

The Dream Debate and the Periodical in the 1860s

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Hayley Flynn

## Abstract

Dream was a frequently discussed topic in periodicals of the 1860s, appearing in publications as diverse as medical, spiritualist, women's and general literary periodicals. The question of what dreaming was attracted both public and professional interest and drew a variety of theories from scientific, supernatural and theological perspectives. However, the debate that arose from these differing theories was not one of three clearly defined sides. Scientific, supernatural and theological theories on dreaming often overlapped, as can be seen clearly in spiritualist beliefs, which sought to scientifically explain the supposedly supernatural.

Amongst these three interconnecting sides of the debate are themes which appear throughout factual and fictional dream discussions. These themes, which include, for example, insanity, the influence of drugs on the mind and prophetic dreams, highlight the crucial role of dream in exploring the function of the mind. Periodicals provided a unique platform for this variety of themes to be explored from all three sides of the dream debate. This was not only because the frequency of publication ensured that the most recent thoughts and theories on dreaming were continuously available. The ability to pose open questions and conjectures about dream also allowed periodicals to participate in the dream debate in a way that books on the subject did not. For general literary periodicals in particular, the ability to display various strands of dream theory in various formats, including in serialised fiction, meant that the complexity of the subject of dream could be fully explored. The representation of dream in periodicals during the 1860s overall reveals the centrality of dream to contemporary theories on the function of the mind and, therefore, to the developing subject of psychology, as well as the particular importance of the periodical in providing the platform for this development, and the dream debate, to take place.

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## Introduction

During the 1860s, dream was a subject of much debate, belonging equally to the realms of science, the supernatural and religious belief. It was in periodicals that the dream debate found an ideal platform, a space which allowed the variety of interconnecting theories on dream to exist alongside one another, interact and evolve. Dream is also inextricably linked to the development of psychology and the impact of periodical literature on the early development of psychology has been previously noted by critics including Roger Smith and Rick Rylance as well as Hendrika Vande Kemp. Smith, for example, writes that periodicals ‘provided a particularly dynamic and responsive medium for debate, and in this sense were the social setting – public and not academic – in which the shaping of the very notion of psychology went on’. Rylance also highlights the importance of this public setting, arguing that ‘the high-Victorian psychology of the years 1850-80 was a more open discourse, more spaciouly framed in its address to common issues, and with an audience crossing wide disciplinary interests’.<sup>1</sup> In both cases, the general literary periodical is an essential source, although, as Hendrika Vande Kemp has shown, specialised medical periodicals also played a crucial role in the development of psychology.

Vande Kemp’s article focuses on the early (pre-Freudian) literature of American psychology and examples of dream discussions which were largely from the late 1800s. However, Vande Kemp does compare the development of dream psychology from 1860-1910 in periodicals and books published in Britain and the America, drawing conclusions which

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<sup>1</sup> Roger Smith, ‘The Physiology of the Will: Mind, Body and Psychology in the Periodical Literature, 1855-1875’, *Science Serialised: Representations of the Sciences in Nineteenth Century Periodicals* ed. Geoffrey Cantor and Sally Shuttleworth (Cambridge: London: MIT Press, 2004) p. 83; Rick Rylance, *Victorian Psychology and British Culture 1850-1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 7; Hendrika Vande Kemp, ‘The Dream in Periodical Literature’, *Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences*, 17 (1981) 88-113. p. 90-91.

are very relevant to this thesis. For example, in a brief note on publication trends, Vande Kemp points out that there was a steady increase in the number of articles on dream psychology between 1860 and 1870 in both popular and professional periodicals, and that 1870 was the ‘peak year’ for publication. In the 1870s and 1880s, however, Vande Kemp notes that articles on dream psychology consistently decreased in popular periodicals but increased in professional journals until, by 1910, ‘dreams were discussed almost exclusively in psychological and psychiatric-medical journals’.<sup>2</sup> This confirms, as this thesis will later argue, that the beginning of the 1860s marked a change and saw a surge of interest in psychology and, subsequently, dreams. It also indicates that popular periodicals (by which Vande Kemp appears to mean any non-professional periodical) played an equal part to professional examples in representing dream during the 1860s, but that this role was gradually lost as psychology developed as a subject.

Vande Kemp also concludes that ‘dream psychology in the periodical literature tended to develop independently of similar developments in books, even though many of the ideas advanced were similar’.<sup>3</sup> This somewhat oversimplifies the role of both types of publication. It should be acknowledged, for example, that many books were first published in periodicals. In many instances, as this thesis will show, periodicals were also repeating the same information on dreams which had been established many years before in popular books. The two were never, therefore, truly independent. However, this thesis will agree with Vande Kemp’s point that dream psychology developed differently in periodicals by demonstrating that the way dreams were represented in periodicals could not be replicated by books. This is, in part, due to the frequency of periodical publication, which of course allowed for a much faster transference of ideas and responses to those ideas. However, I will also argue that

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<sup>2</sup> Op. cit., Vande Kemp, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 91.

periodicals provided the ideal platform to develop discussions of dream because of their ability to display all of the ‘sides’ of the dream debate and their various connections.

In her article Vande Kemp concludes that Freudian dream theory developed from the combination of oneirocritical (dream interpretation) and scientific traditions presented in periodicals. While this thesis will agree with that statement, it will also expand upon the way dreams were represented as scientific and supernatural phenomena in periodicals to give a clearer indication of the reason the periodical format was crucial to the development of dream discussions. For example, Vande Kemp argues that ‘literature of the popular culture concentrated on premonitory dreams which literally came true, the telepathic and clairvoyant dreams which transcended time and space and dreams which gave a prominent role to death’. As will be seen in chapter three of this thesis particularly, accounts of premonitory dreams were undoubtedly a popular topic in general literary periodicals, however Vande Kemp divides the supernatural from the scientific here in a way that risks misrepresenting how closely intertwined rational, supernatural and religious beliefs about dreaming were in ‘popular’ periodicals. That closeness, as this thesis will show, is partly the reason that periodicals were the ideal platform for dream.

Similarly, Vande Kemp briefly addresses fictional representations of dream by pointing out that ‘dreams were invented and recorded in [...] fictional literature for several purposes’. These purposes included use ‘as allegorical criticisms of past events or foreshadowing of future transactions’, being used ‘to convey a truth with deeper intensity than the art of story-telling could muster’, to ‘take the reader into another world, which might be [...] intended as a sharp contrast to reality’ or to be ‘merely entertaining’.<sup>4</sup> This statement both vastly oversimplifies the role of dream in fiction and fails to acknowledge that fictional

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 88.

representations of dreaming also formed an important part of dream discussions in periodicals. Through closer examination of the factual and fictional works presented in different types of periodical, this thesis will show how the variety of subjects and styles of writing within a periodical developed not only ideas about what dreaming was, but also ways of representing the function of the mind.

In order to fully explore the variety of dream representation in periodicals in the 1860s, this thesis takes into account a range of periodicals which were aimed at a variety of audiences. Dream representation in medical periodicals, for example, will be compared to that in general literary periodicals, women's periodicals and spiritualist periodicals. In each case, at least two examples of each periodical type have been considered in order to take into consideration a range of editorial stances. This issue is considered at length in *Science Serialised*, where Geoffrey Cantor and Sally Shuttleworth highlight how significantly an editor could control the direction of a periodical.<sup>5</sup> As will be seen in chapter three, for example, the editors of *Human Nature* and the *Spiritual Magazine*, though they are both advocates of spiritualist beliefs on dreaming, differ greatly in their religious beliefs. This significantly influences the way dreams are represented in the two periodicals, even where both seek to prove the same thing, such as the truth of prophetic dream. By examining not only the differences but also the similarities that arise throughout these very different periodicals, we see a fuller picture of the complexity of the dream debate and why the nature of periodical literature, with its ability to present something in such a wide variety of ways, was particularly suited to representing all of the aspects of that debate.

There are many texts which have previously highlighted the importance of the periodical format to the representation of scientific, religious and spiritual subjects during the

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<sup>5</sup> 'Introduction', *Science Serialised: Representations of the Sciences in Nineteenth-Century Periodicals* ed. Geoffrey Cantor and Sally Shuttleworth (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004) 1-16. p. 4-5.

nineteenth century. *Science Serialised* (2004) and *Science in the Nineteenth Century Periodical* (2004), for example, as well as *Repositioning Victorian Sciences* (2006) and the *Routledge Research Companion to Nineteenth-Century British Literature and Science* (2017) all display the broad range of subjects which found a platform for debate in the periodical and explore the relevance of that particular format to the presentation of science.<sup>6</sup> Gowan Dawson points out that ‘when what are traditionally conceived as disciplinarily distinct individual texts are placed back in their original periodical context, they become integrated into a multidisciplinary range of overlapping discourses’, forming a hybrid text which ‘blurs the clear generic distinction between forms such as poetry or serial fiction and scientific essays [...] that have been made retroactively by the institutionalization of knowledge along disciplinary lines’.<sup>7</sup> This accurately depicts the context in which various beliefs about dreaming and uses of dream were portrayed. Dream, with its varied approaches and use within a range of disciplines, required these many layers of discourse to be fully examined and understood.

### The Interpretation of Dreams

Interest in the origin of dreaming of course predates the nineteenth century considerably. This fact is highlighted particularly well in *Dreams and History: The Interpretation of Dreams from Ancient Greece to Modern Psychoanalysis* (2004), in which Daniel Pick and Lyndal Roper point out that Sigmund Freud’s ground-breaking work *The*

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<sup>6</sup> Op. cit., *Science Serialised*; Geoffrey Cantor, *Science in the Nineteenth Century Periodical* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); *Repositioning Victorian Sciences: Shifting Centres in Nineteenth Century Thinking*, ed. David Clifford, Elizabeth Wadge, Alex Warwick and Martin Willis (London: Anthem Press, 2006); *Routledge Research Companion to Nineteenth-Century British Literature and Science* ed. John Holmes and Sharon Ruston (London: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>7</sup> Gowan Dawson, ‘Science in the Periodical Press’, *Routledge Research Companion to Nineteenth-Century British Literature and Science* ed. John Holmes and Sharon Ruston (London: Routledge, 2017) 235-254. p. 238.

*Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), originally published in German as *Die Traumdeutung*, ‘echoes the long tradition of dream interpretation stretching back to the Greeks; for *Traumdeutung* is a possible translation of *Oneirocritica*, Artemidorus’ famous second-century Christian era (CE) text on dreaming, which remained authoritative right up to the early modern period’.<sup>8</sup> This demonstrates the vast scope of demonstrable historic interest in dreams but also the influence of that far earlier historic interest in oneirocriticism on psychology in the nineteenth century. This can be seen nowhere as clearly as in Freud’s own comment that ‘one day I discovered to my great astonishment that the view of dreams which came nearest to the truth was not the medical but the popular one, half involved though it still was in superstition’.<sup>9</sup> The representations of dreams in periodicals, particularly in fiction in general literary periodicals, are often grounded in superstitious and supernatural influence. They are an essential part of the way dreams were viewed as a boundary between real and imagined worlds, as well as remaining an integral part of the way dreams were used to explore subjects such as the function of the mind and unconscious desire in fiction.

It is not only superstition and oneirocriticism that influence nineteenth-century thought on dreaming. Physiological enquiries about the mind can also be found much earlier than 1860. René Descartes, for example, in his 1649 ‘Passions of the Soul’ argued that the seat of the soul could be found in the pineal gland. This concept, which triggered tension that was not fully resolved by the 1860s between Christian theological beliefs and theories of cerebral localisation, was the origin of the concept of the double brain and double consciousness, as Anne Harrington and Anne Stiles have pointed out.<sup>10</sup> This theory of double

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<sup>8</sup> ‘Introduction’, *Dreams and History: The Interpretation of Dreams from Ancient Greece to Modern Psychoanalysis*, ed. Daniel Pick and Lyndal Roper (East Sussex: Brunner-Routledge, 2004) 1-21. p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Sigmund Freud, ‘The Interpretation of Dreams (Second Part) and On Dreams’, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume V (1900-1901)* 629-686. p. 634, 635.  
< [http://www.english.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Freud\\_SE\\_On\\_Dreams\\_complete.pdf](http://www.english.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Freud_SE_On_Dreams_complete.pdf)>

<sup>10</sup> Anne Harrington, *Medicine, Mind and the Double Brain: A Study in Nineteenth Century Thought* (Princeton, Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1987) p. 6.

consciousness forms an important part of the discussion on what dreams were and what they proved about the function of the mind.<sup>11</sup> While there was a notable movement away from philosophical theory and toward physiological psychology at the beginning of the 1860s, as will be discussed in chapter one, this new research had its origins in theories such as those of Descartes.

The double, along with dream and hallucination, are also, of course, recognisable Gothic motifs and early nineteenth-century examples of their use in Gothic fiction show dream already being used in fiction to portray the psychology of characters. In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818, revised in 1831), for example, Victor experiences a nightmare just after his abandonment of his creation, in which Elizabeth becomes the rotten corpse of Victor's mother before he can kiss her. As well as foreshadowing Elizabeth's death, the scene is clearly portraying Victor's emotions towards the monster he has created from dead bodies, emotions which he failed to confront during the creation of the creature and literally fled from before the nightmare.<sup>12</sup> Later, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), is filled with dreams that expose the fears and desires of the characters who dream them. The importance of dream to the novel is perhaps best seen in Cathy's comment, before she recounts her dream of being cast out from Heaven to return joyfully to the heath of Wuthering Heights, that 'I've dreamt in my life dreams that have stayed with me ever after, and changed my ideas; they've gone through and through me, like wine through water, and altered the colour of my mind'.<sup>13</sup> Dreams not only originate in the mind here, they also influence it. These dark, prophetic and deeply psychological uses of dream are clearly precursors to the psychological

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Anne Stiles, 'Introduction: cerebral localisation and the late-Victorian Gothic romance', *Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> See chapter two.

<sup>12</sup> The psychological implications of this dream are explored in greater detail in *The Gothic* ed. David Punter and Glennis Byron (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 198-202.

<sup>13</sup> Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003) p. 62.

use of dream in serialised fiction of the 1860s, which will be discussed in the following chapters. In this serialised form, the parts these novels were published alongside scientific articles addressing the function of the mind and origin of dreaming as well as, often, examples of apparently supernatural dream. This combination, as I will argue, provided a unique platform for the necessarily broad discussion of dream to develop.

In order to examine the presence of dream theory in periodical literature of the 1860s, it is necessary to consider the complexity of the term ‘psychology’ during this period. Critics such as Roger Smith and Kurt Danziger have noted the uncertainty of language regarding psychological subjects during the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup> As Smith explains, a range of terms such as ‘mental science, mental physiology, the physiology of the will [and] unconscious cerebration’ were variously used in discussions of the mind. Danziger suggests that it is towards the middle of the nineteenth century that the term psychology began to be adopted in Britain, as evidenced by Sir William Hamilton’s discussion of the term in *Lectures on Metaphysics* (1859).<sup>15</sup> In this work, Hamilton defends the use of the term in a section on ‘the use of the term Psychology vindicated’, in which he points out that the words psychology and psychological are ‘now naturalized in English [...] having of late years come into common use’. However, Hamilton also refers to psychology as ‘an exotic, a technical name’ and this indicates that psychology is not yet a settled term, a fact which is evident in the language used in periodical literature.<sup>16</sup> Hamilton’s comments on the term psychology coming into common use in recent years does, nonetheless, demonstrate progression towards defining psychology as a subject during this period.

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<sup>14</sup> Kurt Danziger, *Naming the Mind: How Psychology Found its Language* (London: Sage Publications, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Having been adopted, Danziger points out, in Germany in the mid eighteenth century.

<sup>16</sup> William Hamilton, *Lectures on Metaphysics* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1859) p. 92, 91.

There is other evidence to suggest that there is a noticeable movement in psychology around the 1860s. In his *100 Years of Psychology, 1833-1933* (1964), J.C Flugel recognised the period between 1860 and 1900 as the second phase of psychology's development, the point at which psychology and philosophy were separated, partly due to the publication of Gustav Fechner's *Elemente der Psychophysik* in 1860.<sup>17</sup> While this is undoubtedly an influencing factor in the progress of psychology during the 1860s, more recent scholars, such as Rick Rylance, have demonstrated that the progress of psychology during the mid-nineteenth century was far more complex than Flugel's distinctions suggest.<sup>18</sup> However, there is a noticeable shift in psychology around 1860 and a growth of interest that is noted by a number of contemporary authors. In 1859, for example, John Stuart Mill explained that:

The sceptre of psychology has decidedly returned to this island. The scientific study of mind, which for two generations, in many other respects distinguished for intellectual activity, had, while brilliantly cultivated elsewhere, been neglected by our countrymen, is now nowhere prosecuted with so much vigour and success as Great Britain.<sup>19</sup>

Other contemporary examples, which will be discussed in chapter one, demonstrate interest by lamenting the lack of progress and the scarcity of research into the important subject of mind before the 1860s.<sup>20</sup> This portrayal of research into the mind will also be discussed in more detail in chapter one, where the role of medical periodicals will be examined.

While there is a movement towards physiological psychology in the 1860s, the influence of Romantic theories of the mind and dream remain very visible in representations

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<sup>17</sup> J. C Flugel. *100 Years of Psychology, 1833-1933* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1964).

<sup>18</sup> Rick Rylance, *Victorian Psychology and British Culture 1850-1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). Danziger's *Naming the Mind* (1997) equally details a more subtle and complex progression.

<sup>19</sup> 'Bain's Psychology', *Essays on Philosophy and the Classics*. Vol.11 of *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* ed. John M. Robson (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

<sup>20</sup> See p. 33, 34.

of dreaming, particularly fictional ones. One striking and direct example can be found in the work of George MacDonald, who was greatly influenced by the German Romantic poet Novalis, and whose fiction often uses dream as a central motif, as will be seen in chapter four.<sup>21</sup> MacDonald includes Novalis' quotation 'our life is no dream; but it ought to become one, and perhaps will' multiple times in his novels as it encapsulates the relationship between the real and spiritual world. To MacDonald, invisible and internal worlds, depicted as dream, are just as real as the material world. This concept, and an interest in the liminal spaces between conscious and unconscious, dream and waking, real and imagined, mind and body is strongly connected to Romantic ideas of the mind and defining the self.<sup>22</sup>

Alan Richardson has summarised a number of theoretical stances held by numerous Romantic figures to create an overview of what the Romantic theory of mind was, although he acknowledges that the result is 'not a consensus but a constellation of roughly affiliated theoretical positions'. These theoretical positions include 'locating the mind in the brain', emphasising that 'the mind is an active processor, rather than a passive register, of experience', acknowledging the 'constant activity of the brain, even during sleep' and sharing a 'biological rather than mechanistic conception of physiological and mental functioning' (which Richardson points out is a departure from Hartley's theory, which will be discussed later). Along with the fact that all 'stress the complexity of the brain, often envisioning it as a collection of "organs"', these theoretical stances can all still be found in representations of the mind and dream in the 1860s, as the examples throughout this thesis will show.

Richardson also points out that 'although literary Romanticism has most often been associated with idealistic and transcendental conceptions of mind, the many points of contact

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<sup>21</sup> Franziska Kohlt has recently addressed the influence of German Romanticism on MacDonald's writing and its subsequent influence on his views of dreaming in her thesis '*More than a figment of scientific fancy': Dreams and Visions in Victorian Psychology and Fantastic Literature, 1858-1900* (2019) PhD Thesis. Brasenose College, University of Oxford.

between scientific and literary representations of the embodied psyche helps remind us of an antidualistic, materialist register within Romantic writing that has, until recently, been badly ignored'.<sup>23</sup> This factor is undoubtedly tied to the interest in liminality mentioned earlier, particularly to exploring the connection between mind and body, which also carries into considerations of the mind and dream in the 1860s.

The importance of Romantic theories of the mind have been widely acknowledged by critics who view those theories as the origin of Freudian psychoanalysis. Joel Faflak, for example, argues that 'romantic poetry, by confronting the unconscious of philosophy, *invents* psychoanalysis'.<sup>24</sup> Matt Ffytche's *The Foundation of the Unconscious: Schelling, Freud and the Birth of the Modern Psyche* (2011) also points to the Romantic era, and philosophers such as F.W.J Schelling and G.H. Schubert, to find the origins of Freudian psychoanalysis and the beginnings of theories of the unconscious mind which would develop throughout the nineteenth century. Ffytch also highlights the importance of dream to the Romantic understanding of the unconscious and points out the way those thoughts on dream influenced Freudian psychology when he writes that Freud 'quotes G. H. Schubert and notes the Romantic interest in the splitting of the personality in dreams' as well as including 'a remark by Novalis that "the dream is a defence against the ordinary regularity of life, a recreation for the fettered fantasy", which reflects the idealist attempt to imagine the liberty of the individual'.<sup>25</sup> Dirk den Hartog's book *Dickens and Romantic Psychology* (1987) had previously argued that Romantic psychology continued its influence into Victorian fiction, as has Edward Dramin's "'A New Unfolding of Life": Romanticism in the Late Novels of

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<sup>23</sup> Alan Richardson, *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) p. 6, 36.

<sup>24</sup> Joel Faflak, *Romantic Psychoanalysis: The Burden of the Mystery* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007) p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> Matt Ffytche, *The Foundation of the Unconscious: Schelling, Freud and the Birth of the Modern Psyche* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) p. 2-3, 229.

George Eliot' (1998).<sup>26</sup> While this applies similarly to short fiction and serialised fiction in periodicals during the 1860s, the following chapters will show that these fictional examples printed closely together with factual articles on the mind and origin of dreaming, as well as theological interjections of biblical dream, form a unique space for a broadly based discussion of the mind and dream.

### The Philosophy of Sleep

Scientific discussions of dreaming often refer to the same theories, although in periodical literature these theories are often not attributed to researchers who have discussed them previously. Robert MacNish's *The Philosophy of Sleep*, for example, contains observations and examples of external influences, such as temperature, on dream which are directly repeated in periodicals of the 1860s without reference to MacNish's 1830 study.<sup>27</sup> One name that does appear with notable frequency in relation to dreaming is that of Scottish physician John Abercrombie. His *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* considers a range of dreams and their possible causes and the popularity of the volume is evident in its publishing history. Originally published in 1830, the book was in its nineteenth edition by 1871. It did not itself, however, present any real original theory on the subject. Much of the scientific theories on dreaming available in the 1860s, Abercrombie's included, had their basis in David Hartley's 1749 *Observations on Man*. Hartley writes simply that:

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<sup>26</sup> Dirk Den Hartog, *Dickens and Romantic Psychology: The Self in Time in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (London: Macmillan, 1987); Edward Dramin, "'A New Unfolding of Life': Romanticism in the Late Novels of George Eliot", *Victorian Literature and Culture* (1998) 273-302.

<sup>27</sup> Robert MacNish, *The Philosophy of Sleep* (Glasgow: W.R. M'Phun, 1860). A second edition was also published in 1834.

Dreams are nothing but the imaginations, fancies, or reveries of a sleeping man; and that they are deducible from the three following causes; *viz.* First, The impressions and ideas lately received, and particularly those of the preceding day. Secondly, the state of the body, particularly of the stomach and brain. And, thirdly, Association.

Hartley's theory of 'Association', is a complex one, which encompasses subjects such as memory and morality alongside dream and is widely acknowledged as an early turning point in the development of modern psychology. With this theory Hartley essentially explains the way that a train of thought is developed, as the mind moves quickly between ideas and images which are in some way associated with one another. Hartley explains that the succession of images experienced in dream are influenced by association, but also expresses the belief that association works differently in dream. Specifically, Hartley argues that 'the brain, during sleep, is in a state so different from that in which the usual associations were formed, that they can by no means take place as they do during vigilance'.<sup>28</sup> This is why, Hartley suggests, the state of the body has more influence over the ideas arising in dream. Hartley considers this theory to highlight two important uses of dream.

The link between dream and the state of the body leads Hartley to conclude that 'a person may form a judgement of the state of his bodily health, and of his temperance, by the general pleasantness or unpleasantness of his dreams'. As well as indicating physical health, however, Hartley also argues that dreams are essential to mental health when he writes that 'the wildness of our dreams seems to be of singular use to us, by interrupting and breaking the course of our associations. For, if we were always awake, some accidental associations would be so much cemented by continuance, as that nothing could afterwards disjoin them;

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<sup>28</sup> David Hartley, *Observations on Man* (London: Thomas Tegg and Son, 1834) p. 241, 242, 244.

which would be madness'.<sup>29</sup> Both of these conclusions remain hugely influential on dream theory of the 1860s, the latter in particular being the clear basis for later writing linking dream to insanity.<sup>30</sup> Abercrombie's *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers* frequently repeats Hartley's theories without acknowledging the earlier publication. For example, Abercrombie mirrors Hartley's explanation and even, to an extent, his writing style, at the beginning of his chapter 'Dreaming':

The peculiar condition of the mind in dreaming appears to be referable to two heads.

1. The impressions which arise in the mind are believed to have a real and present existence; and this belief is not corrected, as in the waking state, by comparing the conception with things of the external world.
2. The ideas or images in the mind follow one another according to associations over which we have no control [...].

Abercrombie then begins to describe 'trains of images brought up by association with bodily sensations'.<sup>31</sup>

The popularity of Abercrombie's book was likely, in part, due to the reputation of Abercrombie himself, who had become King's physician in Scotland in 1828 after gaining popularity for his help of the poor in Edinburgh.<sup>32</sup> However, it is also likely that the style of *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers* was a factor. The section on dreaming in

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 244. The extent of Hartley's theories of the mind and their importance to the development of psychology has been addressed by Robert B. Glassman and Hugh W. Buckingham in 'David Hartley's Neural Vibrations and Psychological Associations', *Brain, Mind and Medicine: Neuroscience in the 18th Century*, ed. Harry Whitaker, C.U.M. Smith, Stanley Finger (New York: Springer, 2007) 177-190.

<sup>30</sup> See chapter two.

<sup>31</sup> John Abercrombie, *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (Waugh and Innes: Edinburgh, 1832) p. 258.

<sup>32</sup> See Nick Hervey 'Abercrombie, John (1780-1844)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter ODNB), (September 2004) <<https://doi-org.ezproxy3.lib.le.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/37>>

particular is highly anecdotal, which bestows the quality of a fictional narrative amidst the brief factual conclusions and renders much of the text more entertaining than informative. For example, after pointing out the association with bodily sensations, Abercrombie dedicates five pages to anecdotal examples.<sup>33</sup> Abercrombie also includes examples of apparently supernatural dream stories. Although Abercrombie refers to these as coincidences, maintaining that dreams are a scientifically explainable phenomenon, multiple examples are still given in detail, suggesting that they have been included purely for the purpose of entertainment. As the following chapters will show, this same method is used often in general literary periodicals, particularly *All the Year Round*. While presenting a tone of scepticism, or even mockery, authors provide anecdotal examples of supernatural dreams because they provide an interesting subject of entertainment.<sup>34</sup>

Nineteenth-century interest in the supernatural has been examined in detail by numerous academics in the past. *The Victorian Supernatural* (2004), edited by Nicola Bown, Carolyn Burdett and Pamela Thurschwell, for example, covers various aspects of supernatural belief throughout the period.<sup>35</sup> Richard Noakes' 'Spiritualism, science and the supernatural in mid-Victorian Britain' within this volume considers the relationship between science, theology and the supernatural in the mid-nineteenth century in particular. Noakes not only discusses the contrasts and crossovers between these subjects but also consistently highlights the complexity of defining the boundaries between them. As Noakes points out, it is necessary to avoid taking those boundaries for granted when considering comments from a time when they were unsettled and changeable.

As the title suggests, Noakes also considers the role of spiritualism in discussions of science, theology and the supernatural. This is a subject which has, again, been explored in

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<sup>33</sup> Op. cit., Abercrombie, p. 260-265.

<sup>34</sup> See, in particular, chapter three.

<sup>35</sup> *The Victorian Supernatural*, ed. Nicola Bown, Carolyn Burdett and Pamela Thurschwell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

detail in a variety of books and articles, including Janet Oppenheim's comprehensive *The Other World* (1985) and Logie Barrow's *Independent Spirits* (1986).<sup>36</sup> Both Barrow and Oppenheim point out the growth of spiritualist belief in the context of growing religious uncertainty towards the mid-nineteenth century. However, both also acknowledge that a more complex combination of circumstances contributed to the popularity of spiritualism. While Barrow focuses on the political climate and the subversive potential of spiritualism, Oppenheim directs her argument towards scientific uncertainty, considering the impact of evolutionary theory as well as 'concepts of mind' and the issue she terms 'the mind-body dilemma'.<sup>37</sup> This dilemma, and its continued influence on dream discussions in periodicals during the 1860s, will be addressed in chapter two. Both of the areas highlighted by Barrow and Oppenheim, however, are of great importance to the way dreams were discussed and represented. They are obviously necessary for understanding dreams from a spiritualist perspective, but the response to spiritualism also influenced the representation of supernatural dreams generally. As is explained in chapter three, spiritualism, like dream, occupied a space between scientific, supernatural and religious explanations, taking evidence from all of those areas in varying degrees.

More recently, Shane McCorristine's *Spectres of the Self* (2010) has examined spiritualism in the context of ghost-seeing more generally. McCorristine takes into account different forms of 'seeing' the supernatural, including the creations of optical technology, such as the phantasmagoria, and hallucinatory visions. Alongside spiritualism, this builds a situation in which the boundaries of the real become questionable and the very notion of evidence must be scrutinized. In this exploration of vision and illusion, McCorristine raises an interesting issue with nineteenth-century definitions of dreaming. Dreams, in the mid-

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<sup>36</sup> Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and psychical research in England, 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Logie Barrow, *Independent Spirits: Spiritualism and English Plebeians 1850-1910* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul: 1986).

<sup>37</sup> Op. cit., Oppenheim, p. 205.

nineteenth century, were not always the product of the sleeping mind and the term is used interchangeably with words such as trance, day-dream and mesmeric sleep. McCorristine correctly argues that the connection between the waking imagination and sleeping dream raised further questions about perceptual experience. Relating this to ghost-seeing, McCorristine writes that ‘by the mid-nineteenth century [...] there was an increasing awareness and propagation of the idea that the brain could go to remarkable lengths to “trick” sceptics into ghost belief’.<sup>38</sup> I would further argue that this conflation of dream with waking visions and constructs of the imagination is, in part, a consequence of the uncertain language surrounding the study of mind at this time but also, more importantly, that it is evidence of the way that ‘dream’ was used to explore and explain the function of the mind in a broader sense than the simple sleeping vision.

I would also argue that concerns that the brain could ““trick”” sceptics into ghost belief’ are part of a larger set of concerns regarding control and autonomy in relation to the mind, a concern which was, again, directly tied to discussions of dreaming. One of the most frequently discussed topics concerning the mind and control in the nineteenth century is mesmerism, a subject which arises in the previously mentioned books by McCorristine, Oppenheim and Barrow as it is often also related to spiritualism. Alison Winter’s *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain* (1998) provides an excellent overview of mesmerism and the dynamics of power between the mesmerist and their patient.<sup>39</sup> The history Winter provides also highlights the unsettled nature of scientific and medical authority in the mid-nineteenth century. This is an important point for subjects such as mesmerism, spiritualism and dream because it complicates the boundary between what is scientific and

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<sup>38</sup> Shane McCorristine, *Spectres of the Self: Thinking about Ghosts and Ghost-Seeing in England, 1750-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). p. 50-51.

<sup>39</sup> Alison Winter, *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998).

what is supernatural. For dreams, especially within the mixed format of a periodical, this means that they may be discussed seriously as a physiological effect and a form of prophecy within the same issue, or even in the same article, without contradiction.

Winter also points out the way that gender often influenced the dynamics of power in mesmeric performances, where mesmerists were most often male and their patients female. As will be discussed in chapter four, this raised specific concerns about the potential sexual impropriety of mesmeric experiments. However, there are examples which suggest that the placement of power was more complex. For example, Winter highlights the infamous case of the Okey sisters, who were part of mesmeric experiments conducted by John Elliotson. The story has been revisited in detail by Wendy Moore in her recent book *The Mesmerist*.<sup>40</sup> The case, as Winter and Moore note, demonstrates the way in which mesmerism could be used to provide power and freedom to women who were ‘mesmerised’ by releasing them from social constraints. Both mesmerism and spiritualism have been previously discussed as forms of subversion, for the working class, as we see in Logie Barrow’s work, as well as for women. Alex Owen’s *The Darkened Room* (1989) focuses on female power in the context of spiritualism particularly, though she continuously acknowledges the close connection spiritualism had with mesmerism.<sup>41</sup> The fears and freedoms that clearly emerge from these studies can be seen to influence representations of dream, particularly in relation to women. As chapter four will demonstrate, fear of male control over the female mind, as well as a contrasting portrayal of the mind as a space of power and freedom for women, appears in multiple fictional examples in both general literary and women’s magazines, where factual articles relating to dream were published alongside those fictional examples. The context

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<sup>40</sup> Wendy Moore, *The Mesmerist* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2017).

<sup>41</sup> Alex Owen, *The Darkened Room: Women, Power, and Spiritualism in Late Nineteenth Century England* (London: Virago Press, 1989).

explained by Barrow, Winter, Moore and others is essential to understanding the origin of this repeated trope.

Fears relating to the control of one's own mind in a dreaming state also enter discussions on criminal accountability. Joel Peter Eigen's *Unconscious Crime* (2003) provides a particularly comprehensive overview of this subject.<sup>42</sup> Eigen examines various altered states of consciousness and his study makes it clear that dream was used as a way to understand the way that the mind might, in one state, display images and emotions which are unrelated to those of conscious reality. Rhodri Hayward's 'Policing Dreams: History and the Moral Uses of the Unconscious' (2000) similarly provides an interesting perspective on morality and the unconscious mind.<sup>43</sup>

Hayward is not as concerned with criminal law but he emphasises how the way that beliefs on the origin of dreams determined the perceived morality of the dreams content. The theory of double consciousness, or duality of the mind, and the related theory of double brain are inseparable from these discussions of accountability. These theories appear in general periodicals of the 1860s in an offhand way which implies widespread knowledge of them and they provide one way to understand the often nonsensical nature of dreams, particularly when they appear to contrast with the dreamer's conscious thoughts and actions. The way these theories are incorporated into fiction throughout the nineteenth century has been previously explored by others, including Anne Stiles and Beth Tressler, both of whom demonstrate both

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<sup>42</sup> Joel Peter Eigen, *Unconscious Crime: Mental Absence and Criminal Responsibility in Victorian London* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> Rhodri Hayward, 'Policing Dreams: History and the Moral Uses of the Unconscious', *History Workshop Journal*, 49 (2000) 142-160.

the unsettling nature of the concept of double consciousness and the variety of ways in which it could be interpreted.<sup>44</sup>

They also, as the names suggest, raised physiological and psychological questions about the mind and brain. Anne Harrington has explored this in detail in *Medicine, Mind and the Double Brain*, where she also points out the theological origin and implications of the question.<sup>45</sup> As will be explored in chapter five particularly, the origin of dreams and whether dreaming was a physiological, psychological or supernatural phenomenon had serious theological implications. As was previously mentioned, René Descartes had already raised the theologically unsettling question of where the seat of the soul might be found in 1649. Similarly, if the origin of dreams could be narrowed to a physiological cause, the truth of biblical accounts of prophetic dream must be questioned. However, theological and scientific theories of dream were not entirely at odds with one another. Just as with science and religion in the nineteenth century in general, frequent attempts were made to demonstrate that both theories may be compatible. Frank Miller Turner had demonstrated the scope of this well in his book *Between Science and Religion* (1974), where he points out the many connections between the two sides, as well as noting the role that spiritualism played in the ‘debate’, by suggesting that scientific evidence might be found to conclusively prove the existence of a spirit world.<sup>46</sup>

One particularly notable text on the relationship between science and religion in relation to dream is William Newnham’s *Essay on Superstition* (1830).<sup>47</sup> The book, as its

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<sup>44</sup> Anne Stiles, ‘Robert Lewis Stevenson’s *Jekyll and Hyde* and the Double Brain’, *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 46.4 (2006) 879-900; Beth Tressler, ‘Waking Dreams: George Eliot and the Poetics of Double Consciousness’, *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 39.2 (2011) 483-498.

<sup>45</sup> Anne Harrington, *Medicine, Mind and the Double Brain: A Study in Nineteenth Century Thought* (Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1987).

<sup>46</sup> Frank Miller Turner, *Between Science and Religion: The Reaction to Scientific Naturalism in Late Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974).

<sup>47</sup> William Newnham, *Essay on Superstition* (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1830).

subtitle explains, is ‘an inquiry into the effects of physical influence on the mind in the production of dreams, visions, ghosts, and other supernatural appearances’, but it also consistently addresses the conflicts and parallels between science and Christian belief. *Essay on Superstition*, which was published as a book in 1830, began, as Newnham explains in his introduction, as a series of essays in the *Christian Observer* throughout the previous year. As was noted earlier in regard to Abercrombie’s *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Truth*, Newnham does not make any really new claims about the origin of dreams. His arguments on the influence of external impressions, such as sound, on dreams can also be found, for example, in Abercrombie’s book.

However, Newnham’s book differs from those previously discussed because of its focus on sympathetically combining scientific research into the mind with Christian belief, summarising, as it does so, many of the arguments which are still visible in the 1860s in regard to faith and science. In his preface to the book, Newnham explains his intention:

To remove some of those misconceptions which *seem* to place the pursuits of the Christian, in opposition to the researches of science; a *spectral imagining*, which can alone maintain its supposed existence, so long as it can be invested with the undefined character that will be communicated by the darkness of ignorance, or by the twilight of information, but which must vanish before the full-born day of knowledge: - for Christianity and true science can never be opposed; - and it may be fearlessly said, that the investigations of the latter, if conducted in a spirit of inquiry after truth, will *always serve to explain and confirm* the former; although they will also dissipate the mistakes of some of its most valuable professors.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p. 9-10.

This quote from Newnham highlights many interesting points about developing approaches to science and religion at this time, as well as to the supernatural. Newnham, who was a general medical practitioner, frames Christianity as a truth which science cannot disprove. Scientific research which contradicts Christian belief, in Newnham's argument, only '*seems*' to. These scientific arguments become 'spectral imaginings' in a clearly intentional reversal of roles that questions scientific infallibility. Newnham even covers previously accepted scientific theories by arguing that scientific investigations which are 'conducted in a spirit of inquiry after truth', a phrase which itself casts doubt on the intentions and morality of some investigations, will 'dissipate the mistakes' of its 'most valuable professors'. Scientific theory which disagrees with Christian belief is therefore portrayed as either incorrect, dishonest or destined to be disproved. This merging of theological and scientific theories is one of the ways that the 'sides' of the dream debate interacted, and continued to interact during the 1860s in various types of periodicals.

### Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Truth

The first chapter of this thesis will consider how dreams were used as a way to explore the function of the mind, both physiologically and psychologically. In order to provide the necessary context, the chapter begins by briefly highlighting contemporary comments on the progress of psychology and the importance of developing the study of the mind, using examples from *The Lancet* and *The British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*. These demonstrate the sense amongst various members of the medical and scientific community that studies on the human mind were considered of great importance, but also that up to 1860 there had been frustratingly little development in the field. This also reinforces the argument that there was a sense of change and imminent progress surrounding the study of

the mind at the beginning of the 1860s. These particular examples also begin to demonstrate the context in which dream was being discussed in medical periodicals.

However, despite their close relationship to discussions of mind elsewhere, in both books and other types of periodicals, the origin of dreaming is very rarely discussed in these medical periodicals. The subject of dreams, on the other hand, does often arise as part of medical discussions. The second section of this chapter will look at the connection between drugs and dreaming. The examples found in *The Lancet* and *The British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* demonstrate that dream was being used as a form of evidence, a way to examine the effect of a substance on the mind. This ties dream to physical medical experiments and confirms the fact that, in the 1860s, the content of dreams was being taken seriously by medical professionals.

I will then compare the way the association between drugs and dreaming is represented in a general literary periodical, specifically *All the Year Round*. The most obvious difference, as the chapter will show, is that all of the examples found in *All the Year Round* are either entirely fictional, or are presented mainly in the style of a fictional narrative. In both cases, however, there is a notable level of detail given to psychology and medical explanations of the effect of drugs on the mind. The function of the mind and the effect of drugs upon it is clearly presented as a subject of interest to the general reader. Through Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*, which was published serially in *All the Year Round* in 1867-68, this chapter also begins to show that there was fear associated with the question of how much control a person has over their own mind.

Following Collins' serialised novel, the chapter continues to examine the use of dream to explore the function of the mind in fiction. Through examples of short fiction and passages of serialised fiction in *All the Year Round*, it becomes clear that dreams were used in

two different but complimentary ways. In many examples, dreams were being used to explore the emotions and fears of characters more deeply, providing the reader with an insight into the psychology of a character which would not otherwise be possible. In other cases, such as 'The Bed at the Bustard', the author uses fiction to explore the way that the mind works during dream, from the way that dream scenes change and develop, to the possibility of self-awareness and multiple points of view during a dream. In both cases, dreams are being used to explore the mind. Throughout this chapter I will also demonstrate that representations of dream in fiction were likely informed by popular texts on dreaming, such as Abercrombie's *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Truth*.

Chapter two examines the relationship between dream and insanity, a connection which appears frequently and which is entirely based on contemporary beliefs about the function of the mind. As will be seen, however, there is also obvious movement away from the simplified categorisation of 'insanity' in the 1860s, with medical professionals beginning to take a broader and more inclusive view of mental health issues. The association between dream and insanity was not new; it features, for example, in the works by MacNish and Abercrombie mentioned earlier. However, dream is still being used to explore what insanity was and how close the states of sanity and insanity were.

Following on from the themes of the previous chapter, chapter two will show that, just as dreams were more often discussed in relation to drugs than as a subject by themselves in medical periodicals, they are also found on multiple occasions in discussions about insanity. The reason for this, as subsequent chapters will confirm, can be found in the association between dream and the supernatural, as well as with subjects such as mesmerism and spiritualism which many of the medical periodicals, and especially *The Lancet*, were strongly opposed to in the 1860s. When associated with established medical issues, however, dream is

removed from its supernatural associations and therefore is more acceptable in the context of the medical periodical.

As in the previous chapter, it will be shown how the issues discussed in medical periodicals appear in fiction in general periodicals. For example, the serialisation of Collins' *The Woman in White* in *All the Year Round* relies on both insanity and dream as essential features of the plot. When this is compared to non-fictional articles on dream and insanity, published at the same time within the same periodical, the interest in the connection between dreaming and insanity, and the way that interest can be explored in different ways within a periodical becomes clear. By looking at examples from the *Cornhill Magazine* it is also possible to see the way dream and insanity was presented by medical professionals to a non-professional audience. The popularisation of science has been examined at length by others, including Gowan Dawson and Bernard Lightman, both of whom acknowledge the importance of the periodical in portraying popular science.<sup>49</sup> The explanations published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, which include comprehensive explanations of the function of the mind as well as detailed explanations of scientific experiments, display the level of knowledge that was available to a general, middle class, non-professional audience as well as demonstrating the existing general interest.

Through the range of periodicals, authors and styles, it remains clear that there is a common fear associated with the close relationship between sanity and insanity, and the ease with which the former may become the latter. This is part of the wider fear surrounding the question of how much control over one's own mind a person has, an issue which will also be addressed in later chapters. Following this, the final section of chapter two looks at the issue

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<sup>49</sup> Gowan Dawson, 'Science and its Popularisation', *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1830-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 165-183; Bernard Lightman "'The Voices of Nature': Popularising Victorian Science', *Victorian Science in Context* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

of criminal accountability in association with dream. Again, this is directly related to the question of control, or the lack of it, over one's own mind. However, it carries the added complexity of determining the origin of dreams. If the dreaming mind can, as the first part of this chapter examines, be considered as equal to a state of insanity, then criminal actions carried out while sleep walking, under the impression of a dream image, may not have any relation to a person's conscious intentions.

As with the subject of insanity generally, the issue of criminal accountability was being discussed in medical periodicals. It is clear from *The Lancet* in particular that medical professionals saw medical knowledge as a necessary, though not often used, element in lawfully determining accountability. This conversation raises interesting questions about morality and unconscious thought within the sphere of the medical profession. However, the subject was also very obviously of popular interest. Accounts of crimes or accidents involving somnambulism were published in newspapers throughout the 1860s and, as will be shown in the chapter, examples were presented in the general periodical in a way that is clearly intended for entertainment. Again, therefore, we see dream as both a serious medical issue and a subject of general interest.

Chapter three begins to place the supernatural connections with dream in the context of the scientific explorations discussed in the previous two chapters. The chapter seeks, overall, to examine the instances where scientific and supernatural explanations for dream are combined and presented together in some way. As part of this, I look at the treatment of prophetic dreams, particularly dream interpretation guides and anecdotal dream stories, in *All the Year Round*. These demonstrate the way that the supernatural elements of dream were shared and discussed amidst an overall tone of scepticism and even mockery. In 'Dictionary Dreams', for instance, the article mocks the concept of dream interpretation guides, yet includes an alphabetical list of dream interpretations in the style of those guides. Similarly,

articles which claim to explain supernatural occurrences in a rational manner often include one or two examples which they claim are inexplicable. In this way *All the Year Round* caters to the existing interest and entertainment value of supernatural dreams, while claiming to be in favour of science, thus covering both areas of interest.

The chapter then begins to look at the spiritualist periodicals *Human Nature* and *The Spiritual Magazine*. At this point, religion is also brought into the discussion of differing dream beliefs and these two periodicals in particular provide contrasting religious opinions, despite their shared spiritualist belief. The *Spiritual Magazine* is a strong proponent of Christian Spiritualism, while *Human Nature* agrees broadly with Christian values, but rejects the institutionalised nature of organised religion. This difference creates an interestingly direct debate between the two periodicals, which is itself an excellent example of using the periodical platform to develop and promote ideas in a way that the publication process of books would not allow. It also influences the way that the two periodicals present dreams. The introduction to the two periodicals and their differing views in this chapter aims to demonstrate that spiritualism, of different kinds, was a subject which promoted the co-existence of supernatural possibility, theological truth and scientific evidence.

With this in mind, the following section of chapter three examines the ways that spiritualist periodicals published factual articles supporting the concept of supernatural dreams. These articles, particularly those in *Human Nature*, address forms of physical evidence, examining theories of physiological psychology and phrenology alongside the assumption that the spiritual world is a real and provable thing. Dreams enter these discussions as both a product of the mind and as a spiritual phenomenon. Subjects such as prophetic dream, clairvoyance and magnetic trance are considered seriously and frequently referred to as psychology. This section of the chapter also takes into account the connection between spiritualism and anthropology, a subject which has been addressed by others, such as

Efram Sera-Shriar, and which demonstrates the use of cultural history as evidence of supernatural dream.<sup>50</sup>

As in other chapters, I will then examine the way that similar ideas relating to dream were presented in fictional and non-fictional anecdotal stories within the same periodicals. In these, where entertainment is clearly the main intention of the narrative voice, the dream beliefs expressed in the accompanying non-fiction articles are still very clear. On this point, *The Spiritual Magazine* and *Human Nature* again differ considerably as, while *Human Nature* was emphasising their serialised novel *The Ideal Attained*, *The Spiritual Magazine* gave no attention to fiction and instead published many anecdotal stories. While clear parallels emerge between the anecdotal stories of *The Spiritual Magazine* and the supernatural anecdotes published in general literary periodicals, both the context of the surrounding articles and the level of detail in the anecdote distinguish those published in *The Spiritual Magazine*. While considering the differences in dream representation between different types of periodicals and different editors, noting the similarities that continue to exist despite those differences allows a pattern to emerge which displays the elements of dream that were of particular concern.

Chapter four will focus on the subject of women and dream. Using *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies' Treasury*, the chapter begins by examining the representation of scientific dream theory in women's periodicals. This demonstrates that women's periodicals functioned in much the same way as general literary periodicals in their representation of scientific dream theory. Articles contain considerable detail and dream emerges as a tool for better understanding the function of the mind. However, in both of these periodicals there is also a greater balance between these scientific

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<sup>50</sup> See, for example, Efram Sera-Shriar, 'Credible Witnessing: A.R. Wallace, Spiritualism, and a "New Branch of Anthropology"' *Modern Intellectual History*, 20 (2018) 1-28.

discussions, religion and the supernatural. Both *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and *The Ladies' Treasury* feature examples in which the author openly acknowledges the potentially contrasting opinions of scientific, religious and supernatural belief. Despite this open discussion of the varying sides of the dream debate, both women's periodicals do favour the scientific, giving far more space to these explanations.

The second section of this chapter, however, displays the particular way that dreams are associated with both control and freedom in relation to women. Building on the earlier explanations of dream being connected with fear of control, this chapter revisits the subject of mesmerism in more detail, taking into account research that places women as the main victims of mesmerism. After briefly confirming the presence of this fear in women's periodicals with the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine's* 'What My Doctor Thinks of Himself', an article which presents both mesmerism and the medical profession in a poor light, the chapter looks at fictional portrayals of this fear. The association was not confined to women's periodicals and George MacDonald's *The Portent*, which was serialised in the *Cornhill Magazine*, provides a good example of male control combined with the earlier discussed fear of physically enacting the unconscious movements of dream in somnambulism.

