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Lisa Quinn
Fort Hays State University

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Lisa C. Quinn

Dr. Carl Singleton

Cumulative Experience

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Reflection

From a young age, Jude Fawley aspired to have a degree from Christminster. In this way, Jude and I are alike. I have always loved books and reading and when I found that there was actually a college degree that could be granted based on studying, researching, and writing about books, I determined that I aspired to have a degree in English. I think this may have been part of what drew me to this work. The question I will attempt to answer for Jude is one that many look back on as they attempt to determine where things went awry or plans changed.

Life, whether in truth or fiction, is comprised of dealing with conflicts and balancing them against one's own life. Finding a balance between conflict and society is the basis of many works of literature, spanning all times and places. The courses I took in this program allowed me to read works from many different aspects of literature, and most of the works that I read deal with the circumstances that challenge the characters. In this way, they are all similar to Jude the Obscure; however, few of them are as tragic as this work.

When faced with the question of self or society, the main issues include not only one's own self, but also what consequences that the actions have on those around you. No one person or character lives in a vacuum. It is the survivor instinct in man that causes the fight; and yet we are all dependent on society, good or bad, for our well-being. The key question that everyone faces in dealing with balancing self and society is what you do about it. This conflict can be

summed up in one simple sentence: It does not matter so much what happens to you as it is what you do about it. This is true with the conflicts that the characters deal with in the works I read for this program.

Jude is fighting against the discrimination of a class system that was in place in England in the 1800s. Many of the characters in the works I read for this course of study also faced roadblocks and discrimination. In most cases they either were able to stand up to them and deal with them or move on. Dedalus fights against society in The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Jim in Huckleberry Finn is faced with discrimination of his race and the perception of the American Negro in America at the time this work was published. Later in America, individuals like the Joads in The Grapes of Wrath were also discriminated against not only because of their poverty but also because of where they came from. Huck Finn and the Joads came from similar types of backgrounds, and yet they were treated very differently by the societies in which these stories were set. In both of these American novels, the characters attempted to deal with what society had done to them. In both cases, they fight and adapt to what they face.

The Joads made every attempt to adjust; and as quickly as they adapted, the circumstances changed. The main characters of the family unit are all strong and resolute. Those that could not find a place in the changing circumstances facing the family, such as Connie, leave. Al leaves the family but it is because he finds that he needs to adapt in order to survive. The Joads seem to survive where other characters (such as Muley Graves and the gas station attendant who do not) become trapped in their fight against a society that they cannot beat.

If I were to ask the same question about the circumstances that defeat the Joads as I am asking about Jude, it would be society that trapped them. We do not know what ultimately

happens to the Joads, but Steinbeck shows them as survivors in the face of what life hands them. As with Jude, the Book of Job in the Old Testament is often compared to the hardships of the Joads. I think it is a truer comparison to The Grapes of Wrath because of the adaptiveness and the strength of will of the characters. They are defeated, but they refuse to quit. When the family unit, which is the core of their society, breaks apart, it weakens them in their fight, but does not defeat them. Their survival comes from their inner strength.

In the novels that I read in the core course classes, the main characters were overcoming, or attempting to overcome the circumstances that were thrust upon them. Most every one of the works ended up being a reflection of the time in which they were set. Society changes and yet the conflicts do not. The Joads just adapt to the new circumstances. In some works, more than in others, it was the strength of the individual characters battling against the society rather than a collective fight as with the Joads or even the partnership as with Huck and Jim. I seem to see it more in the characterizations of the female characters of the works, than the male ones.

Emma Bovary, Hester Prynne, and Jane Eyre are all examples of women who were attempting to deal with the society and the circumstances that the society had thrust upon them. Those three characters are all strong, independent women who take on the society of their times and yet only two of them survive. It is only Jane that thrives. Emma escapes and Hester settles for her circumstances, but under her own terms. Jane triumphs by staying true to herself.

