many writers declared as an act of pure spite.

The actions and organisations of dog-stealers were seen as being contrary to all that was decent about dog ownership. The dog-stealing fraternities of the metropolis went by the name of ‘the Fancy’ (sometimes ‘the London Fancy’ or simply ‘dog fanciers’), a play on the more respectable use of the term in the dog world. Named as such because ‘they are in the habit of indulging practically in strong fancies for dogs, which do not, strictly speaking, belong to them’⁶ these groups of dog-stealers were well organised and, as Youatt had asserted, knew their trade well.

Dog-stealers would stalk potential canine victims while they were at home or wandering on the street. Then, with accomplices, they would lure the dog from its home or distract the owner long enough so as to steal it away. The dog would then be stored

⁵ ‘Animal Magnetism’, *New Sporting Magazine*, April 1841, p. 283.

⁶ ‘Animal Magnetism’, p. 284.

with many others in a secluded area. If payment for the restoration of their canine victim was not made in time then there was always the fear that the animal would be slaughtered and turned in to dog meat.⁷ The grim living conditions in confinement were, undoubtedly also part of the bargaining process. When the owner did eventually get their dog back they could expect them to be visibly mistreated and underfed, the longer the gap between kidnapping and payment the worse the condition of the canine. Although the Fancy could sometimes give the owner of a dog their demands directly, they typically waited for the owner to advertise the loss of their pet. At this point a dog-restorer would be employed to collect the reward money and to restore the dog to its owner. Knowing an owner would pay a fair price for their dog many Fanciers would repeat the crime and continue to exploit a customer who had proven to be reliable (typically with increased rates of restoration).⁸

On some occasions if a dog was repeatedly stolen and restored in a sorry state then some owners would be offered a ‘subscription fee’. If they paid the fee then their dog would still be regularly stolen but it would be returned to them promptly rather than be subjected to further cruelty and malnourishment. This system of theft was both profitable and frequent in the Victorian period, with commentators lamenting the actions of dog-thieves publicly and, presumably, countless more individuals keeping their experiences with the Fancy quiet, for fear of the repercussions that speaking out might bring.

By the 1850s dog stealing had become a system of criminality which seemed almost unavoidable for the middle-class dog lover and its trade in affection, domestic invasion and the exploitation of moral attachment was abhorrent to those who fell victim to it. Unlike the rabid dog—which roamed violently, mindlessly, and (most importantly)

⁷ Charles Manby Smith, *Curiosities of London Life: or Phases, Physiological and Social, of the Great Metropolis* (London: Cash, 1867), p. 161.

⁸ ‘Animal Magnetism’, p. 284.

visibly throughout the streets—dog-thieves, through the perfection of their system, were insidious, sly, and undetectable. This lack of visibility, so contrary to the public's usual mediation of canine-related concerns, makes the figure of the dog-stealer and subsequent representations a focal point for examining class and gender in relations to criminality and the defence of the home.

Obfuscated Offenders

'The dog-stealer contrives most adroitly to evade the law. The proprietor of a dozen dog-layers is never seen even in company with a dog when making his rounds'.⁹ By 1857 this was a well-known fact of the fancy and was consistently emphasised in the recounting of the fancy's criminal affairs. The ability to surreptitiously steal away a prized dog, obscure one's identity, and conceal the origins of a pilfered canine were commonly practiced arts. When dog-theft peaked in 1844 a report documented this aptitude for invisibility:

The men who form the club which I mentioned at the beginning of these remarks, are in the habit of assuming all sorts of disguises to effect their purpose; and frequently the person who restores your lost dog is a well-dressed, puritanical-looking scoundrel.¹⁰

Dog-stealers not only perfected this art of obfuscation but also flaunted it, in what was considered to be a brazen act of ridicule directed at the middle class. Indeed, in one instance concerning the theft of an individual's favourite scotch terrier the dog-stealers involved were unabashed enough as to charge extra for the time they had taken to observe and steal away the terrier.¹¹

⁹ Smith, *Curiosities of London Life*, p. 162.

¹⁰ George Manning, 'The Increase of Dog-Stealing and its Evils Considered', *New Sporting Magazine*, 7 May 1844, p.366.

¹¹ Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor: A Cyclopaedia of the Condition and Earnings of Those That Will Work and Those That Cannot Work and Those That Will Not Work*, Vol. 2 (London: Cass, 1851), p.50.

The various tactics employed by the Fancy allowed them to flourish. So much so that, even though police were generally aware of the locations of various dog-stealing dens, they still considered the Fancy ‘so sly’ as to evade justice. This contrast between the accessible dens of crime and the elusive criminals that resided within it no doubt caused further distress for the people who found their dogs constantly missing.

The emergence of dog-stealing can subsequently be perceived in terms of a representational struggle. Confronted with a threat to the home with every instance of canine theft the middle-classes required a visual enemy which they could then identify and ultimately defend against to alleviate their feelings of precarious domestic security. But the methods of the Fancy were specifically designed to help them avoid identification and apprehension, preventing the victims of dog stealers from ever truly knowing the criminal mastermind behind the corralling of innocent middle-class pets. The anxiety that this provoked can be seen in the repetitious nature of dog-stealing accounts, which emphasised again-and-again the ability of dog-stealers to remain a hidden threat at the very doorstep of domesticity. However this desire to envisage the dog-thief did not take long to enter the realm of visual culture, and, as previous chapters have noted, the figure of the dog-thief was linked to that of the dog-seller, depicted as uncouth and animalistic.

Figures 32 & 119 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 32: [Left] ‘Bull-Dog Type’, in *Fun*, 1862, p. 98, Private Collection.

Figure 119: [Right] John Tenniel, ‘*Bull-dog type*’, in *Punch*, 1858, University of California, Santa Cruz.

While actual representations of dog-stealers were not abundant throughout the period (isolated in painting to one identifiable example), images of dog-dealers, such as this, were much more prevalent. As is to be expected, the comparison between the physiognomic bulldog-type and the dog-seller became one example of such

representations, with ‘Bull-Dog Type’ even having the dog-seller hold up a bulldog as if to provide perfect clarity for his confirmation of type as a criminal character. The cockney accent seen in the rabid dog was also frequently involved in images of the dog-seller too, and periodical illustrations at the time made sure to emphasise this link between lower-class accents and the character of the iconic dog-seller. This carried on, too, in Ansdell’s *Buy a Dog Ma’Am?* (1860) where the title makes use of an inflection often attributed to cockney characters to further emphasise the criminal allusions of the central dog-seller.

In this painting a dog-seller (undoubtedly also a stealer) tries to sell his wares to an audience of inquisitive women—one of whom has taken a particular interest to the seller, while her dog reflects the apprehension that the viewer is expected to have (and that the dog’s owner should pay caution to). The association of the dog-seller with dog-stealers, and the importance of physiognomy in such readings, is shown in the appraisal of a commenter on the painting who notes that the seller has ‘the practices villainy of the class’ attributed to dog-thieves—noting that, if one were to purchase a dog from this figure, ‘The only drawback...may be that the ten-pound-note [to buy the dog] will soon double itself in the price of “rewards” to the most undeserving of men’.¹²

Figure 120 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 120: ‘*The Street Dog-Seller*’, in Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor: A Cyclopaedia of the Condition and Earnings of Those That Will Work and Those That Cannot Work and Those That Will Not Work*, Vol. 2 (London: Cass, 1851), p.49, Cornell University Library, Cornell.

Figure 121 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 121: Richard Ansdell, *Buy a Dog Ma’am?*, oil on canvas, 1860, The Kennel Club, London.

¹² C.C., ‘Buy A Dog Ma’am?’, *New Sporting Magazine*; Aug 1862, 145-148, p. 145.

Even if the bulldog-type was not fully employed a sense of animality and brutishness seemed to be a requirement of dog-selling representations. This can be seen in the prominent social researcher and writer, Henry Mayhew's own feature of the dog-selling character, which shows the dog seller with prominent side burns and a gruff semi-pout. It was also this that wove together an intricate narrative in the *Sporting Magazine's* appraisal of *Buy A Dog Ma'am?* (that of an ex-parish boy fallen from the grace of middle-class society in to a situation of 'honest poverty') as the commentator curiously noted that, despite the obvious allusions to dog theft in the image, 'there is nothing in the class physiognomy of the London dog-fancier that suggests a picture such as we have here.'¹³

By the latter half of the century images of the dog-stealer had subsequently become easily recognisable and were ingrained in the public imagination as demonstrated through their typecasting in periodical imagery and subsequent artistic depiction by Ansdell. And, while dog theft did experience a noticeable decline in these later years, the image of the bulldoggish criminal set to threaten the home prevailed. This can be seen in an image from the *Illustrated Police News* in 1881 which depicts a then rare encounter between the police and a dog stealer. The incident shown is that of Bruce, a butler to Mr Lawford, identifying a dog-stealer and his accomplice to police sergeant Brixton. The thief, James Hasley, was charged with stealing Lawford's German dachshund and a collar (worth £10).

Figure 122 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 122: *'Dog-Dealers and Dog-Stealers'*, in *Illustrated Police News*, 1881, p. 1, British Library, London.

¹³ C.C., 'Buy A Dog Ma'am?', p. 145.

Portrayed with a certain degree of sensationalism (being published in the *Illustrated Police News*) this image is noticeably riddled with the pictorial cues of the conventional dog thief. Both men being accused are of the lower classes, and Hasley has been drinking, with his tankard positioned crookedly in his hand. In terms of physiognomic type Hasley is similar in conformation to Mayhew or Ansdell's representation of the slightly animalistic seller, whereas his accomplice conforms much more accurately to the bulldog type. This matching of types is made more noticeable to the reader by presenting the accomplice's face in profile, allowing for clear identification. While the two have been caught the illustration still makes allusion to the early obfuscation with which the fancy was associated; placing his hand behind his back Hasley's hides yet another stolen dog in his back pocket. When tracing the line of sight of everyone in the room not one is able to see this act of obfuscation implying that the accomplice may still go on to commit more crimes undetected.

Yet, notably, there is an element missing from this image: namely the dachshund that the butler Bruce had been hoping to retrieve. Instead the most visible victim of the dog-stealer's crime is a small Italian greyhound or terrier-like dog which can be seen propped on the side of the bar between the two men. Diminutive, dainty and with its tail curled in distress, this small lapdog would have easily been identified as belonging to a woman, and presenting a female element in the image. However, the visual exchange that is occurring in this incident is almost entirely male-dominated. Images or accounts focusing on the confrontation of dog-stealers offer an interesting case for the gender-dynamics that dog-thieves inadvertently triggered in their middle-class victims, the connotations of which become more apparent through a case study of such confrontations and their visual depictions.

The Man Defending

Tapping in to the popularity of the serialized artist biography, an 1894 account of Landseer's career in the *Manchester Courier* had the following tale to tell:

A friend of Landseer's asked him to paint his dog for him, but on the day fixed the animal was found to be stolen. The artist promised to recover it if possible and went to a well-known dog stealer, telling him to let him have it at once, no questions asked. The man said he could not possibly find it under a fortnight, and at the end of the time appeared with it. "You see," he said, "I did steal the dawg, but I sold it to such a trump ov a hold lady for such han howdacious price, I thought I must let 'er 'ave the benefit of it for a fortnight."¹⁴

This account is significant for several reasons. Pertaining to this thesis as a whole it further emphasises the extent to which canine artist, their subjects, and the world of middle-class pet keeping were intertwined and thus ever-present in the artist's mind. Published as an anecdote for the public's pleasure it also shows the demand for dog-related tales in relation to the lives of artists. However, addressing the story in relation to the constructed figure of the dog-stealer we are able to glean even more from the situation. The actions of the cockney dog-thief reflect the organised elements of the Fancy and highlight the cunning with which it worked: after all, the dog-stealer in question knows full well that he can steal the dog back at any point, and retrieving it is just a matter of sympathetic delay.

The confirmation of the dog-stealer to his type is to be expected in this tale (especially as it was so well established by the end of the century), but of more note is Landseer's behaviour. Painting the portrait for a friend, Landseer does not hesitate to go into the den of the thieves in order to retrieve the stolen canine. He is presented as almost demanding the dog back but is reasonable when it comes to waiting. Landseer is

¹⁴ *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 14 July 1894, p. 2.

subsequently presented as a polarising force to the dog-stealer—noble, brave, and patient even in the face of criminal activities. In the end he retrieves the dog who, notably, has been stolen away from an affluent female owner. The contrasting dynamic between the uncultured, lowly dog-stealer and the brave, middle-class artist figure presented in this account brings to light the prevalence of male-representations in the dog-stealing debate; framing them as an issue of the male's role in society and at home.

Although dogs were an undeniable representative of the domestic sphere in the Victorian period, they did not represent just one gender (nor even one family member). Instead the dog was able to provide a familiar archetypal figure for each member of the ideal middle-class household—acting as domestic exemplar for women, diligent teacher and guardian for children, and moral representative for men. Each family member's role in the house could be embodied, in some way, by the domestic dog, and its role depended on the issue at hand. More than this dogs were conventionally a masculine animal, and (outside of lap dogs) this remained the case for most of the Victorian period. As Sarah Amato observes 'Dogs were widely regarded as men's pets...The dog was continually celebrated as man's best friend, and also his loyal servant' and 'Dogs were believed to exemplify a chivalric heroism, guilelessness, and loyalty, traits which had long been associated with an idealized masculinity'.¹⁵ Such traits were certainly present in Rivière's *Requiescat* and in many of the other life-saving saints of Chapter Two. In relation to the home these traits translated as instructions for men, with Amato noting that 'Depictions of dogs as masculine creatures were meant to inform conduct both inside and outside the home'.¹⁶ The application of moral instruction is subsequently a key aspect in the depiction of dog-thieves and the polarizing of the gruff dog thief and the masculine canine retriever.

¹⁵ Sarah Amato, *Beastly Possessions: Animals in Victorian Consumer Culture* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2015), p. 73.

¹⁶ Amato, *Beastly Possessions*, p. 73.