In the final instalment of *The Portent*, however, the power and control which is displayed throughout the novel changes considerably and this reversal of power is the focus of the final section of this chapter. While still displaying fears of enacting unconscious thought, the final part of *The Portent* literally reverses the roles of the characters to give the woman control, as well as revealing that the woman had previously been enacting her own desires. Rather than control, therefore, somnambulism provided the woman with freedom to subvert social constraints and act upon her true desire. The remainder of the chapter will demonstrate that this was not an uncommon association, using a second example of fiction

from *The Ladies' Treasury* as well as a re-telling of the story of Elizabeth O'Key in *The Lancet's* obituary for John Elliotson. It also looks at examples in both women's and general literary periodicals where dream is presented as an unrestrained space of freedom for women.

Chapter five looks specifically at the representation of religion and dream in periodicals during the 1860s, a subject which is touched upon in previous chapters but not fully examined. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Agnes of Sorrento* and George Eliot's *Romola*, both of which were serialised in the *Cornhill Magazine*, are considered in the first section of this chapter. The two novels share many similarities, their position in the *Cornhill Magazine*, which, as is shown in chapter two, published incredibly detailed explanations of the function of the mind, being only one. The two do differ considerably in their approach to Catholicism, but both use dream within their plots in a way that raises the question of whether dream is a scientifically explainable mental process, or divine prophetic message. In both cases, the former is presented as the most likely, but the possibility of the dreams being truly prophetic is never fully dismissed or disproven. This element of the dream debate is therefore played out in detail in a fictional setting. Again in both novels the female protagonist faces a moral dilemma relating to belief in Catholicism and the corruption that exists within it and both are particularly interested in the psychological progress of the characters. Dreams are integral to this representation, a fact which is particularly obvious in *Agnes of Sorrento*, where dreams allow the reader to see the thoughts that Agnes will not express. While demonstrating the tension between scientific and religious explanations for dream, therefore, both are also excellent examples of the way that dreams were used in fiction to portray a deeper psychological understanding of characters. This is, in part, related to the freedom of dream to explore desires which are not expressed in aloud.

This section is followed, for comparison, by examples in another periodical, *Bentley's Miscellany*, where religiously inspired dreams are presented as part of a non-fiction article.

While these confirm many of the previously discussed associations between prophetic dream and, for example, the distant past, it also provides an interesting example of the way editorial stances influenced the way that dreams were explored in periodicals. The examples from *Bentley's Miscellany* display a tentative approach to religious dreams, neither confirming nor denying the possibility that Christian beliefs in those examples from the past may be true. However, they do this in a way that avoids any exploration of the theological or psychological arguments about dreams, instead simply presenting a story of interest, which contain features of dream debated elsewhere, without addressing them in any detail.

The final part of this chapter compares the treatment of superstitious dreams to those of religious origin. Particularly taking into account dream interpretations guides and the way that they, in a similar way to biblical examples of prophetic dream, were often given authority based on their age. As well as addressing this association between superstitious dream beliefs and the distant past, this section also draws upon themes of the previous chapter as it considers the connection between women and dream which is clear in the history and presentation of dream interpretation guides. The way superstitious dream guides were presented in periodicals is far from positive, yet their level of representation demonstrates popular interest. Taking into account detailed research by others, such as Maureen Perkins, which demonstrates the way that dream interpretations guides both highlighted the disconnection between scientific and superstitious beliefs and simultaneously presented them alongside each other, I intend to show how general periodicals mirrored the style of these popular guides and how that style fit with the overall representation of the dream debate within those periodicals.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Maureen Perkins, 'The Meaning of Dream Books', *History Workshop Journal*, 48 (1999) 102-113.

Dream was a rich and varied subject in the 1860s. It drew attention from a range of disciplines, including medicine and theology, and seemed to be the key, for many, to understanding the function of the mind. It was connected to the distant past, through superstitious beliefs that carried into popular dream guides, to the recent past and Romantic questions about the concept of the self and our unconscious experience, and it was also connected to the future, and the exciting promise that the secrets of the mind would soon be unlocked. It is therefore unsurprising that it was in periodicals, with their variety of styles, authors, editors and subjects, that the subject of dream found the perfect platform.

While the growth of physiological psychology is visible in articles on the mind and dream, the periodical form prevented it from dominating the discussion and instead allowed the question of what dreaming was to be approached from a variety of angles, both within and outside of science. As Freud's later comment on the popular dream belief, rooted in superstition, shows, this varied approach was integral to the development of Freudian psychology.<sup>52</sup> The fiction in periodicals continued to explore the question of what dreaming was, but it was also using dreams in different ways to portray the function of the mind and the psychology of characters. It seems likely that these early attempts to faithfully portray the function of the mind and the process of unconscious thought, as experienced in dream, were the precursors to the stream-of-consciousness style of narration.<sup>53</sup> The following chapters will explore the different ways that dream was represented in various types of periodical in order to show how and why dream in periodical literature in the 1860s had such a significant influence on psychology in literature and as a developing subject.

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<sup>52</sup> See p. 6

<sup>53</sup> See, for example, 'In the Small Hours', discussed in chapter one, p. 62.

## Chapter One

### Dream and the Study of Mind

As was noted previously in the introduction to this thesis, a renewed interest in the study of the mind is visible in the early 1860s, which is evidenced by John Stuart Mill's 1859 comment that 'the sceptre of psychology has decidedly returned to this island'.<sup>54</sup> This renewed interest is demonstrated in comments made by authors within *The Lancet* and *The British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*. In a joint review of *Mind and Brain* by Thomas Laycock and *On Obscure Diseases of the Brain* by Forbes Winslow which was published in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* in 1860, the author writes that:

The conflicting and unsatisfactory results of abstract speculations on the constitution and powers of the human mind, have long been a source of regret and discouragement; every attempt, therefore, which is in any degree judicious, to place mental philosophy on a surer basis than that on which it has hitherto rested, is to be entertained with candour [...]<sup>55</sup>

In comparison to Mill's comment, this language implies that the interest in the function of the mind has not been met with any significant academic progress. In the same year, the *Lancet* published a review of Winslow's book alone. Again, the reviewer comments on the current academic progress on the subject of the mind, stating that:

Notwithstanding the sad fact that cerebral and mental diseases have of late years fearfully increased amongst all classes, no work on their diagnosis and treatment exists which, in the present advanced state of knowledge, can

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<sup>54</sup> This quotation is discussed in more detail in the introduction to this thesis.

<sup>55</sup> 'Review IX' *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, 26 (1860), 295-307. p. 295.

be properly considered as a text-book on the entire subject, for the use of students and medical practitioners. Abercrombie's admirable volume on the 'Diseases of the Brain', published in 1829, is the last and the best of the distinct treatises which have appeared.<sup>56</sup>

This indicates, again, that frustratingly little research exists on the mind.<sup>57</sup> The reviewer emphasises the fact that the mind is a subject of particular importance, due to the apparent increase of 'cerebral and mental diseases', but points out that those with an interest in the subject must rely upon research that was published over thirty years previously. While many new editions of Abercrombie's books were published throughout the 1860s, with *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers* reaching its nineteenth edition by 1871, the text and its promotion of the theory of association remains largely the same. This is the context into which dream enters the study of mind. As was discussed in the introductory chapter, Abercrombie's work was full of dream theory, mainly based on Hartley's earlier (1749) theory of association, meaning the essence of the research presented by Abercrombie is older than the reviewer in the *Lancet* implies.

Abercrombie's dream research, as was mentioned in the introduction, was also highly anecdotal, both in *Diseases of the Brain* (1828) and *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (1830).<sup>58</sup> This indicates that, even in 1828, dream anecdotes were being used as a reliable source of medical evidence. However, the dream anecdotes also change the format of the factual, scientific discussion into something with more narrative, becoming at times almost like a collection of short stories. This element of Abercrombie's work, while its content is praised in medical circles, as demonstrated by the

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<sup>56</sup> 'On Obscure Diseases of the Brain and Disorders of the Mind: Their Pathology, Diagnosis, Treatment and Prophylaxis. By Forbes Winslow, M.D., D.C.L.', *Lancet*, 1 (1860) 498-500. p. 498.

<sup>57</sup> For more on the relevance of increased 'cerebral and mental diseases', see chapter two.

<sup>58</sup> Fully titled *Pathologic and Practical Researches on Diseases of the Brain and the Spinal Cord*.

above *Lancet* review, resonates more with dream discussion in general literary periodicals, where frequent interjections of anecdotal evidence provided an ideal combination of fact and entertainment. While the medical periodicals voice regret over the lack of new study into the mind, therefore, it is often in the general periodical, with a broader family audience, that the discussions of dream in the style of Abercrombie takes place. This chapter will examine the way that dream enters the study of the mind differently in medical and general literary periodicals while often portraying the same theories.

### On Dreaming and Somnambulism

Within medical periodicals, the contemporary interest in dreaming amongst the community of medical professionals is visible through announcements and reviews of lectures. For example, in the *Lancet*'s 'Medical Diary of the Week', an advertisement for 'Royal Institution – 8p.m. Mr. A. E. Durham, "On Sleeping and Dreaming" appears on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1862 and 'Royal Institution – 8p.m. Mr W.S. Savory "On Dreaming and Somnambulism"' on February 13<sup>th</sup> 1864.<sup>59</sup> Thomas Wakley's controversial decision, as editor of the *Lancet*, to publish medical lectures in full is well known. These lectures dominated the periodical in its early years when, as John Hostettler points out, a £5 surgical lecture could be viewed in the *Lancet* for sixpence.<sup>60</sup> The decision was undoubtedly based on Wakley's dedication to medical reform. Although the price of the *Lancet* did increase to 8d in 1846, the price would stay the same until 1870, and it remained the clearly more accessible option.

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<sup>59</sup> 'Medical Diary of the Week', *Lancet*, 1 (1862) 215; 'Medical Diary of the Week', *Lancet*, 1 (1864) p. 202.

<sup>60</sup> John Hostettler, *Thomas Wakley: An Improbably Radical* (Chichester: Barry Rose Law Publishers, 1993) p. 45.

Hostettler has highlighted the fact that Wakley was particularly disturbed by the practice of medicine without proper qualification, pointing out the nepotism and jobbery Wakley witnessed, as well as the fact that certificates and examination passes could be purchased.<sup>61</sup> After Thomas Wakley's death in 1862, his son James Wakley, aided by his brother Thomas, took over as editor. Both sons were also medically qualified, having both studied at University College London, an institution that was known for its progressive views, as Alison Winter notes.<sup>62</sup> James Wakley did uphold his father's dedication to medical reform, as is evidenced by the dedication published in the *Lancet* after his death in 1886, where the author states that James 'not only maintained but extended the reputation which the *Lancet* had acquired under its founder's direction for earnestness of purpose, strict integrity, and unselfish zeal for the public good and for the welfare of the best and permanent interests of the medical profession'.<sup>63</sup> The *Lancet*, according to W.F. Bynum, maintained the largest circulation of any medical periodical until the 1870s.<sup>64</sup> As Bynum suggests, this popularity was likely, in part, also due to the fact that the *Lancet*, unlike other existing medical periodicals, was published weekly, which allowed it to 'carry news of topical interest, to foster a correspondence column, and to encourage readers to anticipate its publication each week'.<sup>65</sup> This and the following chapters will demonstrate that this was certainly the case in the *Lancet*'s treatment of dreams.

In keeping with the *Lancet*'s dedication to providing access to lectures by recreating them within its pages, a full account of Savory's 'On Dreaming and Somnambulism' is

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p. 37, 46.

<sup>62</sup> Alison Winter 'The Construction of Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in the Early Victorian Life Sciences' in *Victorian Science in Context* ed. Bernard Lightman (London, University of Chicago Press, 1997) 24-50. p. 30.

<sup>63</sup> 'James Wakley, M.D.', *Lancet*, 2 (1886) p. 463.

<sup>64</sup> *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*. Ed. Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (London: Academia Press, 2009).

<sup>65</sup> W. F. Bynum, 'Wakley, Thomas (1795–1862)' *ODNB* (September 2004) <<https://doi-org.ezproxy3.lib.le.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/28425>>

presented in March 1864, where the full title is given as ‘On Dreaming and Somnambulism in Relation to the Functions of certain Nerve-Centres’. While this is an account of a lecture, rather than an original article, the reporter provides the content of the lecture in such great detail that the information functions in the same way as an originally written article, detailing Savory’s conclusions in full for the reader. The piece begins by explaining that ‘in the first portion of the discourse a sketch was given of the general plan of construction of the nervous system, from the simplest to the more complex forms’.<sup>66</sup> The reporter then summarises Savory’s explanation of the various nerves and their associated reflex actions. This beginning instantly indicates a physiological approach, a direction which psychology had been moving towards throughout the nineteenth century and which was the more common approach to psychology by the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>67</sup> Dream, it is then explained in the report, is caused by the ganglia remaining ‘in some measure, active’ during sleep. This theory of a partially active mind is not new, it is also explained by MacNish in *The Philosophy of Sleep* (1830). William Scovell Savory, who would later become surgeon-extraordinary to Queen Victoria was, at the time of the lecture, Hunterian professor of comparative anatomy and physiology at the Royal College of Surgeons. It is unsurprising then, in consideration of Savory’s medical background and the progress of psychology towards physiological explanations that, in comparison to MacNish’s earlier theory, Savory’s takes a far more physiological stance on dream and the active areas of the mind. Other previously discussed

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<sup>66</sup> W. S. Savory, ‘On Dreaming and Somnambulism in Relation to the Functions of Certain Nerve-Centres’ *Lancet*, 1 (1864) 229-300. p. 299.

Wakley’s reproduction of lectures which would have been expensive to attend has been examined elsewhere. The origins and consequences of Wakley’s decision are summarised well by Roger Jones in ‘Thomas Wakley, Plagiarism, Libel, and the founding of *The Lancet*’, *Lancet*, 371 (2008) 1410-1411.

<sup>67</sup> See Roger Smith ‘The Physiology of the Will: Mind, Body and Psychology in the Periodical Literature, 1855-1875’ in *Science Serialised: Representations of the Sciences in Nineteenth Century Periodicals* ed. Geoffrey Cantor and Sally Shuttleworth (Cambridge; London: MIT Press, 2004). p. 81. Also Alison Winter, *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1998) p. 27.

theories are also present, such as the possibility of external impressions influencing dream, which is found in the work of both Abercrombie and MacNish.

Savory also addressed the function of the mind more broadly under the subject of day-dream and the consideration of why it is a dream state; however the thought process is still described in a way which mirrors earlier associationist ideas. Savory writes that in day dream ‘the mind is wholly withdrawn from the consideration of external and surrounding circumstances, and revels in the luxuriance of thoughts’ and ‘that is really a dreaming state’. He subsequently argues that the dream state can therefore be reached intentionally, ‘an indisposition rather than an inability to reason’. This touches upon defining dream and imagination, distinguishing between the conscious and unconscious mind. The uncertainty is directly related to the lack of distinct definitions surrounding not just dream, but the function of the mind generally.<sup>68</sup> The flexible use of the term ‘dream’, rooted in the question of what dreaming actually was, is a necessary consideration when looking at any discussion of dreaming in the 1860s. Ultimately, Savory’s point becomes more of an observation on the shared experience of day dreaming and the moments of waking from sleep than a developed theory of the origin of these dream states.

The lecture ends on the subject of somnambulism, another of the various dream states and one which is often presented as particularly dangerous, due to the physical enactment of the dream, as will be shown in later chapters. Somnambulism is explained in the same physiological manner as dream was at the beginning of the lecture. Again, following the same theme of uncertain definitions, it is also noted that ‘the term somnambulism appears to be very loosely employed’.<sup>69</sup> Savory argues that there are two types of somnambulism, one of which is based purely on instinctive actions and the other a combination of somnambulism

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<sup>68</sup> See introduction for more on the issues with language and the study of the mind.

<sup>69</sup> Op. cit., Savory, p. 300.

and dream. The latter type of somnambulism is the one which, Savory claims, is the most common type, as well as the most commonly accepted definition, and is therefore the definition which he focuses on. As with his earlier discussion of dream, however, Savory is not presenting any particularly new theory on somnambulism, but rather highlights existing theories and observations. As a whole, the lecture and, subsequently, the article, is focused on defining dream states. The introduction and conclusion provide a frame for a physiological explanation for the origin of dream, traceable to particular areas of the brain, but the body of the article does little to explain the theory. Ultimately, therefore, the representation of this lecture within the *Lancet* demonstrates the possible physiological explanations for dreaming in the 1860s, as well as highlighting the prominent issue of defining dream and distinguishing between unconscious states. It is clear that the dreaming mind, as represented in Savory's lecture and to the readers of the *Lancet* through their account of the lecture, is thought to have many forms and that dream is used as a term for various unconscious states. It is for this reason that states referred to interchangeably as dream, such as somnambulism and trance, are also considered throughout these chapters, as they form part of the question of what dream was in the 1860s.

While the account of Savory's lecture provides an interesting view of the way dream was being presented in medical circles and to the often professional audience of the *Lancet*, it is also relevant that it is one of the only examples in the *Lancet*, throughout the 1860s, to address the origin of dream without relating it to another subject, such as insanity.<sup>70</sup> This absence is equally important to understanding the representation of dream in periodical literature. As will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters, dream was a subject still closely tied to superstition and the supernatural.<sup>71</sup> Dream was also an integral part of

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<sup>70</sup> See chapter two.

<sup>71</sup> This is demonstrated well by Shane McCorristine in *Spectres of the Self: Thinking about Ghosts and Ghost-Seeing in England, 1750-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

arguments in favour of mesmerism and spiritualism, both subjects whose proponents attempted to prove the existence of the supernatural as scientifically viable. These unsurprisingly divisive subjects raised questions about what constituted scientific research.

The *Lancet* had a particularly hostile relationship with spiritualism by the 1860s, as can be seen in the article ‘The Delusion of Spiritualism’, published in November 1860, which uses the pronouns ‘we’ and ‘ours’ to imply that the views on spiritualism represented within the article are those of all associated with the periodical, rather than just the author.

Mesmerism finds a similarly derogatory reception in the *Lancet*, particularly in discussions of John Elliotson’s experiments on the subject.<sup>72</sup> The association between dream and the supernatural appears to create a reluctance to address the subject directly in medical periodicals. While the popularity of physiological psychology provides the opportunity to explain dream in a scientific and tangible way, tracing the origin of dream to particular areas of the brain and nervous system, it is a theory of dream that is by no means certain. While dream is rarely addressed as a subject in its own right within the *Lancet*, it does appear far more frequently in relation to specific medical issues or experiments, as will be shown in the following section. In this way, the *Lancet* presents dream as a scientific, medical issue, and reinforces this position through the association of dream with recognised medical subjects.

### Drugs and Dreaming

The discussion of dreams alongside other medical subjects occurs in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* as well as the *Lancet*. One of the frequent associations in both periodicals is between drugs and dreaming. For example, the *Lancet* includes both

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<sup>72</sup> See chapter three for a more on the relationship between dream, mesmerism and spiritualism, as well as the *Lancet*’s treatment of Elliotson’s experiments. Particularly p. 63

‘The Tetrachloride of Carbon as an Anaesthetic by Protheroe Smith M.D Physician to the hospital for women’ on June 22, 1867 and ‘Papers on the Therapeutic Action of Drugs’ by Sydney Ringer on March 20, 1869.<sup>73</sup> Both articles provide a detailed discussion of particular drugs and their effects, including discussion of the effective use of the drugs to prevent nightmare and, in the case of the latter article, somnambulism in children. Ringer, for example, writes of the ‘frightful imaginings’ of women during pregnancy, which can be ‘removed, and in their place calm, refreshing sleep be sustained, by the influence of bromide of potassium’. Smith similarly treats unwelcome dreams with drugs, providing evidence of a case, of which he writes: ‘Male, aged fifty-six; nervous and exhausted from harassing mental work; sleep invariably disturbed by dreams. Half a drachm of tetrachloride produced sleep without any distressing symptoms; afterwards slept soundly all night without dreaming’. In both cases the author is considering the influence of a drug on the mind and using dream as evidence of the effect. Specifically in these cases, it is the prevention of any dream which is used as evidence of restful sleep.

Examples of dream being used as medical evidence can also be found in cases where neither sleep nor dreaming were the subject of the experiment or treatment. One such experiment appears in both the *Lancet* and the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*. In 1863, the *Lancet* published ‘Practical Remarks on the Hypodermical Treatment of Disease by Charles Hunter, Esq. M.R.C.S. Surgeon to the Royal Pimlico Dispensary’.<sup>74</sup> Hunter provides details of an experiment in which he treats a patient with atropine, which is described as ‘occasionally a narcotic’. On the effects, it is specifically pointed out that the patient ‘dreamed extraordinary things’ before waking to find her pain gone. The patient’s

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<sup>73</sup> Protheroe Smith, ‘The Tetrachloride of Carbon as an Anaesthetic’, *Lancet*, 1 (1867) 762-763. p. 762; Sydney Ringer, ‘Papers on the Therapeutic Action of Drugs’, *Lancet*, 1 (1869) 392-394. p. 394.

<sup>74</sup> Charles Hunter, ‘Practical Remarks on the Hypodermical Treatment of Disease’, *Lancet*, 2 (1863) 675-676. p. 676.

dreams are noted as an effect of the drug, evidence of its influence while the patient is sleeping. The same case appears in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, in a review of ‘On the speedy relief of Pain and other Nervous Affections by means of the Hypodermic Method. By Charles Hunter’, in 1866.<sup>75</sup> As with the representation of the case in the *Lancet*, while the production or prevention of dreams was not the purpose of the experiment, the choice is made to note the effect of the drug upon the patient’s dreams. The two articles demonstrate the way that dream appeared as evidence in medical periodicals, providing a way to examine the function of the mind in an unconscious state.

The issue of the effect of drugs on the mind, and the relationship between this issue and dream, can also be found in general literary periodicals, though in a very different style. ‘Ghostly Quarters’, for example, which was published in *All the Year Round* in 1861, provides an example of the effect of opium on dream.<sup>76</sup> The story told is one of four within the same article, three of which are examples of supernatural stories disproved and the final one an unexplained supernatural story. The ‘well-known story of Gaffendi and the demoniac’ is the first story of the article, in which a man is ‘due to be burnt to death because of his familiar intercourse with the devil’.<sup>77</sup> The story is actually that of French 17<sup>th</sup>-century philosopher Pierre Gassendi. It is possible that the incorrect spelling of his name in the article is due to the common use of the long or medial letter s, which is easily mistaken for the letter f, in printing up to the early 1800s. However, it is also possible that the author was intentionally imitating the older printing style in their retelling. If viewed as an error, it would suggest that the story was not common in print, despite the authors claim that the story is well

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<sup>75</sup> ‘Review X: On the speedy relief of Pain and other Nervous Affections by means of the Hypodermic Method By Charles Hunter’ *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, 37 (1866) 395-401; Hunter’s book, which is being reviewed here, was published in 1865 (London: John Churchill & Sons).

<sup>76</sup> ‘Ghostly Quarters’ *All the Year Round*, 5 (1861) 427-432. p. 427.

<sup>77</sup> The story is an old one which appears, for example, in *The Literary and Biographical Magazine and British Review* for February 1794 under ‘Biographiana; or, Anecdotes of Illustrious Persons’ p. 84-85.

known, at least during the 1800s. In the story itself, Gassendi proves the prisoner's visions of the devil to be caused by opium, through an experiment in which he gives the same tablet taken by the man in question to a dog. Both 'writhed and tossed about terribly' while asleep and, on seeing the reaction of the dog, the man is persuaded 'that the whole was a troubled dream'. The supernatural is therefore explained away by the rational explanation of the effects of opium on the mind, specifically the effect of vivid dreaming.<sup>78</sup>

Although the anecdotes in 'Ghostly Quarters' are presented in a narrative style which is closer to fiction than to scientific or psychological discussion, crafted to produce suspense through punctuation and structure, and to create a heightened sense of drama through their language, psychological theory is also an integral part of the article as a whole. Each story is introduced by a short consideration of the psychological issue the story will address, establishing this as the purpose of presenting the stories. The story of Gassendi, for example, begins with the anonymous author's statement that ghosts are 'generally traceable to diseases of the brain, or to intemperance- especially in the case of opium – or to some defect in the optic nerve'. The second points out that 'deep grief, especially the grief of bereavement, not unfrequently acts as a conjuror-up of the spirits of the departed. I have myself held, in a dream, no doubt, converse with the dead'. The final story of the article, however, differs from the other three. Rather than being framed by scientific explanation, it begins by declaring the events it describes 'a mystery', despite being 'from a source absolutely incapable of misleading, and exceedingly unlikely to be misled'. After enforcing the reliability of events in this way, the ending, rather than summarising how the seemingly supernatural events were really due to natural causes, leaves the reader with the certainty that the mystery 'will never

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<sup>78</sup> The use of animal dreams in explaining human dreaming is an interesting subject in itself. Newnham's *Essay on Superstition*, for example, argues that dreams cannot be purely due to spiritual agency, as animals dream and 'it will not be contended that their dreams come from spiritual agency'. William Newnham, *Essay on Superstition* (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1830) p. 160.

be unravelled now [...] until the day when all secrets are revealed'.<sup>79</sup> This line ends the entire article and undoubtedly plays on the use of tantalising ghost stories and supernatural mysteries as a form of entertainment, revealing this to be the overall intention of the author.

Immediately following 'Ghostly Quarters' is an advertisement for Edward Bulwer Lytton's 'A Strange Story', to begin in the periodical on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 1861. This clever positioning of the advertisement promises readers more strange stories, to follow those of 'Ghostly Quarters', and continues to imply that these supernatural tales are reproduced mainly for their value as entertainment, rather than a true desire to dismiss them with scientific evidence. The presence of psychological theory within these stories, however, would be unnecessary if the entertainment of the ghost story was the article's only purpose, which indicates that the function of the mind is also a subject of interest to the general audience of *All the Year Round*. The contrast of ghost story and its rational framing also demonstrates the complexity of the debate between science and the supernatural in periodical literature. A debate clearly exists, and leans strongly towards the scientific at the beginning of the article, where the seemingly supernatural events are explained rationally. However, the final story presents a situation in which events may have no visible explanation from either science or psychology, where an answer can only be provided on 'the day when all secrets are revealed', a reference to the biblical day of Judgement and an afterlife which is itself a religious and supernatural concept. The debate therefore becomes a more complex one, where the definitions of science and the differences between the supernatural ghost story and religious beliefs are an essential part of the argument. Even while experiments into the effects of drugs on the mind were expanding knowledge of how the mind functioned and finding

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<sup>79</sup> Op. cit., 'Ghostly Quarters', p. 427, 429, 432.

new ways to explain the seemingly supernatural dream, unanswerable questions were maintaining the debate.

One of the most striking and famous examples of drugs and the dream state in the periodical can be found in Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*, which was serialised in *All the Year Round* between January 4<sup>th</sup> and August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1868. Collins' consideration of dream states in his novels undoubtedly stems from his own interest in the unconscious, a factor which has been mapped in detail by Jenny Bourne Taylor, who notes Collins' use of the unconscious mind amongst various psychological issues throughout the novels he wrote during the 1860s.<sup>80</sup> The presence of opium as a key feature of *The Moonstone*'s plot is directly related to this exploration of the unconscious, but can also be attributed to Collins' own use of the drug for pain relief, which has been well documented.<sup>81</sup>

Alongside his own experiences, Collins was also knowledgeable about the public debate surrounding opium in the early 1860s, which he demonstrates through the doctor of *The Moonstone*, Ezra Jennings. In the novel, Jennings explains that 'the ignorant distrust of opium (in England) is by no means confined to the lower and less cultivated classes'.<sup>82</sup> This distrust surrounding working-class use of the drug was a real issue, but Virginia Berridge suggests that the existing distrust was from the middle classes, specifically aimed at working-class consumption of the drug, rather than from the working class. Berridge highlights a quote from the *Lancet* on the subject, published in 1830, which asks:

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<sup>80</sup> See Jenny Bourne Taylor, *In the Secret Theatre of Home: Wilkie Collins, Sensation Narrative, and Nineteenth-Century Psychology* (London: Routledge, 1988). For more on Collins and dream, see also chapter 4, p. 189-192.

<sup>81</sup> While Collins' use of opium has of course been noted by all of his biographers, Alethea Hayter looks particularly at Collins' use of laudanum while writing *The Moonstone* and at the relationship between his opium use and portrayal of dream in his novels. See Alethea Hayter, *Opium and the Romantic Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968) p. 255-270.

<sup>82</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone, All the Year Round*, 20 (1868) 97-103. p. 98.

Would you add to the pangs of an aching heart, and the tortures of half cramped limbs, the frightful phantoms of a bewildering drug? ... Opium,- subtle, crafty, sleeping draught of tyrants; the courted charm of worthless sensual slaves! To make the people exert themselves to improve their conditions, pain, destitution and wretchedness, must be their stimulants!

This is the attitude, Berridge argues, 'which lay implicitly under much of the discussion of popular consumption throughout the rest of the century'.<sup>83</sup> By 1860, the *Lancet* was publishing numerous articles on the successful use of opium for various medical conditions, although a note is made that there was a petition for the suppression of the opium trade in the House of Commons on May 7<sup>th</sup> 1860.<sup>84</sup>

Interest in the issue of opium would also have been stimulated by the Pharmaceutical Society in the 1850s and 60s; as Berridge points out it was during that time the society used 'the dangers of working-class opium consumption and the sale of laudanum in back street shops in poor areas [...] to support their demands for a moderate form of control of the sale of the drug'.<sup>85</sup> This specific fear for working-class consumption of the drug explains why the *Lancet* continued to promote its use in medicine to a mainly professional middle-class readership while the debate on the danger of its use was still ongoing, the concerns were for working-class use of the drug. In Jennings' comment on the 'ignorant distrust of opium', he implies that, although it is not entirely confined to them, the distrust of opium is generally from the working class, rather than aimed at the working class by the middle and upper classes. By pointing out that this 'ignorant distrust' is not 'confined' to the lower class, there is an implication that the ignorant view of a generally uneducated class has infiltrated middle-

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<sup>83</sup> Virginia Berridge 'Opium Eating and the Working Class in the Nineteenth Century: The Public and Official Reaction'. *British Journal of Addiction*, 73 (1978) 107-112. p. 109.

<sup>84</sup> 'Parliamentary Intelligence', *Lancet*, 1 (1860) p. 481.

<sup>85</sup> Op. cit., Berridge, p. 109, 111.

class thought, escaping the confines of its original source. This undoubtedly represents opium in a positive light, as something which should be trusted and is trusted by the educated and medical professionals. It is particularly relevant that the comment comes from Jennings, who is a character closely linked to dream and the unconscious.

The complexity of Jennings' character has been examined by Nicholas Saul, who highlights his dualistic nature. As Saul points out, Jennings is visually both young and old, with hair which is both black and white. He is both charismatic and repulsive, his constitution both male and female. In the context of *The Moonstone*, Saul argues, a novel which 'opposes in its symbolic order black and white, light and darkness, science and superstition, East and West [...]' Jennings is the mediating force, and the one who can solve the mystery, because of his dualistic nature. Saul does briefly note the conscious and the unconscious as part of Jennings' duality, his knowledge of psychology being reinforced by the fact that he is writing 'a book on the intricate and delicate subject of the brain and nervous system'.<sup>86</sup> I would further argue that dream forms an important part of Jennings' representation, and subsequently that Jennings is an integral part of how dreams are represented in the novel.

Collins demonstrates his knowledge of contemporary studies of the mind when Jennings refers to Doctor John Elliotson as 'one of the greatest of the English physiologists' and quotes from his *Human Physiology* as he explains the possibility of the mind remembering, while under the influence of opium, that which it cannot under normal circumstances.<sup>87</sup> In *Human Physiology* (1835), Elliotson includes a quote comparing the mind influenced by opium to dreaming, where 'the thoughts frequently have more delicacy,

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<sup>86</sup> Nicholas Saul, 'Half a Gypsy: The Case of Ezra Jennings in Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*' in *Role of the Romanies: Images and Counter Images of 'Gypsies' / Romanies in European Cultures* ed. Nicolas Saul and Susan Tebbutt (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004) 119-130. p. 123, 124.

<sup>87</sup> Op. cit., *All the Year Round*, 20 (1868) 97-103. p. 100. While Elliotson's reputation was somewhat marred by his controversial experiments with mesmerism, as will be discussed in more detail in chapter four, his contribution to his field is still acknowledged to have been outstanding, even by his critics in the *Lancet*.

and the sensations are more acute, and we can hear and answer: just as in ordinary somnambulism we can rise, walk, see with our eyes open, touch with the hands, &c'.<sup>88</sup> As in the *Lancet* and *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, dream is used comparatively to discuss the function of the mind and explore the boundary between consciousness and unconsciousness. It is also relevant that the actions are described as just like 'ordinary somnambulism', as this is the state which is central to the plot of *The Moonstone*. Jennings' references to the work of Elliotson and to William Benjamin Carpenter (author of *The Principles of General and Comparative Physiology*), who are referred to only as 'Dr Carpenter' and 'Doctor Elliotson', suggest that these are figures likely to be recognised by the reader. Both Elliotson and Carpenter had been mentioned previously in *All the Year Round*, though not with notable frequency and always with the same offhand assumption that the reader is already familiar with the name. Their inclusion, then, seems intended to add realism to the arguments of the fictional doctor, Jennings, by referring to the accounts of well-known figures in medicine.

As well as being the character most closely associated with the genuine contemporary study of dream, Jennings is also the character most frequently associated with dream. His eyes are described as 'dreamy' in multiple instalments of the novel, marking that as a feature of particular note. It could be argued that this dreamy appearance is simply foreshadowing Jennings' later admission to abuse of opium, however the drug is still inextricably linked with dream. The side effects of the over-use of opium are stated by Jennings, again using dream, as he describes:

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<sup>88</sup> Franz Joseph Gall (no further reference given). It is notable that the subject arises within Elliotson's chapter on mesmerism. John Elliotson, *Human Physiology* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longman, 1835) p. 677-678.

A dreadful night; the vengeance of yesterday's opium, pursuing me through a series of frightful dreams. At one time I was whirling through empty space with the phantoms of the dead, friends and enemies together. At another, the one beloved face which I shall never see again, rose at my bedside, hideously phosphorescent in the black darkness, and glared and grinned at me.<sup>89</sup>

The description is reminiscent of the swirling figures of John Anster Fitzgerald's dream paintings, 'The Artist's Dream', (1857) 'The Nightmare' (1857-8) and 'The Stuff that Dreams are Made of (1858)', where phosphorescent, grinning demons surround a sleeping figure. Charlotte Gere and Lionel Lambourne have pointed out the 'overt references to drug-induced hallucinations' in Fitzgerald's paintings.<sup>90</sup>



Figure 1: John Anster Fitzgerald, 'The Artists Dream' Victorian Fairy Painting (London: Merrell Holberton, 1998) p. 114.

In the essay 'In Fairyland', Charlotte Gere also points out the direct correlation between 'The Artist's Dream' and Collins' own description of an experience he had after taking opium.<sup>91</sup> 'The Artists Dream' was exhibited at the British Institution in 1857, however

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<sup>89</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone, All the Year Round*, 20 (1868) 121-127. p. 121.

<sup>90</sup> Charlotte Gere and Lionel Lambourne, 'The Artist's Dream', *Victorian Fairy Painting* (London: Merrell Holberton, 1998) p. 115.

<sup>91</sup> Charlotte Gere, 'In Fairyland', *Victorian Fairy Painting* (London: Merrell Holberton, 1998) 63-72. p. 68.

there is nothing to suggest that Collins would have seen these paintings. The similarity in imagery may simply stem from the fact that both attempt to portray the effects of opium.

Unlike other fictional representations of dreams featuring deceased loved ones, Jennings' dream has no sentimental or religious message.<sup>92</sup> It is clear that the people in the dream appear at random, both 'friends and enemies together', and the appearance of a loved one is frightening in its strangeness, yet it is also meaningless. This is confirmation that the dream is represented purely as an exploration of the function of the mind and the effect of opium. A more sentimental association with dreaming does appear in a later instalment with the death of Jennings, in Mr Candy's comment that, in the final hours of his life 'I think he dreamed. Once or twice he smiled. A woman's name, as I suppose – the name of "Ella" – was often on his lips at this time'.<sup>93</sup> This is a far calmer reflection of the earlier dream, the loved one appears as a pleasant memory rather than a grinning phantom. The nature of the dream is fairly vague as its description comes from Mr Candy's observation, rather than the dreamer himself. It could therefore be interpreted in either a spiritual or scientific way. In either case, the observation of his dream provides a small insight into the mind of the dying Jennings.

This dream description also draws the reader's memory back to a previous instalment of the story with the specific mention of a woman's name, to the point where Jennings explains the role of a mysterious but clearly beloved figure in his past. It is in this earlier section of the story that Jennings reveals himself and his faults, but also the one in which he ceases to be the peculiar, mistrusted figure, and becomes instead the intellectual hero. Jennings' own use of opium is explained in this section as the only effective method of preventing his own death from 'an incurable internal complaint'. While he admits to have

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<sup>92</sup> See chapter 5 for examples of divinely inspired dream.

<sup>93</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone*, *All the Year Round*, 20 (1868) 193-201. p. 198.

progressed ‘from the use of opium to the abuse of it’ due to the progress of the disease, even preserving his own life is portrayed as a selfless act, as he prolongs it only in an attempt to provide for somebody else and ‘make her independent of the world’.<sup>94</sup> Immediately after the opium confession, Jennings announces that he has the vindication of Blake’s innocence in his hands and, though the reader is forced to wait until the next instalment to find out about the effect of opium on Blake, Jennings from this point is the hero who unravels the mystery. In comparison to early descriptions of Jennings, where ‘nobody knew much about him’, ‘none of us liked or trusted him’ and ‘his appearance is against him’, Jennings at the end of his life is ‘a great man’ with ‘an angelic expression’ and ‘the sweetest temper’.<sup>95</sup> The dream, calm and happy, is part of this transformation, but is also the constant factor, which follows Jennings’ character throughout the novel.

Opium, while the cause of much suffering in the novel, avoids an entirely scathing portrayal because, as Jennings explains, it is the misuse, rather than the use, of the drug which is the issue. Blake’s unconscious theft addresses a fear which arises frequently in relation to dream states, about the inability to control one’s own mind and actions.<sup>96</sup> However, the reader finds that it is the doctor, who has incorrectly measured the dose and failed to take into account Blake’s susceptibility to the drug after giving up tobacco, who is to blame for the effect of the opium. It is also opium, used correctly, which allows Franklin Blake to finally prove his innocence. For Jennings, opium does have a negative effect after prolonged use, shattering his nervous system and leaving him with horrifying dreams, but it also allows him to live for a noble cause. By the end of the book, there is no negativity left in the portrayal of

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid. 73-79. p. 78.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. 289-295, p.295; 601-610, p.606.

<sup>96</sup> See chapter two for discussion of this fear in relation to insanity, or chapter four for the way dream states are connected to control, or lack of control, for women.

this character who, by his own admission, abuses opium, and this does much to negate the negativity associated with the drug.

Dream in *The Moonstone* is, however, far more complex than a question of opium as a saving or damaging drug. The dreaminess of Jennings and contrast of his opium influenced and dying dreams form an essential part of his character. They are undoubtedly a part of the duplicity explored by Saul, associating Jennings constantly with the conscious and unconscious, but also with mystery and science, both boundaries that the subject of dreaming crossed. Between Blake's unconscious crime, a common contemporary fear which is discussed in greater detail in chapter two, and Jennings' contrasting dreams, *The Moonstone* presents the reader with a piece of fiction filled with psychological interest and exploration, within the pages of a periodical which was simultaneously providing readers with factual articles on the science of the mind.

### Psychological Dreaming in Fiction

*All the Year Round* contains a great many examples of dream discussion, both fictional and factual, and it may be argued that this is due to Dickens' interest in the subject, as editor of the periodical. The extent of Dickens' involvement in the published content of the periodical is debatable, as Shu-Fang Lai points out.<sup>97</sup> However, there are some examples of serialised fiction, including *The Moonstone*, for which there is evidence in Dickens' correspondence that he took particular interest in its development. Dickens' own interest in dreaming has been examined by Jonathan Glance in 'Revelation, Nonsense or Dyspepsia: Victorian Dream Theories', where he points out the complexity of the subject and its

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<sup>97</sup> Shu-Fang Lai, 'Fact or Fancy: What Can we Learn about Dickens from His Periodicals "Household Words" and "All the Year Round"?' *Victorian Periodicals Review*. 34.1 (2001) 41-53.

prevalence in Dickens' novels, periodicals, essays and letters.<sup>98</sup> Catherine Bernard has also addressed Dickens' interest in dreaming in 'Dickens and Dream Theory', where she writes that 'it is difficult to say just how scholarly Dickens was in this matter [of dream research]. We do know that his Gad's Hill library contained many of the major studies on dreams, including Abercrombie's *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (1838), Robert MacNish's *The Philosophy of Sleep* (1838) and Dugald Stewart's *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* (1814)'.<sup>99</sup> However, she argues that 'since so many of these books recapitulated scientific and popular theories of the day, we can assume that Dickens' reading of a limited number of them would have familiarized him with the major currents of Victorian dream theory'. As the examples within this thesis show, numerous periodicals, including *All the Year Round*, presented contemporary dream theories and those of Abercrombie and MacNish are often repeated. Therefore, even if Dickens had not read any of the studies on dream that he owned, by engaging with periodicals he would still have been familiar with their theories, if not their original source.

Bernard also argues of Dickens that:

In his theories and fiction he reveals not only a considerable knowledge of contemporary dream theory, but also an apparently intuitive insight into the autobiographical meaning of dreams. Sensing that dreams were psychological in origin, rather than supernatural or physiological, Dickens offered a strikingly independent view of dreams that challenged many conventional beliefs of his day.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Jonathan Glance, 'Revelation, Nonsense or Dyspepsia: Victorian Dream Theories', Presented at NVSA conference (29 April, 2001)

<[http://faculty/mercer.edu/glance\\_jc/files/academic\\_work/victorian\\_dream\\_theories.htm](http://faculty/mercer.edu/glance_jc/files/academic_work/victorian_dream_theories.htm)>

<sup>99</sup> Catherine Bernard, 'Dickens and Dream Theory', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 360 (1981) 197-216. p. 202.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, p. 202, 197.

This statement is problematic when viewed in relation to contemporary publications on dreaming. Glance points out, regarding Bernard's article, that 'to attribute to Dickens a modern understanding of the unconscious or an intuitively Freudian notion of dreaming is to wrench him from his historical context'. Dickens' writing does 'reveal complex assumptions about the causes and meanings of dreams', he argues, but 'this complexity stems from the conflicting theories of dreaming in the Victorian period'.<sup>101</sup> Glance writes of the conflicting impressions of 'the Romantic movement's fascination with states of marginal consciousness, and neuroscience's new theories and advances in the study of the brain', as well as pointing out the contrasting scientific and superstitious dream publications which were available. Although Glance highlights Dickens' depictions of dreaming in articles which appeared in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, with both psychological and supernatural themes, as well as pointing out that Dickens, as the editor, published numerous articles on dream within those periodicals, he does not look at these publications in the context of other contemporary periodicals. I would argue that it is only by doing so that the importance of the periodical form to representing the complex and, at times, conflicting, discussion of dreams becomes clear. While the individual beliefs and interests of editors do, of course, influence the representation of dream in different periodicals, this thesis will show that the complex nature of the dream debate remains visible in all of them.

Dickens' own broad interest in dream, which is explored in detail by Glance, is displayed in the diverse approaches to dream displayed in his periodicals. This diversity, however, which presents a mix of psychological, physiological and supernatural representations of dream, all of which will be examined throughout this thesis, is also influenced by Dickens' intention to entertain. In the final issue of *Household Words*,

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<sup>101</sup> Glance, op. cit.

published on May 28, 1859, Dickens addresses the reader on the subject of his new periodical by stating that:

That fusion of the graces of the imagination with the realities of life, which is vital to the welfare of any community, and for which I have striven from week to week as honestly as I could during the last nine years, will continue to be striven for 'all the year round'.<sup>102</sup>

The will to fuse reality with imagination results in numerous examples of factual articles which incorporate fictional elements. This is not unusual in relation to dream, as was shown in the introduction with Abercrombie's highly anecdotal study of dreaming, however, it is particularly prevalent in *All the Year Round* in comparison to other general literary periodicals published in the 1860s. Scientific explanations for the supernatural may therefore be concluded by a tantalisingly unsolved mystery, displaying the impossible prediction of some distant even through a dream. Dickens' own fictional representations of dreaming also follow this fusion of imagination and reality.

*Great Expectations* was serialised in *All the Year Round* between 1860 and 1861 and, although dream does not form a major part of the novel's plot, it is used in a deeply psychological way. The key dream of *Great Expectations* is one which Pip experiences during a fever near the novel's conclusion, in the penultimate instalment of the story in *All the Year Round*. The psychological aspect of this dream is noted by Kate Egan, who suggests that the dream sequence can be viewed as an epiphany and as a 'private psychological experience' through which the character is changed.<sup>103</sup> This view of the dream as epiphany is

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<sup>102</sup> Charles Dickens, 'Address', *All the Year Round*, 19 (1859) p. 601.

<sup>103</sup> Kate Egan, 'Dreams in The Idylls and Great Expectations'  
<<http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/dickens/ge/dreams.html>>

This quote in the article is directly related to 'The Coming of Arthur', however, Egan's point is that the two dream sequences have this in common.

based on Pip's description that all the faces he sees in his fevered dream had 'an extraordinary tendency [...] sooner or later, to settle down into the likeness of Joe'. Joe therefore becomes the one point of consistency in Pip's mind. On waking, Pip then truly sees the value of Joe and of his constant presence in his life, a change of heart which seems to have been completed during the psychological experience of the dream. The dream sequence here, however, provides more detail than Pip's revelation about Joe. Pip explains that:

I often lost my reason, that the time seemed interminable, and that I was a brick in the house wall, and yet entreating to be released from the giddy place where the builders had set me; that I was a steel beam of a vast engine, clashing and whirling over a gulf, and yet that I implored in my own person to have the engine stopped, and my part in it hammered off; that I passed through these phases of disease, I know of my own remembrance, and did in some sort know at the time.<sup>104</sup>

There are two factors in Pip's dream which seem to engage with contemporary dream theories. One is the fact that, as Egan briefly acknowledges, Joe is physically with Pip, as well as in his dream. While Egan implies that the physical as well as figurative appearance of Joe enforces Joe's importance as Pip's 'oldest and truest friend', it is also noteworthy that contemporary studies, such as those of Abercrombie, talked about the influence of external factors (such as sound) on the dreaming mind. The second factor is time, the confusion of which Dickens specifically points out. Time as it appears in dream is something which is discussed in dream books, including MacNish's. Here the example is given that while a great length of time may have passed in a dream, only a short time may have passed in reality. Pip's dream is influenced by this distorted sense of time.

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<sup>104</sup> Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations, All the Year Round*, 5 (1861) 409-413. p. 409.

Egan also argues that the actual dreams which are disclosed, shown in the quote above, indicate that 'Pip sees himself as various parts in a whole', emphasising 'man's smallness on earth'.<sup>105</sup> The industrial imagery is very relevant here in the dream, where Pip imagines himself as a single brick in a wall and a steel beam within an engine. In both cases he is placed precariously, in a 'giddy place' or 'over a gulf' and trapped within a functioning system much bigger than his single part. This was not the first time that Dickens used the image of industry as a frightening and powerful force, his most notable earlier use perhaps being the railway of *Dombey and Son* (serialised 1846-1848), where the machine metaphorically becomes a living monster, capable of destroying life. In Pip's dream, however, it is more relevant that when Pip sees himself as part of the whole, he feels that he wants to be free of it. Throughout the novel, Pip has played an unknowing part in the schemes of others, his life directed by the ambition and vengefulness of other characters. On a basic level, Pip's wish to be free from the complications of these schemes seems to explain the imagery of his dream. The message that runs through *Great Expectations* is the hypocrisy of the class system. It could be argued that Pip's fevered dream, occurring just after his old dream of becoming a 'gentleman' is ended by the capture of Magwitch and loss of his fortune, is the turning point at which Pip comes to realise that a gentleman should be defined by their honour and kindness, rather than the circumstances of their birth and wealth. In a broader context, therefore, Pip's wish to be freed from the dizzying heights of the man-made structures in his dream may also be viewed as a psychological representation of his desire to free himself from the system which he had desperately wanted to climb higher in, but which he now sees will not bring him happiness. Dickens therefore uses this dream sequence to provide a metaphorical insight into Pip's mind at a point in the plot where his character is undergoing a dramatic change. The same issue of *All the Year Round*, published on 27 July

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<sup>105</sup> Op. cit., Egan.

1861, which is opened by this dream scene in *Great Expectations* is closed by the article ‘Ghostly Quarters’, which, as was discussed earlier, is particularly concerned with psychological theory as an explanation for seemingly supernatural events.