While most all characters adapt or move on, Emma Bovary is an exception and in this way is similar to Jude. She refuses to accept her circumstances or find a way to deal with them or see things as they truly are. When I read Madame Bovary, the topic on which I was to write was to explore how Emma Bovary brought her final tragedy upon herself, by her own actions. Emma rebelled against the society that she was a part of and in being selfish and self-centered,

she lost her life. She would not see that it was she who trapped herself; she was sure that it was the society in which she lived. She was blind to her real circumstances and the part she was playing in her own downfall.

In comparing her to Jude, she does take charge of her own fate, making specific choices for herself, rather than becoming totally victim to them. Jane Eyre does the same thing, with a much better outcome. It is self that causes Emma's downfall, while facing the class system, as Jude does. She is, however, more like Arabella than Jude, in that she uses, or tries to use, her sex to get what she wants. Emma also is a tragic character who will not see the reality of the choices she has made and when she ultimately sees them for what they are, she cannot deal with the consequences and takes her own life. Her death is long and painful and when the circumstances of her life become known, it destroys the lives of her husband and daughter. Emma not only would not deal with society in a realistic manner or try to find a way to change her circumstances in a manner accepted by the society in which she lived, but ultimately the consequences of her selfishness had tragic results for her family as well.

Jude sees Arabella as one thing and on their wedding night finds that she is something quite different. Emma sees Rodolphe as her lover and ticket out of the dull country life she was leading, when in fact he is selfish and manipulates her for his own ends. Emma became so entangled with her vision of herself and the society in which she lived and hated that she did not care whom she hurt or what the consequences of her actions would be. Being responsible for yourself and your actions is the hallmark of being an adult in Western society. Using this as a definition, Emma was not truly an adult. Her daughter eventually suffers for the sins of her mother. Emma's downfall was self.

Hester Prynne breaks the laws of society and realizes that she must deal with them for the good of Pearl. She does, however, deal with them under her own terms. Condemned to wear the scarlet letter, she creates a beautiful gold-embroidered version that she wears proudly. She was not forced into the relationship with Dimmesdale and accepts the consequences of her actions. She is true to herself in that she does not reveal the father of Pearl. We are first introduced to her as she stands proudly with the child outside the prison with the scarlet letter emblazoned on her breast. She chooses to adapt to the role that the society of the New England settlement puts her in, but she does not let it conquer her. She uses the strength of her own self to face society and, unlike Jude, she is not overcome. In this work, it is Dimmesdale who is defeated, and it is not society, but self that defeats him. It is his great secret sin of self and his own guilt that finally causes his death. However, unlike the death of Emma Bovary, Hester and Pearl do not perish--in fact, Pearl blossoms and succeeds. Hester stays near the edge of the community that tried to punish her and in doing so, without allowing them to shun her, she wins. Hester eventually softens the hearts of the community, who must grow to respect her. When she dies, she is buried next to Dimmesdale under a single headstone. It had to be acceptance by the community that ultimately placed her next to him.

Jane Eyre is thrust into conflict from her youth. We immediately upon meeting her see her spirit and how she will not be bullied. She stands up to her cousins as well as the adults in the household. When threatened by hell, Jane shows her spirit and tells Mr. Brocklehurst that she will stay well and not die.

This confrontation sums up her spirit throughout her life. She does not run away nor does she cower, but decides how she will adapt herself to the circumstances. In each of the sections of her life, at the Reeds, Lowood, Thornfield Hall, and Morton, Jane is faced with

struggles that were almost overwhelming, especially for a woman in the society of the times.

Yet in each of the circumstances she turned them around and triumphed over them; she would not let her circumstances defeat her.

When she learns of Bertha, Jane does not stand and wring her hands; she waits until night and leaves. One thing that the reader needs to remember in this action is that at the time of this writing, travel such as this was more of a process than a journey. This also was near the time when an unaccompanied women traveling alone was not safe. Jane elected to not be held captive, to stay under Rochester's terms, but to leave on her own, even though she had no idea where she would go or how she would survive. When St. John asks her to go to India, she agrees to, but only on her terms, not his. Jane will not be defeated. She comes from her circumstances bloodied but unbowed. Unlike Jude, she is not defeated by self or society. Both try, but Jane ultimately triumphs over her circumstances.