In regards to dog-thieves the domestic paradigm being invoked is the then well-known rhetoric of the active male and the passive female:

The man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, for conquestBut the woman's power is not for rule, not for battle—and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision Her great function is Praise....This is the true nature of home—it is the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division.¹⁷

This view, conveyed here by Ruskin, was a common one in the mid-nineteenth century and was taken up as a prevalent trope for idealized family and gender dynamics.¹⁸ In the seventeenth century the home had been, for many, the realm of masculine identity, but the eighteenth century saw a shift in domestic structures. Men's role in the home became no less important but it was, throughout the long eighteenth century, contested and obscured by, as Karen Harvey has illuminated, 'new types of family relationship rooted in contract theory' and by the emerging culture of 'domesticity'; a concept 'primarily associated with women and femininity'.¹⁹ The impact of these changes, exacted in the eighteenth century, were further clarified in nineteenth-century sentiment until Ruskin's words became commonplace, not erasing the masculine identity in the home, but certainly shifting public (and subsequently academic) focus. Men were expected to be the active defenders of both the home and domesticity, and women were the passive angels of the house whom they sought to defend. This gives greater clarity to the inclusion of a lapdog

¹⁷ John Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies* (New York: John Wiley, 1865), pp.90-91.

¹⁸ See Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992) and Tim Barringer, 'The Gendering of Artistic Labour in Mid-Victorian Britain', in Moria Donald, Linda Hurcome, eds., *Representations of Gender From Prehistory to Present* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), pp.154–56.

¹⁹ Karen Harvey, *The Little Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 2.

in the *Illustrated Police News* account, but can also be seen to shine new light on the other images we have explored.

In almost all images depicting both a dog-seller/stealer and a woman the positioning of the man is highlighted for its viewers as active. The man shown raises his arm, or looks primed to come to the assistance of the curious female. The dog being lured from the home did not just represent the breaching of the safety of the home but also the corruption of its moral values, through the tempting of its heart—the woman. Whether it is a dog wandering into the grasp of a stealer, or a woman curious about the wares a dog-seller has to offer, the male's role remains the same: to protect the middle-class home from corruption and defend its values, by employing the active traits of masculinity.

Figures 123–124 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 123: [Left] Detail of 'Bull-dog type', in *Fun*, 1862.

Figure 124: [Right] Detail from 'The Street Dog-Seller' in Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor: A Cyclopaedia of the Condition and Earnings of Those That Will Work and Those That Cannot Work and Those That Will Not Work*, Vol. 2 (London: Cass, 1851), p.49, Cornell University Library, Cornell.

In the absence of a male this figure still prevailed, but through the dog instead. Conventional roles dictated this, as the dog and woman together were seen as a proxy for a man and woman, in which instance the dog took up the role of the absent male figure. This, of course, was not always the case (lapdogs were hard to justify as anything but feminine, for example) but it was arguably the default when a woman was depicted with a dog. Amato has observed that 'When women were shown alongside high-bred dogs ... it was understood that the dog was a masculine presence'²⁰ and this masculine presence often took on a protective role. In such images Amato argues that 'The woman was

²⁰ Amato, *Beastly Possessions*, p. 80.

portrayed as defenceless without the dog; he protected her from physical harm and preserved her virtue'.²¹

Figure 125 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 125: Richard Ansdell, Details from *Buy a Dog Ma'am?*, oil on canvas, 1860, The Kennel Club, London.

Depictions of dog-sellers and stealers conformed to this gender dynamic, as we can see in *Buy A Dog Ma'Am?* Familiar references to the angel of the home and the risk of the fallen woman are made through the unchaperoned woman (the 'Ma'Am' of the work) who looks on at the dog-stealer, and the urban environment in which the scene takes place. Although a strong male figure may be lacking on the canvas the curious woman is accompanied by her own dog which observes the presumed dog-stealer cautiously. Encapsulating both male and female gender dynamics, this terrier represents both the female anxiety at the threats of the city (as seen in the Italian Greyhound portrait formerly) and the male's position as defender of his female counterpart. Raising one paw up this terrier's body language almost mirrors that of other masculine representations in its position as defender. In comparison to its owner's expression and body language the terrier is an active figure, emphasising its masculine role even further.²²

Images of dog-sellers thus served not just as visual identifiers for the literal perpetrators of the crime but also a figurative representations of what such threats posed,

²¹ Amato, *Beastly Possessions*, p. 80.

²² It is worth noting that the dog seller was confidently described as a 'hard featured dog-stealer' in the *Art Journal*, emphasising the link between physiognomic types, the arts, and canine controversies. However of further interest in the *Art Journal's* appraisal of this work (and in relation to Chapter Three): 'Take the two subjects out of the painter's hands, and place the spectator before the veritable scenes themselves,' it states, 'and we know to which the palm would be given'. Speaking directly to the artistic mediation of canine subjects, such an account substantiates the notion that uncomfortable social subjects were addressed and had their potency partially mitigated through the works of artists. This speaks directly to Chapter Three's assertion that certain subjects could only be safely mediated through dogs in art and, even then, could still be controversial if this account is anything to go by. 'Buy a Dog Ma'am?', *The Art Journal*, 1862, p. 164.

who should defend against such threats and how. In such depictions genre paintings and newspaper illustrations took pride of place but, as has been seen, accounts of the contrast between the dog-stealer and the middle-class opponent were also highly valued. With this in mind we come to our last example of the relationship between dog-thieves (or, more accurately, criminality) and the idealized masculine middle-class defender through looking at the Bishop of Bond Street.

Mr William Bishop (1797–1871) of Bond Street, gun maker to Prince Albert and owner of a shop at 170 New Bond Street (1826–1871), was described by one magazine as ‘an eccentric character’ having ‘acquaintance with innumerable “queer characters” of every grade [which gave] him an insight into society rarely to be met with any man’²³ and when it came to his position as a caninophile his character was in keeping with every possible cliché. When Bishop’s beloved dog, Tiny, passed away in 1844 he erected a plaque to her praising her ‘sagacity, intelligence, and devoted attachment’. When, in 1863 another one of his dogs was bludgeoned to death on the orders of a woman who thought it rabid he contested the act as one of undeniable cruelty. And, when his dog Tiny was stolen he paid the ransom to retrieve his prized King Charles Spaniel.

However Bishop did not stop there. Unsatisfied with the law in relation to dog-stealers—where one would have more success asking for apprehension of the thief for stealing the dog’s collar rather than the dog itself—Bishop decided to take an active role in counteracting the Fancy. As part of this role Bishop was able to become an intermediary between dog-stealers and owners, bartering the restoration of dogs to a total cost of over £1,000. Bishop also petitioned for the enactment of a bill that would put dog-stealing on the same level of horse-stealing, with more severe punishment for those who were involved in the crime. Bishop put over £600 of his own money²⁴ behind volumes of

²³ ‘The Increase of Dog-Stealing and its Evils Considered’, p. 365.

²⁴ Frederick Tolfrey, ‘The Bishop and the Dog Bill’, *Sporting Magazine*, July 1845, pp. 185-188.

testimony in support of the bill, which was enacted in 1845. This was a notable turning point not just in the counteracting of dog-theft but also in the elevation of the middle-class man's role against such criminals. Through the Bishop of Bond Street those interested in the dog-stealing controversy were now able to cite a situation in which the active male figure (in many ways an exemplar of middle-class masculinity and respectability) was not only able to defend against such thieves but also brought that defence into law. As legal ineptitude was already a bugbear of canine enthusiasts (as seen through Chapter Three and the rabies debate) this was, no doubt, a significant action. Recognised as such by the Bishop's friends, a commission was made to celebrate the occasion; revealing the importance of portraiture in such instances but, also, the desire of a visual rhetoric to accompany the Bishop's actions, and one that was highly masculine in nature.

This portrait was by the notable English portrait and animal painter Henry Barraud (1811–74)²⁵ and was completed in 1848. Presented in a work space that looks decidedly domestic in some regards Bishop is surrounded by items of culture and intellectual worth—such as paintings, sculptures, taxidermy, and fine storage cases—which signify his social refinement. These items remain notably masculine in most instances, presenting Bishop as an idealized man of culture and learning. Depicted with a gun (the product of his trade) Bishop also epitomises the strong work ethic which was valued in Victorian society, however the gun in his hand also has a double meaning. Considering the painting as a celebration of the dog-stealing bill, Bishop, gun in hand, represents the active male 'doer' of middle-class society, literally armed and ready to defend its values and home. His dogs equally add to this message, as Tiny can be seen dutifully looking up at her

²⁵ Henry Barraud was a successful painter at the time—having exhibited in the Royal Academy from 1833 to 1859 and the British Institution and Society of British Arts from 1831 to 1868. Arguably, the choice to commission such a prominent painter is even more revealing of the distinction that his friend's thought Bishop's canine milestone was worth.

master, with all of the faithfulness and duty that a man was expected to embody, whereas a nearby terrier has a gun propped beside it, adding to the connection between canines, the active male and the defence of the home.

Figure 126 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 126: Henry Barraud, *The Bishop of Bond Street*, oil on canvas, 1848, Holland and Holland, London.

Figure 127 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 127: Henry Barraud, Detail from *The Bishop of Bond Street*, oil on canvas, 1848, Holland and Holland, London.

Figures 128–129 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 128: [Left] Henry Barraud, Detail from *The Bishop of Bond Street*, oil on canvas, 1848, Holland and Holland, London.

Figure 129: [Right] The Southwell Brother, *Photo of Mr. William Bishop*, c.1860s, Private Collection.

Figures 130–131 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 130: [Left] Henry Barraud, Detail from *The Bishop of Bond Street*, oil on canvas, 1848, Holland and Holland, London.

Figure 131: [Right] The Southwell Brother, Details from *Photo of Mr. William Bishop*, c.1860s, Private Collection.

In an interesting turn of events Bishop later decided to recreate the exact pose of Barraud's painting when posing for a photograph taken by the Southwell Brothers (presumably in the 1860s). Although the posturing is near-identical (right down to the positioning of the fingers) the difference between Bishop's true demeanour and that of Barraud's painting reveals to us even more about the artist's intent. In Barraud's rendition of Bishop is shown as gentle, with soft eyes, an inviting smile and rosy cheeks made more

youthful as was conventional during the period. These traits, softened by Barraud, present a masculine figure which is not purely aggressive and ready 'for war, for conquest', but is also gentle, compassionate, and able to use that softness to help better society and himself. Such a representation is indicative of the 'kind patron of the canine race'²⁶ that he was known as, rather than just the gun-wielding defender.

Amato asserts that the 'loyalty, self-sacrifice, and chivalry' shown in dogs stood in contradiction to the Victorian understanding of men as 'sexually aggressive, immoral, and selfish, contaminated by the public sphere'.²⁷ Amato perceives this in relation to a 'shift in codes of masculinity in the second half of the nineteenth century from an emphasis on moral earnestness to aggression and athleticism at the close of the era'.²⁸ While this shift no doubt occurred, I would argue that representations of dog-sellers and stealers provide us with a more nuanced view of masculinity as it was perceived throughout the period. As this chapter has shown, depictions of dog-sellers and stealers involved consistent visual narratives throughout the period, and the idealized masculine opposition was envisioned as early as the mid-nineteenth century (through the Bishop of Bond Street) and prevailed well in to the 1890s (through incidents such as the Landseer anecdote). Men were presented as active in the prevention of dog theft, but this role was taken up in defence of the home, and with a desire to embody the masculine traits of chivalrous hounds at threat rather than to move away from them. In such depictions the modern aggressive man merges with the 'loyal and self-sacrificing' male figure of the past to create a more balanced (and, perhaps, more accurate) view of the Victorian middle-class man; able to defend his home through an active role but, much like Barraud's Bishop, also able to exist within it as a gentler, welcoming, and morally sound figure.

²⁶ 'Sporting Anecdotes', *Sportsman*, 1851, p. 449.

²⁷ Amato, *Beastly Possessions*, p. 74.

²⁸ Amato, *Beastly Possessions*, p. 74.

Fallen Dogs and Fallen Women

The Fallen Canine: Domestic Dogs Out of Place

Representations of dog-sellers may have acted within the paradigm of masculinity in the domestic sphere, and the defence of the home, but the victims of dog-theft in most occasions were not masculine. The tiny greyhound on the pub counter in the *Illustrated Police News*, the miserable cavalier with the seller's hand wrapped around it in *Buy A Dog Ma'am?* (and the small poodle held in the other), and even the Bishop's beloved dog Tiny, seen as even more diminutive with her master towering over her; each of these dogs acted as a feminine presence on the canvas, emblematic of the domestic bliss which men were expected to defend.

But this, in itself, produced a conceptual dilemma which we can observe as present at the time. Dogs were not necessarily stolen in violent or forceful ways but rather tempted by their male kidnappers from the home. The *Athenaeum* may have lamented in 1844 that 'dogs are nearly as easily seduced from the path of duty as men' being 'so demoralized and so corruptible'²⁹ in the face of dog-stealers, but imagery of the time paints a picture in which man's fall was not the primary concern. In one rare example of a dog-theft being painted in the act the associations between dog-theft and the corruption of femininity are explicit.

Figure 132 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 132: Briton Rivière, *Temptation*, oil on canvas, 1879, Private Collection.

Of this painting Phillip Howell notes that 'there are few better illustrations of the vulnerability of property and the siege mentality of the Victorian bourgeoisie'³⁰ but,

²⁹ 'Report from the Select Committee on Dog Stealing', p. 767.

³⁰ Howell, *At Home and Astray*, p. 70.

further than this, Howell also identifies this work as proof that ‘regarding dog stealing as a feminist issue’ has academic legitimacy. Indeed, there is little doubt that the diminutive spaniel shown is representative of both a female owner and femininity in general. Its very breed was aligned with lapdogs at the time but, beyond this, it even wears a delicate blue ribbon, associating it further with femininity. Caught in the moment just before temptation reaches its fruition one critic at the time noted that ‘Whether fidelity or gourmandise will turn out the stronger passion we can only guess’.³¹

Bearing strong associations with middle-class women Howell notes that ‘it is not difficult, moreover, to read the painting as not merely denoting dog-stealing but really connoting sexual temptation and the vulnerability of domestic female virtue’³² and these themes of invasion take place in familiar visual and social arenas. With the spaniel straying from the home in *Temptation* (1879) we are able to note that the doorway is left open, free for the public sphere to intrude upon the middle-class home, as dog-stealers often did. This aligns such images of canine temptation with the highly gendered separate spheres of middle-class life. Or, as Howell observes ‘We have here a fable of woman and pet caught between two worlds – the private sphere of the domestic hearth, and the public space of the streets and the criminal underworld’.³³

Building on this argument from Howell, it can be proposed that such visual scenarios not only evoked a sense of femininity in danger but were directly aligned with another mythology of lost female virtue in the Victorian period; that of the fallen woman. Social reality was infrequently depicted in the Victorian period, despite an emergent artistic interest towards topics of social discomfort among painters and the existence of the social problem painting. Julian Treuherz considers this in terms of the purpose of most

³¹ Walter Armstrong, *Briton Rivière: Royal Academician, His Life and Work* (London: Art Journal Office, 1891), p. 18.

