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ABSTRACT

"THE AGE OF ODDITIES": BYRONISM AND THE FICTIONAL REPRESENTATIONS OF BYRON

by G. Todd Davis

"The age of oddities": Byronism and the Fictional Representations of Byron," examines the perpetuation of the Byron legend as a process of mythologizing by both Byron and later authors who alter, expand, or moderate this discourse. The dissertation examines not only the Byronic figure's constructedness but also how synchronic representations engender a literary history. Chapter 1 investigates how Byron's self-fashioning deflects a rabidly curious audience's awareness away from the poet to his performance and draws readerly attention to, as Judith Butler would say, a stylized repetition of acts. Chapter 2 examines how Hans Robert Jauss's horizons of experience and expectation and exploration of the author/text/audience triangle produce an historically emergent model for how these fictional representations proliferate. It then focuses on reception theory to explicate the construction and recurrence of the Byronic vampire, showing how the Gothic genre was altered and expanded by subsequent refigurings of vampiric representation by such authors as John Polidori, Miranda Seymour, and Tom Holland. Chapter 3 explores how Butler's performativity explains Byron's performances and poses, which appear as illusions based upon ostensibly stable identities. It then moves into the paranormal and the scientific realms, in which Byron becomes refashioned both as a supernatural entity, whose psychic exile from corporeal boundaries evokes images of the wandering ghost, and a disembodied spirit captured in a technological matrix and personified as a cyborg. Chapter 4 draws upon Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics to explicate Byron's interstitial position between sanity and madness, elucidating the identificatory myth that seduces subsequent authors and critics. Consequently, it examines how such authors as Lady Caroline Lamb and Percy Bysshe Shelley become ensnared in the interpretive circle, unable to see beyond Byron's pretense of madness, mistaking it for truth.
"THE AGE OF ODDITIES":  
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REPRESENTATIONS OF BYRON  

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**Introduction: Byronizing the Byronic**

Perhaps, too, I might say of this, and of other novels of the same kind, that there is in them an unhealthy egotism; a Byronism of personal feelings. *Blackwood Magazine, April 1846*

Byronism, you're aware, is now a regular disease, expected in families. *Blackwood Magazine, April 1851*

*Byronic, Byroniad, Byronian, Byronical, Byronish, Byronize, Byronist, and Byronite.* What is it about Byron that so impels us to invoke his name repeatedly in noun and adjectival form? I would argue that this fascination bespeaks yet another term to which Byron has lent his name: Byronism, which I define as the production and reproduction of the Byron legend. The phenomenon incorporates, but also extends well beyond, Lord Byron the historical personage; this mythologizing has been effected by authors, critics, reviewers, and others who have found it necessary to *read, mediate, or converse with* the Byron myth. Byron uses it himself in his letter to Francis Hodgson dated May 12, 1821: "Moore wrote to me from Paris months ago that 'the French had caught the contagion of Byronism to the highest pitch' and has written since to say that nothing was ever like their 'entusymusy'" (*BLJ* 8:114). Like my epigraph's sentiments, Byron likens this effect to an infection or pollution that contaminates the French, producing a mania that propels them to "the highest pitch" of enthusiasm. In "The Byromania" (1812), Annabella Milbanke describes how this phenomenon "compels all hearts to love him and obey" (l. 6). Her poem addresses the pervading charisma that Byron's persona possessed for those with whom he came into contact and illuminates the near sycophantic fervor Byron's devotees expressed.

Even in Byron's own time and immediately thereafter, Byronism had already gained a name for itself. In 1821, the *London Magazine* said of Byronism: "The personal interest, we believe, has always been above the poetical in Lord Byron's compositions; and, what is much worse, they seem to
have been, in almost every instance, studiously calculated to produce this effect” (qtd. in Rutherford 13). In 1868, Walter S. McCann declared in *The Galaxy*:

No affectation in modern times ever raged with such fury and lived so long as did Byronism. It came up somewhere about the latter part of the life of the noble poet from whom it took its name, possessed more than a third of the young Englishmen then living, and it was fully a half-dozen years after the publication of Mr. Moore’s Biography before it began to go down, and even as late as the commencement of the present decade there were quite a number of persons writing demoniac poetry and wandering about with the old misanthropic sneer. (777)

In these two quotes, we see how Byronism was "more than the poetical," encompassing Byron’s life and influence. This was a phenomenon that someone, ostensibly Byron, "studiously calculated to produce." Byronism is also portrayed as an "affectation" that began with Byron’s life but then spread out to *infect* more than 1/3 of all Englishmen. Moreover, writers are even now producing and reproducing the Byronic effect.

Byronism, per Judith Butler, creates the effect that it names. Consequently, I aim to expose the coalesced Byronic body performatively created by Byronism. Even the historical Lord Byron cannot definitively stand as its origin, since his performances carry with them their own past. In *Byron and the Victorians*, Andrew Elfenbein says, for instance, that such writers as John Edmund Reade or William Whitehead created a "trademark" that was "the Byronic hero, who quickly became a stock character; indeed, it was stock character even before Byron" (87). With this in mind, we can also well imagine that the mechanism for turning a man into a celebrity, for perpetuating a persona, and for generating a linguistic phenomenon that far outstrips its origins existed long before Byron’s birth. I would suggest, however, that this forceful, audacious, and successful mechanism achieved (and continues to achieve) stunningly new heights with the advent of Byronism.
For many critics, reviewers, and biographers, Byron’s allure strongly encourages intimacy and familiarity. As an example, Ethel Colburn Mayne has this to say of Byron in her biography:

The paradox was part of the pose, using pose in its true sense of poise—the way in which you have to stand if you are to stand at all. We hear too much of his "chameleon" character. His character was not chameleon, but strikingly the reverse. Byron never changed; in all surroundings he remained the same. "Everything that he did is implicit in everything else that he did." I have written that elsewhere of him; and it is, in truth, from his invariability that the whole Byronic legend has grown. So far from not being able to guess what he will do, we know on the instant what he will do and—still more accurately—what he will say. We could not have imagined the words, but we can imagine the sense. Did he ever fail to say it? Not once. (xiii-xiv).

Byronism thrives on exactly this intimacy, this awareness of "knowing" Byron as if he were one's best friend. If there is one explanation of the Byronic figure with which this dissertation disagrees, it is that Byron never changes, always saying and doing what one expects. I agree with Mayne that "the paradox was part of the pose," but I theorize that Byron's pose is all that we can ever know; performativity effaces any historical personage that might be knowable.

Byronism engenders Byron as a continual diffusion, a "figure of fantasy" as Butler might say. By using her theories on gender performativity, I will show how Byronism is "performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (GT 25). The historical Lord Byron becomes effaced or even controlled by the figure that Byronism creates, protean in its ability to modify its appearance, engulfing the new and claiming it as its own. Through performativity, this Byronic entity enacts a "repeated stylization [. . .] a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance [of Byron], of a natural sort of being" who stands within history as the figuration of Byron, which is then disseminated through Byronism.
This recurrent production of acts effects an artificial codification of Byron in that the performance varies with each alteration. No ontology results from Byron's performativity; Byronism produces the effects of "an internal core of substance, but produce[s] th[ese] on the surface of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principles of identity as a cause" (GT 136). Performativity suggests a "dramatic and contingent construction of meaning" that can be seen historically through a time-specific representation of the Byronic performance within, and perpetuated by, Byronism.

The terms, methodologies, and theories of Stephen Greenblatt, Hans-Robert Jauss, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jerome McGann, and Judith Butler bolster my argument by grounding it within an historically contingent and pervasively intertextual framework. Greenblatt provides the terminology of "fashioning" and "refashioning," allowing us to see how authors construct or "fashion" themselves to better coincide with societal and cultural expectations. Jauss's theories provide both the overarching structure informed by the audience-text-author triangle and the means by which to understand the audience's mediation and textual meaning-making through reception theory. Butler's performativity elucidates the authorial component by showing us how the Byronic figure exists as a blank page onto which the performative writes its discourses, engendering a Byron always in the state of becoming. Finally, Gadamer's hermeneutical theories explain textual exploration and audience interpretation, allowing us to see how intertextualities tie interpretations to the past and present, creating texts and interpretations within a persistently emerging tradition.

While refraining from repeating the theorists' synopses and analyses from later chapters here, I should emphasize the marked connectivity with which my chosen theorists mesh and work in tandem. Each focuses on historically contingent, ideologically dependent texts that cannot be separated from their place in history. Serving to remind the reader of the difference between the past and the present as well as their interconnectedness, this "temporal distance," as Gadamer calls it, can be both "positive" and "productive." Moreover, two or more
theorists, say Butler and Jauss, function effortlessly in combination, to further accentuate the historical and intertextual connections. For example, we might see how the diachronic performative, fluid and destabilized, coalesces within a synchronic space. This synchronicity allows the performative to be brought into being from the material that precedes it. From the fluid substance of myriad representations arises one that resembles a performative Byron. Each metamorphosis draws upon repeated acts yet creates new figures with each manifestation. Ultimately, each of my theorists remains grounded, and thus related, by the historical, societal, and cultural ramifications of textual production and reproduction.

Relying myself on historical and intertextual perspectives, I focus not only on nineteenth-century but also on twentieth-century texts. Rather than concentrating on biographies, reviews, or critical works to delineate this historical evolution, I concentrate on those works that fictionally represent Byron in both centuries. I have also tried to avoid unwarranted generalization by grounding my analysis in specific readings of such individual tropes as the vampire, the ghost, and the madman. I recognize the implications one might draw from such a list: that Byronism affects only Gothic tropes or that Byronism can only be explicated from within the monstrous. This is not the case, however; other tropes could have been and will be used in some future incarnation of this dissertation: the rebel, the libertine, the philosopher, and the queer. By extension, then, I explicate not only the fictional tradition of Byronism but also the mediation of this tradition by his audience.

The benefits of this approach are manifold, two of which I document here. First, we see that Byronism is more than an economic phenomenon, as Jerome Christensen argues in Lord Byron's Strength, that existed only during Byron's early and middle writing career, only to be curtailed by Don Juan's "anti-Byronism" (221). I argue that Byronism pervades not only the nineteenth but the twentieth century as well. Its mythologies have been altered, expanded, and diminished by authors who continue to produce and reproduce the Byron legend. Byron becomes an effect of this perpetual manipulation of the Byronic figure. He
stands, as Butler might say, as an expression of the reiterative and citational practices that accompany these repeated stylizations.

In Chapter 1, I will discuss Byron's body as trope, as figure, as cultural image, and as icon. Sometimes this body will be Lord Byron's body, which was pummeled, molded, and dieted into submission by its owner; sometimes this body will refer to Byron's corpus of writing, that which critics, reviewers, and his audience took to be a cultural body through the act of self-confession; mostly, however, that body will be formed in the Byronic image by Byronism. In this regard, the production of Byron occurs by means of "figures of fantasy through the play of presence and absence on the body's surface" (GT 135). This persistent production effects a "false stabilization" inasmuch as the persona frequently mutates with each new surface rewriting and reorientation. Thus, we see how "the effect of an internal core of substance" can be produced "on the surface of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principles of identity as a cause" (GT 136). Consequently, the historical Lord Byron matters less for our purposes than either the performatively created Byronic persona or Byronism, the process that perpetually disseminates and produces what we, for sake of ease, shall simply call Byron.

This Byronic figure demonstrates, as Gadamer would say, "undetermined possibilities," with proliferating images manufactured repeatedly. I explore not so much a cataloguing of those images but instead the mechanism that perpetuates and manipulates them. Brenda R. Silver's Virginia Woolf: Icon has as its object a similar agenda: showing Woolf as a cultural icon and emphasizing how Woolf's advocates and critics "alike insist that they alone know the 'real' or 'authentic' Virginia Woolf, however different these Virginia Woolfs may be" (xvi). She describes "versioning," a concept whereby "new versions of a text or image keep it in constant flux. These multiplicities of texts and the responses to them have defeated any effort to impose a single, unitary, dominant interpretation" (xii). In a similar way (although different terms are employed), we can see Byron as an entity that induces recognition yet forestalls any effort to effect a "dominant
interpretation." Silver emphasizes how "the proliferation of Virginia Woolfs has transformed the writer into a powerful and powerfully contested cultural icon" (3). Likewise, Byron's figure impels an intimacy and familiarity, yet remains "contested" inasmuch as critics and reviewers demand that their Byron be recognized as the "true" Byron, one that we must acknowledge and accept. If we do not, we can only hope to receive, as Silver says, "the ire and/or condescension of those who insist on a Virginia Woolf to whom, they assert, they have a direct line" (5). She continues: "My distrust of those who would fix her into any single position, either to praise or blame her, remains my strongest motivation. We cannot stop the proliferation of Virginia Woolfs or the claims to 'truth' or authenticity that accompany each refashioning of her image; nor would I want to, however much I might disagree with or be scared by the effect produced by any particular representation" (5).

Linking this same design to Byron, we see the constructedness of the Byronic figure and the mechanism through which that fabrication takes place. Silver concludes: "I have focused on those places where Virginia Woolf becomes symptomatic of embedded layers of cultural anxiety, in an effort to formulate as precisely as I can the issues—and the stakes" (5). Similarly, we will come to see how Byron and Byronism have saturated our culture and our consciousness, how Byron's numerous images have been disseminated, and how this cultural literacy and intertextuality actually compel proliferations rather than hinder them.

Chapter 1 introduces the theorists and theories, outlining and defining the terms and references that will be used throughout the rest of the dissertation. Here, the focus remains on the "ism" that impels and structures Byronism. Of particular importance is Stephen Greenblatt's notion of "self-fashioning," which delineates specific conventions that govern fashioning and refashioning. We will see how the background material of history, culture, biography, and discourse become foregrounded by a critical view that sees this milieu as ingrained within textual production and reproduction. In this chapter, the historical Lord Byron makes his most prominent appearance, which only accentuates the differentiation between that enigmatic personage that we cannot know and the
Byronic figure that is continually represented and reproduced in fictional discourse. Even within the biographies, we have a man who repeatedly becomes embedded within his own refashionings, within his own performativity. I talk of masks only to question the existence of the man beneath. I highlight performances to question the existence of the performer. Authenticity becomes demystified as Lord Byron becomes effaced while Byronism thrives.

In this chapter, I also argue that contemporary critics who have taken Byronism as their subject, namely Andrew Elfenbein, Jerome Christensen, and Jerome McGann, tend to diminish and weaken Byronism, either stipulating that it existed only during Lord Byron's life or restricting it to a smaller sphere than I would argue for here. Also in this chapter, I explore the ways in which Byron's physical body has been manipulated and codified, from the stories of diets, food, and drink, to the way in which the slimming down affects those who come into contact with him. I show how Byron's body becomes a commodity, a means through which an exchange of pleasure occurs through exhibition. This leads, as one might well imagine, to a sexualization of that body and the way in which the physical becomes controlled by and contingent upon the discourse that surrounds it. Fundamentally, I show how Byron's body becomes a "cultural site in which its many competing discourses subsume, though never entirely escape from, its biological, quotidian or mortal limits" (Lewis 295). At this juncture, Byron's body signifies the mediation between the cultural and the biological, between the performative and the biographical.

Chapter 2 argues that the vampiristic trope generated by Byron's 1816 fragment and John Polidori's *The Vampyre* connects to a voraciously consuming audience and the anxieties it produces for the poet. As Fred Botting asserts, "Gothic finds itself as the mirror of a baser nature, a symptom of a voraciously consumeristic commercial culture in which pleasure, sensation and excitement come from the thrills of a darkly imagined counter-world" (12). This "voraciously consumeristic commercial culture" demands satisfaction, and Byron ostensibly acquiesces to this demand while enacting a playful ruse. Accordingly, this chapter also focuses on the anxiety of reception and the way in which Byron both
anticipated and feared his audience's and critics' reception of his works. I explore Jauss's horizons of experience and expectation and the means by which new productions enter into mediation between the audience and the author. As Jauss emphasizes: "In the triangle of author, work, and public the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history" (19). Consequently, the audience makes meaning and demands satisfaction for previously heightened expectations while at the same time forming a mediated relationship with the text that evokes coupling and reproduction. These tropes engender vampiric images of bloodsucking and supernatural allure through an asexual reproduction that mirrors Jauss's triangle.

I argue, then, that Byron creates the vampiric curse in order to transform his reception anxiety into a trope, engendering an entity that consumes him through the medium of his work. Not only do I explore Byron's *Giaour* but also the intertextuality created through an implication of Lord Grey de Ruthyn's character with the vampire Lord Ruthven, who appears in John Polidori's *The Vampyre* and subsequent publications by Miranda Seymour and Tom Holland.

Chapter 3 argues for a correlation between performativity and the Byronic figure by focusing on the ghost trope and its connection to memory. Ghosts seem particularly suited to fictional representations of Byron since they allow Byronism's authors to summon the poet from beyond the grave in order to seek answers to questions that remained unanswered at his death. They reify and reiterate Byronic traces through the act of reinscribing his figure repeatedly, investing the ghost with transcendent qualities that suggest a reassembled Byron, complete with idiosyncrasies and character traits. The ghosts are performative, reinscribing each stylized act while at the same time manipulating and varying the persona through Byronism's effects, which impels and perpetuates Byronic performances and personas. We see how Byronism presents a Byron whose entirety is continually postponed, always in the state of becoming yet never arriving at any stabilized identity except through an historically contingent specificity. Byron becomes stable only when seen through a synchronic lens. Diachronically, Byron remains fluid and destabilized. Instead,
then, of a man wearing many masks, which is how Jerome McGann describes Byron in *Byron and Romanticism*, we have a Byronic body that exists as a blank page onto which the performative writes its discourse.

Having connected Butler's performativity to Byron, I then argue for *Manfred*’s link to ghosts and memory. Even though Manfred longs desperately to forget, this is the one boon that neither the spirits nor Byron can bestow since ghosts are memory incarnate shrouded in a teleological guise. They exist to be questioned, which is exactly what the authors of fiction do: they interrogate the Byronic ghosts in an attempt to glean answers to questions that have remained unanswerable. John North, Romulus Linney, and Amanda Prantera endeavor to pose inquiries regarding the Byronic wraith's sustainability and his pervasive allure even after death. Additionally, I argue that only Prantera’s text enacts performativity with its cyborg creation while the other texts engender only performances by insisting on ties to an original Byron that informs their ghosts.

Chapter 4 argues that Byron performs madness and that this performance blinds the reproducers of that madness to the performativity that enacts it. Consequently, I introduce Gadamer's hermeneutic circle and its ability to both inform and entrap. As Gadamer stresses: "All that is asked is that we remain open to the meaning of the other person or text. But this openness always includes our situating the other meaning in relation to the whole of our own meanings or ourselves in relation to it" (269). As interpreters, we must remain open to multiple meanings, always and by necessity reading through a perceptually tinted lens but cautiously prepared for meanings that might not coincide with our preordained outcomes. The text limits while at the same time opening previously unimagined possibilities.

Gadamer insists that instead of becoming trapped in the hermeneutic circle by remaining blind to our own prejudices, we must learn to question the text and remain open to its answers. In turn, we allow the text to question us, providing answers that impel the hermeneutic process. Additionally, we remain cognizant of the "temporal distance" between the past and present and the mediation that occurs between them. This "in-between" epitomizes
hermeneutics for Gadamer, but he also envisions this as a place where interpreters can become lost. This problem of becoming trapped by one's positional immediacy informs the readings that form the remainder of the chapter. I show not only how McGann's theories on Romantic ideology coincide with Gadamer's hermeneutics, but also how Lady Caroline Lamb and Percy B. Shelley become lost in this hermeneutic circle. Having explored these relationships, I then move on to Don Juan de Marco, a movie that both exposes the Romantic myth and playfully simulates a situation in which the characters become seduced into this already deconstructed Romantic utopia. The film shows its audience the alluring quality of fantasy while continually exposing the constructed framework. It not only exposes the illusion but also reads the artifice as artifice.

Above anything else, I aim to understand Byron as artifice. In Bodies That Matter, Judith Butler says: "For a performance to work, then, means that a reading is no longer possible [. . .] where what appears and what it means coincide. On the contrary, when what appears and how it is 'read' diverge, the artifice of the performance can be read as artifice" (129). This dissertation explores how Byronism as artifice misleads, how it becomes unreadable by constructing, through performativity, that effect from which it seemingly originates. Correspondingly, Brenda Silver concludes her introduction by saying: "I see this moment as an episode in an ongoing series rather than a 'conclusion'; there are no final credits" (31). I would suggest the same is true of Byronism. If anything, the Byronic legend's proliferation and reiteration remain broadly functional. Byron haunts us, sucks us dry, and drives us mad. Byronism's capacity to enact this continued fascination rests at the core of what follows.
Chapter 1: Byron (and the) Ism

[In France], where there being no time to read what is published elsewhere, an error is too soon embraced and engrained on the mind of the public as a consequence of a certain method which dispenses with all research. Hence the imaginary creation which has been called Byron, and which has been maintained in France notwithstanding its being wholly unacceptable as a portrait of the man, and totally different from the Byron known personally to some happy few who had the pleasure of beholding in him the handsomest, the most amiable of men, and the greatest genius whom God has created.

Teresa Guiccioli

In My Recollections of Lord Byron and Those of Eye-Witnesses of His Life (1869), Teresa Guiccioli laments the perpetuation of a legend that from personal acquaintance she and a select few knew to be flawed. She attributes this misunderstanding to a lack of interest in Byron's correspondence and poems, which should tell the reader all he/she should ever wish to know about the poet, and to a heightened interest in gossip, scandal, and tendency to exaggeration. In a somewhat different vein, Annabella Milbanke, in 1812, reviles the poet's enormous popularity and its consequences. In "The Byromania" (Appendix 1), she details the magnetism of this man's "magic," the disdain with which she viewed these obsequious women, and her refusal to participate in the mania. Byron's figure becomes intertwined with both the mania generated by the women who adored him and his own self-fashioning. Byron becomes that which Byron mania initiated and encompassed. Milbanke's poem illustrates the craze that would change the landscape of Romanticism forever. Byromania, later called Byronism, evokes the image of a pervasive craze and integrates two key concepts: 1) the movement away from the man to the much larger legend that would incorporate not only the poetry, letters, journals, biographies, fictional representations, and critiques of the man but also attributes of his created characters; 2) the obsession of both men and women with this legend.

Guiccioli also rather perceptively illustrates Byronism, here defined as the perpetuation of the Byron legend, a process of mythologizing by both Byron and his friends, biographers, and readers who alter, expand, or moderate the Byron
myth. Initially, Byronism prevails on two separate fronts. As seen in various letters and journals, Lord Byron attempts to alter and manage his image to correspond more closely to or place himself at odds with public expectations. After Byron left England in 1816, Sir Walter Scott quipped that he had "Childe Harolded himself, and outlawed himself, into too great a resemblance with the pictures of his imagination" (Lockhart 5:127). Byron became his character, as many in his reading audience had already imagined, enacting a performance that bears a marked similarity to his own textual creation. As will be discussed later, Lord Byron performed for an audience, altering his body and inscribing the "pictures of his imagination" on the face he presented to his public. Conversely, he attempted to match that already-constructed but perpetually changeable image to his reading public's expectations, which in turn takes up the discourse and expands it.

Self-Fashioning and Performance

Throughout this chapter, I argue that Byron "self-fashions," a term first used by Stephen Greenblatt, who in Renaissance Self-Fashioning, outlines the means by which authors manipulate their images and identities within historical and cultural contexts. A leading theorist of New Historicism, Greenblatt affirms history and culture's contextual necessity within his theoretical constructs. New Historicism concerns itself with questions of power, drawing especially upon Foucault's philosophical work to foreground history and culture, seeing them as entrenched within textual production and reproduction. This theoretical construct emphasizes "the representational nature of literary texts and the textual nature of historical knowledge" (Pieters 13). We know the past only through observation of the text it creates: history's remnants as represented through discourse.

By knowing the environmental and cultural milieu, Greenblatt suggests we can better understand the productive and consumptive forces that brought the text into being. "Self-fashioning" emphasizes that individuals and society perpetually define one another. Greenblatt takes as self-evident Shakespeare's assertion that "[a]ll the world's a stage, / And all the men and women merely
players” (As You Like It II, vii). Individuals construct, or in Greenblatt's term fashion, themselves to coincide more fully with societal and cultural expectations. He stipulates that "the power to impose a shape upon oneself is an aspect of the more general power to control identity—that of others at least as often as one's own" (1). By imposing this shape upon themselves, individuals perform for spectators both real and imaginary. "[F]ashioning," as Greenblatt emphasizes, "may suggest the achievement of a less tangible shape: a distinctive personality, a characteristic address to the world, a consistent mode of perceiving and behaving" (2). This "less tangible shape" implies performance, affectation, and pretension because self-consciousness engenders self-repetition and self-promotion.

We "impose a shape" upon ourselves to coincide with societal expectations, value systems, and ideological constraints. Greenblatt seizes "upon a handful of arresting figures who seem to contain within themselves much of what we need, who both reward intense, individual attention and promise access to larger cultural patterns" (6). He chooses Sir Thomas More, William Tyndale, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlow, and William Shakespeare. Hardly surprising, I pick Byron, although he explicitly states that society had far less hold on him than his readers might imagine: "My great comfort is, that the temporary celebrity I have wrung from the world has been in the very teeth of all opinions and prejudices. I have flattered no ruling powers; I have never concealed a single thought that tempted me" (BLJ IV: 92-93). Temporary celebrity, of course, belies his vehement remonstrance. He may well have "wrung" this fame from the world, but eminence and acclaim arise from an audience's recognition, mediation, and approbation. He may have "flattered" no one, he may have spoken every "thought," but Byron's renown, or perhaps notoriety, depends upon his audience.

As detailed in Chapter 2, Byron's audience expects and Byron self-fashions accordingly. Greenblatt affirms that self-fashioning "involves submission to an absolute power or authority situated at least partly outside the self" (9). While publicly dismissing the need for an audience, his readership's
"absolute power and authority" held sway over Byron's writing and publication. As I will discuss later, Jerome Christensen sees Byronism as an economic machine designed to manipulate and control the audience and its tastes. For the moment, however, we can see from Byron's letter to John Murray that that poet "once wrote from the fullness of [his] mind—and the love of fame (not as an end but as a means to obtain that influence over men's minds—which is power in itself & in its consequences)" (BLJ July 17, 1818). Byron seeks fame not for itself but as a means by which to affect and shape his readership. He seeks the power that comes from having a captive audience, which he employs to change a society he found objectionable.

Byron self-fashions by disregarding or even flaunting society's opinions and attitudes. By distancing himself from his readership and setting himself up as independent of its approval, Byron initiates his autonomous status as poet. Greenblatt emphasizes how this "absolute power is perceived either as "that which is unformed or chaotic (the absence of order) or that which is false or negative (the demonic parody of order)" (9). Drawing upon an aristocratic superciliousness, Byron disdainfully maligns his readership while enjoying its adulation and admiration. To Douglas Kinnaird, he writes: "I will never yield to [the public].—As long as I can find a single reader I will publish my Mind (while it lasts) and write whilst I feel the impetus" (BLJ January 26, 1822). To John Murray, he says: "I never courted popularity—and cared little or nothing for the decrease or extinction thereof [. . . .] I care but little for the opinions of the English—as I have long had Europe and American for a Public and were it otherwise I could bear it" (BLJ September 18, 1822). Byron merely tolerates the public's fickleness while dismissing the superfluous English. To Douglas Kinnaird, he reveals that "I should never have thought myself good for any thing—if I had not been detested by the English" (BLJ February 24, 1823). Byron's audience was a necessarily evil, courted warily, castigated in print habitually, and disparaged frequently.

As I will discuss in Chapter 2, Byron envisions his audience as a voraciously consuming entity, a vampiric force that sucks him dry. "[S]elf-
fashioning," as Greenblatt stipulates, "always involves some experience of threat, some effacement of undermining, some loss of self" (9). Byron imagines this loss of self by envisioning an entity that drains him, that feeds upon his writing, and that consumes him. Byron disdains those readers who would demand similarity and repetition, while he continues to meet expectations by becoming that which most pleased: an aristocratic poet who spurns his public while at the same time gratifying them with Gothic landscapes and brooding characters. Greenblatt addresses this love/hate relationship with the "absolute power" as follows: "Self-fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange, or hostile. This threatening Other—heretic, savage, witch, adulteress, traitor, Antichrist—must be discovered or invented in order to be attacked and destroyed" (9). Byron perceives his audience as not only strange but hostile. In a letter to John Murray, he emphasizes: "I knew the precise worth of popular applause." He continues by paraphrasing Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* in relation to his audience: "I neither love ye—nor fear ye" (*BLJ* April 6, 1819). His need for approbation remains concealed beneath layers of abhorrence and aversion. He courts his public by continually reminding them of his position and rank, establishing an immediate alienation contingent upon forbearance and repugnance.

Byron's self-fashioning deflects a rabidly curious audience's awareness away from the poet to his performance and draws readerly attention to, as Judith Butler would say, a stylized repetition of acts. Byron performs for his audience, fashioning himself to conform to or resist cultural, social, and ideological expectations. As I will discuss more fully in Chapter 3, Butler's theories on performativity explain the differences between performance and performativity, between readability and unreadability, and between artifice and the approximation of reality. According to Joseph Bristow, Butler uses performativity to describe "how the body provides a surface upon which various acts and gestures accrue gendered meaning" (214). In the next section, I explore how Byron's performativity not only accrues gendered meaning on his body but other meaning as well, which eventually approximates authenticity so effectively that it
cannot be read by the audience for which he performs. In some instances, though, Byron's performance differs from his audience's perceptions, and thus biographers such as John Cam Hobhouse or Thomas Moore, whom I shall discuss later, question his authenticity, reading Byron's artifice as artifice. More often than not, however, the performance works and the masquerade continues, thereby integrating, as Butler would say, the "body performing" (i.e. Lord Byron) and the "ideal performed" (i.e. Byronism) until they became "indistinguishable" (BTM 129).

Byron becomes an effect of a continual diffusion, a figure created by the process of Byronism. Reconfiguring Butler's description of gender performativity for Byronism, we could say that "there is no [Byronic] identity behind the expressions of [Byronism]; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (GT 25). How can this statement be justified, especially when we remember that Lord Byron actually existed in history as a person? Rather than discuss the historical Lord Byron, an unknowable entity, we will focus instead on the Byronic figure that was created by the authors and critics who perpetuated his image through discourse. We have, as Greenblatt would say, a "textually constructed historical 'reality,'" a "literary representation that expands and enhances historical discourse" (9). Consequently, Byron's "self-fashioning" and further "fashioning" by those who follow him occur within history, appropriated and reproduced by those who would alter, expand, or moderate the Byron myth. Byron becomes a "repeated stylization [. . .] a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance [of Byron], of a natural sort of being" who stands within history as the figuration of Byron, which is then disseminated through Byronism (GT 33).

The production of Byron occurs by means of "figures of fantasy through the play of presence and absence on the body's surface" (GT 135). Not only are Byron's fantasies and idealizations written on his body but critics' and authors' "figures of fantasy" are as well. This persistent production of Byronism effects a "false stabilization" of Byron inasmuch as the figure frequently mutates with each
new surface rewriting and reproduction. Thus, the actions and aspirations of Byron and those around him "produce the effect of an internal core of substance, but produce this on the surface of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principles of identity as a cause [. . .] That [Byronism] is performative suggests that [Byron] has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute [Byron's] reality" (GT 136). Three entities accordingly emerge: Lord Byron, the historical man, who remains unknowable to us except through discourse; Byron, the configuration performatively created; and Byronism, the process that perpetually disseminates and reproduces Byron.

**Byronism and the Critics**

Critics have repeatedly attempted to explain Byronism's continuing appeal. Frances Wilson says that "Byron hypnotized his own generation and dominated the next: his life and times [. . .] continue to be the subject of myth and controversy" (1). Wilson is not alone in viewing Byron as a gifted magician or spellbinder who enchants his audience; James Soderholm also envisions Byron as the sorcerer who charms his way into the reader's heart and mind:

Byron's success in manipulating his poetic images in conjunction with and as reflections of his public image accounts for much of his glamour, but the spell that made him so alluring had much to do with his readers' own investment in the poet's life and career. Fame and glamour often result from complex acts of representation in which a cult figure and those who "cultivate" him join fanciful forces. Although Byron enjoyed toying with those who took seriously his fictional—and sexual—personae, he was unprepared for the kinds of responses his legend and his writings would generate. Because of the desire to participate in the life and fame of one's hero, and the will to do so in writing, Byron awoke in 1812 to find himself not only famous but also drawn into the fray of fantasy and forgery, activities over which he had little control. (8)
Soderholm sees Byron as casting spells, especially those of the mystic poet who enchants the audience with illusion and artifice, controlling his identity, as Greenblatt would say, by imposing a shape and manipulating his image. More than this, though, Soderholm explores how Byron's audience willingly participates in the fantasy, created through self-fashioning and performativity. The author and the reader enjoy the myth through a synergistic and empathetic camaraderie; they are literally joined, as Soderholm says, in "fanciful forces."

Soderholm comes closest to my own conception of Byronism, but he does not overtly connect the two parties (Byron and his audience) within the larger configuration of Byronism. He sees Byron as creating a "persona," instead of, as I would suggest, being created as an effect of Byronism. He emphasizes self-manipulation by describing how Byron controlled "his public image"; he underscores the audience's mediation through the readers' "investment in the poet's life and career." What he misses, however, is how Byronism continues through the production and reproduction of the Byronic legend. Later in this chapter, we will see how Jauss's audience-text-author triangle explains not only what Soderholm appropriately identifies as the "fray of fantasy and forgery," but also how emergent discourses continue and how the Byronic legend persists.

Byronism, the thriving movement, effaces the historical personage, Lord Byron. The man is less important than the dissemination of an image, especially as constituted by the critics. In Lord Byron's Strength, Jerome Christensen explains Byronism almost exclusively from an economic perspective, which restricts our understanding of Byron to production, with little emphasis on the audience's reception and mediation. He stresses that "the literary system of Byronism" was "collaboratively organized" by both Byron and Murray in order to "reproduce it in commodities that could be vended to a reading public avid for glamour" (xvi). Byronism, "the chief by-product of the bloodless warfare between the major reviews, was from the outset imagined as a para-Napoleonic phenomenon, an empire based on the sale of books rather than on the conquest of nations" (147). Described in stark military terms, Christensen's text portrays Byronism as "cultural imperialism" akin to Napoleonic egotism and arrogance.
Christensen further depicts Byronism as a "signally effective weapon" deployed by a commercial society analogous to an "ambitious and potent regime founded by military conquest and sustained by despotism" (xx). At the head of this despotic regime stand Byron and Murray who jointly control this "cultural and commercial phenomenon" (6). Christensen emphasizes that "Lord Byron—body, corpse, and corpus—was administered by many such experts, but chiefly by the publisher John Murray, who harnessed the spasmodic outpourings of the 'lava' of Lord Byron's imagination to the serial production of explosive new poems" (24).

Seriality lubricates this mechanism. The production turns upon the authoritarian, near totalitarian Byron/Murray regime. Christensen describes it as the "engine driving Byronomania," not only keeping it alive but perpetuating it. This seriality exists "over the signature of Lord Byron and under the aegis of John Murray" (130). Hardly surprising, then, is Christensen's insistence on Byronism as an economic phenomenon, which he parlays into a cultural and ideological one. In stark contrast to my own view of Byronism, he stresses that "this empire conspicuously began to unravel with the publication of Don Juan, which, in opposition to Byronism, addressed a strong, ethical challenge to the murmurous complacencies of commercial society" (xx). While I agree that economics influences Byronism, I would disagree with Christensen that Byronism ebbs with the publication of Don Juan. If anything, this final poem (what many critics would call Byron's masterpiece) expanded Byronism exponentially. The phenomenon encompasses this new production, and instead of an antithesis, we have a variation. Moreover, this alteration allows new productions to occur, such as the numerous imitations and lampoons that succeeded Don Juan. Rather than shutting down this machinery, the modifications add more material to be reproduced, more material for Byronism to exploit.

Christensen emphasizes the historical confluences and elaborate machinery that enable Byronism while Byron and Murray were alive. Instead of seeing this phenomenon as self-perpetuating, though, he creates an "anti-Byronism" that diminishes its antecedent's effects. Moreover, he disregards the influence of Byron's readership and its ability to mediate within and "forge" the
"fantasy" of the Byronic legacy. I would argue that a dialogue among the audience, text, and author begins at the moment Christensen says it breaks down, creating a literary history that perpetuates itself through production and reproduction.

In *Byron and the Victorians*, Andrew Elfenbein explores the creation and perpetuation of Byronism, which he defines as the "developments that allowed Byron to become a celebrity in Britain." Byronism involves "three interpenetrating levels: Lord Byron's poems, biographies of Lord Byron, and adaptations of and responses to both" (9). Yet this definition diminishes Byron's active participation in his own mythologizing and restricts Byronism's sphere to British readers while ignoring Byron's popularity with both the European and American public. Elfenbein does, however, emphasize the extensive machinery, much like Christensen does, that, once in place, elevates Byron's popularity and notoriety. Moreover, he takes a multidimensional approach that articulates Lord Byron's writings, the writings about Byron, and the ensuing discourse that extends and accentuates the Byron legend. Elfenbein rigorously distinguishes Lord Byron the man from Byron the celebrity, which he defines as a "multifaceted cultural phenomenon." He stresses: "George Gordon, Lord Byron, the individual whose life and writings are familiar from the work of scholars such as Marchand and McGann, now largely disappears from my analysis. 'Byron' henceforward refers to Byron the celebrity" who is "a name without a stable identity, available to be damned, consecrated, or ignored, but in all cases accessible only through the marketing of cultural goods" (47). The celebrity, as constructed cultural phenomenon, remains reachable only though a continuing discourse that Byron employs as he implements his self-fashioning.

Byron's readers use the discourse of excessive objectification to fashion their idol and perpetuate his legendary status. Elfenbein maintains that Byron the celebrity is "a peculiar commodity because the 'thing' that gave value to his products was his subjectivity." He further asserts that "marketing Byron as a celebrity masked the fetishization of commodities by personalizing them" (48). Whereas Soderholm analyzes the fantasy and forgery inherent in the Byronic
legend, Elfenbein reconceptualizes the phenomenon when he says that "having an opinion about Byron marked one as belonging to the privileged social group consisting of the respectable members of society, a category that could unite men and women separated by older categories like rank" (50). Authors of Byronic texts familiarize themselves with and ingratiate themselves within an elite society, much like the aristocratic one from which Lord Byron wrote, thereby contributing to the mythologizing while at the same time writing a bit part for themselves. Effectively, they begin to participate in the performance, while both expanding and altering the act of performativity through discourse.

Byron self-fashions an alluring mystique that intrigues readers and impels them into a mutually dependent and symbiotically charged relationship—a "fray of fantasy and forgery" as Soderholm says. Elfenbein affirms that it was "precisely because these readers were not acquainted with Byron as a man in 'real' life that the reviews could tell them that they knew him through his poems" (52). Byron has often been seen as a confessional poet, inherent within his own characters—mysterious figures with unbearable secrets, dedicated to wreaking havoc on their surroundings. Elfenbein says, "Byron's heroes suggested the possibility of a secret inner life of passion, which could never be expressed, but which provided a vivid alternative to what then became the dullness of the external world" (64). The audience's familiarity was part of what made Byron so accessible, since his proximity allowed the reader to imagine sharing his feelings, his thoughts, perhaps his soul. Additionally, the critics who reviewed Byron's poetry intimated that readers should experience his work through this empathetic response.

Elfenbein emphasizes the audience's influence and mediation, but he neglects the broader scope that I would argue Byronism encompasses. He sees the effect that Byron had on the Victorians, which admittedly was his goal, but he doesn't move beyond the English readership to the more extensive audience that existed for Byron's works. He limits his perspective to Byron's life and the subsequent period, but this diminishes the wide-ranging effect that Byronism had on not only the European continent but also on America. Moreover, Byronism
doesn't end with the Victorians; it enlarges its capacity with further reproductions that refashion the heroic poses, the epic images, and the larger-than-life struggles. The discourse is constantly being manipulated by emergent authors and texts. The legend and legacy thus resist diminishment inasmuch as the mythologizing and performativity amplify the figure, expanding to accommodate the most recent alteration rather than closing off the borders to future alterations. Unlike Christensen and Elfenbein, I would suggest that Byronism has continued, unabated, undeterred, and undiminished. If anything, this *machine* has accelerated, molding a Byronic figure that not only has an extensive literary history but that continually adds new dimensions and nuances with each new refashioning.

**Byron's Corporeal and Literary Bodies**

In this section, I explore how Byron imposes a shape on his physical body through manipulation and codification, from the stories of diets, food, and drink, to the way in which the slimming down affects those who touch him. Byron's body becomes a commodity, a means through which an exchange of pleasure occurs through exhibition. This leads, as one might well imagine, to a sexualization of that body and the way in which the physical becomes controlled by and contingent upon the discourse that surrounds it. Fundamentally, Byron's body becomes a "cultural site in which its many competing discourses subsume, though never entirely escape from, its biological, quotidian or mortal limits" (Lewis 295). At this juncture, Byron's body symbolizes the mediation between the cultural and the biological, between the performative and the biographical.

As Greenblatt would say, Byron fashions another self, imposing an alternate shape and controlling his identity. Byron's self-fashioning, as well as the fashioning of others, gets written onto his body—a figurative blank page awaiting pen and ink. In *Volatile Bodies*, Elizabeth Grosz says: "This metaphor of the textualized body asserts that the body is a page or material surface, possibly even a book of interfolded leaves, ready to receive, bear, and transmit meanings, messages, or signs, much like a system of writing" (117). Byron's body as text
gets written on by his self-fashioning and performativity; this textual body is read by others, who digest that text, reconceptualize and reconfigure it, then write a new text onto the body that neither obscures nor erases but incorporates, assimilates, invigorates, and modifies the previous text. The new text appears on the next interfolded leaf, which in turn will be read, digested, altered, and rewritten. Since, as Greenblatt states, "[s]elf-fashioning is always, though not exclusively, in language," we can see how Byron's fashioning through discourse integrates itself within the textualized body that awaits its "meanings, messages, or signs." Grosz continues: "Bodies are fictionalized, positioned by various cultural narratives and discourses, which are themselves embodiments of culturally established canons, norms, and representational forms, so that they can be seen as living narratives, narratives not always or even usually transparent to themselves" (118). These bodies as texts become integrated into meta-narratives, which are then told, retold, read, and reread through cultural iconography and discourse. Byronism creates "[c]anons, norms, and representational forms," as well as the cultural milieu that surrounds the constructed texts, prompting their perpetuation.

This body stores history as well as text. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Gail Weiss assert: "When we inquire into what 'the body' means, we must recognize that both the question and any possible answers to it always unfold against historically contingent, yet nonetheless powerfully enduring frames of interpretation" (1).1 Foucault says in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," genealogy's task is "to expose a body totally imprinted in history" (148). He defines body as "the inscribed surface of events" (148). These "inscribed surface[s] of events," like Butler's "act," are written upon bodies progressively through history. As a result, not only can we take genealogy's postulations that origins remain complicated, but because of the historical nature of bodily inscription, Byronic performance becomes imprinted upon the Byronic body through Byronism. The constructed body, imprinted with performance, stands as an iterability arising within, as Butler would say, a temporally defined nexus. As Butler warns, though, a "construction is, after all, not the same as an artifice"
Even though Byronism constructs Byron, performativity exists as a codifiable composition, which quite often is mistaken as the original.

Byronism presents a Byron whose entirety is continually postponed but always effected through history. Byron is always in the state of becoming, never arriving at any stabilized identity except through a historically contingent specificity, a "certain nexus of temporal horizons" (Butler BTM 94). Lord Byron stands as the phantasm unknowable to us yet allegedly and mistakenly positioned as the origin. Byronism attempts to portray itself as having read this internality, but the internality is illusion. What exists remains already on the surface, refashioned with each emergence of Jauss's triangle, which occurs as a result of the synergistic and empathetic give and take among audience and text and author. Byron becomes stable only when seen through a synchronic lens arranged through the "heterogeneous multiplicity of contemporaneous works" which allows us to "discover an overarching system of relationships in the literature of a historical moment" (Aesthetics 35). Diachronically, Byron remains fluid and destabilized, awaiting the next stabilization.

Because Byron perceived his surroundings as "alien, strange, or hostile," his self-fashioning promoted pretense. As we see from his letters and journals, he found his physical being particularly reprehensible; while discoursing about the next world, he quipped: "And our carcasses, which are to rise again, are they worth raising? I hope, if mine is, that I shall have a better pair of legs than I have moved on these two-and-twenty years, or I shall be sadly behind in the squeeze into Paradise" (qtd. in Marchand 98). Byron's lameness, and perception of the world's seemingly unmitigated disdain for it, created a constant torment for him, and he habitually lamented his inhibited mobility. He subsequently developed a peculiar walk, a run/hop gait that would hide his limp from all but the most perceptive observer. He would arrive at parties, pick a suitable spot, and then remain there for the evening so as to minimize awareness of his limp. Byron recreated and improved upon his imagined liabilities to counteract the environmental and societal hostilities he perceived as threatening. He mesmerized his readers, casting a spell on them so that they might see the
illusion, even believe in the chimera's absolute existence, while failing to detect
the ostensibly humdrum, deceptively flawed man fearing discovery.

Byron's self-fashioning began as a young child, when he attempted to
reconcile his self-image with his new title and rank. Greenblatt emphasizes that
"self-fashioning always involves some experience of threat, some effacement or
undermining, some loss of self" (9). Byron's identity changed with his
advancement into the peerage, which produced both cultural power and societal
recognition. After the fifth Lord Byron died in 1798, the precocious new peer
asked his mother "whether she perceived any difference in him since he had
been made a lord, as he perceived none himself" (Moore 44). His elevation of
rank had changed him only in the eyes of those around him. Thus, through the
relatively simple, yet vastly complex, act of naming (an act of performativity
inherent within the laws of inheritance), the young man had been propelled from
the stature of heir apparent to Lord, bringing with it tremendous prestige and
recognition. In yet another example, during the taking of attendance at the
Aberdeen Grammar School, without prior notice or warning, the master said
"Dominus de Byron." Moore recounts the effect these words had: "Unable to give
utterance to the usual answer 'adsum,' he stood silent amid the general state of
his schoolfellows, and, at last, burst into tears" (44). The recognition silenced
Byron. The inability to speak and the tears that followed articulate a failure to
reconcile his self-image with that of the world around him. He was still the lame
little boy who could not play or participate in youthful games; to those around
him, though, his peerage promised not only a bright future but also possible
recognition for both individual and school. Later that day, the school's master
invited the young man into his chambers for cake and wine. Marchand reveals
that the "little treat and the respectful manner of the new master gave him at
once high notions of his new dignity" (44). Public recognition changed him,
rewriting his subjectivity through deference and initiating, as Greenblatt would
say, an appropriation and repatterning.

In yet another example of self-fashioning, Byron manipulated and shaped
his body into a leaner, fitter form. Byron submitted to his "absolute power or
authority situated at least partially outside [him]self" (Greenblatt 9). In this instance, the authority represented not only society but also Byron's own self-loathing of his body's corpulence and the body, itself. Wilma Paterson, Jeremy Hugh Baron, and Arthur Crisp hypothesize, quite effectively, that Byron was either bulimic or anorexic.² If so, then Byron literally imposed his pre-imagined shape upon his body. Discussing women and anorexia, Susan Bordo stresses that "the bodies of disordered women in this way offer themselves as an aggressively graphic text for the interpreter—a text that insists, actually demands, that it be read as a cultural statement" (94). As was seen before, Byron constructed a "fictionalized" body, a body "positioned by various cultural narratives and discourses." His slender, lean body awaited reading by what he imagined will be a duly impressed readership. He chastised his body into a form that better fit how a poet, a statesman, an aristocrat, and a lover should appear. By controlling his body, Byron exercised the "masculine" traits of fortitude and restraint, thereby reestablishing reason's domination over his wayward and unruly appetite. His body became an enemy against whom he fought. Bordo says: "[T]he anorectic discovers that her shrinking body is admired, not so much as an aesthetic or sexual object, but for the strength of will and self-control it projects" (100). She continues: "The anorectic's ability to live with minimal food intake allows her to feel powerful and worthy of admiration in a 'world,' as Susie Orbach describes it, 'from which at the most profound level [she] feels excluded'" (102). If, in fact, Byron was anorexic, he would have felt "admired" for his will power and "self-control"; he would have felt "powerful," and since power is integral to continued self-fashioning, would have repeated this reshaping of his body.

Byron disciplined his body into submission. His obsession and austere diet enacts Butler's performativity and Greenblatt's mobility, especially in the context of constructing his body to match personal and societal expectations: When they sat down to dinner, the host was embarrassed by the fact that there seemed to be nothing his guest could eat. Rogers asked Byron if he would take soup. "'No; he never took soup.'—
Would he take some fish? 'No; he never took fish.'—Presently I asked if he would eat some mutton? 'No; he never ate mutton.'—I then asked if he would take a glass of wine? 'No; he never tasted wine.'—It was now necessary to enquire what he did eat and drink; and the answer was, 'Nothing but hard biscuits and soda-water.' Unfortunately, neither hard biscuits nor soda-water were at hand; and he dined upon potatoes bruised down on his plate and drenched with vinegar." [In] Rogers's *Table-Talk* [we hear the rest of the story]: "Some days after, meeting Hobhouse, I said to him, 'How long will Lord Byron persevere in his present diet?' He replied, 'Just as long as you continue to notice it.'—I did not then know what I now know to be a fact,—that Byron, after leaving my house, had gone to a Club in St. James's Street and eaten a hearty meat-supper."(Marchand 14)

Hobhouse quips that Byron will continue with this façade only as long as people notice, and yet, Hobhouse reinscribes this activity in the process of noticing. Later authors manipulate this reinscription, continually repeating the story and thereby reinscribing the discourse onto Byron's protean body. A web of deception and pretense is woven around his figure in an act of self-fashioning. Hard biscuits and soda water, an austere regimen to say the least, became his diet of choice whenever he believed himself too heavy. Others acknowledged and accepted this public image, and it soon became one dominant representation of the poet. By imposing this slender shape upon his body, Byron controlled and changed his identity, appropriating and repatterning, as Greenblatt would say, his inscribed body through dieting.

Byron's bodily obsession and performativity assumed, as Greenblatt would say, an "arbitrary connectedness" to his self-image and self-esteem. At Harrow, he had gained enough weight to put him over the two hundred pound mark. When he arrived at Cambridge, he pursued an intense diet regimen: "I wear seven Waistcoats and a great Coat, run, and play at cricket in this Dress, till quite exhausted by excessive perspiration, use the Hip Bath daily; eat only a quarter of
a pound of Butcher's Meat in 24 hours, no Suppers or Breakfast, only one Meal a Day; drink no malt liquor, but a little Wine, and take physic occasionally. By these means my Ribs display Skin of no great Thickness, & my Clothes have been taken in nearly half a yard" (Marchand 128). Eventually, he would reduce his body weight to less than 140 pounds. He delightedly told everyone that his Cambridge friends had hardly recognized him: "none of them knew me at first my figure & visage are of such preternatural Longitude" (Marchand 130). To Lady Blessington, he said: "Don't you think I get thinner? Did you ever see any person so thin as I am, who was not ill" (139). In a letter to Douglas Kinnaird, he said: "I am as thin as a skeleton" (BLJ August 14, 1823). His doctors regularly told him to consume a more nutritious diet, but he refused, emphasizing "that if he did, he should get fat and stupid, and that it was only by abstinence that he felt he had the power of exercising his mind" (Blessington 48). Byron's fascination and obsession with his body reflected the seemingly irreconcilable differences between the figure he imagined himself to be and the image he portrayed to the world. More than that, though, this shapely imposition sexualized his body, making it attractive, alluring, and sexy. Instead of getting "fat and stupid," he exercised his mind. His controlled body and heightened intellect generated power among his peers, a commodity to be exchanged for pleasure or admiration. Through self-fashioning, Byron detracted scrutiny from that which he believed would diminish his character (i.e. his limp) and attracted notice to that which he believed would accentuate his reputation (i.e. his slender body).