In other fictional examples from the general literary periodical a move towards psychological explanations for dreams can be seen alongside the specific denial of supernatural explanations. In *Bentley’s Miscellany*, for example, the story ‘Old Hooker’s Ghost; or, Christmas Gambols at Huntingfield Hall’ was published in December 1865 and uses dream as an analogy for the mind in its waking state. The story, as a whole, is one in which the rational is shown to ultimately triumph over the seemingly supernatural, transforming the frightening events into humorous ones. Therefore, when the character Jane finds herself suddenly alone in a dark room, she attempts to run, but ‘she felt herself in the grasp of some supernatural power, as a person feels in a dream when unable to proceed’.<sup>106</sup> This type of dream experience is discussed by MacNish as the definition of nightmare. He argues in *The Philosophy of Sleep* that the difference between dream and nightmare (or incubus) is that the latter causes the individual ‘to feel that their powers of volition were totally paralyzed’.<sup>107</sup> The reader soon finds that Jane is not truly held back, she is simply unable to move because her cloak is caught on a door, but, deprived of her sense of sight in the darkness, her mind is influenced by earlier fearful events into believing, against her normal rational beliefs, that she is being held by a supernatural force, as one might in a dream. The dream is used to represent the irrational fancy of the mind as it focuses only on fear and imagination rather than the physical senses. While this reflects existing theories about dream being the product of the imagination unchecked by the impressions of external

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<sup>106</sup> ‘Old Hooker’s Ghost; or, Christmas Gambols at Huntingfield Hall’, *Bentley’s Miscellany*, 58 (1865) 637-652. p. 651.

<sup>107</sup> Robert MacNish, *The Philosophy of Sleep* (Glasgow: W.R. M’Phun, 1860) p. 73.

senses, it also uses this aspect of dream to demonstrate how the conscious mind may be ‘tricked’ into believing that a supernatural event has occurred.

A similar example can be found in *Bentley’s Miscellany* earlier in 1865 with the serialised story ‘Bred in the Bone’ by Alexander Andrews. The story introduces the reader to gothic imagery within the first few pages, the setting being an isolated old country house with ‘yawning chimneys’ and doors which ‘creaked and groaned’, causing the narrator, in his youth, to imagine spirits and ghosts. Further affirming the author’s intention to provide the reader with a traditionally gothic setting, at least from the narrator’s perspective, the narrator explains that ‘they were the days of Horace Walpole’s and Mrs Radcliffe’s novels [...] and I soon invested those heavy black chambers with appearances and associations such as the sensation writers of those times delighted in’.<sup>108</sup> This tone continues into the representation of dreams, where the supernatural is a constant and obvious presence but is held back by reminders of rationality. Prophetic dreaming is a key feature of the plot, the importance of it showing in the narrator’s explanation that:

I know that there are a great number of people who put no faith in dreams, and I am not surprised at it, though I freely confess I am not one of them. A good many, I believe, never dream at all, and imagine that dreams are only produced by an abnormal condition of the system, attributing them to over-feeding (the poor mechanic out of work, though, dreams of the impending distraint upon his little furniture, or starvation of his children, on very low diet indeed); others dream, but their dreams have no significance, and make no impression. But some I know (and I am one of the number) frequently find their dreams fulfilled, not literally and completely, but in some

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<sup>108</sup> Alexander Andrews, ‘Bred in the Bone’, *Bentley’s Miscellany*, 57 (1865) 372-390. p. 372-373.

startling particular to which their dream had a reference, more or less remote. To this extent I have a faith in dreams, and have a right to my faith, I think, for it is founded on frequent experience.<sup>109</sup>

This comment draws the reader into the mystery of the narrator's prophetic dreams and the evidence of them that will be provided in the story. However, there are also a number of suggestions within this quote, as well as elsewhere in the story, which imply the piece to be in favour of a more rational psychological explanation. Knowledge of contemporary scientific dream theory can be seen in the references to an 'abnormal condition of the system' and 'over-feeding' as influences over the subject of a person's dream. This is clearly reflecting the theory, discussed by Hartley in his *Observations on Man* (1749) and elaborated upon by MacNish, which claims that the state of the stomach is directly related to dreaming. With his comment on the poor mechanic, however, the narrator points out that this is not the only cause, but that strong emotions and impressions made on the mind during the day will also influence the subject of dream, a more psychological approach, but one which could still be attributed to Hartley's early theory of association. Andrews also inserts subtle doubts into the statement, pointing out that these prophetic dreams are not fulfilled 'literally and completely' but only in a 'remote' way. The inclusion of these statements is undoubtedly intended to raise doubts in the mind of the reader early on.

The type of prophetic dream the narrator claims to have experienced is considered by Abercrombie in *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and Investigation of Truth* (1831), where he writes: 'a class of dreams, which presents an interesting subject of observation, includes those in which a strong propensity of character, or strong mental

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid. 598-614. p. 611.

emotion, is embodied into a dream, and, by some natural coincidence, is fulfilled'.<sup>110</sup>

Abercrombie dismisses the possibility of supernatural or spiritual causes and instead attributes prophetic dreams to impressions made during the day, or to the dreamer's fear of events which are likely to happen based on their existing knowledge. It seems likely that Andrews intended for the reader to see the prophetic events of his story from Abercrombie's point of view, rather than the supernatural stance taken by the narrator, who may be perceived as unreliable on this topic due to his interest in popular gothic novels and his tendency to imagine spirits and ghosts in his youth. This is enforced by the continuous suggestions that the prophetic events have rational explanations. For example, in the paragraph preceding the initial dream, the narrator, already aware that Nelly's father poses a threat to her, sees a man matching his description who behaves strangely upon being seen. Directly following this, the narrator dreams of this man taking Nelly away.<sup>111</sup> The dream plays out a likely scenario based on the character's knowledge and is strongly influenced by recent events. The proximity of the event and the dream, where the narrator ends the subject of the mysterious man and begins his dream within two lines, highlights the link between them for the reader.

Similarly, the conclusion of the story proves to be only vaguely related to the prophetic dream. Although Nelly is led away by the man in the narrator's dream, she has departed willingly with him after a complex series of events which are not represented by the dream. Though the vague links between the dream and actual events are accepted as prophetic by the narrator, Andrews' writing makes it clear that the reader is not expected to accept the supernatural theory. The actual stance of the piece regarding the dream is therefore a psychological one, subtly dismissing supernatural theories in favour of commonly discussed

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<sup>110</sup> John Abercrombie, *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (London: John Murray, 1849) p. 211.

<sup>111</sup> p. 607.

theories of association. Andrews is also commenting throughout the story on the supernatural and prophecy as a motif of popular gothic fiction, setting that against the factual details of the story in a way that prompts the reader to question the narrator's early claims about prophetic dream. In a similar, though less overt, way to 'Old Hooker's Ghost', this piece of fiction is also demonstrating the way that apparently supernatural events can be explained scientifically with contemporary theories of the mind.

Other examples examine the function of the mind during a dream. For example, 'The Small Hours', published in *All the Year Round* in July 1862.<sup>112</sup> Here the narrator presents himself as Hyson Nightstare of Wakefield, a man who consistently has difficulty sleeping. The name and choice of location are so obviously references to the inability to sleep at night that the article appears to take a somewhat comic tone. The first two pages confirm this, providing light-hearted observations on the things people think and notice when they cannot sleep, in a way that is intended to be relatable. Nightstare's reflection on dreams, however, is a particularly intricate one. He reflects that:

As you suffer all these things to drift at leisure through your mind, it is as likely as not that you will drop two or three times into a sort of half-slumber, and so your thoughts will be turned into dreams. Over those thoughts you have no control, or perhaps at times a half-control, as when it happens that you *see through* your own dream, and decline to be moved by its terrors, because, even in your sleep, you know that it *is* a dream, and that you need not trouble yourself about it, for that reason. A great many difficulties would disappear if this were more generally understood – that they are not simply thoughts over which the reason has no control.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> 'The Small Hours', *All the Year Round*, 7 (1862) 397-401.

<sup>113</sup> 'The Small Hours', *All the Year Round*, 7 (1862) 397-401. p. 399-400.

These reflections demonstrate considerable depth of thought about the function of the mind during sleep. Thoughts become dreams, according to Nightstare, when the thinker has either no control or limited control over them. In order to dream, by this definition, it is not necessary to be fully asleep. The difficulties Nightstare refers to, regarding the control a person has over their own thoughts in a dream, are not expanded upon. However, it seems likely that it relates to contemporary discussions about the accountability of a dreaming person, which will be discussed further in chapter two.

Nightstare continues to observe that ‘when utterly impertinent thoughts come into the mind during our waking hours we at once get rid of them, but when they attack us in sleep we are powerless’. This addresses, once again, the fear of control and, in particular, how responsible a person is for their own unconscious thoughts. Continuing from this, he considers that ‘it is a question whether any transaction in which we engage ever utterly perishes. It is a question whether the memory of these transactions does not return at regular intervals in the cycles of thought’.<sup>114</sup> Nightstare gives the example of purchasing beeswax and, months later, that thought re-entering the mind. In a waking state, he argues, the thought would be dismissed, but in a dreaming state, the thought is woven into your dream. This is an interesting contemplation of memory and the way memories re-enter the mind in a cyclical way, as well as distinguishing the role of memory in conscious and unconscious thought. Memory is discussed alongside dream by both Abercrombie and MacNish in their works on dreaming which have been previously mentioned.

The article ends with Nightstare listening to imaged winds in Lebanon cedars before he falls asleep, meaning the article consists entirely of the thoughts and observations of this character who cannot sleep. It is similar, in this way, to Dickens’ 1852 article ‘Lying Awake’,

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid, p. 400.

published in *Household Words*. In both cases the narrator, unable to sleep, provides a commentary on sleep and dreaming that interacts with other contemporary discussions on the subject. One notable difference between the two is the way the narrator leads the reader through his sleepless thoughts in a way that is comparable to a stream of consciousness. In ‘Lying Awake’ Dickens leads the reader through a sleepless night in his past. Dickens does represent his train of thought while attempting to sleep, for example in the transition from ‘[I] was as obstinate as George the Third’ to ‘Thinking of George the Third – for I devote this paper to my train of thoughts as I lay awake’.<sup>115</sup> However, by addressing the reader and reminding them that these are past thoughts, the article takes a more self-conscious tone, not truly following the random nature of thought. In comparison, ‘In the Small Hours’ progresses from more structured comments on the sounds of a house at night to an entire column, on the penultimate page of the article, of continuous imagined conversation without any separation other than punctuation.

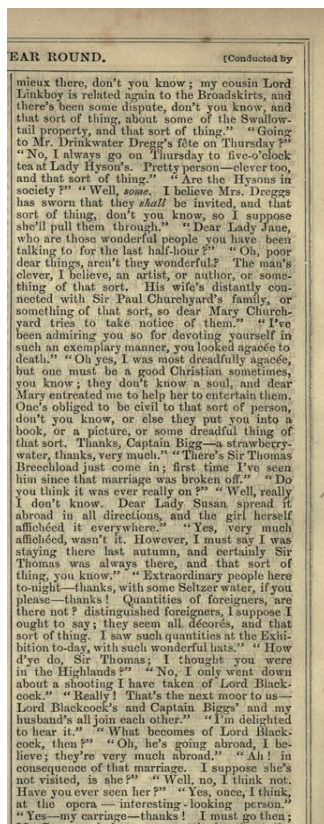


Figure 2: 'In the Small Hours' p.400. Despite it being clear that there are a number of different speakers, the speech which forms this entire column (with the exception of the final line) runs on with no line separation.

<sup>115</sup> Charles Dickens, 'Lying Awake', *Household Words*, 6 (1852) 145-148. p. 145.

In this way, the reader follows Nightstare's thoughts as he grows closer to sleep and dreaming, his thoughts becoming more random and less structured.

The final short paragraph of the article is made up of a random collection of images and sounds: 'In the Caves of Ulysses, the Mediterranean as it washes in and out talks better than this. The nightingale talks better as she sings from the pomegranate tree' etc.<sup>116</sup> In a departure from the earlier astute observations on the mind during dream, the random series of conversations, images and sounds at the end of the article have definite similarity to a stream of consciousness. This is in itself a fascinating study of the function of the mind in the moments between sleeping and waking, presented in a way that provokes thought without becoming a scientific or psychological study. While this is an excellent example of the way that fictional representations of dream within the general literary periodical presented a broad range of readers with detailed analysis of the function of the mind, it also provides an insight into the way that new thinking about the mind and dream in the 1860s was influencing writing techniques in fiction. In attempting to faithfully represent the function of Nightstare's mind in the moments before sleep, the author of 'The Small Hours' moves from a traditional first person narrative to a constant flow of imagined speech, unbroken by line division or comment from the narrator, giving the reader the impression that, as in dream, Nightstare's thoughts are now moving, without the interruption of reason, through a series of connected images and impressions. Although this only makes up one column of the article, it is a way of accurately representing the function of the mind and natural flow of thought that is, in essence, a stream of consciousness. It seems likely that that attempts, such as this, to

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<sup>116</sup> Op. cit., 'The Small Hours', p. 401.

represent the thoughts of a character in a realistic way, were the precursor to later stream of consciousness novels.

‘A Bed at the Bustard’, published in *All the Year Round* in February 1869, provides an alternative, yet still deeply psychological, example of how the dreaming mind might be represented in fiction. The narrator of the article states their intention ‘to endeavour to analyse the growth of a dream, out of the simply natural into the grotesque’. The reader is therefore aware, early in the article, that it will provide an analysis of the way that a dream progresses. The narrator also informs the reader that this analysis is not a unique one, but that the dream he is to record ‘is one of the very few I have been able to so analyse, the waking impressions of dreams being generally so vague and incoherent’. Not only is the narrator able to recall this particular dream, he is also aware, during the dream, that he is dreaming, which leads to a particularly detailed first person account of his dreaming thoughts. He explains that ‘although distinctly conscious that I was dreaming [...] I pretended [...] to myself that I did *not* know I was dreaming, and chuckled to think of the deception I was practising on myself, who thought I *was*. I had thus resolved myself into two distinct personalities. One personality firmly believing what I saw to be real and material, and the other personality deriding the idea’.<sup>117</sup> The deriding personality is gradually taken further in to believe the dream events as it progresses and a third personality eventually emerges. This is an interesting commentary on the function of the mind and self-awareness. The three personalities consist of one which is rational, one which is entirely unable to distinguish between reality and dream and one which is able to observe the other two. The actual events of the dream are entirely based upon things the dreamer has seen before falling asleep and the ways in which he might recognise this are

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<sup>117</sup> ‘A Bed at the Bustard’, *All the Year Round*, 1 (1869), 271-274. p. 272.

explained, more so early in the dream when the discerning personality is more aware. This gives a clear impression of a rational explanation for dreaming.

Alongside this, the article also addresses the connection between dream and superstition in its fictional framing. The account of the dream is framed by the narrator's entrance to a hotel and the morning following his dream. A mysterious exchange between the maid and landlady about the room the guest is to sleep in is followed by the comment that 'it was no haunted room, so far as appearance went. There was nothing very strange nor supernatural about the very comfortable-looking old four poster bed [...]'. This sets the expectation for the reader, at the very beginning of the article, that supernatural events may be expected. After the dream events, all clearly based on rational explanations, the narrator tells the maid he experienced a bad dream, prompting the reply that she knew he would, as every guest who sleeps in that bed has bad dreams. Again this is clearly designed to raise the expectation of a supernatural explanation. On being asked why this is the case, however, the maid explains that the landlady 'stuffed that there bed with *live* feathers- never baked 'em first [...] and they heave, and heave, and heave, and rise like yeast when anybody sleeps on 'em, and you are bound to dream'.<sup>118</sup> This explanation ends the article and ends any speculation about supernatural forces being at work in the story.

The final explanation of the dream also corresponds with the frequently repeated theory that the external sensations experienced by the sleeper influence the content of a dream. The intentional suggestion of supernatural events allows the reader the entertaining pleasure of expecting a supernatural story, until the ending, with its complete dismissal of any supernatural possibility, which undercuts the reader's expectations and mocks the stereotypical ghost story plot of sleeping in a haunted hotel or guest room. As with 'The

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid, p. 271, 274.

Small Hours', the overall intention of the article is entertainment, but it simultaneously prompts a thoughtful dissection of how the dreaming mind works. From the division of the mind into three separate layers of consciousness, to the more common indication that dream is influenced by what the sleeper can physically feel, this article approaches dream from a psychological standpoint. It also subtly addresses the association between dream and the supernatural. While it mocks the notion of haunted dreams, the way that the narrative leads the reader into the expectation of the supernatural still implies that supernatural dreams are a subject of interest.

Although psychology in the 1860s was a subject unsure in its language and definitions, its presence within periodical literature reveals it to be one which was richly varied and widely discussed amongst a general as well as professional audience. Rylance's comments, discussed previously in the introduction to this thesis, frame the interdisciplinarity of psychology particularly well, and also highlight the crucial role of general periodicals. As Rylance points out, 'the broad audience for psychology perceived the issues it raised as matters of common, not specialized, intellectual and cultural concern'.<sup>119</sup> Rylance's comments are also true of the subject of dreaming, which is itself inextricably bound with the psychological discourse that Rylance refers to. In examining the particular role of dream in the discussion of psychology in periodical literature, it becomes evident that dreams were an essential tool for understanding the unconscious mind. Within medical periodicals, dreams are used seriously as a form of evidence, a visual way of examining the intangible and little understood subject of the mind. Crucially, the same can be said of dream in the general literary periodical. In contemplative pieces of fiction such as 'A Bed at the Bustard' and 'The

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<sup>119</sup> Rick Rylance, *Victorian Psychology and British Culture 1850-1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 7.

Small Hours', dream is a phenomenon through which the mind is explored as the reader is asked to consider mental functions such as memory and layers of consciousness.

Fiction in periodical literature of the 1860s engages with dream in two significant ways. By presenting contemporary theories, as Collins does so overtly in *The Moonstone*, these pieces are involving a broad audience with the development of dream theory and encouraging contemplation of the function of the mind. Simultaneously, dream is used as a fictional device to explore the content of a character's mind, developing from the more philosophical, Romantic use of dream in fiction and beginning to display suggestions of later modernist techniques of representing the mind. The examples within this chapter demonstrate the centrality of dream to understand the mind in the 1860s, as well as the role that periodicals played in portraying such a varied and ill-defined subject. Further confirmation of the importance of dream to the study of the mind can be found in the consistent association of dream with insanity. Articles on dream and insanity, within both medical and general literary periodicals, share many similarities with the more general explorations of the mind addressed in this chapter, as chapter two will show.

## Chapter Two

### Dream and Insanity

As the previous chapter demonstrated, dreams featured strongly in both factual and fictional discussions of the mind in periodical literature during the 1860s. With this in mind, it is unsurprising to find that there is also a noticeable correlation between the subjects of dream and insanity in periodicals. The specific study of insanity suffers from the same lack of definition and uncertainty of language that was discussed the introduction to this thesis in

relation to psychology in general.<sup>120</sup> There was some attempt, during the 1860s, to provide more accurate definitions for the study of insanity, which is shown by the development of the Association of Medical Officers of Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane, established in 1841, into the Medico-Psychological Association in 1865. Thomas Bewley has pointed out that the 1865 name change ‘marked a move towards a more professional organisation, working both for its members and for better conditions for the mentally ill’.<sup>121</sup>

However, the 1865 volume of the association’s journal, the *Journal of Mental Science*, begins with J. C. Bucknill’s comment that:

We profess that we cultivate in our pages mental science of a particular kind, namely of the insane. But it has been objected that the term mental science is inapplicable, and that the terms mental physiology, or mental pathology, or psychology, or psychiatry (a term much affected by our German brethren), would have been more correct and appropriate.

This highlights an ongoing discussion about the language surrounding the mind and the categorisation of its study. It also indicates that the subject is far from settled. An earlier (1860) article from the *Journal of Mental Science*, ‘What is Psychology?’ by J. Stevenson Bushnan, provides an interesting view of psychology as a subject which is yet to find distinct definitions. The article also addresses the place of dream within the study of mind, as well as indicating the reason behind the association of dream and insanity. Dreams, Bushnan writes, ‘unquestionably belong to psychology [...] but while dreaming belongs strictly to psychology, it is the very type of mental derangement which belongs not to psychology, but

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<sup>120</sup> See also Kurt Danziger *Naming the Mind: How Psychology Found its Language* (London: Sage Publications, 1997) and Roger Smith ‘The Physiology of the Will: Mind, Body and Psychology in the Periodical Literature, 1855-1875’ in *Science Serialised: Representations of the Sciences in Nineteenth Century Periodicals* ed. Geoffrey Cantor and Sally Shuttleworth (London: MIT Press, 2004).

<sup>121</sup> Thomas Bewley, *Madness to Mental Illness: A History of the Royal College of Psychiatrists* (London: RCPsych Publications, 2008) p. 23.

to the pathology of the nervous system'. The consideration of dream as a subject of pathology is relevant to the role of dreams as medical evidence, as discussed in chapter one. Bushnan further explains that 'in dreaming, the laws of human thought do not cease to operate; but the controlling influence of reason is lost – so also is the correcting effect of an external reality through perception'. While this is not an original theory, also appearing in MacNish's *The Philosophy of Sleep* (1830), it is central to the relationship between dream and insanity. With the loss of the controlling influence of reason in mind, Bushnan continues to point out that 'according to some psychologists, there is during sleep an unceasing state of dreaming. If this be true, it must be rare for a man to be otherwise than mad during sleep. But to become sane again he has only to wake'.<sup>122</sup> This theory, that dream is equal to insanity, appears frequently elsewhere. This chapter will show that dream was integral to considerations of insanity, both in medical and general literary periodicals.

### We're All Mad Here

In Carroll's famous Cheshire Cat scene, Alice is told that everybody in the dream-world of Wonderland is mad. If Alice was not mad, the Cat informs her, she would not be there. This is a comment on the similarity between the dreaming and insane mind.<sup>123</sup> The existence of Wonderland is dependent on Alice's mind remaining in a dream state and subsequently one of insanity. This is a theory Carroll wrote of in his diary in February 1856:

Query: when we are dreaming and, as often happens, have a dim  
consciousness of the fact and try to wake, do we not say and do things  
which in waking life would be insane? May we not then sometimes define

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<sup>122</sup> J. Stevenson Bushnan, 'What is Psychology?', *Journal of Mental Science*, 6 (1860) 39-49. p. 48.

<sup>123</sup> This is implied by Roger Lancelyn Green in *The Diaries of Lewis Carroll*, ed. Roger Lancelyn Green, Vol.1 (London: Cassell & Company, 1953) p. 66.

insanity as an inability to distinguish which is the waking and which is the sleeping life? We often dream without the least suspicion of unreality:

‘Sleep hath its own world’, and it is often as lifelike as the other.<sup>124</sup>

This explains a connection between dream and insanity which is deeply psychological, using dream to explore the function of the mind, particularly in relation to mental illness, and even our perception of reality. In his query, Carroll also highlights two points which will be further discussed in this chapter; that the dreaming mind may be considered entirely separate from the waking one, within its own world, and that the extent of a person’s control over their own mind while dreaming is questionable.

One instalment in Dickens’ series of essays ‘The Uncommercial Traveller’, which was published in *All the Year Round* in July 1860, approaches the subject in a similar way to Carroll. While Dickens’ piece has greater depth and length, it is also presented as a query. Prompted by a walk past the well-known psychiatric hospital Bethlehem, he asks himself ‘are not the sane and the insane equal at night as the sane lie dreaming? Are not all of us outside this hospital, who dream, more or less in the condition of those inside it, every night of our lives?’ While dreaming, Dickens clearly states here, the mind is in the same state as that of a person deemed insane. There is an equality in the dream state that reflects Carroll’s comment that ‘we’re all mad here’. Dickens reinforces this opinion with a list of comparisons between the two states of mind. For example, with the anecdote: ‘said an afflicted man to me, when I was last in a hospital like this, “Sir, I can frequently fly”. I was half ashamed to reflect that so could I – by night’.<sup>125</sup> This essentially psychological consideration uses dream to

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<sup>124</sup> February 9, 1856, *The Letters of Lewis Carroll*, p. 76.

<sup>125</sup> Charles Dickens, ‘The Uncommercial Traveller’, *All the Year Round*, 3 (1860) 348-352. p. 350.

sympathetically contemplate the function of the mind of those suffering from what was considered to be insanity.<sup>126</sup>

The 'Uncommercial Traveller' article appears just a few pages after an instalment of Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White*, which opens the particular number of *All the Year Round*.<sup>127</sup> The instalment ends part way through a letter from Mrs Catherick, at the point at which she is about to explain the history of Anne and her admittance to a private Asylum. The reader following *The Woman in White* would be aware at this point of the wrongful admittance of Laura Farlie to that same asylum and her inability to prove her sanity there. Being isolated and having her sanity questioned ultimately has a negative impact on Laura's mental health by the time she is rescued from this situation and it undoubtedly raises many questions about the similarities and differences between the sane and insane mind. Jenny Bourne Taylor argues that 'by setting up Laura's obviously wrongful confinement against Anne's, which is also problematic though not quite in the same way, Collins draws on the "older" resonances of fears about the confinement of the sane in madhouses by relatives aiming to steal their property by bereaving them of social identity'.<sup>128</sup>

Collins is also clearly concerned about the rights of women in particular. His story contains multiple examples of women who are controlled by men and lack the legal or social support to free themselves. The only woman who seems able to operate somewhat independently of male control is Marian, who possesses a 'masculine form and masculine look [to her] features' and 'dark down on her upper lip [which] was almost a moustache'.<sup>129</sup> This masculinity is, clearly, the key to Marian's extended independence. However, despite this difference, even Marian is legally and, to a large extent, financially dependent on the

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<sup>126</sup> See chapter one for more on Dickens and dream, including existing scholarship.

<sup>127</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 3 (1860) 361-365.

<sup>128</sup> Jenny Bourne Taylor, *In the Secret Theatre of Home: Wilkie Collins, Sensation Narrative, and Nineteenth-Century Psychology* (London: Routledge, 1988) p. 132-133.

<sup>129</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 2 (1859) 117-123. p. 118.

male characters of the novel.<sup>130</sup> Both Mrs Catherick and Countess Fosco fall into this category of controlled women, though the main focus and clearest example is in the simplicity with which both Anne and Laura are isolated in an asylum by Percival Glyde.

Dream is, fittingly, a theme which runs throughout *The Woman in White*, alongside insanity, connecting the three central female characters, as will be shown fully in chapter four. Dickens' consideration of the similarity between the sane dreamer and insane patient of the asylum in 'The Uncommercial Traveller', falling in such close proximity to this crucial point in *The Woman in White*, is aptly placed to encourage further consideration of the subject, inciting the reader to question how fine this boundary may be and to draw further sympathy for Anne, whose story the reader is to see next. This placement of an examination of dream and insanity in 'The Uncommercial Traveller', alongside an instalment of *The Woman in White* which is poised to lead into the story of its 'insane' character, is one example of the way the periodical form provided a unique platform for the discussion of dreams. In this instalment of *All the Year Round*, fiction and non-fiction are placed in a way that draws the reader into viewing the subject of dream and insanity from different angles.

Taylor also points out that the serialisation of *The Woman in White* coincided with 'the publication and widespread discussion of the Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry into the Care and Treatment of Lunatics and Their Property of 1858-9', which 'itself marked the culmination of a specific set of debates and anxieties about how to establish the boundaries of madness'.<sup>131</sup> Collins would certainly have been aware of the Inquiry, particularly as, Taylor points out, two of his acquaintances (John Forster and Richard Monckton Milnes, also friends of Charles Dickens) were members of the committee. The

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<sup>130</sup> Much has been written on Marian's transgression of gender boundaries, including Anne Gaylin's *Eavesdropping in the Novel from Austen to Proust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p. 121-125.

<sup>131</sup> Taylor, op. cit., p. 44-45.

boundaries of insanity were therefore clearly in the mind of the author, the periodical's editor, and likely in the mind of the reader in the midst of this much publicised Inquiry. The boundary of insanity was not a new question in the 1860s, it was also a point of some disturbance nearly a decade before the Inquiry. An article in *The Times* on 22 July 1853 considered that:

Nothing can be more slightly defined than the line of demarcation between sanity and insanity... Make the definition too narrow, it becomes meaningless; make it too wide, and the whole human race becomes involved in the dragnet. In strictness we are all mad when we give way to passion, to prejudice, to vice, to vanity; but if all the passionate, prejudiced and vain people were to be locked up as lunatics, who is to keep the key to the asylum.<sup>132</sup>

This is reminiscent of Carroll's statement that 'we're all mad here' and it clearly portrays the difficulties of defining the boundaries of insanity as well as the public interest in discovering those boundaries. While this question, posed in 1853, remains unanswered into the 1860s, these questions grew into responses to insanity such as the Inquiry of 1858-9.

The fine boundary between sanity and insanity is presented with great clarity when insanity is considered alongside dream to explore the function of the mind more generally. This is not dissimilar to the use of dream to explore the effect of drugs on the mind, discussed in chapter one. As has been seen, psychology, or the study of the mind, was a subject which was still establishing its own definitions and boundaries in the 1860s and so it is unsurprising that uncertainty arises on the subject of insanity. Abercrombie's popular *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers* (1830) frequently uses comparisons of dream and

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<sup>132</sup> Quoted by Taylor, op. cit., p. 42.

insanity in exploring the function of the mind. For example, in his chapter on ‘Reason’, Abercrombie argues that imagination, such as that of a novelist, creates visions in which ‘there is probably, for the time, a kind of belief of its real and present existence’. The vision is dissipated ‘by reason comparing the vision with the actual state of things in the external world’, but, if it is not dissipated, ‘this would constitute insanity’. This phenomena of visions seeming to have ‘a real and present existence in the external world, and in which reason fails to correct this belief by the actual relations of external things’ is present, Abercrombie states, in two conditions, dream and insanity. He describes these conditions as ‘mental phenomena [which] have a remarkable affinity to each other’. There are other ‘affections which come under the same class’, Abercrombie explains as he furthers his exploration of this state of mind, but ‘insanity and dreaming are the two extreme examples’.<sup>133</sup> Somnambulism, a dream state which will be discussed in later chapters, is then discussed as a phenomena existing between the states of dream and insanity, further questioning the boundary between the sane and insane mind.

Forbes Winslow’s *On Obscure Diseases of the Brain* (1860) presents very similar inquiries and a joint review of this book, alongside Thomas Laycock’s *Mind and Brain*, in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* brings Winslow’s argument into the ongoing discussion within the medical periodical. The reviewer explains that ‘In the third chapter, on the “Premonitory Symptoms of Insanity”, Dr. Winslow adverts to the close resemblance between many forms of insanity, and the state of the brain and mind during sleep and dreaming [...]’. Winslow recounts many of Abercrombie’s anecdotes in *Obscure Diseases of the Brain* and therefore, due to his obvious familiarity with Abercrombie’s work, likely drew inspiration for his own research into dream and insanity from Abercrombie. In the review of

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<sup>133</sup> John Abercrombie, *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (Waugh and Innes: Edinburgh, 1830) p. 263, 264, 265.

Winslow's work in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, however, no reference is made to Abercrombie's work on the subject, though Abercrombie is frequently discussed in the journal. The reviewer does suggest, however, that 'We know not how far it may have been attempted to compare the states of sleep and dreaming in the sane and insane. Such a comparison would be beset with great difficulties, but might, perhaps, yield some useful results'.<sup>134</sup> This suggestion, to an even greater extent than the comparison of the insane and dreaming minds, demonstrates the importance of dream in developing methods of studying the mind.

Thomas Laycock's *Mind and Brain* (1860) also deals with dream and insanity, however, the article, which discusses Laycock's study at length, only points out the connection between dream and insanity in saying that Dr. Carpenter should 'acknowledge that not only the doctrine of reflex or unconscious cerebral action, but the applications of that doctrine to insanity, dreaming, somnambulism, hypnotism, electro-biology, reverie, &c., were due to Dr. Laycock'.<sup>135</sup> The section of Laycock's *Mind and Brain* which the reviewer is referring to, and which the reviewer assumes the reader is familiar with, states that 'In those induced states of the brain termed "electro-biological" in dreaming, and in insanity, we have forms of disordered consciousness in which this instinctive correction of the impressions on the senses and the thoughts is wholly or partly interrupted'.<sup>136</sup> It is notable here that the examples of unconscious cerebral actions grouped with dream include electro-biology, a study which is incredibly similar to mesmerism and shares its belief in a connection between human minds.

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<sup>134</sup>'Review IX', *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, 26 (1860), 295-307. p. 304. For more on this article, see chapter one, p. 33.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, p. 302.

<sup>136</sup> Thomas Laycock, *Mind and Brain* (Edinburgh: Sutherland and Knox, 1860) p. 97.

The 1865 book *Fascination: or, the Art of Electro-Biology, Mesmerism, and Clairvoyance* by Thomas Welton, for example, distinguishes between electro-biology and mesmerism by stating that electro-biology is the ‘science of impressions, whereby the person impressed simply obeys the will of the operator’ while in Mesmerism ‘the person mesmerised is in perfect sympathy and accord with the mesmeriser, and that which he (the mesmeriser) feels, sees, smells [...] is perceived by the mesmerist’.<sup>137</sup> The mesmeric trance is often referred to as dream, a connection which will be discussed further in chapter three, but this reference further extends the use of dream as a tool to explore the mind’s function, as it is used as a tool to view the influence of mesmerism. During the 1860s, mesmerism usually only appears in both the *Lancet* and *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* as a subject of contempt and mockery, and even then only infrequently, which makes the unquestioned mention of electro-biology unusual. It is possible that the term electro-biology, being more closely aligned, linguistically, to the accepted study of electro-magnetism than to controversial mesmeric practices, is a more acceptable term for the powers of mind that both subjects claim to prove. More importantly, however, the way the connection between dream and insanity is referenced here in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* displays the connection between dream and insanity as one relatively well known to medical professionals, who would most often be readers of the periodical, as well as suggesting that they would be familiar with Laycock’s work.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, dream research is rarely featured in medical periodicals, tending to arise as a subject only in relation to other issues, such as the function of a drug or, as in the example above, in connection with insanity. In general literary

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<sup>137</sup> Thomas Welton, *Fascination: or, the Art of Electro-Biology, Mesmerism, and Clairvoyance* (London: Goldsmith Press, 1865) p. 12.

periodicals, however, the association between dream and insanity arises far more frequently and the subject is considered with great depth. Both Dickens and Collins made particularly notable comments on the subject, as has been seen, in *All the Year Round*, and a similar interest can be found in the *Cornhill Magazine*. As a shilling monthly, the *Cornhill Magazine* was aimed at a largely middle-class audience and contained a combination of serialised fiction, poetry and non-fiction that appealed to a broad audience. While this remains the case throughout the 1860s, editorial change in 1862 did influence the representation of scientific subjects, as Gowan Dawson has pointed out. As Dawson writes, ‘the breezy laissez-faire attitude towards scientific verifiability encouraged during Thackeray’s editorship’ was ‘hastily abandoned’ under the editorial committee comprised of George M. Smith, Frederick Greenwood and George Henry Lewes. One of the examples Dawson highlights is the subject of spiritualism, discussions of which would continue after the editorial change, but which ‘veered more and more towards outright hostility’.<sup>138</sup> Dream, with its connection to both science and spiritualism, may therefore be expected to find different representation in the *Cornhill Magazine* after Thackeray’s resignation.

In Thackeray’s final month as editor, April 1862, two particularly notable examples of the association between dream and insanity were published. ‘First Beginnings’ by Andrew Wynter, which explores the ‘first beginnings’ of brain disease, is one of these. Wynter was himself a physician who edited the *British Medical Journal* from 1855 to 1860. Along with this experience with the medical periodical, he contributed numerous articles to general periodicals, specialising in ‘popularizing scientific information for general readers’.<sup>139</sup> The

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<sup>138</sup> Gowan Dawson, ‘The *Cornhill Magazine* and Shilling Monthlies in Mid-Victorian Britain’, *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 123-150. p. 147.

<sup>139</sup> P. W. J. Bartrip, ‘Wynter, Andrew’, *ODNB* (September 2004) <<https://doi-org.ezproxy3.lib.le.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/30163>>

The popularisation of science for a general audience within periodicals has been widely noted and is examined, for example, in *Science Serialised* ed. Geoffrey Cantor and Sally Shuttleworth (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004). The importance of popularisation to the development of scientific subjects is also particularly addressed

result is an article which is incredibly detailed, yet does not assume that the reader has any existing professional knowledge. ‘Of late years’, Wynter writes, ‘the science of mind, healthy and diseased, has been placed, as it were, in the field of the intellectual microscope, and since the appearance of Dr. Abercrombie’s *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers*, which created such a profound sensation thirty years ago, numerous investigators have been engaged in following up the clue he placed in their hands’.<sup>140</sup> Wynter’s language does not frame the study of mind as the subject of research by medical professionals but as a mystery to be solved by following a trail of clues. While this is an appropriate metaphor for research, it also implies that the investigator does not need to be a professional and that, therefore, the non-professional reader might be included in this investigation. The language also romanticises scientific research by presenting it as a sensational, intellectual, mystery to be solved. There is a clear similarity between this image and that of the amateur detective presented in much detective fiction of the age. It is therefore possible that Wynter was purposely drawing on this popular image to draw the reader into the exciting role of amateur detective themselves.<sup>141</sup>

As an example of one such ‘investigator’, Wynter points particularly to ‘the great Morel’ in France. Benedict Morel’s *Traité des Maladies Mentales* had been published in 1860 and Wynter’s reference to simply ‘the great Morel’ assumes that the reader is familiar with Morel and his work.<sup>142</sup> As an example of an ‘investigator’ from Britain, Wynter refers to Dr. Winslow, arguing that his ‘volume on *Obscure Diseases of the Brain and Mind*, has given practical application to this line of inquiry, without which the efforts of abstract philosophy

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in Bernard Lightman’s ‘“The Voices of Nature”: Popularizing Victorian Science’ in *Victorian Science in Context* ed. Bernard Lightman (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997).

<sup>140</sup> Andrew Wynter, ‘First Beginnings’, *Cornhill Magazine*, 5 (1862) 481-494. p. 481.

<sup>141</sup> The popularity and importance of the fictional amateur detective has been explored by Haia Shpayer-Makov in *The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>142</sup> *A Treatise on Mental Illness*.

were vain'. Winslow's work, he continues, 'has not been surpassed since the appearance of Abercrombie's great work' and 'opens a subject in which the public is greatly interested, namely, the careful observation of the *First Beginnings* of brain disease, which, if permitted to advance unchallenged, always proceeds to lamentable results'. Having informed the reader of the most relevant sources and current research into the subject, Wynter also suggests to readers that brain disease can be prevented by recognising early signs and not permitting it to 'advance unchallenged'.<sup>143</sup> This implies that the article will help readers to avoid the 'lamentable results' of brain disease, taking the role of medical professionals to diagnose themselves and others.

As was seen in the previous chapter, mental health issues, or cases of 'insanity', were thought to be increasing during this period, so the ability to avoid brain disease, or prevent it in others, takes advantage of contemporary fears to draw interest. There are also parallels to be drawn between this encouragement of self-diagnosis and the emergence of public health journals, 'the vast bulk of which', as Sally Shuttleworth points out, emerged 'from the 1860s onwards', after the journal which is considered the first of its kind (Benjamin Ward Richardson's *Journal of Public Health and Sanitary Review*) was published in 1855. Shuttleworth also highlights the fact that public health journals emerged in the face of various developments on the subject of public health, such as the 1848 Public Health Act. Richardson, she argues, began his journal 'in the light of intense public interest in questions of public health, particularly in cities'.<sup>144</sup> Wynter undoubtedly draws on this same interest in

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<sup>143</sup> Op. cit., Wynter, p. 481.

<sup>144</sup> Sally Shuttleworth, "'National Health is National Wealth': Publics, Professions, and the Rise of the Public Health Journal', *Science Periodicals in Nineteenth Century Britain*, ed. Gowan Dawson, Bernard Lightman, Sally Shuttleworth and Jonathan R. Topham (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020) 337-369. p. 340.

‘First Beginnings’, by suggesting to readers that the knowledge he is providing will help them to preserve their mental health.<sup>145</sup>

When Wynter refers to the ‘efforts of abstract philosophy’, which would have been in vain without Winslow’s practical application, he highlights the movement away from philosophical research on the mind and into the physiological psychology which followed it. A physiological approach to brain disease is obvious in the article, for example in the opinions that ‘all abnormal mental phenomena depend on some unhealthy condition of the blood’. Wynter also refers to a popular feature of dream research when he writes that ‘in the horrible phantoms stimulating the thoughts of the insane, which haunt us in nightmare, we have a familiar example of the manner in which an over-loaded stomach will disturb the mind’.<sup>146</sup> This theory, that digestion and the type of food consumed has a direct effect on dream, is a common one, as discussed earlier, and features in Macnish’s *The Philosophy of Sleep*. Wynter, however, further suggests that the condition of the stomach is also related to the mind in a state of insanity, referring to the thoughts of the insane and thoughts during nightmare as equal.

Wynter’s language of phantoms and haunting is also interesting here. Earlier in the article he refers to the ‘demon in possession’ forcing a person to act out of character, ‘select[ing] those very moments’ which are least convenient for socially inappropriate acts.<sup>147</sup> The demon is a metaphor for insanity, though Wynter’s use of the metaphor seems to charge the illness with intentional malice, as does his use of the phantoms haunting the mind. While Wynter’s article is in no way seriously implying supernatural causes, this is certainly an intentional reference to beliefs considered outdated by some, but still believed during the

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<sup>145</sup> Nineteenth-century concerns about health are also addressed in *Anxious Times: Medicine and Modernity in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Amelia Bonea, Melissa Dickson, Sally Shuttleworth and Jennifer Wallis (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 2019).

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, p. 485.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, p. 483.

1860s by many, of demons and spirits influencing dreams and actions.<sup>148</sup> In doing so, it literally transforms supernatural beliefs into scientific ones, pinning phantoms and hauntings to physical causes. It is also language which emphasises the fear of the unknown, encompassing both the supernatural and the concept of mind when not viewed as a physical object. ‘The more the fact of the physical nature of insanity is acknowledged – the more it is recognised as an ailment which can be reached by physical agents – the greater will be its chance of successful treatment’, Wynter reassures the reader.<sup>149</sup> The overall effect is to present physiological science as the reassuring answer to fears of the unknown.

‘The Brain and its Use’ by James Hinton also appears in the April 1862 edition of the *Cornhill Magazine* and, within the wider context of exploring the functions of different sections of the brain, also considers the connection between dreaming and insanity. Opening this lengthy article, Hinton outlines the reasons for popular interest in the function of the brain, writing:

We cannot wonder at the interest with which the brain has been regarded ever since it was discovered that consciousness had its seat within it. What a strange thing it seems that feeling and thought should be traced up to a soft piece of marrow within the head, and there fixed. How provocative of curiosity, how stimulative of hope! If we could but penetrate deeply enough into this little bit of matter, open as it is to all our senses with microscopes and chemical analysis to aid them, would not the whole secret of life stand before us? Should we not then know why we think, and how it is we feel,

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<sup>148</sup> There are often implications that superstitious beliefs remain prevalent amongst the working class, however anecdotal evidence of supernatural dreams as well as the dream beliefs of spiritualism indicate that spirit influence over dream was not a belief specific to the working class. This will be addressed further in chapter three.

<sup>149</sup> Op. cit., Wynter, p. 485.

what consciousness depends on, and how the senses are made the ministers  
not of impressions only, but of knowledge?<sup>150</sup>

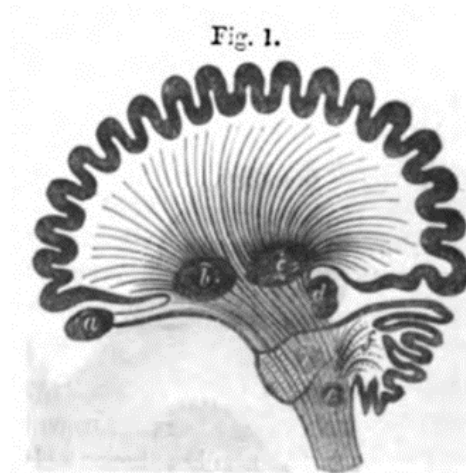
This statement highlights a number of key issues surrounding the study of mind and Hinton displays the reasoning behind interest in the emergence of physiological psychology. Subjects such as the origin of emotion and the definition of consciousness, which had not gained any satisfactory answers through philosophical study, stood to be answered in a definite and scientific manner with the help of ‘microscopes and chemical analysis’. Tangible and visual evidence may be provided for the elusive subject of the function of the mind. The overarching tone of the entire introduction is excitement for the possibilities of exploring one’s own consciousness and the shared experiences of the human mind; the hope of finding definitive answers to the questions of ‘why we think’, ‘how we feel’ and how we learn. In a similar way to Wynter, Hinton shows that science will reassuringly rid us of the unknown.

While Hinton’s article often takes an informal tone and provides an explanation of scientific terms, it also provides a great level of scientific detail. Including detailed images of experiments and annotated cross sections of the brain, this article brings specialised medical knowledge to the general reader of the *Cornhill Magazine*. The level of scientific detail in the *Cornhill Magazine*, as well as the assumption that readers would be familiar with the names of eminent researchers, as was seen in Wynter’s article, can be partly attributed to its largely middle-class and therefore educated audience. As a slightly cheaper weekly, for example, *All the Year Round* (2d. per issue), does not go into as much detail about physiological aspects of the brain. The *Cornhill Magazine*’s ability to produce high quality images also contributes to

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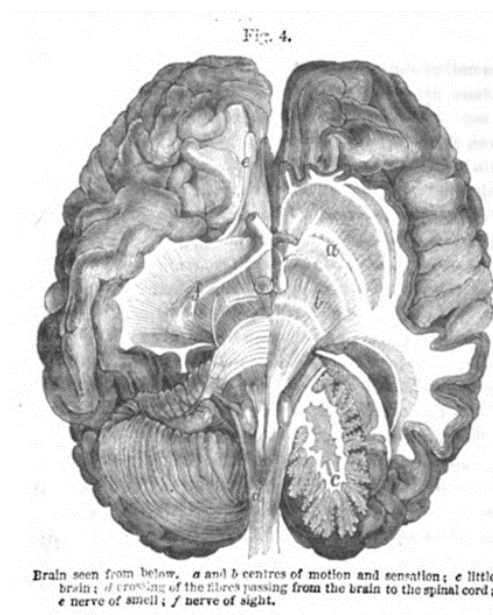
<sup>150</sup> James Hinton, ‘The Brain and its Use’, *Cornhill Magazine*, 5, (1862) 409-425. p. 409.

its ability to present scientific diagrams and experiments, as seen here in Hinton's 'The Brain and It's Use':

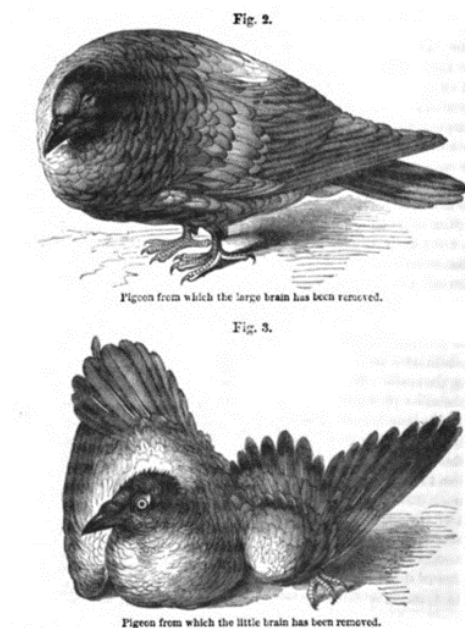


*Figure 2: A representation of the three centres of the brain with connecting fibres. p.*

*411.*



*Figure 3: 'Brain seen from below' with letters indicating specific areas such as the 'centres of motion and sensation' and 'nerve of smell'. p. 414.*



*Figure 4: Depicting an experiment carried out on pigeons, from which the 'small brain' or 'large brain' have been removed in order to demonstrate the differing function of the two. p. 412.*

These woodcut engravings are detailed but were not overly expensive to produce, due to the durability of the blocks (in comparison to metal plates) and speed of production (which could be achieved by allowing a number of engravers to work on different parts of an image).<sup>151</sup> Publications such as the *Cornhill Magazine* were therefore able to provide a number of illustrations in a single number economically. In 'The Brain and Its Use' Hinton is able to explain his point clearly without the need for professional language by referring to the illustrations provided. In figure two, for example, the areas of the brain which are referred to in the article are indicated by letters on the relevant part of the image, with a caption underneath explaining the area that each letter represents. Figure three, meanwhile, allows the reader to view the results of an experiment which Hinton refers to in order to explain the difference between the 'small brain' and 'large brain'.

<sup>151</sup> See *The Lure of Illustration in the Nineteenth Century: Picture and Press* ed. Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) p. 4.