³² Howell, ‘Flush and the *Banditti*’, p. 51.

³³ Howell, ‘Flush and the *Banditti*’, p. 51.

Victorian artworks—which were meant to be a luxury, aimed at pleasing the viewer in some capacity and ‘not noted for its frank or disturbing qualities.’³⁴ But successful paintings of social realism did not lack buyers, and some common motifs in particular managed to find recognition and an audience.³⁵ Among these the fallen woman was arguably one of the most notable.

In her book, *Myths of Sexuality*, the leading authority on the fallen woman archetype describes her as a woman who ‘had been respectable but had dropped out of respectable society’.³⁶ Various paintings at the time represented and explored the notion of the fallen woman, from Richard Redgrave’s *The Outcast* (1851), to Dante Gabrielle Rossetti’s *Found* (1859-1881), and exhibited in powerful pieces such as Augustus Leopold Egg’s triptych, *Past and Present* (1858). Having given in to her vicious impulses and given to a life of sin the outcome for most fallen woman was also depicted in art: suicide by hurling one’s self off a bridge, hoping to find redemption in death if not life.

Figures 133–134 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 133: [Left] Richard Redgrave, *The Outcast*, oil on canvas, 1851, The Royal Academy of Arts, London.

Figure 134: [Right] Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Found*, oil on canvas, 1859-1881, Delaware Art Museum, Delaware.

Figures 135–136 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 135: [Left] Augustus Leopold Egg, *Past and Present, No. 1*, oil on canvas, 1858, The Tate Collection, London.

Figure 136: [Right] Augustus Leopold Egg, *Past and Present, No. 2*, oil on canvas, 1858, The Tate Collection, London.

³⁴ Julian Treuherz, *Hard Times: Social Realism in Victorian Art* (London: Lund Humphries, 1987), p. 9.

³⁵ Treuherz and Casteras, *Hard Times*, p. 11.

³⁶ Nead, *Myths of Sexuality*, p.95.

Figures 137–138 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 137: [Left] Augustus Leopold Egg, *Past and Present, No. 3*, oil on canvas, 1858, The Tate Collection, London.

Figure 138: [Right] George Cruikshank, *A Destitute Girl Throws Herself From a Bridge, Her Life Ruined by Alcoholism*, etching on paper, 1848, The Wellcome Collection, London.

Figure 139 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 139: George Frederick Watts, *Found Drowned*, c.1848-1850, The Watts Gallery, Surrey.

Dogs tempted by the dog-stealer were presented in a way that evokes the imagery of the fallen woman. Not only were the victims of dog-stealers shown as lapdogs, for example, but they are also afforded feminine accessories; the most popular of these being a blue lace ribbon around their neck. This addition, present in both Ansdell's *Buy a Dog Ma'Am?* and Riviere's *Temptation* would have had clear connotations of vanity, which was a key aspect of the iconic fallen woman. When creating reasons as to why a perfectly content middle-class housewife would stray from the home one had to find faults, after all, and vanity was a commonly identified trait that could lead to corruptibility. And, like most representations of the fallen woman and other topics of social realism, the fallen dog and other representations of the corrupted canine found a more receptive space for representation in periodical imagery.³⁷ As Treuherz notes:

what was acceptable on the page of a magazine was less so hanging on a wall.

But, paradoxically, it was the successful introduction of “difficult” subjects

³⁷ For more information on the relationship between print and painting see Andrea Korda, *Printing and Painting the News in Victorian London: The Graphic and Social Realism, 1869–1891* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), with particular attention given to Chapter Three: ‘Genre Painting to Breaking News: Frank Holl and the Fallen Woman’.

in journalistic context which prepared public taste to accept them in works of art.³⁸

Not just ‘accept’ but also readily ‘recognise’.

Through both narrative and pictorial cues fallen women and fallen dogs subsequently shared the same social landscape as creatures lured out of the home (through personal flaws and outside, masculine attention) who found themselves victims of a criminal underworld as a result of their reckless decisions and as subjects of the canvas whose narrative lie prevalently in print press.

Fallen women were typically viewed with an unkind eye by many in society and the consensus was that once a fall had occurred then there was no redemption beyond death or redemption through Christ (represented by Watt’s *Found Drowned* and Hunt’s *The Awakening Conscience* respectively).³⁹ But, Walkowitz research suggests that many women were not just sympathetic to the plight of prostitutes and fallen women but also fiercely protective of their bodily autonomy and ultimate fate. The resistance of the Contagious Diseases Acts of the time, and the subsequent formation of the Ladies’ National Association, is testament to this, and contributed towards an emerging feminist movement.⁴⁰ For those holding such stances, but not willing (or able) to become a vocal activist, dogs were a much more malleable icon when it came to narratives of the fallen woman and her potential fate. A dog, once stolen from the home, could be reclaimed and, although it might be stolen again, the affection felt for the stolen dog and its status in the home was never truly threatened. As such for the sympathetic viewer (or the anxious middle-class woman) the fallen dog presented a softer, more reassuring conceptual

³⁸ Treuherz, *Hard Times*, p. 11.

³⁹ See Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality* for further exploration into the ill-fated conclusion of the fallen woman’s narrative tale.

⁴⁰ Judith R. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

narrative to the fallen woman; one that still warned against temptation but allowed for redemption in life and the restoration of one's own domestic status. This desire for reassurance that fallen woman could return to the home as conveyed through imagery of the fallen canine is nowhere more apparent than in the visual and cultural presentation of Battersea Dogs Home.

Roles and Readings of Battersea Dog's Home

Battersea Dogs Home (initially known only as the 'Temporary Home for Lost & Starving Dogs) was founded in 1860 by Mary Tealby and was set up in a stable yard in Holloway, North London. It has been explored by a number of academics, having facilitated for the very first time, a microcosm of canine representations, in which all manner of breed and mongrel could be found. It was entirely possible to find an aristocratic hound sharing space with a beloved middle class lapdog, a far stray country Collie, a rough butcher's tyke, and a mongrel of the streets. Naturally such a unique situation prompted public interest, not just regarding the work of the home but also the various anthropomorphic characters that they perceived as being clustered together.

This is best illustrated in John Charles Dollman's exemplary painting *Table d'Hôte at A Dog's Home* of 1879. In this painting we see the extent to which the variety of canine physiognomies intrigued the Victorian public, as many recognisable characters are shown (including the cavalier with its blue ribbon and the ever-suffering black and tan terrier of Chapter Three). The painting sold in 1881 for £100 (roughly £4, 831 today)⁴¹ and was considered a 'delightful subject' by one commentator in *The Magazine of Art*, who observed that the appeal came from the fact that 'there is much subtle insight into canine character in the demeanour of the various and varied guests'.⁴²

⁴¹ *Artist and Journal of Home Culture*, 1 February 1881, p. 41.

⁴² *Magazine of Art*, 1889, p. 19.

Figure 140 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 140: John Charles Dollman, *Table d'Hôte at A Dog's Home*, oil on canvas, 1879, National Museums Liverpool, Liverpool.

With such diversity in the guests at Battersea Dogs Home it is only natural that there is a diversity in the way they are examined academically too. Hilda Kean has convincingly argued for the domestic connotations of the dogs home in her own reading of its purpose and activities:

Here was a place to which stray dogs could be taken, looked after well and hopefully be restored to their owners. Significantly, what was established was a 'home', a domestic venue, rather than a place of custody ... A home was the dog's proper place.⁴³

Framing the Dogs Home in terms of gender Kean highlights the link between fallen dogs and fallen woman with the assertion that:

When kindly women saw stray dogs roaming the streets of London they were not simply witnessing fellow creatures in distress ... they could also witness an animal who had fallen from a position of security in to neglect.⁴⁴

The placement of such animals into a safe domestic space before eventual restoration to the home thus became a gendered discourse, in which women could assuage fears of their own fall by showing that fallen creatures could return to the home in addition to highlighting their own kindness and virtue of character.

But the home was not just the place of women. As has already been explored through the opposition of dog-stealers, each member of the Victorian household had a role to play in it, and equally feared for its security when under threat. Subsequently the

⁴³ Kean, *Animal Rights*, p. 88.

⁴⁴ Kean, *Animal Rights*, p. 88.

actions of members of the home can be read not in terms of gender but with a broader appeal to domesticity and its role in Victorian middle-class society.⁴⁵ Given the distinctiveness of the different classes (and the way they are so clearly set against each other in Dollman's work) it is therefore only natural that a class-based reading of the Home's mission is given. Phillip Howell proposes that 'the inmates of the Dog's Home were understood via the discursive tropes regarding the *human* vagrant', addressing questions of political economy and moral reform without relation to gender.⁴⁶ Yet the public had various ways of seeing the Dogs Home. The imagery of the home and its associations with the trope of the fallen dog allow an interpretation of its establishment that emphasises the Home's intention to link fallen dogs to fallen women with the hopes of providing redemptive reassurance.

The founder of Battersea Dogs Home, Mary Tealby had herself deviated from the idealized norm of domestic femininity. Described in an 1861 census record as married to Robert Tealby, Mary was actually separated from her husband, who lived 200 miles away from her with an unmarried housekeeper. This housekeeper, Maria Kirton, was made the sole beneficiary of his will in the same year. No records survive documenting Mary's feelings about the conditions under which the separation occurred, however many reports indicate that Mary would identify herself as a widow rather than as separated, indicating a desire to at least conceal the true story behind of her living arrangements with her father and brother in London. Mary was a fervent advocate of animal welfare and considered it her mission to assist dogs who had found themselves living on the streets. This well-defined agenda was made particularly clear by Mary herself, who spoke of 'the aggregate

⁴⁵ For more links in to charitable organisations, the representative role of domestic animals in relation to class and domesticity, and the upbringing and behaviour of women please see Monica Flegel, 'How Does Your Collar Suit Me?: The Human Animal in the RSPCA's Animal World and Band of Mercy's', *Band of Mercy Advocate, Victorian Literature and Culture*, 42 (2016), 247–262.

⁴⁶ Howell, *At Home and Astray*, p.83.

amount of suffering among those faithful creatures throughout London'.⁴⁷ Her intention with the dog's home was to create a 'temporary refuge to which humane persons may send only those lost dogs so constantly seen in the streets', resonating with Kean's reading of female sympathy when confronted with fallen canines.⁴⁸ Mary Tealby's decision to found Battersea Dogs Home represented the first British animal welfare organization founded by a woman. When the committee of the home first met there were seven other women on the board, and all of the patrons were titled ladies. As a result of this the early endeavours of the Home spoke strongly of the importance of woman's involvement in the animal movement but also of feminine security more widely.

Although the chores of the home were originally undertaken by the lone keeper, James Pavitt, the notion of founding the home, campaigning on behalf of its efforts, and adopting a dog all had a predominantly feminine motivation. After all in reclaiming one's own dog a person would be restoring their canine companion to its proper domestic placing. Those who chose to adopt a new dog demonstrated through their actions their tenderness and desire to be exemplary caregivers, even to God's brute creations. Tenderness and nurturance were well-established traits of femininity making the gendered rhetoric of the home even more explicit.

This, too, is something Kean observes in her writings, as she comments that such endeavours reflected not just the domestic associations given to dogs but also the role that women had as primary caregivers to such animals.⁴⁹ Further than this, the prominence of women in Battersea Dogs Home (as founders, supporters, and buyers) had clear roots in the restoration of those in unfortunate situations. This has been highlighted by Kean who

⁴⁷ 'A Print from Dollman's The Dog Refuge': Gary Jenkins, *A Home of Their Own: The Heart-Warming 150-Year History of Battersea Dogs and Cats Home* (London: Bantam Press, 2010), p.42.

⁴⁸ Hilda Kean, 'Mary Tealby founder of the Battersea Dogs Home', *Hilda Kean*, (2012) <https://hildakean.com/?page_id=224> [Accessed 10 February 17]

⁴⁹ Kean, *Animal Rights*, p. 89.

notes that the Home's ventures (especially in the 1860s) were similar in function and rhetoric to organisations such as the Charity Organisation Society.⁵⁰ Consequently the role of the Dogs Home as an initially feminine institute becomes apparent through the ideological structure that it encouraged. The Dogs Home was even founded in the same year as the Society for the Relief of Distress, which was a notable year for significant social reform led by the endeavours of philanthropic women.

Whereas literature was effective in communicating the greater nuances of the Dogs Home the public's understanding of (and desire to read) canine imagery meant that much could be read through the use of imagery. Representations of the residents of the Dogs Home were readily employed as an easy way to present the Home's various motivations, as well as to try and advertise for donations and adoptions. In such illustrations the Victorian public would be assumed to see three different types of dog: those who had strayed from their homes and would soon find their owners again, those who had never had a home but who would deservedly find one, and those who were beyond hope and would be destroyed. However, in addition to these three common categories we can also see another canine character which stands out from the crowd—that of the Collie dog—and it is this canine figure which creates the strongest argument for links with the fallen woman iconography.

Collie dogs were often included in imagery showing the Battersea residence but their inclusion was rather peculiar compared to the other strays and purebreds. Collies were associated with the countryside and, therefore, it would have been odd for most people to see them in the Dogs Home of London. The visual oddity of the Collie was also noted throughout the period, as the press would sometimes comment on the presence of a Collie dog when speaking of their own visits to the Home. As we have already explored

⁵⁰ Kean, *Animal Rights*, p. 89.

in this thesis, the collie dog had strong links to the sagacity, fidelity, and general virtuous nature of the canine race. However, in relation to the fallen woman the Collie also has another pictorial function; that of the contrasting spheres of the countryside and the city. In Rossetti's *Found*, for example, (which, though incomplete, is considered one of the most famous presentations of the topic) the purity and health of the country is directly juxtaposed with the corruption of the city. The drover who recognises his previous love represents day work and a sense of virtue and kindness, whereas the fallen woman has become a night worker and has fallen to despair. These comparisons between the country and the city had an increasing role in the fallen woman narrative—as the city's corrupting influence was believed to have a part to play in such corruptions and was readily juxtaposed to the countryside as a site of innocence.

Women in the countryside were considered to be particularly strong exemplars of feminine virtue; embodying not only the domestic Madonna of the home, but also the purity and simple bliss of country living. The unfaltering dedication of the wife of the countryside was represented in an iconic fashion in George Elgar Hick's (1824–1914) work, *The Sinews of Old England* (1857). In it we see an idealized version of the working-class family of the countryside, with a navvy looking off into the distance with an intent to work while his wife looks to him, sweetly and in a supportive fashion. 'His wife', Barringer tells us, 'is identified with an image of wholesomeness, fecundity, and passivity, signalled by the abundance of flowering and climbing plants'.⁵¹

This representation of the country ideal feeds in to the premise of the woman's role to her man more generally. The 'oak and ivy' analogy was one that was often employed in relation to these roles. As Lynda Nead puts it:

⁵¹ Tim Barringer, *Men at Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain* (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2005), p. 30.

