

5. Hopkins, "Binsey Poplars," in *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. W. H. Gardner (London: Penguin, 1985), 39.
6. Hopkins, "Binsey Poplars," 39.
7. See, for instance, Rachel Ablow on his "Wounded Trees" in *Victorian Pain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 114–21; Suzanne Keen, *Thomas Hardy's Brains: Psychology, Neurology, and Hardy's Imagination* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 2014), 146; and William A. Cohen on Hardy's perpetual verbal confusions between people and trees in "Arborealities: The Tactile Ecology of Hardy's Woodlanders," *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 19 (2014): n. pag, doi:10.16995/ntn.690.
8. Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, ed. Dennis Taylor and Patricia Ingham (London: Penguin, 1998), 17.
9. Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, ed. Tony Slade and Penny Boumelha (London: Penguin, 1999), 207.
10. Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, 56.
11. Thomas Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, ed. Rosemarie Morgan and Shannon Russell (London: Penguin, 2000), 32.
12. Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, 33.
13. Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, 259.
14. Ivan Kreilkamp, "Pitying the Sheep in *Far from the Madding Crowd*," *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 42, no. 3 (2009): 474–81, 478.



Seriality

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THE Victorian serial form has been the subject of diverse scholarly explorations, most often engaging with print culture and book history, since the publishing industry in the mid-nineteenth century prompted an uptick in Victorian serial novels. The circulation of serials across national borders has also garnered excellent studies on the transatlantic circulations of serial novels.¹ Although scholars have focused on other genres besides the novel that appeared in serial format, such as Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* or Robert Browning's *The Ring and the Book*, or even John Ruskin's *Unto this Last*, the overwhelming object of interest

has been the serial novel.² These investigations consider how the serial novel, broken up in time and space with fixed pauses between published installments, shapes both reading and writing practices.³

A few years ago I taught a graduate seminar titled “Seriality” in which we pursued this topic in Victorian culture from kaleidoscopic perspectives: M. E. Braddon’s *The Doctor’s Wife* (serialized in *Temple Bar*, 1864) as a reworking, recycling, and Anglicized sequel to Gustave Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* (also serialized when initially published in France); George Eliot’s three stories linked under the title *Scenes of Clerical Life* (*Blackwood’s* January to November 1857); Anthony Trollope’s *Can You Forgive Her?* (serialized in monthly parts 1864–1865); and George Henry Lewes’s *Studies in Animal Life* (serialized in *The Cornhill* in 1860) to consider seriality in nature, specifically Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution through natural selection as a serial narrative of sorts. The concept as well as its historical print practices invited surprising connections and applications.

The psychoanalytic concept of transference suggests a wholly different way of exploring seriality. The novel issued in parts, with installments punctuated by regular pauses, encourages the back-and-forthness of transference and countertransference, just as these regular gaps and returns also shape our own affective oscillations between fiction and world. How is transference a serial phenomenon?⁴ In the traditional meaning of the term *transference*, the patient puts the analyst in the place of a parent, a primary person from early life. This putting-in-place structures the analytic experience so that “analysis without transference is an impossibility.”⁵ Sigmund Freud makes even broader claims for transference where we can see its purchase in the serial act of reading fiction: “It is a universal phenomenon of the human mind,” one that “dominates the whole of each person’s relations to his human environment.”⁶ Transference behaves as a tool of suggestion that bridges emotional relations to people outside and within the walls of the consulting room. Analysis, as an interpretive enterprise, reveals this convergence of outside and inside. Reading novels does much the same thing as the transference where a series of worlds, fictional and distant, on the one hand, and real and immediate, on the other, shape one another. If the imprinting of the earlier affective relationship mediates intimate ties in the present or future, the ability to read that effect depends on this back-and-forthness that the analysis encourages.