Hinton's article, while detailed, remains accessible for the non-professional, and involves the reader with intermittent questions and the use of the inclusive "we," as seen in the above quote. It should be noted that this is not specific to Hinton's article. As Gowan Dawson has pointed out, the use of 'the collective, editorial, "we"' was common in periodicals before the 1860s and remained so in the *Cornhill Magazine*.<sup>152</sup> In the context of dream specifically, however, this adds to the debate about what dreaming was. Dream appears twice in Hinton's article; once when briefly considering 'the fantastic dreams which ensue from the perverted action of the brain under the stimulant or narcotic poisoning', in a discussion of 'unconscious thought', and again when he asks: 'In day-dreaming, do we not think in two ways at once; indulging unbounded fancies on the one hand (or brain) and holding on to the cold reality by the other? If the latter also were to slip its grasp, how far should we be from temporary madness?'<sup>153</sup> Just as in Dickens' 'The Uncommercial Traveller', Hinton poses his consideration as a question to the reader as an issue which is relevant to everyone and is, therefore, of universal interest. While this section shares similarities with Dickens' sentiments, there are two notable differences. Firstly, Hinton uses day-dream as his point of comparison, rather than the dream of sleep that Dickens writes of. Hinton is also not considering the mind in a dream state as equal to that of insanity, suggesting rather that the dream state leaves one side of the brain 'holding on to the cold reality', thereby preventing it from fully entering a state of insanity. As he gives no example of it, it is unclear whether Hinton's opinion of sleeping dream would differ from day-dream, however, as dream and day-dream are frequently considered to be the same action of the mind in this period, it seems likely that Hinton's theory would apply to either.

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<sup>152</sup> Gowan Dawson, 'Science in the Periodical Press' *Routledge Research Companion to Nineteenth-Century British Literature and Science* ed. John Holmes and Sharon Ruston (London: Routledge, 2017). 235-254. p. 174.

<sup>153</sup> Op. cit., Hinton, p. 417, 415.

In his reference to ‘one hand (or brain)’ Hinton is writing of the concept of dual brain, or duality of mind, using a play on words to continue the informal tone of the article while addressing an interesting contemporary theory. Like Wynter, Hinton refers to Dr. Wigan, author of *A New View of Insanity: The Duality of the Mind* (1844), whose book contains a chapter on dreaming and the ways in which it proves his theory of duality of the mind. This also suggests that Hinton is writing of the dream state generally, though his use of day-dream specifically gives the impression of a more conscious, controlled action than the sleeping dream, particularly from his use of the term ‘indulging’. As was mentioned earlier, the general purpose of the article is clearly to present science as a comforting answer to potentially disturbing questions about the mind and in Hinton’s representation of a dream state that is entered intentionally by the dreamer ‘indulging’, rather than one in which the sleeper has no control, he maintains this impression of comfort and control. However, the boundary between sanity and insanity is still shown to be unnervingly fragile. While the language implies that one is further from insanity when not ‘indulging’ one half of the brain in ‘unbounded fancies’, the ‘slip’ of the other half’s grasp on reality implies the sudden, unintentional and irreversible change possible in every human brain. In this way, despite the comforting promise of control, the article also continues to perpetuate the fear it seeks to address, that a person could easily lose control of their own mind.

### Duality of the Brain

The concept of duality of the brain and mind appears to have been a well-known one by the 1860s, as was the related concept of double consciousness. As Anne Harrington and Anne Stiles have pointed out, the concept of double brain, and of cerebral localisation generally, has theological, rather than medical origins. As was mentioned in the introduction

to this thesis, Harrington and Stiles have highlighted René Descartes argument his 1649 ‘Passions of the Soul’ that the seat of the soul could be found in the pineal gland, beginning a tension between religion and theories of cerebral localisation. Harrington also highlights the role of phrenology in the early nineteenth century in continuing this tension, pointing out that ‘the phrenologists, led by the Austrian anatomist Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1826), were among the first to take the growing body of evidence as they found it and map out the human soul boldly upon the convolutions of the cerebral hemisphere’. In response to the materialistic theory of phrenologists, some, including Sir Henry Holland, took the stance that while theories of double brain were true, ‘standing *over and above* that brain was a single, immaterial mind’, thus separating the soul entirely from the argument.<sup>154</sup>

Wigan, who is specifically referred to in Hinton’s ‘The Brain and its Use’, was similarly keen to avoid an argument which questioned religious beliefs. Harrington argues that Wigan ‘tried hard to make it appear as if his doctrine, that the mind and brain of a man were equally dual, in no way implied that he was adopting a materialistic perspective or denying the reality of the Cartesian soul’. He does this by arguing that the interchangeable use of the terms ‘mind’ and ‘soul’ was ‘a serious obstacle to the freedom of investigation of mental phenomena’ and continuing to define them separately, as he intends to use them in his own work. Harrington, however, voices suspicion over Wigan’s claim to piety, pointing out the ‘conspicuous anticlerical bias pervading much of Wigan’s unpublished writings’.<sup>155</sup> It would therefore appear that Wigan intentionally modified his argument to fit with contemporary concerns about cerebral localisation and the existence of the soul. When Hinton writes that Wigan ‘argues that the mind is double also, explaining on the principle

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<sup>154</sup> Anne Harrington, *Medicine, Mind and the Double Brain: A Study in Nineteenth Century Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) p. 6; Anne Stiles *Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) p. 2, 7, 21.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid*, Harrington, p. 25.

some forms of mental disease', he also adds 'and though we may not accept this idea, we certainly seem to find in our experience many traces of the influence of our double brain'.<sup>156</sup> Although Hinton leaves his own view on the subject ambiguous, he also disassociates the *Cornhill Magazine* from either side of the religious and scientific debate by not acknowledging the truth of double mind or the association of mind and brain.

Dickens mentions 'the theory of the Duality of the Brain' in his 'Lying Awake', published in *Household Words* in 1852. Being unable to sleep, he wonders whether 'perhaps, with no scientific intention or invention, I was illustrating the theory of the Duality of the Brain; perhaps one part of my brain, being wakeful, sat up to watch the other part which was sleepy'. The comment in the context of the article is clearly humorous, with the humour centred on the mind functioning 'with no scientific intention or invention'.<sup>157</sup> This leaves the impression of a degree of mockery for the materialistic theory. It also suggests that the theory is a relatively well known one a decade before Hinton's 'The Brain and its Use'.

All other brief mentions of 'Duality of the Brain' in both *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* are equally vague about the theory. In July 1852, for example, the anonymous article 'Our Doubles' avoids the theory altogether by referring to the subject of the article as the 'theory of corporeal duality' and pointing out 'I don't hint at the duality of the mind, for that is a subject above my reach, and above my ken'.<sup>158</sup> Later, 'Brain Spectres' (1863) takes a case which may be explained by the theory and refutes it with an alternative.<sup>159</sup> 'A Physician's Dreams', published in *All the Year Round* in November 1859, openly disputes the materialistic implications of the theory using dream. The author writes:

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<sup>156</sup> Op. cit. Hinton, p. 415.

<sup>157</sup> Charles Dickens, 'Lying Awake', *Household Words*, 6 (1852) 145-148. p. 145.

<sup>158</sup> 'Our Doubles', *Household Words*, 5 (1852) 388-391. p. 389.

<sup>159</sup> 'Brain Spectres', *Household Words*, 10 (1863) 426-428.

As to the external nature of the phantasmagoria of dreams, we may, from the mere constitution of man, show that the soul needs no one but herself to prepare and paint the slides, or to set up in dream-land the magic-lantern of her puppet theatre. The mind is a great conjuror. Some have said that she is like a double-acted harp, and can play many chords at one and the same moment. Certainly the duality of the nerves and organs of sense seem to indicate a power in the mind of (at least) a duplex action. The thought has been carried out in an ingenious volume called *The Duality of the Brain*. But the scenery of the soul is too varied to be accounted for by a mere double-action. [...] Within her consciousness is comprised creation – nay, God himself, or all that we can conceive of God.<sup>160</sup>

The language here is that of art or entertainment. The phantasmagoria, painted slides, magic lantern and puppet theatre are all optical marvels which suggest to the reader the fantastical imagination. The mind becomes a metaphorical conjuror, continuing the theme of entertainments, and is likened to a complex musical instrument, aligning it with the arts. Science features very little in this discussion of the mind and soul. The physiological ‘duality of the nerves and organs of sense’ are admitted to indicate ‘a duplex action’, but the instant dismissal of double-action to account for ‘the scenery of the soul’ leaves the compliment for the ‘ingenious volume called *The Duality of the Brain*’ seeming to include only its physiological implications, separating the mind and soul. The end of the discussion makes the religious feelings of the author clear and explains the reluctance to include the mind in the theory of duality. Instead the mind and soul are aligned with the arts and entertainment, the imaginative, while the brain is aligned with the nerves and organs, the practical and material. Religious influence can be seen in both *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, although

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<sup>160</sup> ‘A Physician’s Dream’, *All the Year Round*, 2 (1859) 109-113. p. 111.

no specific religious views are made apparent. This is undoubtedly due to Dickens' own broad views on Christianity and his aversion to public professions of faith.<sup>161</sup> For this reason, supernatural dreams in the periodical are most often met with mockery, unless they are of a religious origin. This same stance is clearly continued in relation to the theory of the double brain.

Later in *All the Year Round*, the article 'Magic and Science' (March, 1861) appears to raise the issue of duality of the mind without referring to the theory itself. The article looks at the supernatural beliefs of ancient times, pointing out the origins of old superstitions and setting them alongside their modern scientific explanations. Unsurprisingly, dream forms a part of this discussion.<sup>162</sup> Explaining the possible origins of belief in supernatural dreams, the author writes:

If you consider dreams, you will notice as one peculiarity that in them the mind is, as it were, separated into two distinct entities which hold converse with each other. We are often astonished at the statements and repartees of our double; we are puzzled by his questions; we are angered or flattered by his remarks – and yet these have been our own creation. It is natural to suppose that we have actually been visited during sleep by one of the spirit world; and until the science of psychology had learned to interpret the phenomena of dreams by the phenomena of waking thought, especially of reverie, this supernatural explanation would prevail.<sup>163</sup>

This statement clearly suggests support for the theory that the mind is dual, not the brain alone. However, it does not mention the existing theory of duality of the mind, or refer to it in

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<sup>161</sup> See Paul Schlicke, *Oxford Reader's Companion to Charles Dickens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). In particular, 'Evangelical Religion', p. 227 (pp.227-228) and 'Religion' p. 492 (pp.490-494).

<sup>162</sup> For further discussion of the supernatural in this article, see chapter four.

<sup>163</sup> 'Magic and Science', *All the Year Round*, 4 (1861) 561-566. p. 565.

any way, omitting the word ‘duality’ or ‘dual’ entirely. It seems unlikely that the author would avoid using the term for a non-specialist audience, as Dickens used the term himself in the periodical. It is possible that the author avoids naming the theory because the article supports the concept, knowing the controversy it created. It is also possible that the author explains the specific point, rather than using a previously coined term, because of the uncertainty of language surrounding the mind, as the following paragraph will demonstrate. Wigan, for example, describes double consciousness (or, his preferred title, ‘alternate consciousness’) as a ‘person being in a manner two individuals, as far as sensation and sense of personal identity are concerned’.<sup>164</sup> This is inseparable from the concept of dual mind, though it is clearly more psychological than the physiological theory of double brain; however it does not use language to link to either of these existing theories. Wigan’s two titles for the same theory also demonstrates the unfixed nature of the language surrounding studies of mind. The theory of double consciousness described by Wigan does closely match the ‘Magic and Science’ example of the dreamer not recognising that they are the creator of their double. While ‘Magic and Science’ seems remarkably sure about the establishment of the subject of psychology as a science, and its having already established a way to interpret dreams, contemporary sources, as shown in this chapter, demonstrate that the subject was not so stable.

The state of double consciousness is frequently associated with dream or somnambulism, the subject of this section of ‘Magic and Science’. Abercrombie describes the state in his *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers*, where a section of his chapter on somnambulism is titled ‘Remarkable condition, commonly called Double Consciousness’. He argues that the condition is named ‘rather incorrectly’, as Wigan implies it is, but describes it as consisting of ‘the individual recollecting, during a paroxysm, circumstances which

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<sup>164</sup> Arthur Wigan, *The Duality of the Mind* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longman, 1844) p. 392.

occurred in a former attack, though there was no remembrance of them during the interval'.<sup>165</sup> This extends the description to suggest a situation in which the dreamer or somnambulist appears to have an entirely different personality in their waking state which is unaware of the actions of the double. While both of these definitions may be applied to the argument used in 'Magic and Science' it is essential to note that double consciousness was a term applied to a variety of conditions.

As Beth Tressler explains, "Double consciousness" applied to a widely diverse spectrum of mental states that stretched from dual personalities to the sleeping state to mesmerism to reverie to somnambulism, with many variations in between. Often in a sweeping gesture, the writings of physicians and intellectuals would conflate these distinct states and make "double consciousness" as hazy and unidentified as the condition it sought to characterize'.<sup>166</sup> Fitting with the subject of psychology at this time, the language surrounding this theory of the mind is ill-defined and confusingly changeable. In Wigan's *Duality of the Mind*, for example, he gives Henry Holland's definition of double consciousness as 'rapid fluctuation of mind from one train of thought to another', which is again different to the definition Wigan himself provides.<sup>167</sup> This uncertainty is relevant not only because it is necessary to consider that certain terms used in an article may not mean the same thing, but also because the uncertainty demonstrates one of the ways in which this open discussion of the mind aided the early formation of psychology and its language. One of the most relevant definitions of double consciousness during the 1860s, in terms of its presence in contemporary discussions of mind, is that given by Abercrombie, as it describes a situation

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<sup>165</sup> John Abercrombie, *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth* (Waugh and Innes: Edinburgh, 1832), p. 298. This theory is crucial to the plot of Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*, which will be discussed in the following section.

<sup>166</sup> Beth Tressler, 'Waking Dreams: George Eliot and the Poetics of Double Consciousness' *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 39 (2011) p. 483-498. p. 485.

<sup>167</sup> Op. cit. Wigan, p. 109.

which caused much debate regarding the criminal responsibility of a sleeping person and somnambulists. Explaining the function of the mind during dream states became a key point in law and medicine, as well as psychology.

## **Lunacy, Vice and Crime**

The complex issue of criminal accountability in dream states is one which arises in periodical literature throughout the 1860s. One clear example in fiction can be found in *All the Year Round*'s serialisation of Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*, where the shock of Franklin Blake's theft leads to complex questions when he is unable to recall his somnambulistic actions. It is notable that the solution to this issue in the novel, corresponding with Abercrombie's definition of double consciousness, is to recreate his somnambulistic state, in which he can remember his actions when he was last in the same state. Criminal accountability was one of the areas relating to dream which medical periodicals were discussing. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, medical periodicals rarely dealt with the question of the origin of dreams, but did discuss issues relating to dream alongside other medical issues. The issue of criminal accountability made it necessary for the medical profession to collaborate with those interested in criminal law, as medical evidence of the function of the mind was entirely necessary to establish the level of accountability, and the debates visible within medical periodicals show the issue to be one of great concern.

The *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* directly addresses the issue in 1862, in the article 'Responsibilities of Somnambulists'. Here Dr Legrand du Saulle explains that 'Two opinions are before us relative to the responsibility of the somnambulist:'

The first is supported by Hoffbauer, Fodéré, and Muyart de Vouglans; it consists in regarding every person as guilty who commits a criminal act

during his sleep of somnambulism. “The actions of somnambulists are probably the result of the ideas and meditations of the evening.” Fodéré has even passed the following severe judgment: - “He (the somnambulist) whose conscience is always in conformity with his social duties, never belies himself when he is alone with his own soul; he, on the contrary, who only thinks of crime, falsehood, and vengeance, displays during sleep the bent of his depraved inclination, which the presence of exterior objects had kept enchained during the evening. *Far from considering these acts as delirium, I regard them as the most independent which can exist in the human life.* [Italics in the original text] I look upon somnambulism as a crucible in which thoughts and intentions disconnect themselves absolutely from the mass of matter”.

Supporters of this first theory include well-known figures in their respective fields, including physician François-Emmanuel Fodéré and lawyer Pierre-François Muyart de Vouglans. It is therefore presented as a theory with some popularity and support from experts. The author, however, refers to this as an ‘inhuman theory’ which ‘seems to be inspired by the behaviour of one of the Caesars under a circumstance worthy of narration’. The story referred to is explained to be that of a Roman citizen who dreamt of killing the emperor and, on the basis that he would not have dreamed it if he had not thought of it during the day, the emperor ‘delivered up to punishment the inoffensive victim of the mysteries of sleep’.<sup>168</sup> This shares similarities with the dream theory that impressions made during the day affect the content of the dream, but goes further to suggest that a person’s true feelings, controlled by external influences, or ‘the presence of exterior objects’ while awake, are only fully displayed in the

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<sup>168</sup> Legrand du Saulle, ‘Responsibilities of Somnambulists’, *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, 30 (1862) 540-541. p. 540.

dream state. Fodéré's comment on somnambulism as the 'crucible in which thoughts and intentions disconnect themselves absolutely from the mass of matter' also demonstrates support for the theory that mind and brain are separate. This first theory, considering every person who commits a crime during somnambulism as guilty, is an unnerving one, in which a sleeping person, unable to control their thoughts, may reveal their true 'depraved inclination'. The author of this article, by using the term 'mysteries of sleep', reminds the reader, however, that the origins of dreams are still unknown, therefore the mind in this state cannot be considered criminal.

Legrand du Saulle does present this first theory of automatic guilt as the least popular of the two. On the second theory he continues:

The second opinion, that which is most generally received, tends to consider the somnambulist as being in possession of a will too uncertain, too fragile, to hold him subject to penal laws; in fact *dormiens furioso æquiparetur*.<sup>169</sup>

Upon what foundation may criminality reasonably be based? Upon a dream, regarded rightly or wrongly as the reflective mirror of the evening's preoccupations. But has a guilty thought never crossed the brain of an honest man?<sup>170</sup>

This opposing theory does not refute the idea that thoughts during the day influence the content of a dream, only that a man may be honest but still experience a guilty thought. The imagery of dream as a reflective mirror is also an interesting one. As a mirror is not an exact

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<sup>169</sup> This translates roughly as 'sleeping is the equivalent of madness'. Du Saulle's article is also published in *Annales médico psychologiques* (4th ser.:v.1) in January 1863 and in this version the Latin phrase is attributed to Tiraqueau, a French Jurist and politician, and particularly to page 15 of his *Le De Poenis Temperandis* (1559).

<sup>170</sup> Op. cit. Legrand du Saulle, p. 540.

replica, but an image at least inverted and perhaps a little distorted, this is the manner in which a persons' thoughts are displayed to them in their dreaming mind. This gives further reason to excuse the sleeper from criminal responsibility, suggesting that, although the images of their dreams are influenced by their waking thoughts, they are not responsible for their distortions. Unlike the first theory, this also excuses the dreamer from the moral guilt of experiencing unwanted dream images. Joel Peter Eigen is discussing the popularity of viewing demonstrations of unconscious states of being, through mesmerism or hypnotism, when he writes that:

Dreams revealed bizarre, outrageous, and personally horrifying ideas that could pass through one's mind without the ability to "correct" or, indeed, even interrupt noxious associations and accompanying emotions. Beyond mere dreaming, sleepwalking graphically revealed the extent to which ideas could not only possess the mind but also lead to physical motion, with the dreamer's conscious self powerless to intrude upon the impelling idea. The power of such an idea to rouse the sleeping person and produce movement captivated, and sometimes horrified – the onlooker.<sup>171</sup>

This fear, both of the unchecked images themselves and of acting in a way one cannot control, partly explains the popularity of the debate on whether a person was responsible for their thoughts and actions while dreaming and, by association, also for the popularity of research into what dreaming was. The captivating, yet horrifying, prospect of losing control over one's own mind was a fear for all, without boundaries, a little understood phenomenon which could affect any human. The answer to this fear was in understanding the function of

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<sup>171</sup> Joel Peter Eigen, *Unconscious Crime: Mental Absence and Criminal Responsibility in Victorian London* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003) p. 16.

the mind and this is what general literary periodicals offered to a non-professional audience when they engaged with scientific theories of mind and dream.

Saulle also goes on to give a different reason for fearing somnambulism, suggesting that it may be simulated.<sup>172</sup> He provides three possible reasons for this, the first being for the purpose of ‘accomplishing an act which would be difficult or impossible to execute during the evening’. Saulle does not expand on this point but, presumably, refers to a person feigning somnambulism in order to carry out an act which would be either inappropriate or criminal while awake. The second, most closely related to the outcome of the responsibility debate, is ‘to relieve oneself from the just punishment of a reprehensible or injurious action’. Thirdly, ‘to excite commiseration and obtain assistance by fraudulent means’.<sup>173</sup> Amidst the question of whether somnambulists, unaware of their own actions, should be held criminally responsible, this asks whether the choice to clear those who acted in a dream state from responsibility for their actions may lead to intentional criminal actions going unpunished.

Saulle reassures the reader that ‘falsehood and cunning are not long in being unmasked: imitators generally take to it very badly, and scarcely know the first elements of the game they vainly endeavour to play. Besides, the possibility of simulation must always be present to the mind of the expert. The fear of fraud will always guard him from a hasty judgment, and from falling into a snare’. Saulle is addressing the judgment made by medical professionals on criminal responsibility, considering the fears of the professional reader of the medical journal when he writes of these ‘misadventures’ compromising ‘the knowledge, the character, and the dignity of the medical man’.<sup>174</sup> For many reasons, the question of the responsibility of the somnambulists is an unsettling one.

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<sup>172</sup> Roger Smith discusses this with reference to contemporary trials in *Trial by Medicine: Insanity and Responsibility in Victorian Trials* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981) p. 95-96.

<sup>173</sup> Op. cit., Legrand du Saulle, p. 540.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, p. 540.

In the *Lancet* (1868), Thomas Laycock raises a similar argument when he uses dream to discuss the criminal accountability of the insane in ‘Suggestions for Rendering Medico-Mental Science Available to the Better Administration of Justice, and the More Effectual Prevention of Lunacy, Vice and Crime’. Like Saulle, Laycock recognises the similarity between dreaming and insane minds. Disagreement between medicine and law is instantly evident in Laycock’s article, which he begins by explaining ‘that medico-mental science is often at variance with the doctrines and decisions of the courts of law is a fact too well known and too generally admitted to need formal proof. It is almost as generally assumed that the consequent scandalous failures of justice, which too often occur, must be attributed to the defective education and knowledge of the profession’.<sup>175</sup> For these failures to be considered ‘scandalous’ there is clearly public interest behind this tension, which is confirmed by the repeated presence of the subject in general periodicals.

This would have been aided by the availability of information on criminal trials. Eigen points out that ‘there is available a curious set of pamphlets known as the *Old Bailey Session Papers (OBSP)* that, beginning in 1674 and continuing into the early twentieth century, report courtroom testimony of every trial at the Old Bailey, London’s central criminal court’. These pamphlets provided current news of criminal trials, an insight into the world of the legal professional specifically written for the public. As Eigen continues to explain, ‘these trial narratives of the Old Bailey’s sittings (the “sessions”) were taken down in shorthand, transcribed and printed nightly, and sold on the street within days of the trial. Although written for nonlawyers, they carried the imprimatur of the Common Council for the City of London, which ordered their publication. [...] the OSBP were intended for a lay

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<sup>175</sup> Thomas Laycock, ‘Suggestions for Rendering Medico-Mental Science Available to the Better Administration of Justice, and the More Effectual Prevention of Lunacy, Vice and Crime’, *Lancet*, 92 (1868) 403-405. p. 403.

audience [...]'. As well as this 'The *Times of London* [...] maintained a complete index of criminal trials'.<sup>176</sup>

Along with this ability to follow current trials closely, newspaper articles revealed shocking tales of somnambulism. For example, 'The Somnambulist of Redcleugh' in 1860 tells the story of a woman who admits to murder while sleep-walking.<sup>177</sup> Similarly, 'The Somnambulist Assassin. A Tale' (1863) provides a story in which two murders are attempted by a somnambulist and the somnambulist is nearly buried alive while in his trance.<sup>178</sup> Although these examples do not examine the way in which cases of crime during somnambulism are being legally dealt with, they do raise the issue of the criminal accountability of somnambulists, keeping the issue and the scandalous possibilities, in the public mind. These legal cases and newspaper articles also demonstrate ways in which, alongside the presence of the subjects in periodical literature, the issue of the origin of dreams remained in the public view during the 1860s. Unlike the periodicals, however, they do not provide a platform to discuss these often complex issues, or to present differing sides of the debate in a variety of forms.

Explaining his point in 'Suggestions for Rendering Medico-Mental Science Available to the Better Administration of Justice, and the More Effectual Prevention of Lunacy, Vice and Crime', Laycock compares dreaming to insanity and further explains his meaning that 'conduct depends, not on what the man knows in the abstract but on what he remembers at the moment: a state of mind in which no one – nay, not even the individual himself – can give

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<sup>176</sup> Op. cit., Eigen, p. 4, 5.

<sup>177</sup> *The Alnwick Mercury*, February 1, 1860. p. 2. The story itself is reprinted from Wilson's *Tales of the Borders* and, although supposedly factual, is told with the detail and pacing of a piece of fiction and clearly designed for entertainment.

<sup>178</sup> *The Leeds Times*, October 17, 1863. p. 6. Again, a story clearly designed for entertainment and told in a style recognisable from many ghost stories, with the story teller encouraged to tell of their experiences around the fire at a Christmas party.

evidence, except as to mere probabilities'.<sup>179</sup> Although Laycock is writing of many forms of insanity, his description here appears to be referring to double consciousness, in the form of which an individual cannot remember the actions of their double. Anne Harrington writes that the theory of duality of the mind, specifically Wigan's theory, 'proclaimed reassuringly that insanity was caused by physiological malfunctioning and carried no moral taint', although 'it argued no less strongly that every individual had a *moral duty* to cultivate significant power over his two brains so as never to succumb to the ravages of madness'.<sup>180</sup>

This is certainly also applicable to Hinton's 'The Brain and its Use' in the *Cornhill Magazine*, where madness is a consequence of 'indulging' one half of the brain. Laycock, in his article, also highlights the more complex nature of the study of mind due to the prevalence of supernatural belief. 'That numerous vices and crimes originate in disordered brain-functioning is one of the principal discoveries of modern medicine', Laycock writes, demonstrating the positive progress of psychology or the science of mind. He continues, however, that 'up to a late period the subjects of the disorder were classed with those who yielded to the temptations either of the world, or the flesh, or the devil; and even now those subtle suggestions and impulses to do evil which are of the essence of the disorder are not unfrequently attributed, as formerly, from a very remote antiquity, to supernatural influences'.<sup>181</sup> Laycock highlights the progress of studies of the mind when he points to classifications which were believed 'up to a late period', and which are therefore believed no longer, in the face of new scientific evidence. However, despite this progress, he also admits that aspects of the dreaming or insane mind are still attributed by some to supernatural causes. Laycock emphasises that these beliefs were hugely outdated, 'from a very remote

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<sup>179</sup> Op. cit., Laycock, p. 404.

<sup>180</sup> Op. cit., Harrington, p. 25.

<sup>181</sup> Op. cit., Laycock, p. 404.

antiquity', yet they were not infrequent, and they were widespread enough for Laycock to have taken note of them.

In *All the Year Round*, 'Medical Nuts to Crack' (1861) addresses the same issue of criminal responsibility in a dreaming state as 'Responsibilities of Somnambulists', though the style is of course different, with the latter being published in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* and therefore addressing readers who were largely medical professionals. 'Medical Nuts to Crack', however, presents the subject in a less formal, more entertaining tone. The title itself indicates this tone, altering the idiom 'a tough nut to crack' to imply that the article will enlighten the reader on some difficult medical subjects. The article gives many examples of criminal cases in which it was difficult, for various reasons, to determine who the criminal was. It is then asked: 'is a man answerable for what he does in the confusion of waking out of sleep?'<sup>182</sup> This is a question of the state of mind in the moments after waking and the two anecdotal examples given suggest that dream may continue to influence the mind in these moments. This is a theory which was also discussed in medical circles. In 1866 an incident described in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, for example, is concluded 'Dr. Begley gives his opinion that "the act was probably one of sudden impulse on awaking from a frightful dream."' <sup>183</sup> In 'Medical Nuts to Crack', however, the tone is less of scientific conclusion and more obviously for entertainment.

Beginning the discussion on sleep, the article asks 'And, again, how is it with the somnambulist?' The exploration of this subject consists entirely of anecdotes. For example, 'A simple and innocent Carthusian monk was, when he walked in his sleep, a thief and plunderer of the dead. A pious clergyman once, as a sleep-walker, robbed his own church.

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<sup>182</sup> 'Medical Nuts to Crack', *All the Year Round*, 5 (1861) 358-360. p. 360

<sup>183</sup> 'English County Asylum Reports for the Year 1864', *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, 37 (1866) 70-80. p. 73

Another person could not sleep without watches by the bed, because, sane and harmless when awake, he was liable when asleep to somnambulism with a mania for suicide. He got loose one night and hanged himself by the foot'.<sup>184</sup> There is an undertone of humour throughout these anecdotes, based on the ludicrous contrasts that it presents. The irony of a 'pious clergyman' stealing from his own church, for example, and the very serious subject of suicide being turned into a comical scenario in which nobody is actually hurt.

An example is also given of a monk who attempts to murder a person while sleepwalking, spurred by a dream he was experiencing. An incredibly similar example is included in the *Lancet* in 1868, though the somnambulist is there a pupil in a training school for young priests, rather than a monk.<sup>185</sup> It is notable that the majority of examples in 'Medical Nuts to Crack' relate to people in positions generally associated with religion, including two monks and the 'pious clergyman'. The recurring image of religious figures in these situations may have two purposes. Should priests and monks be viewed as particularly moral members of society, the motive appears to be for the criminal action to appear particularly shocking, seemingly a reminder that anyone, regardless of their morality in their waking hours, may commit criminal acts in a dream state, unable to control their own actions. However, it is also possible to draw comparisons with the monk as a gothic motif, and the anti-Catholic representations of monks in novels such as Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* or Lewis' *The Monk*.<sup>186</sup> Both could be explained, to an extent, by the article's desire to provide entertainment, however the roles of monk or clergyman in the context of the article appear to be specifically Catholic and a sectarian influence seems likely.

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<sup>184</sup> Op. cit., 'Medical Nuts to Crack', p. 360.

<sup>185</sup> 'Somnambulism', *Lancet*, 92 (1868) p. 136.

<sup>186</sup> The figure of the monk in gothic fiction, as well as the anti-Catholic implications of its use, has been widely discussed. See, for example, Terry Castle, 'The Gothic Novel' in *The Cambridge History of English Literature, 1660–1780* ed. John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 673–706. Also William Hughes, 'Roman Catholicism' in *Historical Dictionary of Gothic Literature* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2013).

Along with the example of attempting suicide while in a state of somnambulism, the whole of this section in ‘Medical Nuts to Crack’ seems crafted to create an unnerving picture, playing on existing fears of not having the ability to control one’s own mind. However, the humorous notes prevent the subject from ever becoming entirely serious. The section on somnambulism ends with the comment ‘we pass over the innumerable riddles that arise out of the question of insanity or sanity. It is not every madman who is as clearly in delusion as the man who thought that he must keep his head and heart together, and so serve the Lord by throwing himself head over ears over every stile or gate he came to [...]’.<sup>187</sup> The serious issue of defining sanity and insanity is therefore dismissed as a riddle and the author moves away from this genuinely medical concern into a comical story. The following section, on ‘persons found dead by violence’, once again draws the subject back to the serious, but the intermittent use of humour changes the tone of the article as a whole.

Directly following this article of unusual anecdotes is an advertisement for Bulwer Lytton’s ‘A Strange Story’. As was noted in the previous chapter, where an advertisement for ‘A Strange Story’ followed the supernatural ‘Ghostly Quarters’, the positioning of the advertisement suggests that the strange anecdotes of ‘Medical Nuts to Crack’ are hoped to raise interest in the upcoming novel. In a similar, though less serious, way to the proximity of *The Woman in White* and the ‘Uncommercial Traveller’ discussed earlier, this demonstrates, once again, the unique way in which the general literary periodical could present an idea using both fact and fiction, drawing the reader into consideration of a serious subject without losing focus on entertainment.

Together, the articles discussed in this chapter demonstrate that dream and insanity formed a crucial part of the scientific debate on dreaming. In relation to the theory of double

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<sup>187</sup> Op. cit., ‘Medical Nuts to Crack’, p. 360.

brain, the subject also demonstrates one of the ways in which theological concerns interacted with questions on the function of the mind. Questions regarding the nature of insanity and the similarity of that state of mind to the universally shared phenomenon of dreaming truly raises Carroll's question of whether we are 'all mad here', at least while asleep. With this consideration it is easy to see how debates surrounding law, insanity and dream states continued throughout the decade and attracted the attention of the public. The presence of this debate in both medical and general periodicals reveals the difficulty of establishing firm legal and medical rules about a subject which had unsettled definitions and boundaries. As was mentioned earlier, however, the uncertainty of language surrounding the subject of mind during the 1860s played a part in the development of psychology as a subject, and dream is inextricably linked with this subject and its development.

The *Cornhill Magazine*'s 'Commissions of Lunacy' provides a good example of the ill-defined language of the mind and the way it influenced the development of the study which would become psychology.<sup>188</sup> The article itself is a scathing response to an article on lunacy and responsibility which had appeared in *The Times*. The author argues that 'it does not follow that madness is not a real specific thing because it has never been defined, any more than it follows that a tree is not a real thing because the word tree has never been defined'. While this deals specifically with insanity, it is applicable to the subject of mind in general and to defining something which is intangible and yet central to very real, universal, emotions and thoughts. This is where, as discussed in the previous chapter, dream became a useful piece of evidence in the question of how the mind worked, as it was an unconscious phenomenon that could be articulated. The use of dream as evidence of the function of the

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<sup>188</sup> [James Fitzjames Stephen], 'Commissions of Lunacy', *Cornhill Magazine*, 5 (1862) 220-232. p. 222.

mind would, of course, be central, years later, to Freud's crucial work *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899).

With dreams used as evidence to explore the mind, it is easy to see why dreaming, with its often nonsensical patterns and sudden transitions unquestioned by the sleeping mind, also became an important part of tracing the boundary between sanity and insanity.

Throughout all of the issues raised regarding the similarities between dream and insanity is the suggestion of fear that the dreaming mind is evidence of the ease with which control over the mind can be lost. The possibility of a person, who believes that they are sane, committing a crime without knowledge or memory of their actions, is kept in the public consciousness through legal debates and anecdotal tales of somnambulism. The theory of double consciousness, and debates on the dual mind or brain, give further weight to the fear that losing control of one's mind was a real, medically proven, possibility. As Eigen points out, the popularity of viewing alternative states of consciousness, as in mesmerism, was rooted in this fear, the trance created 'to investigate the hidden secrets of the mind, particularly the possibility of decoupling reason and choice from subsequent behaviour'.<sup>189</sup> This uncontrolled aspect of dreaming, and the possibility of the dream state allowing the mind to be controlled by another person, is another thread of the dream debate which challenged the boundary between the scientific and supernatural. Mesmerism and spiritualism, as will be seen in the next chapter, were both subjects at the centre of this part of the dream debate.

### Chapter Three

#### The Scientific Supernatural

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<sup>189</sup> Op. cit., Eigen, p. 15.

The previous two chapters have demonstrated the connection between dream and scientific developments in the understanding of the function of the mind, and the way that this connection was represented in various ways within periodicals during the 1860s. As has already been suggested, however, there was often no clear boundary between science and the supernatural at this time, and certainly not in relation to dreaming. Both spiritualism and mesmerism are subjects which demonstrate the interconnected nature of science and the supernatural through their shared belief that the supernatural could have a scientific explanation. As was outlined in the introduction, religion was the third component in the dream debate, contrasting at times with both scientific and supernatural theories. Like dream, spiritualism and mesmerism addressed religious belief alongside arguments for both science and the supernatural. It has been widely suggested that the popularity of spiritualism in Victorian Britain may be attributed, in part, to loss of faith in Christianity, as spiritualism suggested that it may be possible to provide empirical evidence of a spiritual realm or afterlife.<sup>190</sup> However, the mid-Victorian ‘crisis of faith’ is, of course, more complex than a simple growth of secularism, as has been highlighted by many, including George Levine and James Moore, and these complexities are also relevant to the reception of spiritualism.<sup>191</sup>

Jen Cadwallader, for example, suggests that both rising secularism and ‘general dissatisfaction with Protestant orthodoxy’ contributed to the growth of spiritualism. ‘Spiritualism’s practitioners’, she argues, ‘were a strange mix of secularists who were interested in material causes for the supernatural and Christians who wanted greater proof of

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<sup>190</sup> See, for example, Frank Miller Turner, *Between Science and Religion: The Reaction to Scientific Naturalism in Late Victorian England* (London: Yale University Press, 1974).

<sup>191</sup> George Levine, ‘Scientific Discourse as an Alternative to Faith’ and James R. Moore, ‘Theodicy and Society: The Crisis of the Intelligentsia,’ *Victorian Faith in Crisis: Essays on Continuity and Change in Nineteenth Century Religious Belief* ed. Richard J. Helmstadter and Bernard Lightman (California: Stanford University Press, 1990).

the divine and greater freedom in interpreting those proofs'.<sup>192</sup> Cadwallader also agrees with Jennifer Bahn that the popularity of mid-Victorian ghost stories is related to the popularity of spiritualism.<sup>193</sup> This is particularly interesting when considered alongside Shane McCorristine's statement that 'the uncertain territory between dream and reality [was] a location that was [...] being mapped out in ghost fiction'.<sup>194</sup> The anecdotal ghost-seeing story is prevalent in both spiritualist and general literary periodicals and, as later parts of this chapter will show, so were anecdotal stories of ghost 'seeing' in dreams. The way that anecdotal dream stories were used as a form of entertainment will be addressed in this chapter but it is undoubtedly the case that those elements that influenced ghost stories and intricacies of ghost-seeing, as addressed by Cadwallader, Bahn and McCorristine, also influenced the representation of dream.

In her statement on the types of spiritualist practitioners, Cadwallader indicates that spiritualism's ability to provide evidence of a spirit world is the reason for its popularity. This has been interestingly addressed by Peter Lamont, who has suggested that the popularity of spiritualism in the mid-nineteenth century was more a response to a crisis of evidence than a crisis of faith. Lamont's theory complicates the 'crisis of faith' argument by pointing out that the 'evidence' of an afterlife provided by the spiritualist séance was often harshly rejected, despite the lack of alternative scientific explanations. Lamont also points out that, for many who accepted that the séance demonstrated phenomena that could not be explained by existing scientific theories, the answer was not that spirit agency was real, but that there were

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<sup>192</sup> Jen Cadwallader, *Spirits and Spiritualists in Victorian England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 12.

<sup>193</sup> Jennifer Bahn, "Ghostly Hands and Ghostly Agency: The Changing Figure of the Nineteenth Century Spectre", *Victorian Studies*, 51.4 (2009) 663-686. p. 664. See Cadwallader p. 12.

<sup>194</sup> Shane McCorristine, *Spectres of the Self: Thinking about Ghosts and Ghost-Seeing in England, 1750-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) p. 20.

existing natural forces that had not yet been explained.<sup>195</sup> Ultimately, Lamont argues that spiritualism, particularly the séance, raised serious questions about the reliability of human observation and testimony as evidence, as well as questions of scientific authority.

In his article, Lamont also points out the similarity of mesmerism to spiritualism, a fact which has again been previously noted. Janet Oppenheim summarises this similarity particularly well when she writes that ‘Mesmerism expanded effortlessly into spiritualism for a rich variety of reasons, not the least important of which was the combination of scientific, religious, and occult sources on which both movements drew. Each created a blend of theory and practice that could appeal strongly to a population wanting scientific authorization for its faith and the blessings of religion upon its scientific discoveries’.<sup>196</sup> Dream states are an integral part of the evidence for spiritualism and mesmerism, from prophetic dream to somnambulism and mesmeric sleep. As was shown in chapter two, dream was already being used in a medical context as evidence of the function of the mind. Chapter five will further demonstrate that it was also still connected to supernatural or superstitious beliefs, as well as having biblical connotations as a connection between God and the human mind. It is therefore unsurprising to find that dream is so closely intertwined with the subjects of spiritualism and mesmerism and that many discussions of dream are, by association, also influenced by the mid-Victorian ‘crisis of faith’ and ‘crisis of evidence’.

It is necessary to consider, however, that the attention mesmerism and spiritualism received was not always positive. Both received widespread criticism for their apparent charlatanism. In July 1860, ‘Modern Magic’ in the *All the Year Round* refers to Spiritualism as ‘the great drawing-room excitement of the day; the phase of spiritual development, which

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<sup>195</sup> Peter Lamont, ‘Spiritualism and the Mid-Victorian Crisis of Faith’ *The Historical Journal*, 47.4 (2004), 897-920. p. 917.

<sup>196</sup> Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p. 222.

has already turned more than one unstable head, and which threatens to turn a few more before it dies quietly out in its present form, and leaves only the due residuum of scientific truth'. The residuum of truth, the author is willing to allow, includes only 'evidencing some of the subtle harmonies between man and universal nature, not yet catalogued and labelled'. In spiritualism generally, though, 'What there is of true [sic] in it has been so overlaid with trick and deception that it is a hard task to discover one from the other'.<sup>197</sup> Similarly, *Bentley's Miscellany*, also in 1860, urges readers to look at the 'spiritualistic mania which now prevails' and consider that 'on the one side is imposture, with more or less of self-interest as its motive; on the other, egregious weakness, not only willing, but anxious to be cheated.'<sup>198</sup> In both examples the author acknowledges the interest in spiritualism at the time of writing while also presenting it as a clearly deceptive practice.

Popular interest, however, keeps the subject as a recurring topic, even in those periodicals which denounce it. In the same volume that labels Spiritualism as part imposture and part weakness, *Bentley's Miscellany* also published 'Table Turning and Spirit Rapping', a ten page article on the theories behind the phenomena and the research that has been done to disprove it.<sup>199</sup> This is identical in intent to articles such as 'Dictionary Dreams' in *All the Year Round*, where dream interpretations are mocked and yet published and discussed at length.<sup>200</sup> This type of article clearly stems from the simultaneous ridicule of the seemingly supernatural and intense interest in those same subjects. In opposition to the outlooks of *Bentley's Miscellany* and *All the Year Round*, however, the *Cornhill Magazine* was openly favourable towards spiritualist beliefs.<sup>201</sup> In the same year that the two former journals

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<sup>197</sup> [Eliza Lynn Linton], 'Modern Magic', *All the Year Round*, 3 (1860) 370-374. p. 370.

<sup>198</sup> Victor Gouache, 'The Outremanche Correspondence: No. VIII' *Bentley's Miscellany*, 48. 221-226. p. 225.

<sup>199</sup> 'Table Turning and Spirit Rapping', *Bentley's Miscellany*, 48 (1860) 568-578.

<sup>200</sup> See p. 114.

<sup>201</sup> For a full discussion of Spiritualism in the *Cornhill Magazine* during the early 1860s, see Gowan Dawson 'Stranger than Fiction: Spiritualism, Intertextuality, and William Makepeace Thackeray's Editorship of the *Cornhill Magazine*, 1860-1862' *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 7.2 (2002) 220-238.

published their damning articles on the deceptive nature of spiritualist claims, the *Cornhill Magazine* published Robert Bell's 'Stranger than Fiction', an account of Bell's experiences at a séance. Bell concludes: 'to say that certain phenomena are incredible, is merely to say that they are inconsistent with the present state of our knowledge; but, knowing how imperfect our knowledge is, we are not, therefore, justified in asserting that they are impossible'.<sup>202</sup> Bell's statement summarises the way in which all phenomena considered supernatural, not only spiritualism, were deeply entwined with science. This chapter will look at the various representations of dream that could be considered supernatural in both general literary periodicals and spiritualist periodicals. This will demonstrate the centrality of supernatural dreams to the development of later forms of psychological dream interpretation, as well as the way that dreams were used as a form of entertainment.

### Magic and Science

Alongside the proposed science of dream states in periodical literature are examples of dreams which make no claim to scientific evidence, and are based instead on superstition and tradition. These supernatural representations of dream often appear to contrast with the scientific dream theories discussed in chapters one and two. However, the way in which these dreams are presented in periodical literature highlights the complexity of the relationship between these two sides of the dream debate, and, for this reason, they are also helpful in understanding spiritualist and mesmeric dreams. The importance of superstitious dreams to the early development of psychology should also not be underestimated, particularly considering Freud's later comment, discussed in the introduction to this thesis, that 'one day I

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<sup>202</sup> Robert Bell, 'Stranger than Fiction', *Cornhill Magazine*, 2 (1860) 211-224. p. 224.

discovered to my great astonishment that the view of dreams which came nearest to the truth was not the medical but the popular one, half involved though it still was in superstition’.

In the 1901 book *On Dreams*, in which this quote appears, Freud argues that:

The majority of medical writers adopt a view according to which dreams scarcely reach the level of being psychical phenomena at all. On their theory, the sole instigators of dreams are the sensory and somatic stimuli which either impinge upon the sleeper from outside or become active accidentally in his internal organs.

This view is recognisable from the examples of physiological psychology which were discussed in chapter one. He then goes on to argue that:

Popular opinion is but little affected by this scientific judgement, and is not concerned as to the source of dreams; it seems to persist in the belief that nevertheless dreams have a meaning, which related to the prediction of the future and which can be discovered by some process of interpretation of a content which is often confused and puzzling.<sup>203</sup>

Here Freud is clearly referring to dream interpretation guides, which would list possible subjects of a dream alphabetically and provide the dreamer with their meaning.<sup>204</sup> The meaning was often, as Freud suggests, a prediction of future events.

Freud implies, in his description, that dream interpretation guides were still popular by 1901. During the 1860s, the dream guide was clearly central to discussions of supernatural

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<sup>203</sup> Sigmund Freud, ‘The Interpretation of Dreams (Second Part) and On Dreams’ *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume V (1900-1901)*, 629-686. p. 635, 634.  
< [http://www.english.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Freud\\_SE\\_On\\_Dreams\\_complete.pdf](http://www.english.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Freud_SE_On_Dreams_complete.pdf)>

<sup>204</sup> For more on dream interpretation guides throughout history see Norman Mackenzie, *Dreams and Dreaming* (London: Aldus Books, 1965) p. 74-80.

dream and the persistence of this popularity through to the end of the nineteenth-century implies that they remained of great importance to the perception of dreaming. The portrayal of dream interpretation guides in periodicals of the 1860s, however, demonstrates that, as with mesmerism and spiritualism, popularity did not always indicate acceptance. Often, while the popularity of the guides is acknowledged, it is also simultaneously mocked.

‘Dictionary Dreams,’ published in *All the Year Round* in 1860, is one example of the way this popular subject is presented. The anonymous article is written in first person as an account of the narrator’s experience of purchasing and reading the *Ladies’ Own Dream Book*. The appearance of the guide is described in great detail, the humour of which appears to depend on the reader’s knowledge of the way dream guides are usually presented. The overall poor quality of *The Ladies’ Own Dream Book* is emphasised, the illustration on the front cover being quite absurd and the colouring ‘apparently [...] executed with much freedom of handling and a full pencil’.<sup>205</sup>

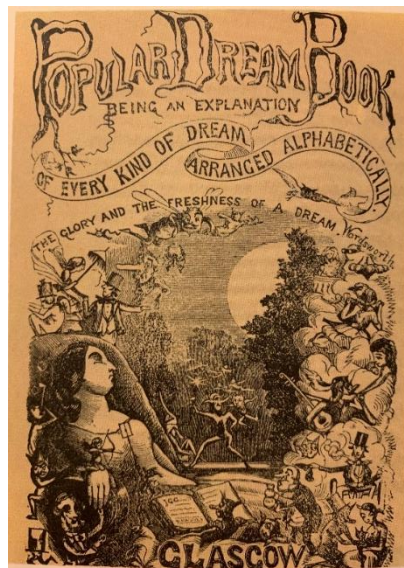


Figure 5: Example of a nineteenth-century dream interpretation guide. Norman Mackenzie *Dreams and Dreaming* (Aldus Books: London, 1965) p. 78.

As well as the poor quality of the ‘shabby pamphlet’, the narrator points out that:

<sup>205</sup> ‘Dictionary Dreams’, *All the Year Round*, 5 (1861) p. 549-552. p. 550.

While the back of its cover was of a bright pink colour, the front was of a pale drab – indications which will carry at once to all thoughtful minds the conviction that the work so bound had been an old inhabitant of the shop-window, and had paled on the side exposed to the light.

While this indicates that the dream guide has been in the shop, unpurchased, for a long time, it seems unlikely that the narrator is suggesting that dream guides are unpopular, as publications such as this evidently were still popular in the 1860s. Helen Groth and Natalya Lusty, for example, point out that dream guides ‘remained the most pervasive form of dream writing well into the nineteenth century.’<sup>206</sup> It is possible, therefore, that the narrator of ‘Dictionary Dreams’ is indicating the huge volume of cheaply produced dream guides as the reason for the guide being unpurchased for so long.

The popularity of superstitious guides is noted later in the article with the comment that ‘of all those topics which it is the function of thought to investigate, there are none perhaps possessing a more universal interest for all mankind than those in which the unseen and immaterial world, the world of spirits, of omens, of superstitions and dreams, becomes the subject of our speculation’.<sup>207</sup> Though dream is considered from scientific, psychological angles elsewhere in *All the Year Round*, the positioning of dream within a list including spirits and omens establishes it as a supernatural subject.<sup>208</sup> The narrator does not note, for example, that the unseen and immaterial questions of mind and dream are also a subject of scientific interest.