... he is the oak and she is the ivy. Just as the ivy needs the support of a tree in order to grow, so a wife depends on her husband, and in the same way that the ivy may hold up the tree when it is weakened, so a wife is able to assist her husband when he is afflicted.⁵²

This rhetoric of proper feminine duty is something we not only see in working-class women of the countryside but also in representations of middle-class women, such as in Hicks' titled *Woman's Mission: Companion of Manhood* (1863) and was the prevalent attitude for the mid-Victorian period.

This role is something we also see in Millais' work, *The Order of Release*, in which a wounded man has been returned to the home. In this image the man relies on his wife, who stands firm in her place, but we also see another supporter of the man—his sheepdog. In this picture the dog licks the hand of the man, which his wife also holds, unifying woman and dog in an act of loyal and tender affection. In such an image we are reminded of the virtuous role that the Collie or sheepdog has. Positioned as pious watchers over the flock but also as faithful servant of man the Collie dog was analogous to the ideal woman—as they look to their owner for support and offer support in kind. The positioning of the Collie dog as fawning over its master, such as in the illustration in Darwin's work, was also, in many ways, common to the way that a woman could be seen supporting her husband.

Figures 141–142 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 141: [Left] George Elgar Hicks, *The Sinews of Old England*, watercolour with gum arabic on paper, 1857, The Yale Centre For British Art, Yale.

Figure 142: [Right] George Elgar Hicks, *Woman's Mission: Companion of Manhood*, oil on canvas, 1863, The Tate Collection, London.

⁵² Lynda Nead, 'The Magdalen in Modern Times: The Mythology of the Fallen Woman in Pre-Raphaelite Painting', *Oxford Art Journal*, 7 (1984), 26-37 (p. 28).

Figures 43 & 55 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 43: [Left] Sir John Everett Millais, *Two Sketches for the Order of Release*, pencil on paper, c.1852, Private Collection.

Figure 55: [Right] A. May, 'Fig. 8—The same caressing his master', in *The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, 1872, p. 55, Author's Collection.

With these ties to feminine virtue and the purity of the countryside intrinsically and artistically linked to the Collie dog it may seem peculiar that the Collie is positioned in the Dogs Home with all the other fallen canines and this feeling was mutual among contemporary commentators. News reports at the time tell us that many people who saw a Collie in the Dogs Home would not assume it was through a fault of its own (unlike with other dogs). A report in *Fun*, for example, presented from the perspective of the Collie itself, noted that 'A Sheep dog stated that he had come up from the country with his master, but that the latter had got drunk, and so he lost him', placing the blame firmly on the owner and not his dog.⁵³

Figure 143 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 143: 'Home for Destitute Dogs' in *Graphic*, 1871, Private Collection.

The Collie's position as separate from the rest of the dogs at the home was especially notable in an image from the *Graphic* from 1871 in which we see a line-up of destitute dogs waiting to be watered. Although this image depicts the usual line up of lost, homeless, and without hope a Collie dog can also be seen in the bottom left of the illustration. Separated from the rest of the dogs through a water dish, the Collie's posture is calm and reminiscent of the artistic representation of the Collie guarding the flock. As if to further illustrate the Collie's links to the countryside and position as out-of-place half

⁵³ 'Canine Casuals', *Fun*, 2 March 1867, p. 258.

of its body is obscured by straw—providing a pictorial association to the Collie’s true ideological home.

The Collie dog’s exemption from the classifications of ‘fallen’ meant that this inmate was presented as an emblem of the city/country divide, able to function as a reminder of the traits that one should avoid if they do not wish to find themselves falling through lack of virtue. The Collie’s presence in the home could also be read in relation to the hierarchy of breeding among canine enthusiasts: assuring viewers that neither a well-bred Collie dog nor a well-bred middle-class woman would ever truly experience the fall that lesser dog breeds might. In this it is useful to note that just above the Collie and similarly positioned is a pug whom, with its decorated collar, clearly belongs to a middle-class woman.

Ultimately removed both ideologically and spatially from the other dogs, the Collie’s place in such imagery allows it to act as a reminder for readers of the feminine ideal that they should strive towards, underpinning the Home’s association with not just desolate individuals (as per Howell’s reading and the title of Fig. 139, ‘Home for Destitute Dogs’) but also to fallen women and their canine counterparts. A middle-class family can also be seen through the bars of the cage, attempting to select a new canine companion. While presented as a nuclear family both mother and child show signs of vanity (through the luxurious and overstated feathers in their hats) which may have served to further illustrate this point to receptive viewers of the work.

Considering the spaniels, Italian greyhounds and other dainty lapdogs so frequently associated with feminine identity in imagery of dog-sellers and stealers it is perhaps surprising to some that the Collie would take on this role in imagery of the Battersea Dogs Home’s canine iconography. Still, the pictorial employment of the Collie implies such a reading and conforms to conventional methods of identifying the idealized

domestic woman and the corruptions of the city, if not fully complying with common canine motifs. But by some accounts the actions of the Dogs Home did not ‘comply’ in general with the conventions of Victorian society. Standing out as an animal charity rather than a human charity at the time, contemporary commentators were eager to criticise the Home for its misplaced philanthropy. Meanwhile modern scholars, such as Kean, have championed the home as a site of female empowerment and liberation against conventional notions of femininity. Indeed, to present the idea that a fallen woman could be reformed in life (and not death) also stood against the norm in the conventional narrative portrayed through mainstream artistic renditions. However it is important to cast a critical eye on the proposed progressiveness of Battersea Dogs Home before considering it, as Howell does dog-stealing, in terms of feminism or a feminist reclamation. Examining representations in the periodical press of the female dog owner in comparison to the role of Battersea Dogs Home as a strictly domestic institution and addressing how the home presented itself through imagery has the potential to offer an alternative reading to the outlying nature of Battersea Dogs Home. This in turn problematizes the notion of Battersea Dogs Home as a space for female independence or liberation.

Women, Dogs, and the Domestic Dog’s Home

The figurative dog of literature and imagery may have been a paragon of domesticity, and one which corresponded to the woman in the home, but the realities of pet-keeping were not so receptive to female influence. As dog ownership and showmanship was traditionally a male practice a woman owning and displaying her dog to a wider public was seen as an act of rebellion, even radicalism in some instances.⁵⁴ A woman owning a lapdog for companionship, for example, might be expected, but a

⁵⁴ Amato, *Beastly Possessions*, pp. 56-104.

woman owning a larger breed, or taking her dog outside of domestic spaces or in to the show ring signalled her as an outlier in the public's eyes.

When revisiting figures from Chapter Three, the criticism of female dog owners become immediately apparent. With very few exceptions, it is female pet owners who are depicted as being too affectionate towards their dogs, of spoiling them, and of allowing their nurturing nature to be misdirected on to dogs. *Work* is one instance among many where canine philanthropy by women is critiqued. *Punch* were also particularly damning, in one instance making their criticism of the archetypal dog-loving spinster the centre of their feature for 'The Victorian Era, 1887'. Titled 'Fond but foolish' the illustration at the centre of this compilation presents an unflattering rendition of female-driven canine affection.

Figures 144–145 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 144: [Left] 'The Victorian Era, 1887', in *Punch*, 1881, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Figure 145: [Right] Detail from 'The Victorian Era, 1887', in *Punch*, 1881, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Female pet owners were implied to be ill-suited for the role and to cause extreme damage to their animals, both physically and psychologically. The 'Malade Imaginaire' shown in its namesake image was part of a running series by *Punch* with two women in dialogue where their failings as dog owners typically being the punchline of the joke. Women's preference towards 'sweet ordering', as Ruskin put it, was considered to inhibit their ability to be proficient breeders in the show ring too and the outcome of this was the topic of one *Punch* image in which a woman, considering dogs to be a 'fashion', has taken breeding to an absurd extreme, warping her pets into monstrous creations as her own aesthetic preferences become wildly out of control. A man in the distance observes the spectacle. Perhaps he is a breeder himself and is horrified by the display, perhaps he is

simply a shocked observer. Either way he attracts no attention from the woman, whose affections lie solely on her dogs.



Figure 146: 'Dog Fashions for 1889', in *Punch*, 26 January 1889, Author's Collection.

This notion of the dog acting as a misplaced focal point for a woman's affection or charity was a continued criticism of female dog owners. If a woman were presented visually alongside dogs as encouraging patterns of good Christian behaviour then representations were generally favourable but if women were to take up dogs as their own and make efforts to display their canine affections then it was implied that they had sacrificed another aspect of their virtue or destabilized the conventional familiar dynamic in so doing. Monica Flegel (who has studied the animal in the family in relation to the queering or disruption of orthodox family dynamics and its public perceptions) has identified the spinster as a renegade figure, provoking a great deal of public anxiety and scorn. Such anxieties were also rooted in the fear of domestic destabilisation:

Challenging the idea that women must find fulfilment only in love and nurture, [spinster] represent a significant threat, an alternative to domestic ideology that revels in animal/human proximity in ways that cannot be entirely subsumed within the idea of family.⁵⁵

The danger of these women comes from their willingness to take the domestic dog, exemplar of domestic virtue, familial duties, and their associate values, and corrupt it through neglecting these conventional values herself. We see the visual criticism of such actions not only in iconic representations of the old spinster ('Dear Old Fido' and 'No Doubt' acting as two examples), but also in Briton Rivière's *Envy, Hatred, Malice*.

In this painting the young woman is seen as having so many dogs that her desire to care for others has been replaced with an unreasonable appetite for affection. As if surrounded by male suitors, the young woman is not represented as a virtuous icon in the home but instead holds an expression which could be read as dream-like but also as licentious. Her blue ribbon (much like the one of the spaniels who succumbed to theft) represents the young woman's vanity whereas the result of her actions (which take place in the domestic sphere) are given to us in the title: Envy, hatred, malice. The manner in which women treated their dogs was thus something that they would have carefully considered, as we should consider canine representations today. Framed in this notion of potential female deviance examples of virtuous canines and canine downfalls alike were often, at best, male-given moral parables on how the family should act, with particular attention given to its female members.

Figure 35 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 35: Briton Rivière, *Envy, Hatred, Malice*, oil on canvas, 1881 (Private Collection).

⁵⁵ Monica Flegel, *Pets and Domesticity*, p. 13.

This is not to say that females did not have a confident and defiant place in the world of canine ownership, but examples of subversive female pet ownership were not commonly represented. The actions of the Ladies' Kennel Association (founded later in the century in 1894) provides one such example, which Sarah Amato has brought to light. Aligned as a 'implicitly feminist organization and understood as such by those within and outside the animal fancies' the LKA actively challenged male canine institutions, such as the Kennel Club, as part of a larger move towards women's rights.⁵⁶ However, as part of their efforts to be seen as equals to male breeders, the images presented by the LKA were almost identical in purpose and breed-representation to that of other dog fancy publications.

The artist Maud Earl also provides a strong example of a woman working against conventions to carve a place for herself as a very successful artist, working almost exclusively for female patrons, in the dog fancy. The fact that Earl was able to host her own solo exhibitions,⁵⁷ receive features in magazines,⁵⁸ and continue to flourish as an artist well after her move to America in the twentieth century signals not only her success as an artist but also the degree to which women were willing to participate in the fancy and support other women doing so.⁵⁹ Given the growth of women owning pets and, in some instances, their ownership in the face of continued criticism then one might imagine that the Dogs Home, founded by women and already controversial as an animal charity, would have fallen into position as another place for women's rights to be emphasized and conventional roles challenged. However, this was not the case.

⁵⁶ Amato, *Beastly Possessions*, pp. 92-93.

⁵⁷ 'The October "Pearson's Magazine"', *Worcester Chronicle*, 7 October 1899, p. 6.

⁵⁸ 'Famous Dogs of the Day: Miss Earl's Pictures', *Shields Daily Gazette*, 30 September 1899, p. 3.

⁵⁹ It also highlights issues recently addressed in the discipline of art history concerning the exclusion or near-erasure of women artist's success in regards to the canon of art history. In short if you were a Victorian animal painter the likelihood of you being acknowledged in the current canon is slim. If you were a female animal painter even more so.

This we can tell from the advertising tactics of the Dogs Home and the way that it chose to be represented in image. In one popular image, for example, undertaken by John Charles Dollman, we see the Home's grounds keeper and carer, Pavitt among the dogs of the home. However Pavitt himself is not the focal point of the painting. Instead all attention is being given to his daughter, who has taken up a spaniel and who has gained at attention of most of the dogs present. Representing innocence, femininity, and the virtues of the home, Pavitt's daughter in this painting subsequently implies the proper place for both dog and woman as being in the domestic sphere as a delicate force. Records from Battersea Dogs and Cats Home show that this painting was reproduced as a print and was therefore likely to have been distributed as an exemplary representation of the Home.

Figure 147 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 147: John Charles Dollman, *The Dog Refuge*, oil on canvas, 1871, Brighton and Hove Museum and Art Galleries, Brighton.

Figure 148 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 148: 'A Print from Dollman's *The Dog Refuge*' in Gary Jenkins, *A Home of Their Own: The Heart-Warming 150-Year History of Battersea Dogs and Cats Home* (London: Bantam Press, 2010), p.31, Author's Collection.

Figure 149 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 149: 'Lost and Found, 1900', in Gary Jenkins, *A Home of Their Own: The Heart-Warming 150-Year History of Battersea Dogs and Cats Home* (London: Bantam Press, 2010), p. 96, Author's Collection.

While this rendition of the Home and its domestic ethos was painted in 1871 (and likely printed at a similar time), another representation from 1900 highlights the extent to

which domestic and familiar values were kept at the core of the Dogs Home's ethos. In Figure 149 we see a dog meeting its new owner, notably another little girl. In the top right hand corner of the image we are shown the fate it had previously suffered (distressed on the street) but in the girl's arms it has now found a home and will be restored to a life of domestic, and notably female-driven, bliss. Both keeper and her elder male sibling are given a neutral expression to further emphasise the girl's smile and the active role she is expected to take in the nurturance of this new family member.