From Byron's self-fashioning comes repeated fashioning by his consuming audience. Greenblatt stresses that self-fashioning "invariably crosses the boundaries between the creation of literary characters, the shaping of one's own identity, the experience of being molded by forces outside one's control, the attempt to fashion other selves" (3). Having addressed the last three components, I would now like to examine the first. Byron's reading audience consistently associates the Byronic Hero, a manifestation of Byronism and evocative of those same "fanciful forces," with its creator. The creation then becomes intimately involved in the creator's representation, thus perpetuating a
cycle of fashioning. Byron's words are reinscribed on his body by the audience who participates in the fantasy forging, producing, as Butler says, "fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs" (136). These "corporeal signs" arise through a discourse perpetuated by readers who would fabricate a poet influenced by and implicated in his own fictional characters. In *The Byronic Hero*, Peter L. Thorslev Jr. specifies how "Byron's influence on later literature stems not only from his works and perhaps not even principally from his works, but rather from his life and legend. For this reason, those who look upon him as of primary importance because of his influence rather than because of his intrinsic merit as a poet are far more likely to concentrate on the Byronic Hero in legend, and in European literature after Byron's death" (5). Consequently, Byronism flourishes as a result of this symbiotic relationship between creator and created, between author and reader, between self-fashioner and refashioner; rather than simply reading (which, as Butler said in relation to performativity, becomes impossible) and critiquing the poetry, the audience expands its gaze beyond the words on the page while writing those same words on Byron's body, seeing Byron in his work yet paradoxically produced by that work. Moreover, the biography and other refashionings expand and alter the myth as well. The legend survives, fed by Byron's enigma and mystique.

Byron's audience regularly mistook him for his fictional personages and vice versa. Peter W. Graham says: "The blatant contrivance of Harold enhanced awareness of Byron's subjective presence in the poet: readers sensing the poet within his poem easily slid into associating poet and protagonist" (31). The poet remains reciprocally associated with his creation, which furthered the Byronic legend but effaced the historical personage. At times, Byron would identify with his creature; at other times, he would distance himself from it. In a letter to his friend R. C. Dallas he said: "I by no means intend to identify myself with Harold, but to deny all connection with him [. . . .] I would not be such a fellow as I have made my hero for all the world" (Marchand 66). Originally, though, Byron had made no effort to conceal his autobiographical affinity for his character. The original title was to be "Childe Burun," but Dallas compelled him to change the
title to "Childe Harold" before publication. This equivocation between accepting and rejecting the poetic guise and character association would become the means through which Byron would keep his reading public guessing; sometimes it suited the poet to claim affinity, sometimes it suited the poet to disavow all resemblance as merely circumstantial. Whatever sold the most poetry and brought about the most flattering criticism influenced which discourse Byron advertised. He had begun his self-fashioning and self-aggrandizement campaign, alternating his poses with calculated regularity.

Because of this persistent self-fashioning, Byron became the most popular poet of his era. He embraced this semblance, first basking in the adulation and fame, then wandering the continent in a self-imposed exile, and finally donning the hero's mantle yet again in the Greek fight for independence against the Turks. The reading public consumed both Byron's figure and words voraciously. Monies garnered from his sales far exceeded both his own and Murray's elevated expectations. Significantly, not until late in his career did Byron begin to accept the payment for his copyrights. He had written that no aristocrat should demean himself by accepting money for "scribblings" and therefore offered the copyrights to close friends to distance himself from the notion that a gentleman would lower himself to becoming a mere writer. However, it was as a writer that Byron generated his substantial popularity, creating a vicious circle in which he found himself both expressing contempt for his "scribblings" and reaping the remarkable results of his fame.

Byron's Reception

In order to explain how the fictionalized accounts of Byron's life produce Byronism and how the perpetuation of Byronism occurs through audience reception and mediation, I draw heavily, both here and in Chapter 2, upon Hans Robert Jauss's reception theory, which might necessarily explain any author's relationship with his or her readership, yet proves especially effective for Byronism because of Byron's pervasive, symbiotic, and often antagonistic relationship with his readers. Jauss investigates the synergistic give and take
among audience, text, and author, formulating the construct as a three-sided figure connected at each focal point. In *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, Jauss says:

> In the triangle of author, work, and public the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history. The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees. For it is only through the process of its mediation that the work enters into the changing horizon-of-experience of a continuity in which the perpetual inversion occurs from simple reception to critical understanding, from passive to active reception, from recognized aesthetic norms to a new production that surpasses them. (Jauss 19)

According to Jauss, the addressee actively creates the text while she or he is simultaneously limited by the text's horizons. A mediation occurs, whereby the audience actively engages the text, developing a critical understanding that crystallizes into a new production "through negation of familiar experience or through raising newly articulated experiences to the level of consciousness" (25). Jauss stipulates that the text regulates and influences readers' interpretations by emphasizing a series of expectations against which readers distinguish the text. This "dynamic process" actively articulates the audience and the work, which can be "objectified historically along the spectrum of the audience's reactions and criticism's judgment" (25). Byron's figures, viewed as texts written upon his body by his readership, mutate with each addendum rather than remaining relatively static, since each new production assimilates discourse and reconfigures it. To use Jauss' terms, the work and audience create continually renewing "horizons-of-experience," the ever-broadening landscape of critical and perceptual understanding, through which "recognized aesthetic norms" are transformed into "new productions" that surpass or efface their primogenitors but also retain enough of the former material to be recognizable in each incarnation. To put it another way: "These changing expectations, coupled with knowledge of (and reaction to) past readers' responses, combine to produce for each literary work a
critical 'tradition' that is continuously enriched and modified as new generations of readers emphasize different points or see old ones in a new light" (Murfin and Ray 332). In general, authors consume material and transform it into critical discourse, thereby augmenting and enhancing the constantly expanding horizon for future generations. As Jauss says, the "next work can solve formal and moral problems left behind by the last work, and present new problems in turn" (32).

This triangle of author, work, and reading public constantly recreates itself through inexhaustible regeneration. With each rereading, reinterpretation, and rewriting, the triangle continues to shift, explaining why Byronism flourishes. Jauss explains: "The theory of the aesthetics of reception not only allows one to conceive the meaning and form of a literary work in the historical unfolding of its understanding. It also demands that one insert the individual work into its 'literary series' to recognize its historical position and significance in the context of the eventful history of literature" (32). Each succeeding generation scrutinizes and reconfigures new aspects of the legend within discourse. Each appraises nuance and explores innuendo. The consuming public produces a new work, which in turn is given to the public for yet another consumption and regeneration. Jauss says that the "objectifiable system of expectations" occurs for each work in the "historical moment of its appearance, from a pre-understanding of the genre" and "from the form and themes of already familiar works" (22). As we have seen already with Greenblatt's self-fashioning, the works remain historically contingent, placed as Jauss stipulates in a "literary series," but are related to, even dependent upon, the previous text's incarnations. Byronism extends itself inexhaustibly, spinning off new creations with each succeeding shift of the triangle.

Intertextuality materializes, since each text cannot meaningfully exist outside of Byronism's "system of expectations." The texts retain meaning only when read in conjunction with the previous and the succeeding texts. Moreover, responding to a text via another text becomes more complex when one of those texts, i.e. Byron, constantly undergoes metamorphosis, i.e. through Byronism. Each additional triangle continues the historical shifting yet connects to the
previous triangle. Each succeeding text attempts to answer questions that were raised in response to intrinsic and problematic inquiries about preceding materials. We will see this in the last section of this chapter when describing Jauss's inquiry into questions that the texts answer in order to "discover how the contemporary reader could have viewed and understood the work" (28). Often, these texts mistakenly try to discover the "real" Byron but instead amplify an already elaborate myth, thereby augmenting and modifying that myth in new and dynamic ways. The key issue, then, becomes not what the text tells the reading audience about the Byronic myth, but what the text tells the audience about the rewriter's agenda and cultural biases, the historical period, and society's ideology. The constant telling and re-telling of the myth provides ample material for more elaborate modes and manifestations of production and refashioning.4

The text cannot be mediated outside the purview of relational texts that surround it, because it becomes enmeshed within the literary series of preceding and succeeding works. However, the text can exhibit numerous socio-cultural, socio-economic, historical, and ideological markers that inform readers about this historically contingent work. Jauss explains:

If the perspective of the history of reception always bumps up against the functional connections between the understanding of new works and the significance of older ones when changes in aesthetic attitudes are considered, it must also be possible to take a synchronic cross-section of a moment in the development, to arrange the heterogeneous multiplicity of contemporaneous works in equivalent, opposing and hierarchical structures, and thereby to discover an overarching system of relationships in the literature of a historical moment. From this the principle of representation of a new literary history could be developed, if further cross-sections diachronically before and after were so arranged as to articulate historically the change in literary structures in its epoch-making moments. (35)
A further definition of Byronism might well be Jauss's "overarching system of relationships in the literature of a historical moment." Byronism's intertextuality exists through a connection of historically contingent productions and reproductions, fashionings that occur subsequent to Byron's self-fashionings. Each time a Byron text is produced, a "new literary history" develops that perpetuates this phenomenon by increasing the material from which successive authors can draw. Jauss uses a methodology that incorporates both a synchronic perspective, in the sense that particular texts are examined without the relational texts and corresponding history, and a diachronic perspective, in the sense that a particular text can inform the reader about preceding and succeeding texts. These texts can be used to locate an author's methodology, narrative structure, program for publication, and belief systems as well as his/her own ideological agenda. By using these synchronic samples diachronically, the changes in "literary structures" and "literary history" can be effectively mapped.

Jauss uses both synchronic and diachronic methods to effectively form a model of literary history. He says: "The theory of aesthetics of reception not only allows one to conceive the meaning and form of a literary work in the historical unfolding of its understanding. It also demands that one insert the individual work into its literary series to recognize its historical position and significance in the context of the experience of literature" (32). The new text emerges within a literary series, connected through historical intertextuality. With each retelling, authors rewrite the myth to alter or efface the disconcerting or unusable residue left behind by the previous telling and/or to expand and enhance aspects to coincide more fully with the "historical position" and the "experience of literature." Fundamentally, authors remake Byron in their own invented image. Byron had already attempted to self-fashion, employing an iconographic performativity, a separation of imagined self from idealized self. Proceeding from this, authors situate Byron within a particular cultural milieu. As Jauss concludes, however, these minor, or sometimes major, alterations and renovations created new problems that in turn had to be restructured by the next audience member turned author.
Byron's Legacy

Since Byron was no longer able to self-fashion, Hobhouse and Moore assumed the mantle, fashioning his legacy by attempting to possess and control the knowledge of the poet's life. This generation scrutinized and reconfigured the legend through discourse, attempting to move from simple reception to critical understanding. Hobhouse wanted to preserve a pristine memory of Byron, disavowing any wrongdoing or scandalous behavior on the poet's part. Distressed that Byron had revealed secrets better left unstated or confessed, Hobhouse was the impetus behind the burning of the poet's memoirs in John Murray's office. Christensen says that Hobhouse's "zeal" to burn the memoirs stemmed from his belief that "any fact that could violate the picture of Lord Byron he wanted preserved in public memory was to be denied or destroyed" (357). Moore adamantly opposed the burning, not only because the lucrative copyright had been given to him by the poet but also because Moore had read the memoirs and believed that they contained little that had not already been revealed, either in print or in poetic form by Byron. Disregarding Moore's objections, Hobhouse and Murray destroyed the memoirs, immediately creating two antagonistic factions, headed by Hobhouse on one hand and Moore on the other.

The burning of the memoirs reconfigures the life and legacy of Byron. To recoup his loses, Moore compiled a complete works and life, in which he collected the poems, supplementing them with the first "definitive" biography of the poet's life. In "Writing and Rewriting Byron's Lameness," Christine Kenyon Jones says: "Certainly Moore did his best for Byron, and produced an impressively wide-ranging and coherent biography, but the result is nevertheless a picture of Byron that is very thoroughly 're-interpreted' by Moore for the changed tastes of English society" (71). Since the memoirs' reception by a reading public would have refashioned the legend that Hobhouse and Murray were trying desperately to safeguard, they needed to be destroyed. In his diary entry of May 17, 1824, Hobhouse states: "Lord Byron in 1822 had to me personally certainly expressed himself very strongly as being of my opinion as to
the unfitness of making use of the MSS as originally intended." Hobhouse constituted himself as the individual who knew Byron best, the record keeper and the legend fashioner. He sought to control, as Jauss would say, the literary series and historical position vigilantly, ever watchful that something did not slip by that might harm the myth in any way.

Moore and Hobhouse's disagreements over Byron's legacy expose their need for unlimited, proprietary control over the information disseminated to the waiting public. Even though Hobhouse was trying to circumvent and contain these newly articulated experiences, Byronism was perpetuated by their conflict, as Byron's adherents and detractors desperately sought or fabricated information to substantiate their own positions. Both men wanted to be the gatekeeper who knew Byron "best," whose remembrances of Byron needed to predominate in order to validate the link between the caretaker and the poet, between biographer and heroic myth. Thus, in Hobhouse's copy of Moore's life of Byron, marginal comments discuss how Moore fell sadly short in his understanding of either Byron or his life; for instance, Moore talks about Byron's friendships at Harrow and Cambridge:

To a youth like Byron, abounding with the most passionate feelings, and finding sympathy with only the ruder parts of his nature at home, the little world of school afforded a vent for his affections, which was sure to call them forth in their most ardent form. Accordingly, the friendships that he contracted both at school and college were little less than what he himself describes them, "passions." (I, 43-44).

Hobhouse scoffs: "M. knows nothing or will tell nothing of the principal cause & motive of all these boyish friend[ships]." Hobhouse sets himself up as knowing more than Moore, or at the very least, being privy to more information than Moore is willing to disclose. Hobhouse attempts to become the authority, the source for all knowledge pertaining to Byron in order to control the flow of the material and construct an unspoiled image of his life-long friend, whom he viewed as more sinned against than sinning.
Byronism could not have been maintained had Byron not been invested with a certain panache, a celebrity status that evoked images of mystery, grief, despair, aristocratic luxury, genius, and beauty. Soderholm describes Byron as a "glamour boy who borrows not a little of his seductive magic from those who would touch—and touch up—their idol" (5). The poet's idolization, denigration, or evisceration began before he died with the publication of Lady Caroline Lamb's *Glenarvon*, Eaton Stannard Barrett's *Six Weeks at Long's By a Late Resident*, Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey*, and John Polidori's *The Vampyre*. These texts alter and expand the horizon of experience, which will generate a new horizon of expectation surrounding Byronic texts. Since Byron's death, textual production has been altered by authors who have been attempting to, as Soderholm so aptly phrases it, "touch" or "touch up their idol" in order to mediate, as Jauss would say, the experience of literature and create an emergent literary series, thereby recognizing already produced aesthetic norms and creating new productions that surpass them. In this way, the authors could insure that their own names would be linked with Byron's.

Byron's extraordinary reception was fashioned by his words, his figure, and his celebrity status. As a commodity to be exchanged for pleasure, his newly fashioned, sexualized body generated quite a stir in aristocratic drawing rooms and social gatherings. His improvisation and mobility, as Greenblatt would say, caused delight and admiration, not to mention trepidation and concern, throughout English society. Marchand maintains that *Childe Harold's* publication made Byron "the literary lion of the season," especially with the women:

> Even more pleasing, though sometimes embarrassing, were the tributes of admirers, often unknown and most frequently feminine, that came in every post after the fame of *Childe Harold* had begun to spread widely. Some of them wanted to convert him from skepticism. Often the ladies wanted to meet him or asked him to criticize their verses. (346)

Byron became the toast of English society but was especially sought after by women, some of whom would literally throw themselves in front of him to gain his
attention. Because of his self-fashioning, Byron had become the sought-after poet, the aristocratic lord to whom society's elite women, both married and unmarried, flocked. He often had more invitations than he could possibly accept. Lady Jersey, elite London society's renowned socialite, all but demanded Lord Byron's presence at her events. This is the same celebrated woman who not only refused the Duke of Wellington admittance to a social gathering when he arrived late but also frostily stared down the Prince of Wales when he "cut her for taking up the cause of his wife" (Marchand 348).

Byron's newfound social status, a marker for power and privilege during the Regency Period, led to continued self-fashioning. He boasts: "I received everywhere a marked attention, was courted in all societies, made much of by Lady Jersey, had the entrée at Devonshire-house, was in favour with Brummel, (and that was alone enough to make a man of fashion at that time;) in fact, I was a lion—a ball-room bard—a hot pressed darling!" (Medwin 214). Having constructed his image to align more closely with the world traveler and poetic genius, Byron was patently adored by the social set. He also called the much-touted dandy Beau Brummel friend, the same Brummel who not only established the fashion for the season but moreover had the Prince Regent's ear. Though Brummel would eventually find it necessary to leave England, since his debts had mounted to an extravagant level, society highly favored Brummel at the time, and Byron made a point of dropping his name to increase his own cultural status and power as society's new "hot pressed darling." Moreover, this double entendre evokes images not only of the crowds that inevitably crushed around him, seeking his attention at parties, but also the numerous women, as Marchand relates, who were desperate to "press" him in a "hot" embrace.

Byron's new social status and refashioned body allowed both women and men actively to seek Byron's attention. This adulation was not to last, however, and Byron fell from grace as quickly as he had risen. The "horizon of experience" that had so effectively propelled him to fame now served equally well to lower his social status. Surrounded by scandal, rumor, mocking looks, and barely whispered cuts, Byron needed to leave London in 1816 after a disastrous
marriage to Annabella Milbanke, exiling himself from England and English society. His description of this descent is telling: where before he had described himself as the "ball-room bard" and a "lion," he now depicted himself in less positive terms:

I once made a list from the Journals of the day, of the different worthies, ancient and modern, to whom I was compared. I remember a few: Nero, Apicius, Epicurus, Caligula, Heliogabalus, Henry the Eighth, and lastly the *** [presumably the devil] [. . .]. I was abused in the public prints, made the common talk of private companies, hissed as I went to the House of Lords, insulted in the streets, afraid go to the theatre, whence the unfortunate Mrs. Mardyn had been driven with insult. The Examiner was the only paper that dared say a word in my defence, and Lady Jersey the only person in the fashionable world that did not look upon me as a monster. (Medwin 50-52)

Byron's audience wrote derogatory mannerisms onto his figure that were inconsistent with the prior adulation. Hobhouse softens the representation: "Lord Byron was never hissed as he went to the House of Lords; nor insulted in the streets. The Examiner was not the only paper that defended Lord Byron."7 The horizon of experience changed again, since Byron's reception by the reading/viewing public had altered drastically and the public increasingly perceived him as the profligate rake and the haughty lord. Byron's metamorphosis continued; his own supercilious creations and inappropriate mannerisms were now being written repeatedly onto his body by the minds of the consuming public, sullying his figure with melancholy and despair. Byron's self-fashioning had suddenly taken on a life of its own, thereby becoming Byronism as I have previously defined it. The Byronic phenomenon, instead of faltering or failing, enthusiastically embraced these new trappings of exile, haughtiness, arrogance, mystery, and malevolence, adding to Byron's mystique.

To counteract this negativity, Byron self-fashioned again, this time as hero, soldier, and Greek savior. As Greenblatt would say, he appropriated and
imposes a different shape, thereby repatterning his image. Byron had written about heroes, both decent and dreadful, comedic and tragic, but he wanted to feel the sword in his hand as he rode into battle. He desperately sought a warrior's life and said with some passion that if "Greece should fall, I will bury myself in the ruins!" (Gamba 47-8). Rather than return to England dishonored or in parts, Byron wanted to die a martyr, buried in the rubble that would be Greece's fight for freedom. After all, he had previously stated that he by no means ranked "poetry high in the scale of intelligence" (BLJ III:179). He later said to Hobhouse: "alas! I have been but idle—and have the prospect of early decay [. . . ] Philosophy would be in vain—let us try action" (BLJ VI:211). Byron wanted to re-fashion his image, changing it from effete aristocratic poet to passionate revolutionary, who changed history through his actions rather than his words. This was what prompted him to travel to Greece and offer his aid to the rebels. This "passion" for action, his self-fashioning again, was what impelled him to ask for burial in Greece should he die there.

As much as Byron attempted to self-fashion, environmental and societal occurrences could not reliably be controlled. Byron's elaborately pre-written outcomes did not materialize. He did not die in battle, instead wasting away from a high fever as numerous doctors literally bled him to death. What he had wished for in life, however, swiftly arrived in death. Marchand describes the scene:

An ominous quiet had settled over the town when the news went abroad that the great benefactor of Greece was sinking fast. A chilling fear had put a damper on the Easter festivities for which numbers of people from the surrounding county had flocked into Missolonghi. On Monday evening, Parry recorded, "at the very time Lord Byron died, there was one of the most awful thunder storms I ever witnessed. The lightning was terrific. The Greeks, who are very superstitious, and generally believe that such an event occurs whenever a much superior, or as they say, a supreme man dies, immediately exclaimed, 'The great man is gone!'" (1230)
Byronism was now in a self-perpetuating mode, gathering up discourse and writing it anew onto Byron's body. Self-fashioning had turned into public fashioning as the Greeks mourned a savior. "His death did more, perhaps, to unite Greece than all his living efforts" (Marchand 1236). His name grew legendary and his personal fight became congruent with the struggle that Greece, herself, had known. The Greeks built statues and memorials, renamed streets, and revered Byron as one of their own. His body was not yet cold when the Greeks began lauding the poet as a hero, thereby perpetuating Byronism.

Now that he was dead, the people of England joined the Byronism phenomenon, fashioning themselves as grief-filled mourners instead of castigating critics or righteous moralists. As for his friends, Hobhouse was devastated, experiencing an "agony of grief" (Broughton and Dorchester III, 35). Mary Shelley wrote in her journal: "Albè—the dear capricious, fascinating Albè—has left this desert world! God grant I may die young!" (Shelley et al. 194). Alfred Lord Tennyson and Thomas Carlyle were both distressed by Byron's death, the latter writing that he "had lost a brother" (Wilson 327). In the London Magazine, Allan Cunningham lamented that Byron's death "came upon London like an earthquake" (119). Now that Byron was dead, the battle over who would be his biographer, his critic, and the keeper of the Byron legacy was about to begin.

The following chapters show Byronism and its emergence, the creation and modification of an exclusive yet far-reaching mythology, and the exploits and mannerisms that were written on Byron's body as a type of performativity, perpetuated by authors who would alter the legend to suit their own imaginings. In Chapter 2, Jauss's horizons of experience and expectation and exploration of the author/text/audience triangle engender a historical and evolutionary model for how these fictional representations proliferate. Reception theory helps explicate the construction and recurrence of the Byronic vampire, showing how the Gothic genre was altered and expanded by subsequent refigurings of vampiric representation by such authors as John Polidori, Miranda Seymour, and Tom Holland. In Chapter 3, Butler's performativity explains Byron's performances and figure, which appear as illusions based upon ostensibly stable identities. We
move then into the paranormal and the scientific realms, in which Byron becomes refashioned both as a supernatural entity, whose psychic exile from the body evokes images of the wandering ghost, and a disembodied spirit captured in a technological matrix and personified as a cyborg. In Chapter 4, Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics illuminate Byron's interstitial position between sanity and madness, elucidating, as Jerome McGann would say, the Romantic Ideology that seduces subsequent authors and critics. Consequently, we see how such authors as Lady Caroline Lamb and Percy Bysshe Shelley become ensnared in the interpretive circle, unable to see beyond Byron's pretense, mistaking it for truth. Overall, these chapters elaborate Jauss's author-work-audience triangle, his horizon-of-experience, the perpetual inversion and the production of new aesthetic norms that would be incorporated into the myth, only to become the foundation from which a new author would surpass the previously fashioned production in a recurring reiteration of the emerging legend.
Chapter 2: Bloodsucking Byron

But the family tree of the card-carrying vampire of modern European fiction – the grand saigneur, combining the beauty of Milton's Satan with the haughtiness of Byron's Fatal Man – as opposed to the genesis of the myth itself, is relatively accessible. Christopher Frayling, Vampyres

For, once a fashion is launched, the majority imitate its external aspects without understanding the spirit which originated it. The same can be said of Vampirism, and for this fashion also Byron was largely responsible. Mario Praz, The Romantic Agony

As evidenced by my epigraphs, Byron expanded and altered the Gothic genre by initiating the vampire legend in English, satiating his ravenous audience's expectations with Gothic travelogues and vampiric tales. In "Undead Byron," Tom Holland asserts that "vampires remain recognizably Lord Byron's descendants" and that even though they may "bear the name of Count Dracula," they are still "possessed of Lord Byron's face" (155). Moreover, Byron's vampiric trope became a means through which later authors capitalized on Byron's popularity and infamy while integrating him within their own Gothic representations. Such authors as John Polidori, Tom Holland, and Miranda Seymour appropriated not only the "Fatal Man," as Frayling defines it, but also Byron's historical person and fictionalized figure, incorporating them into a new horizon. Byron is refashioned as the powerfully alluring vampire, the aristocratic predator who preys upon vulnerable victims.

As for Byron's relationship with his readership, he acknowledged and appreciated popularity's appeal and his audience's pleasure, but he also feared their all-consuming voraciousness. Consequently, Byron's reception anxiety remained in the foreground as he transformed through writing his parasitical audience, by means of a vampiric curse, into a vampiric trope encompassing Gothicism and reproducibility. Polidori, Holland, and Seymour appropriated not only Byron's reception anxiety but also his biography, as they expanded and altered the Gothic genre. By emphasizing homoeroticism and victimization, these authors developed and exploited Byron's creation, formulating a newly enhanced vampiric legend by situating Byron within his own vampiric creation.
As had Victor Frankenstein, Byron maligned his recently formed creature. After Polidori's *The Vampyre* had been ascribed to him in Galignani's *Messenger*, he wrote: "I have besides a personal dislike to 'Vampires' and the little acquaintance I have with them would by no means induce me to divulge their secrets" (BLJ April 27, 1819). This teasing retort not only denounces those who would ply the reading audience with spuriously authored works, while trading upon Byron's popularity; it also implies a knowledge of the supernatural that both elides and alludes to a barely suppressed familiarity with vampirism. Since Byron had already written about the vampiric curse in *The Giaour*, this "acquaintance" suggests Byron's reception anxiety about the seemingly merciless manner his audience, publisher, and critics consume his work with vampiric voracity. Byron thus takes revenge on his audience, self-fashioning his figure as vampire to suck his audience dry.

**The Anxiety of Reception**

In a suitably Gothic fashion, Byron both anticipated and feared his audience's and critics' reception of his works. He became prey to their incessant and vampiric demand for travelogues and moody heroes. His new poetry bumped up against the aesthetic resonance of his established poetry, thereby creating a dissonance between the expectations of his audience and his own expectations for a new kind of Gothic production. In Jaussian fashion, Byron's new production enters into a horizon of experience that his audience wishes to remain static; however, through the operation of this new production, the horizon of experience changes, leading the contemporary audience to resist or accept the change but allowing future generations to experience an altered horizon of expectation. David Richter explains it this way:

> The new work may merely fall nicely within the horizon of expectations and be accepted as a simple consumer good, or it may challenge that horizon. Works that challenge the audience's horizon of expectations may succeed in altering the way the audience responds to literature, or may fail in doing so, and be
rejected. Rejected or misunderstood works, however, may succeed in entering the literary canon later when the literary horizon has, in effect, caught up with them. (46)

As works "challenge" the audience’s horizon of expectations, readers must reject "simple reception" so as to merit a "critical understanding," must trade "passive" for "active reception" in which the "recognized aesthetic norms" constitute a new aesthetic production that surpasses the previous one. However, this shift does not occur instantaneously, and while some readers laud the changes and move into the new horizon of expectations with anticipation, most "passive" readers, content with the status quo, feel betrayed and disappointed, grumbling about the absence of Gothicism that they had come to know and love.

Jauss examines this alteration of the horizons of experience and expectation, and the resultant resistance, within a synchronic and diachronic matrix. He describes how an analysis of the literary experience avoids "the threatening pitfalls of psychology if it describes the reception and the influence of a work within the objectifiable system of expectations that arises for each work in the historical moment of its appearance, from a pre-understanding of the genre, from the form and themes of already familiar works, and from the opposition between poetic and practical language" (Aesthetic 22). Through this, and through an understanding of the Gothic as genre, we can see how Byron's audience had been prepared by him to receive his tales within "the historical moment of [their] appearance," but also by such authors as Walpole, Beckford, Coleridge, Radcliffe, Godwin, and "Monk" Lewis, who were creating works of Gothic fiction from the "form and themes of already familiar works." These recognizable forms and genres were establishing the public's horizon of experience, teaching them to expect eerie and menacing productions and creating a "pre-understanding of the genre." Consequently, when Byron literally burst onto the scene with Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and The Giaour, among others, the public was prepared for and anxiously awaiting new Gothic creations. Conversely, when Byron desired to move away from the Gothic back to a more satirical and political kind of writing, he was working against the audience's
horizon of expectation. Jauss asserts that a new text "evokes for the reader (listener) the horizon of expectations and rules familiar from earlier texts, which are then varied, corrected, altered, or even just reproduced. Variation and correction determine the scope, whereas alteration and reproduction determine the borders of a genre-structure" (Aesthetic 23). Byron had reproduced Gothic's scope and boundaries, but he satisfied the audience only as long as he remained within a codifiable and knowable genre. When he changed the rules that his audience found familiar, unfulfilled expectations and thwarted experiences of the texts arose that challenged and effaced those expectations.

Within a horizon's landscape, the reader and author form a mediated relationship that evokes coupling and reproduction. Composing, drafting, revising, polishing, and publishing can be troped as procreation: birthed from the mind, written on the page, and delivered to the waiting reader. As Hans George Gadamer asserts in Truth and Method, "Thanks to the linguistic nature of all interpretation every interpretation includes the possibility of a relationship with others. There can be no speech that does not bind the speaker and the person spoken to" (397). In hermeneutic fashion, and through a linguistic translation between text and audience, the reader develops a relationship with the author through the language of the text. An interpretative function "binds" them within a contextual and linguistic dialogue, which prefigures a genderless reproduction. By extrapolation of the linguistic function, we might see how this process of production, consumption, and reproduction works within a Gothic formulation, especially resembling the vampire's sexless creation of progeny. Vampires are created through blood transfers, which can occur regardless of the vampire's or victim's sex. A purely asexual reproduction occurs between vampires that resembles the relationship of the shifting author/text/audience triangle.

Byron becomes his own audience, remaining, while he writes, within a liminal state between author and audience through the mediation of the text. In his elucidation of Gadamer, Jauss stipulates that "the producer of a text becomes also a recipient when he sets out to write" ("Changing Horizon" 148). By filling this doubled and mediated role, Byron varies the scope and alters the boundaries
of the horizons of experience and expectation. However, this dialogue between
author and audience generates an alterity that prefigures and influences the
relationship between producer and consumer. Jauss continues: "A dialogue
consists not only of two interlocutors, but also of the willingness of one to
recognize and accept the other in his otherness" ("Changing Horizon" 148). As a
writer, one sees oneself as both the subject and the object, as both the self and
the other. Consequently, an author always remains in both an empathetic and
an antagonistic relationship with his/her audience, even through a visualization of
him/herself as audience.

This, I argue, is Byron's objective in creating the vampiric curse: he
transforms his reception anxiety into a trope that assaults and preys upon the
audience that would consume him. Since the predatory and supernatural
vampire can be seen as the superlative "other," it becomes an apt metaphor to
describe the writing process and linguistic relationships. Byron characterizes his
audience as an entity that consumes him through the medium of his work: they
drain it of its content and meaning, then introduce an appropriated approximation
back into the mediation. A new creation emerges, not the original but not distinct
either: effectively, it emerges as an amalgamation of old and new, reformulated
and reinvigorated. The production, consumption, and reproduction of the
linguistic relationship are analyzed from a synchronic perspective within a
historical diachrony. To this end, a "representation of literature in the historical
succession of such systems would be possible through a series of arbitrary
points of intersection between diachrony and synchrony" (Aesthetic 39).

Consequently, the audience receives and consumes Byron's works, then
mediates between the text and the next generation of audience members. The
"evolution" continues with this mediation of past and present, which must be
viewed through synchronic points of intersection that eventually produce a
diachronic literary history. As I argue in a later section, individual representations
of the Byronic vampire evoke question and answer formulations of previously
consumed texts, which in turn sustain the tropes that inform the subsequent
fictional representations, thereby perpetuating their reproducibility.
This metaphor of reproducibility informs not only the way Byron and his audience serve as reciprocal interlocutors, but also how the audience reconfigures Byron as the vampire. Ghislaine McDayter theorizes Byron's audience as parasitical and ties Byron's discomfort over production to the literary commodification so prevalent during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Byron would not "be the slave to any appetite," she says and extrapolates: "While that included the appetites of his lovers, it referred more particularly to his adoring 'fans,' who were always assumed to be female (or at least feminized), and who the poet came increasingly to regard as insatiable beings who fed upon his literary corpus to satisfy their taste for the Byronic" (43). The exaggerated gendering of Byron's audience generates an insidious heterosexism by asserting that Byron's "lovers" and "fans," and by extension his insatiably voracious consumers, were always assumed female or feminized. Moreover, by appending sex, this gendering intensifies vampirism as well. Byron thus keeps the vampires and victims, much as Stoker does in *Dracula*, explicitly heterosexual. I would argue that Byron's readers and lovers were both male and female, and that the vampiric trope that weaves its way through this Byronic intertextuality also bespeaks a homoerotic articulation.

McDayter rightly suggests that Byron came to see his audience as increasingly and ravenously consuming, always clamoring for more of what he had previously provided. Byron says to John Murray: "I knew the precise worth of popular applause—for few Scribblers have had more of it." While always appreciating an enthusiastic audience, Byron lamented the relentless necessity of continually playing to its wants and fancies for works that resembled his previous compositions: "If I chose to swerve into their paths—I could retain it or resume it—or increase it—but I neither love ye—nor fear ye—and though I buy with ye—and sell with ye—and talk with ye—I will neither eat with ye—drink with ye—nor pray with ye" (BLJ April 6, 1819). Byron's quotation from Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* is telling, not only because he acknowledged the inevitability of bartering his goods for fame and applause despite his denials to the contrary, but also because he recognized the thankless and exhausting nature of writing.
On the one hand, Byron needed his audience but, on the other, loathed their voracious appetites. Playing to them while mocking them, he implicitly asked for their acceptance while he explicitly castigated them for their constant clamor.

This public cacophony for all things Byronic established dissonance for Byron rather than harmony. He privileged his writing, demeaned his audience, and alluded to the Bible when he said that he had been throwing his "pearls to Swine." He continues: "as long as I wrote the exaggerated nonsense which has corrupted the public taste—they applauded to the very echo—and now that I have really composed within these three or four years some things which should 'not willingly be let die'—the whole herd snort and grumble and return to wallow in their mire" (BLJ May 20, 1822). Byron debases his early writing here as "exaggerated nonsense" with which he has "corrupted" the public view and ruined his audience for anything that he might write later in a different genre or fashion. "It is fit that I should pay the penalty of spoiling them—as no man has contributed more than me in my earlier compositions to produce that exaggerated & false taste—it is a fit retribution that anything [like a?] classical production should be received as these plays have been treated." The sympathetic and antagonistic attitudes clash here, inasmuch as the Gothic genre that had produced so much fame and cachet for Byron had become a horizon that was no longer secure. The exotic and fanciful productions had fashioned an "exaggerated" and "false taste," a horizon of experience and expectation that Byron would have to contest with any new text.

Ever sensitive to an audience's fickleness, publisher John Murray judiciously attempted to constrain Byron within a prescribed, accustomed, and, for Murray, lucrative role. The publisher's notions of propriety and entrepreneurship supplanted his aesthetic judgments. As a member of Byron's audience, he participated in the same horizon of experience as others while gaining financially from Byron's writing. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Jerome Christensen attributes Byronism to John Murray's publishing machinery, which he defines as "that systematically elaborated, commercially triumphant version of himself devised and promoted by his publisher, celebrated and denounced by his
reviewers and readers" (88). Murray knew how important an enthusiastic readership was, not only to Byron's future popularity, but also to his own profit margin. The audience's active participation is essential. Consequently, literary mediation depends upon the author's meeting his/her audience's expectations. Jauss' "process of mediation" can only occur when all three components of author/work/audience operate collectively. If any leg of the triad weakens, the whole structure collapses. As Jauss emphasizes: "The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees" (Aesthetic 19). Murray intuitively realized this, but Byron, as the much aggrieved, narcissistic author, often emphasized his own needs at the expense of his audience's anticipation and mediation. Byron felt as if he were being drained by both his publisher and his audience. Accordingly, Byron castigated his audience and critics on one hand, while he reprimanded Murray on the other hand for excising allegedly indecorous or politicized poetic lines. In a letter to Douglas Kinnaird, Byron expressed his annoyance: "I perceive Murray has omitted the dedication to Goethe—which I had set my heart upon! Is this his insolence or negligence?" (BLJ January 26, 1822). Later that same year, in a characteristically supercilious and self-aggrandizing tone, Byron wrote again to Kinnaird: "I expect him to publish what I require" (BLJ May 3, 1822). In numerous letters, Byron berated Murray repeatedly for expunging the most promising aspects of his poetry in the name of profit and caution. Byron railed: "You have been careless of this poem because some of your Synod don't approve of it—but I tell you—it will be long before you see any thing half so good as poetry or writing [. . . .] I must say once for all—that I will not permit any human being to take such liberties with my writings [. . . .] As for you you have no opinions on your own—& never had—but are blown about by the last thing said to you no matter by whom" (August 31, 1821). The carelessness of the printing process concerned Byron less than the blatant expurgation of passages that Murray believed might be financially destructive. Byron was thus constrained by a horizon that included his audience's insidious clamoring and his publisher's admonitory constraints. His spiritual,
emotional, and intellectual energies were being voraciously drained, much like a vampire drains his prey, which severely negated his ability to, as Jauss would say, vary the scope or alter the borders of the Gothic genre. In a letter to Douglas Kinnaird, Byron asserted: "I never courted the public—and I never will yield to it" (BLJ Jan. 26th, 1822). Byron belies his desire for public approval here, but the notion that an audience may be courted and a writer yield to its wishes reiterates the sympathetic and antagonistic as well as erotic conflict. McDayter asserts that "all of the Romantics repeatedly used metaphors of parasitic consumption and alienation to describe their perceived loss of cultural and interpretive authority" (44). Consequently, Byron was writing within a horizon of experience already primed for his "parasitic" creation. In the Giaour, Byron transformed his anxiety and anger over his texts' reception into a fictionalized vampiric curse. In the analyses that follow, Byron's self-fashioning, his anxiety about writing and public reception, and his vampire legend are appropriated and altered by Lady Caroline Lamb and John Polidori, who integrate Byron within the vampire figure. Their texts would then be consumed and rewritten again by such authors as Miranda Seymour and Tom Holland, who represent Byron, respectively, as prey and predator.

Byron's Gothic Ruse

Byron subverts the horizon of experience with a Gothic ruse, self-fashioning his figure as vampire to suck his audience dry. He varies the horizon already in place by creating a narrative that functions on two separate levels: the first is a traditional Gothic tale, replete with a passionate though illicit love, a revengeful murder, and a curse that envisions eternal damnation and unending torture; the second lies hidden beneath the first, in that Byron represents his consuming audience as the vampiric curse. Byron writes about his reception anxiety within a coded discourse, appeasing his clamoring audience's gluttony for things Gothic while effectively though ever so subtly mocking them at the same time. Byron thus expands the genre while varying it, reproducing his texts within the Gothic tradition while subverting it.
In the *Giaour* (1813), Byron emphasizes his anxieties and fears about his clamoring and critical audience's demands by initiating a vampiric curse. Byron essentially mocks his audience, by representing them within a production for which they had been longing. Traditional vampiric elements are present: the Giaour will be eternally cursed for killing Hassan and stealing Leila, wandering pointlessly around the throne of Eblis in a searing and torturous fire after his death. But first, on earth he will become a vampire, destined to claw his way from the tomb and "suck the blood of all thy race, / There from thy daughter, sister, wife, / At midnight drain the stream of life" (ll. 758-60). He must drain his own blood from the veins of his loved ones, literally reingesting that life that he previously bequeathed. Even when his daughter begs for her life, whispering blessings and calling him "father," he will continue to drain her until the "last tinge, her eye's last spark" becomes dull and dim forever. He will become a specter from which other horrors will shrink and will slink back to his "sullen grave" to await another night of murder (l. 783). Emphasizing isolation, darkness, and despair, the coffin and interminable suffering exemplify Byron's worries about audience reception and the vampiric curse. The protagonist's face is "pale as marble o'er the tomb / Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom" (ll. 238/39). The pallid complexion suggests the exterior manifestation of disease and blight, evoking images of the marble tombstone, so stark in its portrayal of utter desolation and the mystery of death. Against this ashen face, the eyes mesmerize and scintillate in their fury and passion. Byron describes them in vivid Gothic fashion as "meteor-like" in their powerful appeal and fiery depth. The Giaour's brow, dark as his hair, stands in harsh contrast to his skin. The body here functions only as a vessel for the astonishing power that resides within yet at the same time represents the Gothic ruse, a body waiting to be consumed, a body drained of its meaning. The whiteness, the vacuity, the vampiric paleness, serves as nothing more than a blank slate upon which the passion, the magnetism, the hatred, and the fear can be written.

The blank page allows Byron to create a discourse that makes tangible his anxiety about the reception process, while at the same time, destabilizing the
genre he had helped to develop. In the notes to The Giaour, Byron adds background to his vampiric creation:

> The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. The Romaic term is "Vardoulacha." I recollect a whole family being terrified by the scream of a child, which they imagined must proceed from such a visitation. The Greeks never mention the word without horror [. . . .] The stories told in Hungary and Greece of these foul feeders are singular, and some of them most incredibly attested. (CPW 3: 420)

Byron engages in a sleight of hand here, associating his audience with the foul feeders, the Vardoulacha. His writing had turned onerous and his reception anxiety became foregrounded. The audience had become a Gothic force, sapping his power by consuming his text. The relationship between the author, his text, and his audience had turned vampiric, sucking the body dry of its *vital fluids*. Alternatively, the body illustrates the Gothic ruse, an intercession between the production and the consumption of the text. The asexual reproductions are perpetuated through the vampiric trope: an *unnatural* birth formulated through blood exchange and reinscribed through transgression.

**The Ruthven Connection**

"Ruthven" permeates the texts that connect Byron to vampirism. First used by Lady Caroline Lamb in *Glenarvon* (1816), this intertextual trope is appropriated and exploited by John Polidori to connect *The Vampyre* (1819) not only to Byron's life but to Lamb's protagonist as well. The question arises as to why Lamb and Polidori employed Ruthven as a character name. I argue that "Ruthven" can be linked to Lord Grey de Ruthyn, initially Byron's tenant, then friend, and then bitter enemy. By connecting Ruthven with Ruthyn, both Polidori and Lamb textually reproduce the homoeroticism that existed between Byron and Lord Grey. Lamb encoded the name with Byron's confession of past same-sex episodes, intimating that she could reveal damaging material if provoked. Polidori implicated himself within the homoerotic connection on two levels: that of his personal relationship with Byron and that of his own characterization of Byron.
in *The Vampyre* as Ruthven's equal. In the later texts, the correlation between Ruthven and Byron becomes, as Jauss would say, "varied, corrected, altered or even just reproduced": Lamb initiated the representation within her reproduction; Polidori altered the horizon of experience to accommodate the homoeroticism that became nearly synonymous with future Byronic vampires.

The "Ruthven" connection elucidates, as Jauss would say, both the "historical moment of appearance" and the "pre-understanding of the genre." Homoeroticism and victimization become integrated within the "forms" and "themes" of the already familiar Gothic works. By appropriating this aspect of Byron's biography, Lamb and Polidori would have further accentuated Byron's reception anxiety through a public examination of a private secret Byron would have preferred to remain hidden. Thus, within the "objectifiable system of expectations," we see how Byron's own history became part of the developing horizon of experience surrounding vampirism. Lamb and Polidori effectively altered the horizon of experience so that the later horizons of expectation will include vampiric victimizations and homoeroticism.

The biographers, historians, and authors I examine are receivers and, in turn, producers of Byronism's text. Since their horizons of experience differ, they tend to interpret the material related to Lord Ruthyn and his homoerotic association to Byron through their specific cultural indoctrination. Some do this out of anxiety over Byron's, and by implication their own, reception by an audience with its own horizon of experience. Some underscore Byron's passiveness, while others stress his agency within the historical relationship. In each case, the horizon of experience and the historical moment of the text's appearance affect the writer's interpretation and reproduction of the Byron-Ruthven relationship as a mediated Gothicism. In one of the earliest biographies, *The Works of Lord Byron with His Letters and Journals, and his Life* (1832), Thomas Moore blithely glosses over the relationship: "An intimacy, however, soon sprung up between him and his noble tenant" (I, 79). Moore recognizes the friendship, but does not refer to the animosity that occurred between Byron and Lord Grey. In his copy's margins, Hobhouse writes: "and a
circumstance occurred during [this] intimacy which certainly had much effect on [Byron's] future morals" (qtd. in Marchand, 1: 80). Hobhouse's vagueness reiterates his continued need to appear as more knowledgeable about Byron than Moore, but he refuses to elucidate because of the ruinous ramifications to the Byron legend. The competitive fashioning begins here, inasmuch as both Moore and Hobhouse felt the need to reproduce and refashion Byron as either sexually naive or experienced. Moore initiated the conversation, and then Hobhouse added to, but also significantly altered, the text with his cryptic and somewhat furtive observations. The two early biographers were concerned with ameliorating any sexual impropriety attributed to Byron and generating a sanitized reception of Byron. Hobhouse's insinuations as to Byron and Ruthyn's homoerotic relationship, however, would tip off later biographers to the enigmas that remained unstated beneath this guarded account.

Later biographies probe this relationship for clues regarding the real relationship between Byron and Ruthyn. In Byron (1912), Ethel Colburn Mayne references Lord Grey as someone whom Byron "passionately and mysteriously" detested (38): The "sinister Lord Grey" created "aggravated terrors" for Byron (52). Mayne's portrait is the first to associate Grey with an ominous and menacing motive towards Byron, effectively creating a Gothic antagonist. He becomes a threatening predator who preys upon the youthful Byron. No hints of improper sexual advances, however, emerge at this point. In Andre Maurois's Byron (1930), the reader learns only that a quarrel had occurred "for grave and mysterious reasons which, with a stubborn bashfulness, [Byron] refused to reveal" (56). Maurois adds to Mayne's passionate mystery a sense of solemnity, for which Byron's shyness prevents him from revealing the cause. The "stubborn bashfulness" leads the reader to imagine that something inappropriate and unseemly had occurred. Opposing Hobhouse's claim that Byron's future morals had been affected by this incident, Mayne and Maurois blame Grey, thereby sanitizing Byron's reputation for an audience that had already demonized the poet.
By mid-century, the horizon of experience had altered enough to enable a sexualized interpretation of the Ruthyn/Byron relationship. Whereas earlier biographers had been content to accept Moore's guarded silence on the issue, later biographers seem intrigued by Hobhouse's cryptic comment. In *Passion for Excitement* (1956), Eileen Bigland says: "Whether or not there had been any attempted seduction of the boy, the humiliation his mother caused him over the affair must have been well-nigh intolerable and his continued silence on the matter was wholly admirable" (42). Silence surrounding this same-sex seduction seems to Bigland "wholly admirable" and represents the homophobia surrounding this issue during the fifties. The offensive sexual proposition from Grey to Byron may or may not have occurred, but Byron's suppression speaks, Bigland suggests, to his upright principles. In *Lord Byron's Marriage: The Evidence of Asterisks* (1957), G. Wilson Knight allows Byron to fashion himself, quoting a letter to Augusta:

I am not reconciled to Lord Grey, and I never will. He was once my Greatest Friend, my reasons for ceasing that Friendship are such as I cannot explain, not even to you my Dear Sister (although were they to be made known to any body, you would be the first,) but they will ever remain hidden in my own breast.—They are Good ones however, for although I am violent I am not capricious in my attachments.—My mother disapproves of my quarrelling with him, but if she knew the cause (which she never will know,) She would reproach me no more. He Has forfeited all title to my esteem, but I hold him in too much contempt ever to hate him. (BLJ March 26, 1804)

Byron's vehement tone permeates the letter. He represents the relationship with Grey as once exalted but, after the rift, irksome. He alludes to the estrangement tactfully. Knight concludes that "we are left guessing" as to the cause. Knight suggests that Byron "may have been introduced to physical vice by Lord Grey de Ruthyn" (250), thereby increasing Byron's responsibility. Nonetheless, much of what Knight concludes remains inference.
Not surprisingly, more information created a furor among Byron’s biographers, necessitating repeated rewritings, refashionings, and reinterpretations of this event. In the definitive mid-century biography, Leslie Marchand includes two additional letters, one from Byron to Grey:

I cannot conclude without adverting to circumstances, which though now long past, and indeed difficult for me to touch upon, have not yet ceased to be interesting.—Your Lordship must be perfectly aware of the very peculiar reasons that induced me to adopt a line of conduct, which however painful, and painful to me it certainly was, became unavoidable.—On these I cannot enter at large, nor would the discussion be a pleasing one, while any farther explanation is unnecessary.—at the same time, though from these and other causes, much intercourse between us must entirely cease, I have still so grateful a recollection of many favours you have conferred upon me when a boy, that I shall always be happy, when we do meet, to meet as friends, and endeavor to forget we have been otherwise. (BLJ August 7, 1808)

The response from Grey:

We parted in 1804 the best of friends, your letters were afterwards most affectionate [. . . . ] You say the break was painful to yourself, I need not say to you who know I have not the power to command my feelings when [deeply?] wounded what my sensations were. (BLJ I: 168n)

Marchand surmises that “though Byron would never reveal the nature of the offense, he hinted at it clearly enough to make it obvious that the sensuous young lord had made some kind of sexual advance which disgusted his younger companion” (80). Marchand reduces Byron’s responsibility by suggesting that he was repulsed by Grey’s overtures. Almost thirty years later, Louis Crompton suggests that Byron had been willing to submit up to a point, but that Grey proposed a sodomitical sexual act to which Byron could not yield. Byron remains guilty by degrees, then, rather than innocent through right of refusal. As long as
Byron remained on equal sexual footing with Grey, he had no qualms about the intimacy. Once a hierarchy emerged, however, with the dominating partner penetrating the passive other, Byron recoiled, especially since as the younger partner, he would have been expected to play the submissive role.¹⁵

Modern biographers directly name Byron and Grey's homosexual relationship. About Byron's letter to his sister, Doris Langley Moore says:

For Byron to keep a secret was always an effort—communication was his most ebullient gift, and it could not be suppressed for long—but at a time when a homosexual act between males was a capital crime, ladies were not supposed to know such practices existed, and it is quite likely that his remarks were as cryptic to Augusta as he meant them to be. (77)

The secret that could not be revealed indicates the love that dare not speak its name. Neither in print nor in conversation could Byron do more than simply allude to his discomfort and his revulsion over the suggested sexual act. However, since Jerome Christensen says that "Asia Minor" was a "domain where Byron [could] safely indulge his peculiar appetite," Byron's reluctance seems hardly justifiable (54). Moore emphasizes that Byron felt "obliged to resist a man eight years his senior," that Byron was never "attracted to adult men otherwise than in friendship" (77). For her, Byron's distaste and abhorrence stemmed more from age and equality than from the homosexual act, itself. In the latest full-length biography, *Byron: Child of Passion, Fool of Fame* (1999), Benita Eisler places the responsibility firmly on Byron's shoulders:

The "unmentionable" nature of Lord Grey's crime would have been clear to anyone hearing or reading Byron's account of his flight from Newstead. Lord Grey had made sexual advances to Byron that the younger boy repulsed. Or wished he had. (72)

Eisler acknowledges the seduction and implies that Byron might have already accepted such offers, and that his repugnance stemmed more from guilt than from distaste. She continues: "The intensity of his fear, moreover, points to an earlier complicity, followed by a guilty need to exonerate himself. Byron's
homoerotically charged friendships at Harrow make it hard to believe that he could be shocked by Lord Grey's overtures; more likely it was his own response that frightened him" (73). Byron's homosexual anxiety created the need for distance from Grey; he thus blamed the older, more established peer. Byron's complicity damns him; he expressed discomfort regarding his homoerotic feelings and experiences. He hated in Grey what he found so difficult to accept in himself. Byron reinscribed his anxiety through discourse, rewriting his place in the early nineteenth-century horizon of sexual experience to resemble more closely cultural norms and thereby refashioning his image.