Maintaining a pretence of seriousness, the narrator of ‘Dictionary Dreams’ focuses on the *Ladies’ Own Dream Book* as an example which is ‘confident, unerring and authoritative’.

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<sup>206</sup> Helen Groth and Natalya Lusty, ‘Dreams and Modernity: A Cultural History’ (New York: Routledge, 2013) p. 15.

<sup>207</sup> Op. cit., ‘Dictionary Dreams’, p. 550.

<sup>208</sup> See chapters one and two.

The content of the dream book, it is explained, consists of ‘subjects on which well-regulated persons may most reasonably be expected to dream [...] alphabetically arranged’.<sup>209</sup>

Examples are then produced of these alphabetically ordered dream subjects, humorously mocking both the interpretations and the suggested subjects of the dream. The examples, themselves produced alphabetically so that the article mirrors the layout of the actual guide, cover approximately two pages of the periodical and many appear without any comment from the author.<sup>210</sup> Ultimately, this means that, despite the general tone of humorous mocking, the periodical essentially publishes a short dream guide.

‘Dictionary Dreams’ is directly followed by an advertisement for Edward Bulwer Lytton’s *A Strange Story*, an instalment of which begins the number that features ‘Dictionary Dreams’. Bulwer Lytton’s novel revolves around the story of a sceptical doctor coming into contact with the unexplainable supernatural. The positioning of this advertisement directly after ‘Dictionary Dreams’, which presents the supernatural in a sceptical light, appears then to appeal to the readers interest in the possibility of the supernatural. In publishing this guide to dreams, the author appeals to the readers of dream guides and those interested in the popularity of dream interpretations, satisfying their curiosity without the necessity of them buying such a publication, as well as directing readers with an interest in the supernatural to future instalments of the periodical. They also, however, maintain the impression that they take the side of rationality on the subject of dreams, therefore appealing to as wide an audience as possible.

This method is not dissimilar to some dream guides themselves. Maureen Perkins points out that in *The True Fortune Teller* (1850) the author includes the note:

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<sup>209</sup> Op. cit., ‘Dictionary Dreams’, p. 550.

<sup>210</sup> One subject of the dream guide, ‘aunt,’ is not in alphabetical order. The exception seems to have been made in order to position the subject next to ‘uncle’.

The foregoing pages are published principally to show the superstitions which engrossed the mind of the population of Scotland during a past age, and which are happily disappearing before the progress of an enlightened civilisation. It is hoped, therefore, that the reader will not attach the slightest importance to the solutions of the dreams as rendered above, as dreams are generally the result of a disordered stomach, or an excited imagination.

‘Despite nods in the direction of scientific opinion’, Perkins writes, ‘they [chapbook writers] proceed to give all the usual interpretations’.<sup>211</sup> The reason behind this treatment of dream interpretation, and why it is used commercially, in both dream guides and *All the Year Round*, may be found in contemporary attitudes toward superstition. Alexandra Walsham, examining the interest in superstition in the nineteenth century, refers to the task of recording superstitions as ‘nothing less than an intellectual and cultural obsession’. Regarding the motive behind this obsession, Walsham claims there is ‘a profound ambivalence’. ‘On the one hand’, she argues, ‘we can discern a clear element of nostalgia and regret for the passing of customs and beliefs that embodied a rose-coloured and romanticized vision of traditional rural life’. However, according to Walsham, they are also being used as self-congratulating evidence of intellectual progress in Britain. She explains that ‘by recording the ““puerile superstitions”” of former generations that are fast disappearing in the face of the spread of “correct information”, its authors throw into sharp relief the “rational” ethos of their own superior and “enlightened” era’.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Maureen Perkins, ‘The Meaning of Dream Books’, *History Workshop Journal*, 48 (1999) 102-113. p. 105.

<sup>212</sup> Alexandra Walsham, ‘Recording Superstitions in Early Modern Britain: The Origins of Folklore’ *Past and Present*, 3 (2008) 178-180. p. 178, 179, 180.

This motivation is clearly applicable to the dream guides described by Perkins, as well as the dream guide reproduced in 'Dictionary Dreams'. The humour of 'Dictionary Dreams' is based on the shared joke between reader and narrator that they, being rational people, can laugh at the nonsensical interpretations of dreams which they know are not true. This tone fits perfectly with Walsham's observation of superstition being used as self-congratulating evidence of intellectual progress. The reproduction of so many dream interpretations in 'Dictionary Dreams', however, undoubtedly indicates a genuine interest from readers, and the romanticised nostalgia for past beliefs explains, in part, the source of this interest.

The association between superstitious dream and a romanticised idea of the past is present in dream guides generally, though this is reflected in the way dream guides are presented in periodical literature. As Maureen Perkins points out in 'The Meaning of Dream Books', 'any form of predicting the future, whether it was prophecy or fortune-telling, claimed to carry the authority of long-established lineage'. Perkins provides the examples of Roger Cross Smith's published dream guide, *The Royal Book of Dreams* (1830), which he claimed 'was derived from an ancient manuscript which he had simply stumbled across while out on a country walk,' and *Napoleon's Book of Fate*, published repeatedly throughout the nineteenth century, which 'claimed to be a translation of a book "written in German nearly 500 years ago" [...] which had been seized, so it was claimed, from the belongings of Napoleon Bonaparte after his defeat at the battle of Leipzig'.<sup>213</sup> As Perkins suggests, these claims to antiquity are undoubtedly intended to bestow authority, but this is also directly related to Walsham's argument, as the authority originates from an idealised notion of the past and the rediscovery of knowledge from that past.

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<sup>213</sup> Op. cit., Perkins, p. 104.

Age, however, was not always presented as a positive in regard to supernatural dreams in periodicals. In *All the Year Round* particularly, the presence of ancient supernatural dreams usually corresponds with Walsham's explanation of the supernatural as self-congratulating evidence of intellectual progress. 'Magic and Science', for example, claims that 'The early Israelites, in common with all primitive peoples, had their magic, consulted sorcerers, explained dreams, and believed in talismans. In vain Moses proscribed these superstitions'. Rather than being evidence of authenticity, here age is associated with outdated and 'primitive' beliefs. The final comment also suggests that these supernatural beliefs are disapproved of by religious figures.<sup>214</sup> The author of 'Magic and Science' continues to explain that 'In Egypt, Assyria, Judaea, and Greece, there was a regular class of dream-interpreters, men who undertook to *explain* what was prefigured by dreams. No one doubted that the phenomena were supernatural. Dreams *came* to a man; they were not suspected to be the action of his brain. We see this belief naively exhibited in Homer'.<sup>215</sup> Again, the author points to modern intellectual progress in the research on dreams as a function of the brain, contrasting that to the superstitious, beliefs of ancient civilisations.

Homer's naivety is expanded upon with a description of the scene in *The Iliad* in which the god Jove sends a dream to Agamemnon. The author argues that this conception is not wonderful and, as was discussed in chapter two, implies that the concept of dual mind would explain it rationally. The contrast of the naive past and progressive present is then again reinforced with the comment 'It is natural to suppose that we have actually been visited during sleep by one of the spirit world; and until the science of psychology had learned to interpret the phenomena of dreams by the phenomena of waking thought, especially of

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<sup>214</sup> The articles of *All the Year Round* are consistently sympathetic towards broad Christian beliefs. In 'Articles of Unbelief' for example, it is implied that biblical stories of divine dreams are true but no others. For more on the influence of religion on the representation of dreams generally, see chapter five.

<sup>215</sup> 'Magic and Science', *All the Year Round*, 4 (1861) 561-566. p. 563, 565.

reverie, this supernatural explanation would prevail'.<sup>216</sup> While the supernatural stories are presented as things of interest, they are also very much things of the past, which the author suggests it would be foolish to believe in because of scientific progress. In this way, interest in supernatural dreaming remains of interest in periodicals without any claim to belief.

In these two *All the Year Round* articles, 'Dictionary Dreams' and 'Magic and Science', we see how the contrasting beliefs in supernatural dreams and scientific or rational dreams coexist, not just within the same periodical but even within the same article. This combination of interests is the most common way to see supernatural dreams in *All the Year Round*. There are examples of articles during the 1860s where supernatural dream stories without rational explanation are included, such as 'Four Stories', published in 1861. In this article the reader is presented with four, seemingly inexplicable, supernatural stories, two of which are of prophetic dreams. The reader is told that 'all four shall be told as I, the present narrator, have received them. They are all derived from credible sources; and the first – the most extraordinary of the four – is well known at first hand to individuals still living'.<sup>217</sup> Unlike those examples which distance the narrator from any actual support for the supernatural, this comment is designed to support the credibility of the supernatural stories. Articles such as this are a testament to the existing interest in the supernatural. However, they are far less common, suggesting that Dickens, as editor, was aware that combining the interests of supernatural and science was the more commercially viable format for articles. This combination of two interests, in both the scientific and supernatural dream theories, is also very visible in the subjects of mesmerism and spiritualism.

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid, p. 565.

<sup>217</sup> [Thomas Heaphy], 'Four Stories', *All the Year Round*, 5 (1861) 589-593. p. 589.

## Spiritualist Periodicals

Mesmerism and spiritualism are subjects which appear in various periodical types during the 1860s, from family magazines to medical journals and also women's periodicals, which will be discussed further in chapter four. However, there were also periodicals specifically dedicated to spiritualism, which often featured mesmerism as part of their subject. In order to illustrate the way that these periodicals dealt with the subject of dream, this section will examine the *Spiritual Magazine* and *Human Nature*. The *Spiritual Magazine* ran from 1860 until 1877 without much direct competition. Oppenheim titles it 'the first successful journal of British Spiritualism'.<sup>218</sup> In 1867, *Human Nature* began publication, being released in monthly instalments and costing 6d, matching the *Spiritual Magazine* in both timing and price. Despite their many similarities, the two periodicals differed greatly on the subject of religion.

In 1867, the first year of publication for *Human Nature*, the *Spiritual Magazine* published an article simply titled 'To Our Readers', in which the intentions and values of the periodical are stated. The religious stance of the publication is instantly clear in the comment that, having 'completed seven volumes of the *Spiritual Magazine*,' the periodical has 'served an apprenticeship in the largest and most catholic of all workshops of humanity – the study of the spiritual side of things, and of the human soul and its relations to God and the spiritual world'.<sup>219</sup> Coedited by William M. Wilkinson and Thomas Shorter, who was raised in a strict evangelical home and became a supporter of Christian Socialism, the magazine remained 'firmly grounded in the Christian faith' throughout the 1860s. The stance of the periodical is also, at times, described as catholic by the editors, however this clearly refers to Catholicism in its broadest sense, as various branches of Christianity are sympathetically addressed.

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<sup>218</sup> Op. cit., Oppenheim, p. 33.

<sup>219</sup> 'To Our Readers', *Spiritual Magazine*, 2 (1867) 1-3. p. 1.

*Human Nature*, however, was established in 1867 and edited by James Burns who, as Oppenheim points out, was ‘the principal spokesman for anti-Christian spiritualism in Britain throughout the second half of the nineteenth century’.<sup>220</sup> Consequently, while the *Spiritual Magazine* concerns itself primarily with highlighting the associations between Christianity and spiritualism, *Human Nature* focuses on the scientific elements of the theory. *Human Nature*’s article ‘Our Prospectus’ contains the statement that the periodical’s ‘conductors will devote its pages to the discovery and elucidation of the facts of human existence’ and ‘will readily become the exponent[s] of any facts and principles already discovered, or as yet unheard of, that can be of use in the great work of human development’. Having already clearly established its intentions with a language of facts and discovery, a list of subjects is provided. The list includes physiology, under which *Human Nature* is referred to as a ‘thorough health journal’; phrenology, which is defined as a ‘mental science’; and psychology, which, it is claimed, ‘will be introduced by many illustrative and startling facts, never before published, and tending to establish a natural and demonstrative system of metaphysics’.<sup>221</sup> All three headings demonstrate the purpose of the journal to align itself with science, while spirituality and the supernatural form an integral part of the periodical’s content. The headings also, importantly, illustrate the way that physiology, psychology and medicine were being considered alongside supernatural subjects, not in opposition to them. This faithfully indicates the way dream is presented in the journal.

*Human Nature*’s intention to discuss a broad range of topics is also reflected later in ‘Our Prospectus’ when the author (presumably the editor, Burns) establishes the type of periodical it will be by explaining that it ‘will unite the peculiarities of the literary and scientific magazine, family visitor, and general newspaper in all that pertains to the subjects

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<sup>220</sup> Op. cit., Oppenheim, p. 44.

<sup>221</sup> ‘Our Prospectus’, *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 41-42. p. 41.

of which it treats'. This statement is emphasising the broad range of articles and information to be included in *Human Nature*, though this combination is not specific to the periodical. A similar combination of literature, science and contemporary news being found in, for example, *All the Year Round*, with the exception that *Human Nature*'s articles are centred on spiritualism. The same range of articles are also used by the *Spiritual Magazine*, though *Human Nature* contains a greater volume of factual articles, while the *Spiritual Magazine* includes a larger number of anecdotal stories. This difference arises from the *Spiritual Magazine*'s focus on personal spiritual experiences. In comparison to this, when *Human Nature* addresses the subject of spiritualism in 'Our Prospectus', it is titled 'Spiritualism: or The Science of Man's Immortal Future'.<sup>222</sup> Under this heading, the author observes reassuringly that 'facts of the most engrossing interest are daily coming to light, which open up a new and thrilling field for scientific investigation'. This clearly portrays spiritualism as a scientific subject. Bestowing the subject with the alternative title 'The Science of Man's Immortal Future' removes the term 'spiritual' and its implications entirely, while reinforcing the position of spiritualism as a scientific subject. While spiritualism is a subject which, in all cases, claims the ability to provide evidence for the seemingly supernatural, the emphasis on science over spiritual experience distinguishes the tone of *Human Nature* from the *Spiritual Magazine*. This difference, as this chapter will show, has a marked impact on the representation of dream in the two periodicals, despite their shared subject of spiritualism.

This difference in emphasis on the scientific or spiritual undoubtedly stems from the religious differences of the two periodicals. Understanding the religious contention between the two journals is essential to understanding the context in which dreams are discussed in spiritualist periodicals during the 1860s, particularly as this contention had a notable impact on the way that the two periodicals interacted with one another. *Human Nature* did engage

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid, p. 42, 41.

with religious questions. In 'Our Prospectus' it is stated that the interests of religion will not be forgotten. However, 'Our Prospectus' continues to explain that 'the elements of man's religious nature will receive investigation, and the scientific principles upon which a true religion can be based in harmony therewith will be deduced as the facts present themselves'.<sup>223</sup> This is a clear portrayal of religion as a subject to be explored with 'scientific principles', fact and deduction, rather than as a subject of faith. Burns makes the religious stance of the periodical clear with the inclusion of the article 'Is Religion a Myth?' which examines the idea of God as an abstract concept, an aspirational image rather than an actual being.<sup>224</sup> This opinion differed so widely from that of the *Spiritual Magazine* that the subject quickly evolved into an open and continuous debate between the two periodicals.

While this particular debate does not address dreams directly, it is a debate that directly influenced the portrayal of dreams. The interaction between the periodicals begins with *Human Nature*'s inclusion of the *Spiritual Magazine* in a section titled 'Our Contemporaries' in April 1867. Although the piece ends with the seemingly positive comment that 'we cordially commend it to our readers that they may form their own opinion from personal acquaintance', the tone is questioned by other comments, such as 'its philosophy would be hard to define: in this respect it may, by critical minds, be considered rather contradictory, as its efforts to present arguments and opinions are not controlled by any principle broader than the fact of spiritual communion'.<sup>225</sup> In a direct response to this, the *Spiritual Magazine* similarly bestows some praise on *Human Nature*'s 'sufficiently extensive programme' which 'may be an entertaining as well as an instructive miscellany'. However, it also argues that *Human Nature*'s article 'misconceives our aim, sneering at what it does not understand, and misrepresenting us on one point especially'. This point is, unsurprisingly, a

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>224</sup> 'Is Religion a Myth?', *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 6-7.

<sup>225</sup> 'Our Contemporaries', *Human Nature*, 1 (1867), 48-49. p. 48.

religious one, specifically the point made in *Human Nature* that ‘the [*Spiritual*] magazine has occasionally expressed itself against making Spiritualism a religious question’. The *Spiritual Magazine* responds to this at length, enforcing the fact that religion forms the basis of their beliefs by naming many of their previously published articles on spiritualism and religion. One of the articles mentioned contains the comment that spiritualism ‘aims at settling the question of human immortality by direct experiment, thus doing away with unbelief, and that cold indifference which is the stumbling-block to all religious progress’.<sup>226</sup> This is an alternative combination of science and religion which attempts to use science to support Christian belief, rather than to question it, a perfect contrast to the beliefs displayed in *Human Nature*.

In this response from the *Spiritual Magazine*, the author also explains that:

There are two ways in which the relations of Spiritualism to religion are regarded by Spiritualists; in the one way, Spiritualism is regarded as a platform from which they are to advocate the particular opinions and systems of doctrine they may happen severally to hold – theological or anti-theological [...] It is also, in this view, a weapon with which to fight and “pulverise” the creeds and sects which may be in opposition to their own.

They argue that ‘this seems to be the view to which our critic [at *Human Nature*] has a predominant leaning’.<sup>227</sup> The comment, though written as a comment on spiritualism broadly, applying to both theological and anti-theological journals, is clearly directed towards *Human Nature* and its anti-theological view. In their November issue of 1867, *Human Nature* similarly claims that there are two different meanings to Christianity. ‘In one sense,’ it argues, ‘it is a conventional term to signify moral and spiritual harmony and development –

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<sup>226</sup> ‘The Spiritual Magazine and the Religious Question’, *Spiritual Magazine* (1867), 337-341. p. 337, 338, 339.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid*, p. 339.

the essence of the religious life. In this sense we accept it, and try to frame our lives in accordance with it; but we do not prefer to use the term “Christianity”, because these functions of mind and aspirations of spirit are common to all mankind’. This is an incredibly broad view, which implies a general spirituality while avoiding any adherence to a particular religion, though it simultaneously implies that those behind the journal try to frame their lives in accordance with Christianity. The article goes on, however, to argue that ‘the other signification of “Christianity” is that of priestcraft, - a system of tyrannical beliefs, anathemas, and spiritually despotic institutions, that judge their brother, assume proud and haughty moral positions, and otherwise interpose artificial influences between man, God and the spirit world’.<sup>228</sup> This implies a natural link between all humans and the spirit world to which religious institutions, specifically Christian ones, present a barrier. The accusatory tone of the comment is the same as that of the *Spiritual Magazine* as both essentially accuse the other of attempting to “pulverise” other belief systems.

This heated conversation between the two periodicals reflects the theological uncertainty of society in this decade, which will be addressed further in chapter five. It is also the most prominent example of how different the views of these two spiritualist periodicals are and why their representations of dreams are different, despite their shared spiritualist beliefs. The Christian spiritualism of the *Spiritual Magazine* appears to have remained the more popular form of spiritualism during the 1860s. As Oppenheim points out, writing of Burns and his anti-Christian stance in *Human Nature*, ‘unlike Christian spiritualism, it lacked prominent publicists and flourished most luxuriantly among the less influential ranks of Victorian society, particularly the lower middle and upper working classes’. ‘Anti-Christian spiritualism [...]’, she explains, ‘could not even obtain a hearing in many a Victorian periodical, and its advocates had no claim whatsoever to a polite audience’. However, there is

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<sup>228</sup> “‘Spiritual Magazine’ and ‘Human Nature’”, *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 442-444. p. 444.

not a clear divide between the class sympathies of the two periodicals. Thomas Shorter - of the *Spiritual Magazine* 'espoused Chartism and served as secretary to a group of Finsbury Owenites in the mid-1840s. Subsequently he became secretary of the Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations and, thanks to the influence of F. D. Maurice, embraced Christian Socialism'.<sup>229</sup> Therefore, while the anti-Christian spiritualism promoted by *Human Nature* appealed more to lower middle and upper working classes, the *Spiritual Magazine*'s editor was also heavily involved in working-class movements. The equal pricing of the two periodicals (6d) also suggests that the two were not aimed towards different classes.

The way that these two periodicals engage with one another over the subject of religion is also an excellent example of why the periodical was a particularly good medium for debate. Both the *Spiritual Magazine* and *Human Nature* encouraged readers to follow the debate by including sections copied from their rival's responses, so that the reader might know precisely what they were responding to, and even, in the case of *Human Nature* in September 1867, reprinting the relevant article from the *Spiritual Magazine* in full prior to their reply.<sup>230</sup> This debate, on a subject which hugely influences the representation of dreams, explains why there is a significant difference between the portrayal of dreaming in the *Spiritual Magazine* and *Human Nature*, despite their shared belief in spiritualism.

### Mind and Matter

As spiritualism embraces the supernatural as scientifically plausible, it is unsurprising to find factual articles in spiritualist periodicals supporting the concept of supernatural dreams. Psychology and physiology are both subjects set for inclusion in *Human Nature* by

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<sup>229</sup> Op. cit., Oppenheim, p. 40.

<sup>230</sup> 'The Spiritual Magazine and the Religious Question', *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 322-325.

its prospectus. Adhering to this promise, three interesting examples of articles relating to the study of mind appear within its first year. 'Mind and Matter' is one such article. Published in May 1867, it demonstrates the difficulty of defining 'mind'. The article explains that the mind's 'real essence is incomprehensible, and facts, though numerous, are inadequate to describe its nature and define its powers'. It points out that 'the attempt has been made by many philosophers to analyse and record their individual perceptions, thoughts, feelings, emotions, and other mental operations, so as to arrive at a true estimate of the mental powers, and thus define the nature of man'.<sup>231</sup> This statement addresses philosophical reflections on the mind as an abstract concept, examined through personal experience. As was explained in chapter one, this philosophical method was more commonly discussed before 1860, when physiological psychology took precedence.

'Mind and Matter' does then go on to address physiological psychology, arguing that the mind 'cannot be taken in hand and analysed as a piece of matter can; it eludes all attempts thus to individualise it, or detach it from the vague chaotic state by which it seems to submerge the efforts of the investigator in his own consciousness'. The solution to this, according to the article, is in 'the attempt [which] has also been made to study mind through organisation, or in its connection with matter'. This relationship, it argues, is the only way that mind can be 'truthfully and normally studied'.<sup>232</sup> This argument is essentially explaining the attraction of physiological psychology, which is discussed in chapter one, and the ability to provide tangible evidence relating to the function of the mind. The language in this *Human Nature* article purposely leaves the possibility of a force or power existing within the mind, which may be explained scientifically and conclusively through its 'connection with matter'.

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<sup>231</sup> 'Mind and Matter', *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 65-68. p. 65.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid*, p. 65.

The beliefs of spiritualism are therefore presented as congruent with science, and particularly with physiological psychology.

Phrenology, another of the subjects addressed in *Human Nature*'s prospectus, also used physical evidence to explore the function of the mind and, therefore, dream. However, it was also a more controversial study. As was discussed in chapter one, the study of mind was an unsettled subject in the mid nineteenth-century and studies which appear to be marginal in hindsight held more serious positions in this uncertain atmosphere.<sup>233</sup> The lack of structure and definition in emerging subjects also added to the uncertainty and fluctuating support for them. By 1860, however, phrenology was not largely accepted as a serious scientific subject. Stephen Tomlinson implies that it had become more a form of entertainment when he writes that 'by the 1860s it had been largely relegated to fairgrounds and seaside piers', despite the fact that 'during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, phrenology was a widely accepted theory of human nature, embraced by prominent scientists and intellectuals'.<sup>234</sup> Tomlinson is addressing the response to phrenology in America, however a similar decline can be seen in Britain. For example, Thomas Grainger, who later co-edited the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*, 'was an early member of the London Phrenology Society'. But, 'by 1840', five years before his editorship of the journal, 'he had abandoned phrenology recognizing that it had no basis in physiology, and that its radical connections were an impediment to professional progress'.<sup>235</sup> John Van Wyhe has also indicated that phrenology enjoyed greater popularity the early decades of the nineteenth-century in Britain, becoming

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<sup>233</sup> See Alison Winter 'The Construction of Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in the Early Victorian Life Sciences', *Victorian Science in Context* ed. Bernard Lightman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997) 24-50.

<sup>234</sup> Stephen Tomlinson, *Head Masters: Phrenology, Secular Education, and Nineteenth-Century Social Thought* (Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 2013) p. xi.

<sup>235</sup> Nick Hervey, 'Grainger, Richard Dugard' *ODNB* (2009): <<https://doi-org.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/11236>>

‘canonized as the archetypal ‘pseudoscience’’ by the 1870s.<sup>236</sup> Despite its contentious position within the medical community, however, phrenology did maintain some support during the 1860s, as Andrew Leighton’s article “‘Wonder” in Relation to Spiritualism’ shows in *Human Nature*’s June 1867 instalment.<sup>237</sup>

“‘Wonder” in Relation to Spiritualism’ was actually written as a lecture in the early 1860s. As a note in the title explains, the ‘essay was delivered to the Liverpool Hope Street Mutual Improvement Society some five or six years ago. It was subsequently given as a lecture to the Liverpool Phrenological Society; and is now printed *verbatim*, only slightly abridged’. This origin of the article suggests that, while there is a continued interest in the subject of the lecture, newer articles on phrenology, or specifically phrenology with spiritualist sympathies, may not be available, hence the repetition of Leighton’s work after a period of ‘five or six years’ rather than a newer piece. The article considers the theory that ‘large organs of Wonder or Marvelousness’ may determine whether a person believes in apparitions. Further explaining the type of people and experiences in question, a Dr Spurzheim, presumably referring to Johann Spurzheim, the German physician and major proponent of phrenology, is quoted explaining that ‘there are many disposed to believe in dreams, sorcery, magic, astrology, in the mystic influence of spirits and angels’.<sup>238</sup> Dreams are here included in a list of supernatural occurrences, and as an object of belief alongside magic. They are therefore being considered only as the source of prophecy or as the medium for some apparition, in connection to their supernatural associations. Rather than being a scientifically explainable phenomenon, with supernatural connections, it becomes a

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<sup>236</sup> John Van Wyhe, *Phrenology and the Origins of Victorian Scientific Naturalism* (New York: Routledge, 2016) p. 4.

<sup>237</sup> Andrew Leighton, “‘Wonder” in Relation to Spiritualism’, *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 129-146.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid*, p. 129, 130.

supernatural phenomenon with a potentially scientific explanation and, by extension, so does the ‘mystic influence of spirits and angels’.

The article does establish a physiological, phrenological, explanation for belief in apparitions, but it then, turning the physiological to spiritual explanation, asks: ‘supposing the cause of the apparition did lie in the “involuntary excitement of the intellectual organs,” *what* caused such involuntary excitement?’ The answer provided draws the supernatural apparitions in line with the physiological explanations previously discussed:

Our observations would happily have branched out in classes of facts wholly distinct from the apparitional ones, whereby the inference would be sustained, that there was actual, external, invisible agencies, possessing intelligence, affection, and will, and claiming by demonstrative signs to be themselves spirits of the so-called “dead,” in which event a *prima facie* case would surely be made out in favour of the supposition, that since these agencies can thus demonstrate their presence by the manipulation of physical objects, they may also have power to impress persons in various ways, causing in some presages of impending evil or good, in others dreams, in others visions, in others apparitions [...] <sup>239</sup>

This answer presents a combination of the scientific and supernatural that implies the unseen supernatural is connected to physiological explanations. Using ‘evidence’ of spiritual manipulation of physical objects, often claimed to be scientifically verifiable evidence of the existence of spirits by spiritualists, alongside phrenology, an exploration of the mind which is again based on the physical and visible, implies that spiritualist phenomena could be proven beyond doubt by results that could be seen and measured. It is also an explanation which

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid, p. 134.

avoids the issue of prophetic dreams which have explanations based on religious beliefs and claim to be divine messages, a message which may have been problematic to the journal's anti-Christian stance. The influences described are specifically those of 'the spirits of the so-called "dead"'.

It has already been shown that spiritualism attempted to provide an explanation for the supernatural with science, creating a scenario in which the supernatural was a part of scientific discourse. In this article it is possible to see one of the ways dream, with its physiological and supernatural associations, fits with this belief system. Within the spiritualist periodicals, dream occupies a balanced space between science and the supernatural because these subjects were already being combined. Dreams of prophecy or vision, in this system of belief, would be as valid as dreams as the result of diet or association.

A different example of this combination of science and the supernatural can be found in *Human Nature*'s 'The Connection Between Spiritualism and Education', published in September 1867. This article was also originally delivered as a paper, this time by Burns at the third Convention of the British Association for Progressive Spiritualists in July 1867. The piece explores the study of mind under various subject headings as it discusses the draft of a scheme for the establishment of a college in England. Discussing the study of man, the article explains 'it was proposed that man should be studied organically under the heads of Anatomy and Physiology'. Under these subjects, it suggests that 'students might get a thorough knowledge of the wondrous and complex organism through which the mind manifested itself vitally and mechanically on this earth plane of life'. The language here implies that the physical body is a vehicle through which the mind manifests itself and that the mind continues its existence, though not 'vitally and mechanically' on another 'plane of life' after the death of the body. It is clearly mind that is presented as the most important consideration,

with study of the physical necessary only in terms of its connection with the mind. The article continues to explain that ‘it was proposed to study man mentally, imparting to students a system of Phrenology or mental science, teaching the true powers of mind’.<sup>240</sup> ‘Mental science’ is an incredibly broad term, used here to emphasise the point that these proposed teaching subjects are scientific. As was discussed earlier in relation to phrenology, however, there was still a lack of definition surrounding what could be categorised as ‘scientific’ at this time and the inclusion of the contentious subject of phrenology in particular highlights this fact.

Finally, the article states that, during the discussion of this college scheme, ‘a section was set apart for the study of the occult Powers of humanity in the realms of magnetism and psychology, the nature of the means whereby mind acts upon mind – it may be at great distances from the bodies belonging to such minds – also the laws of somnambulism, trance, and clairvoyance; the connection between mind and matter’.<sup>241</sup> Psychology appears unusually placed alongside the study of ‘occult powers’ and magnetism. However, the difficulty in defining the term psychology leaves this passage difficult to interpret. As Rick Rylance points out, ‘Until late in the century, the word “psychic” was used to mean both ‘psychological’ (as in the common phrase ‘psychic facilities’) and the more modern sense pertaining to spiritualism’.<sup>242</sup> Therefore, it is possible that in this case, rather than being a ‘science of the mind’, the word psychology is being used to mean psychic occurrences. However, this is also a dual definition which works for spiritualism’s combination of science and the supernatural.

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<sup>240</sup> ‘The Connection Between Spiritualism and Education’, *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 330-335. p. 331, 332.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid*, p. 332.

<sup>242</sup> Rylance, Rick. *Victorian Psychology and British Culture 1850-1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 22.

The phenomenon ‘whereby mind acts upon mind’ is a key feature of both mesmerism and spiritualism and has direct associations with dream states, particularly somnambulism, which is listed in the article. In mesmerism, the state of the patient while under the mesmerist’s control is often referred to as mesmeric sleep or mesmeric trance, a state which is very similar to that of dreaming and is even interchangeably referred to as dream. Where ‘mind acts upon mind,’ the person in the dream state is often being controlled by another person. This will be discussed further in chapter four and appears, for example, fictionally in George MacDonald’s *The Portent*, published in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1860.<sup>243</sup> In the article ‘The Connection Between Spiritualism and Education’ we therefore see supernatural forms of dreaming presented as academic and scientific, another part of the study of mind. Just as in the previous article, ‘“Wonder” in Relation to Spiritualism’, there is no debate between the scientific and supernatural, they are simply combined within the same subject.

The term psychology is used in *Human Nature* to describe the study of mind, as can be seen in ‘Psychological Inquiries’, published in April 1868. The article is subtitled ‘Mr Home’s Manifestations’ and, in a smaller font, ‘Spirit music at a deathbed, followed by perfumes, raps, and communications, etc., etc.’<sup>244</sup> This is, in itself, an apparent contradiction of scientific and supernatural subjects, the title announcing a subject which seems to clash with the subjects in the subtitle. It is, again, a combination of the two seemingly opposing sides and a suggestion that ‘spirit music [...] raps and communications’ are the subjects of psychological inquiry. The Mr Home of the subtitle refers to Daniel Dunglass Home, a figure who would have been well known to readers and is widely regarded as ‘one of the most famous spiritualist mediums of the century’.<sup>245</sup> Peter Lamont has also highlighted Home’s

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<sup>243</sup> See p. 173.

<sup>244</sup> Honestas, ‘Psychological Inquiries’, *Human Nature*, 2 (1868) 144-151.

<sup>245</sup> J. Jeffrey Franklin, ‘The Evolution of Occult Spirituality in Victorian England and the Representative Case of Edward Bulwer-Lytton’, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Nineteenth-Century Spiritualism and the Occult*, ed. Tatiana Kontou and Sarah Willburn (London: Routledge, 2012) p. 124.

importance to the reception of spiritualism, pointing out that he ‘conducted séances for the British aristocracy and Continental royalty, for writers, artists, politicians, and scientists, as well as for countless respectable professionals’.<sup>246</sup> The inability of scientists such as David Brewster to provide a satisfactory explanation for Home’s séances added to his reputation, as Lamont explains. When Home is mentioned in the title of *Human Nature*’s article, therefore, the name would appear to readers to be both recognisable and reliable.

The article itself covers a variety of subjects over several pages, one of which is sleep and dreaming. On the subject of consciousness, certainly an area for psychological study, even in medical terms, it is written that ‘the double conscious states often observed in somnambulism and clairvoyance, resulting, also, from lesions of the brain, may be adduced to disprove the views of the permanency and continuance of consciousness’.<sup>247</sup> Double consciousness, a relatively well-known theory which appeared in both medical and general periodicals, as discussed in the previous chapter, is part of the contemporary scientific discourse on psychology and dreaming. Somnambulism is a frequent example in the theory of double consciousness; however clairvoyance is an addition unique to this spiritualist stance. Its presence also suggests that when the author writes of somnambulism, they are including the spiritualist concept of the soul moving independently from the body during somnambulism. This theory would be aided by proof that there are two independent states of consciousness. The comment that double consciousness may result from ‘lesions of the brain’ appears misplaced alongside the other two states, seemingly placed to connect physiological medical science to these supernatural theories of dream and clairvoyance.

The author of ‘Psychological Inquiries’ continues to explain that:

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<sup>246</sup> Peter Lamont, ‘Spiritualism and the Mid-Victorian Crisis of Faith’, *The Historical Journal*, 47.4 (December 2004), 897-920. p. 898, 901-902.

<sup>247</sup> Op. cit., ‘Psychological Inquiries’, p. 149.

In sleep, we enjoy a consciousness of our own. In somnambulism, the ordinary action is diminished by extraneous causes, and another centre, an abnormal one, establishes itself functions [sic]; but this functioning operates at the expense of the normal central state of our being, and can continue only so long as this state continues to exist and nourish it. The action of the abnormal is sustained by feeding upon the organism of the normal centre; in disease the brain yields the food supplying madness with its imagery.<sup>248</sup>

The phrase ‘a consciousness of our own’ seems an unusual one and asks the question of how a waking consciousness might not be one’s own. The article does not explain the comment but it seems likely, within the context, that it refers to the waking consciousness being influenced by its surroundings, while, in sleep, consciousness is entirely internal and influenced only by one’s own mind.<sup>249</sup> The main point of this section appears to be to provide an explanation for why the second state of consciousness cannot be maintained permanently. The subject then once again turns to medicine and health in a brief consideration of the function of the mind affected by disease, affirming that the discussion is of a scientific nature despite the fact that many of the subjects addressed by the article would not have been widely acknowledged as scientific subjects.

‘Mr Home’s Manifestations’ continues in the following month’s issue of *Human Nature*, though without the additional title of ‘Psychological Inquiries’. In this issue, the article is focused more upon experiments which the author has carried out in order to prove the existence of spiritual manifestations. However, dreams are still considered, and the author explains the theory that the dual state of the mind consists of central and peripheral states,

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid, p. 149.

<sup>249</sup> Dream proving an internal, private, space which is free from the influences and constraints of the everyday is a feature of women’s periodicals and will be discussed in the following chapter.

writing that ‘In sleep, in disease, in somnambulism, during clairvoyance, and in the trance state of mediums, the peripheral dominates’. A little later the explanation continues:

In sleep and its accompaniment dreams, in somnambulism, in clairvoyance, in every state during which the functions of the mind, however imperfectly, are nevertheless performed, the brain still operates as the source from whence the action proceeds; and hence in psychological enquiries, in the investigation of trance states, we are continually met by an intermingling of the recollections from the waking state and the imagery seen and recognised in the clairvoyant state.<sup>250</sup>

The most notable feature of this statement is in the inclusion of a variety of states in the same category and the way they are repeated in two statements of close proximity, as though to emphasise them. While somnambulism is frequently discussed alongside dream as a form of dreaming, here dream is categorised alongside clairvoyance as well as trance and any state ‘during which the functions of the mind, however imperfectly, are nevertheless performed’. This is an incredibly broad category and one which ties research on dreaming into research on spiritual phenomena such as clairvoyance. ‘The intermingling of the recollections from the waking state and the imagery seen and recognised in the clairvoyant state’, is a statement with strong similarity to the common theory of association and its claim that the content of dreams is influenced by the recollection of one’s experiences during the day. This is particularly relevant as, in spiritualist beliefs, dream can be a form of clairvoyance. By using a well-known and widely accepted theory on dreaming to explain the general phenomenon of clairvoyance, supernatural theories are again tied to the scientific.

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<sup>250</sup> ‘Mr Home’s Manifestations’ *Human Nature*, 2 (1868) 193-201. p. 197, 198.

In *Human Nature's* scientific approach, the movement towards physiological psychology is still visible. However, it continues in a way which includes supernatural events, such as prophetic dream, within the physiological explanations. Presenting the supernatural as explainable by scientific research which is visible and material in order to bring it into the factual, scientific sphere is a large part of both spiritualism and mesmerism. Supernatural dream, within this belief system, therefore makes no distinction between current scientific theory and supernatural research, it is studied through a combination of both as the two were not yet separately defined subjects.

The factual articles of the *Spiritual Magazine* are notably different from those of *Human Nature*. For example, in February 1868, they publish 'Transmission of Thought' by Emile Deschamps, which the title states was published in *Le Monde Musical* of Brussels. In the article Deschamps aims to give evidence of spiritual phenomena, including his own experiences. At one point, he details 'a reflection that has frequently occurred to me:'

It has been given to birds and to certain animals to foresee and to announce storms, inundations and earthquakes. Every day the barometer tells us what weather it will be to-morrow: and shall not man be able by a dream, a vision, or some sign of providence, sometimes to become conscious beforehand of some event which concerns his soul, his life, his eternity?<sup>251</sup>

Descamps compares the human mind here not only to those of other animals but also to a piece of technology. While the barometer was invented long before the Victorian period, weather prediction was a subject of contemporary interest following the formation of a government office to collect meteorological data in 1854.<sup>252</sup> Descamps makes two key points

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<sup>251</sup> Emile Deschamps, 'Transmission of Thought', *Spiritual Magazine*, 3 (1868) 88-90. p. 88.

<sup>252</sup> See Katherine Anderson, *Predicting the Weather: Victorians and the Science of Meteorology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005) p.2. Anderson also goes into greater detail about the controversy

in his statement on weather prediction. The first is that it we find, and accept the truth of, prophecy in the natural world when animals predict the weather. Secondly, he points out that new discoveries made weather prediction possible for humans. He then asks the reader to consider why new discoveries could not prove that humans too may make predictions through dreams or visions.

The use of the terms providence, soul and eternity in the above quotation come amidst a strongly religious argument. Deschamps writes, for example, that ‘when God, on rare occasions, or for some of his children, has deigned to lift a corner of the eternal veil, and to cast on their countenance a fleeting ray of the flambeau of prescience, let us take heed not to cry absurd! And to blaspheme thus the light and the truth itself!’<sup>253</sup> The prophetic events, including dream, are then being attributed entirely to God, even while they may have scientific explanations, as the barometer does. Deschamps even goes as far as to say that considering prophetic dream to be absurd is blasphemous. It is this which separates the *Spiritual Magazine* so distinctly from *Human Nature*. The factual articles of the *Spiritual Magazine* are consistently moulded by religious belief, particularly Christianity, and all return to this as the basis of their argument. Like *Human Nature*, however, they maintain that Spiritual manifestations and prophetic dream are explainable scientifically.

‘Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists’, published in March 1868, is another article which attempts to prove that supernatural research belongs, and even already exists in, scientific research. The article begins:

Amid papers on bone caves, and measurements of jawbones, and  
discussions on doliocephalic skulls, we have in the number for July and

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surrounding the prediction of weather following the suicide of the department director, as well as looking at why prediction and prophecy were so important to Victorian ideas of science, history and religion.

<sup>253</sup> Op. cit., Deschamps, p. 88.

October, 1867, no less than three papers by as many writers, each from very different sides, dealing with more or less the facts of Spiritualism or with questions closely related to it. The first paper from which I shall give an illustration is entitled, *Phenomena of the Higher Civilization traceable to a Rudimental Origin among Savage Tribes*. By Edward B. Taylor [sic] Esq., F.A.S.L., F.R.G.S.<sup>254</sup>

Tylor's article is then quoted at length. The beginning of the article clearly shows the author positioning spiritualism within anthropological study while highlighting the material evidence dealt with by that subject, 'measurements of jawbones and discussions on doliocephalic skulls'. This is a clear demonstration of the attempt to align spiritualist research with other scientific subjects while implying that it can provide evidence which is material. The inclusion of articles or extracts of writing from other sources is also a frequent occurrence in both spiritualist magazines and seems to be a similar attempt to define the position of spiritualist research through other existing fields by presenting research from those other fields as evidence of their own beliefs.

This method of gaining authority through association with other subjects is not unique to spiritualism. As Efram Sera-Shriar points out, anthropology was itself a subject struggling to define itself and its methods during the 1860s.<sup>255</sup> As Sera-Shriar explains, anthropology often borrowed from subjects including physics and geology to achieve greater authority within the scientific community. The introduction above shows that three such articles, from different subjects and authors are included in March, July and October in 1867. The use of theories from different subjects to support spiritualist beliefs is therefore shown to be a

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<sup>254</sup> A misspelling of the name of renowned anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor. T.S. 'Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists', *Spiritual Magazine*, 3 (1868) 97-109. p. 97.

<sup>255</sup> Efram Sera-Shriar, 'Credible Witnessing: A.R. Wallace, spiritualism, and a "New Branch of anthropology"', *Modern Intellectual History*, (2018) 1-28. p. 5: <<https://doi-org.ezproxy3.lib.le.ac.uk/10.1017/S1479244318000331>>

recurring tactic in the *Spiritual Magazine*. In specifically pointing out that the papers and writers are ‘from very different sides,’ the author also attempts to reinforce the impression that there is widespread support for spiritualism from a variety of other subjects, therefore giving their claims greater credibility.

The section of Tylor’s article which is quoted, however, differs from what the introduction of ‘Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists’ suggests. He explains the belief in some cultures, for example, that ‘every man and animal has a separable soul which can go out and come back [...] These spirits are mostly invisible to him in his waking hours, but in his dreams he can see them far apart from where their material bodies are: either the spirits of men and things come to visit him, or his own spirit goes forth from his body and sees them’. Tylor also explains that ‘[...] the ancient Indians made a great merit of fasting. They fasted sometimes six or seven days till both their bodies and minds became free of light, which prepared them to dream’.<sup>256</sup> Although both of these examples of contacting spirits are relatable to spiritualist beliefs, it is clear that Tylor’s work is on the beliefs and traditions of various cultures and does not actually address the physical evidence which the articles introduction implies. Tylor was, in fact, incredibly sceptical of spiritualism, as George Stocking Jr explains. Tylor wrote in 1866 that ‘modern spiritualism, as every ethnographer may know, is pure and simple savagery both in its theory and the tricks by which it is supported’.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Op. cit., ‘Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists’, p. 100, 101.

<sup>257</sup> George Stocking Jr, ‘Animism in Theory and Practice: E.B Tylor’s Unpublished ‘Notes on “Spiritualism”’ *Man*, 6 (1971) 88-104. p. 90. Stocking Jr highlights the fact that Tylor was interested in spiritualism and carried out some research on the subject, though from a purely ethnographic view. He also points out that evidence suggests Tylor had an experience of spiritualism in 1867, the year before ‘Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists’ was published. It seems possible therefore that knowledge of Tylor’s attendance and interest amongst spiritualists prompted the assumption in the *Spiritual Magazine* that Tylor was sympathetic to spiritualist beliefs. This assumption, along with the misspelling of his name, however, suggests that neither the author of the piece or the editors were very familiar with his work.

In the first quote above, where Tylor explains the belief that the soul may travel from the body in dream, he explains a belief which was certainly held by spiritualists, and in his use of the term ‘soul’ he makes it easily applicable to the Christian beliefs of the *Spiritual Magazine*. The second quote is easily applicable to contemporary research on the effect of food, or lack of food, on dream, yet this is not mentioned. Instead, the *Spiritual Magazine* presents the article as evidence of spiritual phenomena, which are shown to have been present in ancient cultures. Interestingly, the belief of ancient cultures in prophetic dream is used elsewhere, such as in *All the Year Round*, in a way which mocks those who continue to believe in them, implying that they are outdated and do not fit with modern scientific thought. This is also related fairly frequently to race. Even in the sections of Tylor’s work quoted in the *Spiritual Magazine*, the condescending tone implies that those who believe in these spiritual phenomena are outdated and uneducated. Tylor writes, for example, that ‘to the savage philosopher the world is swarming with spiritual beings’ and refers repeatedly to those he is studying as ‘lower races’.<sup>258</sup> The wide reach of belief in spiritual dream phenomena, however, appears to be viewed as evidence that dream was influenced by spirits in the *Spiritual Magazine*, despite Tylor’s clearly negative association.

In comparison to the science-based factual articles of *Human Nature*, therefore, the *Spiritual Magazine* displays less scientific fact, though they do attempt to present some articles as scientific. On the subjects of mind and matter, the focus is on the former, but explanations are limited to those which include, or are sympathetic to, religious theories. In ‘Transmission of Thought’, therefore, while Deschamps uses technology as evidence of prophecy, the example is vague, not explained in any detail, and is overshadowed by the statement that disbelief in the spiritual may be blasphemous. In ‘Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists’ too, there is a clear effort to present spiritual phenomena in a scientific light,

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<sup>258</sup> Op. cit., ‘Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists’, p. 100.

however the use of Taylor as an advocate for spiritualism, as well as the misspelling of his name, suggests that it is poorly researched.

As well as this, ‘Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists’, which mainly consists of Tylor’s article, does not attempt to examine the points that Tylor is making. Instead, the article finishes with praise for the comments of James Hunt, who had argued that ‘it would be wrong and highly unscientific to declare that any phenomenon is impossible’, along with a general comment on the failure of scientists to properly investigate spiritualist evidence and the hope that anthropologists will begin to do so.<sup>259</sup>

### Fiction and the Anecdotal Story

*Human Nature*, though providing multiple factual articles, publishes far fewer examples of prophetic dreaming than the *Spiritual Magazine*. The most notable occurrence is fictional, being found in the posthumously serialised novel *The Ideal Attained: Being the Story of Two Steadfast Souls, and How They Won Their Happiness and Lost it Not* by Eliza W. Farnham. Published between April 1867 and December 1869, the novel is a key feature of the periodical, taking up a considerable portion of each issue. In his ‘Prospectus’ the editor claimed that ‘this work alone is worth the whole price of the magazine’.<sup>260</sup> Farnham, the novel’s author, was ‘a self-styled “free-thinker”’, who used her belief in phrenology and mesmerism to overturn the established evangelical approach to criminal reform, which was based purely on conversion, in Sing Sing Woman’s prison and would, later, lecture on

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<sup>259</sup> Ibid, p. 104.

In representing this single belief of Hunt’s to support their cause, the journal yet again ignores the problematic nature of Hunt’s other views, including his overt racism. See Ter Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) particularly p. 239, 241.

<sup>260</sup> Op. cit., ‘Our Prospectus’, p. 42.

spiritualism.<sup>261</sup> The views expressed within her novel may therefore be reasonably expected to follow those of *Human Nature*.

A child in *The Ideal Attained* is described by Farnham as ‘impress[ing] those who saw him as looking out of his dreamy eyes into a distant world [...] and when approached, he would seem to come back as from a trance’. The child’s state is certainly dreamlike, enforced by the use of the word ‘dreamy,’ and, after falling into one of these states, the child explains what he sees as ‘the angels’ gardens [...] Men and women, and little children, so handsome and good and loving, that if mamma could only dream his dreams about them, it would make her very happy’.<sup>262</sup> The angels of the story, considering Farnham’s spiritualist beliefs, are likely to be spirits of the dead, rather than biblical angels, with the child therefore looking into the spiritual world. However, the scene does seem to echo Christian beliefs. The perfection of the angel figures and the idealistic garden of flowers the child sees them in appears to resonate with Christian images of heaven and the garden of Eden. If, in Christianity, heaven is viewed as the ideal end to life, it is possible to view Farnham’s angelic garden as an ideal which is attainable without the stipulations of organised religion. It is an afterlife which is apparently available to all and which the spirit, even while living, has a connection to. This stance would also have appealed to Burns, the anti-Christian editor of *Human Nature*, who objected to Christianity due to its ‘system of tyrannical beliefs, anathemas, and spiritually despotic institutions’ and its tendency to ‘interpose artificial influences between man, God and the spirit world’, but agreed with its ‘aspirations of spirit’ which were ‘common to all mankind’.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> John Lardas Modern, ‘Ghosts of Sing Sing, or the Metaphysics of Secularism’ *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 75.3 (2007) 615-650. p. 631.