In the case of both Jane Eyre and The Scarlet Letter, the question would not be "What Traps Hester and Jane, Self or Society?" but "What Do Hester and Jane Overcome, Self or Society?" In the case of Hester, she overcame society. She stood proudly against the tenets of the society, ignored the contempt with which she was treated and stood up to the governor when there was discussion of having Pearl removed from her home. She stood her ground. In the case of Jane, she also overcame society. She was an orphan female in a time where she had no rights; she was at the mercy of what her family wanted her to do. She had few prospects and yet she too stood her ground. She took responsibility for herself and was an adult.

In all three cases, these women when measuring their outcomes against the statement of what you do about it, Hester and Jane accept that question and take it on. Emma is the coward and takes the coward's way out of her problems.

The self or society question also was found in the readings that I did for the IDS portion of the program. They were not quite as evident as in the novels of my English classes. In IDS 804, we read Levinson's The Soft Edge. This work dealt with the evolution of communication from the time of the first written records to the computer age. We saw the history of the changes and in some cases the difficulties the new changes, or those that were proposing them, were faced with. Socrates was against the written Greek alphabet. He came from the oral tradition and was concerned that writing things down would diminish the memory of humanity. I cannot argue with the fact that reciting something aloud or memorizing it will help keep the brain sharp. However, he was obviously proven wrong as the written word has persevered and the oral tradition is relegated to live theater. The text parallels the attitude toward the reception that electronic media has had in more recent times.

Books on line or books on tape were initially met with great anxiety and fear for the loss of the written press. This is another case of society being afraid of a new change. In the case of books on tape, they serve an excellent place in society for those who for whatever reason cannot read, be it because of physical conditions or circumstances. The individuals who helped make this media form succeed were like the proponents of the written language in Socrates' time. Like the written word and oral tradition, both books on tape and written material co-exist.

I see the great value of electronic media in research, but as was pointed out in that class, care must be taken with picking reliable electronic sources. Those students, who use only electronic research, limit themselves and their research by not taking advantage of the full measure of research materials available. Society will allow those resources to thrive, but will not allow it to totally replace the printed book. An adaptation of the two media types can be found in "print on demand" books. This is a book published and bound by a publishing house, but it will

print only copies when they are purchased. This adaptation shows how society can adjust to meet the needs of the individual, be it the author who is able to sell their works or the publishing house, which does not have to gamble on printing many copies of a book that may not have a wide readership.

Another aspect of when the written book is superior over the electronic one that was discussed in that class was the power of the bibliography. In terms of reference, being able to view the sources cited by the author or the background material offers an additional source of research materials. Books go places that electronic media do not comfortably go. While it might be nice to pull out a pocket viewer and read when on an airplane, I doubt if many readers would take a similar medium to the beach or curl up in bed with a PC to read. In this concern about the written word and the loss of books because of electronic resources, I think that society will find a good middle ground and find a place for each.

In addition, in The Soft Edge, there was the example cited about the distrust of new technologies for communication. The most striking example was the use of the telegraph. When this was a new tool, it was so distrusted that when news was received in London of the death of Abraham Lincoln by the telegraph owned by Reuters' news service, newspapers would not publish the news for eleven days until someone crossing the Atlantic by sea could confirm that it was true. When I read that, I was reminded of Thoreau in Walden being unhappy with the creation of the rail system and that new technology. Society will often be afraid of new technologies for a variety of reasons. It is the responsibility of the self to find the technology that is correct and embrace it. Had Reuters not been true to its own mission and let the society of the times defeat the new technology, the news-reporting source would not have thrived or succeeded and the technology of the telegraph would have been slowed or stopped. Had there

been those like Thoreau who would not accept the railroads, much of the evolution of society in this country would have been slowed immeasurably.

The internet has opened up so many more opportunities, this degree program being one of them, that would not have thrived without it. On the other hand, the internet has allowed con artists, and those who prey on others, an additional avenue within which to work. Society has embraced the use of computers in Western society and in doing so is enhanced by it. It is the self that must review, adapt, and accept new technologies and see what they can offer to improve communication and quality of life.