**Homoeroticism and Vampirism**

Our twenty-first century horizon of experience includes not only the history and politics of the sexual revolution but the Foucauldian claim that homosexual identities came into existence in the late nineteenth century. Our horizon also includes those who argue against Foucault, claiming that his historical dates are imprecise and that this coding of identificatory processes began much earlier. For instance, In *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, Alan Bray argues that an identificatory change began as early as the Renaissance. Rictor Norton, Louis Crompton, Andrew Elfenbein, and others have detailed specific identificatory changes in the consciousness of the Romantic period in relation to same-sex eroticism. It is not my intention to delineate the argument either for or against identities prior to 1869, the year that Foucault underscores as significant to homosexuality's genesis as an identity; much work has already been accomplished in this area. My argument is that through queer theory, we can see how the Gothic often appears as homoerotic: the vampire as connected to same-sex penetration, the coffin as closet in both alterity and isolation, and the voracious predator as sexual marauder.

Vampirism bespeaks desire hidden within monstrosity. For Christopher Craft, "[v]ampirism both expresses and distorts an originally sexual energy. That distortion, the representation of desire under the defensive mask of monstrosity, betrays the fundamental psychological ambivalence identified by Franco Moretti
when he writes that 'vampirism is an excellent example of the identity of desire and fear'" (71). In his chapter on Dracula, Craft is interested in the "inescapable passivity" of the victim against the "vampiric compulsion, a preternaturally heightened consciousness" (x). Moreover, within Dracula and Jonathan Harker's relationship, there exists an "unmediated homosexual connection," and the novel "sustains its flirtation with an originary homosexual desire" although it refuses "to gratify that desire directly" (xi). Consequently, we see how the vampire, alluring and mesmerizing in its power, represents an unrequited and unfulfilled lust that overpowers the relatively weak resistance from its victim. The yearning is imposing in its atrocity yet vibrant in its appeal. This all-consuming passion transgresses the boundaries of the ordinary and moves into the realms of nightmarish dread and anxiety. Nevertheless, a feeling of sublimity permeates that terror, softening it. Craft calls this the "prolonged middle," where a "thrilling anxiety" can be sustained (72). The vampire's teeth penetrate the skin in a lust-filled act of dominance similar to that of sexual intercourse. The blood exchange symbolizes the orgasmic flow of semen and/or vaginal fluids, and yet, this act moves beyond the sexual in a purely ontological sense. Without semen or vaginal fluid, a person still lives; without blood, death occurs instantaneously. The vampire knows this and induces its victim to drink from a newly opened wound a mixture of the vampire's and the victim's blood. The mediated relationship recurs, reconciled through an altered horizon of experience, which lends itself to an alteration of the Gothic scope. This amalgamation transforms the victim into a vampire through asexual reproduction.

This procreation occurs regardless of bodily sex. Thus, while a male/female dyad manifests a heterosexual union, a male/male or female/female pairing evokes not only homoeroticism but initiates a reproducibility unattainable in the real world. Vampirism, by nature of its asexual reproduction, seeks to create that which is like itself; it perpetuates by replicating itself repeatedly. Consequently, the boundaries of normative behavior can be transgressed on two levels: desire and sexuality. Authors of vampire fiction can either strictly uphold these boundaries or can overtly contravene them. In Dracula, Bram Stoker,
apprehensive over Oscar Wilde's trials and eventual incarceration for "gross indecency," expunges almost all physical contact between same-sex characters from his novel. The female vampires claim Jonathan Harker while Dracula asserts his dominance over Mina and Lucy. In opposition to this, Anne Rice recognizes and incorporates same-sex contact in her Vampire Chronicles. Lestat enjoys the male companionship of those to whom he has given the "dark gift." Louis feels insecure without Lestat by his side. Armand overtly courts Louis and travels with him for centuries. David, the elder statesman of the Talamasca, is soul-switched into a young, buff, male body, after which Lestat makes him a vampire, effectively keeping him in this body for eternity. Homoeroticism saturates Rice's texts and works against the strictly heteronormative margins so strictly defended in Stoker's and others' texts. We can see, then, how the horizon of expectation has changed in the late twentieth century as a result of the mediated relationship between vampirism and homoeroticism. Diachronic literary history has changed to incorporate these aspects, which now appear as traditional within Gothic production.

The homoerotic underpinnings of Ruthven's intertextuality and Byron's own Gothic tendencies further accentuate the connection between the biographies and fiction by uniting the vampire figures to an aristocratic Byron. Thus, while the horizon of expectations for vampires before Byron was of the squalid, brutish, zombie-like ilk, after Byron, the vampire embodies Byron's own self-fashioned egotism, self-love, and conceit. In "Undead Byron," Tom Holland asserts that in early legend, "the risen dead would be peasants, red-faced and bushy-haired, filthy with mud; but nowadays they are invariably beautiful, very pale and expensively dressed" (155). They exemplify the same physical characteristics that Byron himself possessed and which were then appropriated and used by successive authors to connect Byron to this legend. Byron's physical description is repeatedly used to portray these characters: his dark, chestnut-colored curly hair; a deathly pale face; gray eyes that were mesmerizing in their beauty; full red lips; short (5' 8 ½") yet stocky body; and a musical, lilting voice that captivated and enthralled its listeners. These physical traits, as well as the
haughty and narcissistic personality, aristocratic lineage, and powerful allure, were all utilized for the refashioning and reproduction of vampires after Byron's time. Consequently, we see how Byron's refashioning authors alter the Gothic's horizon of experience by transposing Byron's body onto the vampire, which becomes not only Byronic but also homoerotic.

As an intertextual trope, the refashioned figure of Byron alters the scope and borders of a genre that includes the vampire as a central figure. The brooding, melancholy, aristocratic, narcissistic beauty unites with the vampiric anteriority through an expanding horizon of experience, extrinsically troping upon its previous incarnations. Jauss suggests that "the interpretative reception of a text always presupposes the context of experience of aesthetic perception: the question of the subjectivity of the interpretation and of the taste of different readers or levels of readers [...]

Lamb and Polidori's Creation of the Byronic Vampire

Lamb's protagonist is not a vampire but rather a Gothic appropriation and refashioning of Byron. Christopher Frayling says: "[Glenarvon], more than all the other villains, with their 'gaunt faces' and 'piercing eyes,' who epitomized the 'metamorphoses of Satan' in the Gothick novel, represents the prototype for the Byronic vampire" (8). Lamb alters the Gothic horizon of experience by integrating Byron within a genre that he expanded and intervenes through a sustained historical and intertextual mediation on Byron's monstrosity.
Glenarvon does not suck blood, arise at sunset from a coffin, or undergo physical metamorphoses. He does, however, prey on the unwary Calantha. Glenarvon describes himself as "cold as the grave" with a "never dying worm [which] feeds upon my heart" (165). He may well be seen as an already dead, dark, brooding, emotionally and psychically figurative vampire, who fulfills the Gothic genre's function while also providing a cathartic release for Lamb's rage at her failed relationship with Byron.

Lamb engages in a therapeutic composition designed to present an answer to the enigma that was Byron. Lamb portrays Glenarvon as a "fallen angel," who drains a highly feminized Calantha of her will to live. Glenarvon's nights and days were given up to "every fierce excess" and his "high spirit of genius was darkened, the lofty feelings of honor were debased, and the frame and character sunk equally dejected under the fatigue of vigils and revels, in which reason and virtue had no share" (139). Glenarvon embodies reckless passion and wild debauchery; he haunts the shadows and ruins, while loving the power of thunderstorms. His "gestures, his menaces were terrific. He would talk to the air; then laugh with convulsive horror; and gazing wildly around, enquire of [Calantha], if there were not blood upon the earth, and if the ghosts of departed men had not been seen by some" (176). Yet, at the same time, he demonstrates genius and a captivating charisma. Frances Wilson says: "Glenarvon alternates between being demonic and angelic, dark and light, ancient and modern" (216).

Accordingly, we see how Lamb mediates between the "ancient" and the "modern" by reinterpreting the vampiric figure, thereby varying the trope's scope by conjoining Byron and the monstrous. Byron was uncomfortable with Lamb's portrait but quipped, "As for the likeness, the picture can't be good—I did not sit long enough" (BLJ November 17, 1816).

Because of its biographical connotations, Lamb was eager for just this level of titillating exposé and so wrote a thinly veiled roman à clef. She not only connected her protagonist with Byron but also associated him with Lord Grey. She attracted readers by referring to seemingly historical events, especially Byron's boyhood "indiscretions." Having been privy to Byron's confessions of
early sexual exploits, she disclosed to Lady Byron that "from his boyhood on he
had been in the practice of unnatural crime" (qtd. in Crompton 82). This
euphemism for same-sex relations reveals that Lamb was privy to the same-sex
forays in which Byron engaged, both in England and in the East. Lamb also
destabilizes Glenarvon's identity, portraying him as feminine and masculine by
turns: "he unites the malice and petty vices of a woman, to the perfidy and villany
of a man" (241). Consequently, by using Ruthven's name, she alters and
expands the Gothic genre not only through the incorporation of Byron within her
monstrous characterization of Glenarvon but also through her allusions to
homoeroticism and gender instability.

Lamb's character, then, acts as an intermediary, as Jauss would say.
This synchronic intersection links the diachronic male-male relationship that
exists between Byron and Grey's homoeroticism and Polidori's vampire. Lamb's
Ruthven is a conduit, mediating between Byron's biography and Lamb's fictional
present. Jauss asserts: "A literary work is not an object that stands by itself [; . .
.] it is much more like an orchestration that strikes ever new resonances among
its readers" (Aesthetic 21). Thus, even though homoeroticism "resonates" in
Glenarvon de Ruthven's characterization, it is only through Polidori's
"orchestration" that Ruthven becomes associated with vampirism. In this way,
Lamb and Polidori created an intertextual Ruthven, which influences every
refashioning that represents Byron as a vampire, inextricably linking Ruthven
with Byron.

In The Vampyre (1819), Polidori appropriates Lamb's characterization of
Byron as Ruthven, enhancing both the vampire's malignancy and
homoeroticism's otherness. Polidori uses Byron's self-fashioning against him,
thereby aligning Byron with his creations, and writing mannerisms and behaviors
onto Byron's previous formulations that were malevolent, predatory, vampiric,
and damning to the creator. Instead of a Byron who is anxious about his noisy
and critical audience as well as his over-ambitious publisher, Polidori transforms
his Byronic character into the vampire that coerces, drains, and destroys. In The
Vampyre, Lord Ruthven is represented not only as a callous, heartless, aloof

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aristocrat, but also as a literal vampire; consequently, Polidori alters and refines Lamb's vague and implicit intimations of a relationship that drains the character's fortitude and resolve by surreptitious or spiritual means into a vampiric relationship. Ken Gelder argues that Polidori was "both trading on Byron's already fictionalized reputation, and adding his own Gothic inflexion to it" (31). The Gothic genre is once again altered and expanded to include the vampiric and homoerotic representation of a thinly veiled Byronic portrait.

Polidori both broadens the scope and challenges the borders of this genre. The aristocratic lord, the melancholy anti-hero, becomes the marauding vampire, intent only on slaking his thirst. Carol A. Senf suggests that "in addition to making Lord Ruthven a vampire who destroys certain victims by drinking their blood, Polidori also makes his vampire a moral parasite, 'a man entirely absorbed in himself'" (31). While noting key elements in the text, both Gelder and Senf miss the following important aspects of the Byron/Polidori dyad. Senf fails to recognize that Polidori plagiarized not only the narrative but the vampiric plot as well. Nina Auerbach asserts: "Polidori's The Vampyre, which was instantly attributed to Byron, is a sardonic development of Byron's material. The tale is Polidori's own, but it is steeped in Byron and Byronism" (16). I would disagree that the tale was original even though Auerbach insists that Polidori "sardonically" developed Byron's source material; in fact, during the conversations at Diodati, Byron had told Polidori and the group the end of his own fragment, which included Darvell's preying upon the narrator's sister once they had arrived back in England. This evidence speaks against Polidori's creation of an "original" tale. Gelder disregards the historical and biographical interaction between Polidori and Byron. Byron had employed the young, handsome man as a doctor and traveling companion. Given Byron's predilection, as noted by Doris Langley Moore, for younger men, though, the homoerotic connection surfaces suggestively. Indeed, this bond becomes the basis for fictions that focus exclusively on the homoerotic relationship between Polidori and Byron. That Polidori would build upon and reinforce this sensual rapport within The Vampyre only heightens the homoerotic suggestion.
Polidori portrays Ruthven as a ruthless predator with a penchant for his male companion. He preys upon those around him, especially Aubrey's sister, and satisfies his thirst for blood upon her while Aubrey remains under the compulsory promise to remain silent, enacted in a ritual reminiscent of a marriage ceremony, extracted by Ruthven before his "death." Polidori augments the tale's homoeroticism by depicting Ruthven as obsessed with Aubrey (the man Polidori would have liked to be, both aristocratic and rich); he explicitly and furtively follows him around Europe and nurses him back to health with fabricated concern and undying attention. Aubrey would often find Ruthven's "gaze fixed intently upon him, with a smile of malicious exultation playing upon his lips: he knew not why, but this smile haunted him" (16). Polidori describes Ruthven as follows:

A nobleman, more remarkable for his singularities, than his rank. He gazed upon the mirth around him, as if he could not participate therein. Apparently, the light laughter of the fair only attracted his attention, that he might by a look quell it, and throw fear into those breasts where thoughtlessness reigned. Those who felt this sensation of awe, could not explain whence it arose: some attributed it to the dead grey eye, which fixing upon the object's face, did not seem to penetrate, and at one glance to pierce through to the inward workings of the heart; but fell upon the cheek with a leaden ray that weighed upon the skin it could not pass [. . . .] In spite of the deadly hue of his face, which never gained a warmer tint, either from the blush of modesty, or from the strong emotion of passion, though its form and outline were beautiful, many of the female hunters after notoriety attempted to win his attentions, and gain, at least, some marks of what they might term affection. (7)

The vampire's alterity is pronounced in this passage. His aristocracy separates him from the crowd less than his "dead grey" eyes and his cold pallor. He vigilantly watches for his next victims, and his magnetism draws them
inexplicably. He stands untouchable, impenetrable, and unreachable. Leonard Heldreth says: "What Ruthven's eyes do register [. . . is] a field of objects drained of meaning, save for their status as provender for a vampire's appetite" (12). The vampire reduces his audience to nothing more than prey and, as a result, this act of watching brings him an egotistical and epicurean pleasure. This stance places him in a position of power and authority over those he watches, initiating an effective hierarchy of superiority and inferiority, of consumer and soon-to-be consumed.

Polidori transforms the Byronic conceit and arrogance into Ruthven's narcissistic, vampiric behavior. Ianthe tells Aubrey "the tale of the living vampyre" and "his horror was increased, by hearing a pretty accurate description of Lord Ruthven" (12-13). Ruthven appears morose, scornful, and haughty and cannot abide the laughter of others, unable to experience joy in the present moment because of his past. Ruthven others himself purposefully, residing in isolation from the crowd, which unites him with what James B. Twitchell, in *The Living Dead*, would have called the "melancholy libertine" (76). The "light laughter of the fair" serves only to infuriate him, and he takes measures to quell that laughter with a look that bespeaks his supremacy and influence. His vampiric authority refuses to be denied or disobeyed, and with a look he throws "fear into those breasts where thoughtlessness reigned." Laughter becomes a transgression that he mechanically suppresses. Ruthven appears beautiful but that façade hides an evil vampire. Thus, Polidori's text seeks to alter the horizon of expectation regarding vampires, mediating between the disgusting zombie-like legends of the past and the aristocratic, stunning vampires of his present fiction. The Byronic vampire has been born.

Nobility, magnificence, and narcissism emerge as the indispensable qualities of the new vampire. Pleasure appears, but only selfish pleasure. Fear predominates, but mixed with a heightened allure. Ruthven's "dead grey" eyes—flat, dull and lifeless—evoke a literal deadness that permeates his being. His face remains pale, never colored by "emotion" or "blush." The vampire, though beautiful, possesses a poisonous heart, although outsiders cannot "penetrate"
that depth. The wall, much like the periphery between life and death, is impermeable, a surface beyond which the gazer cannot pass. Nothing distinguishes this man from a cadaver; he exudes coldness and radiates fatality. In yet another alteration that will define the new vampire, Polidori implies that Ruthven does not possess a soul because it cannot be read within his eyes. Individuals who look at him have their gaze weighted down, moving like a "leaden ray" to the cheek below. Women gaze upon his beauty longingly, but Ruthven sees them as merely prey.

Fundamentally, the women in the text, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick would suggest, serve solely to cement the bond between the two men, even though this short novel moves beyond the homosocial into the realm of the homoerotic. Women are simply expendable goods before the desires of the male protagonists. Early in the text, Aubrey prevents Lord Ruthven from completing a tryst with Ianthe by writing a note to her mother detailing the aristocrat's evil intentions. Consequently, Ruthven revenges himself upon Aubrey by killing Ianthe in grisly vampiric fashion:

There was no colour upon her cheek, not even upon her lip; yet there was a stillness about her face that seemed almost as attaching as the life that once dwelt there:--upon her neck and breast was blood, and upon her throat were the marks of teeth having opened the vein:--to this the men pointed, crying, simultaneously struck with horror, "A Vampyre! A Vampyre!" (15)

Although Polidori portrays Aubrey as genuinely loving Ianthe, he remains true to the ritualistic promise, a pledge that symbolizes marriage vows that Ruthven extracts from him before his faux death. "'Swear!' cried the dying man raising himself with exultant violence, 'Swear by all your soul reveres, by all your nature fears'" (17). This guarantee allows the reincarnated Ruthven to revenge himself once again upon Aubrey by courting and marrying Aubrey's sister in an act of betrayal similar to Aubrey's. However, each of these murders results from Aubrey's betrayal rather than the loss of Ruthven's initial victim. Thus, the heterosexual matrix hides the underlying homoeroticism. The men's relationship
becomes the primary motive behind the narrative. Both Ianthe and Miss Aubrey are killed by the vampire, and his supremacy remains unequaled in both society and sensual appeal. Ruthven remains free and unpunished at the end of the text whereas Aubrey dies, an inevitability constructed by the author's own biographical relationship with Byron. The young doctor was dismissed by Byron as effectively as Ruthven dismisses Aubrey to kill again.

The Byronic Vampire in the Late Twentieth Century

Both Miranda Seymour and Tom Holland rely on Lamb and Polidori's alterations and expansions of the Gothic horizon of experience for their own refashionings. In *Count Manfred* (1976), Miranda Seymour, following Mayne's lead, characterizes Lord Ruthven as menacing and malicious. Although she never explicitly uses the term "vampire," the resemblance is unmistakable. Ruthven exhibits supernatural qualities, irresistible magnetism, and mind-control abilities. He loves dark, gloomy places. His face is thin, with the "cultivated pallor of a hothouse lily" (20). He cannot die: "Simple people say that the Ruthvens do not die, that they cannot unless [. . .] they can find a man of similar, what can one say, psyche, to take their place" (273). Most important, a blood bond exists between Ruthven and Byron: Byron grimly remarks that he committed this act before he "knew what the 'consequences' were." This bond binds their "souls in brotherly love" (299). Ruthven, as master, and Byron, as protégé, develop a blood bond that explicitly implies a vampiric connection. Ruthven's white face, supernatural influences, and eternal life allude to the traditional aspects of Polidori's vampire. Byron is effectively being initiated into the vampiric realm by a more experienced, more ruthless being. Moreover, Seymour depicts Ruthven as disreputable and perverse, a man who exhibits great powers of magnetism and charm while also embodying an extraordinary capacity for intrigue and evil. Byron fascinates him, much as Aubrey enthralled this protagonist's namesake in the earlier text.

In Seymour's text, Ruthven does marry, but only to advance his homosexual interests in Byron. Ruthven "dislikes feminine company" (47) and
corrupts boys (210). His wife's crime "lay in being a woman" (87). After Byron's engagement to Annabella, Ruthven's wife maliciously teases Ruthven about contravening the bounds of proper etiquette and decorum with his unseemly feelings: "You wouldn't let your distress show too much, would you, my dear? It could be a little [. . .] embarrassing to explain your feelings under the circumstances" (121). She finds love letters that Ruthven had written to Byron, complete with drawings (186). At one point in the text, Byron dresses his paramour up like a boy, in order to take her to a boxing match. The woman balks, believing that Byron likes her better as a boy than as a girl. Byron furiously retorts: "Do you think I'm like Ruthven?" (171). The blatant erotic overtones allow Seymour to emphasize the relationship in order to heighten the bond between the vampire and the victim. The horizon of experience within which Seymour writes included not only Lamb's and Polidori's texts, but also the Stonewall riots (June 1969) that prompted the Gay Liberation movement. As a result, she alters the horizon of experience by extending the underlying homoeroticism from the previous works, escalating and intensifying them into a complex and intricate homosexual relationship between Ruthven and Byron.

Ruthven and Byron are joined, locked in battle, vacillating between love and hatred. Byron describes Ruthven as follows:

Every man has two sides, dark and light [. . .] His nature is composed of opposites as clearly marked as if he had two souls in a single body. Ruthven claims to be my darker half. Yes, you can laugh if you like, Lucy. You don't know what it is to be the object of that sort of fixation. He lives my life, you see, to a certain point. Newstead, and you, were mine. Usually, he prefers to link himself by opposites, to score each sin of mine as his victory. (176)

Ruthven and Byron become mirror images, with the former living his life vicariously and literally fixated on the latter. Correspondingly, Ruthven's narcissistic tendency surfaces as he sees himself in his beloved's features. His clothing "was so carefully chosen as to show a high degree of vanity" (20). His eyes were "grey, rock-hard and inescapable" (27). He lives for sensation and
says: "There is nothing to fascinate me in the ordinary and equable nature" (21). At the end of the novel, Byron resists Ruthven, telling him that he will break their blood bond unless he does as Byron wishes. Ruthven's wife had hoped to forget this vampiric secret, but she laments that impossibility: "Polidori's The Vampyre saw to that. Everyone knew that the doctor had the story from Byron himself" (234). Earlier in the text, Ruthven had told Byron the fragment that Polidori would transform into The Vampyre. Consequently, Seymour connects her character to Polidori's vampire, yet varies the scope and redefines the boundaries of the genre in which the vampire resides. This intertextuality confirms the vampire in her text; Ruthven remains alive while Byron, dislodged from his alter ego, replaces Polidori/Aubrey as the interlocutor. The emergent transformations continue through assimilation.

For Seymour, Ruthven vampirically longs to sanction Byron as a mirror image of himself, to propagate in a purely patrilineal sense without the need for a woman's womb. Ruthven's objective entails the complete subjugation and utter manipulation of Byron, who is described as a "slave" (207). Even at the end of the novel, as Byron dies from a fever in Missolonghi, he fears that he has lost the battle to Ruthven and that he will become that which he fears most: Ruthven's pawn and vessel. As was mentioned earlier, the Ruthvens don't die; they simply find a man of similar "psyche, to take their place" (273). In Semour's novel, Ruthven wants Byron to succeed him, a physical, psychical, and spiritual heir. Not only does this suggest a same-sex reproductive trope, but also the homoerotic yearning to propagate solely through male interaction, without a female vessel for gestation. Moreover, this reinforces the association between the men at the expense of the women in the text, as it does in Polidori's tale. Ruthven's wife serves as nothing more than a conduit for Ruthven's affection for Byron. The homoerotically charged relationship survives amidst the fabricated and broadly sketched heterosexual environment.

Unlike Seymour's Count Manfred, Tom Holland's Lord of the Dead (1995) and Slave of My Thirst (1996) reproduce Polidori's characterization by merging Ruthven and Byron, collapsing them into one identity. However, in his
refashioning, there is no Aubrey who serves as Ruthven’s victim and foil, which erases the homosexual relationship between the two men. Instead, Byron preys on women, most notably his family members or those related to him by blood. Polidori appears as himself, also a vampire, but in the guise of antagonist. Polidori takes Aubrey's place in the text as a man who has a symbiotic love/hate relationship with Byron. He hates Byron exceedingly and takes every opportunity to hurt him. Therefore, the horizon of expectation has been altered yet again, as this novel portrays Byron as predominantly a heterosexual vampire who simply takes the name of Ruthven after faking his own death in Missolonghi, using the character as façade, a fashioning that obfuscates his origins. The Ruthven line continues throughout both novels because of Byron's alternate line of progeny, which remains separate from that of Lady Byron and Ada. The name exists as a disguise to hide Byron's vampiric immortality.

Holland also emphasizes the twin aspects of the vampire's power and beauty in the novel. As was emphasized earlier, Holland stresses that "vampires remain recognizably Lord Byron's descendants," and here he makes good on his assertion by creating a Byronic vampire who has lived for almost two hundred years. As a modern-day vampire, Byron reveals himself to Rebecca, the family member as interlocutor, who listens to and transcribes his tale: "The vampire laughed and turned, and held the lamp up to his face [. . . .] There could be no doubt who she was staring at [. . . .] Lord Byron lowered the lamp and returned, limping, to his seat" (32). Holland underscores Byron's physical traits:

The dark curls of his hair set off the ethereal paleness of his skin; so delicate were his features that they seemed chiseled from ice; no flush of color, no hint of warmth touched the alabaster of his skin, yet the face seemed lit by some inner touch of flame. This was not the man who had died in the Missolonghi swamps, bald and overweight with rotting teeth. How had it happened, that he was standing here now, miraculously restored to the loveliness of his youth? "That beautiful pale face," she murmured to herself. And
beautiful it was, inhumanly so—the face of an angel cast from another world. (32)

The dark hair set off against the pale face, the youthful countenance, the unequaled beauty are compared with the character of a fallen angel, cast out from another world for his arrogance and hubris. His features are literally "chiseled from ice" and his face resembles alabaster. The coldness and paleness predominate in this refashioning of Byron as vampire. Hardly surprising, the young woman to whom Byron tells his story seems quite captivated by his aura of supernatural splendor.

Heterosexuality ostensibly permeates this text in contrast to the homoerotic emphasis of Polidori and Seymour's texts, but the subtext contradicts this. Holland characterizes Byron as predominantly a heterosexual with occasional bisexual leanings who remains attractive to both sexes.21 Holland varies the scope of the Byronic vampire by integrating a heterosexual component into the traditional male-male relationship. At one point in the novel, Byron seems to fall in love with a boy, but he later turns out to be a girl in disguise. The only homoerotic connection exists between Byron and his vampiric father. The Vakhel Pasha, whom Byron kills in a duel, bequeaths to his murderer his reign as King of the Vampires. Not surprisingly, the Pasha had been grooming Byron for this inevitability without the protégé's knowledge. The Pasha says to Byron: "I do not offer you life—I do not offer you death—but I offer you something as ancient as the rocks themselves. Prepare yourself for it. Prepare, milord, and be grateful" (123). In this, the Pasha resembles the antagonist from Seymour's text, in that he reproduces not only his body but also his reign by asexual and patrilineal means. In a purely ritualistic and religious manner, the death of the Vakhel Pasha initiates a bloody spray under which Byron stands as if being baptized: "A fountain of blood spouted up into the sky, bright scarlet against the deeper reds of the horizon, and then it began to pour down upon my head, like rain from a bloated crimson cloud. It fell as softly as a blessing, and I raised my face to welcome it" (149). This ritualistic "blessing," in a mocking reenactment of a religious ceremony, transfers the power of the King from sovereign to successor,
much as Ruthven had hoped to do in *Count Manfred*. Byron effectively inherits the legacy from his surrogate father, signifying once again vampiric reproduction through an asexual process.

Contemporary vampiric reproductions often include: the brooding, melancholy anti-hero, who haunts the shadows while savoring his extraordinary power over the vulnerable; the aristocratic insurgent, commanding and ruthless, who preys discerningly on those who find him captivating and magnetic; and the lonely sentimentalist, who, drawn to the dark side seemingly against his/her will, suffers isolation, despair and guilt. Twitchell connects Byron and the bloodsucker, describing the "mythic qualities of the vampire: here was the melancholy libertine in the open shirt, the nocturnal lover and destroyer, the maudlin, self-pitying, and moody titan, only a few years away from Nietzsche's Superman" (75). These recurring vampiric images demonstrate the gloominess, sexuality, and sinister pursuits of these formidable protagonists. Louis and Lestat stand as excellent examples of the Byronic vampire from Anne Rice's vampire chronicles.

These men evoke a dark, menacing personality, tempered by doubt, egotism, or even, on occasion, compassion. Kathryn McGinley asserts: "Ricean vampires retain strong human emotions, including love and guilt that take them a step beyond Dracula [. . . .] While traditional religious relics cannot harm them, they agonize over the nature of good and evil in search of solace" (83). She continues: "Lestat and Louis are polar opposites, each displaying different sides of the Byronic hero" (85). Similarly, Nina Auerbach believes that "the fraught ménage of Louis and Lestat is a return to vampire beginnings. Their irritable mutual obsession recovers literary vampires' lost origin: the homoerotic bond between Byron and Polidori" (153). Louis demonstrates more humanity than most humans do in Rice's books, continually bemoaning his fate and attempting to make the kill as quick and painless as possible. Conversely, Lestat relishes the kill, often playing with his prey for hours before dispatching them. Louis describes Lestat's victims: "A fresh young girl, that was his favorite food the first of the evening; but the triumphant kill for Lestat was a young man [. . . .] They
represented the greatest loss to Lestat, because they stood on the threshold of
the maximum possibility of life" (Interview 41-42). As the consummate vampire,
Lestat exhibits what Bertrand Russell says of Byron: "He could feel himself the
equal of the greatest sinners—the peer [. . .] almost of Satan himself [. . .] the
aristocrat and the rebel were all equally satisfied" (153). These examples not
only bolster Holland's claim, that vampires "remain recognizably Lord Byron's
descendants" (154), but also speak to the dominant aspects of vampiric
reproducibility and homoeroticism, with its connotations of blood, sex, and
alterity.

Question and Answer

As this chapter ends, we are left with questions and answers. Jauss tells
us that the "reconstruction of the horizon-of-expectations [. . .] enables one [. . .]
to pose questions that the text gave an answer to" (28). By 1819, Byron had
experienced both a rise to fame and a fall from grace. His popularity as a poet
had allowed him to reach the pinnacles of success, but the scandals of his
personal life had sorely tempered that acclaim. For Lamb and Polidori, Byron's
Gothic textuality needed to be altered and expanded: they questioned how Byron
would be seen by his consuming audience if portrayed in a monstrous context; in
this case, the monster was a vampire. As has been seen, Byron and subsequent
writers modified the Gothic horizon of expectation, shifting the boundaries so that
the vampire legend became, as Twitchell emphasizes, "a tribute to this one man"
(75). The vampire wears Byron's figure, even though each succeeding
generation altered that portrait to coincide with its horizon of experience.

What, however, do these texts mean to us as present-day readers? Jauss
addresses this issue: "For the implicit question, which in fact is what first
awakens our present interest in the past work, can be obtained only through the
answer that the aesthetic object in its present materialization, holds or seems to
hold ready for us" (69). That "implicit question," what impels the Byronic vampire
and by extension Byronism, remains central to our understanding of historical
mediation of the Gothic and the diachronic progression of the vampire. In
answer, we see how audiences are still clamoring for "things Byronic." His name still sells books, but his poetry has been somewhat effaced by his imposing figure. The audience has been and is always ready to consume a Byronic production. A reader of popular vampiric tales expects a vampire who evokes the Byronic trope. He is, as G. Wilson Knight says of Byron, "torn between history and tragic insight, mankind and lonely self-conflict, time and eternity [. . .] each at once symbols of both the natural and the eternal" (29-30). The vampire symbolizes the immediate and the timeless, the human and the supernatural, the present and the future. Within the narrow focus of this chapter, the vampire becomes a reproducible and reproducing image associated with reception anxieties, homoeroticism, and magnetism. On a larger scale, however, the vampire's popularity has exploded since its Byronic reconfiguration. The vampire speaks to the dark side we all keep hidden; it stands as the ultimate predator: cool, aloof, immensely powerful, incredibly alluring, inaccessible, melancholy, and aristocratic. Perhaps Auerbach says it best: "As a species vampires have been our companions for so long that it is hard to imagine living without them. They promise escape from our dull lives and the pressure of our times, but they matter because when properly understood, they make us see that our lives are implicated in theirs and our times are inescapable" (9).
Chapter 3: The Byronic Wraith

As Ibsen suggests, ghosts populate our psyches and haunt us with their ties to a past we may or may not wish to forget. As detailed in the OED, our language abounds with ghostly images and representations: souls or spirits; ghost writers/artists; the ghost in the machine; the Holy Ghost; itinerant wraiths portending doom; and spiritual messengers. One can "give up the ghost," not have the "ghost of a chance," or resemble a ghost by being the shadow of one's former self. Ghosts exist in microscopes, telescopes, photographs, spectroscopes, and organic cells. They also appear in bands of steel, in television screens as displaced, repeated images, in radar screens as spurious signals, and in fireplaces as dead pieces of coal. Clearly, ghosts intrigue us, permeating our thoughts and our discourses.

Ghosts rarely correspond to the future, evoking instead our lived past and our ability, or perhaps inability, to remember. Ghost-like memories arise unbidden and elude us when sought. We are often said to be haunted by our memories, especially those we would rather expunge from our consciousnesses. Ghosts are cultural icons of memory, whose translucence serves as a representation of their illusory, fleeting, perceptually-based characteristics. Memories are fragmented, ethereal constructions of a synchronic moment within a diachronic linearity. Memories serve as receptacles for our experiences, but those experiences can be manufactured by us or by others, differing significantly from someone else's memories of the same event. Memories ground us in the past while informing our future.23

Throughout this dissertation, I attempt to expose the coalesced Byronic body performatively created by Byronism. The imprinted, stylized, repeated acts
are written as discourses upon blank pages by authors, critics, and biographers. They resemble ghosts by evoking images that seemingly transcend Byronic manifestations and hearken back to the original, emphasizing identifiable and specialized traits that correspond to Lord Byron. By interweaving Jauss’s theories regarding the diachronic and the synchronic with Butler’s theories of performativity, I hope to disperse these ghosts and sever their ties to an original spirit. Butler says that "every identification, precisely because it has a phantasm as its ideal, is bound to fail" (GT 55). The imagined transcendental truth behind every coalesced body is only a construction, nothing more than a mirage or ghost that haunts us with its foundational falsehood.

In this chapter, I will explore, problematize, challenge, and eventually dissolve the link between ghosts, expressly Byronic, and essentialism. By summoning the poet from beyond, the authors I examine seek answers to questions that remained unanswered at his death; they reify and reiterate Byronic traces through the act of repeatedly reinscribing his figure. Moreover, they invest the ghost with timeless qualities that suggest a reassembled Byron, complete with specific idiosyncrasies and character traits. Not surprisingly, the conjuring authors reiterate Byron's performativity. They reinscribe each stylized act, repeating it while at the same time manipulating and varying the figure through the effects of Byronism, which impels and perpetuates Byronic performances and figures. These authors reveal their own agenda and performativity, attempting to force Byronic appearances and meaning to converge, instigating a performance, as Butler would say, that works. They emphasize the ghost's performative qualities, rendering it knowable to the audience as Byron. However, the appearance and meaning often diverge, leading to an artifice seen as artifice.

The Byronic Performative

In Chapter 1, I sketched the ways Judith Butler's theories of performativity can be applied to Byronism's production and perpetuation. The body performing (i.e. Byron) effectuates the ideal performed (i.e. Byronism). However, through the continued manipulation of Byronism, the Byronic figure becomes diffused,
maneuvered, and altered. Byronism creates Byron. Byronism is the perpetuation of the Byron legend, a mythologizing that has been effected by writers who have changed, extended or diminished the Byron myth. Using Jauss's reception theories and the author-text-audience triangle, I showed in Chapter 2 how authors consume material and transform it into critical discourse, thereby augmenting and enhancing the constantly expanding horizon for future voracious generations of readers and viewers. As Jauss says, the "next work can solve formal and moral problems left behind by the last work, and present new problems in turn" (TAR 32). The Jaussian triangulation and reconfiguration continue as Byronism advances.

Yet Byron's performances obscure Byronism's genesis, shrouding artifice with wraith-like teleology that posits a purpose for this seemingly natural phenomenon. Reconfiguring Butler's description of gender performativity for my own purposes, I would say that "there is no [Byronic] identity behind the expressions of [Byronism]; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (GT 25). The various Byronic acts and gestures, which were seized upon and transformed by later authors, critics, and biographers, were written into this discourse, becoming a part of the triangle's reconfiguration. They became, as Butler would say, a "set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance [of Byron], of a natural sort of being" who stands within history as the figuration of Byron that becomes disseminated through Byronism (GT 33).

This recurrent production effects an artificial codification of Byron in that the performance varies with each alteration, with each reconfiguration of Jauss's triangle. This triangle of author, work, and public constantly recreates itself through inexhaustible regeneration. With each rereading, reinterpretation, and rewriting, the triangles advance, explaining how Byronism flourishes. No ontology results from Byron's performativity; Byronism produces the effects of "an internal core of substance, but produce[s] th[ese] on the surface of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principles of identity as a cause" (GT 136). Performativity suggests a
"dramatic and contingent construction of meaning" that can be seen diachronically by examining a synchronic cross-section of the Byronic performance perpetuated by Byronism.

Just as, according to Butler, gender and sex are stylized repetitions of acts that ultimately rely on illusions of stable identities constructed by discourse, so too with Byronism. In *Excitable Speech*, Butler emphasizes that "an 'act' is not a momentary happening, but a certain nexus of temporal horizons, the condensation of an iterability that exceeds the moment it occasions" (14). In other words, an "act" is not a singular event, but a series of such events linked through an historically contingent time and space, focused within a repetition that moves beyond the moment that brings it into being. This "act" discursively defines the Byronic performance that arises synchronically within a diachronic span that is constructed by Byronism. The performance stabilizes within a synchronic cross-section but destabilizes when viewed diachronically. The performance solidifies during an historically contingent time but remains fluid and translucent when viewed outside of this specificity. As Butler would say, this condensation occurs within a "certain nexus of temporal horizons," a phrase that reflects a Jaussian theoretical construction. Butler's "temporal horizons" and Jauss's horizons of experience and expectation situate these "condensations" within a synchronic space; they both rely upon an historical unfolding and mediate within an "objectifiable system of expectations." Accordingly, the work and audience create ever renewing "horizons-of-experience," the ever-broadening landscape of critical and perceptual understanding through which "recognized aesthetic norms" create "new productions" that surpass or efface their primogenitors, but also retain enough of the genetic material to be recognizable in each incarnation.

Within these horizons, writers reiterate the Byronic performative historically. This Byronic performance stands as a persistent impersonation, maneuvered, altered, manipulated, and extended by the authors, critics, biographers and others who follow him. Butler warns us, though, that the term "acts" carries with it inherent difficulties: "It is not simply a matter of construing
performativity as a repetition of acts, as if 'acts' remain intact and self-identical as they are repeated in time, and where 'time' is understand as external to the 'acts' themselves. On the contrary, an act is itself a repetition, a sedimentation, a congealment of the past which is precisely foreclosed in its act-like status" (*BTM* 244). Each act carries with it a past, which manifests itself within each reconfiguration of the Jaussian triangle. To attempt to locate the genesis for this act is impossible. Even Lord Byron cannot stand as its origin, as his performances carry with them their own past. Consequently, as Foucault says in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," genealogy's task is "to expose a body totally imprinted in history" (148). He defines body as "the inscribed surface of events" (148). These "inscribed surface[s] of events" correspond to Butler's "act" in that they are both "inscribed" upon bodies progressing through history. As a result, not only can we take as axiomatic genealogy's postulations that origins remain complicated, we can also propose that Byronic performance becomes imprinted upon Byron's body through Byronism. This body, however, suggests Baudrillard's simulacrum, a copy for which there is no origin. The constructed body, imprinted through performance, stands as an iterability arising within a temporally defined nexus. As Butler warns, though, a "construction is, after all, not the same as an artifice" (*BTM* 94). Even though Byronism constructs Byron, performativity exists as a codifiable composition, which quite often is mistaken as the original.

Byronism presents a Byron whose entirety is continually postponed. Byron is always in the state of becoming, never arriving at any stabilized identity except through an historically contingent specificity, a "certain nexus of temporal horizons." Lord Byron stands as the phantasm unknowable to us yet allegedly and mistakenly positioned as the origin. Byronism attempts to portray itself as having read this internality, but the internality is illusory. What exists remains already on the surface, refashioned with each shift of Jauss's triangle, which occurs as a result of the synergistic and empathic give-and-take among audience, text, and author. As Butler says: "'Inner' and 'outer' make sense only with reference to a mediating boundary that strives for stability. And this stability,
this coherence, is determined in large part by cultural orders that sanction the subject and compel its differentiation from the abject. Hence, 'inner' and 'outer' constitute a binary distinction that stabilizes and consolidates the coherent subject" (GT 134). Byron becomes stable only when seen through a synchronic lens arranged through the "heterogeneous multiplicity of contemporaneous works" which allows us to "discover an overarching system of relationships in the literature of a historical moment" (Jauss Aesthetics 35). Diachronically, Byron remains fluid and destabilized, awaiting the next stabilization. Accordingly, and to restate Butler, various Byronizing acts create Byron.

The Byron constructed through Byronism is, as Butler says of gender, "performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (GT 25). The Byron phenomenon operates largely on performativity, which enacts "a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (GT 33). Byronism sets into motion these "repeated acts" that become situated within a synchronic space, a place that codifies the figure by enclosing it within the "highly rigid regulatory frame," not separate from the act but constitutive of it. Thus, the "appearance of substance," the Byron that Byronism produces, appears to be a "natural sort of being" mistakenly predicated upon some illusory original. The performances enacted and associated with Byron's person are repeated through biographies, fictions, letters, and journals. They constitute the being that is supposed to be the genesis, but which, alternately, only impels the constitution, itself. Byronism repeats and marks these acts on a coalesced Byronic body, a body that fulfills the requirements for the regulatory frame but acquires nuances with each refashioning. Accordingly, it becomes impossible to ascertain the origin because the manipulations reshape the regulatory frame as much as the earliest performances do.

The Byronic performance appears solid only when viewed through a synchronic frame, reproducing the cultural and ideological milieu. The performance reiterates the incessant and repeated actions but always in a state of becoming. Hence, the audience is always already within Byronism, unable to
move to an outside viewpoint because this viewpoint does not exist. This illusion, discursively maintained through these repeated acts, involves not only the performative but also the cultural, political, ideological, and historical facets of the synchronic time in which it manifests itself. They congeal within an historically contingent space, replete with mannerisms and features that might accentuate, diminish, oppose or even cancel out previous incarnations, or they might simply reinscribe the previous performances as "real," leading the reader to imagine that they somehow possess teleological qualities. This has led to an overwhelming abundance of biographical and historical materials that attempt to see through the performative to some illusory original that enacts the eccentricities, the foibles, and eventually Lord Byron's final essence.

What this abundance fails to account for, however, is Lord Byron's inaccessibility, to us or even to his friends or critics of the time. His performativity was as present then as it is today, but we have the additional emendations of the past two hundred years. To imagine that we might find the essential Byron belies the fluidity of the diachronic phenomenon. Instead of a formative cause, we have a Byron that "might be reconceived as a personal/cultural history of received meanings subject to a set of imitative practices which refer laterally to other imitations and which, jointly, construct the illusion of a primary and interior" self (GT 138). These synchronic representations refer to one another, build upon one another, even influence or manipulate one another, but they do not stand as original or even imitate an original. Byronism constructs this illusory Byron rather than perpetrating a primary figure. Therefore, there is no "singular or deliberate 'act'" as Butler says in Bodies That Matter, but instead "the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names" (2). No single Byronic act enables Byronism to exist; instead, the acts are "reiterative" and "citational" in that they continually speak and refer to themselves, congealing into forms but destabilizing repeatedly. They "cite" each other by existing within but never beyond the phenomenon itself.

Byronism reiterates performance while altering it with each reconfiguration of Jauss's triangle. Each performance, read here as a text, becomes one in a
series of texts constantly being produced. Rather than seeing the performance stand alone, isolated from history or only in relation to history, we use both synchronic and diachronic methods effectively to form a model of performative history. The Byronic performative remains "discursively constituted" (GT 2) and these constructs are "'real' to the extent that they are fictive phenomena that gain power within discourse" (GT 119). Byron's performativity becomes enacted through the language he used, through the letters, the journals, the poetry, and the conversations. These words are then reinterpreted and performed. Performativity, Butler says, is the "power of discourse to produce effects through reiteration" (BTM 20). This discourse has a history, which prompts the citationality that pervades each performance.

What, we might ask, are the limits of this performativity? Assuredly, it remains unending, free to spin off new synchronic manifestations with each succeeding generation of authors but does not stop with them. As Butler asserts, "the reach of their [the effects of performatives, understood as discursive productions] signifiability cannot be controlled by the one who utters or writes, since such productions are not owned by the one who utters them. They continue to signify in spite of their authors, and sometimes against their authors' most precious intentions" (BTM 241). This idea follows closely upon the Jaussian connection among author, text, and audience. Even though the author produces the text, once given to the audience, the text changes with the audience's mediation. Interpretations are necessarily fluid; discourses change meaning with each reading, altering the constructs. Butler also emphasizes the productions' ability to "signify in spite of their authors." Byronism ultimately succeeds because of this regulated signification. The Byronic figure's fluidity across a diachronic space metamorphoses with each succeeding and receding production, coalescing in one way, destabilizing, and then coalescing in an entirely different fashion.

Jerome McGann addresses Byronic performativity, at least partly, in his theories regarding Byron's masks. He says: "'Man is least himself,' wrote Oscar Wilde, 'when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask and he will tell you the
Perhaps no English writer, not even Wilde himself, executed this theory of the mask so completely as Byron. [ . . . ] Byron was operating en masque from his first appearances in print” (Byron and Romanticism 141). While addressing Byron's diverse performances, repeatedly manifesting as stylized representation of the Byronic persona, McGann assumes that an entity always exists beneath the mask. Even if Byron wore innumerable masks, with this theory there is always a Byron who survives; he possesses enough agency and form to change the various masks that hide his "real" identity. In Masquerade and Identities, Efrat Tseëlon asserts that masking "evokes an idea of an authentic identity ('behind the mask' or 'behind the performance') only to dismantle the illusion of such identity" (10). The Byron behind the mask is the illusion created by Byronism, a performative set of acts constructed to become that which it professes to be: an originality without genesis.

Whereas a mask implies a wearer, performativity defines and manipulates the body to suit its purposes. Butler asks: "Where is this incorporated space? If it is not literally within the body, perhaps it is on the body as its surface signification such that the body must itself be understood as an incorporated space" (67). The Byronic body exists as a blank page onto which the performative writes its discourse within an historically contingent space. We can envision it as a receptive medium, much like memory, that becomes inscribed with the author's (or biographer's or critic's or friend's) discourse. By exposing the performative body created by Byronism as a result of the stylized repetition of acts and imprinted by the authors, critics, biographers, and others who write the discourse onto this blank page, we will not only be able to see how Byron is fashioned, but also what the writers ascribe to that body based on culture, ideology, and history.

We must, then, focus on the connections between Byronic ghosts and memory, linking these two formulations to the performativity that underlies them. Additionally, we will work against the desire to locate an original Byron upon whom the Byronic performative is based. As Butler asserts: "Just as bodily surfaces are enacted as the natural, so these surfaces can become the site of a
dissonant and denaturalized performance that reveals the performative status of
the natural itself" (146). The repeated acts, as viewed synchronically within a
diachronic fluidity, continually reassert themselves performatively. This
"denaturalized" construction, which works against an essentialistic model, shows
us the performative and reveals in its "very exaggeration" the "fundamentally
phantasmatic status" that we can connect here to ghosts and memory (147).
Tseëlon says as much about her theories of masquerade: "Masquerade unsettles
and disrupts the fantasy of coherent, unitary, stable, mutually exclusive divisions.
It replaces clarity with ambiguity, certainty with reflexivity, and phantasmic
constructions of containment and closure with constructions that in reality are
more messy, diverse, impure and imperfect" (3). Masquerade theory destabilizes
the masks and wearer, thereby simulating the performative. Tseëlon admits as
much when she says: "Like the discursive [masquerade] is ambivalent and
contextual, and like the performative it signals transformation not fixity" (9). In a
similar vein, Annette Kuhn in "The Body and Cinema" says: "Performance, in
other words, poses the possibility of a mutable self, of a fluid subjectivity" (200).
With Butler's performativity, and with Tseëlon and Kuhn's theories of
masquerade, we see that McGann's masks fail to account fully for the fluidity of
the illusory entity constructed through Byronism. The Byronic performative
remains fluid not fixed, always in the act of becoming rather than in a state of
stability.

Manfred's Memory and Astarte's Ghost

The Byronic performative emerges in Manfred with ties to both memory and
ghosts. We see how Byronism once again effects that which is said to be an
origin in Astarte's ghost. Rather than appearing as Byron's ghost, Astarte's
ghost symbolizes Byronic anxiety and the hint of incest. Moreover, the ghost
denotes a paradox: that which Manfred longs to forget yet yearns to remember.
A Byronic hero, Manfred appears consumed with guilt and unending remorse.
His slumbers "are not sleep, / But a continuance of enduring thought" (1.1.3-4).
This enduring thought permeates his being, infusing it with memory. In fact, we
might see how Manfred ultimately represents a sustainable, perpetual memory in its corporeal form. He longs to forget but cannot. In *Byron and His Fictions*, Peter J. Manning emphasizes that in *Manfred*, forgetfulness joins with "its two components of stern self-repression and desire to return to an earlier, untroubled stage of existence" (71). Manfred longs to forget his past or at least the past that haunts him, returning, as Manning suggests, to a more naïve existence. Within the spirit's "Incantation," Manfred is told: "Though thy slumber may be deep, / Yet thy spirit shall not sleep, / There are shades which will not vanish, / There are thoughts thou canst not banish" (1.1.202-205). Since Manfred represents memory, his quest for forgetfulness will always fail. He remains ever vigilant and his "eyes but close / To look within" (1.1.6-7). Introspection serves only to remind him of his enduring thoughts and sustains his suffering.