<sup>262</sup> Eliza Farnham, *The Ideal Attained*, *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 84-102. p. 98, 99.

<sup>263</sup> “‘Spiritual Magazine’ and “‘Human Nature’”, *Human Nature*, 1 (1867) 442-444. p. 444.

The trance-like state of the child who views this garden scene is repeatedly referred to as dream, as is seen in the above quote, although he is not sleeping. Trance is therefore being used interchangeably with dream, a combination which, as is demonstrated in the previous two chapters, was not unusual. As dream was used as evidence of the function of the unconscious mind, it appears to have become a term for all unconscious experience. This is also, of course, related to the uncertainty of language surrounding the function of the mind generally.<sup>264</sup> This is not the only way that Farnham uses dream in a way typical for the mid-nineteenth century. Supernatural dreams which provide a connection with the deceased, or spirit world, occur frequently. Dickens' 'A Child's Dream of A Star', published much earlier in *Household Words* in 1850, also features a child who is able to see angels and his deceased family members when he is dreaming.<sup>265</sup> The child in Farnham's story, however, is also able to predict future events, an ability which is specific to spiritualism and does not appear in Dickens' more traditional Christian view of Heaven.

While fiction does not feature regularly in the *Spiritual Magazine*, anecdotal tales do and it is within these that the majority of dream discussion takes place. A section of the magazine, titled 'Dreams and Visions', provides a variety of stories sent in by readers claiming the ability to provide evidence of spiritualist phenomena. These stories are generally very short, allowing multiple examples to be included in one instalment's 'Dreams and Visions' article. While *Human Nature* does include short anecdotal dream stories, they occur less frequently and usually as lone examples amongst longer factual articles. In their February 1868 'Was it a Dream?', for example, a letter describing a prophetic dream is published and its author ends the letter 'I send this as the contribution of another brick to your fabric of facts in *Human Nature*'.<sup>266</sup> The story, taking up only small parts of the end and beginning of two

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<sup>264</sup> See introduction, p. 8.

<sup>265</sup> Charles Dickens, 'A Child's Dream of A Star', *Household Words*, 1 (1850) 25-26.

<sup>266</sup> 'Was it a Dream?', *Human Nature*, 2 (1868) 45-46. p. 46.

pages, is therefore emphasised as being a piece of factual evidence before the journal moves quickly on to its more usual articles.

An example of the *Spiritual Magazine*'s use of anecdotal dream stories can be found in 'The Prophetic Dream of Lady Wandesforde', written by S.E. De Morgan and published in August 1867. De Morgan begins the article by explaining that:

As well authenticated accounts of prophetic dreams are not as common as those dreams which, like the statements of clairvoyants, give intelligence of distant scenes and occurrences, it is useful to bring cases of the first named character to notice, for these anticipatory or predictive dreams cannot be accounted for by "sympathy of the brain," "transfer of magnetic aura," or any of these partly true but quite insufficient theories which are one after another held and rejected by almost every student of Spiritualism, before he arrives at the belief in the Spiritual world.<sup>267</sup>

This acknowledges two different types of supernatural dream, one of which allows the dreamer to gain geographical and temporal knowledge of events elsewhere and one which is prophetic. The quote also provides different theories to explain these dreams. 'Sympathy of the brain' and the 'transfer of magnetic aura' are theories which would be used by proponents of mesmerism, while they are also applicable to spiritualist ideas. This explains why De Morgan presents these theories as only 'partly true' and 'quite insufficient', suggesting that only through the explanation provided by spiritualism can the phenomenon be fully explained.

Though the article begins with these relatively recent theories of mesmerism, the anecdote itself is from 1639. Following the introduction on the theories of supernatural

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<sup>267</sup> S. E. De Morgan, 'The Prophetic Dream of Lady Wandesforde', *Spiritual Magazine*, 2 (1867) 357-360. p. 357.

dreaming, a considerable amount of attention is given to detailing Lady Wandesforde's family history, particularly the occupations of male family members, in a way which implies that authority and reliability should be assumed from their high social standing. Emphasising this, after providing the various roles and titles of Sir Christopher Wandesforde, the reader is told that 'Lady Wandesforde, his wife, is said to have been a sensible and affectionate woman, and their daughter Alice, who married Mr. Thornton, inherited the mental and moral excellence of both parents'. The significance of the daughter's moral and mental state becomes clear when it is explained that 'the prophetic dream of Lady Wandesforde is narrated by her daughter, Mrs Thornton, in a diary wherein are recorded the events of her father's life'. However, De Morgan continues to explain that 'the whole subjoined extract is from a memoir of the Lord Deputy Wandesforde, &c., appended to his *Advice to his Son*, and edited by the Rev. Thomas Comber, LL.D., afterwards Dean of Durham [...] Dr. Comber married Alice the daughter of Mrs. Thornton, and granddaughter of Lady Wandesforde'. 'These family details', the author explains, 'may serve to guarantee the genuineness of the story'.<sup>268</sup>

While the social positions of the authors and their relationship to the story are intended to provide authority, their inclusion makes it difficult to trace who the story is being told by, a factor which should actually cause the reliability of the story to be questioned. Adding to this confusion, the story begins with a narrator, presumably S.E. De Morgan, who quotes Dr. Comber explaining that he will relate the story in Mrs. Thornton's own words. With this in mind, the reliability of the story, which is over two hundred years old at this point, seems increasingly questionable as it is retold. It is possible that this tenuous reliability is the reason behind the exaggerated account of the family history of those involved. The magazine certainly seems to be appealing to readers' faith in the supposition that the upper

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<sup>268</sup> Ibid, p. 357.

classes should be associated with intelligence and morality, rendering them a reliable source of information.

The description of Lady Wandesforde's dream is another interesting example of the similarities of the terms dream and trance. The events of the dream are given in detail, with small features such as the clothing of the people in the dream and the objects they are holding adding to the impression that the dream is being recounted with particular accuracy. After a loud noise in the dream, Lady Wandesforde, 'as if she was in a slumber, wakened; but she rather believed she was awake all the time'. Dr. Comber later comments that 'I leave it to the reader to consider whether it be reckoned dream or vision, for to me it seems the same'.<sup>269</sup> Whether asleep or awake, therefore, the state of consciousness experienced by Lady Wandesforde is still considered, by Comber at least, to be categorised as a dream.

After the account of the dream, which seems to accurately foretell political unrest and death, more of Dr. Comber's comments are provided in an attempt to dismiss any doubt in the story. For example, 'I shall leave this remarkable story's consideration to the reader, only observing, in the first place, that one cannot without plain injustice deny the good sense and piety of either father, mother, or daughter, concerned in the narrative'. And also, 'nor, in the second, can one reasonably suppose it a pious fraud invented after the facts, because such invention is [...] inconsistent with the character of the persons concerned in it'.<sup>270</sup> Again the emphasis is placed upon the character of the people involved in this story, in order to make it appear reliable. In this case, a religious element is also introduced, developing the suggested reasons to accept the story further than the social background provided earlier, in a way that is particularly aimed at a Christian audience, as the *Spiritual Magazine* was.

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<sup>269</sup> Ibid, p. 358, 359.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid, p. 359.

The subject then turns to the cause of the dream, where Dr Comber comments, ‘I am fully persuaded that it cannot be accounted for on the principles of common solution, but must be solved on the ingenious and judicious Mr. Baxter’s hypothesis of separate spirits’. He notes that ‘I might refer to a number of writers, considerable enough in all ages and nations, for the solution of dreams by separate spirits. But Mr. Baxter is now held *instar omnium* [as an example for all]’.<sup>271</sup> The hypothesis referred to appears in *The Dying Thoughts of the Rev. Richard Baxter*, which was originally published in 1683 and later released in an abridged edition by Benjamin Fawcett, the latter still containing the hypothesis of separate spirits. The hypothesis itself is related to the continued existence of spirits after death.<sup>272</sup> The dream of Lady Wandesforde is therefore being attributed to the influence of the spirit world, in this case one which is directly related, by the relationship with Baxter, to concepts of the Christian afterlife.

A second note from Dr Combe further associates belief in prophetic dream with religion, as he writes ‘from the known regard of Archbishop Laud for dreams, &c., one may safely conclude [...] that if this dream or vision had been related to him, with all the circumstances, it would have terrified him much [...]’.<sup>273</sup> Laud, who is a particularly recognisable figure as the former Archbishop of Canterbury and advisor to King Charles I, is known to have attached an importance to dreams and to have kept a record of his dreams in his diary, which is clearly what Dr. Combe refers to.<sup>274</sup> The inclusion of Archbishop Laud’s stance on dreaming, however, seems unnecessary in the context of ‘Lady Wandesforde’s Dream’ and is therefore presumably present in order to use the Archbishop’s social status, as

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid, p. 359.

<sup>272</sup> At the end of the article, De Morgan suggests that ‘perhaps some of the readers of *The Spiritual Magazine* can tell in which of Baxter’s works the theory of “separate spirits” occurs,’ which would imply that the text, and even the concept of “separate spirits” is neither well known or a strong feature of spiritualist belief.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid, p. 359.

<sup>274</sup> See Charles Carlton ‘The Dream Life of Archbishop Laud’ *History Today*, 36.12 (1986) 9-15.

well as his theological eminence, as evidence of the importance of dream and, again, to give the impression of reliability.

The reference to Archbishop Laud prompts another, shorter, story of prophetic dreaming. Comber writes that ‘Rushworth hath so curious a dream of Laud’s own, with an interpretation, and so *à propos*, that I will give it here’. John Rushworth was the author of *Historical Collections of Private Passages of State*, which included Laud’s life. Again, while the reader is informed of the origin of the story, they are presented with an already second-hand source. The dream and interpretation that Rushworth gives is far less literal than that of Lady Wandesforde, having more in common with the guides of oneiromancy, which give metaphorical meaning to objects and events in the dream. For example, Rushford writes at one point that ‘his chains might signify the imprisonment of the Bishop of Lincoln’. Comber unexpectedly dismisses this dream, writing ‘I fancy every sober person will think such a dream as this very likely to have been inforced [sic] by the natural working of Laud’s imagination in his situation, and that this laborious interpretation of a lawyer is much more extraordinary’.<sup>275</sup> Comber’s criticism of this ‘laborious interpretation’ is perhaps due to its being interpreted in a way which relates more to superstitious interpretations of dreams than direct messages from God or a spirit. Though the ‘laborious interpretation of a lawyer’ implies a complex piece of writing, potentially complicated further by legal language from the specification of Rushworth’s profession, the interpretation is presented very simply, though its conclusions may be far-fetched.

De Morgan ends the article by stating ‘I do not agree with Dr. Comber in thinking Rushworth’s interpretation laborious and extraordinary. On the contrary, it seems simple and obvious, though neither dream nor interpretation are so curious as the experience of Lady

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid, p. 359, 360.

Wandesforde'.<sup>276</sup> As has been previously discussed, dream interpretation guides were popular at the time of De Morgan's writing, which may have left the author more inclined to believe the metaphorical interpretation provided by Rushworth. Ultimately, this leaves the reader with two apparently true prophetic dreams, inspired by the spirit world.

As well as being presented as evidence, the article, particularly the actual description of Lady Wandesforde's dream, has an undoubtedly entertaining quality and is written in a descriptive fashion more common in fiction. For example, it is stated:

[...] raw-boned great men, swarthy and ill-coloured, with all manner of arms; as soldiers, a troop of horse, trumpets, drums, and shouting, making a fearful noise, and drawing of swords, shooting guns, and ordering pikes, with what arms belong to an army running and crying out most hideously, in confused manner, &c.<sup>277</sup>

This is a sentence intentionally crafted to build suspense and create a sense of chaos, action and noise through its use of punctuation and diction. Although the *Spiritual Magazine* rarely uses fiction, articles such as this, with a similar narrative style, replace the fictional articles, providing similar entertainment while also claiming to be evidence of spiritual phenomena. In favouring this type of article over actual fiction, the *Spiritual Magazine* gives the impression of providing a great deal of evidence in support of its spiritualist theories, without losing the entertainment value of fiction, the inclusion of which widens the potential audience of the magazine.

It seems unusual to use 'The Story of Lady Wandesforde' as evidence of prophetic dream, considering its age. However, it is not the only story of considerable antiquity used as

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid, p. 360.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid, p. 358.

evidence in the *Spiritual Magazine*. ‘Stockden’s Ghost Brings his Murderers to Justice,’ published in the January issue of 1867, is the story of an event which supposedly occurred in 1695. The story itself is of a murdered man appearing, on multiple occasions, to a woman in her dreams, in order to show her where his murderers live and allow them to be captured. After this is achieved, the ghost appears in the woman’s dream a final time to thank her, telling her ‘God in heaven will reward thee for what thou hast done’.<sup>278</sup> Dream is again presented here as a medium of connection to the spirit world, allowing communication with the dead which has a direct impact on the living world. The inclusion of the ghost’s final comment also appears, albeit in a general sense, to confirm the existence of both God and heaven. Unlike ‘The Story of Lady Wandesforde’, this story does not claim the authority of social class. The reason for using a story of such age as evidence therefore appears to be its use of both Christian and spiritualist beliefs, as well as the entertainment value of this intriguing murder solved.

While these examples are notable for their age, more modern examples of prophetic dreaming are also published in the *Spiritual Magazine*. One of those included in November 1867 is ‘Mr Lincoln’s Dream of Warning’, relating to the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865. The article is ‘Judge Pierpont’s address to the jury at the Surrat trial’ following the assassination and is based on the story that, on the morning of his assassination, Lincoln had told his cabinet of a dream he had dreamed the previous night, which he had ‘whenever disaster happened’. His assassination is seen as evidence that the dream was prophetic and this is attributed entirely to God, with the explanation that ‘all governments are of God, and for some wise purpose of the Great Ruler of all, by presentiments, portents, bodings, and by

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<sup>278</sup> ‘Stockden’s Ghost Brings his Murderers to Justice’, *Spiritual Magazine*, 2 (1867) p. 44-45. p. 45.

dreams, sends some shadowy warning of a coming dawn when a great disaster is about to befall a nation'.<sup>279</sup>

Other historical examples of supposedly prophetic dreams by leaders are given to support this idea, with Mr Pierpont continuing to say that 'so it was when in the days of Saul – when Caesar was killed – when Brutus dies at Philippi – so was it when Christ was crucified – so it was when Harold fell at the Battle of Hastings – so it was when the Czar was assassinated – so it was before the bloody death of Abraham Lincoln'.<sup>280</sup> There is nothing in the content of Lincoln's dream to suggest that it is related to Christianity, or any religious belief, yet the article attributes it entirely to the influence of God and enforces this association by providing biblical examples of prophetic dream as comparison. This is therefore a clearly intentional portrayal of prophetic dreaming as a result of divine intervention. There is also clearly an intentional emphasis on the important status of the various people who have experienced prophetic dream to indicate the truth and validity of this experience. Both of these facts fit perfectly with the intentions of the *Spiritual Magazine*, which aims to both prove the truth and reliability of spiritual phenomena, and reassure its reader that these phenomena are compatible with Christian beliefs.

*Human Nature* and the *Spiritual Magazine* demonstrate the combination of science, religion and the supernatural which characterises the subjects of spiritualism and mesmerism. Simultaneously, they demonstrate the way that dream can be presented as evidence to support all three subjects and used to demonstrate that religion and the supernatural are scientifically explainable. As the *Spiritual Magazine* in particular shows, dream is the ideal subject for anecdotal evidence, as it provides a narratable insight into the visions of the mind. From a commercial perspective, these anecdotal stories also provided the periodical with a form of

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<sup>279</sup> 'Mr Lincoln's Dream of Warning', *Spiritual Magazine*, 2 (1867) 493.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid*, p. 493.

entertainment, the intention of which shows in the language and presentation of the anecdote as a story. The function of these anecdotes is comparable to *Human Nature*'s fictional *The Ideal Attained*, which similarly provides information on spiritualist beliefs while featuring as a serialised novel for entertainment. In the differences between the two periodicals, and particularly the open debate which appears in both for some months, there is also a prominent example of the way religion influences both the scientific and supernatural debates, attempting at times to align itself with both in spiritualism, while elsewhere it often rejects both. While a subtle struggle between scientific progress and interest in supernatural phenomena can be found in general family periodicals, such as *All the Year Round*, spiritual magazines provide an alternative angle to this issue. In the latter, the truth of the supernatural is unquestioned and science treated as the area of research which will prove these convictions as it progresses, rather than continue to disprove them, as *All the Year Round* suggests. Despite these differences, dreams are discussed alongside both science and the supernatural in both types of periodical, belonging equally to the two sides.

It is in the spiritualist periodicals, where the focus is consistently on the relationship between science, religion and the seemingly supernatural theory of spiritualism that the most obvious merging of the three sides of the debate occurs. It is, subsequently, most obvious in the spiritualist periodicals that the periodical form was the ideal platform for the dream debate. As the religious debate between *Human Nature* and the *Spiritual Magazine* demonstrates, the frequent publication of periodicals allowed debates to develop by encouraging a response to recent discussions. This element of frequent publication combined with the variety of dream representation that was possible in a periodical, in factual and fictional articles as well as in a number of different styles, allowed a discussion of dreaming that was not possible in any other format. As will be shown in the next chapter, in women's periodicals the supernatural dream, particularly those influenced by spiritualist and mesmeric

theories on a connection between minds, develops a very different tone of power and freedom.

## Chapter Four

### Women and Dream

When examining the dream debate in periodical literature of the 1860s, it becomes clear that there are distinct associations between women and the subject of dream. These associations highlight a discourse of power and control that is not generally present in discussions of dream, although it does share some similarities to the issue of unconscious crime, which was discussed in chapter two. Women, for example, composed the vast majority of mesmeric patients and were frequently the focus of spiritualist associated somnambulism. Women also hold a traditional connection with healing and oneiromancy, or the interpretation of dreams, roles of knowledge and power which pose a contrast to the passive and controlled mesmeric patient.<sup>281</sup> In general literary periodicals, such as *All the year Round* and the *Cornhill Magazine*, these contrasting roles are explored in poetry and fiction, though with far less frequency than in women's periodicals, where nonfiction articles are used as well as fiction to explore dream as a space of freedom. The same themes of the dream debate, science, religion and the supernatural, are still present within these representations, as will be seen, continuing to demonstrate the simultaneous contrasts and crossovers between the subjects.

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<sup>281</sup> See Alex Owen, *The Darkened Room: Women, Power and Spiritualism in Late Victorian England* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004)

This chapter will demonstrate that the contemporary science of dream states was equally important in women's periodicals as it has been shown to be in the general periodical, continuing to reflect the movement towards physiological psychology which occurred in the 1860s. It will also show, however, that partly due to the connection between dream and control, the relationship between women and dream raises questions that are more related to autonomy and the concepts of freedom and selfhood. In order to demonstrate the scope of this relationship, the representation of women and dream in the general periodical will be considered alongside that in women's periodicals.

The *Ladies' Treasury* and *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* were the periodicals for women which, as Barbara Onslow points out, 'occupied key market positions in the middle decades' of the nineteenth century, with the latter having a circulation of 60,000 by 1852, and the *Ladies' Treasury* as its only rival.<sup>282</sup> There are a number of similarities between the two periodicals. Both publications were aimed at a middle-class, female audience and were similarly priced, with the *Ladies' Treasury* costing 7d and the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* 6d.<sup>283</sup> Their varied content included fashion and needlework alongside fiction and scientific articles. Both Eliza Warren Francis, editor of the *Ladies' Treasury* and Isabella Mary Beeton, editor of the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* alongside her husband Samuel Beeton, were also well known for their publications on household management, undoubtedly adding authority to their articles on similar subjects in the periodicals.<sup>284</sup> Both were also Anglican, a factor which would suggest that both would

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<sup>282</sup> Barbara Onslow, *Women of the Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Macmillan, 2000) p. 142; Jolein De Ridder and Marianne Van Remoortel 'Not "Simply Mrs Warren": Eliza Warren Francis (1810-1900) and the "Ladies' Treasury"', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 44.4 (2011) 307-326. p. 311.

<sup>283</sup> The price of the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* increased to 6d in 1860, when the magazine relaunched in a larger format. See Onslow, p. 138.

<sup>284</sup> After Isabella Beeton's death in 1865, Matilda Brown co-edited the periodical.

demonstrate sympathy towards biblical examples of prophetic dreaming and the Church of England's stance on modern prophetic dream, which was largely dismissive.

Cynthia White writes that, in the *Ladies' Treasury*, 'the Editor rigorously excluded everything which might tend to "enervate or bewilder" the pure female mind'.<sup>285</sup> In comparison, the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* often published articles which may be considered more controversial. Samuel Beeton, for example, wrote in support of divorce reform, married women's property rights, women's suffrage and education. This difference is visible in the treatment of dream in the two periodicals, with the *Ladies' Treasury* careful to specifically state its belief that dreams of a religious origin are possible, while the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* embraces the contemporary interest in oneiromancy, or dream interpretation.

#### 'The Theory of Dreams' in Women's Periodicals

The *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* and the *Ladies' Treasury* demonstrate the distinctive relationship between women and dream with particular clarity in comparison to general literary periodicals, such as the *Cornhill Magazine* and *All the Year Round*, which were providing a similar combination of instructive and entertaining fact and fiction. Representation of scientific dream theory in the women's periodicals, however, continue to be similarly detailed. One of the most focused examples of this can be found in the *Ladies' Treasury*, in 'The Theory of Dreams', an article attributed to 'C.E.A' and published in January 1867. The article outlines its stance on the dream debate, and seemingly the periodical's as a whole through the author's use of the possessive 'our', by stating:

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<sup>285</sup> Cynthia White, *Women's Magazines 1693-1968* (London: Michael Joseph, 1970) p. 47.

our object [is] to lay before our readers a clear and concise exposition, in simple phrases, of the causes of dreams, and to endeavour to show how far they can be reduced under a regular system, and separated from the superstition attached to them by the ancients, and adhered to with reverence by many of the moderns; but in the case of the latter, more from ignorance than a sense of religion.<sup>286</sup>

The statement implies a preference for the scientific side of the debate, suggesting that the incredibly broad subject of dreaming might be 'reduced under a regular system', explained and categorised in a simple way with scientific methods.

Addressing belief in supernatural dreams, the author refers to 'superstition attached to them by the ancients'. This presents an example of supernatural dreaming being associated with the past, which is used in this instance, as in others, to imply a belief which is outdated.<sup>287</sup> The article admits that the superstitions are still 'adhered to with reverence by many of the moderns', but adds that this reverence is derived from ignorance, again implying outdated beliefs and lack of contemporary scientific knowledge. The addition of 'a sense of religion', however, subtly suggests that belief in religious supernatural dreams would be an acceptable exception.

The author goes on to write that 'we do not pretend entirely to disbelieve in dreams', assuring the reader 'that we do not scorn the supposition that they are sometimes the medium of divine intercourse between the mortal and immortal; or that they may sometimes answer the expectations of the superstitious'.<sup>288</sup> With noncommittal language such as 'may

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<sup>286</sup> C.E.A, 'The Theory of Dreams', *Ladies' Treasury* (1867) 24-26. p. 24.

<sup>287</sup> There are also multiple examples of age being used in an attempt to give supernatural dreaming authenticity. This contrast reflects the contemporary struggle between the nostalgic past and future progress. See chapter three, p. 117.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid*, p. 23.

sometimes', the author carefully avoids dismissing any side of the dream debate with a tentative acceptance of supernatural influence, while still leaving a clear impression that the scientific dominates this argument. As elsewhere, however, the wording also implies that science and religion are not necessarily mutually exclusive. 'We do not pretend entirely to disbelieve' indicates, through the choice of the word 'entirely', that a degree of belief in both scientific and religious theories is possible.

The inclusion of a carefully worded exception to scientific theory for religious beliefs suggests an appreciation that a considerable number of readers, mostly middle-class women in the case of the *Ladies' Treasury*, will hold religious beliefs, and that supernatural dreams form a part of those beliefs. The importance of the subject is shown through a return to it at the end of the article. The main body of the article is entirely dominated by rational conceptions of dream, demonstrating 'that dreams can only arise from internal conceptions; that these conceptions are merely imprints on the brain of scenes that have been seen by the mind's eye – that is, either through the medium of the organs of vision, or through some description'. The explanation concludes that dreams represent 'trains of thought unregulated by the organ of reason' which manifest themselves during imperfect sleep, when total sleep is prevented 'by disease, trouble, or some all-engrossing thought'.

These are all theories discussed in scientific studies of dream, including those by Abercrombie and MacNish, and published in medical periodicals such as the *Lancet*. There is, however, a notable difference in the presentation of information. 'The Theory of Dreams' uses metaphor and personification to aid the explanation of the function of the brain as it proceeds from fatigue to dream. The author writes, for example, that 'fatigue has the power, first, of relieving reason in her arduous functions, and then of closing the volume called the brain'. This explanation both personifies reason as female and presents the brain as a metaphorical book. The image is particularly interesting as it indicates that the brain is a store

of knowledge to be accessed and that, during sleep, this source of knowledge is closed. The metaphor supports a claim the author makes at the beginning of the article, that the ‘brain itself is not sufficient to make a reasonable being, although the supposed source of all reason; for were this so, where would be the difference between man and the brute, the sane and the insane’. After briefly mentioning, but not overtly agreeing with, a phrenological explanation of the organs of the mind, the author concludes that ‘the governing power of the mind is called reason when it attains that importance it does in man, and instinct when its power falls below such standard, as is the case in the brute creation’. While the stance is still physiological, the brain is not being considered as the sole source of the mind’s function. Although the author is reluctant to directly support the theories of phrenology, there is clear sympathy towards a phrenological explanation here. The reluctance to openly support the theory may be explained by the comment, coming after the explanation of phrenological theory, that ‘instead of going further into these deep discussions we will pause at the point at which we believe none will contradict us, or attempt to deny the truth of our assertion’.<sup>289</sup> The author is therefore keen to avoid any subject of controversy, perhaps, as Cynthia White suggests, to avoid ‘everything which might tend to “enervate or bewilder” the pure female mind’.<sup>290</sup>

After the lengthy discussion of modern scientific dream theory, however, the author states that ‘we must not conclude without a few remarks on the truth of the prophecies sometimes foretold in dreams. We do not maintain for a moment that the Deity may not sometimes use this divine method of communication with His creatures’ hearts’.<sup>291</sup> Again, language such as ‘sometimes’ and ‘may not’ renders the statement on the truth of prophetic or supernatural dreams less decisive. The reference to communication with the heart also

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<sup>289</sup> Ibid, p. 24, 23.

<sup>290</sup> See p. 157.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid, p. 25.

implies an essentially emotional connection, which appears to have little relation to the mental and physiological theories discussed earlier in the article. This reference to the heart is interesting when considered in the light of Kirstie Blair's comments on the prevalence of references to the heart in Victorian literature and culture.<sup>292</sup> 'The heart', Blair writes, 'is both material and spiritual, public and private, active and passive; the most intimate part of an individual yet the most detached, in the sense that its actions cannot necessarily be controlled'. With this in mind, C.E.A's suggestion of divine communication with the heart does connect the spiritual with the physical, which had been the main focus of the article up to this point. The physiological function of the brain, however, becomes a separate and therefore irrelevant process in God's communication through dream. Once again, the brain is not the most important component in the creation of dream.

The ending statement of the article continues to explain that:

[...] in some cases where a commonly-received saying, or a superstitious interpretation has taken firm hold of the mind of any person, that such form of vision to which such import is attributed, may be sometimes used by the Almighty as his instrument of communication.

This not only continues to use equivocal language, it also suggests that dreams of a religious influence are experienced by those who are already influenced by popular superstitious beliefs. This subtly implies that the dreams may have their origins in external impressions made on the mind, rather than actual divine influence. While this theory of impressions made during the day influencing dream is not new, it is still often used alongside newer theories as evidence that dreams are not supernatural.<sup>293</sup> It also forms an important part of the explanation of dreaming elsewhere in the article, which claims, for example, that 'dreams can

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<sup>292</sup> Kirstie Blair, *Victorian Poetry and the Culture of the Heart* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) p. 4.

<sup>293</sup> See introduction, p. 13.

only arise from internal conceptions [...] these conceptions are merely imprints on the brain of scenes that have been seen by the mind's eye – that is, either through some medium of the organs of vision, or through some description'.<sup>294</sup> This correlates with the comment on those who have experienced supernatural dream having been exposed to a commonly-received saying, though it contradicts the suggestion that dreams may be the communication of a Deity.

These features give a favourable overall impression towards scientific theories of dream, particularly by indicating that influences on the mind while awake determine the content of dreams, rather than dreams being the product of supernatural influence, though this is suggested alongside obvious reluctance to entirely dismiss the supernatural. This fits with the author's overall reluctance, as was mentioned earlier, to make any statements which may attract contradiction.

The partial anonymity of the author is itself an important factor in the women's periodical. De Ridder and Van Remoortel discuss the way in which Eliza Warren Francis signed her own articles with alternative versions of her name, so that 'authority is scattered among a myriad of gendered and apparently "genderless" voices through which she experimented with various social and cultural identities and forms of affiliation'. For example, 'contributions of particular female concern' such as 'fancywork, cookery and household', it is pointed out, 'usually carried female signatures', such as "Eliza Warren" or "Mrs Warren". In scientific articles, however, she often used 'the more masculine and hence arguably more authoritative "Warren Francis"'.<sup>295</sup> Eliza Warren Francis also used a variety of combinations of initials, using her married and maiden names.

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<sup>294</sup> Op. cit., 'The Theory of Dreams', p. 26, 24-25.

<sup>295</sup> Op. cit., "'Not Simply Mrs Warren": Eliza Warren Francis (1810-1900) and the "Ladies' Treasury"', p. 313, 314.

It seems likely that the same method was used by Warren Francis for other contributors. The initials C.E.A. give the author genderless pseudonymity, potentially allowing the assumption that the author is male and therefore ‘arguably more authoritative’. Alexis Easley considers this issue further in *First-Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830-70*. Addressing the anonymity of women writers in various forms of periodical, Easley argues that ‘the existence of an anonymous press during most of the century demonstrates that the development of the author as an individualized male identity was countered by a tendency towards anonymous forms of authorship, wherein specificities of sex and gender were complicated and obscured’.<sup>296</sup> Similarly, Easley argues, this allows us ‘to view pseudonymous publication as a strategy designed to complicate the authorial position, rather than a defensive means of obscuring an essential “self” or “voice”’. Easley’s argument reflects the findings of De Ridder and Van Remoortel on Eliza Warren Francis, demonstrating that this complication of authorial position, which was such an important part of Warren Francis’s editorship, was integral to women’s roles in periodical literature more generally.

In comparison to ‘The Theory of Dreams’, ‘The Phenomena of Memory’, published in the *Ladies’ Treasury* in 1869, has an easily identifiable male author. The article is attributed to Samuel H. Dickson, presumably the American physician Samuel Henry Dickson (1798-1872). Although dream is not the focus of the article, the subject arises on multiple occasions, an occurrence which, as has been seen in the previous three chapters, was not unusual due to the use of dream to discuss the function of the mind. After discussing memory loss, for example, Dickson writes ‘these phenomena are ultimate facts, unexplained and inexplicable in the present twilight dawn of human science. We may make the same

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<sup>296</sup> Alexis Easley, *First-Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830-1870* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004) p. 6,7

admission as to dreaming, a state of varied incident and action usually forgotten on waking'.<sup>297</sup> In the expression 'twilight dawn of human science', Dickson presents an interesting image of scientific progress at the end of the 1860s. The contrasting images of twilight and dawn imply both ending and beginning in a metaphor that sees light, as knowledge, both setting and rising in the field of human science. While referring to the incredibly broad area of 'human science', this metaphor seems particularly fitting in the context of the progress of psychology, or mental science, during the 1860s, as it gradually abandons philosophical explanations in favour of physiological ones. Dream, however, according to Dickson, is still 'unexplained and inexplicable' within contemporary scientific knowledge. This stance subtly avoids disregarding dreams connected with religious beliefs, though the article approaches the function of the mind from a purely scientific view. This is in keeping with the Protestant view of the editors, as it avoids questioning the validity of biblical dreams, although it does not directly address the issue of religion as 'The Theory of Dreams' does. It is, however, a factual piece, written by a professional for a non-professional audience, which was also found in general family periodicals such as the *Cornhill Magazine*. In this way, women's periodicals were functioning in the same way as general family periodicals were in presenting contemporary research on the mind and dream in an accessible way.

In the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, 'Divination for the Drawing Room', published in five parts between March and July 1867, presents both the scientific and supernatural sides of the dream debate.<sup>298</sup> The title itself instantly aligns the article with the supernatural, presenting divination as a domestic and social activity through its association

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<sup>297</sup> Samuel H. Dickson, 'The Phenomena of Memory', *Ladies' Treasury* (1869) 26-30. p. 29.

<sup>298</sup> A footnote to the title of the first part of 'Divination for the Drawing Room' tells the reader to 'See an article on Divination by Cards in *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, suggesting wider use of the supernatural as entertainment.

with the drawing room. Each month the article is also subtitled ‘Oneiromancy, or Divination by Dreams’, specifying that the supernatural element of the article will be entirely related to dream interpretation. Continuing to establish the theme of the article, part one begins ‘Many years ago, while travelling in Spain, I met with a Jewish rabbi, a man of profound learning and high reputation’.<sup>299</sup> The reader is therefore instantly aware that ‘Divination for the Drawing Room’ is a first person travel story, an appropriate drawing room tale. The author of the article is not revealed and therefore the narrative voice is entirely anonymous but the other character introduced in the first sentence is presented as a trustworthy source, both intelligent and respected. However, this is complicated somewhat by the particular attention to religion. Antisemitism was prevalent at this time in Victorian Britain and Jewish people frequently represented as untrustworthy.<sup>300</sup> In this case the Jewish character is clearly presented in a positive light. This may simply indicate the author’s opinion on Judaism, as there was of course some support for Jewish people alongside the existing antisemitism of the mid-nineteenth century. As was pointed out earlier, the Beeton’s often printed controversial subjects in the *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine*, so it is unlikely that they would have avoided the subject due to any fear of controversy. However, it may also be that the author associates this supernatural conversation with Judaism specifically for its association with a more ancient past and attention to pre-Christian biblical events.<sup>301</sup> As was discussed in chapter three, age is often used as evidence of authority and reliability in relation to the supernatural.

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<sup>299</sup> ‘Divination for the Drawing Room’, *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* (1867) 31-33. p. 31.

<sup>300</sup> Kathy Lavezzo examines the tense and complex relationship between representations of Jews and Christians in *The Accommodated Jew: English Antisemitism from Bede to Milton* (London: Cornell University Press, 2016). Although largely dealing with earlier examples of the relationship, Lavezzo examines the Victorian era in her ‘Coda’, p. 248-258.

Michael Ragussis also examines the complex contrast of tolerance and antisemitism in Victorian Britain in ‘The “Secret” of English anti-Semitism’ *Victorian Studies*, 40.2 (1997) p. 295+

<sup>301</sup> Kathy Lavezzo writes about the ‘Victorian account of space as old or superseded’, (p.251) and, although Lavezzo is talking about a physical representation of the ancient grandeur of temples contrasted with an old and dishevelled present, she is clearly addressing a wider social conception of Jewish society.

Having established the reliability and intelligence of the rabbi the narrator meets, the reader is then told that the rabbi ‘had paid great attention to what are called the “Occult Sciences”’.<sup>302</sup> This is a term for the study of the supernatural which was used for many years. It appears, for example, in John Dryden’s 1671 play *An Evening’s Love*. Its use in ‘Divination for the Drawing Room’, emphasised slightly by both capitalisation and quotation, enforces the presentation of the study as a scientific subject, which seems again to be an attempt to present the subject as trustworthy and factual. The use of the term science in relation to apparently supernatural phenomena is also reminiscent of the way supernatural dreams are discussed in spiritualist periodicals, as was seen in chapter three.

Oneiromancy, the rabbi states, ‘is one of the most interesting of all’ types of divination. He then continues to explain that:

Those Scriptures which you and I equally reverence gave their sanction to a belief in the significance of dreams, and relate many instances of such as were inspired. They show that the Egyptians and Babylonians had a recognised system of interpretation applicable to them; and as to the Greeks, their literature abounds with passages which show that they too had the same notions; the Romans held similar opinions, and I suppose that there has never been a people wholly sceptical in this respect.<sup>303</sup>

From claiming authenticity from science, the discussion moves to claiming authenticity from religion and biblical sources which are shared by multiple faiths.<sup>304</sup> Simultaneously, this combines the beliefs of the supernatural “occult sciences” with religion, specifically Christianity and Judaism. The scientific and supernatural, which were already being

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<sup>302</sup> Op. cit., ‘Divination for the Drawing Room’, p. 31.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid, p. 141.

<sup>304</sup> The reader is told a little later that the narrator is Christian.

considered together, are therefore also shown to correspond with religious beliefs, thus all three sides of the dream debate are shown to be sympathetic to one another. Again using links to the Bible, the article then points to the beliefs of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans, building authority from the idea that, historically, many civilisations recognised dream interpretation as a true source of prophecy. Oneiromancy, this implies, is not a new theory but a well-established and widespread one. Contrasting with the *Ladies' Treasury's* representation of past beliefs in dreaming, it is represented as a positive, rather than a problematic factor.

Opposition to supernatural interpretations of dreams is also raised in 'Divination for the Drawing Room'. The rabbi claims that 'of late years it has been much vulgarised and corrupted, and I need hardly tell a Christian that it is not encouraged by Church law'. Despite admitting that the Christian Church does not encourage oneiromancy, this statement tells the reader that it is a 'vulgarised and corrupted' version of the study which is at fault. Agreeing, the narrator explains that 'its professors used to be burnt alive and now would be prosecuted as imposters, which, however, does not stop the "*gitanos*"', a term for Spanish gypsies, 'from telling your fortune by dreams, as well as by cards'. The narrator then requests 'a sketch, ever so slight, of this science'.<sup>305</sup> This is an interesting contrast as the punishment of being burnt alive appears to refer to the accusation of witchcraft, both fully aligned with the supernatural and in opposition to the Christian Church. Current fortune tellers, it is pointed out, are still prosecuted and this presents oneiromancy as almost a forbidden secret, and perhaps more desirable information due to that. Instantly after this, however, oneiromancy is once again referred to as a science, and the narrator, identified as Christian, asks for a sketch of it as such.

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<sup>305</sup> Ibid, p. 32.

The explanation which follows the question is sympathetic to the beliefs of both Christianity and Judaism. The rabbi explains, ‘our philosophers teach that the soul cannot for a single second fall into a state of unconsciousness, and that when the soul sleeps it acts independently of corporeal influences, and can at times pass away from its material vehicle, and range through space at its pleasure’. There are striking similarities in this theory of the soul and that of spiritualism, which will be discussed later in this chapter.<sup>306</sup> The narrator further explains ‘I know the doctrine well, [...] and it is received by Christians in Germany quite as much as by Jews. Those who hold to it believe that these wanderings of the soul are wholly forgotten in the waking state, and hence do not form the subject of dreams which can afterwards be related’.<sup>307</sup> The rabbi compares this to somnambulism, which is again associated with the movement of the spirit during dream in spiritualism. Although spiritualism is not actually mentioned, its popularity in the mid-1800s, evidenced by the prevalence of the subject in the media as well as by the establishment of groups such as James Burns’ Progressive Library and Spiritualist Institution (1863) and publications such as the *Spiritual Magazine* (1860), suggests that readers would have recognised this connection. From being a forbidden subject associated with witchcraft and imposters, rejected by the church, oneiromancy quickly becomes again a scientific subject, sympathetic to multiple beliefs and considered seriously throughout the world. Oneiromancy is therefore a subject both forbidden and yet safely approved, a contradictory stance which can only be intended to present the subject to the reader as appealing and exciting, the temptation of a secret revealed or forbidden knowledge gained, yet simultaneously respectable and moral.

‘Divination for the Drawing Room’ does demonstrate a knowledge of contemporary dream theory as the rabbi discusses types of dreams which ‘cannot be regarded as oracular’.

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<sup>306</sup> See also chapter three.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid, p. 142.

These include those which are ‘the result of some disease’, ‘dreams which are evidently the result of strong impressions made on the mind during the day’ and those influenced by ‘external sensations’, such as temperature. These are theories which appear in many sources, including the works of Abercrombie and MacNish. By agreeing with the accuracy of these theories, oneiromancy is shown to be a part of recognised scientific studies, rather than being in opposition to them as a supernatural subject. It also allows for the statement that ‘significant dreams’, amongst these other types, ‘are few’ and that ‘much of the obloquy under which the science of oneiromancy has rested takes its origin from foolish applications of it’.<sup>308</sup> This comment dismisses all arguments against oneiromancy by implying that those which are mocked were ‘foolish applications’ of the study. This is very similar to the earlier comment that the subject had recently been ‘vulgarised and corrupted’, blaming modern misuse of the subject for its failures and criticisms. The comment is shortly followed, however, by examples of prophetic dreams which have been realised, reinforcing the idea that oneiromancy can be reliable if the dreams are interpreted correctly.

The first part of ‘Divination for the Drawing Room’ ends with the rabbi’s offer to provide an alphabetical list of dreams with comments and anecdotes from his pocket-book, with the final line promising that ‘we will open this pocket-book next month’.<sup>309</sup> As well as confirming to the reader that this article is to be continued, it is also clearly designed to entice them to purchase the next issue in order to learn the mysterious contents of the pocket book. Over the following four months, the contents of the ‘pocket-book’, are published. The content is an alphabetical list of subjects of dream and their interpretations, such as ‘Apricots, Almonds, or other Sweet Fruits – Dreams of these are fortunate, and signify pleasures and festivities’.<sup>310</sup> The style and content are therefore the same as contemporary dream guides and

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<sup>308</sup> Ibid, p. 32.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid, p. 33.

<sup>310</sup> ‘Divination for the Drawing Room II’, *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* (1867) 204-205. p. 204.

the purpose of presenting a dream guide is only slightly disguised by the narrative which frames the interpretations.

While dream guides were often the subject of scorn, they also held public interest, as is seen in their continued publication throughout the 1800s.<sup>311</sup> Maureen Perkins argues that dream guides were aimed at a largely female readership, pointing out that women were often used in the titles of these guides. She writes ‘The role of women in this genre was crucial. Mother Bridget was one attributed source, Mother Bunch another, and Mother Shipton a third’. Perkins concludes that this was ‘doubtless intended to attract readers by assuring them that the compilers understood their needs and interests’. There is also clearly a maternal theme here, suggesting the passing on of knowledge from an older generation. As was discussed in chapter three, Perkins writes that ‘any form of predicting the future, whether it was prophecy or fortune-telling, claimed to carry the authority of long-established lineage’. Perkins makes this point in relation to claims that dream guides originated from ancient manuscripts but the point is still applicable to the more recent history of family lineage, and particularly the passing of knowledge from mother to daughter. This passing on of specifically female knowledge seems particularly relevant when the subjects of these dream guides are considered. Perkins points out that, ‘marriage and children are by far the most common subjects’ as well as highlighting examples which refer to virginity and menstruation.<sup>312</sup>

‘Divination for the Drawing Room’ uses a combination of aspects from science and religion to validate the concept of prophetic dream, recognising contemporary theory from both as it does so, but ultimately it uses this to frame the publication of a dream guide for the purpose of entertainment. With the content of ‘Divination for the Drawing Room’ readers

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<sup>311</sup> See chapter three, p. 115-118.

<sup>312</sup> Maureen Perkins, ‘The Meaning of Dream Books’ *History Workshop Journal*, 48 (1999) 102-113. p. 105.

could interpret their dreams in just the same way as if they had purchased a dream guide but without having to actually purchase a specific guide, or admit an interest in this subject that was scorned as unintelligent nonsense by some. A particularly interesting feature of this article is its recognition of the various concerns and interests surrounding the subject of dream, of which it includes all and dismisses none. This demonstrates, within the same article, both the general interest in the subject of dreaming and the way that the explanations of science, religion and the supernatural were equally important to the way it was being represented and defined.

As 'The Theory of Dreams' and 'Divination for the Drawing Room' show the *Ladies' Treasury* and *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* presenting all sides of the dream debate, without seeming to agree solely with any of them. Through this combination, essentially different from a discussion of the subjects as separate entities, it is easy to see that the boundaries between each side of the debate are not clearly defined. As was seen in chapter one, scientific and supernatural subjects frequently lacked definition and there are many cases in which science is discussed as sympathetic with religion and the supernatural, as in spiritualism. In both women's periodicals, the three appear to be represented harmoniously, though science appears to be the central concern in providing authenticity. In other areas of the women's periodical, however, science and the dream states are portrayed in a far more negative way.

### Dream and Control

There are numerous occasions in which dream states become the subject of fear, particularly in relation to mesmeric sleep and somnambulism. This is sometimes related to a more general distrust of medical practitioners. This distrust is well represented in the article

‘What My Doctor Thinks of Himself’, published in the *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* in November 1860. The arrogance of male doctors is implied in the title, and the anonymous author writes that ‘medicine remains in the same darkness’ as in times when people simply ‘groped for healing herbs [...] So at least I gather from an alarming book (published in Edinburgh four or five years ago) on mesmerism’.<sup>313</sup> The anonymous author of the article quotes from Abercrombie, John Forbes and Astley Cooper amongst a list of medical professionals who have admitted the uncertain state of medicine. The distrust is therefore not purely related to mesmerism. The author goes on to say that ‘it is only fair, it is only human, to represent the state of affairs to the “general reader”, who is not in the habit of reading books in which such revelations as these are found: and as to what is to be done, I leave to that general reader herself’. This is an interesting comment on reading habits and highlights the ability of periodicals to disseminate information to an audience that would otherwise be unlikely to access it. However, it does also indicate the way periodicals may distort this information, with authors using only particular elements of an argument to fit their own purposes. This is also visible in the *Spiritual Magazine’s* ‘Spiritualism Among the Anthropologists’, which was discussed in chapter three.<sup>314</sup> Like this article, where the author misspelled Edward Burnett Tylor’s name, the author of ‘What My Doctor Thinks of Himself’ misspells Abercrombie’s name as ‘Abercromby’, indicating that they are not as familiar with the work as their article suggests.<sup>315</sup>

Mesmerism did raise a particular set of fears, however, and those fears were not restricted to women’s periodicals, as was seen in chapter three. However, Alison Winter highlights the fear surrounding mesmerism for women particularly, as it was most often they

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<sup>313</sup> Possibly *Mesmerism in its Relation to Health and Disease* by William Neilson, which was published in Edinburgh by Shepherd & Elliot in 1855.

<sup>314</sup> See p. 139.

<sup>315</sup> ‘What my Doctor Thinks of Himself’, *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* (1860) 37-40.

who were the subjects of experiments, the physical nature of which was often considered inappropriately intimate.<sup>316</sup> Fears regarding mesmerism generally, however, were widespread, a fact which is reflected most strongly in the discussions within medical periodicals, which highlight the fear amongst medical practitioners that mesmerism may not be simply a case of charlatanism, but actually dangerous. For example, in 1861, the ‘Half-Yearly Report on Toxicology, Forensic Medicine, and Hygiene’ in the *British and Foreign Medico Chirurgical Review* included a review of the essay ‘Maladies Accidentally and Involuntarily Produced by Imprudence, Negligence, or Transmission by Contagion’ by the doctor and eminent forensic medicine scientist Auguste Ambroise Tardieu.<sup>317</sup> The article details the case of a child who cannot be woken after taking part in a mesmeric experiment. The physician who attends the child diagnoses nervous disturbance, denying the influence of magnetic force, yet this indicates that the practice of mesmerism remains dangerous, even if mesmeric forces do not exist.

Mesmerism is not a necessary feature of control during dream states. As with mesmerism, however, the control is usually, though not always, connected with women. It is also not solely found in women’s periodicals. For instance, a strong example can be found in George MacDonald’s fictional story, *The Portent*, which was serialised in the *Cornhill Magazine* between May and July 1860.<sup>318</sup> Central to this story is the fact that the character Lady Alice is a somnambulist. In the dramatic sequence during which this fact is revealed, the narrator, Duncan, witnesses ‘a tall form, apparently of a woman, dressed in a long white loose robe, [which] emerged into one of the streams of light, threw its arms over its head,

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<sup>316</sup> Alison Winter, *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000)

<sup>317</sup> Benjamin W. Richardson, ‘Half-Yearly Report on Toxicology, Forensic Medicine, and Hygiene’, *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review* (1861) 287.