Of course the Dogs Home would have had various reasons for wanting to present itself in such a light, and some would not have been tied to gender. The Dogs Home was, after all, a business and needed to be able to appeal to the public in order to survive and to guarantee a continual flow of its canine residents in and out of their temporary home. Depicting a dog merrily finding comfort in the arms of a young girl harnessed the cultural capital of such imagery, popularised by Barber (as we have seen in Chapter Two) in order to help sell the Home to an audience that never tired for such images. However, these images were also in keeping with the associations that the Dogs Home had towards fallen women and the chance of redemption (or, more aptly, avoidance) through an investment in domestic values. Complementing the Home's desire to provide women with reassurances against domestic displacement, these advertisements endorsed the notion that salvation and success for women was to be found and cultivated in the domestic sphere and through nurturing the family as was conventional of the wifely archetype.

Battersea Dogs Home did not challenge conventional middle-class familial relations and the woman's place in the home. The rhetoric of the Dogs Home was, after all, one of domesticity, and so the Dogs Home itself was a strong advocate for the woman's place the domestic sphere. Owned by a woman and run by a largely female board the Home used advertisements that provide us with an example of women in the world of dog keeping actively encouraging conventional Victorian values through

imagery, rather than having such values dictated to them or acting to work against them. Battersea Dogs Home was therefore never truly an outlying or defiant entity in terms of Victorian gender politics, instead it reinforced conventional roles within receptive female viewers.

Significantly, this is in keeping with many other examples of missionary and philanthropic endeavours by women in the non-domestic sphere, which might now be considered as contentious at first glance but which, for the modern Victorian lady, was measurably commonplace. In her own reading of the vegetarian, homeopathy, hydropathy, hygeism, and medical botany movements, Kathryn Gleadle recounts similar situations in which women were active advocates for many ideological causes, and would often take an active role in encouraging them, through both indoor and outdoor activities.⁶⁰ Yet, equally, women who indulged in female activism were often compliant with conventional gender roles. Some, as Alison Twells notes, even opposed what are now recognised as important feminist movements.⁶¹ This was due to the very nature of domesticity and a woman's duty which most middle-class women believed, as Gleadle emphasises, included philanthropic endeavours:

it would be misleading to imply that a women's ideological commitment lay solely in the specific performance of domestic child-rearing duties. Women's activities were extremely diverse, drawing upon their multi-faceted contribution to social, cultural, and economic life, and upon female traditions of public engagement.⁶²

Where Gleadle admits the limitations of her analysis, in studying movements largely led and dictated by men, the Battersea Dogs Home offers an example of women's

⁶⁰ Kathryn Gleadle, "The Age of Physiological Reformers": Rethinking Gender And Domesticity in the Age of Reform', in *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain 1780–1850*, ed. by Arthur Burns and Joanna Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 114–135, (p. 114).

⁶¹ Alison Twells, 'Missionary Domesticity, Global Reform and "Woman's Sphere" in Early Nineteenth-Century England', *Gender & History*, 18, 2 (2006), 266–284, (p. 267).

⁶² Kathryn Gleadle, "The Age of Physiological Reformers", p. 214.

activism in which their actions continued to reinforce (and even rely upon) domesticity, further strengthening Gleadle's assertions. Given the care-taking, nursing, and generally domestically aligned nature of many women's activism the actions of the Dogs Home can be seen, as Gleadle proposes, to have been in keeping with the natural intersection of domesticity and politics; allowing for 'a viable strategy whereby women were able to express their ideological views' in a fulfilling manner.⁶³ Integrating this understanding of female activism and philanthropic efforts, it is apt that the Battersea Dogs Home was never truly radical with its gender ideologies (if not criticised in other areas) because, as Twells states, 'Women's philanthropic activity was neither a marginal activity...or a more liberating alternative to marriage and domesticity,' but, instead, were 'integral to the identities and domestic practices of missionary women'.⁶⁴ That the dog intermingled with such identity politics is yet one more example of how canines helped reinforce the female domestic and present another method through which it could effectively become manifest.

Intrinsically linked to masculine and feminine representations, transcending the public and private spheres, and representative of every member of the middle-class family, such navigations of the dog create a rich and multivalent picture of Victorian gender dynamics and their role in middle-class society. The gender identifications explored in canine representations often presented an ideological clash depending on their reading, forcing the middle-classes to consider the roles of each gender and the dangers of crossing the self-imposed barriers that existed throughout the period. In some instances the dog was thus employed as an exemplar for the proper gendered conduct and in others a critique of gendered transgressions. In all cases the presence of the dog in the Victorian

⁶³ Kathryn Gleadle, "The Age of Physiological Reformers", p. 209.

⁶⁴ Alison Twells, 'Missionary Domesticity', p. 279.

home (and outside of it) acted as a clear catalyst for such discussion, prompting an image exchange by sheer virtue of its own visual and cultural existence.

Chapter Five. ‘Appealing Dogs’ in Late Nineteenth Century Charity and Photography

Introduction

The nature of gender in Victorian middle-class society made its mediation through the dog a near inevitability. However, throughout Chapter Three and Four there has been another element of Victorian society which is worth addressing in more depth: that of philanthropy as a quintessentially middle-class trait. The philanthropic desire to help those in need is what made the St. Bernard and Newfoundland stand out as notable breeds. Meanwhile in the rabies debate philanthropy became a tool with which to undermine the actions of some individuals. In bringing up the treatment of certain dogs, commentators were attacking dog-lovers’ sense of philanthropy and, thus, their status as a truly moral individual.

Similar efforts were made against the Dogs Home (which directed the dual ire of being both a canine-centric charitable institute and a woman-dominated establishment). In one article from *Fun*, where the dogs were given the ability to speak for themselves, one canine inmate at Battersea even noted that ‘He had heard that some people had talked about “taking care of dogs and neglecting Christians”,’ in a critical manner. However, rather than just acting as an example of more philanthropic criticisms, this dog follows up its remark with the following observation:

He thought people who talked in that way did not, as a rule, give much to dog or man; while those who felt for the four-footed poor were not likely to forget their afflicted fellow-men.¹

In this we see that Battersea Dogs and Cats Home was not just criticised as misdirected philanthropy but also signalled a desire in middle-class dog lovers' to defend their stance. Caring for a dog provided many opportunities to foster the compassion and nurturance that was so valued in the home and it was commonplace to associate treating animals well with kindness to fellow humans (as seen in works such as Hogarth and, later, Brown's *Stages of Cruelty*). Defenders of the dog-loving community consequently had a strong case for the link between a well-kept dog and a charitable individual, as observed by the dog in *Fun*.

Philanthropy, stemming from Christian motives, was a powerful force in Victorian culture and the ladies handing out fliers in Ford Madox Brown's *Work* were representative of a much larger movement towards increased social reform. Whether or not these actions were considered a success (even in the period) it has generally been accepted that art and philanthropy were intrinsically linked in Victorian Britain; with the moralistic narratives of many paintings acting as iconic imagery for reformers. Art in itself was believed to provide charitable benefits. As Orr observes:

Influential Victorian critics such as Ruskin and Morris believed that the practices as well as the products of the artist / craftsman were part of the cure for the ugliness and dehumanisation wrought by industrialisation.²

This belief, which existed within mainstream Victorian society, influenced both the purpose of artworks and the manner in which they addressed the subject of philanthropic giving or actions. 'Imbued with the social ideals of Ruskin and Morris', Deborah Weiner

¹ 'Canine Casuals', *Fun*, 2 March 1867, p. 258.

² Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Women in the Victorian Art World* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 5.

notes that many artistic practitioners ‘tried to define a role for art in the social experiments of the day’³ with philanthropy being the umbrella under which most social efforts resided. This drive towards moral and social reformation is at the heart of the canine representations in *A Distinguished Member of the Humane Society* (itself a charitable institution), *Derby Day*, and *Work*. Certainly most (if not all) images from Battersea Dogs Home provided a strong intersection for the relationship between dogs, philanthropy, and middle-class values too. However, some of the strongest intersections of these themes arguably come not from the Home but from images concerning the blind beggar’s dog and, later in the period, the donation dog.

The blind individual was, for some Victorians, the perfect allegory for the need of guidance in one’s life. However, blind beggars were still members of the lower classes, and beggars in general were criticised as idle or feckless. But when accompanied by a dog in Victorian imagery an interesting phenomena can be observed. In representations of the blind beggar and his canine companion, the dog is almost always given emphasis as collecting money on behalf of its owner in a manner that is intended to evoke sympathy or admiration. Whereas most mongrel or street dogs were met with ire, the blind beggar’s dog was generally seen in a favourable light. Why is this? In contrast to conventional notions regarding representations of the mongrel this elevation of the begging, breedless street dog stands out as an anomaly among typical Victorian attitudes. That is, until you consider the metonymical nature of such dogs.

Guiding their afflicted owner, providing companionship and caring for them, collecting money on their behalf; the blind beggar’s dog can be seen to act not as a figure of begging but, instead, as a proxy for the duties of the middle-class philanthropist. The charitable endeavours of such dogs in imagery, consequently align such dogs with

³ Deborah E.B. Weiner, *Architecture and Social Reform in Late-Victorian London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 214

middle-class canine representations, regardless of the reality of their lower-class existence. Blind beggar's dogs were subsequently given such a favourable position because they operated in pre-existing notions of the benefit of philanthropy in society and the arts. However, with the blind man unable to see, such imagery, in this instance, was never intended for its lower-class subject, nor was the beggar himself afforded much in the way of agency. Instead representations of blind beggar dog acted as a direct appeal to middle-class viewers to consider their own charitable spirit when confronted with such figures in society. In short dogs made beggars more palatable, while simultaneously allowing the middle-classes to reassert their own social rhetoric.

This circumventing of the blind man in such representations reached an apotheosis in the late-Victorian period, as charity dogs began to collect money for various charitable causes without the obvious assistance of a human collector. Creating a focal point for all of the positive traits observed in the dog, such charity dogs became visual exemplars of the philanthropic rhetoric of the Victorian middle-classes. Of further interest is the way in which these animals were perceived and received by the Victorian public. Positioned before the public eye as an appealing visual phenomenon, such collection dogs were seen as charming and endearing aspects of the generous (and slightly quirky) British spirit. Unlike the sagacious pets of the earlier period, the much-loved lapdogs, or even the philanthropic beggar's dog, the charitable collection dog was fully accepted as a social and cultural icon, with no strong criticisms lobbied against their existence in society.

The depiction and reception of donation dogs is consequently representational of a greater shift in canine perspectives at the turn of the century. Seen in all aspects of society and art (as fundamental, in some ways, as the spirit of philanthropy itself), dogs and their visual associations eventually became commonplace in Victorian Britain, to the point where canine representations were neither as confrontational nor necessarily worthy of heavy criticism. This is not to say that dogs were no longer charged with social potency

after the Victorian period, rather the visual and social implications of canine representations arguably reached a point where the role of the dog in imagery was readily assumed and, therefore more readily adopted. Dogs became so tied to the social and cultural landscape of Victorian Britain that they became tropes; their perceived role in any given image easily recognisable. While representations of canine philanthropy may not have informed this development on its own, it does provide us (and, indeed, did provide the Victorians) with a clear manner through which to perceive the eventual development of the dog from an uncertain aspect in the metropolis into an easily identifiable icon for a variety of social issues and attributes.

A Blind Appeal

Unlike the stray dog, the dog-seller, or even the inoffensive chickweed seller (all featured in Brown's *Work*) the blind beggar was typically received sympathetically by the middle-classes. As cities grew in Britain the iconic metropolis was increasingly becoming a visual spectacle and the navigation and enjoyment of city life was heavily dependent on sight. To be deprived of that was subsequently considered to be a great cruelty and a tragedy worthy of social and cultural recognition. Efforts to help those afflicted with blindness were noticeable during the Victorian period, with organisations such as the Institute for Training the Blind and similar institutions being founded from the mid-century onwards.⁴ The iconic image of the blind man on the streets was a call for charitable giving and an appeal towards a 'culture of compassion'.⁵ Visually the sign 'Pity the poor blind' was well recognised as a 'prompt to charity' which called out for such compassion and for eyes to be cast upon those could not see themselves.⁶

⁴ Flint, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination*, p. 70.

⁵ Flint, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination*, p. 68.

⁶ Flint, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination*, p. 68.

Visualising the visually impaired was also popular in the arts, particularly among the Pre-Raphaelites. Millais' *The Blind Girl* (1854-6) is the most famous example, but Millais also revisited the theme in *Peace Concluded* (1856). Compassion brought people closer to the divine, after all, and so the blind person in need of assistance provided the middle classes with a means through which to practice their own spiritual improvement while helping improve the life of another. It was one of the most quintessential and idealized forms of philanthropy possible.

Figure 150 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 150: Sir John Everett Millais, *The Blind Man*, pen and ink drawing, 1853, Yale Centre for British Art, Yale.

Millais even brought attention to the philanthropic associations of the blind man in a pencil sketch titled *The Blind Man* (1853). In it a young middle-class lady can be seen assisting a blind man to cross the street safely, as she holds back some horses with the raising of her umbrella. The prudence of this woman in helping those who truly need her assistance is emphasised by the begging action of the young street sweeper (one who can work but is choosing to try and beg instead). The young lady does not notice the boy as she focuses on her task. Her covered top section, bonnet, and long dress emphasise her purity. Among this idealized representation of middle-class compassion the blind man's dog seems to be almost an afterthought. Tugging on its lead, this dog holds a collection plate but does not make any sympathetic appeal on behalf of its owner. Its actions, if anything, stand in stark contrast to the anthropomorphic imagery of canines that was prevalent throughout the period. In a time where a dog could be a distinguished member of the humane society Millais' beggar dog is nothing but an animal trying to frantically move out of the way of the oncoming horses.

However, while Millais' pencil sketch was representative of the intentions behind helping the blind throughout this period it was not, by any means, in line with the iconography that developed around the blind beggar and his dog. Instead, in examining depictions of blind beggars and their dogs as they existed in the period we actually find a shifting dynamic towards the dog's solemn appeal, rather than the plight of its afflicted master. The relationship between a blind man and his dog was also increasingly emphasised as time progressed and from the mid-century onwards blind beggars were not simply associated with a placard reading 'pity the blind' but also with the figure of a dog holding a collection tin, dutifully begging by their side. Both acted as a call to compassion which was readily recognised, but the shift in dynamics regarding the central figure of the blind beggar towards the beggar's dog highlights the ways in which the middle classes mediated their philanthropic efforts and the visual signs that appealed to them most.