Manfred's memory restricts itself not merely to his personal suffering but also encompasses a much broader worldly anguish. His performance requires a larger stage, a more extensive purview. He laments that those who "know the most / Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth, / The Tree of Knowledge is not that of life" (1.1.10-12). He aligns himself with Adam, which enlarges his suffering and his memory to that of the first primogenitor. His misery and torment become larger than any one life could maintain, which suggests his near deification and intense persecution. If not Christ-like in his composition, he at least resembles the Miltonic Lucifer, the Greek Prometheus, or the biblical Job. In *Byron and the Myth of Tradition*, Frederick W. Shilstone emphasizes this separation from humanity: "the more Manfred learns, the more acute becomes his sense of human isolation" (158). This is suffering on a universal scale, but it separates Manfred from humanity. He endures alone and unaided, his memory unequalled.

These stylized, repetitive acts (the timeless suffering, the eternal memory, the unending isolation) signal the performative by their continued recurrence. These acts become repeated and concentrated through and within other Byronic heroes, which then become reiterated and manipulated by later authors. Manfred embodies memory but longs to forget. His memories haunt and torture
him, but the exorcism of these intangible ghosts remains problematic. As Butler says in *Bodies That Matter*, performativity is "the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names" (2). Manfred's performativity effects that citationality that perpetuates Byronism. His "continuance of enduring thought," his "vigil," and his unending "grief," produce the "acts" that become inscribed on his personality (1.1.4-9). The character longs for that which Byronism cannot allow or give. Much like the spirits that Manfred invokes, who "can but give [him] that which [they] possess," Byronism cannot give Manfred the one thing that keeps it continuously advancing.

In this regard, Byronism stands as a sustainable and perpetuating memory. The reconfiguration of the Jaussian triangle can be sustained only through memory, through a reenactment of the author-text-audience triad that continues with each rewriting. As Jauss says, only through the process of mediation can a work enter "into the changing horizon-of-experience of a continuity in which the perpetual inversion occurs from simple reception to critical understanding, from passive to active reception, from recognized aesthetic norms to a new production that surpasses them" (*Aesthetics* 19). The movement from simple to critical and from passive to active requires memory to function within tradition and history. The "experience of literature" necessitates an *experience* that can be mediated and recalled. Even though the performances appear altered or manipulated by the authors, each succeeding discourse holds within it the discourse from the previous rewriting. The diachronic linearity persists through recognition of the previous synchronic manifestations. The tenuous but persuasive links of the Byronic performative ensure its survival. This is the web against which Manfred so futilely struggles. He is caught, not only by his own actions and grief, but by the past and by the memory that links him to this past.

Astarte’s ghost symbolizes the past that Manfred longs to forget. She resembles him in every detail except for her feminine, soft, and emotional nature. Notably, however, that familiar taint of narcissism permeates this play; Manfred adores Astarte because of their similarity. They might have been identical twins:
her lineaments, her features, and her voice were all identical to Manfred's except that they embodied gentleness. Manfred and Astarte share not only a lineage, but also a history and a connection to both memory and story. Manfred says: "I say 'tis blood—my blood! The pure warm stream / Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours / When we were in our youth, and had one heart" (2.1.24-26). They share the same blood, but they also share the same history, the same past. Much like the spirits, the Witch of the Alps, and Arimanes, Astarte cannot give Manfred what he desires: forgetfulness. This is not within her power because she herself does not possess it.

The shared blood, history, and past have led some critics and reviewers to theorize that Manfred and Astarte were literary representations of Byron and Augusta. In this way, the critics and reviewers assert that the ghosts who haunted Manfred also haunted Byron. The same year *Manfred* was published, a reviewer for *The Day and New Times* declared: "Lord Byron had coloured *Manfred* into his own personal features" (qtd. in Marchand 699). He continues by saying that Manfred had committed "incest." Manning affirms that "in Manfred's love for Astarte Byron offers a disguised account of his love for Augusta" (84). Earlier in his text, Manning asserts that Manfred "is not Prometheus seeking a boon for mankind, but a ceaseless self-tormentor whose most insistent desire is absolution from the painful self-consciousness which is the Promethean heritage" (72). In "Byronic Confession," Soderholm asserts: "Certainly Byron divulged something about himself and his tormenting past in *Manfred*, but precisely what caused his intolerable suffering, he intimated but never directly confessed" (187). He does stress that "most of Byron's contemporaries believed he was ruminating over his crime of incest" (187). In these instances, and others, the critics and reviewers imply a direct link between Byron and Manfred. Not only does this association initiate a biographical connection that must always remain suspect and should inevitably be further complicated, but it also diminishes performativity. By seeing Byron masked as Manfred, these critics suggest a wearer behind the mask. I would argue, however, that both Manfred and Byron are performatively
constructed by Byronism, which necessarily forecloses any essentialistic connection between the performance and the performer.

The performative never forecloses the multiplicities inherent in any text. In fact, we learn to savor the dissonance created by alternate readings and disparate voices. McGann says that the Byronic Hero "is a hero with a thousand faces" (158). The faces here imply masks, all worn by an individual who possesses the agency to wear or not wear them. The performative works against this. Instead of seeing an entity beneath the thousand masks, we need to dissolve the link between the wearer and the face, between the ghost and its corporeal body. We have performance, but performativity is more than just performance. Butler argues: "Performance as bounded 'act' is distinguished from performativity insofar as the latter consists in a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer's 'will' or 'choice'; further, what is 'performed' works to conceal, if not to disavow, what remains opaque, unconscious, unperformable. The reduction of performativity to performance would be a mistake" (BTM 234). Were we to accept the mask and wearer, we would miss the performativity that "precedes," "constrains," and "exceeds" them. The critics and reviewers represent Byron as a performer who wears masks, whereas performativity induces us to see that which exceeds Byron, that which remains "opaque, unconscious, unperformable."

Byronic Ghosts

The ghosts in this section are linked to the past and memory, by authors who construct Byron's past and seek to connect that construction to an original. The ghosts are memory embodied but shrouded in a teleological guise. The authors whose texts I shall examine use these representations to investigate Byron's past and locate an origin in order to incorporate that origin in their rewriting. These authors interrogate the dead, asking questions and receiving answers to mysteries that remained unsolved during Byron's life. They question opinions and find reasons for inexplicable actions. They attempt to locate the
man behind the mask much as did McGann and the previously cited reviewers and critics. What they miss by focusing on this is that which precedes, constrains, and exceeds the performer. What they miss is the performative. I argue, then, that the first three texts focus on the performer to the exclusion of the performative, upon which the fourth text concentrates. The historically earlier texts attempt to articulate a performative but fall short, not fully activating the performative but instead prefiguring performativity. They make overtures toward but often end up working against the performative by focusing solely on the performer—the Byronic ghost with its connections to the historical yet dead Byron.

In the texts I discuss, these performers appear as both likely and unlikely ghosts. In John North's *A Shade Byronic* (1933), the Byron specter appears to a middle-aged woman in the early twentieth century. He cannot speak and so the mystery's unraveling depends upon the narrator's detective acumen. In Quevedo Redivivus' *A Spiritual Interview with Lord Byron* (1876), the narrator visits a medium, a spiritualist who channels Byron's spirit from the other realm. The narrator is treated to a lengthy harangue about the state of the afterlife, the literature of the age, and Byron's frustration and anger with his numerous literary portraits. In Romulus Linney's *Childe Byron* (1981), Ada, Byron's daughter, caught in the agonizing death throes of cancer, imagines that her father visits her. Whether this is caused by hallucination and drugs or by a breach of the barrier between the living and the dead is left to the reader's imagination. In this text, Ada demands answers from her father, whom during her life she never saw again after the separation when she was five months old. Finally, in Amanda Prantera's *Conversations with Lord Byron on Perversion 163 Years after his Lordship's Death* (1987), Byron's figure becomes activated within and then enticed from a computerized artificial intelligence. The synthetic matrix forms a perfect medium for a narrative that exists on numerous levels: 1) the programmers and Byron experts; 2) the questioner and the computer; 3) the computer's internal thoughts to which only the reader is privy. In each text, the repeated acts that perpetuate Byronism construct the Byron whom the ghosts
resemble. Only the final text actively inhabits a performative space; the first three emphasize performance and the performer by stressing ties to an original Byron that informs their ghosts.

A Shade Byronic, the least complicated of these four texts, initiates an immediate and direct association between the biographical Byron and the ghost. He is introduced to the protagonist, a 44 year-old spinster named Irene Miles, as a "short and antique-looking man" who carried with him a copy of Sir Walter Scott's Quentin Durward (9). Only his "large grey eyes" and his inability to speak stand out as noticeable: "The small man opened his mouth to protest, but even after several attempts not a sound emerged" (15). This silence drives the novel, but it also reduces the Byronic characterization to nothing more than eccentricities and idiosyncratic behaviors. His arrogant sneers, his moody pouts, and his demanding nature, often romanticized, stand out starkly against the mundane picture of a lost and helpless man seemingly out of his element and time. North gestures toward the performative by emphasizing repeated acts that have become indicative of Byron but does not move beyond this point.

The ghost's characteristics (taken from the Elizabeth Colburn Mayne biography that later appears as a prop within the narrative) structure a plot that progresses with each new discovery. He limps with a "slithering gait"; at a restaurant, he eats nothing but cold potatoes soaked in vinegar, drinks nothing but soda water, and becomes immeasurably excited over red tooth-powder (26, 43, 114). He bites his nails, yet his "noble brow," "white skin," and "blue-grey eyes," bespeak nobility that remains apparent to the narrator (109, 18). This is a Byron abridged, a phantom that cannot defend himself to his attackers, or even explain his confusion or desires to an often frustrated Miss Miles. He appears as nothing more than a shell of a man filled with Byron's more unappealing traits.

Even the character's limited magnetism exists only to show Miss Miles how deadly mundane her own life had become, how incurably dull. She follows this man from a needy desperation rather than from any desire to decipher this mystery. When she is with him, she feels "[p]eace was descending upon her soul. She was no longer chained to earth; she was no longer a mere economic
unit, a cog in a harsh commercial machine, earning so many pounds a week. She was not even herself; at the moment she just felt rather beautifully lost in a delightfully strange world" (49). She becomes privy to a supernatural event that propels her out of a humdrum and economically driven existence into a world that vibrates with novelty, exploration, and adventure. In fact, the Byron portrayed here has a lost-puppyish quality about him. His inability to speak places him in a position of passivity and vulnerability. North describes the ghost as a "slight shrinking simulacrum of a man" (45). Byron appears as nothing more than a condensation, a hastily drawn automaton propelled by peculiar behavior and tastes.

Byron is a ghost, but only in the sense that he appears as a shadow of a former self. North portrays him as an ineffectual wraith, saddened by his loss of power, stature, nobility, and genius. Miss Miles feels haunted by an apparition, an entity whom she describes as a "phantom," a "dream," a "spectre," and a "vision" (173, 181, 187, 197). More often than not, however, she sees him as an old, weary and perplexed man, whose drooping shoulders seem to carry the weight of the world (156). This ghost had lost his luster; his past, his memory, haunts him as much as Manfred's does. He suffers because he remembers. "The old sour and angry gleam lurked behind his lowered eyelids [. . . .] He had merely caught a glimpse of himself in one of the huge slab-like mirrors" (45). In this way, he resembles the bookseller in the novel, surrounded by books that remind him only of the past, a past into which he can escape the mundane aspects of the present. The bookseller says of Byron: "Whatever people may say about his poetry it has at least got some guts in it; and that's more than you can say of this modern stuff" (97). He continues: "Byron was just about the first and is still among the very greatest of the spirits of the modern age" (99). North portrays both Byron and the bookseller as ghosts, both literally and figuratively clinging to a past that haunts them yet provides the only solace they possess. Because of this strong connection to a Byronic origin, the text embraces essentialism and belies performativity. North motions toward performativity with an emphasis on the repeated acts that become inscribed on the Byronic form,
but he effaces the performative while accentuating the performer. Lord Byron, implicit within the Byronic ghost, defines and serves as origin.

Whereas in North’s text we have nothing but body and behavior, in Redivivus’ text, we have only spirit and voice. A medium channels Byron's spirit for a client in order to ascertain the dead poet's views on contemporary literature, politics, and culture. Before we even start reading the text, we are connected to Byron by the author's name, Quevedo Redivivus, which alludes to Byron's anonymous publication under the same name of *The Vision of Judgment*, his fervent satire against Robert Southey. Quevedo Redivivus is Latin for Quevedo Revived, referencing Francisco de Quevedo, the 17th-century Spanish author of *Sueños*, a prose satire. Only those who have studied Byron's biographies would understand and grasp this allusion. The author occupies a Byronic space, initiating through allusion a sardonic and mocking satire that appropriates the Byronic voice.

Byron becomes a mouthpiece through which Redivivus can criticize and satirize his peers. He remains anonymously Byronic, hiding behind the dead poet's scathing wit and contemptuous articulations. Conjured by the medium, the spirit begins his harangue immediately, hardly allowing the interviewer any space for questions or comments. He reviles Disraeli’s parodies, wishing that he would "suppress, if possible, his *Venetia*" (5). He damns Harriet Beecher Stowe for her execrable denunciation of him and her defense of Lady Byron; he censures Henry James Pye who "writes his silly verses in the Spiritual papers as mine, and brings me into ridicule" (6). He venerates Hans Christian Andersen and Edgar Allan Poe, while belittling Robert Browning and Alfred Lord Tennyson as "drivelling." He continues: "I never could read ten lines of Tennyson without a headache. I candidly confess I don't consider either him or Browning poets" (8).

Redivivus conjures the satirical Byron of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, *The Vision of Judgment*, and *Don Juan*. Byron appears here as the self-righteous critic who weighs the current state of Victorian literature and finds it lacking: "The majority of people who read, read little and have no judgment. [. . .] What can briefless barristers, man milliners, and ritualistic curates, know of
literature?” (8). The author creates for himself a Byronic mask, behind which he can hide, but through which he speaks. The mask works in much the same way the medium works: as a conduit for a disembodied voice that nonetheless once had firm ties to a body. The author wears the Byronic voice like a cloak, behind which he hides his identity. He can deride, disparage, and censure all within the confines of his veiled space. He performs Byron, but the text is not performative because it misses that which, as Butler would say, precedes, constrains, and exceeds the performer. Like North's *A Shade Byronic*, this text gestures toward the performative through acts that alert the audience to Byron's reproduction, yet it connects that likeness to an historical yet dead Byron.

Once again, the connection to origins overwhelms the text, implicating an historical Byron within a conjured phenomenon. North created a body without a voice; here, we have a voice without a body. Other than one brief reference to tobacco, "Don't light it, it's beastly vulgar I own, but I chew a little" (9), the body remains absent. The author focuses solely on his own spiritually parroted denunciations. This voice resides within the medium's body, even though the spiritualist has taken great pains to look the part, dressed in a "long cloak" with the "large collars so well known in Lord Byron's pictures" (5). The author relies upon the stylization that accrues through knowledge about Byron and uses it to draw attention away from the corporeal to the articulation. In so doing, the author privileges the speaker's dialogue over his conduct, while at the same time inscribing upon the spiritualized form the recognizable content of the performer. The ghost becomes a mouthpiece through which the author can reach his audience; the author speaks to his addressees and remains driven by their reception of him.

In yet another putative turn, Redivivus attempts to impart a timeless quality to his own meditations. Situated within a celebrated poet's voice, Redivivus's words take on import and significance they might not otherwise have possessed. On the other side, Byron lives with Horace, Thomas Moore, Anacreon and Aristophanes in "a sort of Valhalla" (9). Shelley remains "meek" and "gentlemanly," Coleridge "eats opium still," and Hannah Moore and Felicia
Hemans "give tea parties" (9). He dines with Sheridan, Shakespeare, Ben Johnson, Lytton, and the Prince Regent. He belongs to the "Socratic Club," thanks to Plato and because of his "knowledge of love" (11). This context allows the author to place Byron within a writer's heaven, an eternalized place from which the dead poet speaks. The spirit has been conjured; Redivivus constructs Byron, a Byron always already constructed by Byronism, and speaks through him. This text draws upon the historical to inform the Byronic performance, underscoring the performer at the expense of the performative.

In *Childe Byron*, Romulus Linney performs an apology for Byron, ameliorating bad behavior, arrogance, and aristocratic privilege by providing for the poet rationales and stimulus. On the one hand, Byron's daughter Ada represents those individuals who loathe Byron's life and abhor his laissez-faire attitude; on the other hand, the Byronic ghost (or perhaps hallucination) defends his behavior, eventually bringing Ada over to his point of view. The time is November 27, 1852. Various props from Byron's life surround Ada: poems, pistols, a skull cup, and a sword. Hector Berlioz's "Harold in Italy" is playing in the background. Ada appears weak, near death from cancer at age 36, the same age that her father died. The author intersperses Byron's poetry throughout the text, especially that connected with Ada. As the scene opens, she writes her Last Will and Testament. Through this act, she summons her father, who appears in the open collar and long cloak for which he was known in life.

The props act as Ada's talismans and conjuring tools, allowing her to summon Byron, much like the authors do, through an emphasis on his effects. This ties the ghost to his property, linking him to a Byronic original, once again underscoring the performer. As audience members, we are meant to recognize the ghost through his belongings and his appearance, which impart a proprietary ambience to the scene. Berlioz's music situates the audience within Byronism, alluding to the Byronic influence not only on other writers but on composers as well. First published in 1977, the work anachronistically plays with history, showcasing Ada's instrumental patronage of Charles Babbage, inventor of the
first "thinking machine," a prelude to the computer. She describes it as an engine "run by clockwork, with digits standing for thoughts. Suppose your every conscious thought is attached to a digit. By arranging them to appear in mathematical combinations, you might have, at your immediate disposal, every idea you ever possessed" (4). She later says to Byron, "it may even write your poems" (4). Byron remains suitably disdainful: "A machine that thinks is bad enough. God save us from one that writes" (4). Byron denigrates the machine as both unfeeling and incapable of reaching suitable poetic stature.

This performance never moves beyond the performer. Whereas a machine would be perfectly performative, lacking any link to body or spirit, Linney instead reiterates the link between the ghost and the historical man through proprietary conceit. The poet keeps the muse to himself. To be replaced by a machine would indicate that the poetic process was nothing more than a mathematical construction, reducible to logical equations and numerical data. The ghost, by asking God to save humanity from a machine that thinks, rails against this "Analytical Engine," believing that poetry can only be accomplished through sweat, inspiration, and genius, the bailiwick of humanity and only a few humans at that. Byronic pride and haughtiness appear here but evoke only boundaries and definitions rather than multiplicity and performativity. We have, as Butler would say, repeated stylizations as well as reiterative and citational practices, but they are always connected to an already dead body and serve merely as reflections of the historical rather than expressions of the performative.

This play effects a mini-biography, allowing Ada and the reader to view Byron's life through a hostile lens. By doing so, Linney allows the Byronic ghost to explain his actions, his positions, and his choices. Ada flings incidents at him as accusations, to which he adds his personal perspective. Ada creates a pretty child Byron, whereupon the ghost laughs and says: "He's too damned pretty! I was fat as a pig! [. . .] Morbid little fat boy, posing" (6). Linney plays with the reader, allowing Byron to recognize his own posturing. Ada and Byron manipulate this fluid image, molding it until the boy suits both their fantasies. At one point, when the young boy has been accosted by Lord Grey, the ghostly
Byron teaches him how to fight. The older Byron tosses a sword, then instructs his younger self: "Higher. Point up. Thrust! Don't slash! Hack with it! Don't be delicate! Split the shoulder. Aim for the neck. Thrust!" (12). The elder Byron performs for the younger Byron here, acting as tutor, ally, and goad. The performer remains conspicuous; the actor wearing a mask announces his presence. We have a reassembled Byron firmly linked to history and memoir, which precludes the performative from occurring. Linney connects the ghost to Byron's own biography, linking these adaptable and interchangeable yet historical bodies.

The body connects the ghost to history. In *A Shade Byronic*, we see Byron's teeth, eyes, hair, and stature. In *A Spiritual Interview*, the anonymous author emphasizes Byron's voice and need to chew as an allusion to assuaging hunger pains. In this text, Linney emphasizes Byron's genitalia. Ada begins: "It was common knowledge that your sexual organ was twice—" Byron interrupts: "Oh, three times—" Ada: "—the size of a normal man's." Byron interrupts again: "Four, maybe five [. . .]—six, sometimes seven—" Ada: "—mythical (perhaps), grandiose (certainly), sexual organ" (6). The playfulness points to a certain aggrandizement, unquestionably, but the performance only links the ghost more firmly to the biographical. In *Mad, Bad, Dangerous to Know: The Life of Lady Caroline Lamb*, Seàn Manchester recounts the opening of Byron's sepulcher on June 15, 1938:

The body of Lord Byron came into view ~ it was in an excellent state of preservation. No decomposition had taken place and the head, torso and limbs were quite solid according to the churchwarden, Arnold Houldsworth. The only parts skeletonised were the forearms, hands, lower shins, ankles and feet. The poet's right foot was detached from his leg and lay at the bottom of the coffin. The hair on his head, body and limbs was intact, though grey. His sexual organ showed quite abnormal development. (154)

The reader wonders what exactly "abnormal development" means, but the biographical link remains clear. Ada emphasizes the sexualized body, much to
the ghost's amusement and titillation, in order to link this coalesced Byronic body to the later topics of incest, sodomy, and homosexuality.

Sex becomes yet another way in which Linney connects Byron's ghost to his historical body. Ada accuses Byron of not only raping and sodomizing her mother, but also of having sex with his sister and with boys. She even suggests he might have had sex with a pet bear he kept at Cambridge. Byron scoffs: "No, but I think I should have. He was very affectionate. But they hanged you in those days for loving just another man. God knows what they would have done about a bear" (6). Ada represents Byron as the degenerate who would have sex with man, woman, or beast. The Byronic ghost counters by emphasizing his feelings and their connections to life. The author shows Byron using sex to increase his poetry's perspicacity. He tells Ada: "Give me credit for writing about life directly. People I loved and people I hated, not Greek vases, like that idiot Keats" (7). The ghost's performance has direct association with Byron's collected letters and journals. Linney reinforces the resemblance by correlating these views, thereby accentuating the performer.

Linney, North, and Redivivus perpetuate the Byronic performance through a linkage with the historical and the biographical. When Linney creates his Byron, he imbues him with a laissez-faire, sexualized figure that both draws upon the biographies while at the same time updating the performance's "reiterative and citational practice[s]" for his audience. Homosexuality, not yet an identity in Byron's time, becomes a pronounced identity in 1977 that the modernized and restructured ghost not only embraces but uses as a tool to deride the laws of the late nineteenth-century. He flippantly remarks that he would write a book on British morals and entitle it: "Sodomy Simplified, or, Pederasty proved to Be Praiseworthy." That Linney pulls this title from a letter that Byron wrote to Henry Drury on June 25, 1809, accentuates the performer while demonstrating identity issues emerging at the time of this play's publication in 1977. Byron reminisces about Edleston, the young choirboy from Cambridge:

I rescued him. We took off our clothes, to dry out in the sun. I found a creature like the animals I took home all my life. [. . .] All my
helpless, wretched, lonely things. [. . .] He sang like an angel. And with him, so did I. (14)

Ada responds derisively, calling Edleston a "pervert." Byron responds: "Yes. God bless him." Linney adds perversion here, allowing his Byron to both recognize and dismiss it. As we know from Foucault, this anachronistic identity would not have existed during Byron or Ada's time. As Foucault says in *The History of Sexuality*: "Westphals's famous article of 1870 on 'contrary sexual sensations' can stand as [homosexuality's] date of birth [. . . .] The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (43). Linney updates Byron, making him relevant and germane to his audience; he reproduces Byron while modernizing him.

By reconciling Ada with Byron, Linney links them to history and biography. The characters see how their writing styles parallel and mirror each other. Byron reads Ada's book and then recites his poetry. After vehemently denying the comparison, Ada proceeds to call him names: "Achilles!" "Napoleon!" "Bastard!" and perhaps the worst epithet to him, "Cripple!" Byron furiously retorts "Bitch!" The anger has its cathartic effect, and the father and daughter soon realize their similarities. Byron says: "And I must say, you became an astonishing creature." Ada replies: "Like you. Like you." Byron says: "Yes, like me" (40). Linney creates these characters out of the same material, drawing upon the repeated acts of the father to create the daughter. The source material, much like the genetic material, is the same. Byron's history and biography, manifested repeatedly, become the genesis for Ada as well as Byron, generating multiple characters while seemingly obscuring the formulations that embody it. With these repetitions and citational practices, we have a text that comes closer to the performative than the previous two, yet one that still emphasizes the performer. The "congealment of the past," the "inscribed surface of events," never escapes the performance. They miss what precedes, constrains, and exceeds the performer. The performers are "discursively constituted" but fail to recognize the discourse that produces effects that it names.
Amanda Prantera's *Conversations with Lord Byron on Perversion* 163

Years after his Lordship's Death embraces and enacts performativity. Prantera initiates a matrixed, Byronic figure, integrating computer with Byronic corpus, and thus creating a textual cyborg. She also creates narrative layers that allow conversations to occur on multiple levels thereby reiterating performative acts by showing the constructed nature of the artifice. Prantera details how all information pertaining to the historical Lord Byron (poetry, journals, biography, and history) was loaded on a mainframe, from which the Byronic cyborg (aptly named "Brainchild Harold") originates. Donna Haraway emphasizes that a cyborg is a "hybrid of machine and organism" (272). The Byron data fit within what Butler would call a set of repeated acts; Prantera's computer matrix performs as a highly rigid regulatory frame that contains yet extends the Byron figure. The cyborg "thinks," "understands," and "remembers" (23). Furthermore, the "Byron expert," Anna, says: "'It's funny,' she sighed again, 'sometimes, particularly when it's not being technical, it's so convincing that I can fancy myself talking to the actual flesh and blood Byron'" (150). The program has achieved the "natural sort of being" that Butler hypothesizes to be the result of the performative phenomenon.

Byron's corpus coupled with synthetic hardware creates an assemblage of man and computer. The Byronic cyborg marvels at its ability to remember: "Just look how nifty he was with the quotations. Quite amazing" (170). Its mind, enhanced by extensive memory capacity and instantaneous recall, computes at blindingly fast speeds. Consequently, the computer performs as a super Byron, having the ability, speed, and mental acuity to access extensive information and meticulous detail. In *Mind Children* (1988), Hans Moravec describes human identity as nothing more than an informational pattern that could be downloaded into a computer (109-10). N. Katherine Hayles takes exception to this in *How We Became Posthuman*: "Even assuming such a separation was possible, how could anyone think that consciousness in an entirely different medium would remain unchanged, as if it had no connection with embodiment?" (1). Hayles insists that a human being is first an "embodied being," strikingly different from the
intelligence "embodied in cybernetic machines" (284). Embodiment contains and constrains, and while she says that "subjectivity is emergent rather than given," she would also stress that embodiment, itself, defines the biological or synthetic parameters (291).

Prantera's cyborg's embodiment enacts both a rigidity and a fluidity depending upon the mechanism involved. While the hardware remains firmly fixed, the software can be manipulated within certain constraints. The computer technicians alter the various parameters within the program's subroutines, tweaking the Byronic figure. Much like Byronism, which creates a Byron during a synchronic manifestation, these technicians can narrow the limitations and constraints of the computer program to more closely match what the Byron expert calls the "flesh and blood" Byron. Haraway describes the cyborg as "a kind of disassembled and reassembled, postmodern collective and persona self" (283). Rather than imagining an original to which the computer needs to be tied, the matrix remains disconnected from a purely rigid embodiment. Its subroutines can be reconfigured (within certain limitations) to create multiple personas, unaffected by anachronistic time frames or human boundaries. The cyborg exists as a fluid entity that can be molded, altered, and manipulated. Each software adjustment produces new and somewhat unpredictable effects. These adjustments occur to the "interest values" placed on particularly pertinent topics. "Marriage, for example, separation, poor Lady Byron herself, the names of hostile literary critics – things like these had been given a pretty high 'interest' rating (and a high 'irritability' rating too)" (18). Mathematics was given no interest value and "topped the bill in 'boredom'" (19). Homosexuality affected the program differently since it had been "allotted a medium 'interest' but a high 'anxiety' tax" (19). The technicians had programmed ratings (between 1 and 8) for such criteria as interest, irritability, anxiety, sympathy, and boredom, ensuring that the computer's replies would be influenced by these ratings as well as Byron's histories, biographies, and writings.

Even though Prantera links the computer to the past through biographical and historical data, the computer enacts performativity. Not only do we have a
stylized repetition of acts, as exemplified by the data programmed into the matrix, but we also have a program that can be immediately manipulated to suit the audience. As Haraway says: "No objects, spaces, or bodies are sacred in themselves; any component can be interfaced with any other if the proper standard, the proper code, can be constructed for processing signals in a common language" (283). Instead of a ghost that requires firm ties to a dead body, this "ghost in the machine" needs no such links. The Byron corpus (biographies, journals, poetry, and reviews) functions as a foundation upon which the mutable figure can reside.

Byrons without number can be created and destroyed without culpability. The only limitations are those that constrain the human minds within the narrative. The cyborg is "self-reflexive" and "self-aware"; it has both an input/output mode and an output only mode; and finally, the cyborg cannot lie, but because of certain "emotive parameters," it can appear evasive and can conceal things (Prantera 28). These nuanced subroutines mean that the cyborg "can't tell us anything new about his Lordship, but it can tell us something different. Something that even the most conscientious of his biographers may have overlooked" (Prantera 13). Even though the technicians and the Byron expert are hoping that this cyborg can do what biographers have been longing to do for centuries, locate the "real" Byron, the man behind the masks, the narrative constructs for the audience a performativity that exemplifies fluidity, illusion, and mutability. Haraway suggests that "the cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity. It is oppositional, utopian, and completely without innocence" (273). Haraway stresses that her "cyborg myth is about transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities" (275). Prantera's cyborg staunchly performs on a fluid stage, unrestricted by boundaries; it remains a fusion of man and machine yet explores uncharted paths that lead to "dangerous" possibilities.

The performer has been effaced for a pure performativity. Here, nothing exists behind the mask. The genesis, the original, the man behind the curtain, disappears. Byronism, impelled by the performative, creates Byrons as needed.
The cyborg performs this, perpetuating yet another Byronic performative, coalescing a fluid being within virtuality, within an historically contingent synchronic space that can be changed instantaneously to suit one's needs. We have nothing but artifice. The acts, gestures, performances, and performer have all been effaced while the "figures of fantasy" have been expanded and reiterated. The cyborg remains discursively constituted but can change that discourse at will, altering not only its only programming but its emergent subjectivity as well.

Prantera's cyborg paradigmatically encompasses both the ghost and memory. The latter is limited only by the silicone and micro-processing units available to the computer fabricators. In the near future, organic and fluid memory will be unrestricted by the synthetic core computers rely upon now. As for the former, a virtuality unconstrained by physical or corporal boundaries beautifully describes a ghost's incorporeal features. Haraway emphasizes: "People are nowhere near so fluid, being both material and opaque. Cyborgs are ether, quintessence" (275). Hayles describes a world in which the "coupling" between humans and machines is "so intense and multifaceted that it is no longer possible to distinguish meaningfully between the biological organism and the informational circuits in which the organism is enmeshed" (35). Even though Hayles would be firmly opposed to this disembodied structure, Haraway imagines an entity that, much like a ghost, can leave its body and travel through cyberspace, unfettered by physical demands such as hunger or thirst. Haraway imagines a world "without gender, which is perhaps a world without genesis, but maybe also a world without end" (273). Prantera's Byronic cyborg likens this freedom to a tree with "no roots, no trunk or branches, just the top, blossoming away all on its own" (170). The mind unshackled from the body – the performative in its phantasmatic splendor.

Prantera's narrative exists on multiple layers, which further demonstrates performativity, since postmodernists disavow a metanarrative that transcendently guards humanity and culture. The narrative enacts multivocal discourses that inhabit different layers of spectatorship and subjectivity. On the first level, the
technicians, the Byron expert, the professor in charge, and the investors (the Universal League of Byron Lovers) speak to one another. On the second level, the interaction between the interrogator (Anna the Byron expert) and the Byronic cyborg takes place. On the third level, we, as privileged audience, hear the internal dialogue of the cyborg, thoughts that remain distinct from other portions of the narrative. We see how changing the interest rating affects the dialogue and thought processes of the program. Through performative reconfigurations, the cyborg morphs with each manipulation.

Prantera initiates performativity, creating differently configured Byrons that view the same source material (biographies, poetry, journals, letters, and so forth) through altered perceptual lenses. The novel constructs Byrons similarly to the way in which I hypothesize Byronism constructs Byron. For example, when the computer technicians change the homosexual anxiety tax from 8 to 5 and raise the interest level to 7, the cyborg changes: "As the new answers came through, however, she began to see that something in the language had changed. It didn't jar exactly, but – she couldn't quite put her finger on it – it was in a subtly different key somehow. Yes, that's what it was. The language was in a subtly different key" (72). The insistence on music and key changes here describes the dissonance that becomes apparent within the cyborg's internal dialogue as he waits for Edleston: "He lay carefully poised on the bed in his best damask dressing-gown, as laundered, spruced and perfumed as a well-schooled whore and with scarcely more claim to dignity. [ . . . ] He was slipping, there was no doubt about it; and in more ways than one" (73). The transformation is startling; the cyborg moves from wariness to blatancy regarding its homosexuality. The audience sees this far more clearly than do the Byron scholar and technicians. They see only snippets; we see the change overtly and explicitly, the "descent and darkness," the "plummeting and perdition" (78).

Cyborgian performativity disturbs many humans. Hayles stresses that "the chaotic, unpredictable nature of complex dynamics implies that subjectivity is emergent rather than given, distributed rather than located solely in consciousness, emerging from and integrated into a chaotic world rather than
occupying a position of mastery and control removed from it" (291). The cyborg’s fluidity and freedom imply a disjointed body and subjectivity. Individual embodiment takes a backseat to the collective mind of virtuality. The ease with which Prantera’s Byronic cyborg settles into this new personality frightens the Byron scholar. She pleads with the technicians to change the interest and anxiety levels again. The balance, we are told, "has been seriously disturbed" (94). "'I hope it goes back to exactly how it was before,' she added. 'I liked it better that way'" (95). The illusion of control comforts her, even though that illusion "bespeaks a fundamental ignorance about the nature of the emergent processes through which consciousness, the organism, and the environment are constituted" (Hayles 288).

The Byronic cyborg will never return to what it was; with each manipulation, it irrevocably changes. Memory records the transformation and it becomes part of the program’s evolution. The ghost shape-shifts; the cyborg remembers the alterations and becomes self-reflexive as a result. Its subjectivity "emerges" from the chaos, "distributed" across vast microprocessors, and "integrated" into a fluid, protean environment. We experience the altered cyborg not only in its narrative style but in its voice as well. The narrative becomes homoerotic and then heterosexist. In the first instance, we see how the cyborg’s remembrance of "his flesh, which had always blandly refused to stir for anything male, however young, however winning, seemed to be having second thoughts. Loud, outspoken, eloquent thoughts; very pleasurable ones" (81). After the change, the cyborg retreats from Edleston because "he was a boy; and because public opinion and his own coincided for once on the issue at stake" (106). That opinion, however, has been manipulated, the interest and anxiety levels altered, and the personality adjusted.

These adjustments continue, alternately stabilizing and destabilizing in expressions of performativity. The changes become easier for the technicians to make, having twice altered them already. They do worry, however, that the changes will put the program in a "muddle. We were agreed from the outset: each parameter can be shifted slightly either way for purposes of adjustment,
and can be shifted back into its original position, but none can be shuffled about indefinitely without repercussion on the system" (110). Memory limits the program, allowing changes but not indiscriminately. The technicians increase the global anxiety for homosexuality back to an 8 while increasing the interest in heterosexuality. However, since the computer doesn't have a global frame on heterosexuality, a heterosexist determinant built into the machine that imagines heterosexual behavior to be normative, the technician simply increases the interest in such vocabulary as "breasts and genitals" (112). This alteration transforms the cyborg considerably, modifying the Thyrza narrative extensively. Edleston becomes Alba, a European princess masquerading in drag in order to obtain a proper English education at Cambridge. This heteronormativity not only solves the question of Byron's homosexuality, but it also cleanses the Byron legend of the "perversion" ascribed to him within the novel's title. The narrative embraces heteronormativity on one hand while at the same time exploring a virtual world without sex or gender. The language, according to the Byron scholar, had become "well-balanced now and neither scurrilous nor straitlaced" (138).

The happy medium of heterosexuality had now been achieved. Prantera creates the final performative persona, a heterosexualized lover who remains true to his female beloved. She reveals to the audience the "true" story, allowing Byron's image to be cleansed of its perversion and the taint of homoerotic behavior. Rather than subverting the traditional through a performative construction and deconstruction cleansed of gender and sex, she merely reaffirms the preferred convention of staunch heterosexuality and noble sentiment. However, Haraway avows that "the cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world" (273). The performative strives to overcome such binaries as male/female, masculine/feminine, and heterosexual/homosexual. Butler emphasizes: "The heterosexual logic that requires that identification and desire be mutually exclusive is one of the most reductive of heterosexism's psychological instruments: if one identifies as a given gender, one must desire a different gender" (239). Within the performative phenomenon, institutional
harassment and authoritarianism are deconstructed, situated within the regimes of power out of which they arise.

Prantera’s text dismantles the Byronic ghost’s creation and reiterates the performativity inherent in that manifestation, but ultimately fails to move beyond the gender binaries. Even though Prantera includes the performative constructions of homosexuality and heterosexuality, she finally settles upon the last one, the one that seems to “fit” the cyborg. She ultimately fails to follow performativity to its logical conclusions, simply resorting in the end to a traditional, heterosexualized cyborg constructed by her narrative manipulations. The performative shows us the illusion behind the Byronic mask, yes, but also the author’s impetus, ideology, and heterosexism. I appreciate Prantera’s forays into the performative and the ways in which her cyborg accepts and even relishes its freedom and fluidity. He quips: "Perhaps in future it might do to let just a few things out of the bag now and again to keep them hopping. It would help while away the time" (170). The cyborg has nothing but time as Haraway suggests. He lives in a "world without end," a world without limitations or boundaries. While certainly cautious, Hayles agrees: "Although some current versions of the posthuman point toward the anti-human and the apocalyptic, we can craft others that will be conducive to the long-range survival of humans and of other life-forms, biological and artificial, with whom we share the planet and ourselves" (291).

As we have seen, the ghost and memory can both counteract the performative and accentuate it. In the first three fictions, we have authors who link the ghost to its corporeality. The body lingers within its translucence, defining and limiting the manifestation. Through an integral connection to the past, memory repeatedly secures the ghost to its former self. North, Redivivus, and Linney reify the Byronic body, instilling it within their ghostly reconfigurations. They imply an original Byron that the ghost resembles, drawing upon some biographical truth to lend credence to their rewritings. Not only does this perpetuate an historical essentialism, but it also focuses on the performer rather than the performative. It misses, as Butler would emphasize, that which
precedes, constrains, and exceeds the performer. This performance conceals what remains opaque.

Performativity allows for these lacunae, the spaces between the performances, the gaps surrounding the performer. Consequently, we have seen how Prantera uses both the ghost in the machine, or the Byronic cyborg as I have named it, and memory to enact and propagate the performative. Even though she ultimately relies on a heterosexist conception, which entrenches her within binaries that she might have disregarded, the performative aspects occur repeatedly. She details the Byronic cyborg's fluid nature, protean in its multiplicity, and cacophonous in its dissonant, multivocal narrative. The cyborg is constrained by an atypical (synthetic and electronic) embodiment. We have seen this, as well, in Haraway; the ghost rules virtuality, roaming cyberspace without restraint. Memories exist, but they do not hamper or confine. They serve merely to remind the cyborg of its path and of its unlimited and performative future. Just as Ibsen, in the epigraph to this chapter, recognizes the ubiquitous ghost, so too does Haraway emphasize the ubiquitous cyborg. She avows: "By the late twentieth century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics" (272). My Byronic cyborg allows us to see a different aspect of Byronism, a fluid multiplicity that creates what it purports to effect. These Byrons are illusions based upon ghosts and memories that performatively remain free from embodiment. They defy limitation but at the same time, they often enthrall an audience into believing a substantiality that does not exist. They fool us into believing we know them, that we can interpret their codes, which, not surprisingly, brings me to my next chapter.
Chapter 4: Interpreting Byron's Madness

If melancholy was a medical condition connoting an acute and divided sensibility, the total breakdown of body and soul could be prefigured in melancholy and achieved (potentially) in madness. Madness comes to represent the radical break with sanity; a hard blow to the sensibility totally alters the spiritual and chemical composition of the individual, damaging the delicate balance of the juices and sending the body and mind into chaos.

*The Dictionary of Sensibility*

[M]adness is only the absence of reason. - The ruling angel leaving its seat, wild anarchy ensues. You would have seen that the uncontrolled imagination often pursues the most regular course in its most daring flight; and that the eccentricities are boldly relieved when judgment no longer officiously arranges the sentiments, by bringing them to the test of principles [. . . .] This is a true picture of that chaotic state of mind, called madness; with reason gone, we know not where, the wild elements of passion clash, and all is horror and confusion.

Mary Wollstonecraft  *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*

As can be seen by my epigraphs, early nineteenth-century individuals believed that madness destroyed the body and soul's connection and represented an "absence of reason." Unhampered by reason's constraints, the liberated imagination produced riotous passions and chaos. At the same time, madness was intimately aligned with genius, which necessarily prompted numerous writers to assume and then record their personal connections to melancholy and insanity. These performances envisioned an audience that would recognize and accept the performer's ploy. Sometimes, the ruse was so perfectly executed that it enacted and resembled authenticity, and the performer was imprisoned in an asylum.

Byron performs madness and that performance blinds his refashioners to the performativity that enacts it. Consequently, an interchange occurs between the performance as text and its interpreter; as a repetitive act, the performance coalesces into a viable pretense that produces and reproduces the madness trope. Hans-Georg Gadamer's theories show how the hermeneutic circle can both inform, by grounding the reader in an historically contingent, multivocal conversation, and entrap, by limiting the reader's horizon to a prejudicial immediacy. McGann's analyses illustrate how Romantic illusions and myths occupied both the Romantic poets and the critics who subsequently became
embroiled within these same ideological debates. McGann grounds his interpretations in history and investigates how Romantic scholarship and criticism had become uncritically absorbed in "Romanticism's own self-representations" (Romantic Ideology 1). By focusing on the hermeneutic circle and a horizon's limitations, I can connect Butler's performativity and the "certain nexus of temporal horizons" as well as Jauss' historical unfolding of the horizons of experience and expectation. With these theories, I illuminate Byron's performance of madness and the ways in which Lady Caroline Lamb and Percy B. Shelley reproduce that madness, without questioning it, within their texts. An analysis of Don Juan DeMarco ends the chapter, a film that not only portrays the alluring Romantic myths but also parodies those who would be hoodwinked by them.

Chasing the Byronic Chimera in the Hermeneutic Maze

In Chapter 3, I explore the "unreadability" of Byron's performances. Butler asserts that for a performance to work, it must effect authenticity and thus remain unreadable as artifice. When the appearance and meaning diverge, the pretense loses its authenticity and appears artificial. For a performance to succeed, the artifice must appear real and resist being read. The artifice imparts the illusion of depth while simultaneously forestalling an in-depth reading; the interpreter mistakenly concludes that the appearance and the meaning associated with that appearance correspond. When the appearance and the meaning conflict, the performance emerges as constructed. Contextually, then, the interpreter sees only Byron, the body performing madness, rather than Byronism, the performance that effects the "realness" of the Byronic body. The interpreter becomes effectively trapped within the hermeneutic circle, unable to see beyond the mad performance to the performativity that generates the illusion.

This illusion remains in place because the interpreter is unable or unwilling to disperse it. Gadamer asserts: "A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. He projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text. Again, the initial meaning emerges
only because he is reading the text with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning" (T&M 267). In relation to what we have been exploring, this projection of madness and meaning has been Byron's coalesced body, an historical figure that permeates not only the poetry and the prose he wrote but also the biographies and fictions that were written about him. Byronism creates a Byronic artifice, which the interpreter then reads and subsequently projects onto any future reading. The artifice tropes itself with the body, an artificially created figure (a golem if you will) magically and perpetually endowed with life. It speaks to its audience and acts when watched.

Should the interpreter, then, forego any textual anticipation or ideological perception when reading a text? Not according to Gadamer, who details the impossibility of leaving oneself behind in order to read objectively. He explains: "All that is asked is that we remain open to the meaning of the other person or text. But this openness always includes our situating the other meaning in relation to the whole of our own meanings or ourselves in relation to it" (269). The ideologically based, historically situated interpreter must remain open to multiple meanings, always and by necessity reading through a perceptually tinted lens but cautiously prepared for meanings that might not coincide with his/her preordained outcomes. "Meanings," Gadamer emphasizes, "represent a fluid multiplicity of possibilities [. . .] but within this multiplicity of what can be thought—i.e., of what a reader can find meaningful and hence expect to find—not everything is possible" (269). He stresses that "we who are attempting to understand must ourselves make [a text] speak. But we found that this kind of understanding, 'making the text speak,' is not an arbitrary procedure that we undertake on our own initiative but that, as a question, it is related to the answer that is expected in the text" (378). The text's questions and answers proceed from the textual borders, established by the content and context of the discourse. Thus, as we saw in Chapter 2, a text cannot mean just anything; it remains effectively constrained by its discourse and textual boundaries.

The text limits interpretations while at the same time opening previously unimagined possibilities. Gadamer tells us that "the hermeneutical task becomes
itself a questioning of things," a way in which to examine the textual artifice, the entity that obviates reading and interpretation, thereby becoming aware of the meaning that might lie within. As interpreters, we are, as Gadamer tells us, prepared for the text to tell us "something." Nevertheless, we must remain ever "sensitive to the text's alterity," to the otherness that forestalls a simple reiteration of our own prejudices and preconceived notions (269). The text has its own authenticity that stands outside the interpreter, refusing to be subsumed within prejudgment. At the same time, as we saw in Chapter 2, the text only makes meaning when read by someone. The author/text/audience triangle remains, as Jauss would say, "energy formative." Thus, the "historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees" (Aesthetic 19).

Just as reception theory allowed us to focus on the audience and performativity on the author, now hermeneutics lets us explore the text in "all its otherness." The text asserts its "own truth," even if for every interpreter, that "truth" is slightly or even markedly different. Despite this difference, though, interpretations do not occur in a vacuum. Gadamer assures us that "understanding is to be thought of less as a subjective act than as participating in an event of tradition, a process of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated" (290). With every interpretation, an intertextuality ties the interpretation to that which has come before and that which will occur later. Every textual elucidation has a history, not only in its own present, but in its past, out of which it arises and from which it takes meaning.

Gadamer describes this intertextual mediation through history as a hermeneutic circle, which is "not formal in nature, [. . .] neither subjective nor objective." Rather it is "the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter." He continues:

Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves. Thus the circle of understanding is not a "methodological" circle,
but describes an element of the ontological structure of understanding. (293)

With each textual explication, interpreters mediate between the past and the present, creating yet another text that fits within the persistently emerging tradition. As Gadamer's student, Jauss synthesizes this phenomenon to somewhat alter the hermeneutic circle, creating the author/text/audience triangle that informs all his work. In this chapter, though, we focus on the relationship between the interpreter and the text and the mediation that occurs within the confines of the textual boundaries.

As I suggested in the introduction, the performance of madness informs this chapter. The literary tradition and textual mediation surrounding that performed madness arise from our understanding of and participation in the tradition itself. We alter the tradition's parameters with our own hermeneutic contribution. Consequently, Gadamer explains that the "true locus of hermeneutics is this in-between," the space that exists between the interpreter and the text, the mediation between the unknown and the known (295). In this nebulous space, the hermeneutic magic transpires. Of particular importance, however, is the remembrance and acceptance of one's own prejudices and ideological biases. Gadamer insists that we must "recognize the temporal distance as a positive and productive condition enabling understanding. It is not a yawning abyss but is filled with the continuity of custom and tradition" (297). This "temporal distance" exists between the past and the present, between the interpreter and the text. If we neglect or forget about the prejudices inherent in any interpretive endeavor, we can become lost within the hermeneutic circle, unable to see beyond the confines of our own blinders.

The "temporal distance" between past and present and the mediation that occurs between them describes the hermeneutic positionality. It is not enough for us to imagine ourselves as subjects and the text as object; we must also see the text as subject and ourselves as objects for which the text makes meaning. If our predetermined meaning overwhelms the "truth" of the text, then we will see nothing but ourselves in the interpretation. Gadamer explains that "it is perfectly
legitimate to speak of a *hermeneutical conversation,*" one that exists not only between the interpreter and the text, but also between the past and the present and the tradition that ties the two together (388). In our context, the "conversation" occurs repeatedly between the authors examined here and the Byronic madness they consume. From *Glenarvon* to the Star Trek holodeck simulations, these authors mediate between past and present and then rewrite or remediate, extending the evolutionary tradition with each additional interpretation, which subsequently expands and alters Byronism itself.

The only way to understand Byronism and the mad performance effected therein is through history and tradition. Gadamer emphasizes how "understanding is, essentially, a historically effected event [. . . . W]e are always already affected by history" (300). When an author involves him/herself in the Byronic fictive tradition, he/she must wrestle with the great accumulation of material already in existence. We, as interpreters of said fictions, must do the same. However, as Gadamer asserts, "every finite present has its limitations," which is why he uses (following in the footsteps of Nietzsche and Husserl) the concept of horizon, a "standpoint that limits the possibility of vision" yet which includes "everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (303). The interpreter should not be limited by the immediate, needing also to see beyond it: "A person who has an horizon knows the relative significance of everything within this horizon, whether it is near or far, great or small. Similarly, working out the hermeneutical situation means acquiring the right horizon of inquiry for the questions evoked by the encounter with tradition" (303).

Being trapped in immediacy has plagued many Byron scholars and biographers. Some become lost in the hermeneutic circle, unable to see beyond their immediate concerns. Some focus on the performer, unable or unwilling to see how performativity impels and shapes the performance. Some cannot mediate between the present and the past, anachronistically rewriting modern concepts onto a nineteenth-century past. This dissertation attempts to circumvent those issues by focusing not only on the fictional tradition and its mediation, but also on the way in which Byronism creates that which is
considered its creator. For the critic, the horizon must include the historical, fictional, biographical, and critical elements of Byron scholarship. Gadamer asserts that the horizon is "something into which we move and that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving. Thus the horizon of the past, out of which all human life lives and which exists in the form of tradition, is always in motion" (304). By focusing on Byronism rather than Byron, we see how the horizon can be expanded exponentially. Thus, as Gadamer concludes, our horizon of the present "is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices" (306). It is only through this testing of prejudices that interpreters can escape the hermeneutic trap, which blinds them to their function as interpreters and limits the horizon to the immediate. Hermeneutics remains dependent upon the linguistic nature of interpretation. Because a text has many meanings, which Gadamer defines as "fluid multiplicity of possibilities," our task of "making a text speak" means that we have to be willing to hear what a text has to say.