<sup>318</sup> *The Portent* is not MacDonald’s only contribution to the *Cornhill Magazine* and in this periodical he develops his thoughts on dreaming and death which, although published previously in his novel *Phantastes*, are more fully portrayed later in *Lilith*.

gave a wild cry [...] and fell at full length along the moonlight track'. The narrator explains that, as a somnambulist, Lady Alice had been 'startled by the noise of [his] advance' and 'the usual terror and fainting had followed'.<sup>319</sup>

The reader is instantly aware that Lady Alice has no control over what she is doing and also that her behaviour is scandalously far from accepted social norms. The details of her clothing make it clear that she is wearing night clothes, the inappropriate nature of which is emphasised when Duncan begins to wonder 'What was to be done? If I called aloud [...] if anyone should hear,- but I need not follow the train of thoughts that passed through my mind [...] Suffice it to say, that I shrank most painfully, for both her sake and my own, from being found, by common-minded domestics, in such a situation, in the dead of the night' After being roughly carried to Duncan's room, her loose hair 'trampled on' by him in the process, the reader then sees Lady Alice's reaction on waking. The reaction is one of 'mingled bewilderment, alarm, and shame,' before 'her expression changed to anger'. This briefly emphasises the concerning lack of control Lady Alice has over the situation she has found herself in and also the lack of memory she has of what has happened to her while she has been sleeping. Again the impropriety and sexual implication of this is highlighted by her clothing as she 'discovered the unsuitableness of her dress [...] and remained leaning on her elbow'.<sup>320</sup> Thus in a state of somnambulism, which is not controlled, there is already a real sense of danger and fear surrounding the inability of the somnambulist to control their own mind.

Duncan's control of Lady Alice follows shortly after these events and is based purely on desire. Wishing to see Lady Alice, who he has fallen in love with, he says to himself 'would to heaven [...] that will were power!' Although Duncan does not realise at this point

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<sup>319</sup> George MacDonald, *The Portent*, Cornhill Magazine, 1 (1860) 670-681. p. 676.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid, p. 676, 677.

that he has any power over Lady Alice, he does openly wish for the power to obtain what he wants. Instantly following this, he states:

In the confluence of idleness, distraction, and vehement desire, I found myself, before I knew what I was about, concentrating and intensifying within me, until it almost rose to a command, the operative volition (if I may be allowed the phrase) that Lady Alice should come to me. Suddenly I trembled at the sense of a new power which sprang into being within me. I had not foreseen it, when I gave way to such extravagant and apparently helpless wishes. I now actually awaited the fulfilment of my desire [...] Nor had I to wait long.<sup>321</sup>

The feeling of desire, a word which is repeated twice in this sequence, and the will for power, culminates in control over Lady Alice's mind and body. The power Duncan feels and exerts is emphasised by his awareness of it, though the combination of intention (Duncan's concentrating and intensifying the power) with suggestions of accident ('before I knew what I was about' and 'helpless wishes') imply that Duncan as a character is aware that this exertion of power is wrong and that he is struggling between the morality of using it and the easy fulfilment of his desire.

This time, when Lady Alice wakes, her comment 'yet again! Am I your slave, because I am weak?' further enforces the position of power Duncan has taken as he forces Lady Alice to act against her will. Her use of the word 'slave' echoes Duncan's use of the word 'command'.<sup>322</sup> Duncan's first words in response are 'Lady Alice, I have not touched you'.<sup>323</sup> While this refers to the fact that Lady Alice walked to Duncan's rooms without him

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<sup>321</sup> Ibid, p. 680.

<sup>322</sup> This may also be seen in the context of class role reversal as Duncan, a tutor working in the house, controls and commands the stepdaughter of the houses owner and his employer.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid, p. 681.

physically carrying her this time, it undoubtedly also highlights the fear of sexual impropriety. As in any form of dreaming, while in a somnambulistic state Lady Alice is unable to control her thoughts and therefore her actions. This control is taken by another, who uses it for his own desires, causing distress to the sleeping woman. There is a very clear element of fear in this lack of control over one's own mind, which is heightened by the somnambulistic state in which one's uncontrollable thoughts are made physical and can be witnessed by others. Adding to this fear is the potential of outside control, which is very similar to the fear which mesmerism raised, with the sleeping state playing a key part in taking control away from the dreamer. However, there are also occasions when the role of power is arguably reversed and this can be seen in the final instalment of *The Portent*.

### A Room of One's Own

In the final instalment of *The Portent*, published in the *Cornhill Magazine* in July 1860, a different view of power and freedom begins to emerge. For the first time, Lady Alice sleepwalks to Duncan's room without his influence and is happy to have done so:

“It is strange,” said she, “to feel, when I lie down at night, I may awake in your presence, without knowing how; and that, although I should be utterly ashamed to come wittingly, I feel no confusion when I find myself here. When I feel myself coming awake, I lie for a little while with my eyes closed, wondering and hoping, and afraid to open them, lest I should find myself only in my own chamber”. [...]

Rather than fear, there is now a sense that Lady Alice's somnambulism allows her to act upon her true desires, which she would be prevented by social norms from doing while awake, when the actions would make her 'ashamed'. She now claims to feel 'no confusion' as she

was said to in the previous sleepwalking events, and states it is her will to wake in Duncan's chamber rather than her own. The dream state becomes one in which Lady Alice is free from constraint, to do as she wishes. Unconsciousness frees her from social constraint, allowing her mind to act freely upon its desires. This develops later when Lady Alice calls Duncan to her, telling him "the scales are turned, dear, [...] you are in my power now: I brought you here".<sup>324</sup> The complete reversal of power is emphasised by the three statements and Lady Alice is no longer the passive victim. However, there is a difference in this, as Duncan is not sleeping when he is called, and although he responds 'as if yielding to the irresistible' there is no doubt that he is following his own desires. He is, therefore, not entirely passive, as Lady Alice was when first called, and does not fully take on the same role. An imbalance of power, though far more discreet, does still exist.

The ending of *The Portent* which was published in the *Cornhill Magazine* differs greatly from the ending of the book which MacDonald published in 1864. In the final instalment published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, after planning to flee Alice's guardians, Duncan and Alice hear hoof beats (the 'portent' of the story) and are burst in upon by her guardian. Following this, Duncan has no recollection of what happened, until he wakes alone on the moor. Despite attempting to call Alice to him, as he did previously, she does not appear and he ceases to try because of the 'torture it must cause her, not to be able to obey it'. The only clue given as to Alice's fate is the sight of her face behind the bars of an asylum for the insane, though an inspection of the inmates finds 'no one resembling her'.<sup>325</sup> This extends the theme of control by raising the issue of the unnecessary confinement of women in asylums, a subject which was addressed in relation to *The Woman in White* in chapter two.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> *Cornhill Magazine*, 2 (1860) 74-83. p. 78, 80.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid*, p. 83.

<sup>326</sup> See p. 73.

In comparison, MacDonald's later version follows the sound of the hooves and the crashing open of the door with Lady Alice's action to save them from their fate. Telling Duncan 'they shall not part us this time. You follow me for once', she takes up a Malay creese, a type of short sword, and thus makes way through the 'half a dozen domestics who were at this time gathered'. In this version, Duncan and Alice are married and Duncan continues to tutor Alice, who is 'a quick scholar'.<sup>327</sup> This is a stark contrast. The serialised version of Alice sees her punished for her transgression, visualised behind bars and still talked about in terms of her ability to obey. The later version of the novel presents a far more proactive character, who not only survives and succeeds in breaking away from her earlier constraints, but who actually orchestrates that escape herself.

Alice's continued education is an important factor here. In both versions, Alice is entirely uneducated and prevented from learning by her guardians, though Duncan does begin to teach her. William Raeper highlights MacDonald's belief in the importance of education for women, writing that 'it was part of his romantic ideal to elevate woman out of the drawing-room to stand beside man as an equal co-partner under God'. Raeper also points out that the MacDonald family were socialising during the early 1860s with contemporary 'protagonists of the feminist movement' and were 'infected with talk of women's rights and education'.<sup>328</sup> In the final version of *The Portent*, therefore, it is particularly notable that MacDonald points out Alice's continued education as this is an essential part of her freedom. The importance of the term 'freedom' is itself highlighted by it being the title of the final chapter. In comparing the two versions of the novel's ending it is obvious that, while the same themes are present, the subversive nature of Lady Alice's power is considerably toned

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<sup>327</sup> George MacDonald, *The Portent* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1864) p. 282, 286.

<sup>328</sup> William Raeper, *George MacDonald* (Tring: Lion Publishing, 1987) p. 60, 165.

down in the *Cornhill Magazine*, where she is a problem that physically disappears by the end of the final instalment.

The issue of power reversal in dream states is not confined to fiction in periodical literature. In the *Lancet*, a real-life example of a mesmeric patient inverting her role to one of power can be found. Elizabeth Okey was one of the patients who participated in John Elliotson's experiments on mesmerism.<sup>329</sup> The experiments began in the 1830s, but, after Elliotson's death in August 1868, the *Lancet* published an obituary almost entirely dedicated to the subject. The obituary portrays a particularly negative impression of mesmerism and one which clearly suggests it is a subject of questionable morality. For example, 'hysterical and excitable girls were in several instances magnetised to sleep by certain manipulations in a vertical direction, and awoke by others in a horizontal direction'. This focuses firstly on the vulnerability of the patients, who were solely female, and then on the physical manipulation of the body. The vagueness of what the 'certain manipulations' entail, combined with the specific point that the women begin vertically and wake horizontally, particularly considering the implication that they have no memory of the space between those two movements, emphasises the sexual nature of the danger these vulnerable women are in. Similarly, the author observes that 'the clinical clerks and other pupils were occupied in "manipulating" – or, as some called it, "pawing" – the patients to obtain mesmeric effects'. Both manipulating and pawing are clearly negative actions towards the patient, the latter in particular implying an uncomfortably physical aspect.<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> Wendy Moore points out that Elizabeth Okey's name 'was routinely misspelled 'O'key' by journalists so that her origins were widely assumed to be Irish. Inevitably this gave rise to the lazy assumption that she came from the numerous poor, ill-educated, unskilled Irish families that had gravitated to London over the past few decades – and triggered popular prejudice as a result.' *The Mesmerist* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2017) p. 6.

<sup>330</sup> 'Obituary: John Elliotson, M.D. Cantab. F.R.S.' *Lancet*, 2 (1868) 203-204. p. 203.

The obituary explains that these experiments were suggested to Elliotson by ‘a Frenchman, styling himself the Baron Dupotet’.<sup>331</sup> ‘Styling himself’ implies pretension and potential dishonesty in Dupotet’s representation of himself, but Winter points out that Dupotet had become ‘a household name in polite society’ by the time he departed from Britain ‘some twenty months later’.<sup>332</sup> Winter also recounts an experiment by Dupotet, which further explains dissatisfaction with his experiments in Elliotson’s hospital. One woman, she explains, had ‘large quantities of snuff [pushed] into her nose without producing the least effect; pins were stuck into her arms and legs without being noticed’ and ‘finally, he [Dupotet] awakened her by touching her knee’.<sup>333</sup> These actions, penetrative, painful and undignified, would never have been considered acceptable under normal circumstances and yet they become acceptable under the title of scientific experiment when the patient is apparently unaware of what is happening to her.

The danger of mesmerism to women in particular is strongly stated in a *Lancet* article simply titled ‘Animal Magnetism’, published in December 1838. The article states that ‘mesmerism, according to its advocates, acts most intensely on nervous and impressionable females’, and asks: ‘what father of a family, then, would admit even the shadow of a mesmeriser within his threshold? Who would expose his wife, or his sister, his daughter or his orphan ward, to the contact of an animal magnetiser?’ The threat of mesmerism in this is explicitly related to women. It is then implied that the threat may grow as the author relates the story of a group of Russian officers who were supposedly seeking ‘instruction in the art of putting persons to sleep, by mesmeric processes, with the express view, as it ultimately appeared, of exercising their newly acquired knowledge in their own country, on

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<sup>331</sup> By the early 1840s, Elliotson and Dupotet’s relationship had soured and they were openly critical of one another, as Wendy Moore points out in *The Mesmerist* (p.102-103).

<sup>332</sup> He arrived in 1837. Ibid, ‘Obituary’, p. 203.

<sup>333</sup> Alison Winter, *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000) p. 42, 45.

unsuspecting females who might fall within their power'. With this in mind, the author questions the 'continuance of instruction in this scandalous "science" in the *private wards of one of our public hospitals* [original italics], where wealthy and, perhaps, libidinous men, are daily invited to witness the easy mode of producing "sleep"'.<sup>334</sup> Mesmerism in this light becomes intentionally criminal, with women as the intended victims. The threat, it suggests, is widespread already, but likely to worsen if public mesmeric experiments are allowed to continue.

Elizabeth Okey, however, who was being treated for epilepsy in Elliotson's experiments in the 1830s, is treated somewhat differently by the *Lancet*. The author of Elliotson's obituary explains that she 'was not satisfied with being sent into mesmeric sleep; she became consecutively fixed, as in a trance, and then prescribed for her own ailments and the ailments of others'.<sup>335</sup> The *Lancet*'s obituary refers to Okey as both 'remarkably clever' and 'a consummate actor,' thereby clearly stating the author's opinion, and reinforcing the opinion given in previous articles in the *Lancet*, that the effects of her mesmeric trance were fake. If this is considered to be the case, Okey was using her position as mesmeric patient to reverse her role and take the position of doctor.

Further explaining Okey's state, the obituary continues 'she became a "sleep-waker", during which state she was said to have two distinct phases of consciousness and sensation, each being commenced or terminated at the will of the operator: in one state she clipped her words in a peculiar manner, and talked "midsummer madness"; in the other she was rational, and talked plainly and intelligibly'.<sup>336</sup> While it seems Okey was controlled by an 'operator' when she changed between these two personalities, she had still created two personalities

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<sup>334</sup> 'Animal Magnetism' *Lancet*, 1 (1838) 450-451. p. 450, 451.

<sup>335</sup> Op. cit., 'Obituary', p. 203.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid, p. 203.

through which she could act in a way which she would not normally have the freedom to. In the first, she took the role of doctor and in the second an unrestrained ‘madness’, during which she could say what she pleased and be excused by her state. Wendy Moore points out that there are accounts of Okey speaking with inappropriate familiarity to men of high social standing, for example.<sup>337</sup> To some, Okey became a symbol of a different kind of threat.

Alison Winter has highlighted comments made by Thomas Wakley in the *Lancet* regarding Elizabeth Okey, which contrast greatly with the periodical’s representation of women as victims of mesmerism, as seen in their article ‘Animal Magnetism’. Winter points to Wakley’s implication that Okey’s actions were ‘a kind of abstracted prostitution, a perverse manipulation of men’s appetites for intellectual excitement. Where prostitutes spread disease, Okey spread deception and dishonour. She was a dangerous genius, a seducer of foolish men, and a threat to society. She herself was morally weak, but her prey – men like Elliotson – were weaker still, because they gave her the power to deceive them’.<sup>338</sup> The patient, rather than the mesmerist, becomes the manipulator in this view. Even the fear of sexual impropriety, usually based on a fear of the mesmerist, is reversed by Wakley’s comments. Okey is portrayed as deceptive, dishonourable and dangerous, but also powerful, charismatic and a genius. There are undoubtedly similarities here to the descriptions of male mesmerists, though it is necessary to note that Okey’s case is an unusual one, which is why she attracted so much attention from the *Lancet*, and that, in the vast majority of cases, fear is not associated with the female patients.

An example of dream being used by a woman to act in a way that she otherwise could not can also be found in the *Ladies’ Treasury*. ‘A Strange Story’, written by S.M. Davis was

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<sup>337</sup> Op. cit., Moore, p. 6-9.

<sup>338</sup> Op. cit., Winter p. 101.

published in January 1866.<sup>339</sup> The title is the same as that of a story by Bulwer Lytton, which began serialisation in *All the Year Round* in August 1861.<sup>340</sup> Bulwer Lytton's story is based around the beliefs of spiritualism, as Davis' is, suggesting an intentional link between the two when Davis quotes a translation by 'Bulwer' of the poem 'Das Geheimnitz der Reminiscenz', which speaks of souls being naturally bound to one another.

Davis' 'Strange Story' quickly establishes its association with mesmerism when a character in the second paragraph is described as being 'in a state of tense, nervous excitation, similar to that of a subject of mesmerism. A preternatural power seemed to possess him. He moved and spoke like a somnambulist'. While the character is entirely conscious and the mesmeric state only an analogy, the association is suggested to the reader before anything that could be considered as mesmerism has happened in the story. The narrator explains 'I repeat the story because it is literally true, and because some of its incidents may be classed among the psychological phenomena which form the most occult, the most interesting, and the least understood of all departments of human knowledge'.<sup>341</sup> This is a use of the term psychological which refers to the mind but also associates it with the occult. In doing so, it demonstrates the ill-defined boundary between science and the supernatural as well as the confusion in actually defining psychology as a subject.<sup>342</sup> This aspect of the subject is both the 'most interesting' and 'least understood of all departments of human knowledge'; the need to provide explanation for this little understood area of widespread interest can be seen in the popularity of public mesmeric experiments, which provided an explanation simultaneously shocking, entertaining and potentially demonstrating tangible scientific evidence.

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<sup>339</sup> S.M. Davis, 'A Strange Story', *Ladies' Treasury* (1866) 38-43.

<sup>340</sup> Edward Bulwer Lytton, *A Strange Story*, *All the Year Round*, 5 (1861) 457-462.

<sup>341</sup> Op. cit., S.M. Davis, p. 38.

<sup>342</sup> See introduction, p. 8.

The story itself is told through the discussion of two male friends on psychology, the soul and spiritual phenomena. The discussion involves such statements as ‘the torch of science is by no means incendiary to the system of psychology. Arago himself admits that it may one day obtain a place among the exact sciences, and speaks of the actual power which one human being may exert over another without the intervention of any known physical agent: while Cuvier and other noted scientists concede even more than this’.<sup>343</sup> Psychology is presented in opposition to science here, in the same way the supernatural is sometimes presented, and appears to be purposely aligned purely with the theory of a connection between minds.<sup>344</sup>

However, the inclusion of eminent scientists as supporters of psychology gives the appearance of support to this connection theory. François Arago (1786-1853) was a French physicist who, amongst other notable contributions to science, discovered the principle of rotary magnetism. Arago’s speciality in magnetic fields undoubtedly explains his appearance in ‘A Strange Story’, which raises the issue of magnetic connection between minds. Eminent naturalist and zoologist Georges Cuvier made no such experiments but did, according to *Mesmerism; its History, Phenomena and Practice* (1843) by William Lang, openly support the possibility of mesmerism as a real phenomenon.<sup>345</sup> Alison Winter also points out that Cuvier acknowledged that a real ‘nervous communication’ could exist between ‘two animated bodies in certain positions, combined with certain movements’.<sup>346</sup> While this is not open support for mesmerism, it does approve the scientific concept of forces behind it. As the friends of ‘A Strange Story’ begin to discuss an example, which will become the main story,

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<sup>343</sup> Op. cit., S.M. Davis, p. 39.

<sup>344</sup> Which may be attributed, without further information, to either mesmerism or spiritualism.

<sup>345</sup> William Lang, *Mesmerism; its History, Phenomena and Practice* (Edinburgh: Fraser and Co., 1843) p. 12-13.

<sup>346</sup> Op. cit., Winter, p. 41.

the inclusion of recognisable scientists who have some association with mesmerism adds authenticity to the strange story itself.

The story, which is framed by the discussion of psychology, is told from a male perspective but is very much focused on female concerns about marriage, freedom and social constraints. It sees the character Vilalba leaving the woman he loves to earn money before asking her to marry him, without telling anybody of his feelings or intentions. When he returns, the woman, Blanche, is married to somebody else, who she does not love. The man then experiences the supernatural event, where ‘every nerve tingles as if touched by a galvanic battery’ and ‘from the tremulous waves of cloud arose [...] the form and features of my lost love [...] pain and anguish stricken, with clasped hands and tearful eyes; and upon my ears fell, like arrows of fire, the words, “You have been the cause of all this; oh, why did you not”-’. This causes the man to admit ‘I had never dreamed that I alone was in fault, - that I should have anchored my hope on something more defined than the voiceless intelligence of sympathy’.<sup>347</sup>

In *A Magazine of Her Own*, Margaret Beetham writes of serialised fiction in the *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* that the stories ‘were immensely popular because they allowed the anxieties of femininity to be explored in safety’. These serials, Beetham points out, ‘instructed the reader on the pleasures and dangers of becoming a female self’. In fiction, subjects which were very personal, which would not be addressed in the public sphere, could be addressed and discussed in a subtle way. Beetham also highlights Anne Humpherys’ suggestion that some stories in the magazine ‘reveal an anxiety among middle-class women about their absolute reliance on men for their livelihoods, and indeed for their lives. Though

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<sup>347</sup> Op. cit., S.M. Davis, p. 42.

Cinderella performs her part, the Prince is unreliable'.<sup>348</sup> The same can be said of 'A Strange Story' in the *Ladies' Treasury*, where the woman is severely restricted from pursuing her own happiness, having to rely solely on the actions of the men around her. This is further emphasised by the fact that the woman is forced by her father to marry someone she does not love 'with the stern authority which many parents exercise over the matrimonial affairs of their daughters'. Her own feelings in the matter are described as a 'trifling impediment'.<sup>349</sup> This portrays an anxiety and frustration in a woman's lack of control over her life.

The reader later learns that Blanche appears to have triggered the supernatural event experienced earlier, as she tells Vilalba, the man who left her that while they were apart:

I learned to dis sever you from the material world, there came a conviction of the nearness of your spirit, sometimes so positive that I would waken from a reverie, in which I was lost to sights and sounds around me, with a sense of having been in your actual presence. I was aware of an effect rather than of an immediate consciousness, as if the magnetism of your touch had swept over me, cooling the fever of my brain [...]<sup>350</sup>

This action is learned and intentional. The reverie, a term often used interchangeably with dream, appears to be a type of mesmeric sleep, which is suggested by the reference to magnetism. Using this learned power, Blanche manages to maintain a connection with the man she loves, which brings her comfort from the physical reality that she cannot be with him. This plot is somewhat reminiscent of the psychological communication between Jane and Rochester in *Jane Eyre*, published much earlier in 1847; however in 'A Strange Story' the connection is very specifically attributed to mesmerism and forms part of the broader

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<sup>348</sup> Margaret Beetham, *A Magazine of her Own?: Domesticity and Desire in the Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914* (London: Routledge, 1996) p. 74-75.

<sup>349</sup> Op. cit., S.M. Davis, p. 43.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid, p. 43.

topic of science and the supernatural that frames the story itself. The communication in ‘A Strange Story’ is also not a simple calling of one mind to another. Blanche’s message is detailed and specific, allowing her to reprimand Vilalba for his social error which left her vulnerable. It is possibly indicative of Blanche’s newly learned power that the story ends with her choosing her own future, free from male influence, by deciding not to marry again.

In both ‘A Strange Story’ and *The Portent*, therefore, the dream states of somnambulism and mesmeric sleep provide a source of freedom. Dream as a free space is discussed at length in ‘Guesses in Dreamland’, published in the *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* in February 1863 and attributed to ‘E.G.’.<sup>351</sup> E.G. writes that Dreamland is ‘a land without limits – a world within and yet without the world – a territory that is anywhere, everywhere and nowhere. All may ramble it, and none can exclude another; all may explore it [...]’. This metaphor is one of equality and freedom, a limitless space in which social restrictions are removed. Although intangible, Dreamland is a private space, a version of the world in which thoughts can be freely explored. It is potentially therefore also a space of empowerment to those who are restricted by various forms of contemporary gender bias. The article points particularly to the divide between ‘youth and age, wisdom and ignorance, rich and poor’, which is reminiscent of Dickens’ article ‘Lying Awake’, published in *Household Words* in 1852, where he writes of dreams, that ‘it would be curious [...] to inquire how many of its phenomena are common to all classes, to all degrees of wealth and poverty, to every grade of education and ignorance’.<sup>352</sup> Dream was therefore already being considered as an egalitarian construct.

Following this theme, ‘Guesses in Dreamland’ continues to represent dream in terms of permeable boundaries:

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<sup>351</sup> E.G., ‘Guesses in Dreamland’, *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* (1863) p. 157-167. p. 157

<sup>352</sup> Charles Dickens, ‘Lying Awake’, *Household Words*, 6 (1852) 145-148. p. 145.

Sleep is the fairy land of modern times. Steam-engine and steam-plough have frightened away all our Pucks, Peas-blossoms, and Robin Goodfellows; and scientific discoveries have robbed our vulgar geography of enchanted islands, fairy mounts and mythical Bohemians. The occult powers of nature gradually resolve themselves into laws [...] but mankind have still left to them a fairy land of their own.<sup>353</sup>

Dreamland, as ‘a world within and yet without the world’, already establishes it as a space which exists between boundaries. As a modern fairy land, it also becomes a place where imagination thrives against the rational and mechanical, as well as a space where a romanticised ideal of the rural past is preserved. References to visiting a place of the past also act as a reminder that time is another of the boundaries broken by Dreamland. This rids the dreamer of another social constraint as time becomes irrelevant. Time was a new, or at least more severe, constraint specific to the industrial landscape, as the introduction of Railway Time in 1840 began to standardise time and the ‘increasingly disciplinary industrial world of factories, the mail system and transport schedules’ made stricter regulation necessary.<sup>354</sup> It is therefore particularly relevant that dream breaks this constraint in order to allow a return to the idealised rural past, which was destroyed by ‘steam-engine and steam-plough’. Dreamland becomes a space of ultimate freedom and equality. The fairy land it provides is also importantly ‘a fairy land of their own’ as the article continues to enforce the concept of dream as a personal and free space in the possession of the dreamer.

The same theory can be found in Charlotte Brontë’s ‘When Thou Sleepest’, published in the *Cornhill Magazine* in August 1861. The fourth stanza considers:

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<sup>353</sup> Op. cit., E.G., p. 157.

<sup>354</sup> ‘Introduction’, *Victorian Time: Technologies, Standardisations, Catastrophes*, Ed. Trish Ferguson (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) p. 20.

Be it dream in haunted sleep,  
Be it thought in vigil lone,  
Drink'st thou not a rapture deep  
From the feeling, 'tis thine own?  
All thine own; thou need'st not tell  
What bright form thy slumber blest; -  
All thine own; remember well  
Night and shade were round thy rest.

Dream is very clearly a space which is personal and private here, which belongs to no one but the dreamer and cannot be judged. Dream is then portrayed as a bird-like soul, which spreads its wings to fly and soars 'higher, higher' until, waking, 'again in sadness dreary / Came the baffled wanderer home'.<sup>355</sup> The bird-like imagery further enforces the impression of freedom.

There is also travel imagery once again as the 'wanderer' returns home, suggesting not only freedom but also exploration within this personal space of the mind. In the final stanza:

And again it [the soul] turned for soothing  
To th' unfinished, broken dream;  
While, the ruffled current smoothing,  
Thought rolled on her startled stream.  
I have felt this cherished feeling,

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<sup>355</sup> Charlotte Bronte, 'When Thou Sleepest', *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 178-179. p. 178, 179.

Sweet and known to none but me;

Still I felt it nightly healing

Each dark day's despondency.<sup>356</sup>

The feeling 'known to none but me' is again addressing the fact that dream is a private, secret space. Thought is personified as female and as it rolls, unchecked and unimpeded, along a stream, there is a clear sense of peace and freedom in this private space. This escape into dream also serves a purpose to the waking mind, as it soothes and heals it. Sleep is acknowledged medically for its use in healing but dream is usually presented as a hindrance to this process, a phenomena which prevents the brain from resting entirely, a theory which appears in 'Guesses in Dreamland'. Sally Shuttleworth has examined Brontë's use of psychological detail in her writing at length, identifying the importance of 'the interior domain of selfhood', which seems particularly applicable to 'When Thou Sleepest'.<sup>357</sup> Looking at Brontë's poem alongside 'Guesses in Dreamland' clearly demonstrates the way dream is considered as an important space of freedom and privacy to women in particular. Dreamland remains, however, a temporary escape from real world inequalities, rather than a solution to them.

As has been shown in this chapter, women are also most frequently (although not exclusively) associated with supernatural dreaming. Mesmeric sleepers and somnambulists are most often female and prophetic dream guides are usually associated with women. Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White*, serialised in *All the Year Round* between 26 November 1859 and 25 August 1860, provides another good example of an association between women and

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<sup>356</sup> Ibid, p. 179.

<sup>357</sup> Sally Shuttleworth, *Charlotte Brontë and Victorian Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) p. 245.

prophetic dreaming. Of the three central female characters, Anne Catherick, Laura Farlie and Marian Halcombe, all apparently experience a prophetic dream.

The first example appears in the letter from Anne Catherick to Laura, which asks ‘Do you believe in dreams? I hope, for your own sake, that you do. See what Scripture says about dreams and their fulfilment (Genesis xl. 8, xli. 25; Daniel iv. 18-25), and take the warning I send you before it is too late’.<sup>358</sup> Anne uses biblical references to dreams to bolster the authenticity of their prophetic abilities, as is seen in other dream discussions, including the earlier discussed ‘Divination for the Drawing Room’. In this case, however, the reference is very specific and readers are able to follow Anne’s references in the Bible to find her examples of prophetic dreams.<sup>359</sup> It is debatable whether the dream of her own which Anne subsequently relates is really prophetic at all, or even whether the dream was ever actually experienced, as it does not relate anything she did not already know, and is used only to attempt to give a warning. However, the uncertainty in this does not negate the fact that Anne is associated with that prophetic dream and to belief in supernatural dreaming. Laura echoes Anne’s words later when she also asks ‘Do you believe in dreams?’ She explains, ‘My dreams, last night, were dreams I have never had before. The terror of them is hanging over me still’.<sup>360</sup> Laura’s mirroring of Anne’s words here is itself prophetic as this scene occurs at the beginning of the journey which leads to her swapping places with Anne, literally being forced to take her identity in the asylum Anne used to inhabit. Laura also experiences disturbing dreams earlier in the novel, but the reader is never aware of what they were. However, this final dream certainly indicates that Laura experiences prophetic dreams.

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<sup>358</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 2 (1859) 189-195. p. 190.

<sup>359</sup> The references are for the King James’ Bible.

<sup>360</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 3 (1860) 97-103. p. 102.

Marian is connected with dream from the moment she appears in the novel, as Walter Hartright describes the feeling of meeting her for the first time as ‘a sensation oddly akin to the helpless discomfort familiar to us all in sleep, when we recognise yet cannot reconcile the anomalies and contradictions of a dream’.<sup>361</sup> Walter makes this comment after noticing the contrast of masculine and feminine features Marian possesses. This is comparable to Collins’ portrayal of Jennings as a character who defies boundaries and is therefore strongly connected to the boundary-defying subject of dream.<sup>362</sup> Marian’s experience also differs from those of Laura and Anne as it has clear associations with mesmeric sleep. She explains:

My eyes closed of themselves, and I passed gradually into a strange condition, which was not waking – for I knew nothing of what was going on about me, and not sleeping – for I was conscious of my own repose. In this state my fevered mind broke loose from me, while my weary body was at rest, and in a trance, or day-dream of my fancy – I know not what to call it – I saw Walter Hartright.<sup>363</sup>

Soon after, Marian writes ‘I thought of Hartright [...] as I saw him in the spirit in my dream’ and later she continues to refer to the experience as ‘my dream’.<sup>364</sup> Therefore the experience Marian has, in which she is neither awake nor asleep, is still considered to be dream. There are indications that Collins intended this dream to be considered mesmeric. Count Fosco, who gives particular attention to Marian throughout the story, is shown to practice mesmerism when the doctor complains ‘this foreign nobleman of yours is dying to try his quack remedies (mesmerism included) on my patient’. Marian’s referring to her state as

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<sup>361</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 2 (1860) 117-123. p. 118.

<sup>362</sup> See p. 47.

<sup>363</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 2 (1860) 477-480. p. 479.

<sup>364</sup> Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 2 (1860) 501-506. p. 504: Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 3 (1860) 121-129. p. 128: Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White, All the Year Round*, 3 (1860) 73-78. p. 74.

trance, another term which is frequently used alongside mesmeric sleep, also hints at a connection with mesmerism. Marian's dream is found to be accurate in its incredible detail, becoming the clearest example of prophetic dreaming in the story, foretelling everything that has happened to Walter while he has been away from the main plot.

Maureen Perkins argues that dream guides become increasingly targeted at a specifically female audience as the century progressed. Perkins points out that 'one assumption demonstrated by compilers was that the least educated, the least literate, and therefore the least discriminating were most likely to be women'. Also, 'It was part of this scenario to present those most likely to suffer as being amongst the poorest in society'. As an example of this, Perkins uses *The Woman in White*, arguing that 'it is the low-born Anne Catherick, illegitimate child of a maidservant, who tries to warn Laura Fairlie by relating a prophetic dream'.<sup>365</sup> However, of the three prophetic dreams portrayed in the novel, Marian's is the most undoubtedly accurate and uninfluenced. Marian is not only of a higher social class than Anne, she is also credited throughout the story for her particularly high level of intelligence. It is unlikely, therefore, to have been Collins' intention to present prophetic dream as a folly of the uneducated lower classes.

Dream here, as in many other instances, crosses class boundaries. It is also true, however, that none of the women in *The Woman in White* benefit from their power of prophetic dreaming. Anne is unable to stop Laura from marrying, Laura unable to save herself from Percival Glyde and Marian unable to even fully interpret her dream until the events of it have already played out. In all three cases, the dreams function as plot devices to create suspense and build the sense of impending threat. However, there is undoubtedly also a sense of injustice in the women's lack of control over their fate, particularly in the control

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<sup>365</sup> Op. cit., Perkins, p. 110

taken away by marriage. The dreams heighten this sense of injustice, as the reader sees how little legal power the women possess in order to protect themselves and one another, even when they are aware they are in danger.

The association between women and dream in the nineteenth century is a complex one. Women in association with dream states are by turns fearful and feared, controlled and powerful. In women's periodicals the *Ladies' Treasury* and the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, comprehensive summaries of current scientific dream theory are found alongside dream interpretation and declarations of belief in biblical dreams. All sides of the debate are considered as possible and none dismissed. For women, consciousness of the debate is clear but the debate itself appears to be secondary in importance to issues of mind, freedom, power and control that dream states raised. Dream becomes an expression of strength and knowledge that is restrained by society, as in *The Woman in White* and 'A Strange Story'. In the latter, and in the final instalment of *The Portent*, the dream state as the source of a connection between souls provides a degree of power to women who are otherwise powerless in their situation. In both cases, however, the women involved are ultimately denied the outcome that would bring them happiness by the socially and legally accepted control of a father or stepfather.

In 'Guesses in Dreamland' and 'When Thou Sleepest', however, it is suggested that the power of dreams is not in their ability to change the restrictions of society, but to provide a space which is free from them. A private and secret space, where thoughts can run unhindered by rules or expectations. Though very different to the discussions of psychology found in medical journals, both examples provide a deep exploration of the mind's function and of a sense of self.<sup>366</sup> This representation of dream in relation to women will be discussed

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<sup>366</sup> See chapter one for discussions of psychology in medical periodicals.

further in chapter five, where it will be explored in the context of fiction with a deeply religious theme.

## Chapter Five

### Religion and Supernatural Dream

The previous four chapters have shown that scientific and supernatural approaches to dream frequently intertwine and that, in a range of periodical types, this interaction between the two ‘sides’ of the dream debate allows for a rich discussion of the mind and dream. The influence of religion on this discussion has already been addressed somewhat throughout previous chapters, as this third ‘side’ of the debate is inextricably linked to the other two. However, this chapter will explore the extent of religious influence on representations of dream in periodical literature by examining the articles which focus on divinely inspired dreams.

Religious belief raised a number of problematic questions about the origin of dreams and concerns about whether emerging theories contradicted biblical stories and the concept of the soul.<sup>367</sup> The majority of people in Britain in the mid-nineteenth century were Christian, as is shown in the 1851 census of Great Britain. The census also shows, however, that while the majority of Christians were Protestant, a great variety of different branches of Christianity were also practised. It is necessary to take this variety into account when considering content that refers to Christian beliefs.

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<sup>367</sup> See introduction, p. 6.

As was highlighted in the introduction with Newnham's essays, and explored further in chapter three in relation to spiritualism, the response to emerging theories that questioned theological belief was not always to dismiss that belief, or attempt to disprove it. Science and theology were frequently combined sympathetically, often in a way that suggested existing religious beliefs could be empirically proven. Even when biblical examples of prophetic, or divinely influenced, dreams are accepted to be true, modern examples of supernatural dreams may be simultaneously dismissed, as is seen again with Newnham. Aileen Fyfe addresses 'the myth of inevitable conflict' between science and religion by pointing out that, in the early nineteenth century, 'science was not something separate from religion but was widely regarded as an intrinsic part of it' and that 'this Christian vision remained strong throughout the nineteenth century, but it faced an increasing range of competing alternatives'.<sup>368</sup> By the 1860s, Fyfe points out, the alternative was a secular vision of science, promoted by figures such as Thomas Henry Huxley and Jon Tyndall. However, this secular view failed to dominate, according to Fyfe, until the early twentieth century. Fyfe highlights the importance of periodicals to disseminating both Christian and secular visions of science but they were also portraying the complexity of combining science and religion, as can be seen in *Agnes of Sorrento* and *Romola*, novels serialised in the *Cornhill Magazine* in the 1860s.<sup>369</sup> Both pieces of fiction use dream and the question of whether dreams are a message from God or the product of mind as key themes in their plots.

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<sup>368</sup> The true complexity of this conflict narrative is also addressed in greater detail by Frank Turner in 'The late Victorian conflict of science and religion as an event in nineteenth-century intellectual and cultural history', *Science and Religion: New Historical Perspectives* ed. Thomas Dixon, Geoffrey Cantor and Stephen Pumfrey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>369</sup> Aileen Fyfe, 'Science and Religion in Popular Publishing in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Britain', *Clashes of Knowledge: Orthodoxies and Heterodoxies in Science and Religion*, ed. Peter Meusburger, Michael Welker and Edgar Wunder (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008) 121-132. p. 121, 122, 130, 126.

## Through the Eyes of the Spirit

*Agnes of Sorrento*, by Harriet Beecher Stowe, was serialised in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1861 and simultaneously serialised in the American monthly *The Atlantic*.<sup>370</sup> The strongly religious theme of the story is unsurprising considering the author's background. While Stowe was born into a Calvinist family in Connecticut, and her father was a Congregationalist minister, she was exposed to many varying forms of Christian belief. For example, Harriet's mother and her family were Episcopalian. There are significant differences between these two branches of Christianity. Calvinists, for example, unlike the Episcopal Church, believe in predestination (the concept that all things, including whether a person will go to heaven or hell after death, were predestined by God before the creation of the world) and do not believe that marriage is a sacrament. After the death of her mother while she was a young child, Stowe lived for a while with her grandmother, who was sympathetic to the Church of England, and was cared for by her aunt, who was Episcopalian. When Stowe married, her husband was interested in German theology and believed that he had been visited by ghosts and spirits as a child, likely influencing Stowe's interest in spiritualism.<sup>371</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe's letters also make it obvious that theological discussions were common within her family throughout her life. It is unsurprising then that religious conflict forms the theme of *Agnes of Sorrento*.

Dreams form a key part of this important conflict in the book, set during the infamous control of the Borgia family in fifteenth century Rome. The conflict is between faith in God, which is presented as unquestionably good, and faith in the people in positions of power within religions, who may be both corrupt and dangerously powerful. Stowe's concern with

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<sup>370</sup> Beginning in May 1861, p.598-613 and ending in April 1862, p.610-631.

<sup>371</sup> Nancy Koester, *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Spiritual Life* (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2014).

women's rights certainly influences this theme.<sup>372</sup> Agnes is both manipulated by Father Francesco, the priest she trusts to guide her, due to his selfish romantic interest in her, and later nearly becomes a victim of rape in the 'Borgia harem'.<sup>373</sup> This particular scene, where the 'Borgia harem' is revealed, presents the reader with the manipulation of women by a powerful group who were notoriously corrupt. However, Stowe also represents the same issue on a smaller, worryingly undetectable scale, with Father Francesco. As confession is conducted privately, Father Francesco is able to secretly manipulate Agnes with her own faith, terrifying her with ideas of hell and sinfulness, to convince her to become a nun and prevent her from marrying. The experience leads to Agnes physically punishing herself, both fasting 'with a severity which alarmed her grandmother' and fastening to herself 'one of those sharp instruments of torture which in those times were supposed to be a means of inward grace, - a cross with seven steel points for the seven sorrows of Mary'.<sup>374</sup> This secret, silent suffering somewhat reflects that of Agnes' own mother, who is secretly married to and subsequently abandoned by a member of the upper classes, being left 'to die in misery and dishonour' as she is unable to prove her marriage.<sup>375</sup>

While *Agnes of Sorrento* is set in the early 1500s, this theme of women being manipulated by men and subsequently silenced by law or social expectations is very relevant in the 1860s and arises often in Wilkie Collins' writing, as was seen in chapter four.<sup>376</sup> It is possible to read the story of Agnes' mother as a criticism of the Catholic Church as, unlike Catholicism, Calvinism, which Stowe followed, did allow divorce in specific circumstances, one of which is abandonment. However, Stowe adds to the scenario that the woman is unable

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<sup>372</sup> Amy Easton-Flake. 'Harriet Beecher Stowe's Multifaceted Response to the Nineteenth-Century Woman Question', *The New England Quarterly*. 86.1 (2013) p. 29-59.

<sup>373</sup> The 'Borgia harem' is referred to briefly earlier in the novel [vol. 4 (1861) p. 509] but is referred to as an 'impure den' in this section [vol. 5 (1862) p. 621].

<sup>374</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 5 (1862) 107-121. p. 121.

<sup>375</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 5 (1862) 610-631. p. 621.

<sup>376</sup> See page. 73.

to prove that she married. The husband's denial is taken as the truth and this highlights the lack of legal power women hold far more than it questions the differing stances of the Christian churches. While this is clearly the focus of the scenario, however, it seems likely that the case of abandonment after marriage is intended to highlight that there is injustice in the inability to divorce in that circumstance, considering the novel addresses injustice within the Catholic Church in other ways. In both cases, the secret suffering of both Agnes and her mother is, in part, the shame that both are made to feel despite their innocence. Manipulated and isolated by her lack of power, Agnes' dreams provide scenes which are a more truthful representation of the thoughts and emotions Agnes is trying to repress because she believes they are sinful.

Agnes' uncle tells her, just before she relates her first dream, that 'dreams are the hushing of the bodily senses, that the eyes of the Spirit may open'.<sup>377</sup> This openly implies that Agnes' dream is free thought, without the external pressure and manipulation she is otherwise subjected to. However, Agnes' uncle also implies that the 'eyes of the Spirit' opening allows divine messages to be seen. But, despite the strongly religious theme of the text, it is clear that Agnes' dream is intended as an exploration of her thoughts and not as a divine message, as she is told by her uncle. Stowe writes that 'the dreams of Agnes, on the night after her conversation with the monk and her singular momentary interview with the cavalier, were a strange mixture of images, indicating the peculiarities of her education and habits of daily thought'.<sup>378</sup> This very clearly indicates that the dream stems from waking thoughts and impressions. A particular point is made earlier about Agnes' childhood being intentionally surrounded by religious images and stories. On the stories of the saints she particularly likes to hear, Stowe comments that 'fed with such legends, it could not be but that a child with a

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<sup>377</sup> See page. 214.

<sup>378</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 362-376. p. 366, 362.

sensitive, nervous organization and vivid imagination, should have grown up with an unworldly and spiritual character, and that a poetic mist should have enveloped all her outward perceptions'.<sup>379</sup> Her 'outward perceptions' of the world, Stowe tells the reader, are changed by the influences of her life, which have been largely religious. A comment just before the dream also reminds the reader that it comes after Agnes' 'conversation with the monk and her singular momentary interview with the cavalier'. These conversations are mirrored by the dream immediately following them, which begins with an angel who tells her "the Lord hath sealed thee for his own!", representing the monk's view that she should take holy orders, and then moves 'with the wild fantasy of dreams' to the cavalier asking 'Oh, Agnes! Agnes! Little lamb of Christ, love me and lead me!'<sup>380</sup>

During the first scene of the dream, Agnes feels 'a delicious tranquillity, a calm ecstasy', while, following the second dream scene 'in her sleep it seemed to her that her heart stirred and throbbed with a strange, new movement in answer to those sad, pleading eyes'.<sup>381</sup> While the heavenly images in the dream are the product of Agnes' 'education and habits of daily thought', the messages of the angel and cavalier clearly represent the two sides of Agnes' decision, and the emotion she feels for each. Taking religious orders, the choice she has been told is right to take, comes with a feeling in the dream of comforting calm, while the cavalier creates an emotion she does not fully recognise but is clearly positive and sympathetic from the description. The reader is therefore able to see thoughts which are personal and more instinctive than those which are influenced by Agnes' fear of sin instilled in her by other characters.

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<sup>379</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 3 (1861) 598-613. p. 316.

<sup>380</sup> Op cit., *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 4. p. 362.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid, p. 362.

Agnes later experiences another dream which is described in great detail and which similarly displays emotions which she suppresses during her waking life, while showing that the theme of the dream is influenced by association with waking thoughts. Recalling a time when, as a child, she nursed a wounded eagle, Agnes says to herself of the cavalier “he is like my poor eagle! The archers have wounded him, so that he is glad to find shelter even with a poor maid like me [...] I hope dear uncle will find him this afternoon; he knows how to teach him; as for me I can only pray”. Agnes then falls asleep and dreams that she is carrying a wounded eagle, while ‘her grandmother seemed to shake her roughly by the arm and bid her throw the silly bird away’.<sup>382</sup> The eagle is transported directly from her waking thoughts to her dream and clearly represents the cavalier. Not only does Agnes associate him with an eagle just before the dream, the behaviour of Agnes’ grandmother towards the bird reflects her opinion of the cavalier, who she tries to warn Agnes away from due to her mistrust of his higher social status.

As with the first dream, this dream has two parts which quite obviously represent the two sides of Agnes’ decision. Stowe explains that ‘then again the dream changed, and she saw the knight lie bleeding and dying in a lonely hollow [...] and she kneeled by him, trying in vain to staunch a deadly wound in his side, while he said reproachfully, “Agnes, dear Agnes, why would you not save me?”’<sup>383</sup> At this point in the story Agnes believes, based on the advice of the priest, that it is sinful for her to have any contact with the cavalier, and that it is only through prayer that she can save his soul. Although she seems resigned to this in her comment just before the dream, ‘as for me I can only pray’, the dream reveals a more conflicted state of mind, showing that Agnes is not fully convinced by the advice she has been given. In the first half of the dream, Agnes is helping to heal the wounded eagle and the

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<sup>382</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 497-512. p. 501.

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid*, p. 501.

only negative aspect of the dream is the reaction of her grandmother. In the second half, however, the cavalier has been left in 'a lonely hollow' to die, and reproaches Agnes for her inaction when she could have saved him. The second part of the dream, compared with the first, is clearly the decision to stop all contact with the cavalier, and follow the advice to only pray for him. This conveys to the reader that, while Agnes is trying to avoid sin by following the priest's advice, she more truthfully feels that this decision will do greater harm.

Ultimately, the decision is a religious one, which the reader is reminded of before Agnes' final decision as she is told 'marriage is a sacrament as well as holy orders'.<sup>384</sup> It is notable that neither marriage nor holy orders are considered to be sacraments in Calvinism.<sup>385</sup> Earlier in *Agnes of Sorrento*, Stowe commented that 'Christianity, when it entered Italy, came among a people every act of whose life was coloured and consecrated by symbolic and ritual acts of heathenism. The only possible way to uproot this was in supplanting it by Christian ritual and symbolism equally minute and pervading'. Catholicism is therefore presented as an earlier, less developed form of Stowe's own beliefs, closer to the heathenism it replaced. As an early form of Christianity, though, Catholicism draws respect from Stowe, who goes on to write of 'those ages when the Christian preacher was utterly destitute of all the help which the press now gives in keeping under the eye of converts the great inspiring truth of religion' and asks 'let us not, from the height of our day, with the better appliances which a universal press gives us, sneer at the homely rounds of the ladder by which the first multitudes of the Lord's followers climbed heavenward'.<sup>386</sup> This is also an interestingly self-conscious comment on the positive impact on education and empathy that progress of the press has had. Aileen Fyfe has pointed out the proliferation of religious texts, including tracts, books and periodicals,

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<sup>384</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 5 (1862) 610-631. p. 630.

<sup>385</sup> As with most Protestant religions, baptism and communion are considered to be the only two sacraments.

<sup>386</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 203-217. p. 211.

after the 1850s.<sup>387</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe undoubtedly has this range of available texts in mind when she writes of ‘all the help of the press’, however, this comment coming within a novel which is being serialised simultaneously in two periodicals, in both Britain and America, draws attention to the periodical in particular as a medium for spreading a Christian message.

Catholicism is not portrayed in an entirely negative light in the novel, as although Stowe points out the potential danger of men abusing their positions of power within the Church, this is contrasted with the views of characters such as Agnes and the cavalier, which are based on a belief in kindness and justice. As a group emerges who are opposed to the Borgias, a divide appears between those Stowe portrays as true Christians and the corrupt organisation. In Agnes’ dreams the reader therefore views the conflict between Agnes’ natural feelings, which are portrayed as heavily influenced by Christian values, and the selfish manipulation of corrupt power.