In IDS 802, we reviewed the knowledge gathering techniques of many different disciplines. In the Liberal Arts area, we read about the critic and the role they play in the area of the arts. Margaret Macdonald's article "Some Distinctive Features of Arguments Used in Criticism of the Arts" pointed out that judgments of art is a subjective one and in the eye of the beholder which in this case is the critic. The critics base their opinions on their experience. However, the artist is attempting to invoke an emotional response by the viewer. Because it is such a subjective view and one where the artist's intention may not always be clear, the response may not receive the attention or the result that the artist had intended. It is the responsibility of the artist to be able to work within society and yet be true to his or her own work. It may take some adjustment on the part of the artist and the critic to find acceptance and a place of mutual understanding. There have been many artists over the years who were derailed by the society in which they lived, who persevered and ultimately were seen for their true talent. Vincent Van Gogh sold only one painting in his lifetime. His society in France would not accept his new post-Impressionist style and yet now we recognize him as a genius before his time. He did not

let society dictate to him and stayed true to himself. The tragedy is that he did not live to see his work accepted as he was haunted by other demons.

In applying this logic to many different forms of the arts, Macdonald does indicate, “a great artist is reinterpreted in every age” (103). While the critic’s beliefs are based on the current society, or the society in which the criticism is written, with real world examples, not ones frozen within the confines of a novel, there are times when society comes to find itself embracing what was previously rejected. A physical piece of work such as a painting, a play, or sculpture has the ability to exist beyond the time or “self” of the artist and be embraced by society. Additionally, it is altogether possible that a form such as Andy Warhol’s art that was as much about the person as the art form can lose its value and impact when it is removed from the society in which it was created. In the case of the fine arts, self or society is a transient thing. Because the work is enduring, it is subject to the changes in the environment within which it exists, regardless of the person who created it or the vision of the critic who speaks about the work.

RESEARCH

Jude Fawley is a dreamer. He dreams of escaping Marygreen where he is neither wanted nor loved, he dreams of being a scholar at Christminster, he dreams of having first Arabella and then Sue love him. Sue tells him “you are Joseph the dreamer of dreams, dear Jude” (215). In the end, he seems to have none of those dreams come true. Life is very hard for Jude. Any dream or aspiration that he attempts fails with increasingly terrible consequences. He ends up not achieving what he wanted and dying miserably alone just a short distance from the things he tried to reach for.

While men have always dreamed dreams of what might be and some are content with what life gives them and others are not, Jude seems to be at the extreme end of this spectrum. What makes Jude fail so badly at the things he aspired to in life? Are his dreams unrealistic? Does he not go about attempting to achieve them correctly? Does he cause the failures due to his own recklessness? Does society hold Jude back not letting him succeed? Does Jude just not know how to deal within the rules of the changing society? Why do things go so terribly wrong for Jude? All of these are questions asked in looking for the answer to the question: What Traps Jude--Self or Society?

The dreams of Jude essentially are those of Christminster and of Sue. The one goal that Jude holds on to overtly in the book is that of Christminster. If it were possible to question him about what he dreams, I suspect that he would cite only Christminster. A degree from Christminster is not Jude’s own dream but one that he has taken from Phillotson. Jude works diligently at making this dream a reality, but fails.

In his dream of Christminster, it first appears that society and not self traps Jude. He is well-educated and yet never even given a chance to compete. Being denied admission does not

stop Jude from continuing to obsess over Christminster. He cannot and will not let go of it. He knows that he should be granted a space in Christminster and when the patrons of the pub cheer him after repeating the Nicene Creed in Latin, his frustration shows. “‘You pack of fools!’ He cried, ‘Which one of you knows whether I have said it or no?’” (125). This is such a poignant statement as Jude is the best-educated person in the pub and yet he is trapped by the class society of his times, and he will never be able to increase or use that knowledge. It is here that he truly understands that this goal will never be reached. He cannot battle society and the class system; he is defeated. Alvarez echoes this in the tragedy of the work by saying: “it is not one of missed chances but of missed fulfillment, of frustration” (113).