Visualising the Relationship Between the Beggar and Dog

In the first volume of *London Labour and the London Poor* Henry Mayhew confidently stated that 'Nobody likes a dog so much as a blind man' before conveying an anecdote concerning a blind man and his beloved dogs, Keeper and Blucher.⁷ The blind man's narrative begins by making clear that his dogs are mongrels, before moving on to his account. The blind man in Mayhew's story tells of the value of having a dog present:

With my dog I can go to any part of London as independent as any on who has got his sight ... [Keeper] is with me night and day, goes to church with me and all.⁸

This church reference may seem like a passing comment but, arguably, it is at the crux of most representations of the blind beggar and his dog. In fact, the blind man makes

⁷ Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. I* (London: Griffin, Bohn, and Company, 1861), p. 404.

⁸ Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, p. 404.

multiple references to the religious diligence of his dogs throughout his account, considering them to ‘cry just like a Christian’⁹ as part of his description and seeing their eventual euthanasia at the hands of another as a necessity because, to him, killing them himself would have been ‘as bad to me as killing a Christian’.¹⁰ Before this point in the tale, the blind man tells Mayhew that his first dog, Blucher, went as blind as himself and eventually got grievously injured in an accident in the road. Despite sustaining fatal wounds the blind man tells us that Blucher still guided both of them home before sustaining paralysis; the dog’s duty to care for others creating a form of saintly self-sacrifice.

Through Mayhew’s encounter with the blind man we learn not only the practical significance of a dog to a blind man but also its figurative significance. The blind man and the two seem near inseparable. Because of this close relationship, as conveyed by Mayhew, it may be tempting to draw a complete parallel between dog and owner—with the two existing in a state of visualized hybridity or as synonymous in every way—and, indeed, some representations did so at the time. One image from the *Parish Magazine* in 1870 potentially demonstrates the near-hybridity that the blind man and his dog could possibly possess, demonstrating the existence of this link. In an article which quoted snippets from Mayhew’s texts (highlighting, in particular the bond between man and ‘Christian’ dog) the image worked to assert the similarities between a blind beggar and his dog. Taking a physiognomic approach, the blind beggar and his dog are both shown in profile—bringing their similarities to bear—as the two both hold their head up high and even share an expression as they walk together. A closer inspection shows that the man’s hair has been etched to have connections with the way that the dog’s ear falls against its own face too and they share a similar positioning of the lips. Even the position

⁹ Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, p.405.

¹⁰ Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, p. 404.

of the blind man's feet and the dog's hindquarters are perfectly in line with each other, signalling the dog's role as a living prosthesis for his owner and the hybridity between the two.¹¹

Figure 151 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 151: 'The Blind Man and His Dog', in *Parish Magazine*, 1870, p.16, Private Collection.

Figure 152 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 152: Details from 'The Blind Man and His Dog', in *Parish Magazine*, 1870, p.16, Private Collection.

Still, as Mayhew's account shows, the blind beggar and his canine companion were never truly synchronised in a perfect manner. Although the blind man in Mayhew's account noticeably lacked a cockney accent, he still used a sentence structure meant to imply a lower class individual. His actions still guided him to the tobacco shop and his physiognomic features in imagery such as the above were still deliberately lowly and dishevelled. In her account of the narrative function of blind individuals Flint argues those that were blind were seen as having a strong inward relationship to God. Interpreting Millais' *The Blind Girl* as depictive of a divine Madonna—without outwards sight but inward virtue—Flint brings attention to movements in the mid-Victorian period which considered blindness to be a blessing which facilitated divine guidance.¹² While this is certainly the case in many representations of the middle-class Madonnas or the unfortunately afflicted male, the blind beggar on the street was presented much more as

¹¹ Ivan Kreilkamp, 'Anthroprosthesis: or, Prosthetic Dogs', *Victorian Review*, 32 (2009), 36-41.

¹² Flint, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination*, pp. 64-82.

a figure that sought guidance rather than one which already possessed it. This can be seen in the language used by the beggar in Mayhew's account: who considers his dog, not himself, to exemplify many Christian values.

Yet, regardless of their moral ambiguity when compared to accounts of blinded maidens, the blind beggar was not completely devoid of redemptive qualities. There was an understanding that blind beggars did wish to elevate themselves when it came to their social status, religion and personal morality. While this notion of the blind man seeking (not giving) guidance was undoubtedly constructed in many ways, the method of most interest in this thesis was through their dogs. One account from Charles Manby Smith's *Curiosities of London Life* even makes this link directly, stating that:

There's lots o' blind men goes about wi' dog tied to a string: them's beggars. When a blind man drives a dog, he've a-made up his mind to be a gentle man. A dog aint of no real use to a blind man in Lindon—not a bit in the world. A dog is a blind beggar's sign; and when the dog carries a tray in his mouth to catch the coppers then there's two beggars instead o' one".¹³

The blind beggar's dog subsequently acted not as a synonymous representation of the beggar himself but, instead, as an indicator of his desire for social improvement and as an open invitation for philanthropy. Further than this with the dog acting as a 'Christian' force in a blind man's life, there was a cultural association in the period between the moral instruction of blind beggars and the dogs they owned. In short the blind beggar's dog guided him in more ways than one, at least within cultural representations.

This may not seem surprising at first, but looking back at the representational treatment of other street dogs in the period the blind beggar's dog stands out as a very peculiar figure. Often a mongrel (as highlighted by Mayhew) and shown as such in almost all imagery, the blind beggar's dog should, by all other accounts, be painted as a

¹³ Smith, *Curiosities of London Life*, p. 86.

condemnable figure. Yet, with rare exceptions (such as Millais' sketch) the blind beggar's dog was almost always presented as a sagacious, loyal and sympathetic entity. Considering why this may be brings us back to Chapter Two, where we looked at saintly hounds. Guiding his owner, showing him unwavering loyalty, and providing a source of moral as well as physical guidance, it become apparent that the traits conveyed through the blind beggar's dog were not those typically placed on the mongrel dog archetype but, instead, the iconic saintly dog of the Victorian middle-class household. The blind beggar's dog can consequently be seen not as synonymous of its owner but of the middle-class philanthropist which should be by the blind man's side, guiding him compassionately through the bustling metropolis. Their presence acted as both a call for such assistance and a demonstration of the benefits that it could provide, a visual intervention in the image.

The middle-class allusions embedded in the blind beggar's dog were apparent not just through the traits that it was afforded but also through its placement in imagery (particularly in the latter half of the century) and the anthropomorphic expressions that it is afforded. If we look, again, at Millais' *The Blind Man* and compare it to other images of the blind beggar's dog the substitutional nature of the animal becomes apparent. While Millais drew the figure of the middle-class woman who guided the dog as sympathetic, gentle and compassionate (in comparison to the man's tugging dog) later imagery omitted this human intervention; instead drawing the blind beggar's dog directly as a gentle, delicate, and polite beggar, making a silent appeal to the public. In some cases images were even doctored to add this appealing canine figure, with one patented image from 1894 literally painting in the figure of a blind beggar's dog to make an appeal on behalf of its owner and perhaps do tricks as part of a musical performance.¹⁴ With the blind man

¹⁴ While perhaps difficult to see in reproduction, the painterly lines of this dog and the sketchy details of the fur are highly noticeable.

looking upwards neutrally, and the dog maintaining the only eye contact in the image, its role as a proxy for philanthropic efforts explicit.

Figures 153–154 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 153: [Left] *Photograph of a Man Begging*, 1894, The National Archives, COPY 1/416/542.

Figure 154: [Right] Details from *Photograph of a Man Begging*, 1894, The National Archives, COPY 1/416/542.

Charitable Advocacy and Middle-Class Reassurances

The defence given in affording charity to dogs as well as humans is something we have explored before but it is also worth noting that the link, too, was made in connection to the blind beggar's dog and human philanthropy. In this instance it is the canine commentator from *Fun's* visit to Battersea Dog's Home which is worth revisiting, as the dog that defended canine philanthropy was, himself, a blind beggar's dog. The canine is given the following claim to utter:

He knew how to read, having long carried a placard, "Pity the poor blind," and he noticed that the names of some of the supporters of the Home were to be found on the lists of many other general charities.¹⁵

Validating, through his account, the link between those who loved dogs and those who gave to human charities, the blind beggar's dog ultimately became a figure that acted as a middle-class proxy, for a middle-class audience, speaking in defence of middle-class philanthropy, both towards man and dog. It is this transcendence of its owner's influence which validates the position of the blind beggar's dog as a middle-class representative rather than the lower-class counterpart of its owner, and through which we understand the complexities of the philanthropic movements of the period.

¹⁵ 'Canine Casuals', p. 258

Figure 155 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 155: John Sargent Noble, *Pug and Terrier*, oil on canvas, 1875, New York: The American Kennel Club, New York.

By the late-nineteenth century, some images omitted the blind man altogether and, instead focused on the exchange of blind beggar's dog and middle-class lapdog in an appeal towards charitable giving. While there is evidence to suggest that multiple examples existed of this particular motif, the clearest example available to us now is John Sargent Noble's (1848–96) *Pug and Terrier* (1875). Sargent's image circumvents representations of human owners and, instead employs an anthropomorphic engagement between two dogs—one a pug of high breeding and another a terrier belonging, we can presume, to a blind beggar. As the terrier gives the pug a humble look, tilting its head down somewhat as it looks up to the pug, the viewer is prompted to have understanding for the beggar dog's situation and, by that, sympathy for its owner. Meanwhile the pug's expression shows that it is sympathetic to the terrier's plight—it looks to the terrier wide-eyed and we are expected to assume that it will show compassion to the terrier.

Although mongrel dogs were conventionally seen as representative of their lower-class owner we know that, in the circumstance of the blind beggar's dog, this was not wholly the case. As such Sargent's painting reads as an entirely middle-class piece. Its narrative is meant to be understood as that of a humble Christian philanthropist asking another middle-class individual to take up the mantle of philanthropy. This is emphasised not just in the rhetoric associated with the blind beggar's dog but also in that of the pug dog, which was often seen to embody the worst aspects of female doting at the neglect of charitable giving to humans. Such imagery subsequently served not just as a call to philanthropy but also as an insight into the different dynamics and criticisms apparent within the culture of philanthropy itself.

These representations were never intended for the blind beggar on whose behalf the appeal was supposedly being made (and who could never see them anyway). Nor were such images ever truly concerned with the moral and social instruction of the lower classes. While no accounts survive as to the reception of this work, Noble frequently exhibited at the Royal Academy, where this work would have likely been hung before going in to a private collection, inaccessible to the public eye. As such representations of philanthropy towards the blind (especially painted ones) acted solely to the benefit and preference of a middle-class audience. As the physiognomy and character of the blind beggar's dog transformed from representations such as Millais' beggar dog to the empathetic soul at the side of their unfortunate master with unwavering loyalty, this eventual archetype of the blind beggar's dog appealed clearly to one group of society: those who loved the combination of canine character, middle-class virtue, and moral instruction.

Such images can thus potentially act as a commentary on the degree to which philanthropy served the classes it wished to help and queries how much was simply concerned with personal security. Simultaneously they also bring attention to the cultural capital of philanthropy and the economic motivation behind images that encouraged charitable giving. Catering to the public's expectations of what a dog should look like, are such representations truly about helping those in need or are they simply trying to appeal to those who might see an image of a sweet dog and loosen their purse string for the image rather than the cause itself? While this thesis claims no secure answer to these questions it is worth bringing attention to the means through which this gradual omission of the beggar and his plight in preference to safe, representations of middle-class morality and compassion came to pass.

Utilizing tropes that were only just gaining momentum in the mid-nineteenth century, the shift of the iconic blind beggar to that of his dog indicates the degree to which

certain canine representations had become ubiquitous and readily accepted. The use of dogs in philanthropy can consequently be seen to signal the acceptance of the Victorian public to the canine icons that they had realistically only constructed within the span of a generation or two. Examining philanthropic dogs thus provides us with visual insights into the dog's role in society throughout the Victorian period. Looking back from the mid-century to its reception at the turn of the century we can consider public perceptions of the dog in regards to their eventual transition from a tentatively forming visual marker to a well-worn and socially diverse trope.

From Rover to Jack: Celebrity Canine Collectors

Sincere in their efforts or not the blind beggar's dog was not the only, nor necessarily the most popular, 'canine philanthropist' of the period in terms of visual representations. Instead that honour goes to the now mostly forgotten railway collection dogs which were popular in Britain from about 1860 until 1960 (enjoying the heyday at the turn of the century). Although people could privately hire collection dogs, the most common kind throughout the period were those owned by railways or hospitals and used to collect donations for particular causes. These dogs achieved this either by collecting money in their mouth and returning to a human retriever or, more commonly, through the use of a collection box on their neck or back.

Of these collector dogs the first known example is Rover of Lancashire, identified in the 1860s, who set the standard for future charitable canines. Rover belonged to the oil and colour man W. Edwards who observed that he would approach respectably-dressed gentleman (never women and never the poor) and paw at their pockets until he was given some money. Once obtained the dog would then run to a shop close by and get a bun or cake. Seeing this Edwards decided to train his dog to beg on behalf of the distressed

operatives of Lancashire and attached a sign to Rover's neck for this purpose. Thus the first known collection dog was put to work.

In an article by *The Children's Friend*, in 1863, readers were introduced to Rover with a short article and an accompanying illustration. The illustration itself was designed by Harrison Weir, frequent contributor to the *Illustrated London News* and other publications, making it clear that no expense was made in the depiction of this phenomenon.¹⁶ In this image Rover is depicted not as a pawing nuisance but, rather, as a polite and passive force for charitable appeal (his tail low between his legs). The person Rover seeks charity from is also seen to be receptive to the dog's efforts, demonstrating the philanthropy and kindly nature of respectable gentleman in the face of charitable appeal. In such an instance it is interesting to see that the trainer, W. Edwards is entirely absent. It is only Rover who is shown and his curious actions become the highlight of both the illustration and the article. We are even told that the action of appeal was something that Rover 'had been in the habit [of], of a very long time'¹⁷ and that it was simply Edward's position to utilize that action for charity. As such Rover was cited as almost innately inclined for his position of charitable appeal (though we are told in the article that he still take the occasional coin to buy food as recompense).

Figure 156 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 156: "Rover" Collecting for the Lancashire Distress': in *Children's Friend*, 1863, p. 15, Private Collection.

¹⁶ We can speculate that this was because *The Children's Friend* understood the appeal that such a representation would have to the public: as they also made a print of the image available to publish through Messrs Seeley, Jackson & Halliday. 'A Collecting Dog and the Lancashire Distress', *The Children's Friend*, 1 January 1863, p. 16.

¹⁷ 'A Collecting Dog and the Lancashire Distress', p. 15.