Seriality as a form of reading provides some distinct shape and margins to narrative events, to reading installments by comparing with the past narrative chunk, or a growing awareness of the ongoingness of seriality. Eliot’s narrators, especially in her earlier fiction like the serialized

Scenes of Clerical Life and in the unserialized *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss*, encourage this transferential reading pattern.⁷ Take this reflexive moment from the second segment of “Amos Barton” published in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* in February 1857: “As it is, you can, if you please, decline to pursue my story farther; and you will easily find reading more to your taste, since I learn from newspapers that many remarkable novels, full of striking situations, thrilling incidents, and eloquent writing have appeared only within the last season.”⁸ Eliot lines up the series of worlds here, “my story” and “reading more to your taste” that appears in the daily pages of other publications, and the emotional promise of those earlier “thrilling incidents” or “striking situations” might cast a stronger force on the present ordinary realism. That reading is a transferential seriality is crucial to understanding Eliot’s realism, with the reflexive narrator managing the pivots between story and extra-story worlds. This seriality of transference also structures Charles Dickens’s double-narrated part-issue serial *Bleak House*, where the third-person narrator declares at the start of the final chapter of the second installment: “While Esther sleeps, and while Esther wakes, it is still wet weather down at the place in Lincolnshire.”⁹ This narrator functions like a looming consciousness outside Esther and gestures to a realm that exists whether she is unconscious or awake, and yet this narrating voice complements the story Esther tells. Like a series of narrating personas, transference structures affective ties and ways of apprehending those links.

Taking seriality and transference in a different direction, I also propose that subjectivity and character formation operate in a similar way. For example, *Wuthering Heights* offers the serial subject of the female bildungsroman, where the first volume centers on the elder Catherine Earnshaw Linton’s story and the second volume on her daughter Catherine Linton Earnshaw. The seriality of these two characters is essential for Brontë’s apprehension of what it means to move from girlhood to womanhood where the parts are still separate entities—in this case, characters—of female subjectivity. A different spin on serial subjectivity involves two novels, both serialized, where one character recycles aspects of an earlier character. How might, say, Lydia Gwilt in *Armada* (serialized in *The Cornhill* Nov. 1864–June 1866) afford a transferential subject for Lydia Glasher in *Daniel Deronda* (serialized monthly in eight parts from February to September 1876)? How do we structure our successive readings of characters through a kind of transferential attachment of meanings? John Harmon in *Our Mutual Friend* offers another instance of serial subjectivity also as a plot mechanism. Seriality is a flexible concept, I want to

suggest, and deserves more critical attention as we open up more ways of reading Victorian literature and culture that bring together print culture with theories of narrative, character, and literary forms.

NOTES

1. See Meredith L. McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting 1835–1853* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007) and Daniel Hack, *Reaping Something New: African American Transformations of Victorian Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).
2. See Linda K. Hughes, “What the Wellesley Index Left Out: Why Poetry Matters to Periodical Studies,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 40, no. 2 (2007): 91–125; Kathleen Tillotson, “Tennyson’s Serial Poem” in *Mid-Victorian Studies*, ed. Kathleen and Geoffrey Tillotson (London: Athlone Press, 1965).
3. For an overview of the history of the serial form, see Susan David Bernstein and Julia McCord Chavez, “Serialization and Victorian Literature,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature* (Clarendon: Oxford University Press, 2017). Article published October 2017, doi: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190201098.013.254.
4. For a full account of transference as seriality, see my “In Treatment with George Eliot: Realism as Transference,” in “Television for Victorianists,” ed. Caroline Levine, special issue, *RaVoN* 63 (2013), <http://www.erudit.or/revue/ravon/2013/v/n63/1025615ar.html?lang=en>.
5. Sigmund Freud, *An Autobiographical Study*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1963), 72.
6. Freud, *Autobiographical Study*, 72.
7. This back-and-forthness of transference and seriality bears comparison with John Plotz’s “phase shift moments” in his study of semi-detachment and the Victorian novel, where he addresses the narrator’s pivot between storyworld and the immediate presence of the narrating moment in the opening of *The Mill on the Floss*. See John Plotz, “The Semi-Detached Victorian Provincial Novel,” *Victorian Studies* 53, no. 3 (2011): 405–16.
8. George Eliot, *Scenes of Clerical Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 37.
9. Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*, ed. George Ford and Sylvère Monod (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1977), 76.