To return to Butler's hypothesis, we understand that the artifice of Byron's madness resists being read. Gadamer would emphasize that any text necessarily resists reading and that the solution for this remains the question and answer methodology. As we have seen in Chapter 2, Jauss uses this technique as a foundation for much of his work. Gadamer tells us that the "question is not boundless. It is limited by the horizon of the question" (363). Consequently, the question and subsequent answer to and from the text remains constrained by the historicity of the question's horizon. It, as Gadamer says, "implies openness, but also limitation" (363). Our prejudices and experiences work within our horizon of inquiry to restrict the boundaries but at the same time induce us, as interpreters, to look beyond that which is familiar and comfortable. We must also remember that hermeneutics describes a "conversation" between the text and the interpreter. Therefore, on one side of the equation, the interpreter asks questions of the text, which provides answers. On the other side of the equation, though, the text asks questions as well. Gadamer stresses:
Thus the relation of question and answer is, in fact, reversed. The voice that speaks to us from the past—whether text, work, trace—itself poses a question and places our meaning in openness. In order to answer the question put to us, we the interrogated must ourselves begin to ask questions. We must attempt to reconstruct the question to which the traditionary text is the answer. (374)

This process is one of give and take, with both sides asking questions and both sides giving answers. As a result, the hermeneutic circle enlarges our horizon instead of trapping us within the confines of a specific reading or meaning. Moreover, we must ask what question existed to which the text is an answer. Again, Jauss has taken this directive seriously from his mentor, using it as a foundation for his theories: the "reconstruction of the horizon-of-expectations [. . .] enables one [. . .] to pose questions that the text gave an answer to" (28). Not only are we concerned with the questions that the text raises as well as the questions that arise in us as a result of the text's answers, but we also have to be concerned with the questions that impelled the text into being.

By exploring Byron's artifice of madness within the fictions, as well as the other tropes examined in previous chapters, we can effectively peruse the historicity of the fictional horizons. By taking earlier texts, often those written during the nineteenth century, and comparing them with twentieth-century texts that incorporate and explore similar tropes and metaphors, we can begin to see particular questions and answers that permeate and perpetuate this system. Gadamer explains how "questions always bring out the undetermined possibilities of a thing" (375). "Undetermined possibilities," "multiplicities," and "conversations" permit previously unimagined readings unconstrained by preordained meanings. Consequently, the hermeneutic circle encompasses and encourages multiple meanings within its horizon, while at the same time allowing the interpreter to see beyond the performances to the performativity. Moreover, this allows us to work within the author/text/audience triangular evolution as well as to see how Byronism's artifice resists being read.
The performative links Gadamer, and by association Jauss, with Butler. In "Reading the Text," James Risser explains that for Gadamer "a performative dimension is at work in every interpretation" (103). He emphasizes that "the text demands of the reader an active collaboration for its very execution. [. . .]

Consequently, reading, directed towards the future of the text, is performative; it opens it out, sets it going" (97). The reader and the text make meaning together. As Jauss tells us, the reader must be active not passive. So, not only do we see how the reader and the author form a linguistic relationship, and how the author and text become intertwined through the performative, but also how performativity permeates the realm between interpreter and text. Risser explains: "This performative character means that there is ultimately no determination of meaning that is originary or even reproductive; the determination of meaning remains productive" (104).

As we produce meaning, so too does the text produce meaning in us. This continual give-and-take ensures that even if we were to read a book twice or many times, each subsequent conversation would generate different interpretations because of experiences that have produced an alteration in our horizons. Thus, each interpretation is performative, never "originary" but always "productive." Moreover, each interpretation remains prejudicially constructed within an historically contingent period, thereby engendering a "condensation of an iterability," as Butler would say, but one that does not remain static. In other words, each reading evokes a "stylized repetition of acts" that are informed by our own prejudices and situatedness but that produce additional meaning with each new occurrence. However, when biases constrain a critic, either initiated before or during a textual reading, then the horizon becomes restricted and the "fluid multiplicity of possibilities" gets curtailed. Thus, critics' "uncritical absorption in Romanticism's own self-representations," as McGann would say, induces them to remain trapped within the hermeneutic circle, limited by his/her own prejudicial immediacy. The Romantic illusions or myths blind both critics and poets to their own ideology, which separates them from a mediation between past and present, between immediacy and tradition.
McGann’s *Romantic Ideology*’s emphasis on historically contingent, poetic productions and "grand illusion[s]" (131) reshaped the landscape of Romantic criticism. To ignore McGann’s contribution would be to disregard his impact on Romantic scholarship. First, I would argue that McGann acts as a conduit between Gadamer’s hermeneutics, horizons, and mediations, and the conversations taking place in contemporary Romantic critiques. McGann’s work also assumes that "poems are social and historical products and that the critical study of such products must be grounded in a socio-historical analytic" (3). While the first remains important, the second is indispensable to the arguments outlined in this chapter and throughout this dissertation. Both Gadamer and McGann help me to better elucidate the interplay between text and interpreter as well as that "in-between" state that Gadamer finds so instrumental to hermeneutics. Furthermore, they both form a critical "tradition," as Gadamer might say, that helps bridge the "temporal distance" between the fictional representations of Byron and the conversation they provoke. Ultimately, both Gadamer and McGann facilitate my reading "with understanding," to elucidate how madness works as a trope within tradition, within the "in-between" that subsequently suggests questions and answers that will preclude our getting lost in the hermeneutic circle of Byron's *madness*.

**The Byronic Performance of Madness**

Byron performed madness for his audience, enacting a series of ruses designed to elicit sympathy, awe, and captivation. Enacting a linguistic and historical conversation, these performances were then read, mediated, and perpetuated by those around him and by those authors who would fictionalize him later. An interplay develops between the text and the interpreter, allowing, as Gadamer would say, "undetermined possibilities" to develop. Moreover, Byronism incorporates and perpetuates madness as a subterfuge, aligning Byron with the poetic geniuses who walked a fine line between brilliance and madness. Madness, as a repetitive act, coalesces into a viable pretense that produces and reproduces the trope. This enactment functions like McGann’s outline of a
Romantic illusion or myth: a means by which poets could imagine their lives and works transcending the mundane and existing beyond the ken of mere mortals.

Byron was hardly the only Romantic poet to perform madness. In *Resolution and Independence*, Wordsworth says: "We Poets in our youth begin in gladness; / But thereof come in the end despondency and madness" (Stanza 7). In a letter to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Charles Lamb avows: "Dream not of having tasted all the grandeur and wildness of Fancy, till you have gone mad" (Cecil 55). In Sonnet LXX, Charlotte Turner Smith envies a mad, "solitary wretch" who "wildly" wandered on "an Headland Overlooking the Sea," for his freedom from governmental restraints and religious dogma (61). In "The Retrospect," Percy Shelley wrote that he: "Would close mine eyes and dream I were / On some remote and friendless plain, / And long to leave existence there, / If with it I might leave the pain / That with a finger cold and lean / Wrote madness on my withering mien" (lines 29-34). In *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, Thomas De Quincey laments: "Over every form, and threat, and punishment, and dim, sightless, incarceration, brooded a sense of eternity and infinity that drove me into an oppression as of madness" (74). Similarly, George Becker emphasizes how "the aura of 'mania' endowed the genius with a mystical and inexplicable quality that served to differentiate him from the typical man, the bourgeois, the philistine, and, quite importantly, the 'mere' man of talent" (127-28). Genius became a performance through which the writer could distinguish him or herself from the mundane and common. Because of the intimate ideological connection between genius and madness, Romantic authors generated a tradition of confessional texts that portrayed melancholy and insanity. Madness acted as a conduit between the poet and the muse, allowing the former to surpass the normative functions of mind. Any poet/writer endowed by the muse with the capacity and intellect to reach beyond the ordinary would necessitate a move into the horizon of inquiry by his or her audience.

Hardly one to forego a fashionable trend, Byron flirted with madness and its performance to separate himself from the "'mere' man of talent." His concern and anxiety over his audience's reception led him to enact madness in an
attempt to connect his poetic nature with the transcendent poetic realm, thereby enacting what McGann would call Romantic ideology. Byron recounted stories of his "mad" ancestors and then refashioned his behaviors to incorporate specific acts that would immediately connect him to these narratives; he did much the same with authors or personages from the past with whom he felt a connection or with whom his audience would immediately associate madness; and finally, he exaggerated his own behavior to an absurd and foolish extent. By performing this behavior in front of an audience, he entered into a tradition and enacted a madness that would translate itself onto his writing and subsequently project itself onto his corpus.

Byron's performance began with a repeated recounting of his paternal and maternal ancestors' wild conduct. Numerous biographies relate how "The Wicked Lord," the paternal great uncle from whom Byron would inherit his title, dined with his pistols on the table and slept with the sword with which he had killed his cousin and neighbor William Chaworth. Byron, himself, adopted this behavior, sleeping with his pistols and carrying them with him everywhere, not only because it connected him more fully to his Byron lineage but also because it bolstered his performance of madness. André Maurois recounts a particularly squalid pastime of "The Wicked Lord" that Byron immensely enjoyed repeating: "Sometimes, again, his lordship would lie on the stone flags of the Abbey kitchen and amuse himself by staging races of cockroaches up and down his own body, flipping the insects with straws when they were sluggish" (24). As for his maternal side, Byron would write to his half-sister Augusta of his mother: "She is as I have before declared certainly mad" (BLJ June 5, 1805). Thomas Moore narrates an episode that occurred after a particularly notable fight that Byron once again found so amusing as to recount it repeatedly: "[Byron and his mother] were known each to go privately that night to the apothecary's inquiring anxiously whether the one had been to purchase poison, and cautioning the vender of drugs not to attend to such an application, if made" (The Works of Lord Byron 99-100). In addition to his family, Byron connected himself with past personages who would immediately bring to his audience's mind a correlation to madness.
For instance, in comparing himself to Jonathan Swift, Byron says: "I feel a something, which makes me think that, If I ever reach near to old age, like Swift, 'I shall die at top' first" (BLJ January 6, 1821).33

Most prominently, Byron's connections to madness existed in his own behavior and his subsequent exaggerations. In a letter to Lady Melbourne, he said: "I am one day in high health—and the next on fire or ice—in short I shall turn hypochondriacal—or dropsical—whimsical I am already—but don't let me get tragical" (BLJ January 12, 1814). Byron might well have added poetical to his list since the linguistic interplay tropes upon both madness and his ability to rhyme, synthesizing the two with a dose of nonchalance for good measure. To Teresa Guiccioli, he wrote: "This season kills me with sadness every year. You know my last year's melancholy—and when I have that disease of the Spirit—it is better for others that I should keep away" (BLJ September 28, 1820). Somewhat later, he wrote: "My melancholy is something temperamental, inherited from my mother's family—particularly from my grandfather" (BLJ October 1, 1820).34 To Thomas Moore, he writes: "If I don't write to empty my mind, I go mad" (BLJ January 2, 1821). Madness becomes projected onto not only the genetic code but also his physiology. The performance evolves into, as Butler would say, a repeated stylization that continues this conversation with his audience and further cements his position within the tradition. The familial and medical inferences connect him to his past and perpetuate a performance that remains tied to both the personal and the cultural. Furthermore, the poetic association connects him to a community that perpetuates this illusion and uses it to extend its own poetical transcendence.

Byron performs madness in his poetry. In Canto the Third of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Byron states:

XLIII
This makes the madmen who have made men mad
By Their contagion, —Conquerors and Kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;
Envied, yet how unenviable! What stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule. (379-87)

Here, Byron links madness with extraordinary individuals: war heroes, monarchs, creators, orators, prophets, and poets. If humankind were to see within "one breast," it would educate the common man as to the "unquiet things" that "stir too strongly," thereby diminishing worldly ambition. As a poet, Byron places himself within this category, as someone who has felt, seen, and experienced too much; subsequently ironic and bitter, he thus aligns himself with those "madmen" who are "envied" yet "unenviable." He mediates here between his exceptional experiences as a poet and his inexperienced audience. He believes himself to inhabit that "in-between" place, wherein he can translate and interpret the ethereal poetic realm to his audience occupying mundane reality. In "The Dream," Byron creates a similar familiarity:

the wise

Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift:
What is it but the telescope of truth,
Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real? (177-83)

In what might be seen as an example of romantic ideology, Byron implies that the "wise" have a much deeper grasp of truth and can strip "the distance of its fantasies" thereby bringing "life near in utter nakedness." Byron enacts a conversation here that the reader must reproduce to exact meaning. This conversation discursively creates multivocal meanings in a dialogue between the poet, other poets, reviewers, and readers. Byron proposes questions and answers, both of which are open-ended interchanges. The "telescope" articulates a horizon that limits vision and articulates what Gadamer calls
"temporal distance" between the past and the present, between the interpreter and his text.

Gadamer stresses that understanding is an "historically effected event" (300). By elucidating Byron's performance, we will see how he implants within his audience a strong connection between himself and madness. Aspects of distrust, betrayal, and suicide are infused within this conversation of madness. Lady Byron writes of his "repeated threats of Suicide," and of one night in particular when he "seized the dagger, & ran with it to his own room, the door of which I heard him lock" (Lord Byron's Wife, 328). Byron recounts similar episodes to his friends and acquaintances. To Lady Blessington, he says: "You have heard, of course, that I was considered mad in England; my most intimate friends in general, and Lady Byron in particular, were of this opinion" (178). Marchand asserts: "Annabella took refuge in the belief that he was suffering from temporary insanity" (552). He continues: "It was a positive relief to her, as she later confessed, to be able to believe that her husband's wicked ravings could be ascribed to a deranged mind" (561). Byron's madness becomes that through which Annabella can explain her husband's odd and sometimes terrifying behaviors. It was her "refuge," her safe haven. Byron then satirizes these events in Don Juan, effectively perpetuating and expanding the conversation with his readers through discursive reproduction: "For Inez call'd some druggists and physicians, / And tried to prove her loving lord was mad, / But as he had some lucid intermissions, / She next decided he was only bad" (Canto I, 26-7). Lady Byron was hardly alone in believing Byron’s mad performances. Upon receiving Canto 3 of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Sir Walter Scott expressed his admiration and trepidation:

We gaze on the powerful and ruined mind which he presents us, as on a shattered castle. [. . .] There is something dreadful in reflecting that one gifted so much above his fellow-creatures, should thus labour under some strange mental malady that destroys his peace of mind and happiness, altho' it cannot quench the fire of his genius. I fear the termination will be fatal in one way or other, for it
seems impossible that human nature can support the constant working of an imagination so dark and so strong. Suicide or utter insanity is not unlikely to close the scene. (The Letters of Sir Walter Scott 4:297)

We see here the "powerful" and "ruined mind" that aligns Byron an ideology of transcendent genius, the gift of which has somehow damaged him. He resides "so much above his fellow-creatures" and yet still labors under "some strange malady." Scott emphasizes Byron's imaginative component as "dark" and "strong," the result of which, he imagines, will surely be either "suicide" or "insanity." Scott buys Byron's performance and subsequently perpetuates it by initiating his own conversation, mediating the previous dialogue and thereby extending the tradition.

Byron has successfully separated himself from the "'mere' man of talent" through his performances. Once placed into the public's hands, the interplay of public conversation expanded exponentially, provoking dialogue after dialogue. Byronism thus expands because of, as Gadamer would say, the "fluid multiplicity of possibilities." The performance, as repeated act, becomes a tradition through which readers and critics viewed Byron. A few saw through the act, seeing the artifice as artifice. Thomas Moore writes: "The world had, from first to last, too firm a hold on [Byron's] sympathies to let imagination altogether usurp the place of reason" (Works 385-6). Marchand says Byron was the "most completely realistic of all the romantics because he accepted the romantic urge as a part of human nature without pretending it was more than a dream" ("Modern Spirit" 164). As we will see in the next section, however, most later authors took Byron at his word, so to speak, and patently believed in his madness.

The Hermeneutic Circle's Lost and Found

Both Caroline Lamb and Percy Shelley enter into this horizon of inquiry by reading and accepting Byron's madness and perpetuating it within their own fictional representations. As a result, Byron's performances are further solidified by those individuals who enter the conversation already in progress. Coppola's
Don Juan DeMarco, however, comes into the conversation after much time has passed, effecting a temporal distance that, as Gadamer says, can be a productive condition. Taking this as axiomatic, then, we will see how the movie portrays the artifice as artifice and playfully tantalizes its audience with a Romantic myth that acts as both illusion and enticement. Consequently, this postmodern perspective brings a demystified view to the Romantic illusions that have beguiled readers and critics of Romanticism. Dispassionately, the movie exposes the façade and playfully simulates a situation in which the protagonist becomes seduced and then seduces others into the Romantic myth. Lamb and Shelley, conversely, are ensnared by the hermeneutic circle because of their historical situation, which blinds them to Byron's performance.

In Glenarvon (1816), Lamb reproduces Byron's madness. In fact, because of her own outsider status after their illicit affair, she mimics Byron's madness and performs a similar act herself, without being able to see beyond the immediacy of her own surroundings. Wilson emphasizes, "Lamb struggled not to regain [Byron] but to become him" (xxxii). She mimics Byron's claims to effortless writing, which were yet another aspect of the Romantic illusion of poetic genius. Lamb avowed, "in one month – I wrote and sent Glenarvon to the press" (Lady Morgan's Memoirs 202). She becomes trapped in this hermeneutic circle, unable or unwilling to interpret Byron's performance, thereby seeing only the performer. Lamb is mired in her horizon's immediacy, unable to mediate between Byron's stylized repetition of acts and what she believes to be the reality of Byron's madness. Lamb remains entrapped by the construct because it appears real. As a result, the artifice remains unreadable to her, and she disseminates Byron's madness to her readers.

Lamb characterizes Byron in her text as both Glenarvon and Viviani, creating a dangerous schizophrenic who delightfully seduces those around him as Glenarvon while viciously preying upon them as Viviani. The reader does not discover that the brilliant and beautiful Glenarvon is the malevolent Viviani until late in the novel. Frances Wilson asserts that Glenarvon concerns itself with issues of "doubleness and conflict, and with the impossibility of restricting the self
to just one story" (215). Of the protagonist, she says: "Glenarvon alternates between being demonic and angelic, dark and light, ancient and modern, and with an ease which is envied by the female heroines who, once they encounter the mercurial Lord, themselves fade into and out of not only one another but Glenarvon as well" (216). Wilson fails to take into account the tradition that had been effected by Byron and his refashioners. Lamb's text's doubleness and "mercurial" nature coincide with the projection of madness. Wilson fails to determine the question that the text asks and therefore arrives at an answer misinformed by authorial mediation. Lamb produces the madness that she has mistaken for reality.

Because of her entrapment within the hermeneutic circle, Lamb misreads the signs of Byron's madness. She misappropriates the answers in response to the text's questions and thereby fails to read the artifice. She becomes mystified by the Romantic illusion and consequently describes Glenarvon's genius and his relative position above common humanity: "[Glenarvon] seemed to [Calantha] so far above her – so far above everything. She considered him as entirely different from all others; and, if not superior, at least dissimilar and consequently not to be judged of by the same criterion" (161). Lamb echoes Scott here, situating Glenarvon within a higher realm, unreachable and untouchable by those around him who have no right or, at the very least, no means by which to judge his actions. He becomes the poetic genius, set apart from humanity. She equates Byron's madness with his genius. She attempts to make the text speak but misinterprets the discourse. She asks the text inappropriate questions because of her historically limited horizon. The "in-between" space has produced confusion rather than clarity.

The specter of madness lurks just beneath the surface and emerges more frequently as Lamb's novel progresses. Glenarvon describes himself as "cold as the grave – as death; and all here [placing Calantha's hand upon his heart] is chilled, lost, absorbed" (165). He continues: "The never dying worm feeds upon my heart: I am like death, Lady Avondale; and all beneath is seared" (165). Writing from within Romantic ideology, Lamb refashions the poet from "The
Dream," who has experienced too much and whose sensitivity brings as much suffering as revelation. Instead of entering into the conversation and expanding it, she repeats the discourse already produced by Byron before her. She cannot read the artifice and therefore reiterates the acts without understanding the performance that engenders them.

Unable to read Byron's performance as artifice, Lamb reproduces it here as truth. Glenarvon becomes a purportedly factual construct of the person Lamb had known. This, readers imagined, was the real Byron. Late in the novel, Glenarvon screams to his adversaries: "All hell is raging in my bosom. My brain is on fire. You cannot add to my calamities" (349). In this, he becomes every Byronic Hero that Byron created, especially Manfred, who cries to the demon: "I bear within / A torture which could nothing gain from thine [ . . . ] I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey--/ But was my own destroyer, and will be / My own hereafter" (3.4.127-40). Lamb patterns Glenarvon on Byron's performances, in both his life and his poetry, perpetuating the artifice without being able to interpret it. She gets lost in the hermeneutic circle, unable to see beyond her own immediacy and her own horizon. She accepts Byron's performances as real and reproduces them in her text.

Byronism gains its power from these misinterpreted and continually refashioned reproductions. Lamb replicates a figure, which becomes the template for future productions, perpetuating a performance and seeing it as the self. Glenarvon, the eponymous hero, chases an illusory ship with sable sails and a "ghastly white" crew who chanted: "Hell waits its victim" (365). Glenarvon was "all maddening with superstitious terror [ . . . ] His brain was burning [ . . . ] Madness to frenzy came upon him" (366). He jumps off the ship into the water, where he almost drowns. He is rescued by his crewmates, but feels himself dying. He senses his drift downward, sinking "with horrid precipitance from gulf to gulf, till immured in darkness" (366). Lamb cannot see the alterity of Byron's madness and therefore reproduces a character unable to move beyond the "frenzy" that surrounds him. She reads with misunderstanding and therefore misinterprets the discourse produced within the emerging tradition. Glenarvon
(the poetic genius who descends into madness, commits heinous crimes, dies, and remains damned for all eternity) not only illustrates the Romantic myth, both delineated and expanded, but also reiterates the performance so aptly enacted by the poet whom Lamb wishes to reproduce.

Because Lamb remains within what McGann would call the Romantic myth, she cannot see beyond these enticing illusions. The hermeneutic circle remains closed; instead of questioning Byron's performance, she projects her own meaning onto the text and sees nothing else. Her horizon remains limited by her inability to see beyond her own immediacy. She forecloses meaning by refusing to imagine that the original text can tell her anything beyond what she already knows to be the truth. She remains closed to the answers that text provides. She does not see Byron's alterity; she instead sees only the projection that she herself constructed. Lamb secures Byron's fictional future as poetic genius and madman without being able to understand the reproductive mechanism known here as Byronism. The circle effectively binds her, continuing the figure's unreadability and, ultimately, its artifice.

Much like Lamb, Shelley misinterprets Byron's performances of madness. The artifice remains unreadable, which prompts Shelley to reproduce Byron's madness in *Julian and Maddalo* (1819). Shelley's letters address Byron's madness: "Lord Byron, is an exceedingly interesting person, and as such is it not to be regretted that he is a slave to the vilest and most vulgar prejudices, and as mad as the winds?" (Jones I: 491). In a second letter dated December 18, 1818, he continues: "I entirely agree with what you say about Childe Harold [Canto IV]. The spirit in which it is written is, if insane, the most wicked & mischievous insanity that ever was given forth. It is a kind of obstinate & self-willed folly in which he hardens himself" (Jones II: 57-58). In both of these letters, Shelley attempts to disconnect the poetic tradition from Byron's selfish nature, an enslavement to depravity that Shelley believes has brought about Byron's vulgarity and immorality.

In *Julian and Maddalo*, Shelley constructs a plot that only thinly disguises himself and Byron. The interconnectedness of the two protagonists'
philosophies, as well as the political and poetical tenets, makes it difficult to separate the two men. The poem is, in part, a reconstruction of an outing on which Shelley and Byron embarked in the fall of 1818 in Venice. Shelley prefaces the work by saying: "It was composed last year at Este; two of the characters you will recognize; and the third is also some degree a painting from nature, but with respect to time and place, ideal" (152). Marchand gives a detailed account of the proceedings that prompted this poem:

Despite the fact that Shelley would have preferred to return to Claire, Byron insisted on taking him to the Lido in his gondola, where they rode their horses along the sands while talking. Byron was in an excellent mood. Shelley always stimulated him to the height of his powers. Though Byron loved to twit him on his atheistic views and his transcendental notions, Shelley too was delighted with the conversation and the ride, and later made a poetic record of it in Julian and Maddalo. (748)

Fundamentally, this poem enacts a dialogue on multiple levels: between the characters, between Shelley and Byron, and between Shelley and his audience. Shelley's elaborate description of Count Maddalo stands in stark contrast to his austere depiction of Julian. Count Maddalo (Byron) is portrayed in the preface as "a person of the most consummate genius, and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the redeemer of his degraded country [. . . .] He is cheerful, frank and witty. His more serious conversation is a sort of intoxication; men are held by it as by a spell" ("Preface" 112-13). Maddalo's genius, conversational skill, and potential to redeem his country are diminished by his arrogance, which stems from a comparison of his own extraordinary mind with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are incomparably greater than those of other men are; and, instead of the latter having been employed in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each other strength. His ambition preys upon itself, for
want of objects which it can consider worthy of exertion. ("Preface" 112-13)

We see here how Shelley aligns Maddalo with poetic genius, projecting onto him the illusion of superiority that evidently so captivated Romantic authors, an illusion that McGann demystifies and elucidates. Moreover, Shelley expands this illusion not only by portraying Maddalo as a genius but also by implying that he could become a redeemer, a messiah to those who long for a release from the monarchical rule that limits and enslaves the English population. However, these talents are considerably moderated by Maddalo's egotism and condescension. His starving "ambition preys upon itself" for want of more nourishing fare. The artifice has survived intact; Shelley attempts to mediate between the poetic tradition and Byron's "obstinate & self-willed folly" but becomes lost within the hermeneutic circle because of his historical position.

In contrast to Maddalo, Julian appears as the muted subordinate, the glow-worm, as Shelley would say, to Byron's sun. He is "passionately attached to those philosophical notions which assert the power of man over his own mind, in the immense improvements of which, by the extinction of certain moral superstitions, human society may yet be susceptible [. . . .]" ("Preface" 113). While he does not portray himself as an outright poetic genius, Shelley does paint a picture of Julian as a philosopher and liberator of the human race. Julian believes in the decency of humanity but is forever disappointed in its actions and achievements. His seriousness masks a melancholy and world-weariness that underscores much of the poem. We can easily see how Julian corresponds to McGann's view of Shelley: "Shelley's work is marked by a poetic commitment to social melioration and by a reciprocal sense that circumstances seemed forever conspiring against such commitments" (Ideology 118). Shelley enters the conversation by characterizing himself as philosopher and liberator. Because he stands at a short temporal distance from Byron, however, he fails to gain that productive condition towards interpretation about which Gadamer speaks.
Mediation and interplay do occur, though, in the text, itself. The subtitle of this poem is "A Conversation." Fundamentally, Shelley attempts to ask the questions and ascertain the answers to this madness trope by drawing upon the intricacies and complexities that existed in his relationship with Byron. The two poets enjoyed conversing with one another immensely; they discussed topics ranging from philosophy and science to poetry and love. Shelley represents and reinterprets their love of conversation and argument through poetry. William Christie emphasizes that Shelley anatomizes in Julian and Maddalo "his own political and philosophical position" in order "to isolate and exaggerate, among other things, its inconsistencies as well as his own hypocrisies" (43). Many critics have seen this poem as autobiographical. In Shelley, The Last Phase, Ivan Roe says the poem is "significantly autobiographical" (141). In Byron and Shelley: The History of a Friendship, John Buxton says the poem "is factual enough, is indeed a piece of immediate reporting of experience" (78). Accordingly, if the poem is autobiographical, and if Julian represents Shelley and Maddalo represents Byron, to whom does the third figure within the poem, the Maniac, correspond? In Lord Byron's Marriage: The Evidence of Asterisks, G. Wilson Knight believes him to be another aspect of Byron:

Whereas Maddalo represents the bluff, manly, caustic, exterior which Byron, pre-eminently in his letters, presented to the world, the Maniac is his underself, his gentler, emotionally tormented, poetic, self, or parts of his sterner self sympathetically and inwardly viewed. The Maniac's characteristics precisely suit Byron. There are correspondences to all his gentler qualities and also to his liberal ardour, wit, anger, pride and scorn; also to Augusta, Allegra, and to his rejection by Lady Byron, together with her accusation of "pride." His sufferings are caused by her rejection. The marriage-secret is hinted. (223)

In opposition to this, David V. Erdman, in Romantic Rebels, stresses: "Knight is certainly mistaken, however, in equating the Maniac in Julian and Maddalo with Byron rather than Shelley" (192).
The maniac represents not only the conversation's synthesis but the poets' amalgamation as well. As had Lamb, Shelley reiterates madness by not only reproducing Byron's performance of it but also Shelley's own status as madman and poet. Christie emphasizes that:

> It is against the periodic flirtation with madness, rather – Shelley's own, if you will, as well as Byron's – that the Maniac's psychic agony and paralysis offer a warning. That Byron's Venetian profligacy betrayed just such incipient symptoms suggests, not that the Maniac is a disguised portrait of either poet, but that he is a portent. (55)

Like Lamb, Shelley remains within what McGann would call the Romantic myth, which renders him unable to see beyond these enticing illusions. The hermeneutic entraps him so that instead of questioning Byron's performance, he projects his own meaning and his own image onto the text of *Julian and Maddalo*. By focusing on Byron's madness, he misinterprets textual alterity, seeing only the projection that he himself constructed. Shelley's madman appears prophetic but only because the maniac synthesizes the two poets' personas.

Shelley represents the Maniac as conversing with no one in particular but in the end conversing with everyone. The madman is figuratively a text speaking, mediating between the two poetic characters:

> How vain are words! I thought never to speak again, Not even in secret, not to mine own heart; But from my lips the unwilling accents start, And from my pen the words flow as I write, Dazzling my eyes with scalding tears; my sight Is dim to see that characterized in vain On this unfeeling leaf, which burns the brain And eats into it, blotting all things fair And wise and good which time had written there. Those who inflict must suffer, for they see
The work of their own hearts, and this must be
        Our chastisement or recompense. (473-84)

The madman thought "never to speak again" but engages in dialogue nonetheless. In attempting to understand and reproduce a text, Shelley projects, as Gadamer says, a meaning for the text's entirety. Shelley misreads Byron's performance of madness, which leads him to reproduce it here as a reality. Moreover, Shelley reproduces not only Byron's madness but also his own, reinvigorating it by aligning it with the virtues poetic genius has to offer. Shelley has failed to remain open to the text's alterity and becomes lost in the "in-between" as a result. The artifice has not only remained unreadable but has been amplified by, as McGann would say, the grand illusion of escape through imagination and poetry. Like Lamb, Shelley becomes entrapped within the hermeneutic circle, remaining focused on his immediate surroundings. Moreover, he mimics Byron's performance, aligning himself with the madness displayed in the poet's enactments of genius. Instead of, as Gadamer would say, "participating in an event of tradition," and mediating between past and present, he remains unable to read Byron's performances, or his own for that matter, because his historical location prevents it. He is necessarily limited by his horizon, unable to see beyond it. Shelley reproduces Byron's performance while at the same time performing it himself.

Unlike both Lamb's and Shelley's poems, Francis Ford Coppola's film, *Don Juan DeMarco* (1995), enters into the conversation two hundred years later, thereby effecting the "positive and productive condition" essential to hermeneutic interpretation. The film exposes Romantic illusions, thereby reading the artifice and satirizing the seductive qualities of this myth. As a result, we, as audience members, see both the enticingly beautiful illusion and the linguistic interplay that creates the illusion. The protagonist (Johnny Depp), a delightfully mad lothario who believes himself to be the legendary Don Juan, persuades those around him to detach themselves from reality, thereby seducing them into his dream. His palpable magnetism woos men and women, drawing individuals to him through
the act of his telling this implausible yet poignant story. He has decided to commit suicide because of Doña Ana's (Géraldine Pailhas) rejection. Dr. Jack Mickler (Marlon Brando) saves the young man by pretending to be Don Octavio de Flores, a seventeenth-century Spanish nobleman, uncle to Don Francisco de Silva, the famous swordsman that Don Juan has summoned. The young man arrives at the Woodhaven State Hospital for a ten-day stay. During this time, the young man tells his story, after which he is medicated, at which point a judge determines that he is not a danger to society or himself and frees him.

In this film, multiple narratives drive the plot. One narrative follows Don Juan DeMarco. Within an elaborate fantasy, Don Juan DeMarco creates his past from two texts: The Original Tale of Don Juan and Don Juan by Byron. The sequences: the seduction of Donna Julia and the cuckolding of Don Alfonzo; the abduction of Don Juan by pirates, who eventually sell him into slavery; and the shipwreck, which washes him onto the shore of an island, to be rescued by Doña Ana, a stand-in for the original Haidée. By using both the original Don Juan and Byron's Don Juan, the film emphasizes the seductive quality of the Romantic myth and at the same time satirizes viewers and readers who believe the illusion to be reality. Madness appears surreptitiously through the act of reading Byron's poetry. Don Juan DeMarco mistakes the Byronic artifice as truth, leading him to construct a fantasy that involves effortless seduction and incontestable lovemaking skills. As for the protagonist's reality, we have a more mundane truth. Johnny DeMarco, a teenager in jeans, a long-sleeved tee shirt, and tennis shoes, relates a gloomy history to the judge who adjudicates DeMarco's case. His father had died in a car accident when he was 16, while they were living in Phoenix; involved in numerous affairs, his mother decided to join a convent in Mexico; seemingly orphaned, the young man sees a young woman in a magazine and desperately wants to meet her but realizes that she won't appreciate him as he is. Having read The Original Tale of Don Juan and Don Juan, he constructs an alter ego less afraid of women than he is. He finally reaches the young woman by phone after numerous tries, but she rejects him out of hand. Devastated, he attempts suicide, as a call for help and cry for attention.
Humiliated and vulnerable, DeMarco elicits empathy from the judge, who, having experienced a "centerfold fantasy or two" in his own youth, orders him released from the asylum.

The second narrative follows Dr. Jack Mickler, played by Marlon Brando, a soon-to-retire psychiatrist bored with his life and his work. Don Juan DeMarco was to be his final case. As the narrative progresses, however, Mickler becomes increasingly entranced by the fantasy as DeMarco's madness permeates his life and changes him. He begins to desire his wife of 32 years more frequently and more ardently. He goes home during the middle of the day to make love to her. He listens to opera, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, as well as Spanish music that enlivens his blood and passions. He begins working out and takes his wife for a romantic dinner, during which he presents her with diamond earrings and hires a mariachi band to serenade her. The romantic realm has seduced him, and he begins to experience its magic, its surreal ambiance, and its enticement. In opposition to this, we have the institutional powers that assert their hegemonic presence throughout the film. The police mock and then confine the young man, who seemingly endangers himself and the community; the medical community, with which Dr. Mickler is increasingly at odds, confines the young man in the asylum, curing him with talk therapy and psychotropic medication; the psychiatrists categorize him as having an "obsessive-compulsive disorder with erotomatic overtones"; the judicial system evaluates his mental condition and his ability to function in society.

The first narrative impels the second. At the end of the movie, Dr. Mickler says that Don Juan DeMarco suffered from a romanticism that was "completely incurable and highly contagious." Not only has the psychiatrist been seduced but so has the audience. We thrill to see Dr. Mickler, his wife, and Don Juan DeMarco on a plane to paradise (aptly named Eros Island). Having left the asylum, Dr. Mickler boasts: "I am Don Octavio, the world's greatest psychiatrist. I have cured over a thousand patients and their faces linger in my mind like summer days." As the couple frolics on the beach, we hear Brando's voiceover as he asks whether Doña Ana was waiting for Don Juan DeMarco. "Why not!"
he cries gleefully. Madness has infected the doctor, his wife, and supposedly, the film's audience. However, we understand that the narrative, as well as the movie itself, exists as an artifice to be read and interpreted. We begin to understand how seductive this fantasy world can be.

A postmodern view compels us to mediate between the past and present. Coppola's movie represents an allegory of Romantic illusion and our present-day fascination with it. We must, as Gadamer emphasizes, "acknowledge that the work of art is not a timeless object of aesthetic experience but belongs to a 'world' that alone determines its full significance" (166). Whereas Lamb and Shelley reproduce Byron's performances, this movie reproduces, deconstructs, and interprets them. *Don Juan DeMarco* shows us the alluring quality of fantasy while continually exposing its artifice as constructed. The text tells us something about ourselves, about our need for escapism, about our longing for some transcendent force, and about our ties to the Romantic myth of madness. At the same time, however, it focuses our attention firmly on our distrust of big T truths and on our recognition of ideological forces at work within our horizons.

The film defines our horizons of expectations while at the same time allowing us to see beyond them. Gadamer asserts the following hermeneutical requirement: "We must place ourselves in the other situation in order to understand it" (303). *Don Juan DeMarco* allows us to experience Romantic illusion for ourselves as we are drawn into a world of transcendent values, of loves that last through any trial or distance, of utopias that exist on idyllic islands named Eros, and of a world that exists outside of the regulatory institutions and asylums of everyday life. Having been transported, we are then brought back to our own reality when the fantasy ends, when the Brandon voiceover enacts the Hollywood ending in a predictable deus ex machina. The romantic excess and camp deliver the expected conclusion, which makes the film readable and allows us to see the artifice as constructed, since our meaning and the artifice diverge. Gadamer says "the horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices" (306). The text speaks to us, making meaning while changing our perspective. Gadamer
stresses: "The other world we encounter is not only foreign but is also related to us. It has not only its own truth in itself but also its own truth for us" (442). This film creates an alluring fantasy, and then strips it of its power to entice.

Jerome McGann claims in *Romantic Ideology* that Romantic scholarship and criticism have been governed by an "uncritical absorption in Romanticism's own self-representations" (1). What I have attempted to show in this chapter is just such an "uncritical absorption" in Byron's "self-representation." His mad performances were mistaken for the performer, himself, rather than the performativity that enacts this madness and creates the Byron we read. As Gadamer has emphasized, "reading with understanding is always a kind of reproduction, performance, and interpretation" (160). Shelley and Lamb reproduced but failed to interpret Byron's performed madness. *Don Juan DeMarco* reproduces and exposes it, seeing the temporal distance and the nineteenth- and twentieth-century tradition of Byronism.

Necessarily, both prior and contemporary critics must recognize and acknowledge their own ideologies, especially where they resemble those identified by McGann. Although the hermeneutic circle can intuitively inform and enlighten, it can also entrap the interpreter within a horizon that forestalls the ability to see beyond one's own immediate historical location. We must mediate between the past and the present, remaining open to the questions and answers produced by our texts. We must also remember that while we can never escape our own prejudices, we must use them to help us better understand the text, allowing it to speak to us in its own voice, changing us as it does so. Our horizons must remain pliable, changing with each textual interpretation.

By reconstructing and examining Byron's performance, we have seen the artifice that desires to remain hidden. Both Lamb and Shelley mistook that artifice for reality, imagining the man, Lord Byron, to be "mad as the winds." Because of their historical location, they remained deeply entrenched within the production and reproduction of Byronism without being able to interpret the ideology that surrounded it. They remained unable to read the artifice, thereby allowing the performance to work, to "effect realness" as Butler would say.
Juan DeMarco, however, reads that artifice and exposes it as performance. Moreover, Coppola's film mediates between Romanticism's past and our postmodern present, demystifying both Reality and Truth. It questions its own position by stepping back to engage critically with the text. Effectively, it shows us the way out of the hermeneutic trap.
Conclusion: Towards a Literary History

The relationship of work to work must now be brought into this interaction between work and mankind, and the historical coherence of works among themselves must be seen in the interrelations of production and reception. Put another way: literature and art only obtain a history that has the character of a process when the succession of works is mediated not only through the producing subject but also through the consuming subject—through the interaction of author and public.

Hans Robert Jauss  Toward an Aesthetic of Reception

I conclude my dissertation by looking towards the "interaction between work and mankind," between "author and public" as suggested by my epigraph. I have established a number of synchronic cross sections and seen how they operate within a diachronic literary history. Questions remain that will inspire my future work: Has Byronism changed since its inception? Is the Byronic figure different now than it was in the early nineteenth century? What contributions has Byronism made to both academic and popular sensibilities? Where does Byronism go from here? As Jauss asserts, we can find the answers within the mediation between author and audience, within the space that connects cultural production with consumption.

Throughout the previous chapters, I have attempted to expose the coalesced Byronic body performatively created by Byronism, which in turn has been perpetuated by Byron’s self-fashioning and the refashioning of others. Byronism enacts a fragmented figure that encompasses cultural and literary alterations while it destabilizes a codified figure; it engenders a historical trajectory, a diachronic literary history that incorporates textual modifications while it promotes synchronic stabilization. I have taken, as Jauss says, "a synchronic cross section of a moment in the development" of a Byronic literary history in order to "discover an overarching system of relationships in the literature of a historical moment" (35). As we have discovered, the overarching system spans two centuries, moving from a purely literary and artistic phenomenon to a broadly expansive cultural and social one. I have attempted to
"articulate historically the change in literary structures in its epoch-making moments," although this articulation could easily inspire my work for some years to come (35).

Rather than abating, as Jerome Christensen suggests in Lord Byron's Strength, I would argue that Byronism has flourished and continues to do so. Byron's recognizable name still engenders value. As a society, we continue to fashion and refashion him, producing and reproducing his figure in both academic and public spheres. Three full-length biographies have recently been published: Phyllis Grosskurth's Byron: The Flawed Angel, Benita Eisler's Byron: Child of Passion, Fool of Fame, and Fiona MacCarthy's Byron: Life and Legend. Numerous critical books and articles continue to frequent the MLA Bibliography's catalogs. On a recent visit to EBAY, I found the following Byronic items listed at auction: books, art, vases, mugs, t-shirts, flowers, newspapers, golf clubs, colognes, postcards, erotica, watches, medallions, cameos, life masks, and sculptures. Washington D.C. boasts a popular restaurant and bar named "The Childe Harold." The University of Nottingham hosts the Centre for Byron Studies and the Universities of Delaware and Texas house extensive Byron archives. The BBC recently produced and premiered Byron, written by Nick Dear and starring Johnny Lee Miller as Lord Byron, Natasha Little as Augusta Leigh, Vanessa Redgrave as Lady Melbourne, Camilla Power as Lady Caroline Lamb, Julie Cox as Annabella Milbanke, and Stephen Campbell Moore as Hobhouse. The International Byron Societies (39 at last count) thrive, hosting conferences all over the world. We can conclusively assert that Byron has achieved legendary, iconographic stature.

As Jauss says, a literary paradigm's accomplishment "is the ability to wrest works of art from the past by means of new interpretations, to translate them into a new present, to make the experiences preserved in past art accessible again" (Aesthetics 54). As we have seen with Don Juan DeMarco, Lord of the Dead, and Conversations with Lord Byron on Perversion, Lord Byron's figure has been restructured for a postmodern audience in order to mediate between the past and the present. Coppola's film, Holland's novel, and
Prantera’s textual cyborg fantasy have demystified Byron’s allure for an entirely new audience by drawing intimate connections between the literary and the cultural. They have updated Byron, made him relevant and germane to his audience. With many retellings, our authors and directors have embraced the myth while altering it with their own modern visions of fragmentation, interruption, and glamour. They have remade Byron for a contemporary milieu, employing iconographic refashionings to translate and interpret him for a visually sensitive audience. His body has become a sexualized commodity to be consumed for our voyeuristic pleasure. On the screen and often in novels, he has appeared as one of his Byronic characters: a larger-than-life, egotistical hero with guilty but never-revealed secrets, a penchant for men and women, and a magnetic personality that draws these individuals to him like moths to a flame.

These codified literary and visual structures have both changed and remained the same, retaining enough material from the previous generations to remain recognizable. Since Annabella Milbanke began emphasizing the "mania" in 1816, the lines between fiction and biography have been blurred. The myths (the bad boy, the rebel, the revolutionary, the lover, the libertine, the rake, and the aristocrat, to name only a few) have been perpetuated for over two hundred years. This intertextuality both informs and constrains our Byron, which exists through a connection to a historically contingent production and reproduction of his figure. The postmodern world, though, has also modernized the Byronic figure. He has achieved cult status with star-like quality. Byron shows up in the oddest places—as the dark, brooding poet in Star Trek holodecks to a sword-fighting immortal in Highlander. His poetry has been effectively effaced while his life and personality have taken center stage.

Byron's figure still encourages an intimacy and familiarity from an adoring audience. Since Byron is no longer able to castigate and disparage his audience, it freely and voraciously consumes him. The public buys and sells Byron's image with impunity; his figure endures as a reference point for romanticized yearnings and rebellious intent. Having previously existed within a Jaussian literary history, we have now a Byron who thrives within a cultural and
social narrative. Byron has become a commodity; in addition to a sexualized and refashioned body, his figure has become that which sells merchandise with increasing frequency. As Elfenbein asserts, Byron has achieved celebrity status, a "constructed cultural phenomenon" still able to mesmerize his audience with an alluring personality and a captivating sensuality.

As Jauss says, we have moved from "recognized aesthetic norms to a new production that surpasses them" (19). This new production has been mediated by an audience that actively engages the Byronic figure, which in turn engenders a critical understanding that crystallizes into "newly articulated experiences" (25). Byron has become kitsch, wickedly fashionable to a population fantastically concerned with beauty, money, power, and prestige. These inexhaustible creations, a paean to our consumerist society, have come into being through the continual reconfiguration of the Jaussian audience-text-author triangles. An already elaborate myth has been augmented and modified so that the current myth entices us with its mirroring of our own insecurities, fears, and aspirations. We can focus on not just the fictional tradition and its mediation, but also on the way in which Byronism created that which is considered its creator. By exploring one segment of Byronism, the fictions, we have begun to effectively peruse the historicity of the fictional horizons.

This is hardly the last chapter, however, as much remains to researched and written. In her review of MacCarthy's biography in The Guardian, Kathryn Hughes wishes for a book on "how the myth of Byron played itself out" over the last two centuries, a book that would resemble "Lucasta Miller's pathfinding The Brontë Myth" (10). I hope to write this book, as numerous fictions linger in the background, waiting for their turn in the spotlight. More than that, though, and returning to Jauss, I look forward to analyzing the connection between us and these fictions in order to understand the "historical coherence" that connects the producer with the receiver. I have already examined the mediation between the "producing subject" and the "consuming subject," but my future work will be encouraged by the Byronic history's significance and construction. I hope to map Byronism's change and the ways in which the various historical periods have
instigated or at least swayed these alterations. After watching Byron's funeral procession, the poet John Clare wrote in his journal: "The common people felt his merits and his power and the common people of a country are the best feelings of a prophesy of futurity" (52). My book will plot that prophesy and what it portends not only for our present but also for our future.
Appendix 1: "The Byromania"

Annabella Milbanke

Woman! how truly called 'A harmless thing!'
So meekly smarting with the venom’d sting.
Forgiving saints!—ye bow before the rod,
And kiss the ground on which your censor trod.
Reforming Byron with his magic sway
Compels all hearts to love him and obey—
Commands our wounded vanity to sleep,
Bids us forget the Truths that cut so deep,
Inspires a generous candour to the mind
That makes us to our friend's oppression kind.
Amusing Patroness of passing whim
Which calls the weaker sex to worship him,
See Caro, smiling, sighing, o'er his face
In hopes to imitate each strange grimace
And mar the silliness which looks so fair
By bringing signs of wilder Passion there.
Is Human nature to be cast anew,
And modelled to your Idol's Image true?
Then grant me. Jove, to wear some other shape,
And be an anything—except an Ape!

A.I.M. 1812
Fictions of Byron – Annotated Bibliography

*Glenarvon. Lady Caroline Lamb. 1816.*

One of the most famous fictions written with Byron in mind as the antagonist. Byron stars as both Glenarvon and Viviani, with Caroline Lamb as Calantha and her husband, William Lamb, as Lord Avondale. Byron read the text and quipped: "If the authoress had written the *truth*, and nothing but the truth—the whole truth—the romance would not only have been more *romantic*, but more entertaining. As for the likeness, the picture can't be good—I did not sit long enough" (Letter to Thomas More, *BLJ* Dec. 5th, 1816). James L. Ruff, the editor of the 1972 version, says: "Calantha is undoubtedly as accurate a self-portrait as Lady Caroline could manage [. . . .] In the noble Lord Avondale, we likewise have Lady Caroline's rather sentimental view of her husband [. . . .] In long sections of the novel, Byron's character is distorted beyond recognition. Disguised as the child-murdering Viviani, Glenarvon bears no real relationship to Byron. As the lover of Calantha, he possesses some of the fascination and charm of the original but lack the real substance of the man. He tends to incarnate the more extreme elements of Byronism, and is a melancholy, brooding, guilt-haunted, self-dramatizing villain. Missing are all the manly qualities of Byron, his warmth, generosity, and especially the marvelous sense of humor which balanced his darker side [. . . .] The overall impression is undoubtedly false for, though she does not totally absolve herself from blame for the affair, Lady Caroline lays most of it at Byron's door. Also, of course, she omits much of her own outrageous behavior in pursuing Byron." (vii-viii)

*Six Weeks at Long's By a Late Resident. Eaton Stannard Barrett. 1817.*

On the surface, one might see this novel as a love story complete with lovers, catastrophes, and villains. Beneath this, however, lies the author's attempt to chastise and rebuke ostensible friends who betray and disappoint. Lord Leander represents Byron, with Beau Brummell as Mr. Bellair, and Thomas Moore as Mr. Little. The author settles the score, as it were, for imagined or real slights or insults. He says: "That a great number of good-natured people will call [the novel] gross, libellous, scurrilous, personal, and Heaven knows what beside, is most certain [. . . .] Sure, I am, that many of the personages recorded in these volumes will feel (if they should guess who I am, and several of them must, though they will put their fingers on their lips for certain reasons) that I have not inflicted on them half the chastisement they deserve at my hands. They will doubtless call to mind the situation in which their infernal schemes have placed me; they well know that I have often, when they themselves were in the most trying circumstances that men could be placed in, held out my arm and raised them from the mire; they will recollect that I have upon more than one occasion consented even to sacrifice, in a measure, my own character to save their's [sic]; they will recollect the vile advantage
they took of that event; they will not forget the promises they then made to me; and their consciences will inform them, in how base, how unmanly they retracted, and shuffled, and prevaricated. Let them then say that I have treated them with severity. They cannot lay their hands on their hearts (their heart! the wretches have none!) and assert that I have been too severe. But the time may come when I shall again emerge, when I shall again meet them face to face, when they shall shrink from me as from a basilisk, and when they shall own that all I now inflict upon them is moderation, is meekness itself, to what I may then have it in my power to execute. But enough of false friends and deluding smilers" (i-ix).

*Three Weeks at Fladong's By a Late Visitant.* Anonymous. 1817.
An imitation of *Six Weeks at Long's By a Late Resident.* Lord Stanza is the Byron character and The Hon Douglas Kincat is Douglas Kinnaird.

*Prodigious!!! or Childe Paddie in London.* Anonymous. 1818.
The novel resembles not only Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and the numerous knock offs but also Lamb's *Glenarvon*. Here, Byron is Lord Woeful and Lamb becomes Lady Glenarvon.