Figure 157 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 157: ‘Brighton Bob Begs for a Penny’, in *Kind Words*, 1868, Cover, Private Collection.

Figures 158–159 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 158: [Left] ‘Image of Help’, in *Young England*, 1884, Private Collection.

Figure 159: [Right] ‘Help, the Railway Dog’, *The Monthly Chronicle of North Country Lore and Legends* (Newcastle-on-Tyne: Walter Scot, 1889), p. 297 University of Toronto, Toronto.

The same decision to highlight the actions of a canine collector were seen, too, in a religious magazine (also aimed at children) in 1868, addressing the actions of a dog known as Brighton Bob. Brighton Bob collected coins before placing them in a Missionary box. Bob was also depicted as begging gently to a well-dressed gentleman who did not, at all, mind the intrusion. The article addressing Bob ended with a message of moralizing influence, encouraging children to equally go out and collect money for the missionary movement.

As the familiarity with collection dogs increased during the Victorian period so, too, did the focus on the canines that did the collecting. For example in one article of 1884 an illustration in *Young England* introduced the readers to Help, trained by John Climpson who was shown above the dog. However in a reproduction of the illustration from 1889 Climpson was wholly omitted from the image and the focus was entirely placed on Help.¹⁸ This shifting focus on the canine charity collector and not human influence behind the dog was concurrent with representations of the beggar dog motif, however with canine collectors the focus on the dog became even more prevalent. As Jan Bondeson observes

¹⁸ ‘Help, the Railway Dog’, in *The Monthly Chronicle of North Country Lore and Legends*, July 1889, p. 297.

‘By the mid-1880s collecting dogs had become all the rage’.¹⁹ The actions of collection dogs were also considered to be ‘clearly more successful than human mendicants, since they were a novelty that appealed very much to the animal-loving Victorians’.²⁰

The term ‘novelty’ may be considered as trivialising the contribution or significance of these dogs in the public eye, however I would argue that this would be a misinterpretation. As has been shown throughout this thesis, the use of canine representations towards a lighter, more sentimental, comical, or novel narrative was actually a driving aspect of their popularity, and often enabled artists to represent discourses which would have perhaps been too distressing without a dash of novelty aiding their efforts. The value of novel and sentimental dogs was also measurable throughout the period and, if artists could benefit from this then so, too, could charities. Help, for example, managed to raise £1,000 for the orphans of Railway men over his lifetime. Due to their success, collection dogs eventually became commonplace on trains and railways, and the increased visibility of charitable dogs led to an increased interest in the curious canine characters that collected for charities. Through these developments charitable collection dogs became more than mere icons of philanthropy; instead they transcended into the status of celebrity and visual icon. Multiple news stories would document the actions of Brighton Bob, Brake of Southsea and Ryde, the Newfoundland named Nelson, Charley the Windsor dog, Bristol’s Punch (and Punch II), Station Jim, and, of course, London Jack.

London Jack was so famous that, when he disappeared and was later found in a dog-stealer’s den, the newspapers of the time were most relieved and Jack received multiple letters of congratulations from all over the nation. London Jack was subsequently

¹⁹ Jan Bondeson, *Amazing Dogs: A Cabinet of Canine Curiosities* (Gloucestershire: Amberley, 2011), p. 109.

²⁰ Bondeson, *Amazing Dogs*, p. 109.

retired in 1900 and was succeeded by his son, London Jack II (who would later go on to be followed by Jack III). This passing on of the role of collection dog from father to son implied a sense of lineage—that the spirit of charitable giving would undoubtedly follow through the line.²¹ Visual awareness was, undoubtedly, a large contributor to the popularity of these dogs—as their reproduction in newspapers, photography, and postcards was prolific and often taken up by high-profile illustrators (such as Harrison Weir). Further than this in the manner of a celebrity people wished to see the most famous collection dogs immortalized through photography, in particular—an attempt to capture what was considered to be the authenticity of the animal rather than a purely artistic rendition. This utilisation of photography highlights the class of those that were interested in collection dogs and the extent of their visual popularity. Photography was still expensive at the turn of the century, thus the fact that there was a middle-class audience for imagery of charitable collection dogs underpins their popularity and significance within late Victorian society as providing a literal image of commodity culture meeting canine appeal.

Figures 160–161 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 160: [Left] *Photograph of Dog Known as “London Jack” with Collecting Box on Back*, 1899, The National Archives, COPY 1/443/83.

Figure 161: [Right] *Brave Defenders’ adversity, is our great opportunity*, 23 January 1900, The National Archives, COPY 1/444/449.

Although this phenomenon may seem strange to modern commentators, there were many aspects of Victorian society which would have helped popularize such dogs. The initial peculiarity of such dogs would certainly have been of public appeal. Typically presented as an active and aware charitable collector, such railways dogs appealed to anthropomorphic attitudes of canine virtue. Through the explorations in this thesis we can

²¹ Bondeson, *Amazing Dogs*, p. 111-112.

now recognise the themes and values that this would have evoked: A reminder of one's Christian duty, a confirmation of this duty through the action of donating, a reminiscence towards the virtuous traits that such dogs were thought to embody, and self-validation through the reflexive recognition of these associations and subsequent charitable action. In this the collector dog provides the clearest example of a canine trope; characteristic of many of the previously explored canine representations, the collection dog effortlessly embodies many of the core values prescribed to the visual canine without causing or being confronted with contesting concerns or debates.

Notably, unlike the previous canines represented in this thesis, the collection dog was also perceived as a stand-alone entity. This freed the collection dog (at least conceptually) from many of the class-based assumptions prescribed to most dogs, making criticism of its actions or motivations very rare. The collection dog was thus the embodiment of all popular canine traits undiluted. If Hilda Kean's assertion that the pet dog acted as a spectacle of display for its owner is correct then the collection dog was seen as its own spectacle, and a display of nothing but its individual, innate virtues. By the very virtue of its philanthropic efforts, the collection dog's efforts seemed incontestable and, therefore, it was readily accepted without the criticism lobbied against other canine icons.

Figure 162 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 162: *Photograph of "Help" the Railway Dog of England*, 10 November 1892, The National Archives, COPY 1/410/165.

It is perhaps because of this that the potent visual appeal and celebrity personalities of railway dogs were so significant that, even in death, a popular collection dog would not retire. When Help died in 1891 his body was not laid to rest in a canine

cemetery. Instead Help was stuffed and put on display to continue gaining collection on behalf of the railway's charity of choice.

This employment of taxidermy added a new facet to representations of the canine collector which continued to allow the canine a position of charitable appeal and virtuous status even after death. When London Jack died he, too, was stuffed and placed on display to gain collections. In an article in 1901 the *Sphere* observed with praise that 'From his glass case at Waterloo station, he still appeals to the passengers who pass by', noting the practice as one that gained much approval.²² In fact, the taxidermy of Help was so popular that the above photograph of his body was even filed for copyright (suggesting the image might have been distributed and displayed).

The desire to preserve iconic collection dogs as a piece of taxidermy shows not only just how popular such canines had become but also highlights the importance of its legacy through the visual proliferation of these animals. In a period when the ability of dogs to prevail in the afterlife was still being contested the notion that some dogs deserved an ongoing presence after death, while also still providing a positive real-world impact, is undoubtedly of interest.

Although it is unlikely that the Victorians spent much time considering collection dogs beyond the realm of spectacle and charitable giving, the implications of the shift from blind beggars, to the sympathetic beggar's dog, to charity collection canines who gained a celebrity following through their displays of charitable appeal is reflective of the significant shift that dogs experienced socially and culturally throughout the period, and the degree to which they were openly adopted for the proliferation of certain social causes. Once a source of clutter in the metropolis dogs had not only been welcomed in to the home, but also into the social and cultural structure of Victorian society, and the value

²² 'London Week by Week': *Sphere*, 31 August 1901, p. 5.

and values placed upon them—problematic in many cases and almost always multifarious in their treatment—were unified in the image of the collection dog. The collection dog represented all of the values of compassion, virtue, and domesticity that the Victorian middle classes clearly placed upon them throughout the period and the result was a popular icon which no one would contest and in which almost everyone would find appeal. If there were any doubt at all of the origins of the canine collector's popularity then one need only look at the titles of the periodicals in which their images most commonly resided. With very few exceptions representations of the collection dog were mostly targeted towards young, middle-class, children for the purpose of moral and religious instruction. Bringing us back to Chapter Two, this firmly roots collection dogs within the middle-class paradigm of home and hearth, domestic values, and moral instruction. All of which was valued and propagated through the representation of dogs.

The uncontested status of the collection dog as such an icon for essentially human values also reveals the extent to which Victorians overcame their anxieties regarding the role of the dog come the end of the century. Given collars that would often introduce them (as if in their own words) by name, collection dogs presented people with the anthropomorphic, quasi-human canine during every encounter. However, instead of being uncomfortable with such associations the lives and stories of railway dogs were readily accepted by late Victorians and certain collection dogs became iconic figures in their own right. This cultural and visual elevation of such dogs, it can be proposed, was representative of a growing acceptance not just of the dog's position as a socially readable sign for value-based instruction but also of the dog's life and an anthropomorphized companion animal in the home.

While very few examples of collection dog taxidermies exist to this day one dog, Station Jim, is not only accessible but is actually in situ at platform five on Slough station. In a turn of events that, perhaps, perfectly invokes both the similarities and differences

between our anthropomorphic treatment of dogs and that of the Victorians Station Jim has his own Twitter account.



Figure 163: Station Jim's Twitter Page, <<https://twitter.com/stationjim>> [Accessed 7 June 16]

Canine Photography and 'Truth to Culture'

While the preserved bodies of railways dogs were seen as a form of legacy (largely unconventional in other public canine representations) the way in which railway dogs

gained their popularity also utilized another form of visual culture that we have yet to address in depth in this thesis: photography. And, while addressing the topic of any specific medium in depth is not the intention of this thesis, focusing on canine photography provides crucial insights into the position of the dog come the turn of the century.

The Great Exhibition introduced photography to a mass audience in 1851. In the same year Frederick Scott Archer released his wet-plate process of photography to the public without patent restriction, making photography much more accessible to the masses and prompting the foundation of many portrait shops. Grace Seiberling described these incidents as milestones which ‘sowed the seeds for its eventual commercialization’²³ but states that photography did not begin to gain serious commercial momentum until the rise of the *carte-de-visite* in the 1860s.²⁴ Despite the popularity of these items photography was still a rather tentative visual form for most of the mid-Victorian period, as businesses, amateurs, and artists all worked to try and ascertain its true significance to society. While Seiberling’s publication is interested in the work of the amateur in shaping photography it was arguably the commercial element of photography which the Victorian public participated in with the most vigour.

There are many examples of British nineteenth-century photography in which the dog is present (both conventionally and in photographic reproductions of paintings), but the dates of such images are often hard to find, making chronological identification difficult. However, Ruth Silverman has tracked dogs as a canine subject back to its emergence as a medium. The sense of innovation in both middle-class pet keeping and

²³ Grace Seiberling with Carolyn Bloore, *Amateurs, Photography and the Mid-Victorian Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 2.

²⁴ Seiberling, *Amateurs, Photography and the Mid-Victorian Imagination*, p.2.

photographic consumption is something that Silverman considers to have a strong connection:

The instant popularity of photography with a rising middle class, which wanted but could not afford painted portraits, coincided with the beginning of a heyday for the dog as household pet. In the newly leisured Victorian family, the dog was for the first time well fed, pampered, groomed, and shown and, as a member of the family, became an obvious candidate for the new portrait art.²⁵

Although Silverman views dog photography in this way as being driven by a limitation of middle class finances I would argue that such trends in photography were in keeping with visual canine developments in the Victorian period. The abundance of dog-related material derived from Victorian print-culture (examined so far in this thesis) demonstrates an eagerness to consume canine culture in manners that were readily accessible. Canine photography was therefore a modern version of this, building off of a pre-established desire of visual canine consumption rather than establishing a new trend. Equally this thesis has established that changes in canine culture coincided and often interacted with other forms of Victorian development as a near-inescapable aspect of urban environments and all of its associations. Consequently while the exploration of dogs in photography cannot be said to be the exception to the rule in terms of Victorian canine representations, the manner in which it replicated other canine developments throughout the period is a pertinent example of the pervasiveness of such representations by the end of the century.

‘By the end of the century’ might seem a curious assertion, given Silverman’s claims of a long-standing canine photographic history, however examples of canine photography seem to verify this assertion. *The Dog Observed* provides various examples

²⁵ Ruth Silverman, ed., *The Dog Observed: Photographs 1844-1988* (San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 1988), p. x.

of American and French photographs from earlier in the period but British photographs from the mid-nineteenth century are sparse. Libby Hall, which holds one of the most extensive collections of vintage canine photography, notes in its own publication that, although the images in the collection range from 1855 to 1940, the library itself has ‘no more specific knowledge of where and when’ any given photograph was taken and cannot make assumptions.²⁶ The National Archives provide a slightly more comprehensive picture, as many of the photographs they hold are accompanied with patents, which are duly dated. From these we can tell that most canine-related photography patents were undertaken from 1880-1900, with only a few patented examples existing prior in the archives. Prominent celebrity canine admirers, such as Charles Dickens were able to have their images taken with their dogs prior to this but these photos were the exception to the rule rather than the norm. The most popular canine photographer of the period, Thomas Fall, did not found his own studio until 1874, and was not commissioned in this capacity by the Queen until 1897.²⁷ All of this reveals that the interest in canine photography, although present from photography’s formative years, was not prevalent until the late-Victorian period.

One of the reasons behind this was undoubtedly the methods through which photographs were taken. Early photographic processes such as the daguerreotype were ill-suited for capturing moving subjects, making pet portraiture highly problematic.²⁸ It was not until these processes improved that dogs subsequently became a more viable topic for photographic portraiture. However, the existence of American and French examples from earlier in the period suggests a degree of cultural interest too. Dogs could,

²⁶ Libby Hall, *Prince and Other Dogs II* (London: Bloomsbury, 2002), p. 8.

²⁷ Fall Thomas, *PhotoLondon*, <<http://www.photolondon.org.uk/pages/details.asp?pid=2627>> [Accessed 06/06/16]

²⁸ This difficulty was so well recognised that clear images of pets earlier in the period were actually speculated upon as being taxidermy instead by one mid-century critic. ‘Canine Portraiture’, *Once a Week*, 10 August 1867, p.170.

it seemed, be photographed in the mid-century (with some persistence) but the proliferation of canine photography in Britain is a notably late-century phenomenon. While this thesis cannot confidently assert the reason behind this (as archive limitations may have a part to play) the subject of these images provides a viable suggestion for, if not the lack of popularity for dog photography earlier in the century, the popularity of such images come the latter part of it.