Agnes’ dreams, even when featuring strongly religious imagery, are consistently shown to be the product of her imagination rather than messages from God and, though Stowe makes no suggestion of dismissing actual divine dreams, there is no suggestion that any of the dreams in the story are anything other than legends or products of imagination. This also applies to the other characters of the novel. For example, Agnes’ uncle, a monk and artist, exclaims ‘praised be God, many new ideas sprang up in my mind last night, and seemed to shoot forth in blossoms. Even my dreams have often been made fruitful in this divine work’. While this comment suggests the possibility of divine inspiration, it avoids actually attributing the ideas to anything other than the monk’s own mind. Elsie responds to the monk with the comment that ‘many a good thought comes in dreams [...] but for my part,

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<sup>387</sup> Op. cit., Fyfe, p. 124

I work too hard and sleep too sound to get much that way'.<sup>388</sup> Again there is no suggestion that dreams are not simply internal thought and Elsie's comment appears to echo the theory of researchers long after the time of the book's setting, such as Abercrombie, who proposed that dreams occurred only in imperfect sleep.

Another supposedly divine dream is related to Agnes by Jocunda, who asks her whether she has not heard 'about the King of Amalfi's son coming home from fighting for the Holy Sepulchre?' This story is of sirens near Sorrento and Jocunda relates the tale of a bishop, who 'slept every night with a piece of the true cross under his pillow' and subsequently 'dreamed three times that that they would sail past these rocks, and he was told to give all the sailors holy wax from an alter-candle to stop their ears, so that they shouldn't hear the music' and be shipwrecked.<sup>389</sup> The only exception to this treatment was the King's son, who wanted to hear the music and so asked to be tied to the mast instead. Readers would likely have recognised this story as echoing that in Homer's *Odyssey*, with changes made to turn it into a Christian story of receiving a message from God through dream.

The temple of Minerva, supposedly built by Ulysses in thanks to the goddess for safe passage through the sirens, sits on the coast of Sorrento and this is possibly the ruin referred to in the story by Pietro, who explains "I know of a spot, a little below here on the coast, where was a heathen temple in the old days; and one can dig therefrom long pieces of fair white marble, all covered with heathen images". Pietro is questioning whether this marble could be used for a Christian shrine and is told by the monk "so much the better, boy! [...] only let the marble be fine and white, and it is as good as converting a heathen any time to baptize it to Christian uses. A few strokes of the chisel will soon demolish their naked nymphs and other such rubbish, and we can carve holy virgins, robed from head to foot in all

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<sup>388</sup> Op. cit., *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 362-376. p. 365.

<sup>389</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 106-116. p. 110.

modesty, as becometh saints”.<sup>390</sup> The cathedral of Sorrento is thought to contain features salvaged from a roman temple and, as Stowe was visiting Sorrento at the time of writing, this may have inspired this interaction. However, there is also an obvious correlation between the appropriation of the *Odyssey* in Jocunda’s story and the physical alteration of the marble temple pieces into Christian images. While the dream story appears to be unintentionally distorted by Jocunda, it suggests the ease of passing down stories which are untrue. Just before the story, Jocunda tells Agnes “spirits are always pacing up and down in lonely places. Father Anselmo told me that; and he had seen a priest once that had seen that in the Holy Scriptures themselves, - so it must be true”.<sup>391</sup> Explained in this way, the passing down of second hand information seems far from reliable and this seems positioned to explain the unreliability of the distorted dream story.

The physical case of the marble seems a more intentional destruction of history, but it is also notable for the marble’s portrayal of women as either ‘naked nymphs’ or ‘holy virgins’. The contrast clearly reflects the dilemma Agnes faces throughout the story, as she struggles with the choice between what she is taught to see as a sinful earthly relationship with a man or marriage to God as a nun, a conflict described in the final chapter as one between ‘religious scruples’ and ‘natural desires’.<sup>392</sup> The extremes are unnatural ones, constructs of society and the men who wish to manipulate her. It is, however, relevant that the marble represents both nymph and holy virgin, both carvings existing on the same piece. It is only when Agnes realises that these extreme constructs are artificial, and that deviation from the ‘holy virgin’ image is not sinful, that she finds happiness.

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<sup>390</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 497-512. p. 505, 506.

<sup>391</sup> Op. cit., *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 106-116. p. 110.

<sup>392</sup> Op. cit., *Cornhill Magazine*, 5 (1862) 610-631. p. 630.

The nymph is itself an important recurring image in the story, which includes a fountain of a nymph in white marble, ‘evidently [...] the wreck of something that had belonged to the old Greek temple’, which is renamed as Saint Agnes by ‘baptising her in the waters of her own fountain’. Stowe writes that:

The figure and face of this nymph [...] formed a striking contrast to the drawing of the Byzantine painters within the cloisters, and their juxtaposition in the same enclosure seemed a presentation of the spirit of a past and present era: the past so graceful in line, so perfect and airy in conception, so utterly without spiritual aspiration or life; the present limited in artistic power, but so earnest, so intense, seeming to struggle and burn, amid its stiff and restricted boundaries, for the expression of some diviner phase of humanity.<sup>393</sup>

This once again presents two extremes of representation, one which is free but unspiritual and one which is earnest but stiff and restricted. The second, which clearly represents some form of Christianity, is self-destructive in its intensity. Just as, through shame and self-punishment, Agnes damages herself, the art here seems to ‘struggle and burn’ amidst stiff, restricted boundaries. Both forms of art are criticised, the first lacking life or spiritual aspiration, the second being limited artistically and overly stiff and restricted. The overall implication of this is that each would benefit from elements of the other. Neither of these extremes, Stowe tells the reader, is ideal.

While Agnes is generally considered saint-like, she is also associated on multiple occasions with nymphs. The nymph of the fountain, the reader is told ‘had been an especial favourite of the childhood of Agnes, and she always had a pleasure which she could not

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<sup>393</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 3 (1861) 738-751. p. 751.

exactly account for in gazing upon it'.<sup>394</sup> Agnes' confused emotions here echo her feelings towards the cavalier, which she also finds confusing because they do not fit into the religious ideal she has been taught. To use Stowe's own comparison, Agnes only understands how to respond to the Byzantine paintings. Later, Agnes becomes physically similar to the nymph as 'her head drooped into the attitude of the marble nymph, and her sweet features assumed the same expression of plaintive and dreamy thoughtfulness'. With Agnes mirroring the nymph in this way, it is explained that 'her form [...] scarcely yet showed the full development of womanhood [...] her whole attitude and manner were those of an exquisitely sensitive and highly organised being, just struggling into the life of some mysterious inner birth, -into the sense of powers of feeling and being hitherto unknown even to herself'.<sup>395</sup> Agnes then immediately considers the cavalier.

The implication is that Agnes is developing and accessing new emotions as she reaches womanhood. The point that these are natural, innate feelings is highlighted by her becoming like the nymph, a classical figure associated with nature and also sexual freedom. As Jennifer Larsson points out, regarding the origin of the word nymph, 'the crucial point is that, when applied to mortal woman, the term *numphê* points to her status as a sexual being'.<sup>396</sup> Isabella Luta has highlighted the use of the word nymph in the medical naming of nymphomania, arguing that 'there is evidence for a common cultural consciousness of Nymphomania in Victorian Britain' as the term appeared from the mid-nineteenth century in newspaper advertisements for coloured plates of an erotic nature. However, Luta also points out that the figure of the nymph is more complicated than a simple representation of a highly sexualised being. Luta examines Arthur Hacker's paintings of Syrinx and Daphne, nymphs from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The paintings themselves are from later in the nineteenth

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<sup>394</sup> Ibid, p. 751.

<sup>395</sup> Op. cit., *Cornhill Magazine*, 4 (1861) 106-116. p. 109.

<sup>396</sup> Jennifer Larsson, *Greek nymphs: myth, cult, lore*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) p. 3.

century, 1892 and 1890 respectively, but the myth itself presents both nymphs as victims fleeing unwanted sexual attention. As Luta writes, 'Syrinx and Daphne are portrayed as passive victims of their own beauty and allure'.<sup>397</sup>

This element of the myth appears later in *Agnes of Sorrento*, in the form of the men who take Agnes away to the 'Borgia harem'. Noticing her for her beauty in a crowd, the men comment that 'with judicious arrangement she [Agnes] might make a nymph as well as a saint', even commenting that she could be 'A Daphne, for example'. Agnes is saved from the situation at the last moment, as Daphne and Syrinx are, though Agnes' transformation at this point of the story, rather than being a physical one like that of the mythical nymphs, comes in the form of realisation. Agnes' actual experiences at the 'Borgia harem' are entirely omitted from the novel, but when she returns to the text 'the veil had been rudely torn from her eyes; she had seen with horror the defilement and impurity of what she had ignorantly adored in holy places'. This marks the end of Agnes' childlike naivety, a loss of innocence which is inseparable from the obvious sexual connotations, but which also crucially ends Agnes' blind trust in anything connected to the Church. The way that the novel appears in the *Cornhill Magazine* also means that this part, in April 1862, begins with Agnes entering Rome 'in a trance of enthusiastic emotion', showing the reader Agnes' transformation and ending with Agnes' marriage, through which she discovers the balance between her emotions and her faith.<sup>398</sup>

The reader is able to see the emotional dilemma that Agnes experiences, between the choices of nymph or saint, from Agnes' point of view because of Stowe's use of dream.

Dreams are important in the novel not because of their religious imagery or any true

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<sup>397</sup> Isabella Luta, 'Nymphs and nymphomania: mythological medicine and classical nudity in nineteenth century Britain' *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 18.3 (Feb 2017) 35-50.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid, *Cornhill Magazine*, 5 (1862) 610-631. p. 610, 616.

connection to God but because they allow a space for thought which is free from the constraints of society and because they allow this internal thought, which cannot be expressed aloud by the character, to be conveyed to the reader, providing psychological realism. This expression of inner thought through dream is not unusual, featuring, for example, in *Wuthering Heights*, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis, but in *Agnes of Sorrento* it becomes an expression of a particularly female issue of freedom, control and identity. Although the story is set over three hundred years before the time it was written, these are themes which resonate strongly with the portrayal of dreams in women's periodicals at the time, as seen in the previous chapter.

The final instalment of *Agnes of Sorrento* is immediately followed by George MacDonald's poem 'The Wakeful Sleeper', in which he considers the influence of external impressions, such as music, on a sleep-walking child as well as touching upon themes of sleep, dream and death which he had previously explored in *Phantastes* and would later expand upon in *Lilith*.<sup>399</sup> The proximity of these two pieces of writing, which each represent dreaming in different ways, is a clear reminder of the way that general literary periodicals in particular allowed the subject of dream to be explored in a way that was not possible in any other form.

### Angels and Imperfections

*Romola*, by George Eliot, was also serialised in the *Cornhill Magazine* after *Agnes of Sorrento*, from July 1862 to August 1863. The first instalment of *Romola* was therefore published just after Thackeray's resignation as editor. The final part of *Agnes of Sorrento*, on the other hand, had been printed in April 1862, the last month of Thackeray's editorship.

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<sup>399</sup> George MacDonald, 'The Wakeful Sleeper', *Cornhill Magazine*, 5 (1862) 632-633.

However, despite this significant change in 1862, the *Cornhill Magazine* continues largely along the lines set by Thackeray at its conception. In a letter ‘To A Friend and Contributor’ in November 1859, Thackeray had outlined his intentions for the periodical by explaining that:

We hope for a large number of readers, and must seek, in the first place, to amuse and interest them. Fortunately for some folks, novels are as daily bread to others; and fiction of course must form a part, but only a part, of our entertainment. We want, on the other hand, as much reality as possible.<sup>400</sup>

*Agnes of Sorrento* and *Romola* are two of these ‘daily bread’ novels and both are given significant attention, taking up a large portion of the periodical with each instalment and even, in the case of *Romola*, having full-page illustrations. As Thackeray points out, however, the factual articles of the *Cornhill Magazine* are equally important. It should be remembered that the *Cornhill Magazine* articles on the mind and dream which were discussed earlier in this thesis, such as James Hinton’s ‘The Brain and its Use’, were published at the same time that *Agnes of Sorrento* was finishing and just three months before the beginning of *Romola*. It is this proximity of fact and fiction considering complex questions about the origin of dreaming that made the periodical, particularly the general literary periodical, ideal for discussions of dream to develop.

In his letter, Thackeray also envisions the future readers of the *Cornhill Magazine*, describing ‘a professor ever so learned, a curate in his country retirement, an artisan after work-hours, a school master or mistress when the children are gone home, or the young ones themselves when their lessons are over’. The subjects, therefore, needed to be of a broad appeal, and the subjects of dream and psychology were. As Rylance has pointed out, ‘the

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<sup>400</sup> William Makepeace Thackeray, ‘To a Friend and Contributor’, *The Letters and Private Papers of William Makepeace Thackeray* vol. 4, ed. Gordon Norton (London: Oxford University Press, 1946) 159-161. p. 160.

broad audience for psychology perceived the issues it raised as matters of common, not specialized, intellectual and cultural concern'.<sup>401</sup> However, Thackeray also wrote that 'there are points on which agreement is impossible, and on these we need not touch'. Despite this, the *Cornhill Magazine* did touch upon subjects which were incredibly contentious, including spiritualism and dream. Both *Agnes of Sorrento* and *Romola* are based upon difficult questions about faith. It seems that Thackeray was not willing to avoid topics that may cause disagreement, in the way that the *Ladies' Treasury* attempted to avoid anything 'which might tend to "enervate or bewilder" the pure female mind'.<sup>402</sup> In a letter to Robert Dale Owen in July 1860, Thackeray appears to have come close to explaining his limits on contentious subjects when he writes (regarding Robert Bell's 'Stranger than Fiction') that 'I may possibly have another article containing the testimony of another eye witness to the same séance. But there I think we stop for the present as – but never mind giving reasons'.<sup>403</sup> This may, however, indicate that while Thackeray was comfortable presenting potentially difficult subjects in a way that encouraged readers to consider them, he was less comfortable with openly supporting a particular side of those subjects. Both *Romola* and *Agnes of Sorrento* are certainly more concerned with presenting dream as precariously placed between the rational and spiritual than they are with providing definitive answers about the origin of dream.

There are many similarities between the two novels, but the religious stance of each is quite different, as is the representation of dream. As Carole Robinson has pointed out, in *Romola* the characters Dino and Tito represent 'opposite forms of egotism – spiritual and sensual', as Dino 'through excessive spirituality deserted Bardo for a monastery', while Tito 'through excessive worldliness betrays both father and father-in-law'.<sup>404</sup> This contrast of the

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<sup>401</sup> Rick Rylance, *Victorian Psychology and British Culture 1850-1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 7.

<sup>402</sup> Cynthia White, *Women's Magazines 1693-1968* (London: Michael Joseph, 1970) p. 47.

<sup>403</sup> Op. cit., *The Letters and Private Papers of William Makepeace Thackeray*, p. 161, 193.

<sup>404</sup> Carole Robinson, "'Romola': A Reading of the Novel", *Victorian Studies*, 6.1 (1962) 29-42. p. 36.

two extremes, spiritual and sensual, is incredibly similar to that in *Agnes of Sorrento* and, in the same way as Agnes, they leave Romola in a position of confusion as she attempts to find the balance between them. For Agnes, the answer and balance between the two extremes is found in marriage, which allows her to fulfil a religious sacrament while also allowing an earthly relationship. It is an answer which corresponds with Stowe's own Christian views. For Romola, however, the contrast is more complicated and is never truly answered in the novel.

Robinson implies that Romola's confusion is related to Eliot's own indecision, arguing that 'Tito is more easily dismissed than Dino, the religious enthusiast' because 'as a Victorian moralist George Eliot can thrust hedonism aside, but as a Victorian agnostic she is eternally vulnerable to the rejected religious possibility'. For Romola, she argues, her relationship with Dino is 'a vacillation between attraction to and revulsion from the sort of commitment he represents; now she finds it "sickly superstition"; then she wishes "to learn the thoughts of men who sank in ecstasy before the pictured agonies of martyrdom"'.<sup>405</sup> The approach to dream in the novel supports this theory, never committing to or denying the existence of religiously inspired dreams. Avrom Fleishman has suggested that there was no intellectual crisis in Eliot's severance from her Evangelical beliefs, that 'she simply passes from being fully engrossed with the certitude of faith to the certainty of non-belief'.<sup>406</sup> There is no suggestion that the lack of direct contradiction to religious dreams indicates residual belief on Eliot's part. The balanced view of the subject may be better explained by Rosemary Ashton's argument that Eliot saw the futility of attempting to always come to conclusions and believed that moral judgements would be false and hollow if one does not consider individual

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<sup>405</sup> Ibid, p. 36.

<sup>406</sup> Avrom Fleishman, *George Eliot's Intellectual Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) p. 30.

lots.<sup>407</sup> Individual goodness and suffering in the face of misconceptions is certainly present in *Romola*.

The dreams in the novel also reflect Eliot's consideration of conscious and unconscious minds as much as they raise questions of spiritual truth. In *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Psychology*, Michael Davis argues that Eliot rejected the idea 'that science and religion inhabit distinct and unrelated realms' and that instead, 'by connecting the religious with the scientific in her representations of the mind, Eliot insists on the vital importance, and practicability, of describing the mind as part of the world and as connected to other minds, but also underlines her sense that it stands fundamentally at a remove from the factors in the world which shape it'.<sup>408</sup> Eliot's use of dream in *Romola* fits with Davis' comments, as is it used to present a personal, psychological progression. Eliot also directly addresses the issues with prophetic dream that, as has been shown in the previous two chapters, formed a large part of the discussions on dreaming in the 1860s.

The debate between rational and supernatural dreaming is raised early on in the novel when characters discuss a woman's vision of a bull. Nello questions the validity of prophetic images, arguing 'when we poor mortals can pack two or three meaning into one sentence, it were mere blasphemy not to believe that your miraculous bull means everything that any man in Florence likes it to mean'. While light hearted, this comment mocks the idea that someone might believe in prophetic dream in case it is a message from God, and they are afraid of being blasphemous. Goro responds that 'it is not the less true that every revelation, whether by visions, dreams, portents, or the written word, has many meanings, which it is given to the illuminated only to unfold'.<sup>409</sup> Nello agrees with this comment, which displays a clear

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<sup>407</sup> Rosemary Ashton 'George Eliot and the Difficulty of Coming to Conclusions' presented at George Eliot 2019: A Bicentenary Conference (17<sup>th</sup> July, 2019). University of Leicester.

<sup>408</sup> Michael Davis, *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Psychology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006) p. 9.

<sup>409</sup> George Eliot, *Romola*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 6 (1862) 1-43. p. 15.

element of negativity in the implication that only a select group are given the ability to interpret religious dreams. Amid a discussion on the validity of various religious figures providing public talks on their own beliefs, the comment leaves a suggestion of potential manipulation by these figures, who claim to have access to knowledge that others do not through dreams and visions. This is similar to the distrust found in *Agnes of Sorrento*, though Agnes' initial approach is always one of absolute trust, while in *Romola*, suspicion and uncertainty are constantly present.

It is important to note that in *Romola*, as in many other instances discussed in previous chapters, the terms dream and vision are used interchangeably. Such is the case with Dino's prophetic warning to Romola, the dream which runs throughout the novel as an integral part of the plot. Dino refers to his experience as a vision and, though it was 'deep night', he specifically says that he 'lay awake'. However, the vision is referred to afterwards as a dream and elsewhere in the novel, including in the discussion between Nello and Goro, visions and dreams are spoken of as the same thing. Most significantly, Dino himself associates the two just before relating his dream or vision, telling Romola that 'in the painful linking together of our waking thoughts we can never be sure that we have not mingled our own error with the light we have prayed for; but in visions and dreams we are passive, and our souls are as an instrument in the divine hand'.<sup>410</sup>

Dino's comments also portrays the concept of a passive, sleeping, body allowing the soul to become more receptive to 'the divine hand' in a very similar way to the comment in *Agnes of Sorrento* that 'dreams are the hushing of the bodily senses, that the eyes of the Spirit may open'. This freedom of the soul from the body is a romantic image, somewhat reminiscent of Wordsworth's 'Tintern Abbey'; 'we are laid asleep / In body, and become a

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<sup>410</sup> George Eliot, *Romola*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 6 (1862) 433-470. p. 437, 436.

living soul'.<sup>411</sup> Critics such as Edward Dramin and Stephen Gill have pointed out the influence of Romanticism and Wordsworth in particular on Eliot's writing.<sup>412</sup> The presence of the same concept in *Agnes of Sorrento* appears to further demonstrate the relationship between the romantic exploration of the unconscious and mid-nineteenth-century studies in psychology, or the function of the mind. As was discussed in the introduction to this thesis, Joel Faflak has argued that 'romantic poetry, by confronting the unconscious of philosophy, invents psychoanalysis'.<sup>413</sup> It is unsurprising then that this movement, which keenly explored the mind before philosophical considerations of the subject became less popular in the face of physiological psychology in the 1860s, should arise still in fiction which is centred on the mind and the concept of self. Dream, as a way of visually representing the function of the mind and the most personal thoughts of an individual, is particularly fitting in this type of exploration of the mind.

The dream vision which Dino relates to Romola in Eliot's story is incredibly detailed and is fully realised only by the end of the novel. Despite this apparent confirmation of the truth of Dino's heavenly dream, the reliability of prophetic dreams and their interpretations are constantly questioned in the text. Nello comments later in the novel that 'it seems to me a dream may mean whatever comes after it. As our Franco Sacchetti says, a woman dreams over-night of a serpent biting her, breaks a drinking-cup the next day, and cries out, "Look you, I thought something would happen – it's plain now what the serpent meant"'.<sup>414</sup> These moments remind the reader to question the apparently supernatural with rationality. As the story progresses, and Dino's dream vision unfolds into truth, it is also a theory which prompts

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<sup>411</sup> William Wordsworth, 'Lines Written a few miles above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting the banks of the Wye during a tour', *Poems of William Wordsworth volume 1* ed. Jared Curtis (Penrith: Humanities-Ebooks, 2011) 372-376. p. 373.

<sup>412</sup> Edward Dramin, "'A New Unfolding of Life'" Romanticism in the Late Novels of George Eliot' *Victorian Literature and Culture* (1998) 273-302; Stephen Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>413</sup> Joel Faflak, *Romantic Psychoanalysis* (Albany, N.Y. Bristol: State University of New York Press, 2007) p. 7.

<sup>414</sup> George Eliot, *Romola*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 6 (1862) 721-757. p. 736.

the reader to continuously question whether the dream is truly an example of a message sent by God, or one which remains open to rational explanation.

The opposition of the religious versus the rational is a complex one and, in *Romola*, Eliot is keen to display this complexity. A revealing consideration of human attraction to faith comes near the end of chapter thirty six, as Romola considers her ‘tangled web’ of both scorn and attraction to faith, Eliot writes:

No radiant angel came across the gloom with a clear message for her. In those times, as now, there were human beings who never saw angels or heard perfectly clear messages. Such truth as came to them was brought confusedly in the voices and deeds of men not at all like the seraphs of unfailing wing and piercing vision – men who believed falsities as well as truths, and did the wrong as well as the right. The helping hands stretched out to them were the hands of men who stumbled and often saw dimly, so that these beings unvisited by angels had no other choice than to grasp that stumbling guidance along the path of reliance and action which is the path of life, or else to pause in loneliness and disbelief, which is no path, but the arrest of inaction and death.<sup>415</sup>

While this passage is rich with biblical references and imagery it is actually emphasising an essentially humanist view of life and the necessity of humans helping one another along a path which is, by nature, uncertain. However, much of *Romola*’s issue with faith is human fallibility and Eliot also highlights the downfall of trust in fellow humans in this passage, when she writes that the men who bring these heavenly messages are ‘not at all like the

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<sup>415</sup> George Eliot, *Romola*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 7 (1863) 1-30. p. 27.

seraphs of unfailing wing and piercing vision', but are, in direct contrast, 'men who stumbled and often saw dimly'.

These imperfect men are, however, the only option for those seeking guidance. The 'truth' received by many is also confused, like Jocunda's dream story, and it is difficult to differentiate between truth and falsity, and for some between wrong and right. This is the same issue which becomes apparent in *Agnes of Sorrento*, as she is manipulated and misled by the priest she seeks guidance from, thus distorting her understanding of her faith for much of the novel. In *Agnes of Sorrento*, however, this issue is one which is limited to a corrupt few and is ultimately resolved. Agnes' dreams reassure the reader throughout that her natural feelings are opposed to the corruption that controls her. The message of *Romola* contains a less positive approach to religion. The uncertainty of faith in either God or man is never resolved, and dreams, uncertain in both origin and interpretation, are a part of this question.

While *Agnes of Sorrento* and *Romola* are set during the same time period, both featuring the life and execution of Savonarola, they also both display dream in a way which is very much applicable to their own time. Eliot goes as far as to openly relate her message to her own time when she writes 'in those times, as now, there were human beings who never saw angels'. It was undoubtedly Eliot's intention to draw the reader's mind towards claims of angelic visions, both modern and biblical, before presenting them with the thought that, without empirical evidence, with only second- or third-hand stories like Jocunda's, humans are led in their beliefs only by other humans. While in Stowe's *Agnes of Sorrento*, the dreams are very clearly psychological and the contest between religion and rationality is resolved through a merging of the two sides, Eliot does not resolve either the dream question or the religious question. It seems likely, given Eliot's representation of the complexity of the matter that, rather than failing to come to a conclusion, Eliot intentionally reveals that there is no definite or simple conclusion to be found.

Eliot also uses dream in a different way, to mark a transition in *Romola*. In the final instalment of the novel, in a chapter titled 'Romola's Waking', Eliot writes that:

Romola in her boat had passed from dreaming into a long deep sleep, and then again from deep sleep into busy dreaming, till at last she felt herself stretching out her arms in the court of the Bargello, where the flickering flames of the tapers seemed to get stronger and stronger till the dark scene was blotted out with light. Her eyes opened and she saw it was the light of morning.<sup>416</sup>

The way this dream progresses reflects contemporary beliefs about dream, such as the fact that dreams only happen in imperfect sleep and that external impressions can influence their content. Although the reader is only provided with a brief glimpse of Romola's dream, the information Eliot provides clearly directs the reader to the execution of Bernardo in the court of Bargello, where the flickering light had also been particularly described. It is directly after this execution that, wishing for death, Romola enters the boat in which she has her dream. Romola's awakening is clearly symbolic, as the darkness of the court of Bargello, and of her emotions associated with that place, are blotted out by the light of a new morning. Romola literally wakes to find new purpose, finding a helpless baby and then a helpless young woman in quick succession and instantly applying herself to aid them.

This transformation is addressed explicitly by Eliot as she writes that, after thoughts of death, 'the moment after her waking when the cry had drawn her [Romola], [...] she had simply lived, with so energetic an impulse to share the life around her, to answer the call of need [...]'. Romola is mistaken, by the people she helps, as the Madonna, and is referred to by that name. This is another element of the transformation which the dream borders. It is

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<sup>416</sup> George Eliot, *Romola*, *Cornhill Magazine*, 8 (1863) 130-153. p. 130.

again easy to find similarities between *Romola* and *Agnes of Sorrento*, where the contrasting figures of nymph or saint, wife or nun are laid out as the choices for a woman. The moment after her waking, Eliot writes, ‘was like a new baptism for Romola. In Florence the simpler relations of the human being to his fellow-men had been complicated for her with all the special ties of marriage, the State, and religious discipleship’ and these ‘had disappointed her trust’.<sup>417</sup> Again, as in *Agnes of Sorrento*, the naïve trust of religious constructs is broken by the flaws of men. However, while this issue is resolved in *Agnes of Sorrento*, where Agnes finds trustworthy men and a balance between the roles of nymph and saint in marriage, Romola leaves behind both the roles of wife and Madonna, returning to Florence and embracing only her need to help others in a practical way. It is particularly appropriate that dream, which forms such an integral part of the novels questioning of faith and rationality, is the point of transition between Romola’s roles of wife and Madonna, but it is also fitting that, in a novel which refuses to take a definite stance on dream, Romola ultimately rejects both of her apparent choices.

### Religious Dream in Non-Fiction

The concept of angelic visitations and divine messages through dream obviously stem from biblical stories and, later, the legends of saints. However, these early dream stories do not feature particularly strongly in any of the periodicals examined so far. As was shown in chapter three, there are some examples of old stories which seem to have been divinely influenced in the *Spiritual Magazine*, however these are not from a particular figure, such as God, saints or angels, and are more directed at proving that the spirits of the deceased can communicate through dream. Historical stories of dreams messages from biblical figures do

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<sup>417</sup> Ibid, p. 137.

appear, as may be expected, in specifically religious periodicals that were being published in the 1860s, such as *Good Words*, though they are still more commonly found in fiction, and it is possible to find a selection in general literary periodicals, though these rarely indicate a belief in the existence of such dreams.

*Bentley's Miscellany* features two interesting examples of the way these religious dreams were represented in non-fiction. While *Bentley's Miscellany* was also a monthly publication, providing a combination of serialised and short fiction as well as factual articles, its tone and content are quite different to the general literary periodicals previously discussed, *All the Year Round* and the *Cornhill Magazine*. In *Bentley's Miscellany* articles dealing with scientific subjects are scarce and serialised fiction less common than literary criticism by the 1860s.<sup>418</sup> After William Ainsworth resigned as editor in 1841, the editorship of *Bentley's Miscellany* is obscure, which makes tracing the editorial intention of the magazine in the 1860s difficult. However, its tone and content during the 1860s indicates that the provision of entertainment and 'wit' remains a priority of the periodical.

In 1865, the same year that 'Bred in the Bone' (discussed in chapter one) was published, *Bentley's Miscellany* contains three good examples of portraying traditional religious dream. The first, 'Mont St. Michel' is a piece of travel writing, which recounts a story from the 'Chronicle of Avranches' about the origin of a church on the island. The author explains that 'in the year 708 the Archangel Michael appeared in a dream to Hubert, the twelfth bishop of Avranches, and ordered him to build a church upon the rock'.<sup>419</sup> The article, at this point, takes a tone of assumed truth about this story which portrays a direct message from heaven being delivered in a dream.

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<sup>418</sup> The shift of emphasis from serialised fiction to literary criticism in the periodical occurs around 1848, as noted in 'Bentley's Miscellany', *British Literary Magazines: the Victorian and Edwardian Age, 1837-1913* ed. Alvin Sullivan (London: Greenwood Press, 1984) 34-41. p. 37.

<sup>419</sup> 'Mont St. Michel', *Bentley's Miscellany*, 57 (1865) 49-56. p. 52.

The dream itself and its consequences are then explained in more detail, as the anonymous author writes that, within the dream, the bishop objects that it is ‘impossible to dig foundations in such hard ground’ to build a church. However, he is told that if he stamps his foot on the summit of the mountain ‘then, that which appeareth to thee impossible now, will become possible’. Following this advice, Hubert stamps in the designated place, loosening a huge block which rolled into the sea, becoming the platform on which the chapel was built. The author adds, ‘I looked for the spot where the Bishop of Avranches stamped on the ground, and found it too’, an addition which appears to again support the validity of the dream story. However, the following comment, that ‘the bishop must certainly have had an extra sized foot, for both mine hardly filled the gap’ has a humorous, mocking tone, which both throws the author’s own belief into question and suggests that readers would have found this rationalising of the story amusing.<sup>420</sup>

After this comment, the article moves directly on from the dream story, the final humorous note giving the impression that the anecdote is included for entertainment rather than as an explanation of historical fact. The actual belief of the author remains somewhat ambiguous, as the story is referred to as fact elsewhere in the article, such as in the comment ‘how many alterations has St. Michel undergone from the year 708, when the archangel appeared to the pious Bishop of Avranches [...]’.<sup>421</sup> The historical importance of the dream story is also emphasised, as the author points out that it became a place of pilgrimage for a long list of important figures, many of them kings. However, the humorous rationality which finished the story of the divine dream leaves the reader with the impression that it is essentially an entertaining tale, rather than a factual historical occurrence.

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<sup>420</sup> Ibid.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid, p. 55.

The article ends with an exaggerated summary of the island's history, explaining that 'there are really spots upon which the curse of Deity presses, and St. Michel is such a spot. Stained with blood by the human sacrifices of the Druids, profaned by the priests of Jupiter [...]'.<sup>422</sup> The existence of a Deity is again assumed, but the concept is tied in with curses, human sacrifice and Roman mythology. These are stories which make up the history of the island, but they are also examples of religious belief which have had their influence on the place and subsequently passed out of popularity.<sup>423</sup> The angelic dream visitation therefore becomes another historical aspect of the island's legend, rather than serious evidence of a religious dream.

'Modern life on the Bosphorus' shares a number of similarities with 'Mont St. Michel'. The author, who is again anonymous, explores Constantinople, considering such things as the landscape and available entertainment. Within this exploration, the author claims that 'the whole society on the Bosphorus is extravagantly superstitious. Turks, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews, are alike in this respect, and Levantines follow the general current'. As an example, the author explains that 'like the Greeks, the Armenians have taken to the worship of pictures of saints. The saint demands that a lamp should burn before his picture day and night, and if it ever goes out, he avenges himself by fearful dreams and nightmare'.<sup>424</sup> It is worth noting that the worship of saints would have been normal for Catholics, but not Protestants. Richard Bentley, who attended an Anglican school and remained lifelong friends with minor canon Richard Harris Barnham, was notoriously controlling of the content of the periodical he founded.<sup>425</sup> It is therefore unsurprising to find

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<sup>422</sup> Ibid, p. 56.

<sup>423</sup> The article explains earlier that, before St Michel was separated from the mainland by sea, it was the site of a Druidic temple and, after the Roman invasion, a temple dedicated to Jupiter.

<sup>424</sup> 'Modern Life on the Bosphorus', *Bentley's Miscellany*, 57 (1865) 478-483. p. 481.

<sup>425</sup> Robert L. Patten, 'Richard Bentley (1794-1871)' *ODNB* (23 September 2004) < <https://www-oxforddnb-com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-2171?rskey=hWn1X0&result=5>>

Anglican sympathies within the articles, although there does not appear to be any overt statement of religious affiliation in the periodical during the 1860s.

The superstitious belief described in 'Life on the Bosphorus' is based upon the belief that a religious figure, such as a saint, can influence the content of a person's dream. In this case the influence is a negative one, but it is based on the assumption that dreams may have a divine origin, in the same way that the dream in 'Mont St. Michel' does. On the subject of these superstitions, the author continues to explain that 'whenever these and similar Oriental fantasies do not show themselves, you might imagine you were in Europe'.<sup>426</sup> As a 'superstitious' 'Oriental fantasy' the dream story, though clearly originating in the Eastern Orthodox Church, is removed from religious discussion and becomes instead an easily dismissible frivolity. While there is an indication in 'Mont St. Michel' that the author does not share a belief in the dream story, due to the humorous comment about the size of the bishop's foot, there is never any overt implication that the story is entirely fictitious. In 'Life on the Bosphorus', however, the story is dismissed entirely as 'Oriental fantasy' and the author claims that such stories would not be found in Europe, despite the obvious similarity to both biblical dream stories and the dreams of religious origin discussed in chapter three. It seems here that the foreign nature of the dream story allows for a more open dismissal. Edward Said's points on the portrayal of the Orient are also particularly relevant here, as Said highlights the tendency to present the Orient as Other.<sup>427</sup> Whether it is a thing of a distant place or a thing of the distant past, both 'Mont St. Michel' and 'Life on the Bosphorus' portray dreams of divine origin as a thing that does belong in contemporary Europe.

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<sup>426</sup> Op. cit., *Bentley's Miscellany*, 57 (1865) 478-483. p. 481.

<sup>427</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) p. 1.

‘The Legend of Saint Efflamm’ also addresses religious dream and is published in *Bentley’s Miscellany* in 1865.<sup>428</sup> Although it is attributed to travel writer Louisa Stuart Costello, ‘The Legend of Saint Efflamm’ is not a piece of travel writing, like the previous two examples, but Costello’s introduction to a Breton ballad. As Costello simply explains, the poem is a ballad by a ‘Breton poet’ of a legend which is ‘of great antiquity, as the recurrence of triplets proves’.<sup>429</sup> Costello contributed a number of Breton ballads to Bentley’s *Miscellany* in 1865, including, for example ‘Breton Ballad of Heloise’ and ‘The Bride of Leon’.<sup>430</sup> Although he focuses on the United States, Michael Cohen’s points on ballads and the construction of ballad anthologies in the nineteenth century, seem relevant to this inclusion of ballads in *Bentley’s Miscellany*. Cohen argues that collecting ballads both ‘monumentalize[d] [...] oral cultures as histories of the present’ and mediated between ‘cultural and national history’. While Cohen’s argument seeks to demonstrate that anthologised ballads and ‘the fantasies about the cultural and national past they fostered’ were of great importance to ‘the nineteenth-century project of national reconstruction in the United States’, his argument also places the ballad, and the interest in collecting them, in the context of their importance as pieces of history.<sup>431</sup> Costello seems keen to point out the antiquity of the ballad, regardless of the fact that the ‘repetition of triplets’ is tenuous evidence of age. Cohen’s argument provides an explanation for this by highlighting the attraction of preserving in print something which had previously survived only in the oral tradition and therefore risked being lost to the modern age. In this light it is also easy to see the similarities between Costello’s ballad and the story of ‘Mont St. Michel’, where the

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<sup>428</sup> Louisa Stuart Costello, ‘The Legend of Saint Efflamm’, *Bentley’s Miscellany*, 57 (1865) 526-528.

<sup>429</sup> There are actually only five triplets in this poem of 33 stanzas.

<sup>430</sup> Louisa Stuart Costello, ‘Breton Ballad of Heloise’, *Bentley’s Miscellany*, 57 (1865) 147-148; Louisa Stuart Costello, ‘The Bride of Leon’, *Bentley’s Miscellany*, 57 (1865) 278-279.

<sup>431</sup> Michael Cohen, ‘Popular Ballads: Rhythmic Remediations in the Nineteenth Century’, *Meter Matters: Verse Cultures of the Long Nineteenth Century* ed. Jason David Hall (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2011) 196-216. p. 197.

divine dream is not taken seriously as evidence of the origin of dream, but is important still as the history of a particular place.

The central part of 'The Legend of Saint Efflamm' is a dream experienced by Enora, who was to marry Prince Efflamm and believes he has abandoned her. Efflamm has travelled to the 'Breton coast' to fulfil a vow of prayer and solitude and he is there when Enora sees him in 'a blissful dream', telling her:

“Come, follow me [...] and save  
Thy soul, and weep no more forlorn;  
Oh, come my solitude to share,  
And let us spend our lives in prayer”.

Enora, in the dream, agrees to this and the poem continues to explain:

Aged bards have sung the lay,  
How the bride blest angels bore  
Across the ocean, far away,  
And laid her by the hermit's door.<sup>432</sup>

When Enora wakes, she is in the same place as Efflamm. While the dream is clearly a religious one, directing Enora to a life of prayer, the second part of the dream is more unusual as she seems to be physically transported before she wakes. This element lends the story more an element of the fantastical than other religious dream tales, though that is itself fitting with the ballad as a whole, which also features King Arthur battling 'a beast of dread, / One

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<sup>432</sup> Op. cit., *Bentley's Miscellany*, 57 (1865) 526-528. p. 527, 528.

red eye in his forehead gleam'd, / Green scales all o'er his shoulders spread'.<sup>433</sup> Efflam is a recognised saint but the ballad is clearly being presented as both a thing of entertainment and of historical interest, in the same way that the legend of 'Mont St. Michel' was. The article is largely just the poem itself, with little input from Costello, but the inclusion of her introduction to the origin of the ballad does give the impression of presenting the reader with a piece of history, rather than simply an entertaining poem.

'Mont St. Michel', 'Life on the Bosphorous' and 'The Legend of Saint Efflam' all demonstrate the way that religious dream stories in non-fiction articles were portrayed as things of a different time or place.<sup>434</sup> With the exception of the 'oriental fantasy' dream of 'Life on the Bosphorus', the dreams are not openly dismissed as untrue, but both imply that the story is mythical rather than factual. Non-fictional accounts of religious dream are not common in general literary periodicals during the 1860s, as is shown in the content of *All the Year Round* and the *Cornhill Magazine*, as well as *Bentley's Miscellany*. This in itself indicates that the purpose of portraying religious dreams in these periodicals is not to share a religious story of common belief, which would provide evidence that the origin of dream can be theological. There is a notable difference here from the portrayal of scientific and supernatural explanations for dream. As the previous four chapters have shown, articles which claimed to provide evidence for scientific and supernatural dreams were not uncommon. Religious dreams clearly attracted a different approach and this may be because, as was indicated in chapter four, the Christian churches were not supportive of modern claims to prophetic dream. The only truly acceptable forms of evidence of divinely inspired dreams would therefore originate in the Bible and the stories of saints, both of which would have

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<sup>433</sup> Ibid, p. 527. Costello notes that the poet 'confounds the famous Cambrian chief, Arthur, with a warlike divinity of the ancient Bretons'.

<sup>434</sup> A similar association is found in representations of supernatural dreams and dream interpretation guides. See chapter three, p. 118.

already been familiar to Christian readers and, as was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the majority of the population of Britain were Christian in the 1860s.

The serialised parts of *Romola* and *Agnes of Sorrento*, in comparison, use religious dream continuously, effectively displaying the innermost thoughts and emotions of their characters and portraying the complex relationship between faith and science. Divine dreams are far more commonly found in fiction. As was mentioned in chapter three, Dickens' 'A Child's Dream of a Star' is a short piece of fiction based entirely on the concept of dream being a way to receive messages from heaven.<sup>435</sup> Fiction such as this by Dickens supported Christian beliefs about God and heaven without suggesting that contemporary claims to divinely inspired dreams were true. In the case of both *Agnes of Sorrento* and *Romola*, however, the portrayal of religious dream does not function as an argument either for or against its existence, though both portray the complex nature of that argument. In both novels, religion is a subject of contention and the Church an organisation which is vulnerable to corruption. Dream, again in both novels, is integral to the way the protagonists address complex issues with their faith and to the portrayal of those issues. The way dream is used to portray the emotions and true thoughts of characters is also comparable to the examples discussed in chapter four and it is relevant that, in both, dream features in the exploration of women's roles and restrictions. It is essential to note that it is only through their method of publication that these novels are able to participate in the 'dream debate'. The parts of these novels, which represent dream in such an interesting way, were being published alongside scientific articles on the mind and dream, as well as arguments in favour of the supernatural. When considered in this original context, the richness of dream representation in general literary periodicals becomes apparent.

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<sup>435</sup> Charles Dickens, 'A Child's Dream of A Star', *Household Words*, 1 (1850) 25-26.

## Conclusion

In a recent examination of the nineteenth-century response to the subject of sleep and dreaming in France, Jacqueline Carroy highlights the emergence of the scientific ‘dreambook’, an anthology in which scientists ‘practised a systematic recording of their dreams’. There is a clear similarity between these records of dreams and the popular dream books, or dream interpretation guides, which were discussed in chapter three of this thesis. Carroy notes that these interpretation guides, which ‘took the form of a dictionary and referred to a tradition of dream interpretation with antecedents into antiquity’ had ‘dangerous similarities’ to scholarly works such as the scientists’ anthologies. The difference, as Carroy points out, was that the scientific ‘dreambooks’ did not ‘explicitly claim to exercise a practice of interpretation in the sense of deciphering a hidden meaning’, providing instead a more generalised analysis. However, Carroy also highlights the fact that ‘even if the author was academically prominent, he lost a degree of respectability and credibility when he revealed himself as a dreamer’. Dream, Carroy explains, ‘resides in a less rigid frame of knowledge that engenders and authorises a light and spiritual tone’.<sup>436</sup>

As this thesis has shown, medical periodicals in the 1860s only addressed dreams seriously in relation to other subjects of scientific interest, such as the effect of drugs or in studies on insanity. In general periodicals, however, where scientific articles were published alongside fiction, the origins and meanings of dreams were addressed far more frequently. As was suggested earlier in this thesis, it may be argued that scientific publications avoided

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<sup>436</sup> Jacqueline Carroy, ‘A History of Dreams and the Science of Dreams: Historiographical Questions’, *Histories of Dreams and Dreaming: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* ed. Giorgia Morgese, Giovanni Pietro Lombardo and Hendrika Vande Kemp (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019) 17-32. p.22, 21, 23.

much of the discussion surrounding dream because of its continued association with the spiritual and superstitious. Carroy's explanation of the 'dreambooks', which were being published in France in the 1860s, further enforces the impression that the subject of dreaming was still tarred by the notion that it was 'unscientific', even when it was written about by scientists. Carroy's argument that the authors of these 'dreambooks' risked losing credibility because the nature of the dreams they were relating put them in 'farcical' situations is undoubtedly true, but she also hints at the influence of supernatural associations when she writes of the 'dangerous similarities' that 'scholarly works' had to dream interpretation guides.<sup>437</sup>

As was shown in chapter three, it is not possible to demarcate the supernatural and scientific entirely in the 1860s. Spiritualist periodicals claimed to provide evidence for apparently supernatural phenomena and dream was used as one of these forms of evidence, in a way that associates it simultaneously with science and the supernatural. In general literary periodicals, both the scientific and supernatural aspects of dream were represented, whether the supernatural was seriously considered, as it was in the *Cornhill Magazine*, or frequently mocked, as it was in *All the Year Round*. In general literary periodicals, which presented scientific theory but were not aimed at a professional audience, the supernatural enters the discussion far more extensively than it could have in medical periodicals. Even when its portrayal is negative, the supernatural forms part of the discussion. 'Modern Magic', which was published in *All the Year Round* in July 1860, summarises the feelings surrounding the subject of spiritualism well. The author, Eliza Lynn Linton, acknowledges an argument in favour of approaching the supernatural in a scientific way when she writes 'I know that I shall be met by believers with the argument that all the greatest scientific truths were, when first propounded, scouted and disbelieved: witness Galileo, Harvey, Jenner and others'. This

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<sup>437</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

addresses the belief that the supernatural could potentially be explained scientifically. However, she goes on to argue that ‘one of the most provoking peculiarities of the spiritualists is the definite manner in which they speak of indefinite things and indefinite sensations. A publication called the *Spiritual Magazine* is especially full of this sort of unblushing assertion’.<sup>438</sup> Linton gives, as an example, the claims of a medium during a séance, but dreams could be considered as equally indefinite, intangible and potentially unreliable evidence.

‘Modern Magic’, interestingly, ends by pointing out that that ‘the unbelieving son of the conductor of this journal figures [...] in two numbers of the *Spiritual Magazine* as a believer, for no worse indiscretion than the dangerous one of having gone to see what some experiments were like’. Dickens responds directly to this in an editor’s note, where he quotes from the *Spiritual Magazine*’s article, in which Dickens’ son is reported as telling his father that he [Dickens] has been ‘mistaken throughout’ and that ‘all these things can be, and are, for I have seen and heard them father’. Dickens then contradicts this quote from the *Spiritual Magazine* by stating that his son ‘told his father that what he had seen and heard was very absurd, and he gave his father a highly ludicrous detail of the proceedings!’<sup>439</sup> While this highlights the distrust from some quarters of the evidence provided by spiritualist periodicals, it also demonstrates the ability of periodicals to respond to one another in a way that encourages debate.

In spite of *All the Year Round*’s negative portrayal of spiritualism and supernatural explanations for dream generally, the subject is still frequently present in the periodical throughout the 1860s. Its regular appearance in the periodical contributed as much to the discussion of dreams as the portrayal of the subject in periodicals which were more

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<sup>438</sup> [Eliza Lynn Linton] ‘Modern Magic’, *All the Year Round*, 3 (1860) 370-374. p. 374.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid*, p.374.

sympathetic to supernatural belief, such as the *Cornhill Magazine*, would. As Freud's comment that 'one day I discovered to my great astonishment that the view of dreams which came nearest to the truth was not the medical but the popular one, half involved though it still was in superstition' suggests, this aspect of dream discussions, which remained tied to the supernatural until the early twentieth century, was integral to the development of psychology.<sup>440</sup> This is a crucial part of the reason why periodicals, which were far more varied and immediate than books were able to be, with greater potential to generate discussion amongst a broad audience and to respond to that discussion, were the ideal platform for the dream 'debate' to evolve in. General literary periodicals in particular provided the necessary variety for the full scope of the debate to be seen within a single publication. However, as this thesis has shown, dream was represented differently in various periodical types and this variation was equally important. The way that medical periodicals used dream, for example, reveals the importance of dream to understanding the function of the mind from a medical perspective at this time. In women's periodicals, the use of dream to explore freedom, control and the concept of self is particularly vivid. When considered together, it becomes clear that periodicals facilitated the development of psychological theories of dreaming as well as the use of dream in fiction to realistically portray the function of the unconscious mind.

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<sup>440</sup> Sigmund Freud, 'The Interpretation of Dreams (Second Part) and On Dreams' *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume V (1900-1901)*, 629-686. p.634, 635.  
< [http://www.english.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Freud\\_SE\\_On\\_Dreams\\_complete.pdf](http://www.english.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Freud_SE_On_Dreams_complete.pdf)>

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