*Nightmare Abbey.* Thomas Love Peacock. 1818.
An satire, not only of the Gothic genre in general but of the various Romantic participants, many of whom Peacock knew intimately. The characters are caricatures of the Shelley circle: Scythrop – Shelley; Marionetta – Harriet Shelley; Stella – Mary Shelley; Flosky – S. T. Coleridge; Cypress – Lord Byron; Mr. Toobad – J. F. Newton; Mr. Listless – Sir Lumley Skeffington. Most of the information upon which Peacock based his view of Byron as an individual was gleaned through correspondence with Percy B. Shelley and through his reading of *Childe Harold*. Consequently, the character of Mr. Cypress is a compilation of Shelley's representation of Byron's character and Peacock's reductionism of Byron's poetry in prose form. Cypress is characterized by a pronounced melancholy strain, pervasive with gloom and unhappiness. His portrayal of Coleridge as Flosky is one of the most humorous caricatures in Romantic literature.

*Florence Macarthy: An Irish Tale.* Lady Morgan. 1818.
Upon finishing this book, Maria Edgeworth wrote: "My general feelings in closing this book are shame and disgust, and the wish never more to be classed with novel writers when the highest talents in the land have been so disgraced. Oh that I could prevent people from ever naming me along with her—either for praise or for blame. Comparisons are indeed odious. God forbid, as my dear father said, I should ever be such a thing as that. It was for want of such a father she has come to this." A Gothic novel about Ireland, similar to *Glenarvon* in that both the hero (Fitzwalter) and the heroine (Florence Macarthy) remain concealed and mysterious until
the fourth volume. Robert Lee Wolff says of Macarthy: "She is a novelist, author of tales exactly like Lady Morgan's own [. . .] Florence is quiet and unobtrusive in society but clever and witty and feminine." One of four novels Lady Morgan wrote about Ireland and the insistence on heroic valor and liberation. Byron appears in the novel as Mr. De Vere. She describes him as follows: "To those acquainted with the first class of British distinction, he was easily cognizable in accent, dress, air, and physiognomy, as an Englishman of rank and fashion, the *Homme comme il faut* of the highest circles. There was, however, in the countenance and modes of this distinguished young stranger something more than the mere characteristics of country and rank:--a sort of fantastic pensiveness, a real or affected abstraction, a something imaginative and ideal, in his manière d'être, that indicated great eccentricity, if not eminent peculiarity of mind. He seemed a compound of fancy and fashion; a medium between the consciousness of rank, and the assumption and possession of genius, which placed him out of the common muster-roll of society; something escaped from it by chance and vain of standing aloof, untractable to its laws, and therefore believing himself beyond them [. . .] The structure of his fine head was such as physiognomists assign to superior intellect; and the precise arrangement of its glossy auburn curls left it difficult to decide whether its fanciful and fashionable possessor was more fop or philosopher, dandy or poet."

**The Vampyre. John Polidori. 1819.**

Begins with a letter to the Editor, presumably from Polidori about the infamous meetings in Geneva of Byron, Shelley, M. Shelley, Claire, and Polidori, and the writing of ghost stories. Byron as Lord Ruthven is a suave, awe-inspiring lothario. Polidori as Aubrey is a orphan, left with only a sister and possession of great wealth. Ruthven invites Aubrey to go on a grand tour, where they visit Brussels and various other cities, then move on to Rome. While there, Aubrey’s guardians prevail upon him to disengage himself from Ruthven, which he does. Aubrey travels to Greece where he meets a young girl named Ianthe. Aubrey goes out on an excursion, gets caught by a storm and has to return through the infamous woods in the dark. He is set upon by unknown forces but saved by the villagers. Ianthe, however, loses her life to “a vampyre.” Aubrey becomes feverish, attended by Lord Ruthven who miraculously finds him in the village. They again travel together through Greece. During a gun battle between bandits, Ruthven is mortally wounded. He extracts from Aubrey a promise not to tell of his crimes or his death for one year and one day in England. Then Ruthven dies. The bandits take the body to the summit to bathe it in the first cold rays of the moon. His body is nowhere to be found the next day. When Aubrey gets back to England, Ruthven is there, and paying homage to his sister. Aubrey realizes that he cannot break his oath. Aubrey gets sick and stays stick for months. Finally, the year ends but his sister marries and is found dead while Ruthven disappears once
again. A somewhat predictable plot that includes unsurprising narrative
twists. Polidori used Byron’s unpublished story fragment and expanded
upon it. The public considered this tale to have been written by Byron and
his name even appeared upon the cover as the author. An interesting
connection exists between the main character and Lord Grey de Ruthyn,
Byron’s childhood friend and later enemy.

**Julian and Maddalo. Percy Bysshe Shelley. 1819**

Shelley describes the Byron character as follows: "Count Maddalo is a
Venetian nobleman of ancient family, and a great fortune, who without
mixing much in the society of his countrymen, resides chiefly at his
magnificent palace in that city. He is a person of the most consummate
genius, and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of
becoming the redeemer of his degraded country. But it his weakness to
be proud. He derives, from a comparison of his own extraordinary mind
with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of
the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are
incomparably greater than those of other man; and, instead of the latter
having been employed in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each
other strength. His ambition preys upon itself, for want of objects which it
can consider worthy of exertion. He is cheerful, frank and witty. His more
serious conversation is a sort of intoxication; men are held by it as by a
spell." Shelley describes his own characterization as follows: "Julian is an
Englishman of good family, passionately attached to those philosophical
notions which assert the power of man over his own mind, in the immense
improvements of which, by the extinction of certain moral superstitions,
human society may yet be susceptible. Without concealing the evil in the
world he is forever speculating how good may be made superior. He is a
complete infidel and a scoffer of all things reputed holy; Maddalo takes a
wicked pleasure in drawing out his taunts against religion. What Maddalo
thinks on these matters is not exactly known. Julian, in spite of his
heterodox opinions, is conjectured by his friends to possess some good
qualities. How far this is possible the pious reader will determine. Julian is
rather serious." The poem relates the events of an excursion during which
Julian and Maddalo visit an asylum. Maddalo tells the story of the
madman, who came to Venice a dejected and poverty-stricken man. He
returned to Venice with a young woman who subsequently leaves him,
provoking madness. Maddalo pities him and elegantly decorates his room
within the madhouse. When they first meet him, he is playing the piano.
He stops and speaks, as if to himself, of his great despair and
disappointment, longing for death. He stops only to sleep. The two visitors
leave. Julian eventually leaves Venice for London but returns at a later
date. Maddalo is traveling far away but his daughter (an allusion perhaps
to a grown Allegra) kindly receives him. Julian asks about the madman
only to find that the lady who had left had returned; once arrogant, she
was now submissive. The madman had returned to sanity whereupon the
lady left him once again. Maddalo's daughter stops. Julian presses her for more information. She humbly tells him but Julian swears that the cold world shall not know the answer.

**Harold the Exile. Anonymous. 1819.**

Alicia W. and Lady G. are introduced to a man named Delamere, who later turns out to be Lord Harold, the infamous exile from England. He tells Alicia his story of woe. He falls in love with Gabrielle, but both of them were then duped by the evil machinations of Berrington, who eventually marries Gabrielle and treats her horribly. Harold is also duped by the malicious Lady Marchmont, the syren who lures men to their ultimate demise and ruin. Gabrielle eventually dies from heartache, but not until she and Harold finally profess undying love for one another. Harold is later constrained to marry Lady Emily, whom he respects but does not love. Once again, Lady Marchmont sees to it that Harold shall not be happy and creates this elaborate scheme to separate Lady Emily and Lord Harold. They are never re-united and Harold ultimately exiles himself from the scandal and dishonor wreaked upon his head by Lady Marchmont, who gets her just deserts when Lord Marchmont finds Harold and Lady Marchmont together. After having told this elaborate story to Alicia W. and Lady G., Harold leaves again to seemingly wander forever. One of the main issues is Harold's utter lack of agency in this text. Everything happens to him, much like Byron's Don Juan. He has blinders on throughout the entire text, always getting himself into scrapes that a simple word or action could alleviate, yet he never takes those actions or says those words. His misery is brought upon him by those malicious individuals, Berrington and Lady Marchmont, for whom he finds an utter fascination, like a moth to a flame. The Byron connection is tenuous at best as the novel seems to explain a profligate lifestyle by insinuating his lack of agency and malevolent influences working on his life. Very little from Byron's biography corresponds to this text.

**Le Vampire. Charles Nodier. 1820.**

From [http://gothic.vei.net/lordruthven/rlegacy.htm](http://gothic.vei.net/lordruthven/rlegacy.htm), we find the following: "Charles Nodier's *Le Vampire* set another precedent for Lord Ruthven, as it was the first vampire drama. The stage drama opened at the Theatre de la Porte-Saint-Martin in the summer of 1820 and became an immediate success. In Nodier's version, Lord Ruthven got his comeuppance in the end, an element that made its way into most subsequent adaptations of the story. Four more Parisian plays featuring Lord Ruthven opened soon after Nodier's version - two were melodramas and two were comedies. It only took a couple of months for the Lord Ruthven craze to hit the London stage. The first British version was James R. Planche's *The Vampire, or, the Bride of the Isles*. 1829 saw the debut of Heinrich August Marschner's opera *Der Vampyr*, marking Lord Ruthven's introduction to German audiences. Even Alexandre Dumas, the author of *The Three Muskateers*,
contributed to the Lord Ruthven saga when his version of the story appeared on the Parisian stage from 1851-1852."

**Ada Reiss. Lady Caroline Lamb. 1823.**
Ada Reis is a passionate, tempestuous man, given to loud bouts of anger and seething revenge. In the beginning of the novel, he kills two of his retainers because they fail to meet his expectations, whereupon he is introduced to Kabkarra, the evil entity and half-brother to Zevahir, the good entity, both of whom are vying for Reis' soul. Ada Reis goes through a number of rulers, eventually landing in the Americas to become the king of the indigenous people there. Throughout the text, he constantly seeks pleasure and pursues evil. His daughter, Fiormonda, follows his lead, even though she begins with a decent disposition. Her heart is turned by Condulmar with whom she falls in love. He spurns her, which makes her love him even more. Eventually, they all end up in Zubanyann's realm, where all but Fiormonda are doomed to punishment for eternity. Fiormonda repents at the last minute and is whisked away by Zevahir to a convent where she lives a wholesome and moral life until she dies. Overall, the text is Gothic in texture and reminds one of Beckford's *Vathek* in both plot structure and tone although not as satisfying. Numerous inane and useless twists and turns exist, housed within a rather loose plot structure. Both Ada and Condulmar have exaggerated Byronic aspects.

**Valperga; of The Life and Adventures of Castruccio. Mary Shelley. 1823.**
Created from a biography of Castruccio Castracani, a warlord of Lucca, Tuscany, a leading figure of the Ghibelline faction who rose to power in the early fourteenth century vying against the Guelph faction. He irrevocably harms two women, Beatrice and Euthanasia, in the process. Claire Clairmont compares Castruccio with Byron and Euthanasia with Shelley. In a letter to Mary of March 15th, 1836 Clairmont asserts that "Euthanasia is Shelley in female attire" and points out the resemblances between Byron and Castruccio. The editor says: "Mary Shelley portrays Castruccio as a modern man of feeling not simply a man of action; indeed his ability to cry as well as to fight elicited Claire Clairmont's astute surmise that he seems to be modeled on Lord Byron, notorious in his life and art for challenging conventional definitions of masculinity." A Gothic novel pointing towards the evils that tyranny can propound. The editor continues: "A major impetus behind the conception of Mary Shelley's novel was the interest she shared with both her father, William Godwin, and her husband, Shelley, in the history of republicanism [. . . .] There is indisputable evidence that both Shelley and, to a greater extent, William Godwin were involved in the shaping of *Valperga* in its final form."
**Narrative of Lord Byron's Voyage to Corsica and Sardinia, during the Summer and Autumn of the Year 1821. Captain Benson. 1824.**

The subtitle proceeds as follows: "Compiled from Minutes Made during the Voyage by the Passengers; and Extracts from the Journal of His Lordship's Yacht, the Mazeppa." This text is less a fiction than a journal of Byron's travels during a few months in 1821. Presumably, Captain Benson was attempting to cash in on Byron's notoriety and popularity by writing an "insider's story," similar one might say to the journal John Murray paid John Polidori to keep while the latter was in Byron's employ.

**Le Dernier Chant du Pélérinage d'Harold. Alfonse de Lamartine. 1825.**

The poem, a continuation of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, begins with the narrator's Invocation to the Muse. We are then re-introduced to Harold, who is in the process of leaving his sleeping beloved. He has a ship ready and they are leaving to fight the good fight. A brief skirmish ensues, wherein the Turkish ship is destroyed and Harold rescues a young girl, who just happens to be his daughter, Ada. She doesn't know him, but she carries a locket around her neck with his picture. They continue sailing and put to shore in order to listen to a long tale of one lone woman at a funeral. She recounts her woeful survival at the hands of the enemy. All of the women have been driven to an abyss, in which they first throw their children and then themselves. They form a chain, singing a song, and when they come to the refrain, whoever is nearest to the cliff, jumps off. The lone woman is miraculously saved, presumably by an angel, to tell her tale. Eventually Harold, his death imminent, and Ada end up with a Christian Hermit. Many long passages of doubt, wandering, and soul-searching commence. Harold eventually dies, lauding nature over the faith he might have had in God. Nature seems unaffected. The end of the poem is Harold at his final judgment. He is put to the test in order to gain heaven and given three torches to light his way: Faith, Reason, and Genius. The first goes out almost immediately because it is too bright for Harold to handle. The other two get him to the two urns, but go out just before he has a chance to choose. He has to choose between the good and the bad urn in the dark, and unfortunately, chooses incorrectly. The serpent stings him and he remains in hell for all eternity. The overriding theme is that Byron (conveniently disguised as Harold) has led a profligate and immoral life. His only two assets (reason and genius) fail to help him in the end, when faith in the one true god would have been his redeeming feature. Through the use of this metaphor, Lamartine warns his readers away from a lifestyle that leads to this kind of excess and towards his own poetry which more firmly envelopes itself in the Christian motif, thus leading the reader to a more moral and fulfilling life. The ramifications are clear: heaven or hell.
Wanderings of Childe Harolde. A Romance of Real Life interspersed with Memoirs of the English Wife, the Foreign Mistress and various other Celebrated Characters. John Harman Bedford. 1825. Much like other fictions listed here, the text resembles a biography more than a novel. As announced in the title, Bedford intersperses the biography with sometimes factual, sometimes fictional comments by Lady Byron and other important personages within the Byron circle.

The Last Man. Mary Shelley. 1826
Adrian: Brother of Idris (resemblance to Shelley)
Idris: Sister of Adrian (resemblance to Shelley)
Lionel Verney: friend of Adrian, husband of Idris (Mary Shelley in male guise)
Perdita: sister of Lionel, wife of Lord Raymond (Claire Claremont, but also Mary Shelley)
Lord Raymond: husband of Perdita (Lord Byron)
Evadne: the Greek girl whom Adrian loves, but who loves Raymond
The narrator tells the audience that certain Sybylline leaves have been found on which various writings have been composed. They tell of a dark future, sometime in the range of 2073-2100, out of which the narrator pieces together the parts and weaves a story about Lionel Verney and the plague that destroys humankind. Lionel relates the story first-hand as a history of himself. His father was beloved at court by the sovereign. After the king married the haughty princess of Austria, who didn't like Lionel's father at all, Lionel's father was less and less welcome at court, even though the king missed him greatly. Eventually, both Lionel's father and mother die, leaving Lionel and Perdita to fend for themselves. The letter that Lionel's father wrote to the king never reached him until much later, well after the children were teenagers. Adrian and Idris are the children of the king and the prince and princess of Austria. Eventually, the monarchy is disbanded and Adrian and Idris move to Windsor, where Lionel and Perdita live. Lionel vows revenge on the slights that he believes his family has sustained but is eventually won over by Adrian's kind manner and charisma. They become fast friends and continue so until the end of humanity. Perdita is wooed and married by Lord Raymond, a friend of the court, who instead of marrying Idris, whom he doesn't love, gives up a crown to follow his heart. Lionel and Idris fall in love and eventually marry. Adrian comes out of a long spell of madness caused by his unrequited love for Evadne, who actually loves Lord Raymond and leaves because her love is not returned. The group is happy at Windsor for some time. Lord Raymond is elected Lord Protector of England, akin to king but without the guise of royalty. He reigns well until Evadne comes back onto the scene and then he and Perdita have a falling out. Evadne realizes this and once again leaves. Raymond renounces the Protectorship and goes to Greece to fight the war against the Turks. He is valiant in battle and they push the Turks back to Constantinople. Raymond is captured and
held captive. Perdita rushes to Greece and after some months, Raymond is freed but remains near death. Perdita nurses him back to health and Raymond joins the fight against the Turks again. Raymond is crushed by a falling building in the last city they raze, and Perdita builds him a magnificent grave. She also constructs a house where she hopes to stay, telling Lionel to look after her and Raymond's daughter Clara. Raymond thinks it would be best if she came home to England, drugs her and takes her on a ship. While out to sea, she wakes up, is over-wrought with feelings of frustration and betrayal, then jumps into the ocean in order to either a) swim back to Greece or b) commit suicide. She dies and Lionel feels horrible. He takes her back to Greece and buries her in the same place that Raymond is buried. The plague soon hits and the world population is destroyed summer by summer. Lionel tells of the gruesome scenes of death and destruction repeatedly. Lionel gets the plague but is the only human to recover. Finally, only three individuals remain: Adrian, Clara and Lionel. They are sailing to Greece when the boat capsizes and Adrian and Clara drown. Lionel is the Last Man, and tells of his isolation and eventual writing of the history that is reconstructed from the prophecies of the Sibyl leaves.

**Contarini Fleming. A Psychological Autobiography. Benjamin Disraeli. 1832.**

The publishers have this to say of the novel: "Most revealing and remarkable of the early trilogy is *Contarini Fleming* (1832). Subtitled a Psychological Autobiography, this bildungsroman contains a detailed account of Disraeli’s mental breakdown of 1826-30, and his attempt to cure himself by going on the Grand Tour. Scholars are only now realizing how true the book is to Disraeli’s own experiences, hailing it as an early example of the 'writing cure.'"

**Faust: A Tragedy. Johann W. von Goethe. 1832.**

In the "Euphorion Opera," Euphorion represents not only the spirit of poesy but also Byron. Phorcyas calls Euphorion a "naked genius unfledged." He carries a "golden lyre" just like a young Apollo. His "boyish looks and bearing" allow him to become "heir apparent to all beauty." He cavorts with the Gods in lines 9668-9678. Euphorion, much like Icarus, attempts to leap from the bounds of the earth, heedless of the danger. He desires to leap higher, ever higher, to a point where gravity will no longer hold him. Both he and the chorus involve themselves within an intricate dance that turns into a hunt. Euphorion captures a girl and attempts to force himself upon her. She resists and turns into a flame. He shakes off the flames and begins to leap up the cliffs. He sings of war and of conquest rather than peace and serenity. He says that one must trust oneself. He leaps one last time and falls (in a recognizable form that implies Byron) in a heap at the feet of his parents, Helena and Faust. He dies. Of particular importance is the lament to Byron after Euphorion dies. As the spirit of poesy, Euphorion represents not only "the final collapse of the European poetic tradition," but also the death of a
poetic genius. See especially Walter Arndt's comments on "Byron and Euphorion."

**Don Leon.** Anonymous. 1833.

Don Leon (as Byron)

Annabella (makes an appearance)

Numerous other characters particularly known for sodomitical behavior or justifying/enacting the laws that accuse them.

Don Leon tells the story of his life from a homoerotic standpoint. From his initial feelings of desire for John Edleston to sodomy with his wife, he enjoins the reader to understand his alternate longings. He speaks about the unjust laws that victimize individuals who do no harm to anyone. He speaks about individuals tried and hanged. He recounts his life in Turkey and Greece and the fact that other countries are far less rigid when it comes to sex. A poem in heroic couplets allegedly written by Byron in the guise of Don Leon to Thomas Moore. In one section, he talks of the benefits and joys of anal intercourse, describing in particular detail the sodomizing of his wife when she was nine months pregnant with Ada. Of particular importance are the numerous individuals he describes from antiquity to the present who share his alternate desires. Much ink has been spilt trying to determine who is the best candidate for authorship. The poem was allegedly written before Byron died, but many of the dates and names are anachronistic. Therefore, the best estimate is 1833. G. Wilson Knight says that the author is more than likely George Coleman the Younger, but others disagree with him, most importantly, Doris Langley Moore, who believes Richard Paternoster, of Madras, is the author. Louis Crompton leaves it as a mystery.

**Vivian Grey.** Benjamin Disraeli. 1833.

Only a brief passage regarding Byron, quoted here in full:

"We certainly want a master-spirit to set us right, Grey. We want Byron."

"There was the man! And that such a man should be lost to us at the very moment that he had begun to discover why it had pleased the Omnipotent to have endowed him with such powers!"

"If one thing were more characteristic of Byron's mind than another, it was his strong, shrewd, common sense; his pure unalloyed sagacity."

"You knew him, I think, Cleveland?"

"Well, I was slightly acquainted with him when in England; slightly, however, for I was then very young. But many years afterwards I met him in Italy. It was at Pisa, just before he left that place for Genoa. I was then very much struck at the alteration in his appearance."

"Indeed."

"Yes; his face was swollen, and he was getting fat. His hair was grey, and his countenance had lost that spiritual expression which it once eminently possessed. His teeth were decaying; and he said that if ever he came to England it would be to consult Wayte about them. I certainly was very much struck at his alteration for the worse. Besides, he was dressed in the most extraordinary manner."

"Slovenly?"

"Oh, no, no, no! in the most dandified style that you can conceive; but not that of an English dandy either. He had on a magnificent foreign foraging cap, which he wore in the
room, but his grey curls were quite perceptible; and a frogged surtout; and he had a large gold chain round his neck, and pushed into his waistcoat pocket. I imagined, of course, that a glass was attached to it; but I afterwards found that it bore nothing but a quantity of trinkets. He had also another gold chain tight round his neck, like a collar.

"How odd! And did you converse much with him?"

"I was not long at Pisa, but we never parted, and there was only one subject of conversation, England, England, England. I never met a man in whom the maladie du pays was so strong. Byron was certainly at this time restless and discontented. He was tired of his dragoon captains and pensioned poetasters, and he dared not come back to England with what he considered a tarnished reputation. His only thought was of some desperate exertion to clear himself; it was for this he went to Greece. When I was with him he was in correspondence with some friends in England about the purchase of a large tract of land in Colombia. He affected a great admiration of Bolivar."

"Who, by-the bye, is a great man."

"Assuredly."

"Your acquaintance with Byron must have been one of the gratifying incidents of your life, Cleveland?"

"Certainly; I may say with Friar Martin, in Goetz of Berlichingen, 'The sight of him touched my heart. It is a pleasure to have seen a great man."

"Hobhouse was a faithful friend to him?"

"His conduct has been beautiful; and Byron had a thorough affection for him, in spite of a few squibs and a few drunken speeches, which damned good-natured friends have always been careful to repeat."

"The loss of Byron can never be retrieved. He was indeed a real man; and when I say this, I award him the most splendid character which human nature need aspire to. At least, I, for my part, have no ambition to be considered either a divinity or an angel; and truly, when I look round upon the creatures alike effeminate in mind and body of which the world is, in general, composed, I fear that even my ambition is too exalted. Byron's mind was like his own ocean, sublime in its yesty madness, beautiful in its glittering summer brightness, might in the lone magnificence of its waste of waters, gazed upon from the magic of its own nature, yet capable of representing, but as in a glass darkly, the natures of all others." (141-142).

Salmagundi. Mrs. Frances Trollope. 1834.
The poem focuses on the burial of Byron's daughter in the Harrow church based on Byron's wishes. Murray had strict instructions, which he was unable to carry out. The Harrow Men are determined that a tablet should not be erected to show her resting place for fear that the young men who attend the boarding school would think it proper to foster bastards. Mrs. Trollope praises Byron's profusely. She has an extensive knowledge of Harrow and the men who run that venerable institution but doesn't have too many kind words for any of them. Her son's comments on her poetry are also included in the text. He seems to think that her adulation is somewhat overdone and slightly misplaced. Her poem was one of many to have been inspired by *Don Juan*.

Lodore. Mary Shelley. 1835.
In her introduction to the text, Lisa Vargo says: "Above all, *Lodore* presents an instructive example of the position of British women in the 1830s [. . . .] The mood of Miltonic awe that the falls inspired is meant to be evocative of the Byronic character of Fitzhenry [. . . .] Though Lodore 'more nearly resembles Mary's conception of Byron', Dowden sees the
breakdown of his marriage to Cornelia as having parallels in Percy Shelley's letters to Harriet, as well as in his desire to have custody of his children by Harriet after their marriage failed [. . .] A rich texture of issues interrelated by Shelly's immersion in her culture is interwoven into the text. Lodore is meant to represent a conflated version of Byron and Trelawny, a reflection no doubt of her recent editorial work with Moore and Trelawny [. . .] But the death of Lodore is the novel's overwhelming tragedy, and Shelley would have her readers reflect on the consequences of the waste of so much potential for good reduced to solitary angst [. . .] The rather dramatic death of Lodore in a duel is not merely a matter of literary convention. Its Byronic aspects may have something to do with Byron's incident with a dragoon in Italy [. . .] Above all, Lodore is important for what it tells about Shelley's desire to remain true to Jacobin ideals of the decade of her birth, and for what it illustrates about ideological perspectives on women as the middle class gained hegemony during the 1830s" (18-29).

The Private Life and Amours of Lord Byron. J. Mitford. 1836.
The title page reads as follows: "Only authentic edition. The Private Life of Lord Byron: Comprising His Voluptuous Amours, Secret Intrigues, and close Connection with various Ladies of Rank and Fame, in Scotland and London, at Eton, Harrow, Cambridge, Paris, Rome, Venice, etc., etc., with a particular account of the Countess Guiaccioli, and never before published, Details of The Murder at Ravenna, Which caused his Lordship to leave Italy.: Various Singular Anecdotes of Persons and Families of the highest Circles of Haut Ton Compiled from Authentic Sources. With Extracts from Unburnt Documents! And Familiar Letters, from his Lordship to his Friends: Being an amusing and interesting Expose of Fashionable Fraillties, Follies, and Debaucheris. With Numerous Coloured Engravings." The author either misremembers or doesn't know specific details from Byron's biographies. For instance, Byron meets Caroline Lamb much earlier in his life and has this ongoing relationship with William Lamb; at the end of the novel, Teresa Guiccioli is with Byron in Greece when he dies, soothing him and comforting him until he breathes his last; he also meets Teresa much earlier under the guise of Amelia. The author is allegedly a traveling companion of Lord Byron and yet remains unmentioned by Byron himself. As such, he writes himself into the history of Byron's life. Many of the amours listed here were one-night stands or brief trysts that the author draws out into elaborate and satisfying relationships that were particularly meaningful to Byron at the time and that he would remember forever. No mention exists of the men with whom Byron had relationships. He appears here as staunchly heterosexual, with little discourse with men on any level except to cuckold
them by sleeping with their wives. A number of elaborate descriptions both of Byron's physical appearance and his genius appear within the text.

**Venetia. Benjamin Disraeli. 1837.**

Lady Annabel Herbert: Venetia's mother
Marmion Herbert: Venetia's estranged father
Venetia Herbert
Lady Cadurcis: Plantagenet's mother, who dies fairly early in the text
Lord Plantagenet Cadurcis
George Cadurcis: Plantagenet's cousin
Dr. Masham: the tutor who eventually becomes a Bishop.

Lady Annabel and Venetia are living in Cherbury. Lord Cadurcis (as a teenager) and his mother move into Cadurcis Abbey. Lady Cadurcis eventually dies, but not until after they both make the acquaintance of Lady Annabel and Venetia. Lord Cadurcis spends much time after this at Cherbury, being educated with Venetia by Dr. Masham and loved as a son by Lady Herbert. Venetia eventually goes into the locked room and discovers the portrait of her father, Marmion, who is a poet and a traitor to the English crown, having fought on the American side in the revolution. Lord Cadurcis attends Eton and comes back to his ancestral home a man. He asks Venetia to marry him but she refuses. He leaves but pines after her while away. He becomes a great poet, who is highly influenced by the writings and poetry of Marmion Herbert. Venetia and Lady Annabel are brought back into society by the king and queen, whom they meet while in retreat near the ocean for Venetia's health. They come to London and Venetia makes quite a stir. Everyone wants to meet her. Lord Cadurcis is there and they become intimate once again, although Lady Annabel doesn't like him so much having read his poetry. She knows that he resembles Marmion in both sentiment and passion. Lord Cadurcis once again broaches the subject of marriage, but Venetia can't go against the wishes of her mother. Lady Annabel and Venetia go to Italy, where they meet Venetia's father. Venetia and he have a poignant reunion that is cut short by her mother. They leave immediately and go to Venice, where Venetia almost dies from pining away for her father. They are all eventually reunited and all is forgiven. They live happily and are then joined by Plantagenet and George. Lord Cadurcis and Marmion Herbert become fast friends and they live together briefly. Plantagenet and Marmion go out on a boat one day, a white squall comes up very quickly and they both drown. Lady Annabel and Venetia are heart-broken as is George, who becomes on the death of his cousin, Lord Cadurcis. In the end, Venetia and George are married. Disraeli incorporates much of Byron's biography into the text. Lady Cadurcis is very similar to Byron's mother Catherine. They have a tumultuous relationship, although she dies while Cadurcis is still quite young. Lady Annabel resembles Annabella Milbanke in some ways and Venetia might be said to resemble a grown-up Ada. Lord Cadurcis is definitely Byron but Marmion Herbert also has
Byronic traits, while at the same time evoking images of Shelley. The biography is very fluid and no one particular image represents what it seems to at the outset. It is as if Disraeli took all of the biography of Byron and a little of Shelley, Annabella, Ada, and others, threw it into a pot, mixed it up and then took out individual portions for his characters.

**Falkner: A Novel. Mary Shelley. 1837.**
In "Unnationalized Englishmen in Mary Shelley's Fictions," William D. Brewer asserts: "In essence, the life-stories of Shelley's Lord Lodore, Mathilda's father, and Falkner follow the trajectory of Byron's career. These characters return to England after spending many years abroad and are unable to readjust to life in their native country. They also develop dysfunctional relationships with Englishwomen. While Lodore's feelings toward his wife are bitterly antagonistic, Mathilda's father is unable to control his incestuous desire for his daughter. Falkner abducts Alithea Rivers, who became Mrs. Neville during his absence from England, and she drowns trying to escape him. Like Byron, Lodore leaves England with a ruined reputation. Mathilda's father attempts to make amends for his transgressive behavior by committing suicide, and Falkner travels 'from place to place, pursued by [the] upbraiding ghost' of the woman he has buried in unconsecrated ground. Their failures to reassimilate themselves into English society and observe its customs have tragic consequences."

In *Mary Shelley's Early Novels*, Jane Blumberg says that *Valperga, The Last Man, Lodore, and Falkner* "take the Byronic hero as their central character."

**Cecil: Or the Adventures of a Coxcomb. Catherine Gore. 1841.**
Cecil Danby the Coxcomb
John Danby (the Elder Brother and Peer)
Susan Danby (John's wife)
Lord Ormington (the Father)
Lady Ormington (the Mother)
Emily: the unrequited love
Byron (as himself and best friend of Cecil)
Cecil is the second son of a rich Lord and a coxcomb, petted far more by his mother than his father. The book is his autobiography. His brother is highly lauded as a peer while he is lauded for his good taste and his exquisite selection of clothes. He eventually meets Emily, flirts with her and then dumps her. She returns to her home where she dies. Cecil is heart-broken and joins the army. He becomes a hero and is praised for his bravery when he returns home. His father is even cordial, especially as John (the elder son) has produced an heir, which means Cecil is no longer second in line. However, due to an unlucky turn of events, Cecil contributes to the death of his nephew, which puts him back in the line of succession. His father turns cold, going so far as to suggest Cecil had purposefully assassinated his grandson. Cecil leaves the country only to
return soon thereafter. He meets a young gypsy girl whom he saves only to see her murdered. When he returns to England, a number of people die: Lady Susan (John's wife), without producing another heir and Byron. The book ends on an expectant note, presumably setting the reader up for the sequel, Cecil the Peer. Even though highly unfortunate, Cecil placates his reading audience with self-deprecation and wit. Byron plays a bit part as one of Cecil's best friends. They travel together, spending long hours talking with one another. Byron, as dandy, mirrors Cecil's dedication to clothing and appearance.

The Lottery of Life. Marguerite Blessington. 1844.
As is well-documented, Lady Blessington knew Byron personally. Her record of their conversations remains an important source book for scholars. The Lottery of Life, however, only deals with Byron tangentially, sparingly using him as a model for the character of Percy Mortimer. This young man, kind-hearted and generous but also reckless and a spendthrift dandy, eventually becomes compromised when he stands security for an aristocratic friend who defaults on a loan, which leaves Percy to pay the price. Fundamentally, the author creates a narrative that rewards those individuals who maintain a strict work and moral ethic while punishing those who betray friends and act dishonestly. Percy eventually learns the errors of his ways and ends in a loving marriage to his best friend's sister. The hero of the story, Richard Wallingford, rises, through hard work, dedication, honesty, and compassion, from a farmer's son to ambassador, complete with aristocratic marriage and independent wealth.

Lord Byron, who doubles as Augustus Trafford
Lyttleton Page: lawyer in love is Mrs. Darlington
Mrs. Darlington: rich widow
Mr. Lyttleton Page is wooing Mrs. Darlington, a rich widow. Page has been flattering the woman for three years and she's grown extremely tired of his advances. Lord Byron, in his guise of Augustus Trafford makes everything right. He impresses Mrs. Darlington with his indifference and she realizes how wonderful Lyttleton Page actually is. Page and Darlington get married in the end. A short story that resembles a muted Wildean play. Mrs. Darlington is only interested in Trafford because he seems completely indifferent to her. She doesn't want to get married until she realizes that she is being treated with near disdain. The character of Byron pulls off a marvelous coup for Page, who at one point thinks he's being thrown over for Byron, but then realizes his friend has, indeed, given him the means through which to win Mrs. Darlington. A humorous and lively read.

The Vicar's Daughter. George MacDonald. 1872.
Ethelwyn Percivale: narrator and writer
Percivale: Ethel's husband
Roger: Percivale's brother 
Miss Clare: a pious friend 
Ethel's father: clergyman 
Lady Bernard: rich patron 

A story about Ethel's life, with individual chapters about the characters who live both with and around her. The book seems to be a façade for the much more important aspects of child-rearing and theology—a thinly-veiled moral primer, as it were. The author enacts the plot in order to advance his theories on religion, Christianity, and morality. Lady Bernard allegedly represents Lady Byron. She is a pious soul who gives of herself and her money to help others but only insofar as they help themselves. She is a rich patron to whom individuals apply for help and guidance. Not a single mention is made of her husband, why she lives alone, or why she is so wealthy. She is an enigma to the end. Interestingly, Lady Byron was a patron to George MacDonald, the author, starting in 1856. In the novel, we discover the following: she likes music, art, and books; she has a hard time keeping track of all the servants, at least until Roger discovers their inactivity and she lays down the lay; and she adores Miss Clare and does almost anything in her power to help her.

**A Spiritual Interview with Lord Byron. Quevedo Redivivus. 1876.**

The narrator visits a medium, a spiritualist who channels Byron's spirit from the other realm. The narrator is treated to a lengthy harangue about the state of the afterlife, the literature of the age, and Byron's frustration and anger with his numerous literary portraits. Quevedo Redivivus alludes to Byron's anonymous publication under the same name of *The Vision of Judgment*, his fervent satire against Robert Southey. Quevedo Redivivus is Latin for Quevedo Revived, referencing Francisco de Quevedo, the 17th-century Spanish author of *Sueños*, a prose satire. Byron becomes a mouthpiece through which the author can criticize and satirize his peers. He remains anonymously Byronic, hiding behind the dead poet's scathing wit and contemptuous articulations. Conjured by the medium, the spirit begins his harangue immediately, hardly allowing the interviewer any space for questions or comments. He reviles Disraeli's parodies, wishing that he would "suppress, if possible, his *Venetia.*" He damns Harriett Beecher Stowe for her execrable denunciation of him and her defense of Lady Byron; he censures Henry James Pye, who "writers his silly verses in the Spiritual papers as mine and brings me into ridicule." He venerates Hans Christian Andersen and Edgar Allan Poe, while belittling Robert Browning and Alfred Lord Tennyson as "drivelling." He continues: "I never could read ten lines of Tennyson without a headache. I candidly confess I don't consider either him or Browning poets."

"A Sketch of Lord Byron's Life." Julia A. Moore. 1878.

Moore's poem is humorously filled with understatement and apparent insincerity. She says first that Byron was a poet, she believes, and then
closes the sad career of this poet as the most celebrated Englishman of
the nineteenth century. She laments that his first works were poorly
received but that by the age of twenty-four, he had reached the highest,
highest pinnacle of literary fame. She alternates like this throughout the
poem: on one hand, denigrating the poet for his morals, and on the other
hand lauding him profusely. She maintains that his character was of a low
degree, but that he was a handsome fellow with great poetic skills and
intellectual powers. Obviously, the poem is meant to be read satirically.
Walter Blair said of Moore: "Touched, however, by the magic wand of
genius, the novel works of this great poet cause readers to slump down in
their chairs, hold their agitated and aching sides, wipe tears from brimming
eyes, and fill the air with the sounds of distinctly raucous laughter."

The narrator, a critic, biographer, and historian, is searching for Jeffrey
Aspern's papers. He believes that the Bordereau women have numerous
letters and papers from Aspern's own hand. He desperately wants to see
them and concocts a plan to masquerade as a boarder in their huge
house. He does so, but conflicts with Juliana Bordereau's temperament.
She despises publishing houses and their editors. The narrator befriends
Miss Tina and eventually gains her trust. She tells him that Miss Juliana
has numerous papers from Aspern, but that she guards them closely.
Eventually, Miss Juliana dies, but Miss Tina says the only way for the
narrator to gain access to the papers is to marry her. He recoils in horror
and leaves. Miss Tina burns the papers one by one at the kitchen table.
The short story ends with the narrator longing after the papers, knowing
that the destruction of them was his fault. Henry James is writing this
story based on factual evidence relating to Claire Clairmont, her niece,
and Capt. Edward Silsbee, the Boston art-critic and Shelley-worshipper.
Claire had papers and letters of both Byron and Shelley. Silsbee lodged
with the Clairmonts and eventually Claire died. The niece said that Silsbee
could have the papers if he married her.

Lord Byron
Count Gamba (His Secretary)
Dr. Bruno (His Physician)
Prince Mavrocordato (Pres. Of the Greek Assembly)
Odysseus (A Greek Chieftan)
Karaiskaki ( Greek office, spy for the Turks)
Yussouf Pacha (leader of the Turks)
Murad Effendi (Turkish officer, in collusion with Karaiskaki)
Leicester Stanhope (English Philhellenic officer)
Dr. Milligen (Surgeon General of the Greek Army)
A Greek Fisherman
Hatagee (Turkish Girl, captive among the Greeks, lover of Odysseus)
Husseinina (Hatagee's mother)  
Aglae (Greek Lady, ward of Mavrocordato, beloved of Byron)  
The play takes place during the last few days of Byron's life. He is in the process of helping the Greeks fight for independence against the tyranny of the Turks. Karaiskaki is a traitorous spy, hoping to give both Byron and Missolonghi to the Turks. He is instrumental in having Hatagee kidnapped and returned to the Turks. Byron effects a raid on the Turks while bargaining for Hatagee's life with the Pacha. They save her, bringing her back to Odysseus. However, not only is Karaiskaki angry that all his plans have failed, he is also jealous of Byron's attachment to Aglae, as he is in love with her himself. Aglae, however, only has eyes for Byron and she spurns Karaiskaki's advances. Karaiskaki poisons Byron but also ends up poisoning Aglae. They die in each other's arms. An interesting twist on the fever diagnosis that many believe to be the cause of Byron's death in Missolonghi. Byron dies in the arms of a Greek woman, who has spurned a Greek man for the sake of the English Lord. This play does not mention Lukas or the love that Byron had for the young Greek man before he died. It also portrays Byron as being able to handle the Greeks with his extravagant gifts of money as well as effecting raids on the Turkish Pasha. He is very heroic, brave, and committed to ending the violence against women and children during this politically induced war.

The Castaway; three great men ruined in one year. Hallie Erminie Rives. 1904.

George Gordon, Hobhouse, Dallas, Lady Caroline Lamb, Annabella Milbanke, Teresa Guiccioli, Trevanian, Fletcher, Percy and Mary Shelley, Jane (Claire) Clairmont, and many other minor characters, including Ada and Allegra.

A rich fictional biography that supplements biography (some of which is changed or exaggerated) with a portrayal of Byron's passions, thoughts, and emotions. It follows the main character, George Gordon, from his schooling in Aberdeen to his death in Missolonghi. It stresses his poetry and his loves. Much is made of the scandal and the incredible derision that individuals showed toward the poet after his self-exile from England. Byron is presented in all of his passions, his hatreds, his joys and his idiosyncrasies. He remains a hero, regardless of the incredible forces allayed against him. The character of Trevanian is portrayed in much the same way as Nemesis personified might be. He becomes not only a means of retribution but also a doppelganger of sorts. He impersonates Gordon in order to sully his name and increase the scandal. He is eventually shot by a loyal Greek, but not until his work has reached nearly epic proportions.

Love Alone is Lord. Frank F. Moore. 1905.

Lord Byron
Mr. Vince (Byron's illegitimate relative and grounds keeper)
Mary Chaworth Musters (Byron's first love and cousin)
Mr. Musters (a boorish, arrogant country squire, Mary's husband)
Lady Caroline Lamb (Byron's mistress)
The book proceeds in three sections. In the first section, Byron meets Mary Chaworth as a teenager. She is older than he is and he adores her. In the second section, Byron, having returned from his grand tour, has written *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, which was an immediate success. He meets and has a tumultuous relationship with Caroline Lamb. In the third section, Byron returns to Newstead Abbey and sees Mary Chaworth Musters and her children. He realizes how miserable she is and tries to persuade her to leave her boorish, arrogant husband and run away with him. She finally consents (surprisingly with her husband's approval, who has unbeknownst to Byron and Mary, fallen in love with Caroline Lamb) but as they are riding along the road to pick up her children, they come upon an accident in which Mr. Musters has been hurt—paralyzed from the neck down. Mary realizes that she cannot leave her husband now and she leaves Byron standing on the road looking after her with a broken heart. Byron, here, is honorable and witty while at the same time somewhat arrogant and melancholy. He believes in himself but wonders about his talent for poetry. Byron is described as needing to write, compelled by something within him to do so. He loves Mary throughout the entire text, staying true to her to the end. He says that he was attracted to Lamb more because of her outrageous behavior than any connection they shared. The author elaborately describes the situation between Byron's great uncle and Chaworth, whom the elder Byron brutally murdered during a duel. At one point in the first section, seemingly supernatural events occur that lead both Byron and Mary to believe that Chaworth is seeking revenge from beyond the grave. The relationship that Byron shares with Mr. Vince is also quite interesting. Initially, Byron believes him to be the devil incarnate, but realizes later that he is simply morose and says what he feels. He manipulates many of the characters in the text, especially Byron for his own amusement and education. He is the character with whom Mr. Musters collides in the accident in the third part. Somewhat surprisingly, Mr. Vince is closely related to Byron, in that the grand uncle had been sowing his seeds rather prolifically. He lives in a small cottage on the estate and seems to believe that the Byrons have a curse over their heads. At the least, he believes they have a penchant for trouble.


William Ashe (William Lamb)
Lady Kitty Ashe (Caroline Lamb)
Lady Tranmore – William's mother
Geoffrey Cliffe (Lord Byron)
The story begins just before William and Lady Kitty are married. It elaborately describes the wildness and passion of Lady Kitty. Some imagine she might end up mad, and her temper gets both her and William
into a number of scrapes. Even so, William is captivated, and he asks Kitty to marry him. Lady Kitty has a wandering eye, though, and her passion leads her to an affair with Cliffe. Everything ends badly, especially after Lady Kitty publishes a scandalous book about her circle. Eventually, William and Kitty separate. Kitty ends up with Cliffe in the rebel's war between Bosnia and Turkey. This does not last long, as she begins to passionately despise Cliffe for his scornful and haughty ways. In the end, she and William find one another again, rather surreptitiously, at an Inn near Simplon Pass. Kitty dies alone in her room after having apologized to William for her careless and hurtful ways.


Lord Byron  
Lady Thyrza (Greek woman in the Turkish court)  
Demetrius (Greek patriot)  
Monsieur Debray (French spy)  
Maroozi (treacherous Greek, Uncle of Lady Thyrza)  
Nicolo (treacherous Greek, lackey to Maroozi)  
Kassam Pasha (Turk, in love with Thyrza)  
Lady Byron (makes an appearance at the very end)

In a similar vein to *Love Alone is Lord*, Byron is portrayed as having fallen in love with the Maid of Athens, Lady Thyrza. He risks his life for her on numerous occasions. He impersonates individuals upon threat of death within the Turkish harems and courts. He signs up and swears allegiance to the Greek cause. He is found out by Kassam Pasha, who is in love with Lady Thyrza. Byron is exiled from Greece for four years. Kassam does everything in his power to make sure that Byron believes Thyrza is dead or married. Eventually, Byron believes one of the ruses and marries Annabella Milbanke. In the end, Thyrza comes to England, having stayed true to her vows of love to Byron, only to find him married. She is heartbroken and places herself in a convent. Byron leaves Lady Byron only to find out the Thyrza will not see him because of the machinations of another nun, who confesses on her deathbed. The last chapter shows Byron in Greece, having fought the war with the Greeks against the Turks and on his deathbed. In his feverish state, he sees Thyrza, who welcomes him into the afterlife. Much like *Love Alone is Lord*, Byron is portrayed as having one fateful love, adoring her above all others. He is loyal and only despairs when he believes her either dead or married. Byron is the consummate lover, risking life and limb to be with his beloved. Since the coded "Thyrza" remained a mystery for a long time, this type of fiction attempts to dispel the obscurity. The author also reinterprets the "Maid of Athens" poem, which Byron wrote to Teresa Macri. Within this novel, the poem is written to the Lady Thyrza as a love poem/song, that the French spy sings to her while dressed as an oarsman.
George, Lord Bendish (Byron)
Roger Heniker (Bendish's lawyer)
Rose Pierson (eventually, Heniker's wife)
Gervase Poore (Shelley)
Georgiana Poore (Gervase's wife)
Duke of Devizes (Bendish's foil)
Thomas Moore (himself)
Leigh Hunt (himself)
Bendish is a tempestuous lord and poet. Much of his life corresponds to
Byron's biography. He comes upon his lordship late in childhood and has
the same episode at school where the roll is taken at Harrow. His mother
is less than pleasing as a woman. Heniker seems to take the role of
Hobhouse, in a sense, as he is the one with whom Bendish travels around
Europe. Rose Pierson is a woman with whom Bendish toys, but she
eventually becomes Roger Heniker's wife. Gervase Poore is Shelley,
complete with revolutionary and atheistic attitudes. Georgiana is a poor
Mary Shelley, especially in that she despises Bendish. The Duke of
Devizes is the rich, powerful duke who protects Georgiana from the
machinations of Bendish. He also, in the end, foils Bendish by simply
ignoring him, a fate that Bendish despises more than anything. Bendish
does become the toast of the town with both his orator skills and his poem
"The Wanderer," which bears a striking resemblance to CHP. In the end,
Bendish so infuriates Gervase that they duel and Gervase is wounded but
not mortally. Bendish becomes persona non grata and eventually makes
up his mind to leave England for good. Bendish's immediate fault is his
fickleness. This is what eventually leads to the duel between him and
Gervase. Heniker has much of Hobhouse's staidness but lacks his
absolute loyalty and staunch support of Byron. The descriptions of
Bendish are particularly telling and require a much more detailed response
than is allowed within the confines of this space. Eventually, Bendish ends
up being very unhappy, so unhappy that he contemplates suicide for a
brief second at the end of the novel. He loses everything that is important
to him, setting him up for the self-imposed exile that will surely follow.

Little is know of this work. In Byron in England: His Fame and After-Fame,
Samuel C. Chew says: "The Pilgrim of Eternity, by K. K. Ardaschir, was
met with no favour and was withdrawn after a short run" (167).

The Prince of Lovers. Directed by Alicia Ramsey. 1921.
Hal Erickson, from All Movie Guide, says: "Prince of Lovers purports to be
the filmed biography of hedonistic poet Lord Byron, here played by
Howard Gaye. Little more than a pageant of Byron's many 'amours,' the
film looks more like a wax museum, with dozens of stuffy actors posing in
elegant costumes. Surprisingly, the actresses playing the women in Lord Byron's life are not all that attractive, making one wonder what all the fuss was about. The most interesting characterization is delivered by Marjorie Day as Lady Caroline Lamb, the politician's wife who scandalized all of London via her unabashed illicit romance with His Lordship. This fascinating woman was later spotlighted in a 1973 biopic, which like *Prince of Lovers* was an exercise in boredom." In *Byron in England: His Fame and After-Fame*, Samuel C. Chew says: "During the summer of 1922 an excellent photo-play, *The Prince of Lovers*, was shown at the Philharmonic Hall, London. This 'British Screencraft' production was adapted by Miss Alicia Ramsey from her play *Byron*. Mr. Howard Gaye acted the part of the poet. Interesting Byron relics, lent by Mr. Murray and by Mrs. Fraser (the present owner of Newstead Abbey), were used or copied for the film. The costumes and furnishings were satisfyingly free from anachronisms. The action centered in the years 1812-1816, and then, omitting the Italian period, passed to the last phase in Greece. Liberties are taken with historical facts, but save for the somewhat sentimentalized conclusion—Hobhouse appears at the bedside of the dying poet with a message from the King of England—there was hardly a note in the performance to jar upon the sensibilities of a spectator who was well acquainted with the facts of Byron's life" (167).

**The Machine Wreckers.** Ernest Toller. 1923.

Prologue: Lord Byron (for reform) and Lord Castlereagh (against reform, for industry)
Jimmy Cobbett (Socialist reformer)
John Wibley (in league with Ure)
Ure (manufacturer, owner of the factory)
Ned Lud (machine-wrecker)
Henry Cobbett (Jimmy's brother, overseer at the factory)
Beggar (the fool of the play, the jester, the trickster)
Various other personages

The play begins with a prologue in the House of Lords. Byron is arguing against the death penalty for machine wreckers. Lord Castlereagh argues against Byron and stands in favor of industry and the steam engines. The vote goes against Byron. In the play itself, we hear from the weavers who are thrown out of their jobs by the advent of the steam engine machine. The women and children are starving and the men want to destroy the machine. Jimmy argues against this, opting instead for a type of socialist message: bringing all the men together under one governing body much like a union. He calls everyone comrade. The men soon find out that he is the brother of the overseer and plot against him. They eventually destroy the machine, and when Jimmy happens upon the scene, they kill him, unmercifully. They soon realize, however, that he was honest and open with them, and they remain aghast at their actions. They also learn that it
was John Wibley who was in league with Ure, but he escapes, while the machine-wreckers are arrested by the police. Anachronisms of the early twentieth-century bleed into the narrative. Communism and socialism had not yet been introduced by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. However, Jimmy Cobbett speaks the language of the socialist. He pleads for unionization and the building of the men's esteem through fellowship. He talks of the evils of Mammon (the guise in the play of Capitalism) and the joys of bonding together for the right cause. Byron only plays a bit part here. He speaks against the death penalty in the prologue. However, his full speech before the House of Lords is given in the appendix. He is the only one to stand against the full House of Lords when the vote comes.