Figure 164 has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 164: *Charles Dickens with His Favourite Dog, Turk, At His Side*, c.1860-65, Private Collection.

Jennifer Green-Lewis proposes that, although many Victorians saw photography as being realistic and having a truth to nature, the opposite could be said. ‘The appetite for gathering, collecting, taking, and reading cultural signs has no purer expression in the nineteenth century’, she proposes, ‘than photography’.²⁹ What Victorians chose to engage with and mediate through the use of photography was subsequently more indicative of a truth to culture than a truth to nature; an indication of what the Victorians wishes to capture and preserve ‘in the promotion of different realisms and in the service of different narratives’.³⁰ How telling it is, then, that Victorian photographs of dogs, with very few exceptions, conformed to many of the visual representations explored in this book. The dutiful nanny at the crib of a child, the domestic entity as quasi-human member of the home, the beloved family pet which should not be subjected to the muzzle, the faithful lapdog at the side of its lady owner, and the noble charity collector preserved through photography as well as taxidermy. All are present in Victorian photography and more. When looking at photographers in the Victorian period, Seiberling observes that:

²⁹ Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians: Photography and the Culture of Realism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 2.

³⁰ Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians*, p. 2.

It was clear that certain motifs—trees, for instance—recurred in a way which indicated that they had meaning for the photographers. It was equally clear that the meaning was not a symbolic or literary one in any narrow sense of the word.³¹

These canine representations can equally be viewed in this capacity. As observed with the charity collection dog, by the end of the Victorian period the domestic dog's representational status (and the position of other dogs in relation to this status) has become so well-recognised that its employment was becoming incontestable. In other words, representations of dogs became motifs, known to all and refused by few. The *Strand Magazine* asserted that:

Portraits of dogs have been made from the earliest of times; but just now dog portraiture is passing into a craze. To display in the drawing-room an elegant oil painting, crayon drawing, or photograph, in many instances life size, of the favourite canine pet of the family, is a proceeding so entirely in vogue as to be almost commonplace.³²

However, these motifs, while commonly used, were not, as Seiberling herself asserts, 'symbolic or literary in any narrow sense of the word' but were, instead, the culmination of many social and cultural mediations, public engagements, and value-based interactions, as this thesis has demonstrated. What is most notable about the *Strand* article is that dog photography is not considered in isolation but is, instead, situated as part of the overall approach to photography in the Victorian period as an extension of artistic practices. As Graham Clarke observes, the emerging popularity of photography in this time was eager to situate itself 'in relation to painting' in both its approach and output.³³

This was most apparent in one of the most significant early publications of photography,

³¹ Seiberling, *Amateurs, Photography and the Mid-Victorian Imagination*, p. ix.

³² 'The Dogs of Celebrities', *Strand*, 1894, p. 396.

³³ Graham Clarke, *The Photograph* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 41.

Henry Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-6), which was mass-produced and demonstrated photography as possessing a hybridity of both science and art.³⁴

This intermingling of science and art appealing particularly to the actions of dog-lovers—who, as this thesis has demonstrated, often attributed images of dogs with the scientific and physiognomic appraisal of their character. The new medium of photography fitted into a pre-existing visual identity for the dog, afforded through virtue of the dog's existence as a truly visual entity in Victorian Britain, presented and read through its representations. Photography almost seamlessly merged with the established approaches to dogs, art, 'realism' and nature and became integrated artistically as one of many ways to visualize the dog. It is for this reason that Thomas Fall is presented equally as an artist in the *Strand* article, with one photograph even attempting to replicate a painterly narrative rather than acting as a simple portrait.

Figures 165–167 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

[Left to Right] **Figure 165:** *Young Lady With Dog*, c.1880-90s, Libby Hall Collection, London.
Figure 166: *Dog on Chair*, c.1880-90s, Libby Hall Collection, London.
Figure 167: *Gold Medallist*, c.1889, Libby Hall Collection, London.

Figures 168–169 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 168: [Left] *Mother, Child, and Dog*, c.1880-90s, Libby Hall Collection, London.
Figure 169: [Right] *On Guard*, 8 October 1891, The National Archives, COPY 1/405/272.

Figures 170–171 have been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Figure 170: [Left] *Saying Grace*, 13 December 1894, The National Archives, COPY 1/418/895.
Figure 171: [Right] *A Respite From the Muzzle*, 30 July 1897, The National Archives, COPY 1/431/466.

³⁴ Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History* (London: Lawrence King Publishing, 2006), p. 30.

This proliferation of such motifs as part of a broader visual phenomenon, rather than simply a photographic trend, demonstrates not only the ubiquity of such representations, but also the degree to which the social and formation of such representations was intrinsically linked with the image. Take, for example, *A Respite From the Muzzle*, which appeals not just to the threat of rabies but also the perceived absurdity of muzzling family dogs, the class connotations of rabies, and the role of the dog as of children (rather than an dangerous presence). All of these issues are carefully positioned in the narrative of the photo with clear intent and knowledge of their impact, something which is true of all of the above images.

As this thesis has demonstrated mediations of the dog in Victorian Britain were firmly linked to the values and social issues of the period, and art was an intrinsic means through which the dog was reconciled. The resulting imagery, and its consequent popularity is thus a rich resource which we should not relegate to the fringes of art history but, instead, champion as a vibrant example of art interacting with all cultural forms as part of a collaborative development in the changing attitudes of Victorian society.

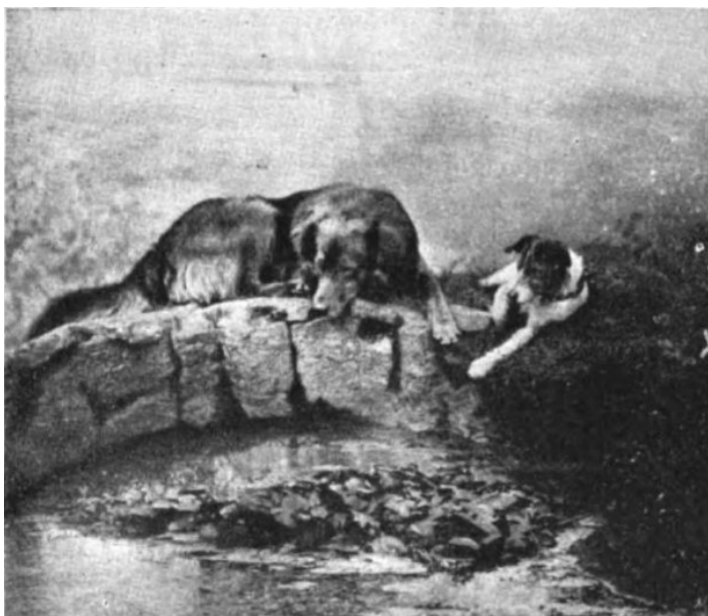


Figure 172: *'Ben and Jack, From a Photograph'*: *The Strand Magazine*, 1894, p. 401, Author's Collection.

Conclusion

This thesis sought to question the conventional canonical structures of art history through the reconsideration of animal painters (and animals in paintings) in the Victorian period. Far from a passing interest on the canvas, this thesis reveals the importance that a well-placed canine could have for a Victorian painter. The relationship between text and image, so intrinsic to many great artworks of the period, has been shown as a key aspect of the figurative canine of the Victorian canvas, and the extent to which canine representations could be read and contested by audiences, critics and the public goes beyond the purely symbolic. The monetary value of canine artworks, the popularity of animal painters, and the considered inclusion of dogs in the works of non-animal painters also exposes the extent to which painters of the dog were fully integrated into their artistic landscape, and the extent to which the conceptual canine subject was valued and employed from an informed point of view. Consequently this thesis calls for a greater degree of scrutiny when it comes to the dog of the Victorian canvas and a reintegration of animal painters and canine artworks in art historical scholarship addressing the period.

But, beyond the canvas, this thesis has argued for the existence of a larger canine culture which permeated many different aspects of society and provided an image-based lexicon through which artists, critics, and viewers could approach canine representations not just in the gallery but also in everyday life. Canine visual culture has been shown to have flourished in Victorian Britain and provided a visual language on to which people could (and would) prescribe and explore a variety of social concerns and moral debates. This thesis focused specifically on domesticity but potential exists for many different thematic approaches—as it is apparent that the dog intersected with a vast array of larger social issues. Death, love, attachment, disease, biographies, monetary value, emotional

investments, childhood, gender, and queer identity have all been explored in this thesis, with the dog providing a fresh approach to these fields of study. Equally, collecting culture, artistic identity (personal and national), the role of the patron, the significance of art and language, and the longevity of a genre's perceived stylistic and monetary value have also been addressed in this thesis. In almost all of these cases it was the exchange between fine art, broader visual culture, and related textual exchanges that allowed for an in depth considerations to be made—demonstrating through my approach just how imperative addressing *all* aspects of visual culture is in the understanding of canine representations and their greater historical significance and value.

As part of this approach a significant personal collection of chromolithographs, periodical prints, and other visual items has been collected and presented in this thesis where appropriate. From this, the comprehensive approach documented above was made possible, but this collection has also allowed for new discoveries to be made (especially in regards to Teufel), the reattribution of some paintings, and new readings in to pre-existing works. This thesis does not presume to be the only reading available for the works included, but it has enabled a culturally comprehensive address of canine representations that has not been the subject of many academic studies to date. Invigorating an interest in considering the dog through this approach is of certain interest to this thesis, as it has proven to be academically rich for exploration.

A fundamental shift in the current approach to canine representations will not occur overnight. There is much more work to be done on the subject of Victorian canine representations before the true art historical value of the dog can be fully brought to light. Because of this, there is a great deal of potential for expanding this research topic in the field of art history, and in fostering multidisciplinary studies. Of particular interest is the dog in relation to national identity and international relations. A sense of national pride and individualism has been present throughout this thesis, but has not been a topic of

rigorous examination. Returning to the dog as a figure of national identity would be valuable, especially in regards to Imperialism and the manner in which Britain wished to present herself both domestically and overseas (and who such presentations would be intended for). An opportunity to address Anglo-French and Anglo-American exchanges would be particularly promising, as it seems that these nations had the strongest mutual exchange of cultural ideas when regarding the dog. Work has already been published on French pet-keeping practices¹ and research is currently being undertaken on the dog's role in French metropolitan histories too, paving the way for further research but a transatlantic approach has yet to be attempted in depth.²

Greater context may also be added to the representative meaning of the dog by giving more focus to Britain as a whole and it would be interesting to contrast the attitudes of the lower and upper classes in the Victorian era. Such a study could prove difficult, given the limited artistic output of the lower classes, and the mostly sporting and field-oriented works that the upper classes favoured. Indeed, such limits in the source material available have played a part in the omission of other class perspectives in this thesis, in addition to its chosen scope. However Sarah Amato's research does suggest that the Victorian lower classes had an active interest in the lives of their pets and participated in pet-oriented consumer culture.³ Considering Landseer's interest in the Scottish highlands and the attention afforded to it by other artists there is also potential for a regional consideration of the dog; what values were conveyed in different regional settings and their role in the construction of region-specific identities.⁴ Presumably this research

¹ Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir*.

² Chris Pearson is currently undertaking such work, with the provisional title *Canine City: Dogs, Humans, and the Making of Modern Paris*. His blog documents his ongoing research endeavours. <https://sniffingthepast.wordpress.com/>

³ Amato, *Beastly Possessions*, pp. 13-15.

⁴ One such regional study has already been undertaken addressing Irish identity and culture via Jeanne Dubino, 'Mad Dogs and Irishmen: Dogs, Dracula, and the Colonial Irish Other', in *Animals in Irish Literature and Culture*, ed. by Kathryn Kirkpatrick, and Bobála Faragáó (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). While outside of the temporal scope of this thesis such an undertaking does indicate further research avenues for interested Victorian researchers too.

would also include a consideration of the dog outside of urban environments—which have, due to thematic preoccupations, been the spatial focus of this study.

Such research would assist in creating a more complete picture of the dog in Victorian Britain and it is also possible to expand the temporal range to address the dog before and after the Victorian period. Many studies have been undertaken into the broad role and position of animals before the Victorian period however, as with the Victorian period, an in-depth monograph study of the dog pre-Victoria's reign has yet to be undertaken. This would provide researchers with a greater understanding of the social climate that facilitated the shift in the role and representation of the dog in the Victorian period, proving beneficial to our understanding of animals and art and society. Alternatively looking beyond the Victorian period would perhaps provide further insights into the dog's move into 'pop culture' and the consequent manners in which canine tropes were employed. As such, expanding the temporal parameters of this research can be seen to have profound benefits.

As my thesis argues for the dog as a serious subject for the discipline of art history I also believe that there is potential in addressing images of the dog through various methodological approaches. Social art history, seen through a thematic approach, was the most prudent methodological approach for this thesis, but there is evidence to suggest that other methodological approaches would also yield important insights. William Secord has already shown the benefits of applying a connoisseurial approach to canine painters and the dog, and there is still a lot of work to be done in the revival of popular Victorian animal painters and a recognition of their oeuvre. Outside the discipline of art history, Amato's research into the Ladies' Kennel Club and the study in this thesis of the fallen canine/fallen woman also suggests that a feminist approach to Victorian canine representations would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the gender spheres in which the conceptual dog operated. Meanwhile work by Monica Flegel has

demonstrated that there is a great deal of potential in queering the domestic dog and its depiction within Victorian culture.⁵ Through expanding on such research art history could help to provide new readings of other works, exposing the visual complexities of this once seemingly insignificant symbolic entity.

Studies of the dog in art history are still in an early stage and sparse. Tentative steps forward have been made but the subject has yet to resonate with current art historical concerns. It is my hope that this thesis has taken a provocative step forward in demonstrating the potency of the dog and its usefulness and readability as a subject. By addressing visual representations of the dog we are not presented with a few simple codes to categorize and then (like a sleeping dog) let lie. Instead we are invited into a rich exchange involving canine concerns, social implications, widely unexplored parts of the art market and much more. It is the aspiration of this thesis to compel future art historians to be more discerning in their identification of dogs within their own explorations of the social and artistic climate of the Victorian Britain and to inspire others to make them the centre of their own research. As, to adopt Walton's sentiment, this thesis has seen enough to be sure that the further study of Victorian attitudes to dogs and dog ownership can teach us a great deal about the wider art history of nineteenth-century Britain.⁶

⁵ Flegel, *Pets and Domesticity*.

⁶ Walton, 'Mad Dogs', p. 220.

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