**Lord Byron. Maurice Ferber. 1924.**
Lady Melbourne, Thomas Moore, Lady Morgan, Annabella Milbanke, Lady Caroline Lamb, John Cam Hobhouse, Lord Byron, Jackson (boxing instructor), Fletcher (Byron's servant), Augusta, Clare Clairmont, Other Women in Byron's life. The play has eight scenes and runs through Byron's life rather quickly, dealing with Byron's relationships with one woman or another. It begins with Caroline Lamb and Lady Melbourne, then moves on to his marriage with Annabella, then his relationship with Claire, then a dream sequence in which a number of Byron's paramours parade through the room. The last scene is Byron's funeral, complete with Augusta and Caroline Lamb, who are both inordinately grieved by the great poet's death. Ferber uses much poetic license, contradicting Byron's biography rather extensively. Mary Shelley is seen working on *Frankenstein* before leaving for Switzerland and while Byron is still in England. Many of the scenes and conversations could not have taken place. The play portrays the characters and events superficially, moving quickly through Byron's amours.

**Glorious Apollo. E. Barrington. 1925.**
The novel begins with Byron's life at Cambridge and moves to his death in Missolonghi, Greece. Rich in detail, the novel follows Byron's biography closely while adding emotions and thoughts to the characters' actions. Particular attention is paid to: the relationship with Dallas, Caroline Lamb, Lady Melbourne, Hobhouse and Moore, Annabella Milbanke, and Augusta Leigh. Two particularly important issues: 1) the narrative is told from Byron's perspective throughout most of the first part, then switches to Lady Byron during the marriage and separation, then back to Byron in Venice and Greece; 2) This is one of the first texts in which the incest between Byron and Augusta is addressed with such overt detail and nuance. Many letters are quoted and much is made of the connection between Byron and his sister and Manfred and Astarte. Of particular note are the numerous references to Byron's beauty and the many
comparisons between him and Apollo. It seems as if the author was completely taken with Byron's beauty and genius. The author seems infatuated with the poet and yet, when speaking through the guise of Annabella, gives him the vehemence and vitriol of a misogynist.

**Donna Juana. Eileen Hewitt. 1925.**
Eileen Hewitt subtitles this work: "A novel in verse." A rollickingly fun read with sharp wit and philosophical meanderings. Uses digression as a foundation supporting a rather predictable and sometimes mystifying plot. The characters are as follows: The Vicar – a brilliant cynic who by mistake was made a Parson; The Vicaress – His plain and pious wife—whom he married out of a sense of humour; Juana Hope – By Genius out of Dulness. Owed nothing to her dam except an unhappy existence. Her sire bequeathed her brains, good looks, no money, and a poetic temperament; Augustus Hope – Brother to the Vicar by the same father. One of the Victorian rearguard; Ida Leigh – Juana's friend from school-days. Also her well-wisher; Peter Percival, Esq. – Uncle and Guardian of Ida Leigh. He is "I dare not" waiting on ;-) "I Will," Anne, his Wife - Church-goer, snob, and anti-Semite; John England – Being the Hero, he is rather a fine-looking fellow. An original thinker, writer, and critic. Has sardonic wit and a kindly opinion of himself; Sir George England – John's father and not much good for anything else—except a graceful deliberation in dying; Enid Acres – Daughter of Sir George, sister of John, widow of David Acres. A Virtuous woman who raises the fallen without emphasizing how much they have hurt themselves. One would think that a poem of this name would use the ottava rima form Byron favored in *Don Juan*. It does not. Instead, it uses a fairly straight-forward iambic pentameter with an AABBCCDD rhyme scheme. Much as it tries, though, it never successfully succeeds in rivaling Byron's mastery of wit, charm, irreverence, and humor.

**The Shattered Harp. Howard Gordon Page. 1928.**
The novel runs from 1812 to 1824 and explores, rather extensively, Byron's connections to the women of his life: Mary, Caroline, Isabella, Lady Melbourne, and Teresa. Much like some of the earlier novels, Mary is the love of his life, whom he can't seem to forget. Caroline is the wild, passionate, crazy lover who simply won't leave him alone. Isabella is a cold, manipulating prude, who becomes sinister and vindictive. Lady Melbourne is Byron's surrogate mother and confidante. Hobhouse is staid but extremely loyal, and Teresa picks up the pieces after his Venice decline. Byron is represented as the temperamental genius poet who chooses the wrong women to love. He is a caring, much maligned poet who seems to need someone in his life to guide him and care for him. He comes into his own when he writes and, in the end, when he goes to Greece to fight for independence. He dies unhappy but the ending more than makes up for his grief and degradation as he is literally crowned with glory in heaven. The novel attempts to explain away numerous secrets.
that had surfaced around Byron. Medora is a child of Mary Chaworth and Byron's passion, while she was separated from her husband, Mr. Musters. Augusta takes it upon herself to raise the child to spare both the mother and father from scandal. The relationship with his sister is a fabricated lie told by Isabella, who appears in this novel as an extremely calculating, cold harpy, set on destroying Byron's life after she finds out about the numerous debts he has. Mrs. Clermont helps her by spying incessantly on Byron, only to be discovered by the loyal Fletcher. Hobhouse's relationship with Byron is often explained in very tender terms, almost as if the author was hinting at a love on Hobhouse's side that might be unrequited by Byron. Subtle but obvious when compared with the usually staid, very English descriptions of Hobhouse elsewhere. He is Byron's most trusted friend, next to the very loyal Fletcher, who comes off in this text as human, caring, and more than just Byron's valet. In fact, the men in this text are the most faithful and trustworthy, while many of the women are downright nasty. Byron has visions or trances into which he falls quite often; in some, they seem nearly prophetic; in others, they are more like an epileptic convulsion. For the most part, this novel is very sympathetic towards Byron, except for a couple of instances. While Byron is in Venice, the author makes particular note of the degradation and despair into which Byron sinks. His profligacy and drug use spirals out of control and he loses himself to debauchery and transgression. The author also denigrates *Don Juan* repeatedly, saying from Byron's mouth that he hated the poem and hoped that future generations would not call it his masterpiece when so many of the other poems were so much better.


Almost all the characters of Byron's life make an appearance. The author does, however, give the characters interesting names and nicknames. For instance, he refers to Byron throughout the text as Geordie. He is sometimes called "The Pup" by his mother, whom he calls "The Crow." Augusta becomes A. or Pippin or Goose. The Cambridge set calls Byron "Old Baron." Byron calls Hobhouse "Hobby" or "Hob." The author starts with Byron's birth and ends with Byron's death, moving from Aberdeen to Missolonghi. He spends less time on many aspects of Byron's life and much more time on only a few. For instance, he highlights Byron's days at Harrow and Cambridge extensively. The affair with Carline Lamb takes an insignificant role especially when compared with the amount of time the authors spends on the relationship between Byron and his sister. Hobhouse becomes a staid, arrogant man with surprisingly athletic qualities. He is Byron's friend at Cambridge but always seems like the "older" brother, always looking out for his younger, much less worldly, much more naive brother. He seems far older than he actually is. The author spends an inordinate time on the days at Harrow and Cambridge. He describes the fights Byron gets into, the dorm rooms where they slept, and the friendships that he made. He does not, however, talk about
Edleston or any sexual connections that Byron might have made during this time. He becomes the naïve child who is somewhat ashamed of his limp and goes on to help the Cambridge athletic teams with his shooting, his diving, and his horseback riding. The author also spends much time on the relationship between Byron and Augusta. She is quite beautiful in this text; in fact, she might have been some rare rose in a garden of pansies. She has dark skin, gorgeous physical qualities, and is constantly shown nude, either in her bedroom or in the shower, with water running down her supple body. It reads almost like a soft-core porn novel. Byron is fascinated by her and strongly attracted to her body and her spirit. They love to ride horses together and get all sweaty. One of the first novels to paint Byron's attraction to Augusta in a sensual light, complete with love and justification for their actions. They go so far as to give examples from history of those individuals who have found incest appropriate: the Pharaohs, Lucretia Borgia, and Napoleon.

_A Shade Byronic._ John North. 1933.

A Byron specter appears to a middle-aged woman in the early twentieth century. He cannot speak and so the mystery's unraveling depends upon the narrator's detective acumen. The ghost is introduced to the protagonist, a 44 year-old spinster named Irene Miles, as a "short and antique-looking man" who carried with him a copy of Sir Walter Scott's _Quentin Durward_ (9). Only his "large grey eyes" and his inability to speak stand out as noticeable: "The small man opened his mouth to protest, but even after several attempts not a sound emerged." This silence drives the novel, but it also reduces the Byronic characterization to nothing more than eccentricities and idiosyncratic behaviors. His arrogant sneers, his moody pouts, and his demanding nature, often romanticized, stand out starkly against the more mundane picture of a lost and helpless man seemingly out of his element and time. His characteristics (taken from the Elizabeth Colburn Mayne biography that later appears as a prop within the narrative) are revealed to both the protagonist and the audience over time. The plot progresses with each new discovery. He limps with a "slithering gait," at a restaurant he eats nothing but cold potatoes soaked in vinegar and drinks nothing but soda water, and becomes immeasurably excited over red tooth-powder. He bites his nails, yet his "noble brow," "white skin" and "blue-grey eyes," bespeak nobility that remains apparent to the narrator. This is a Byron abridged, a phantom that cannot defend himself to his attackers, or even explain his confusion or desires to an often frustrated Miss Miles. He appears as nothing more than a shell of a man filled with Byron's more unappealing traits. His "slithery gait" and "white skin" resemble slimy monstrosity more than aristocratic nobility.

_Crede Byron._ Fanny Heaslip Lea. 1936.

The play covers a fairly extensive period from 1804 to 1824. It begins with a prologue, in which Byron courts Mary Chaworth, and ends with an
epilogue in Missolonghi, Greece, with Byron's death. The main acts run from 1811 to 1816. Thus, the play deals mostly with Byron's relationship with Caroline Lamb and Annabella. Augusta is present but more as support than anything else. Both Moore and Hobhouse play important parts in keeping Byron sane and helping him through legal crises. Mrs. Clermont is once again the downfall of Byron's marriage, searching out and finding the bottle of laudanum he kept hidden in his desk. She also, from the innuendo in the text, tells Lady Byron of the "special" relationship that Byron and Augusta share, but not until they have left Byron's house for a brief repose at Annabella's parent's house. Byron's friendship with Lady Melbourne is once again highlighted. She seems to be the only woman who cares for him and about whom he cares. Both of them are always saying that if she were only a few years younger, they could run off together. Luka makes an appearance at the end but only as a serving boy and messenger. He plays no further part than this in the drama. No mention of any sexual or physical attraction on either side of the divide.

Each of the four acts deals with a specific aspect of Byron life, including a particular woman. Act I portrays Byron's mother and Mary Chaworth; Act II portrays Caroline Lamb and Lady Melbourne; Act III portrays Annabella and Claire Clairmont; Act IV portrays Claire Clairmont and Teresa Guiccioli. Byron's mother is vile in this play. She harps on his lameness with considerably venom and bile. Mary Chaworth's betrayal of Byron seemingly turns him into a monster. He vows revenge on all women for what Mary has done to him. The hint of incest runs throughout the second, third, and fourth acts. Augusta never appears in the play, but she is there almost wraith-like. Byron takes laudanum to dull the pain and the stress of his life. He reaches for it when life is being most ruthless towards him. No mention of Hobhouse, which seems odd considering that Hobhouse was around Byron during most of the time that this play covers. There is much talk of poetry. The author emphasizes Byron's eminence in the poetic circle, inasmuch as the characters believe only Shakespeare rivals him as a poet. Caroline has quite disparaging remarks about Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley. Byron, however, thinks his poetry less important than doing something memorable, especially if it concerns action.

Falling Angel. Gerald Gould and Barbara Burnham. 1936.
Byron's life from 1812 to 1816. The tumultuous years with Caroline, the growing attraction towards Augusta, the marriage with and disastrous separation from Annabella, and all of his friends and peers attempting to save him from personal destruction. The play remains fairly consistent with Byron's biography. The authors attempt to build upon historical facts to create their biographical fiction. Byron seems doomed for destruction almost from the beginning, where individuals, including Byron himself,
refer to Byron as a fallen or falling Angel. Byron seems desperate to reveal the secret about his and Augusta's affair, but no one will let him. He censors himself coming close but never actually admitting to the incest. It remains the dirty little secret about which everyone wants to talk. Byron brings pain to almost every woman with whom he comes into contact. In particular, he is rather odious to both Augusta and Annabella. The latter quips that she wasn't aware that marriage would be so lonely. She longs to befriend Augusta and does but then is tipped off to the affair by Caroline Lamb, who does so in revenge against Byron. After being cut by everyone at Melbourne house, Byron ends the play by glaring at the audience as the curtain falls.

**Bitter Harvest. Catherine Turney. 1936.**
The play runs from 1813 to 1816. It begins just after Byron has terminated his affair with Caroline Lamb and is beginning his affair with Lady Oxford. Mainly, it focuses on the relationship that Byron shared with Annabella and with Augusta. It runs from Byron's fame to his degradation. It highlights Lady Jersey's party where Byron was snubbed and the separation between Annabella and Byron. In the last scene, he asks Augusta to go abroad with him; she refuses, and he signs the separation papers as she leaves. This play was banned in England because it hinted at the incest between Byron and Augusta. One of the more important relationships that surfaces in this play is between Byron and Sir Walter Scott. Byron treats him as more of a bosom friend than Hobhouse or Moore. He even compares him to his faithful dog, which gave all and expected nothing. Caroline Lamb is portrayed as being vindictive and malevolent in the play. She is single-handedly responsible for the lies and rumors that are being perpetuated about Byron throughout London.

**Mad Shelley. Elma Dangerfield. 1936.**
The play portrays Shelley's early life at Eton to his death near Genoa. First, Shelley is sent down from Eton for fighting and trying to "raise the devil;" then he is sent down from Oxford with Hogg for writing a pamphlet on atheism. He courts and elopes with Harriet Westbrooke, then finds himself sincerely attached to Mary Godwin. They run off together with Claire Clairmont. They eventually find Byron and much time is spent on the relationship between Claire, Byron and Allegra with Shelley acting as a mediator. The play ends with the drowning, the funeral pyre, and the burning of the bodies. Hogg and Shelley have a falling out because Hogg falls in love with Harriett and attempts to woo her. Both Shelley and Harriett are vexed by his manner and send him packing. Godwin is portrayed as hypocritical. When Mary and Shelley talk to him about his philosophies on free love, he says he meant it in the abstract not within his own family. Towards the end, everything gets thrown into the mix: Shelley's womanizing (with various women, including Jane Williams); the possibility that Claire and Shelley had a child together, which is why Byron
refused to send Allegra back to Claire; the poetic and philosophic talks between Byron and Shelley; Mary's undying loyalty to Shelley; Trelawny's friendship with both Byron and Shelly; the genesis of the journal Byron, Shelley, and Hunt hope to publish; Shelley and Williams' drowning; and finally the funeral pyre at the end, complete with sizzling brains and intact heart.

**The Honor of the House of Murray. Mrs. Isabel Cummings. 1941.**

The play depicts the burning of Byron's memoirs. The author gives a detailed view of Murray's offices as well as the characters. The memoirs were worth much money to Moore, a price of which the author sets at 8000 pounds. Hobhouse says the memoirs were written with "the greatest candor and with complete details." Byron is seen by Murray as the whipping boy of England. Lady Byron is pious yet cold. She completely cuts Augusta, even when Augusta flies to her for comfort and reassurance. Augusta is worried that her affair with Byron, which is covered with perfect detail, will ruin her and her children. She wants the memoirs burned, as do Murray and Hobhouse. Annabella seems not to care either way since everything that could be said about her has been, and Moore desperately wants them published. In the end, Murray and Hobhouse simply start throwing the papers into the fire. Moore cries and tries to prevent them, saving a few but most of them burn. Murray and Hobhouse congratulate each other on a job well done in as far as saving the lady's honor. Moore sits with his head in his hands in tears. The play, a short one act, ends with this image.

**Poor Caro! Helen Foy. 1941.**

The brief one-act play focuses on the relationship between Lord Byron and Lady Caroline Lamb at a party given by Lady Heathcote, where Caroline tries to stab both herself and Lord Byron. Byron shows both sides of his passion: his antipathy and indifference on one side, which he shows to Lady Caroline, and his passion and his vehemence on the other side, which he shows to Lady Melbourne. The author gives Caroline an interesting lisp, which according to biography, Caroline actually affected on more than one occasion. Everyone thought it quite becoming. In one part, Byron makes an effort to distance himself from his poetic characters. In another part, Lady Melbourne implies that Byron has something of the feminine about him, which allows him such insight into feminine behavior. Towards the end, Byron prophesies that his life will be short.

**For Thee the Best. Mark A. Landau. 1945.**

A distinctly disjointed novel, which resembles a collection of small vignettes rather than a novel. In the opening scene, a new Carbonari member is initiated at which Byron is present. Next, it moves to Lord Castlereagh's office and his daily business. He leaves for his office, accompanied by his wife, wherein he is met by the Duke of Wellington.
They later attend a dinner party, at which Lord Castlereagh loses his mind. He later commits suicide. The reader is also allowed into the private circle of the Prince Regent, who attends this same dinner. Interspersed throughout is the tale of the Master of the Moon, a mysterious man thrown out of the Carbonari for being a spy. He was on the payroll of the Austrians then changed alliances to the British because they paid better. He was sent to Missolonghi to spy on the war effort of the Greeks against the Turks. Then we have a brief chapter about Alexander I. Then back to Byron, writing *Don Juan* and deciding to leave Teresa to go to fight the good fight with the Greeks. We are treated to more Master of the Moon intrigue and then more Byron and his efforts in Missolonghi. Finally, the novel ends with Byron's death. The author distinguishes between two Byrons: one, the outer Byron, seen by all; two, the inner Byron, kept hidden from outside view but seen by the reading audience. Byron feels constrained and bored by his life. He searches for the key that will unlock the door of happiness for him. He believes that the fight for Greek independence is this key. The author focuses much attention on Byron's interior monologues.

**Byron in Piccadilly. Anthony Ireland. 1945.**

The play runs from 1811 to 1816. Act I encompasses the period just after Byron has returned from the East. Act II is about Byron's relationship with Lamb. Act III is about Byron's marriage, both before and after the separation. By the author's own admission, he moves dates and activities around to suit his feelings for the importance of the events. He hopes his explanation will excuse the liberties he has taken with the facts and dates. One of the first plays to include Robert Rushton in any meaningful role, although here he is nothing more than a sparring partner and rather dimwitted. Hobhouse and Byron have a close relationship and in the first act, it appears sexualized. Byron has been taking laudanum to help him with his digestive pains and his mental anguish. Fletcher, the ever loyal valet, is present in almost every scene. Here, Byron sends Annabella packing after he finds out that Mrs. Clermont has been stealing and spying. He catches her in the act and brandishes a pistol, almost as if he would murder her immediately.

**Teresa; or Her Demon Lover. Austin K. Gray. 1945.**

The novel focuses predominantly on Byron and Teresa's relationship. However, it does illuminate the time in Teresa's life before and after Byron. Of particular importance are her relationships with Lamartine and Henry Fox, Lord Holland, as well as her second marriage to the Marquis. This text resembles a biography more than a fiction, although the author uses the facts from various biographies and fills in the gaps with a plot line, complete with emotional and intellectual material. Many letters and journals are also used. The author states: "This is the story, not a biography, of Teresa." A number of insights into various characters are
particularly exciting: Teresa, her husband the Count, Lamartine, Henry Fox, Claire Clairmont, Mary Shelley, and others. Particular attention is paid to *Don Juan* in this text, especially Teresa's adamant refusal to allow Byron to continue publishing it. The author portrays Teresa's friendship with Lamartine and that fact that he pumped her continually for knowledge about Byron. The novel has two pictures, one of Lamartine and one of Henry Fox, both of whom the author says look like Byron in one way or another. He implies, rather overtly, that both of them longed to be Byron. In the appendix, the author examines Lamartine's *La Vie de Byron* in some detail. In a later appendix, the author examines Teresa's *Life of Lord Byron in Italy*.

**Bad Lord Byron. Directed by David MacDonald. 1949.**
The movie begins with Byron in Greece just before his death. He is feverish from a ride in the rain and he is lying on his bed, tossing and turning. The scene then cuts to a courtroom, where Byron is on trial for his life. Five witnesses are called: Caroline Lamb, Annabella Milbanke, Augusta Leigh, Hobhouse, and Teresa Guiccioli. Each of them tells a story. The first two are called by the prosecuting attorney to show Byron's tempestuous and wicked side. Augusta is called as a rebuttal witness and denies, under oath, that she was Byron's lover. Then Hobhouse and Teresa are called by the defense attorney to show Byron's loving, compassionate, and liberating side. The movie ends with the judge asking the movie audience to be the jury and determine whether Byron would be remembered as a poet and a liberator or as a seducer and a libertine. Peter Quennell was an advisor to the movie. Augusta's staunch denial of the incest charge was quite vehement. In fact, she says that she was surprised by Annabella's testimony on the witness stand. Caroline is tempestuous, and in one scene, shows up at Byron's rooms dressed as a page. Annabella comes off as cold and prudish. Augusta is played with style and poise, even though she seems somewhat naïve and unaware. Hobhouse and Teresa were excellently cast. In one scene, Byron is initiated into the Carbonari to help the Gambas and the Guicciolis fight the Italian war against Austria. Then he moves to the war between the Turks and the Greeks. Pietro is there as well. Byron's lameness is downplayed somewhat, although he speaks of it quite often as being the sole cause of his misery and shame as an adult. He says he can never forget it.

**Byron, A Play. Gertrude Stein. 1949.**
The characters are broken down into Scenes and Acts. There are no characters in the sense that Lord Byron plays this part or Augusta plays that part. This is almost an anti-play in the same sense that James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* is an anti-novel. In the introduction, Bonnie Marranca says that Stein decided, "a play didn't have to tell a story. What happened was the theater experience itself. In other words, the creation of an experience was more important than the representation of an event."
She goes on to say that Stein shifts the attention from the "text to the reader. In every sense, the perceiving intelligence took precedence over the art object whose status as an autonomous, self-contained totality was diminished." At a later juncture, Marranca says *Byron A Play* is a "play about writing plays." Stein deconstructs play writing itself and makes the acts and the scenes into characters who speak. At one point, Act I says, "Byron is a queen." An interesting reference if indeed it speaks to Byron's sexuality.

**The Passionate Poet. Julia Mannering. 1951.**
A novel that focuses almost exclusively on Byron's seductions of women. Byron moves from one female conquest to the next. A quote from the text provides ample evidence for his rakish behavior: "Byron at his young age had learnt the secret of power. The humble suppliant, the sighing lover, had no magic to move the heart of a woman—if she had a heart. But reject women, and they came crying and running, clinging to the tail of one's coat like beggars calling for alms." Byron appears here as a raunchy libertine, seemingly never satisfied with any woman, always longing for the thrill of the hunt. Having caught his prey, he discards her and moves on to the next chase. Mary Chaworth becomes the catalyst for this bawdy libertine; her rejection of him begins this repetitive and destructive behavior. Hobhouse appears as critic of *CHP*.

**Camino Real. Tennessee Williams. 1953.**
A dark, brooding play in which Byron makes only the briefest of appearances. For Williams the play portrays love's power as well as the anxiety over death and an unknown future. It displays Williams' empathy with and admiration for the vulnerability and valor of artists and exiles. The play includes numerous symbolic characters based on well known archetypes from popular and literary mythology: Casanova, the greatest lover; Lord Byron, the greatest poet; Don Quixote and Sancho Panza from Cervantes's novel; Proust's Baron de Charlus; Esmeralda, the gypsy girl from Victor Hugo novel; Nursie, played by a man, from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*; and a naïve ex-prizefighting young American with a heart as big as the head of a baby named Kilroy. These characters are trapped, both physically and metaphorically, hoping to escape from beneath the tyrannical rule of the Generalissimo, who never appears, and of Gutman, an aristocratic fat man in a white suit, suggested by the character from *The Maltese Falcon*. The "royal road" ends and the "real road" begins in Camino Real. It is on the margin, a place where "the spring of humanity has gone dry" and from which there is just one exit: a staircase leading to "terra incognita." In The Foreword, Williams talks about "constructing another world while the world that you live in dissolves beneath your feet." He maintains that the characters are "mostly archetypes of certain basic attitudes and qualities with those mutations that would occur if they had continued along the road to this hypothetical
terminal point in it." He ends with: "I only know that I have felt a release in this work which I wanted you to feel with me." In his brief appearance before taking the staircase into the unknown, Byron talks about his life as a poet and that the Camino Real has softened his meter and his pen. He longs to get back to the life he used to know, fighting for freedom and helping men to raise their hearts above the mundane. He speaks fondly yet sadly of Shelley's death and the burning on the beach as a purifying act for Shelley. He longs to once again listen to the pure strains of his heart. He leaves with a quiet intensity, knowing that he will have to cross a large desert but willing to take that chance to get back to what he once was. It is one of the truly brave acts in the play.

"This is the story of a literary deception, told by the culprit himself, a charming young bookseller named Quentin Williams, who attempts nothing less than a forgery of Lord Byron's burned memoirs. And so plausibly and ingeniously does this droll story of the crime and its consequences develop that the reader has the unique experience of cheering the villain on in his efforts. It seemed quite simple to Williams in the beginning. Instead of working on the biography of Byron which he had planned, he would write the poet's "autobiography"—a project which appealed to his imagination as a kind of ghost-writer rather than out-and-out forgery. Unfortunately, Williams became so engrossed in the creation of his masterpiece that he neglected the explosive human elements around him—represented not only by his lovely fiancée, Jocasta, but by his crusading Aunt Beth, the tiresome Reverend John Ockrington, and an astute American dealer, Earl Darrow. And he was totally unprepared for the strange situation that made the late Lord Byron himself a pivotal point in the turn of events." [Front and back cover blurb] Byron's secret memoirs coming to light has long haunted and fascinated Byron scholars. The burning of the memoirs, and the ghost-writers who have penned the memoirs and inadvertently discovered them, seemingly consume the minds of our fictional authors. Moore writes herself into the text as a Byron scholar who comes to judge the manuscript in the last two chapters. This is one of the first texts to overtly explore Byron's relationships with men. The relationship between Quentin and Jocasta is also fascinating. She is a model, who seems hardly suited to Byron studies. However, Quentin, in an attempt to keep her occupied, assigns her the task of finding all the references to animals in Byron's poetry, prose, and biographies. She loves it and soon falls in love with Byron himself. Quentin becomes jealous over the obsession she has with the dead poet. Consequently, this adamantly staunch supporter of Byron decides to add a few scandalous parts to the memoirs to disillusion Jocasta with the image of Byron. He essentially works against what he set out to do, which was to defend Byron against all his detractors. As a result, Jocasta burns the memoirs in the same grate that had burned the original memoirs in the
Murray publishing offices before the scholars could read and judge them sound. A tidy piece of irony there, especially with the mischievous Byron looking down from a picture hanging on the wall.

**Three on Trial. Lawrence Kitchen.  1959.**
The trial of Lord Byron's life. Much like the movie *Bad Lord Byron*, the short drama puts Byron on trial. On the prosecutor's side, Claire, Hunt and Lady Byron. On the defender's side, Moore, Fletcher and the Greek peasant. Byron never speaks, having never been called to the witness stand to defend himself or his actions. Also, as in the movie, the audience is asked to be the jury and the verdict is never obtained. The interaction between the Judge and the two attorneys is quite humorous at times. The subtle irony and mock humility is quite amusing as is the not-so-subtle sarcasm. Byron is never allowed to defend himself. He must sit quietly, allowing others to speak for him.

**An Elegance of Rebels. Noel Langley. 1959.**
The play takes place between 1822 and 1824. The focus is mainly on the relationship between certain cast members and Byron: Shelley, Mary, Teresa, and the Hunts. The first act takes place in Montenero, Italy. The second act takes place in Genoa. The third act takes place in Greece. The author expresses his own tongue-in-cheek manner through the characters. Some of the funniest lines come from Teresa and Byron, especially when directed towards the Hunts. At one point, the Hunt children are playing ball against the wall of Byron's study. The Hunt children call Byron "Old Limpy" behind his back. Then from off stage a gunshot is heard. Teresa, aghast (as the stage directions say), calls to Byron: "Byron! Have you shot a Hunt?" Leigh Hunt really comes off very poorly in this piece. He is maltreated by almost everyone. Mary Shelley and Byron have a tumultuous friendship. At points, they seem to despise one another. Trelawny appears as a braggart and a coward, always leaving when needed most and always looking for the highest bidder with the most money. Teresa and Byron are not altogether happy in this piece. They fight constantly, yet Byron always turns to Teresa when depressed or sick. She comforts him when no one else can. Byron is prone to epileptic fits while with Teresa in Italy rather than experiencing them only in Greece. Byron also wants desperately to reconcile with his wife, which seems incompatible when compared with letters and journals Byron wrote on the subject after his separation.

**The Bitches' Brew. Myra Butler. 1960.**
Numerous characters, everything from three witches with vile tempers and a congress of naysayers to Jupiter, Juno and Mercury, of whom Byron plays only a small part. In the middle of the play, a number of ghosts rise from the crypts to speak. The action in this play doesn't progress linearly. In fact, the narrator says that it was a dream she had, which she wrote
down almost immediately upon waking (one might think of the story behind Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* here). Consequently, it has a very dream-like, surreal quality. The witches, almost identical to what one might imagine from *Macbeth*, dance around and prepare noxious drinks. The congress attempts to block anything that doesn't conform to tradition, secrecy, and dullness. They are particularly peeved at Bertrand Russell for his philosophy and his skill at mathematics and whom they call the greatest enemy of authority and dependence to dogma. In the end, Jupiter replaces the drinks with nectar and everyone, including the witches, has an immediate about face (even though the effect is temporary), which scares them tremendously. They all see to the heart of the group, revealing mistrust, deceit, and egotism. So the plot against Bertrand Russell is overturned and he lives on to continue his philosophy. Three Romantic poets speak as ghosts: Shelley, Blake, and Byron. Shelley lauds revolution, Byron says he sees the benefit in progress but denigrates the modern poets, and Blake talks of curses and humor for kings. Myra Buttle, according to the front flap of the drama, is a pseudonym for Victor William Williams Saunders Purcell.

*Lord Byron at the Opera. Sir Herbert Edward Read. 1963.*

Byron, Henri de Beyle (Stendhal), Marquis de Brême, Marquis de Satirana, Count Confalonieri, Vincenzo Monti, Silvio Pellico, Hobhouse, Polidori.

A brief play that takes place in October of 1816 within the Marquis de Brême's box in Milan. Most of the conversation takes place between Byron and Stendhal. They talk of poetry, music, passion and Napoleon. At one point, the dialogue is interrupted by Polidori and the arrest that was imminent because of his insult to an officer within the opera house. The aristocrats stand for his release and soon everything returns to normal. This was originally intended for production on the radio. It was "the last of Sir Herbert Read's plays to be published, was first produced by Rayner Heppenstall for the B.B.C. on March 11, 1953 with Robert Edisson as Lord Byron, Jacques Brunius as Stendhal, and Massimo Coen as the Marquis de Brême. Ian Sadler took the part of the Marquis de Satirana, Bernard Rebel that of Dr. Polidori, while George Pastell played Silvio Pellico and Lewis Wilson played John Cam Hobhouse." Stendhal and Byron speak at great length about passion and what stands for passion in poetry and music. Byron at one point says that the only passion he has cared to pursue is indifference. Stendhal says that his dominant passion is sanguine while Byron says his is melancholy. Nothing, he says, "in Nature nor in Beauty, can ever for a moment lighten the burden upon my heart, nor enable me to lose my wretched identity." Somewhat later, Byron says that he wants to escape from passions. He goes on to say: "I want to escape from myself, which is why I scribble verses. 'Tis a distraction." In the preface, the author defends the use of dialogue as a literary form. He agrees with Landor that "the best writers in every age have written in
dialogue." He also says that he has done his research and that "There is hardly a sentiment or even an expression in this dialogue for which chapter and verse could not be quoted. The art lies partly in disguising this homework: in giving a dramatic wholeness to so many minute particulars."

This for Caroline. Doris Leslie. 1964.
The life of Caroline Lamb as told through a third person narrative. The first hundred pages or so are spent on the years from 1795 to 1812. The next hundred or so are spent on the two years from 1812 to 1814. The last eighty pages or so are spent on the years from 1814 to 1828. Those two years with Byron seem to have particular appeal for numerous authors. This would be an interesting text to compare to The Marriage of William Ashe. It spends much time detailing the idiosyncrasies of both Caroline and William Lamb. It also details an intimate connection between Caroline and her first cousin "Hart." Byron fills Caroline's life with a grandeur unknown to her before that time. She cannot stop thinking about him after she meets him for the first time. She is drawn to him as a moth is drawn to a flame. Much detailed conversation about madness being close to genius and the seeming inability of many to determine which most closely aligns itself with Byron. He is impetuous, has a nasty temper, and wears his heart on his sleeve, at least for the individual with whom he is infatuated at the moment. A long synopsis of Glenarvon occupies a central portion of the text. The novel also characterizes Caroline's reaction to Byron's reaction and the way in which she deflects the anger directed towards her by those around her that she so blithely caricatured.

A novel, in only the loosest sense, that begins in Venice 1818 with the reunion of Shelley and Byron on Italian soil. Shelley has come to plead the cause of Allegra's return to her mother, Claire. The novel ends four years later with the widowed Mary Shelley watching from her London window as Byron's funeral cortege rolls past. The author uses numerous sources, including letters, journals, and poetic writings to supplement the narrative, which is told in third person. The cover calls it a "dramatic re-creation of the tempestuous final years of Byron and Shelley" but it hardly counts for any kind of dramatic recreation. The prose is very sedate and calm with nary a change in tone or narrative style.

This is a complete biography written from a third person narrative style, with George Byron as the protagonist. It begins with Byron's life as a small child under the care of May Gray and his tempestuous, extremely fat mother. It ends with Byron's death in Greece and the footnote even tells the reader of the autopsy performed on Byron's body, complete with the size of his brain, the degeneration of his liver and kidneys, and other pertinent information. Many of the episodes are particularly brief but the
one period that is completely ignored in this biography is Byron's trip to the East with Hobhouse. Byron is portrayed in this text as a lover extraordinaire. Every detail is given about the various women in his life. Significantly missing are the relationships with men but that seems hardly noticeable to the presumed heterosexual reader. Byron is known for his "bamming" which begins at Harrow. His ability to lie with distinction and exaggerate the truth beyond what might normally be believed. This "bamming" gets Byron into particular trouble, especially when Lady Melbourne assumes he is talking about Augusta when he is actually talking about Frances Webster. Byron likes it so much he allows Lady Melbourne to believe it. However, the rumor mill works overtime, spearheaded by Caroline Lamb and the incest charges become so extraordinary that even Lady Byron begins to believe them. She then, after the separation, begins to dismantle Augusta's defenses until even Augusta believes she did something wrong when nothing happened at all. Byron as his own worst enemy, deliberately misrepresenting issues, only to have them come back to him full-force. Byron is portrayed as child-like here, especially when around Augusta, who calls him Baby Byron on several occasions. He is often childish and mischievous, pouting as would a maligned infant. Byron longs for women to laugh with him. This is his most serious complaint against Annabella: that she is far too serious and always takes for serious his eccentric sense of humor. She also comes off as highly prudish and fanatically religious, to the disgust of even her mother. Caroline Lamb once again appears as the rumormonger. Byron is portrayed as highly superstitious, hating Friday the 13th or any amount of countable things that add up to 13. He is sensitive, overly emotional at times while being cold, haughty and arrogant at other times.

The infamous summer of 1816 in Switzerland at the Village Diodati. The novel follows Polidori's perspective most often, although the narrator is quite intrusive within the narrative itself. He often breaks in with interesting side notes and digressions about the characters. The narrative begins with the hiring of Polidori as Byron's doctor and ends with his eventual dismissal from the employment of the poet. This text prefigures the movies that would follow in the late 1980s. The relationship between Polidori and Byron seems tempestuous at times while gentle at other times. Byron often apologizes to Polidori for his actions or his words and yet the next time, Byron is once again vindictive and hurtful. The reader often hears from Polidori himself, in the form of letters written to his sister Florence. These letters, as per the author's introduction, are completely fictitious. Many of the other letters and journal entries are sourced; for instance, the author borrows freely from Byron's letters and journals, Mary's letters and journals, and Claire's letters and journals. The relationship between Shelley and Byron is portrayed in a positive light, although Byron does get restless if Shelley spends too much time with
him. Byron seems to need quality alone time, especially when writing. If people interrupt him during this time, he is more than likely to get angry and hurtful. Both Shelley and Byron appear here as vegetarians as well as laudanum users. In fact, Polidori implies to Mary that he believes Shelley to be an addict.

**Tyger. Adrian Mitchel. 1971.**
A veritable romp through the life and times of William Blake, told from a perspective one hundred years after his death, even though Blake is very much a part of the story. The story is told from the late eighteenth century while fighting against anachronism through the use of Blake's full knowledge of the next hundred years. A very surreal text, inasmuch as the dramatization is ironic and tongue-in-cheek. Byron is only one of many poets who pays homage to the great Blake every year on a particular day. Also included in the mix: Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Coleridge, Keats, Tennyson, Browning, Whitman, Kipling, and Allen Ginsberg. Blake shines as the poet who is one thousand years ahead of his time, who talks to his dead brother, hates slavery in any form, and tries to work while being buffeted by a barrage of outside details and pressures. Much of his philosophy comes through in his dialogue. Music is integral to this play. In fact, many of the players' parts are sung. Thames Television produced this play on the 150th anniversary of Blake's death.

**Lady Caroline Lamb. Directed by Robert Bolt. 1972.**
Richard Chamberlain: Byron
Laurence Olivier: Wellington
Sarah Miles: Lady Caroline Lamb
Margaret Leighton: Lady Melbourne
The movie begins with the marriage proposal of William Lamb to Lady Caroline and ends with her death. It spends an inordinate amount of time on Caroline's whimsical and tempestuous behavior, especially where it concerns Byron. The movie captures Lady Caroline's erratic behavior beautifully. The casting is askew as she was supposed to be boyish and akin to a sprite. The movie does, however, capture the madness and capriciousness quite well. Not only does she dress up like a page, but also during a costume party, she dresses up like a Nubian slave. The portrayal of Byron is rather erroneous when compared with biography. Caroline meets Byron while he is engaged in a boxing match for his supper. He is abjectly poor and fights dirty. He is scorned by the boxing community and his money is thrown to the ground where he picks it up like a pauper. Caroline then goes to his rooms, which are Spartan and dark. He offers her old Sherry and she reads some lines that will eventually become CHP. When he does publish, he makes a point of getting as much money from Murray as possible. He bargains for every last penny. William Lamb is played as a cold and law-abiding, law-invoking prig. He loves Caroline but has great difficulty showing it. She is the one who dominates every scene.
with William. She comes off as being nothing more than a whore, who sleeps not only with Byron but with the Duke of Wellington as well. Her death is melodramatic. She is drawn to the moon and the clouds and she eventually just passes out. The maid scorns Lady Melbourne, who is portrayed as a discrete and shady older woman with great power and prestige, saying that Caroline died of a broken heart, something Lady Melbourne would never understand.

This novel purports to be the lost memoirs of Lord Byron as given to the author by a descendant of Lukas. It is a detailed account of the years from Byron's birth to just before his death in Greece. The book jacket has the following to say about the novel: "Fact and fantasy are deftly interwoven in this bold and bawdy 'autobiography' of the great poet, wit and satirist Lord Byron. Byron's reputation as a roué more than equaled his literary genius, and his scandalous escapades—so much a part of the Byron legend—are here chronicled in a tone and spirit befitting the author of *Don Juan.* His exceedingly precocious relationship at age nine with his nurse . . . his dalliances with prostitutes and servants . . . his numerous adulterous liaisons with members of the London aristocracy—including the impetuous and unstable Lady Caroline Lamb and her handsome, scheming mother-in-law, Lady Melbourne—his several homosexual attachment . . . his dismal marriage to Anna Isabella Milbanke . . . his incestuous relationship with his beloved half-sister, Augusta . . . all are recounted with an authenticity that brings Byron the man vividly to life." This book elaborately deals with the homosexual liaisons that Byron shared with John Edleston and Nicolo Giraud. In fact, the latter is quite a passionate and sympathetic account of his love for the young man and the physical relationship that they shared. The novel recounts all of Byron's relationships and activities from a first-hand perspective and from a first person narrative. Byron writes to the reader, allowing him/her to see into the private thoughts and emotions that were behind many of the decisions he made.

Miranda Seymour portrays Lord Ruthven as a malicious character who both loves Byron and ruins his life. Whereas she never explicitly uses the term "vampire," the resemblance is unmistakable. Ruthven exhibits supernatural qualities, irresistible magnetism, mind-control, and a love for dark, gloomy places. His face is thin, with the "cultivated pallor of a hothouse lily." He cannot die: "Simple people say that the Ruthvens do not die, that they cannot unless [ . . . ] they can find a man of similar, what can one say, psyche, to take their place." Most importantly, a blood bond exists between Ruthven and Byron: Byron grimly remarks that he committed this act before he "knew what the 'consequences' were." This bond binds their "souls in brotherly love." Ruthven, as master, and Byron,
as protégé, develop a blood bond that explicitly implies a vampiric connection. Ruthven's white face, supernatural influences, and eternal life allude to the traditional aspects of Polidori's vampire. Byron is effectively being initiated into the vampiric realm by a more experienced, more ruthless being. Ruthven does marry, but only to advance his homosexual interests in Byron. Ruthven "dislikes feminine company" and his wife's crime "lay in being a woman." She finds love letters that he had written to Byron, complete with drawings. At one point in the text, Byron dresses his paramour up like a boy in order to take her to a boxing match. The woman balks, believing that Byron likes her better as a boy than as a girl. Byron furiously retorts: "Do you think I'm like Ruthven?" The blatant homosexual overtones allow Seymour to emphasize the relationship in order to heighten the bond between the vampire and the victim. As a result, she can extend the underlying homoeroticism in the previous works, escalating and intensifying them into a complex and intricate homosexual relationship between Ruthven and Byron. Ruthven's objective entails the complete subjugation and utter manipulation of Byron, who is described as a "slave." Even at the end of the novel, as Byron dies from a fever in Missolonghi, he fears that he has lost the battle to Ruthven and that he will become that which he fears most: Ruthven's pawn and vessel. Ruthven wants Byron to succeed him, a physical, psychical, and spiritual heir.


Derek Jacobi and Isla Blair starred in this RSC / English Chamber Theatre Production. In the May 24, 1992 edition of The London Times, Peter Lewis says: "On Tuesday at the Ambassadors theatre in London [Jacobi] adds to his portrait gallery of historical enigmas---Claudius, the crippled emperor; Becket, the martyred saint; Kean, the half-crazed actor---the ever-fascinating Romantic, Byron. 'Mad, Bad and Dangerous to Know' (Lady Caroline Lamb's description of Byron) is a 'dramatic entertainment with music' compiled by Jane McCullough from his letters, prose and poems, many of them set to music and sung (Jacobi has a light baritone voice). Isla Blair, the only other performer, narrates and takes the parts of all the women in Byron's life, including his half-sister Augusta. It was the scandal of his incestuous passion for her which drove him abroad into lifelong exile. Jacobi scorns attempting impersonation. 'Everybody know what Byron looked like. I can't look like that, so I don't try. The aim is to get the essence and feeling of the man through what he wrote and to find the Byronic spirit that made him a hero for his own and subsequent generations.' So there will be no dark curly wig and only the hint of a limp. By purely verbal means he builds the character of the insatiable and arrogant milord who declared: 'What I have earned by my pen, I have spent on my ballocks.' The show makes no bones about Byron's equally ardent homosexual side, from his affair with John Edlestone at Harrow to the Greek manservant Loukas with whom he ended his life at Missolonghi, at 36.'
**My Sister, My Love. Lucille Iremonger. 1981.**

The novel begins with Byron's mother's death and ends with his own death in Greece. The text covers everything in between but spends much time on certain periods: Byron's marriage, Byron's relationship with Augusta, Byron's relationship with Claire, Mary, Shelley, and Trelawny, Byron's relationship with Teresa, and Byron's time in Greece. Of great importance is the infamous Byronic secret: in this text, it appears as both incest and homosexuality. For instance, the beginning of Chapter 4: "Augusta's letter arrived, telling him she was pregnant. Of course the child was his. They were both sure of that." Much time is also spent on the homosexual relationships: Edleston, Robert Rushton (named here at Byron's catamite for numerous years), Lord Grey de Ruthyn (who attempts to anally rape Byron as a young man), Nicolo Giraud, and Lukas. The epilogue is quite interesting, inasmuch as the author finishes the text with what happened to all the other players in the drama. She brings up some interesting facts about various individuals, including Ada, Annabella, Augusta, Teresa, and Medora. The author emphasizes that Augusta was Byron's one and only true love. An editor states on the back cover that: "Of the great English poets, perhaps only Shakespeare has had so much impact on the world at large. Lucille Iremonger has retold Byron's life story with the sensitivity, insight and intelligence that it deserves."

**Childe Byron. Romulus Linsey. 1981.**

Ada, in the midst of dying from cancer, hallucinates the ghost of her father, although her father has a mind of his own and opinions that his daughter couldn't possibly share within the state of her consciousness. Once in the same room, they throw accusations at each other until the end in which Ada, via her Last Will and Testament, desires to be buried in the same vault as her father. The play enacts a catharsis for both father and daughter: Byron, inasmuch as he finally begins to know the daughter he never knew and Ada, inasmuch as she begins to understand the father she only knew through the impure machinations of her distraught mother. Much of Byron's poetry is used throughout as is Ada's own writings, especially in relation to the "thinking machine" that she and Charles Babbage are creating. Much is made of Byron's relationships with other men. Ada flings it at him like one of the most heinous accusations she could imagine. She also brings up the incest between him and his sister as proof of Byron's sinfulness. Vampiric images permeate this text as well. At the beginning, the stage directions call for Hector Berlioz's "Harold in Italy" to be played.

**Blood and Ice. Liz Lochhead. 1982.**

The fateful summer of 1816 in Switzerland. Mary is the key character here and the play revolves around her writing of *Frankenstein*. In fact, the novel starts to interpose itself on the actions of the play in a number of ways:
Mary's characters talk with some of the characters in her novel; the characters of Byron, Shelley, Claire, and Elise all play secondary parts: Shelley plays Victor, Byron plays the monster, Claire plays Elizabeth, and Elise plays Justine. Shelley likes to shock people in this play. At one point, he appears naked in front of a number of older women who visit Mary, who was quite outraged at his behavior. Shelley seems to shrug it off as nothing more than a prank. Polidori floats around somewhat ghost-like, somewhat spy like, writing his memoirs for Murray and generally irritating and annoying everyone with whom he comes into contact. Coleridge's writing makes an importance appearance here. They are constantly quoting the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* or *Christabel*. Byron flirts with both Mary and Shelley in this text, initiating long, intense moments with both characters. The interposition of *Frankenstein* within the text, especially as it is played with the available characters, enacts a play within a play.

**The Anubis Gate. Tim Powers. 1983.**

This novel is quite an impressive romp through history. It begins with a rich man, Mr. Darrow, who has mathematically proven the existence of holes in the time continuum. He has also discovered how to move from one hole to another. Darrow charges wealthy, historically-minded customers, one million dollars a piece to view a lecture by S. T. Coleridge. Doyle is hired because of his expertise in Romanticism. Unfortunately, Doyle is detained and doesn't make it back to the present-day. Steerforth Benner, one of Darrow's body guards, runs into Doyle after the latter attempts to make money any way he can, mostly through begging within the elaborate begging networks established at the time. Benner and a number of other men are back in the period with Darrow, who wants to live there full time. His ultimate goal, though, is to find Dog Face Joe, who is in reality Amenophis Fikee, a powerful mage who can switch bodies at will. Darrow hopes that Benner can switch him into a younger body, since his older body is consumed with cancer. Doyle is eventually switched in Benner's body, which is similar to a hulking yet well-trained Norse God. He ends up foiling most of the plans of the sorcerers Fikee and Romany as well as the machinations of the beggars' master, Horrabin the Clown. The novel ends after Doyle, who narrowly escapes death numerous times, foils all the plans to destroy the monarchy and England in both the 1800s and the 1600s. He is helped in both places by the Antaeus Brotherhood, who are sworn to fight magicians and sorcerers hell-bent on taking over the world. Byron plays only a bit part here as one of the sorcerer's pawns. He is cloned (in the book, it is called making a "ka") and appears in both Turkey and England at the same time. A couple of letters, which the author uses to his own purpose, are quoted to validate the ruse. They are, however, quite valid, according to the letters and journals compiled by Marchand. Coleridge's part is much bigger than Byron's. Not only does he give the lecture that everyone pays to see, but he also appears in one of
the segments in Horrabin's maze of tortures. The captors give the old man a huge dose of laudanum, thinking it will keep him out for a couple of days, not realizing, of course, that Coleridge was a laudanum addict and that his tolerance was very high. He wakes up quite quickly, thinking the maze of horrors is really a dream and that he is exploring his subconscious mind. He unleashes monsters thinking them pent up strengths that his unconscious mind had caged. A brilliant episode, especially when read next to *Kubla Khan* and other poems of Coleridge.

**The Missolonghi Manuscript. Frederic Prokosch. 1984.**
The novel is one more in a series of "found" memoirs. This time, the memoirs were in the hands of Marchesa del Rosso, born an American named Miss Whitaker, who lived in the Piazza Navona. She received her copy on loan from Colonel Eppingham, who had made a copy of Byron's memoirs, which had been purchased from a penniless Baron in Missolonghi. The memoirs fill three notebooks and in them, Byron moves from present-day Greece to his past. Much time is spent on his relationship with Nicolo and Edleston as well as with Loukas. He also recounts his relationships with the women of his life as well as the many conversations with Teresa and Shelley. It ends with Byron's impending death. Much conversation regarding Byron's bisexuality. There is also talk of Beckford and other sodomites who were either severely punished or put to death for their abnormal proclivities. In one particular scene, Lord Ruthven attempts to rape Byron. He is hardly the sensitive young Lord as others have described him. Here he is described as "a bull of a man," and a "ruddy young scoundrel of twenty-three, with apple-green eyes and a boxer's body." Byron and Shelley have the most intense philosophical discussions. Byron, in this text at least, spends a great deal of time philosophizing as well as engaging in much introspection. Prince Mavrocordato is a man who regales Byron with tales of his sexual encounters with young and older men. He is constantly baiting Byron with questions like: If you had your choice of either a man or a woman, which would you choose? Byron immediately says the woman but then begins to equivocate somewhat towards the end of the paragraph. He says: "A beautiful man as well as a beautiful woman can make my heart skip a beat. And both women and men can be sadly tedious and disillusioning. One must, as you say, recoil from generalities." Earlier in this same conversation, the Prince asks Byron a very pointed question: "Have you ever had a liaison, copulatory or otherwise, with a man?" Byron replies: "To be honest with you, Alex, I must reply in the affirmative. Copulatory, four in number. Non-copulatory, only one."

**Prisoner of Vampires. Nancy Garden. 1984.**
Lord Ruthven appears in this children's tale of vampirism, schoolwork, and extracurricular activities. Suitable for ages 9-12.
The play takes place between the summers of 1816 and 1822 in Switzerland, England, and Italy. The characters spend much time together and the "writing of ghost stories" makes its gratuitous appearance. Later, much is made of Byron's life in Venice and the death of Allegra. The play ends when Shelley dies and the body is burned on the beach. Claire deifies Byron in the first act. She worships him and hopes that he will eventually marry her when his divorce from Annabella becomes a reality. Shelley and Byron argue about Wordsworth. Byron despises the man and Shelley nearly deifies him. They have heated arguments that end in friendly embraces. Byron flirts with both Mary and Shelley. In fact, the portrayal of Byron is very sexual. He talks of his trysts with boys as if it were commonplace. Mary accuses Claire of having slept with Shelley and Claire admits it. They seem to share everything and Mary hardly stays angry with Claire because of it. Mary seems worn-down, especially after the death of her children. Byron rather anachronistically talks of the Romantic period and of Romanticism. Polidori appears ghost-like and spy-like, writing his memoirs and generally making a nuisance out of himself. He talks of his loneliness, of Shelley having TB and of Byron having syphilis. The characters at one point act out Plato's Theory of Forms with the cave, the light behind the man, and the shadows on the wall. Polidori is roped into a chair and told he cannot move his head while Shelley makes the shadows. Mary reads from the book while Byron is relegated to the "yes, Socrates" part. Harriett Westbrook appears as a ghost in the play, who follows Shelley around after she drowns herself.

Byron: Gabriel Byrne
Shelley: Julian Sands
Mary: Natasha Richardson
Claire: Myriam Cyr
Polidori: Timothy Spall
Murray: Alec Mango
Fletcher: Andreas Wisniewski
Rushton: Dexter Fletcher
Justine: Pascal King

In a particularly compelling review from Romantic Circles, Rick Albright says: "Russell subjects his audience to 96 minutes of his peculiarly excessive vision of the events of Villa Diodati in June of 1816. In Russell's hands, the events become a nightmare of drugs, sex, horror and (at least in Dr. Polidori's case), self-immolation. It is probably the note of excessiveness to which I most object; in many respects Russell's twisted vision does more than a little violence to the events of that fateful summer, but there was apparently a certain amount of drug use (laudanum) involved, at least where (Percy) Shelley and Byron were concerned--although Russell's handling of this subject is more reminiscent of the
psychedelic 1960s than 1816, and the sexual escapades depicted, if not documented in the journals of Byron, Mary, Percy or Claire, were based on their views of free love at this time. Percy and Claire certainly experimented with séances and other trappings of the occult. The notion of one of their séances actually raising some kind of "horror" in a literal, demonic sense seems pure Russelian silliness--these are perhaps the most offensive scenes to devotees of the Shellesys, particularly the heavy-handed way Russell used the dread of this personified evil as a vehicle for several anachronistic interior monologues reflecting on tragedies from Mary's future. The dramatization of Mary's waking dream--and her vision of Fuseli's 1781 painting "The Nightmare" lit by flashes of lightning, (I don't know if the painting was there or not, but it's a nice touch) do provide an interesting atmosphere, and this is the portion of the film I've used a few times in my classes. But the film overall is very troubling. As noted, it seems to do a certain violence to the legend of Diodati, but what is even more troubling is the way that Russell managed to get so many small details right. These include Percy's phobias about being buried alive and Mary's nearly obsessive fears about the death of her infant William. Her account of having dreamed that her dead daughter Clara was not dead but cold, and needed only to be rubbed by the fire to make her live, is straight out of Mary's journals. Percy's surrealistic vision of breasts with eyes is based on a real incident, and Claire's unusual temperament (even her fits--noted by Mary as often corresponding to her monthly cycle) are unusually accurate, and the unusual nature of the relationship among Claire, Percy and Mary seems consistent with contemporary accounts. (The incident in which Claire scares herself and jumps into bed with Mary and Percy for comfort is also reported in Mary's journals, even if it actually occurred on a different trip)."

**Rowing With the Wind.** Directed by Gonazlo Suarez. 1987.

Percy Bysshe Shelley: Valentine Pelka
Mary: Lizzy McInnerny
Claire: Elizabeth Hurley
Lord Byron: Hugh Grant

In yet another manifestation of the infamous summer of 1816, this film enacts the ghost story challenge and its inevitable end. In this movie, however, Mary's monster takes on startlingly real characteristics and haunts the characters themselves.

**Conversations with Lord Byron on Perversion, 163 Years after his Lordship's Death.** Amanda Prantera. 1987.

A science fiction text that resembles nothing so much as the Star Trek episodes on television, where a facsimile is created from everything that is known about Byron. This information is input into a massive database and connected to an artificial intelligence they call LB. After a while, the computer takes on Byron's persona, memories, intelligence, and sense of
humor and then begins to ruminate on his past. He can even access information and actions that occurred after his death, such as, the promotion of William Lamb to Prime Minister. Anna, the Byron scholar, becomes infatuated with the Byron persona and starts to ask it questions that have been weighing on her mind about the Byronic history, such as, "Who was Thyrza?" "Was it Edleston?" "Did you have sexual intercourse with him?" The artificial intelligence is too smart for her, however, and answers all these questions with caginess and subtlety. It even gets huffy and turns itself off a few times. As a result, the graduate assistants manipulate the parameters for social anxiety, for homosexuality, etc. Much space is given to Edleston. The Byron computer ruminates on his relationship to him without revealing anything to the scholars or academics. We, as readers, read what the computer is thinking but the participants cannot and receive only cryptic messages from the printer. Edleston is described in detail. Byron reluctantly contemplates a relationship with him, saying to himself: "This is a boy, this is a boy." After much thinking and soul-searching, however, Byron goes back to Cambridge (after his dieting and exercising) ready to embrace a fully sexualized relationship with him. They swim to a remote spot, where Byron has to save the young chorister from drowning. While Edleston is still unconscious, Byron discovers that Edleston is really a woman, whom he later finds out is attending Harrow as a boy to receive a proper education. The author never divulges her last name (her first name is Alba) but insinuates that she is a princess from a foreign country whose parents would never allow her to demean herself by marrying someone of Byron's station. They fall in love but to no avail. The parents attempt to assassinate Byron, which is why he has to leave the country so quickly. Eventually, the artificial intelligence starts writing poetry, which is how the novel ends.

Lord Byron: Philip Anglim
Mary Godwin: Alice Krige
Percy Shelley: Eric Stoltz
Polidori: Alex Winter
Claire: Laura Dern
Based on Anne Edwards' novel, the film continues the tradition of focusing on the infamous summer of 1816. Actually filmed on location at Lake Geneva, the movie remains visually appealing throughout. Much attention is paid to drug use, especially laudanum and opium. The film emphasizes the relationships between the characters, which seems to involve sexual attraction on almost every front. Mary, in particular, remains both intrigued and appalled by Byron. In this film, Polidori is a quite handsome young man, whom Byron finds irresistible yet annoying. One scene in particular shows them kissing and embracing as a prelude to a sexual encounter.

The novel spins a tale about two separate entities inhabiting the earth: humans and lamia. The latter is a vampire like race whose chemical structure is akin to silicone whereas humans are carbon. This race was quiescent until a man decided to awaken them by sewing up a statue inside his stomach. This melded the two races and allowed the lamia to awaken and start to feed on humans again. This man is 800 years old when the story begins with Michael Crawford who unwittingly marries himself to a lamia and rues the day. The lamia also inspire poetic verse so it is no wonder that both Keats and Byron have married themselves to lamia as well, although they are desperately trying to get rid of them as they are particularly jealous and keep killing off family members. Shelley is unique in that his mother was married to a lamia (they can take either gender) and he was born of lamia/human origin. His twin sister was born a lamia and haunts/seduces him for the rest of his life. He eventually drowns himself to rid himself of the lamia and keep the rest of his family from dying. The main portion of the book is about Michael Crawford and Josephine attempting to refrain from inviting the lamia back into their lives. Mythology abounds, for example, the three sisters (Graiae) with only one eye, as well as references to vampires, garlic, holy water, etc. Eventually, Byron, Crawford and Josephine are able to put the lamia back to sleep (they are similar to stone creatures who can morph into flying dragons and humans) by cutting the statue out of the 800 year old man. The Carbonari play an important role as the group who secretly works against the lamia, who are also known as the Siliconari. This works for Powers historically because he places the Austrians firmly in the lamia camp. Lord Grey de Ruthyn is the original lamia who seduces Byron and then reappears in various forms, such as one of the Italian women in whom Byron was so interested. As opposed to some texts such as Tom Holland's book, here Byron is the victim of a vampire rather than a vampire himself.


No indication as to how these memoirs were found or in what way they are related to the memoirs that were burned in Murray's office. The novel simply begins with Byron speaking to his audience in Chapter 1. The opening lines are: "My passions were developed very early – so early, that few will believe me, now I am to state the period, and the facts which accompanied it. Still, I, George Gordon, sixth Lord Byron, am a plain man, and my way is to begin with the beginning, so here goes." The novel ends with two postscripts, in which Byron breaks the seal of his journals to add more material. Then an epilogue in which the "editor" relates Byron's death and the burning of the memoirs. This novel represents biography as autobiography with explicit sexual escapades. For instance, Byron mentions that while at Cambridge, he used to get an erection when caned. He also relates incidents regarding obscene orgies with naked boys, Lord
Grey's attempted rape, the sexual advances of the Pasha, and his confessions to Caroline Lamb of the various exploits with boys in the East. He speaks of being *Le Diable Boiteux*, the lame devil, a reference to what Jerome McGann says is one of Byron's favorite books by Alain-René Lesage. The style is bawdy and freewheeling.

**Lord Byron's Doctor.** Paul West. 1989.

Polidori narrates this autobiographical sketch both during his employ with Byron and after. Polidori adds depth and breadth to his somewhat brief diary entries: what he was feeling, what was occurring in each of their lives, and various relationships that he had with each character. The omniscient narrator knows events and emotions, however, that Polidori wouldn't or couldn't have known. Polidori details not only the homoerotic connection between Byron and himself, although Polidori always adds that he was somewhat uncomfortable with the affection that Byron gives to him, but also the love/hate relationship he shared with Byron most of the time. As long as Byron treated him as an equal, reading and laughing with him, Polidori adored him. Relegated to a mere doctor or even worse, servant status, Polidori hated Byron and his arrogance. He talks about his intimate relationship with Claire while she was pregnant with Byron's child. He was not only her doctor (as he was with Mary as well) but he had sex repeatedly with her. They discuss running away together, although Claire knows that she will never be able to live without Mary and Shelley. Polidori recounts his dislike for Shelley, not so much for Shelley's actions or personality, but because Shelley receives from Byron that for which Polidori wishes: intellectual stimulation and respect. He longs for Shelley to depart so that he could share that kind of relationship with Byron himself.

**Frankenstein Unbound.** Directed by Roger Corman. 1990.

Buchanan: John Hurt
Victor: Raul Julia
Monster: Nick Brimble
Mary: Bridget Fonda
Elizabeth: Catherine Rabett
Lord Byron: Jason Patric
Shelley: Michael Hutchence
Justine: Catherine Gorman

Based on the novel by Brian Aldiss, the film delves into time travel and the mixture of fiction with reality. This movie open in 2031 as Dr. Buchanan discovers time slips and the ability to move between backward and forward in time. He visits the late nineteenth century, where he becomes embroiled in Justine's court case and meets Victor Frankenstein. Mary Shelley's novel comes to life as the monster demands a mate and Buchanan does everything in his power to prevent that from occurring. Byron and Shelley play only bit parts here. Mary Shelley, in an act of
seduction directed towards Buchanan, says that while Shelley and Byron profess free love, she practices it. Eventually, Buchanan, Victor, and the monster end up traveling to the far future, a wasteland decimated by Buchanan's time traveling machine. Buchanan kills the monster, but not before the monster cries: "You don't understand. You cannot kill me. You think you have killed me but I am with you forever. I am unbound."

*The Difference Engine.* William Gibson and Bruce Sterling. 1990.
A novel that traffics in alternate realities, using as a premise the creation of computers (which the people of the times call "Engines") almost one hundred years before their time. As a result, a number of changes have occurred with the time line: Byron is now Prime Minister, Shelley has been imprisoned as a leader of radicals, Coleridge and Wordsworth have initiated their own religion and commune, and Keats has become a Kinetotropy expert (rather like an expert in Power Point presentations). The plot line revolves around three main characters: Sybil Gerard (daughter of a Luddite agitator), Edward Mallory (paleontologist and savant), and Laurence Oliphant (diplomat, mystic and spy). They each have a piece of a larger puzzle that only seems to come together in the very end of the novel: a modus (perhaps a gambling method but more than that really, an equation that will more than likely destroy the "Engines" with its inherent implications). A number of fascinating alternate realities present themselves: 1) Byron as Prime Minister and husband to Lady Byron (who at his funeral speaks ill of her husband in her mind, implying that she was the real power behind the throne even though she remained quiet in public); 2) Keats as a computer specialist who has given up poetry and medicine as well; 3) Shelley as a radical agitator who had to be imprisoned by Prime Minister Byron; 4) Wordsworth and Coleridge who have started their own religion based on their philosophy and poetry; 5) the creation of computers a hundred years before their advent in our history. Ada Byron also makes a number of appearances as a lost woman, deep in gambling debts yet stunningly brilliant in mathematics. A woman who effectively broke the code that allowed Babbage to create the computers well before their time. She, like Byron, has her curse as well as her genius.

*Anno-Dracula.* Kim Newman. 1992
In a review from [http://www.strangewords.com/archive/anno.html](http://www.strangewords.com/archive/anno.html), the editor says: "Kim Newman's truly amazing *Anno Dracula* [Carroll & Graf, 1992] takes a notably high metaphorical road and explores the politics of a vampire society. In a tasty alternative fiction, Newman ponders an England where Dracula has won, where the vampire has become the New Breed in the class mix of Victoria's Albion. *Anno Dracula* follows a mystery in a world where Vlad Tepes has trothed Victoria, and is transforming England into a vampire state. This book is bursting with ideas, almost too many to take in. Vampirism is portrayed as a morally neutral state, almost
as an immigration rather than an infestation. Van Helsing has failed to stop Dracula, and the vampires of Europe have converged on Britain to convert, and feed, and create a society in which they can live in safety and in the open. There are good vampires and bad vampires, a class like any other, but they are another species with the capability of initiating the Warm into their fold. Anno Dracula portrays a society in transformation, a class structure overthrown in revolutionary terms, a New Order that may summon a new Dark Ages or a flowering of immortality. Enter Jack the Ripper. In this alternate world, Jack is slicing up vampire prostitutes, a crime with social and political implications that threaten the new vampire society. Is he a psycho, or a fanatic tool of political resistance? Or is he the cat's paw of shadowy cabals struggling for position in a world Transformed? In purest Victorian melodrama, a dashing British adventurer teams with a beautiful and idealistic vampire Elder to track down Jack and end the terror of Whitechapel. The reader is taken on a topsy turvy journey of literary recursion nearly unparalleled in modern fiction, with cameos by everyone from Sherlock Holmes to a crusading Beatrice Potter and George Bernard Shaw. The text is filled with sly allusions to a wide variety of Victorian tales, all subtly (or not so subtly) changed by the New World of Count Dracula's England. The book is an interesting take on the tale of the Ripper, to be sure, but its most fascinating aspect is the detailing of the transformation of political and class structure. Vampirism is treated as a complex phenomenon containing elements of mythic historicism and a dark central European political authoritarianism clearly meant to suggest Nazi Germany. The wide metaphor of colonialism as vampiric is merely touched on, as there is so much going in the book. Newman has managed to tie in a huge collection of Victorian fact and fiction that goes a step beyond the concept of alternative history, creating an alternative fiction that lushly merges historical event with literary trope. Anno Dracula is also a deeply complex story that never bogs down in the minutiae of Newman's well-studied vampire world. The book stands the vampire concept on end, taking it further than most writers, and finding a satisfying horror in the deconstruction of a venerable trope."


Yet another alternate reality text, in which the author rewrites history: Byron, Shelley, Mary and Claire never met while traveling in Switzerland. Instead, Byron becomes a soldier, captures Napoleon, stays married to Lady Byron and is made the Marquess of Newstead by the Prince Regent. The story picks up later when the four do meet at an Inn. They speak of war and the story of Frankenstein turns out very different as a result. In this world, Mary takes a dislike to Byron almost immediately. She taunts and baits him, waiting for him to announce his misogyny to the world and especially to her. He speaks like a soldier and she despises war. He relates his exploits and she finds him arrogant and egotistical. Eventually, he saves her life, which she resents. Byron has full use of both legs. He
stands tall and has even created a new set of footwear called "the byron" to accentuate his legs and calves. However, in the duel that he fights to save Mary, Percy, Claire and the aristocratic woman with whom he has fallen in love, he kills the other man but the horse falls on the wet grass, rolls over his foot and cripples him. The surgeon amputates the foot and he becomes lame. In the end, Byron leaves for South America to fight there for independence. He remains a soldier and is never heard from again. The last paragraph is particularly telling: "They never saw him again, but Mary thought of him often—the great, famed figure, limping painfully through battle after battle, crippled, ever-restless, and in his breast the arctic waste of the soul, the franked and steely creator with his heart of stone."

*Byron. Sigrid Combuchen. 1993.*

From the book jacket: "One night in the summer of 1938, the body of the poet Byron was secretly removed by five members of the Byron society from the family vaults in Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire, where it had lain embalmed since his death in 1824. The body was weighed and measured, a lock of hair was snipped off, the famous foot was examined. This much is true—and it provided a starting-point for *Byron*, a masterpiece of invention in which Sigrid Combuchen uses the 1930s setting as a frame in which to create a mosaic of Byron biography. To mark the 150th anniversary of his birth, each member of the Byron Society researches and presents to the others his or her own biographical sketch of part of the poet's life—his ambiguous relationships with his half-sister Augusta and with his wife Annabella Milbanke; his notoriety in London; the tragedy of his death at Missolonghi; and, of course, his writing. A richly detailed and vivid picture of Byron and his world is thus built up, filtered through the minds of the different narrators and intercut with their own stories, evoking the atmosphere of England and Europe in 1938 as brilliantly as it does the early nineteenth century, and providing a thought-provoking juxtaposition of historical events. Complex and challenging, impressive in its imaginative scope and the richness of its prose, superbly translated by Joan Tate, this is a novel of outstanding quality with enormous appeal to all readers of contemporary fiction." If only half of what the book jacket said were true, this would be a great book. One can only hope that the turgid prose is the fault of the translator rather than the author. The interweaving of the two periods was rather jerky and quite often confusing. One was never quite sure who was talking, how they knew Byron, and what dramatic relevance it had to the narrative whole. The fictional accounts within the text possess the same voice. They run together and intertwine with the narrative of the main voices indiscriminately. No mention of Byron's relationships with other men, especially when in Greece; Lukas is there but has only page duties where Byron is concerned. An extraordinarily long work with pretentious and affected writing.
**Lord of the Dead.** Tom Holland. 1995.

From the book jacket: "The famed nineteenth-century poet and rake, Lord Byron, comes to life in a searing blend of fact and fiction, a shockingly brilliant novel with all the hypnotic power of Caleb Carr's *The Alienist* and the best of Anne Rice. Traveling in the mountains of Greece, Byron falls under the spell of a mysterious fugitive slave, whose pale, slim body arouses his lust. Utterly entranced, his fate is sealed. The supreme sensualist embarks on a life of adventure—that of the world's most formidable vampire. Chosen to enjoy powers beyond those any vampire has ever known, Byron enters a dark, intoxicating world of long-lost secrets, ancient arts, and scorching excesses of evil. He drinks deeply of terror and sex. But his diversions, delicious and cruel, are also his torment: an all-consuming thirst damning all those he loves" Intriguingly, Byron becomes the most powerful vampire after being created by the Vakhel Pasha and then killing him, standing under the shower of blood that jets from the Pasha's heart. He becomes the emperor of the vampires and revels in his power. The individuals who are most attractive to Byron, in a blood sense, are those of his own family, especially his sister and his children. He has to send Augusta away for fear that he will kill her; Annabella has to take Ada away from him for the same reason, but eventually he succumbs (the blood will keep him forever young) and kills Allegra. In order to regain his stunning good looks and youthfulness (after waiting too long to drink from a family member) he has to consume the heart and brains of the Pasha (who is still alive after having been shot and buried; apparently this is the only way to kill a strong vampire). Haidée makes an appearance in this text but appears initially as a boy named Nikos with whom Byron falls madly in lust. Later, she turns out to be a girl. Their child takes the name of Ruthven and this is where Rebecca gets her lineage. Both Polidori and Lady Melbourne are vampires. Polidori becomes Byron's arch-nemesis and it is he who puts Rebecca on Byron's trail in the present day.

**Arcadia.** Tom Stoppard. 1995.

Thomasina Coverly (13, 16) Septimus Hodge (tutor, 22, 25)
Jellaby (Butler, middle-aged) Ezra Chater (poet, 31)
Richard Noakes (landscape architect, middle-aged)
Lady Croom (35) Capt. Brice (35)
Hannah Jarvis (author, 38-39) Chloe Coverly (18)
Bernard Nightingale (don, 38-39) Valentine Coverly (25-30)
Augustus Coverly (15) Lord Byron (in absentia)

The story told in two different periods: early 19th century and late 20th century. The rooms are the same, but the perspectives are different. One is the original cast about whom the later cast studies. Hannah Jarvis is a Caroline Lamb scholar, who is investigating the Hermit of a Derbyshire Manor. Bernard Nightingale is a Byron scholar hot on the trail of Byron's
possible lost memoirs or some scrap of information that might be new to the scholastic community. The back of the book has the following to say: "In a large country house in Derbyshire in April 1809 sits Lady Thomasina Coverly, aged Thirteen, and her tutor, Septimus Hodge. Through the window may be seen some of the '500 acres inclusive of lake' where Capability Brown's idealized landscape is about to give way to the 'picturesque' Gothic style: 'everything but vampires,' as the garden historian Hannah Jarvis remarks to Bernard Nightingale when they stand in the same room 180 years later. Bernard has arrived to uncover the scandal which is said to have taken place when Lord Byron stayed at Sidley Park. Tom Stoppard's absorbing play takes us back and forth between the centuries and explores the nature of truth and time, the difference between the Classical and the Romantic temperament, and the disruptive influence of sex on our orbits in life – 'the attraction which Newton left out.'" Byron makes an appearance only in absentia in this play but the lengths to which Bernard will go to uncover this scandal, even if the lengths lead him to make leaps that might not be beneficial to his career, are humorous and satirical. Bernard will eventually ruin his scholarly career because of these leaps that he makes without the necessary authenticity to back them up. His passion becomes the defining moment, forcing him to work against the historical reality that can't quite be proven when he publishes but later comes out after he has gained some notoriety. Hannah, whose book on Caroline Lamb he reviewed badly in the press, takes great pleasure in bringing out the information that she found in order to somewhat even the score.

Don Juan DeMarco. Directed by Jeremy Leven. 1995.
Don Juan: Johnny Depp
Dr. Jack Mickler / Don Octavio: Marlon Brando
Marilyn Mickler: Faye Dunaway
Doña Ana: Geraldine Pailhas
Doña Inez: Rachel Ticotin
Doña Julia: Talisa Soto
Don Antonio: Franc Luz
Don Alfonso: Carmen Argenziano

The movie satirizes not only the seductive qualities of the Romantic myth but also the chimeric utopia. As a result, we, as audience members, see both the enticingly beautiful illusion and the responsive mechanism that creates the illusion. The protagonist, a delightfully mad lothario, persuades those around him to detach themselves from reality, thereby seducing them into his utopia. His palpable magnetism woos men and women, drawing individuals to him through the act of telling his implausible yet poignantly evocative story. The protagonist believes himself to be the legendary Don Juan and has decided to commit suicide because of Doña Ana's rejection. Dr. Jack Mickler saves the young man by pretending to be Don Octavio de Flores, a seventeenth-century
Spanish nobleman, uncle to Don Francisco de Silva, the famous swordsman that Don Juan has summoned. The young man arrives at the Woodhaven State Hospital for a ten-day stay. During this time, the young man tells his story, after which he is medicated, at which point a judge determines that he is not a danger to society or himself and frees him. Within an elaborate fantasy, Don Juan DeMarco creates his past from two texts: *The Original Tale of Don Juan* and *Don Juan* by Byron. The sequences are: the seduction of Donna Julia and the cuckolding of Don Alfonso; the abduction of Don Juan by pirates, who eventually sell him into slavery; and the shipwreck, which washes him onto the shore of an island, to be rescued by Doña Ana, a stand-in for the original Haidée. By using both the original Don Juan and Byron's Don Juan, the film emphasizes the seductive quality of the Romantic myth while at the same time satirizing those individuals who believe the illusion to be reality.

**Byrne. Anthony Burgess. 1995.**
"*Byrne* tells the astonishing story of an Irish artist who in the early years of the century goes to the bad, bedding and abandoning women everywhere, debasing his talents as a composer and painter, and finally ending up within Hitler's Third Reich. Then he vanishes. After his disappearance, the story passes to his children who move across the troubled face of contemporary Europe until a final apocalyptic confrontation they encounter their infamous father." Burgess uses both *Ottava Rima* and Spenserean sonnet rhymes to tell this tale. His rhymes are quite imaginative but sometimes he descends into the downright ludicrous. The meter is good but sometimes misses the mark. Byrne is an anti-hero, who attempts to be Byronic but fails utterly, coming across as nothing more than arrogant and narcissistic. He is satirical and lacks the passion, the mystery, and the inner flame of spirit that makes a hero like Manfred or Cain so intense, while also lacking the dispassion, the laissez-faire attitude that makes Don Juan so antithetical to the former heroes. The *Times Literary Supplement* makes a claim that Burgess' poem is Rabelaisian in its bawdiness and Nabokovian in its complexity. The first claim is definitely closer to the mark than the second. The allusions are there but hardly complex in their origin or meaning.

**Death and Deconstruction. Ann Fleming. 1995.**
John Charter (detective) Martin Proctor (Pres.) Ninian Wallace (V.P.) Matthew Frost (rich businessman) Lavinia (Ninian's wife and personal asst. to Frost) Michael Pomfret (professor) Bracoussse (premier deconstructionist) Victoria Tallent (rich matron) Finn (journalist and murderer) Many lesser characters
From the book jacket: "In this witty and devilish literary mystery, a murderer stalks the members of a Romantic poets society. John Charter is cajoled by his former wife Sophie into abandoning an Irish fishing trip to
instead spend his vacation investigating a series of hoaxes on the Coleridge and Other Romantic Poets Society. The intrigue starts in Venice during a Byron-Shelley tour of Italy, continues in the London Library and the Royal Institution, and culminates in murder and mayhem during an academic conference at Norman Abbey. Charter's investigation uncovers the possibility of a copy of a long-lost Byron memoir. As his search continues, he is initiated into the mysteries of Deconstructionism, Marxist-Feminism, and political correctness—and the tensions (sometimes violent) they cause in academe." The Byron memoirs make their illusive and yet pronounced appearance yet again as something unattainable yet highly desired. This time they are a hoax and forgery pawned off on an academic for lots of money. They become the center of this mystery, though, over which numerous people are murdered. The novel is set in the present day with a group much like the Keats-Shelley Society or the Byron society. In fact, Fleming is a member of the Byron society so has much experience with similar nuance and intrigue. The tongue-in-cheek book hints at darker truths. Byron makes an appearance via the missing yet desired memoirs.


Adrian Paul (Duncan MacLeod)
Stan Kirsch (Richie Ryan)
Jim Byrnes as Joe Dawson
Jonathan Firth (Lord Byron)
Peter Wingfield (Methos)
Jeffrey Ribier (Mike)
Tracy Keating (Mary Shelley)

Byron as rock star extraordinaire and immortal sword wielder. Byron appears pale with dark eyes and crimson lips. He has become famous again as a musician with an astonishing following. The episode switches between the present-day and 1816, where the immortal cast meets Claire, Shelley, and Mary Shelley. In the present-day, Byron seduces Mike, the young musician who adores Byron. This annoys and maddens MacLeod, who finds it necessary to rid the planet of yet another immortal. During the episode, Byron recites numerous lines of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.


Christopher Clarke as Lord Byron
The ship's physician, a holodeck seeking to improve his personality subroutines, downloads various personality types into his artificially inteligenced matrix. Lord Byron is only one of said personalities. However, these aberrant characteristics lead the doctor into an abyss from which he finds it difficult to ascend. The changes result in a schizophrenic break for the doctor that resembles nothing so much as a Doctor Jeckel / Mr. Hyde routine.
Yet another story about the summer of 1816. This one, however, focuses almost exclusively on John Polidori and his quest for authorial fame. He feels desperately jealous over Byron's ability and Byron's newfound friendship with Shelley. In fact, later in the text, we discover that Polidori finds Shelley sexually attractive, which allegedly explains his inordinate envy towards him. The narrative revolves around a series of secret letters sent by the monstrous Annette Legrand, who unlike her beautiful twin sisters, is hideously malformed and horribly ugly. On top of that, she desperately needs semen to live, rather like a vampire who needs blood. To compensate for this atrocious thirst, she is incredibly intelligent and offers to the men from whom she needs the "vital fluid" the compensation of written texts. To Polidori, she gives The Vampyre, which he claims as his own. At the end of the novel, though, Polidori finds a huge trunk filled with letters from already compensated authors begging Annette to give them yet another manuscript for payment of the semen: Byron has already been given Manfred, Pushkin the Queen of Spades. There are many others as well: Hoffmann, Tieck, Chateaubriand, Caballero, Planes, and even Mary Shelley, although it remains unclear whether Shelley had to reciprocate with vital fluids of her own. An erotic story that borders on the pornographic, translated from the Spanish by Alberto Manguel.

Selected Foreign Language Fictions

Ange, ou Demon. Edward Magnien. 1836.

Lord Byron a Venezia. Gian Battista Cipro. 1837.


Lord Byron’s letzte Liebe. Alexander Buchner. 1862.

Le Premier Amour de Lord Byron. Elie Foures. 1885.

Lord Byron’s letzte Liebe. Karl Bleibtreu. 1886.


They continue: "Because the body encompasses communities (social and political bodies), territories (geographical) bodies, and historical texts and ideas (a body of literature, a body of work), we are especially interested in how disciplinary metaphors materialize specific bodies, and where these bodies break down and/or refuse prescribed paths. Postmodern theorizations of the body often neglect its corporeality in favor of its cultural construction. Thinking the Limits of the Body demonstrates the inseparability of textuality, materiality, and history in any discussion of the body (4). Elizabeth Grosz also argues from this position: "I hope to show that the body, or rather, bodies, cannot be adequately understood as ahistorical, precultural, or natural objects in any simple way; they are not only inscribed, marked, engraved, by social pressures external to them but are the products, the direct effects, of the very social constitution of nature itself. It is not simply that the body is represented in a variety of ways according to historical, social, and cultural exigencies while it remains basically the same; these factors actively produce the body as a body of a determinate type" (x).


What follows is a brief overview of certain poems and texts, the sales rates and the amount of money that the publisher offered for the copyright. In the case of the latter, both the amount of the day and the equivalent modern-day currency (factoring in both yearly changes in monetary values and current Pounds Sterling to Dollars ratios) have been included. It must also be remembered that not until late in his career did Byron begin to accept the money for his copyrights. He felt that an aristocrat should not demean himself by accepting money for "scribblings" and therefore offered the copyrights to close friends. The first two cantos of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage were offered for sale on March 10th, 1812 and sold five hundred copies in three days. Byron had given Dallas the copyright and in the final arrangement, Dallas was paid £600 ($28,713.00: 2001 equivalent). On December 13th, 1816, John Murray (Byron's most notable publisher) told Byron that the Third Canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and The Prisoner of Chillon had each sold over seven thousand copies. Earlier that same year, Murray had paid Douglas Kinnaird (Byron's business manager) £2,000 ($131,373.00) for the manuscripts to both poems. For the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Murray offered Byron £1,575 ($90,956) in 1816. Byron was affronted,
especially as Murray had done so well with the sales of the third canto. He refused, asking Murray to increase the amount to £2,625 ($151,593). Byron had swiftly learned the art of negotiation when it came to his poetry. In 1813, the *Bride of Abydos* sold six thousand copies in one month. It was highly praised by William Gifford and Murray offered Byron £1,050 ($49,182) for both *The Giaour* and *Bride of Abydos*. In 1814, *The Corsair* sold ten thousand copies in one day, eventually going through seven editions and selling twenty five thousand copies in one month. The sum of £525 ($28,134) was given to Dallas. The rampant buying trend continued throughout Byron's career: for instance, that same year *Lara* sold six thousand copies and in 1815, the *Hebrew Melodies* sold ten thousand copies. In 1822, *Werner* sold six thousand copies, and in 1823, the *Age of Bronze* sold three thousand copies in just over two weeks. As for *Don Juan*, Murray was somewhat apprehensive because of its scandalous nature, but nonetheless, offered Byron £1,050 ($68,292) for Cantos the Third, the Fourth and the Fifth alone. Not that Murray had anything to worry about: Byron was extraordinarily popular and the publisher recouped from sales far more than he paid the poet, especially after Byron's early demise in Greece.

4 Stephen C. Behrendt says much the same in his introduction to *History & Myth: Essays on English Romantic Literature*: "The social function served by the telling and retelling of the 'story' that the myth generates in endless, ever-related versions is central to Frye's view of myth, as it is to the structuralist enterprise with which it shares so many important features. This shared act of 'making' is an act of community that simultaneously validates the roles played in the dis-covering of 'truth' by storyteller, 'listener,' and story: by just such countless repetitions across time and space do actions become ritual, stories become myth. Their fundamental 'truths' are built up by a process of accretion that increasingly locates them, socially and culturally, within the realm of what the audience comes to believe "had always been known"—within a belief system that both permeates and shapes the community." Stephen C. Behrendt, ed., *History & Myth: Essays on English Romantic Literature* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990).


Numerous critics have documented the change that occurred with Byron's fragment and Polidori's *The Vampyre*. For instance, in *The Living Dead*, James Twitchell says: "To a considerable extent the myth's currency is a tribute to this one man, for not only was Byron one of the first to think seriously about telling a vampire story, he also constructed the skeleton that would support the vampire in its many reincarnations. By the early nineteenth century the Byronic Hero already had many of the mythic qualities of the vampire: here was the melancholy libertine in the open shirt, the nocturnal lover and destroyer, the maudlin, self-pitying, and moody titan, only a few years away from Nietzsche's Superman" (75). In *The Romantic Agony*, Mario Praz says of vampirism, "Byron was largely responsible" (76). In *Stage Blood*, Roxana Stuart emphasizes that "[Polidori's *The Vampyre*] created an immediate sensation and is the source for nearly every vampire play through the century in England and France until the advent of Dracula in 1897" (35). As for the disgusting, brutish, zombie-like creature that predominantly existed before this change, one might see Dudley Wright, *The Book of Vampires* (Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1989). Wright details these ugly entities, more automaton than undead and what are often termed revenants. He observes how "dead wizards, werewolves, heretics, and other outcasts become vampires, as do also the illegitimate
offspring of parents themselves illegitimate, and anyone killed by a vampire” (2). Wright clarifies the many names these creatures acquired in the years of their existence. In Dutch, the word is vampyr, in Polish wampior or upior, in Servian vampira, in Russian and Albanian wukodalak, vurkulaka and vrykolaka (which means "wolf-fairy"), in Cretian katakhâ, in Malasian penangglan, in Transylvanian nosferatu, and in Wallachian munory. In Asian mythology, a resemblance can be seen in the hungry ghost, who possesses an enormous body but whose mouth is smaller than a pin and, accordingly, remains famished throughout eternity. The Greeks called this creature lamia or strige. Euripides and Aristophanes mention the lilith as a blood-sucking creature, which might also refer to Lilith, the legendary first wife of Adam, doomed to roam the earth as a demon for her disobedience to God's plan. In each of these places, the legend differs exceedingly. In some places, the vampire is simply a wizard or witch who preys on humans. In other places, the vampire resembles a changeling, who can transform into various animals or ethereal shapes in order to wreak havoc on the population. More often than not, the vampire is a reanimated corpse who drinks the blood of humans to stay fresh and free of decay. For more information on vampires, see the following texts: Montague Summers, The Vampire: His Kith and Kin (New York: University Books, 1960); Leonard Wolf, A Dream of Dracula (New York: Popular Library, 1972); Gabriel Ronay, The Truth about Dracula (New York: Stein and Day, 1974); Anthony Masters, The Natural History of the Vampire (London: Mayflower Books, 1974); Douglas Hill, The History of Ghosts, Vampires and Werewolves (New York: Harper and Row, 1973); Margaret L. Carter, Shadow of a Shade: A Survey of Vampirism in Literature (New York: Gordon Press, 1975); Basil Cooper, The Vampire in Legend, Fact, and Art (Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1974); James B. Twitchell, The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1981); Joan Gordon and Veronic Hollinger, eds., Blood Read: The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); Roxana Stuart, Stage Blood: Vampires of the 19th-Century Stage (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994); Carol A. Senf, The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century English Literature (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1988); Margaret L. Carter, ed., The Vampire in Literature: A Critical Bibliography (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989); Leonard G. Heldreth and Mary Pharr, eds., The Blood is the Life: Vampires in Literature (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1999); Nina Auerbach, Our Vampires, Ourselves (Chicago: The

10 These terms and ideas are taken from Jauss's *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, page 19.

11 In *Reading the Vampire*, Ken Gelder says that Giaour is a "derogatory term used by Turks to describe Christians" (27). What this doesn't say, however, is that Byron's Giaour was once a Muslim and has since converted to Christianity, making him not only a blasphemer but also an apostate. In "Development of the Byronic Vampire," Kathryn McGinley affirms the connection between vampirism and *The Giaour*: "Byron's poem 'The Giaour' (1813) contains just such a character who has many vampire-like features. He has been described as a hero who is passionate, pessimistic, self-exiled, dark, handsome, melancholic, and mysterious (Skarda 53). This softer, ambiguous representation of vampire-like heroes, formerly powerful and harshly diabolical, 'blurred the Gothic distinctions of hero and villain and made the self-tortured superman a new Gothic hero, the Byronic hero' (53)" (73).

12 The damned Caliph from William Beckford's *Vathek* undergoes a similar fate with the added punishment of needing to cover his heart with his hand for all eternity.

13 Byron might very well be characterizing his own fears and anxieties about fatherhood and the toll exacted by children upon their parents and vice versa. Ken Gelder asserts that Byron was also evoking notions of incest and referencing, perhaps subconsciously, his affair with his half-sister Augusta. See *Reading the Vampire*, 29.

14 All line numbers are from Jerome McGann's edition of Byron's *Complete Poetical Works*.

15 Crompton's text deals extensively with the homoeroticism that numerous biographers hoped to diminish or even eliminate. His text would be invaluable for any extended discussion about Byron and sexuality.

16 For an excellent review of this interaction between Wilde and Stoker and the resultant homosexual panic, see Talia Schaffer's "'A Wilde Desire Took Me': The Homoerotic History of *Dracula.*** English Literary History** 61.2 (1994).
Lady Blessington describes him in this way: "His head is finely shaped, and the forehead open, high, and noble; his eyes are grey and full of expression, but one is visibly larger than the other; the nose is large and well shaped, but from being a little too thick, it looks better in profile than in front-face: his mouth is the most remarkable feature in his face, the upper lip of Grecian shortness, and the corners descending; the lips full and finely cut. In speaking, he shows his teeth very much, and they are white and even; but I observed that even in his smile—and he smiles frequently—there is something of a scornful expression in his mouth that is evidently natural, and not, as many suppose, affected. His chin is large and well shaped, and finishes well the oval of his face. His is extremely thin, indeed so much so that his figure has almost a boyish air; his face is peculiarly pale, but not the paleness of ill-health, as its character is that of fairness, the fairness of a dark-haired person—and his hair (which is getting rapidly grey) is of a very dark brown, and curls naturally: he uses a good deal of oil in it, which makes it look still darker. His countenance is full of expression, and changes with the subject of conversation; it gains on the beholder the more it is seen, and leaves an agreeable impression. I should say that melancholy was its prevailing character, as I observed that when any observation elicited a smile—and they were many, as the conversation was gay and playful—it appeared to linger but for a moment on his lip, which instantly resumed its former expression of seriousness. His whole appearance is remarkably gentlemanlike [. . .] He is very slightly lame, and the deformity of his foot is so little remarkable that I am not now aware which foot it is. His voice and accent are peculiarly agreeable, but effeminate—clear, harmonious, and so distinct, that though his general tone in speaking is rather low than high, not a word is lost. His manners are as unlike my preconceived notions of them as is his appearance. I had expected to find him a dignified, cold, reserved, and haughty person, resembling those mysterious personages he so loves to paint in his works, and with whom he has been so often identified by the good-natured world: but nothing can be more different; for were I to point out the prominent defect of Lord Byron, I should say it was flippancy, and a total want of that natural self-possession and dignity which ought to characterize a man of birth and education" (6-7).

In The Vampire In Literature, Margaret L. Carter captures this transformation in her introduction: "The vampire is not a ghastly figure appearing like a demon from Hell with fangs bared or eyes bloodied. He is tall and handsome, his hair dark and well-groomed; despite the waxen pallor of his
face and hands, he has flashing dark eyes and a vivid redness in his lips curled in a smile. As the Undead he
cast no shadow and has no reflection, but what is prominent are his canine teeth. The hollow beneath his
eyes adds to his romantic expression of undefinable melancholy diffusing a lonesome sadness. His black
cloak flutters in the breeze as he silently glides along empty corridors while the wind rustles through
shroudlike ghostly curtains” (20).

19 In "Sang for Supper" Brian Stableford notes: "Polidori's graphic representation of avid sexual
appetite as vampiric lust in The Vampyre (1819) was undoubtedly based in hysterical spite against his one-
time employer Lord Byron, but what it produced in the figure of Lord Ruthven was a peculiarly charismatic
figure who retained a good deal of the sex-appeal which made Byron—in the words of the luckless
Caroline Lamb—so "dangerous to know" (72). Numerous critics, myself included, would describe this
production as the Byronic Hero.

20 Tim Powers also wrote a novel that deals with Byron and vampires. In this text, Byron is
portrayed as a victim to a race called the Lamia, a silicon-based life form that evokes vampiric qualities.
However, since Byron exists in that text as a victim to a vampiric, parasitical race and never transforms into
a vampire, himself, that text remains outside the purview of this chapter.

21 As a Byron scholar, Holland would know the works of Doris Langley Moore, Leslie Marchand,
and Louis Crompton, among others. He would be aware that some scholars have inclined Byron more
towards the homosexual side of the equation, while many scholars prefer to see Byron as Holland has:
heterosexual with only occasional bisexual yearnings or simply bisexual.

22 Jauss necessarily restricts that "one" to critics, but I would argue that both critics and
refashioning authors pose questions and subsequently ponder answers to those questions in a text.

distinguishes remembrance from 'memory,' which is the 'destruction' of 'impressions' (160). Memory, Hans
Kellner argues, entails the destruction of other information (Language 39, 53) and is a form of what
Derrida and Paul de Man see as the violence of inscription." For my purposes in this dissertation, memory
will be both the human memory as a physiological function and remembrance, which necessarily partakes
of the perceptional imbalance based on ideological and cultural awarenesses as well as situational

24 For my reading of *Manfred*, I restrict myself only to Astarte's ghost even though many other ghostly figures wend their way through this text. Not only do we have Faust, as emphasized by Goethe in the following note but also evocations of Prometheus, Satan, and Hamlet. Additionally, the chamois hunter, the abbot, the seven spirits of earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, and destiny, and the demon in the end can all be perceived as ghosts in their own way.

25 In *Romantic England: Writing and Painting 1717-1851* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), Peter Quennell says: "But Manfred, the haunted, heart-broken wizard, poised on the dizzy brink of suicide, is yet another self-portrait; while Astarte, whose phantom he conjures up from the void, can only represent Augusta Leigh" (147). Goethe wrote the following in 1820 about his understanding of Byron's poem: "To me, Byron's tragedy of Manfred, was a wonderful phenomenon, touching me closely. This singular but highly gifted poet has absorbed my own Faust into himself, and, like a hypochondriac, drawn from it the strangest sort of nourishment. Those motives and ideas which suited his purposes he has made use of, but in his own original way, so that everything seems different; and for this reason I cannot wonder enough at his genius. This transformation affects the whole so intimately that highly interesting lectures could be given on the similarity and dissimilarity which his works bears to his pattern; but I do not deny that in the long run the dull glow of a boundless and profound despair becomes irksome to us. Yet in the dissatisfaction which one feels there are always interwoven both admiration and respect. Thus we find in this tragedy quite uniquely the very quintessence of the feelings and passions of a remarkable genius, but a genius doomed from birth to suffering and anguish. The details of his life and the characteristics of his poetry hardly permit one a just and fair criticism. He has often enough confessed his anguish; he has repeatedly presented it in verse, and it is difficult for any one not to feel real pity for the unbearable pain which he is forever working and gnawing over in his heart. There are two women whose shadows follow him unceasingly and who play a large role in his best known works; one appears under the name Astarte, the other, without form or presence, simply as A Voice." In *Fiery Dust* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), McGann says: "[Byron's] work with the Drury Lane theater committee seems to have
stimulated his desire to reform the stage, to produce a theater that was free of the melodrama so prevalent in his own day (and often exemplified in his own work Manfred)" (227). He continues: "Knowledge is a marvelous thing to Byron but as early as Manfred he points out its deficiencies" (258). Critics and theorists repeatedly see an historical Byron as integrated within his characters and his works. Quennell connects Byron to Manfred and Augusta to Astarte. Goethe stresses that Byron confesses his "anguish" in his poetry. Two women follow Byron and become necessarily conflated with his texts.

26 In Byron: A Literary Life (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), Caroline Franklin says that Manfred as "Byronic hero defies moral law (it is hinted by committing incest with his sister and indirectly causing her death) and refuses either to be saved or to be damned by an external deity" (78). In Byron and the Myth of Tradition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), Frederick W. Shilstone says: "The incest theme involving Manfred and Astarte serves a broad purpose, not only wracking the protagonist with guilt . . . but also, in this instance, linking Manfred's isolation with his sense of having violated the legacy of his family line" (154). In Byron and His Fictions (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978), Peter J. Manning emphasizes that "criticism has tended lately to minimize the importance of incest in the drama. In so doing it has underemphasized the role of Astarte, for she stands at the heart of the drama" (77). In The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962), Peter L. Thorslev, Jr. says: "Manfred even now is discussed far more often for its autobiographical elements than for its historical significance or its literary merit, and especially for the possible personal reference of the hero's secret sin – presumably including incest – and his agony of remorse on that account" (165). These brief selections hardly do justice to the enormous amount of criticism written about the incestuous themes present in Manfred and the connection of those themes to Byron's own relationship with Augusta. However, it also becomes necessary to see the figurative representation that permeates this drama. Shilstone emphasizes that "it is absolutely necessary to transcend a strictly biographical reading of these details—relating them to Byron's own guilt about Augusta—because of how well they are integrated with the symbolic role this forbidden loves plays in revealing the progress of Manfred's mind" (163).

27 According to the OED, a cyborg is an "integrated man-machine system" whereas an artificial intelligence is "the capacity of machines to simulate intelligent human behaviour." Accordingly, I would
argue that "cyborg" more fully encompasses Prantera's Byron-machine creation than would "artificial intelligence."

28 For eloquent and elaborate explanations of madness in all its various permutations, see: Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*, Roy Porter's *Mind-Forg'd Manacles*, Robert Castel's *The Regulation of Madness*, and Andrew Scull's *The Most Solitary of Afflictions*.

29 Gadamer expands upon his notion of horizon by saying: "When our historical consciousness transposes itself into historical horizons, this does not entail passing into alien worlds unconnected in any way with our own; instead they together constitute the one great horizon that moves from within and that, beyond the frontiers of the present, embraces the historical depths of our self-consciousness. Everything contained in historical consciousness is in fact embraced by a single historical horizon. Our own past and that other past toward which our historical consciousness is directed help to shape this moving horizon out of which human life always lives and which determines it as heritage and tradition" (304). In some ways, this notion of horizon differs from that which Jauss hypothesizes. As Robert C. Holub says: "The trouble with Jauss's use of the term 'horizon' is that it is so vaguely defined that it could include or exclude any previous sense of the word. In fact, nowhere does he delineate precisely what he means by it. [. . .] 'Horizon of expectations' would appear to refer to an intersubjective system or structure of expectations, a 'system of references' or a mind-set that a hypothetical individual might bring to any text. Such a provisional definition, however, does not alleviate the central difficulties in usage" (*Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* 59). Jauss discusses three ways in which the horizon can be constructed: "First, through familiar norms or the immanent poetics of the genre; second, through the implicit relationships to familiar works of the literary-historical surroundings; and third, through the opposition between fiction and reality, between the poetic and the practical function of language, which is always available to the reflective reader during the reading as a possibility of comparison" (*Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* 24).

30 In his review of *Byron and Romanticism*, *The Byron Journal* 31 (2003), Philip Shaw says: "Whether as editor, critic or as theorist, no one has done more to advance the cause of Byron studies than Jerome J. McGann. He is, quite simply, the most ardent supporter and keen interpreter that one could wish for; we have all profited in some way from reading his work" (107). Even though I take exception with
McGann's use of masks in a previous chapter, I agree with Shaw that McGann's criticism has been extraordinarily useful to subsequent Romantic critics.

31 Some might say that I have fallen into the "last and final illusion" of which McGann assigns to Romantic poetry: "that it can expose or even that it has uncovered its illusions and false consciousness, that it has finally arrived at the Truth" (135). I would hardly imagine that I have stumbled across some transcendent Truth in this dissertation. I have merely sought to uncover the tradition and historical influences that underpin the fictional representations of Byron, thence leading to a better understanding of Byronism. I remain firmly entrenched within my own ideology and hardly imagine that I can even begin to ascertain the ways in which I have been constructed by my experience and by my surroundings.

32 Madness pervades much Romantic literature as well as the Romantic zeitgeist. In An American in Regency England, Louis Simond quips that "madness appears to be fatally common in Great Britain" (110). Foucault similarly stresses these artificial constructs when he says: "Madness is not linked to the world and its subterranean forms, but rather to man, to his weaknesses, dramas, and illusions" (26).

33 In a note to this journal entry, Marchand supplies the original reference: "Edward Young, in his Conjectures on Original Composition (1759) recorded that while he was walking with Swift near Dublin, the Dean 'earnestly gazing upward at a noble elm, which in its uppermost branches were much withered, and decayed,' pointed to it and said: 'I shall be like that tree, I shall die at top'" (BLJ 8:16).

34 I am not suggesting that melancholy and madness are the same here. Instead, I would suggest that melancholy foreshadows madness, as elucidated by the Dictionary of Sensibility: "If melancholy was a medical condition connoting an acute and divided sensibility, the total breakdown of body and soul could be prefigured in melancholy and achieved (potentially) in madness" (www.engl.virginia.edu).

35 In the first part of his letter, Scott says: "Lord Byron has more avowedly identified himself with his personage than upon former occasions, and in truth does not affect to separate them" (297). Because of this, I have no qualms with reading Harold and Byron coincidentally here.

36 This rather off-handed remark comes in a note on page 192 with no further explanation.
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