However, Lodge contends, “There were very real social and economic forces working against a man in his position and with his aspirations, but they are only portrayed in the margins . . . of the story; and Jude never puts them seriously to the test” (193). He contends that the main dream of Jude is not Christminster but that of his obsession with Sue. He goes on to say, “Jude’s failure to get to the University is largely the result of his own character” (193). There is merit to this point. Jude does yearn to go to Christminster, but after being turned down once, he no longer attempts to enter. However, with Sue, his other obsession, he does not give up on having her. His last thoughts and prayers were about her.

Sonstroem agrees with this and points out that Jude, while unable to attend Christminster, is unable to let go of it. This is evidenced by his continual return to it, as he and Sue nomadically move their lives. “Unwilling to give up the premise that things are different elsewhere, Jude compulsively returns again and again to the sites of his greatest expectations in the hope of finding something fresh and better that he has overlooked. He never finds any such

thing” (Sonstroem 24:6-15). In this regard, Jude defeats himself. While society would not allow his entrance to Christminster, it was self that would not allow him to let go of that dream.

Hardy had wanted to make a statement on the education system in England and about the universities in particular. In his original notes for Jude he says: “There is something in this world that ought to be shown and I am the one to show it to them--though I was not altogether hindered going, at least to Cambridge, and could have gone up easily at five-and twenty” (qtd. in Hardy, Biography 243). He makes a very strong statement about this in the way Jude is treated. The circumstances that Hardy shows that affected Jude were eventually corrected. Hardy wrote in the 1912 postscript of Jude “that some readers thought . . . that when Ruskin College (Oxford) was subsequently founded it should have been called the college of Jude the Obscure” (qtd. Alvarez 114-115). Alvarez goes on to comment on this by saying that “Hardy may not have had as direct an influence on social reforms as Dickens; but he helped” (115). Hardy wanted to show that the system was outdated and needed to change.

Hardy himself attended school until the age of sixteen when he became apprenticed to an architect. While he indicates in his notes about Jude that he could have gone to Cambridge, there does not seem to be much evidence to support this. There does seem to be quite an autobiographical connection between this aspect of Jude’s life and Hardy’s and the pain they both felt. Hardy also studied Greek and Latin in school (Hardy, Biography 43). As a young man living in London and working as an architect, he went to family friend Horace Mould for advice. Hardy had aspirations of entering Cambridge and when he went to Mould for advice, he did not get the answer he was hoping for: “Horace advised him to stick to architecture, since his father expected him to start earning by the age of twenty-one. He also advised him to give up his Greek, a clear indication that he did not consider his scholarship good enough” (Tomalin 56).

He did heed the advice and not pursue Cambridge. Tomalin speaks about how painful this was for Hardy and that it could still be read into the account of it that he wrote in his old age (56).

Unlike Jude, Hardy did overcome this aspect of society and did not let it hold him back.

When Jude and Sue return to Christminster at the time of graduation, Jude stands in the crowd and laments his fate. “My failure is reflected on me by every one of those fellows . . . a lesson on presumption is awaiting me today” (342). Here he repeats the one thing that he feels has defeated him that he should presume that he could be allowed to earn a degree at Christminster. Langland questions if Jude is actually defeated by Christminster. She points out that perhaps this dream is not unfulfilled. “If, as Sue says, Christminster is only a nest of commonplace schoolmasters, then Jude's life is a relative success” (40). Her view is that Jude is a tragic character of his own making. She feels that he is self-defeated before he begins because of his idealistic views of Christminster; that he sees it as something so grand, that the reality of what Christminster really is could never live up to his expectations. Instead, she feels that Jude ultimately “seeks an authority [Christminster] to define the meaning of his life, and he must do that from within the system, from a position that validates the system and its judgments of him as a failed man who has missed everything” (38). It is her contention that Jude is self-defeated but will not accept his circumstances without the external validation that the University would give him.

Ingham also points out that Jude sees Christminster not as it is, but how he wishes it to be. However, she makes the argument that the Christminster that Jude believes to exist is as real to him as the actual University. “The voices of great men speak to him in his imagination . . . but they are specters and seem to have no counterparts in the Christminster Jude knows. His struggles are brief, his object a delusion” (169). It ultimately was the death of his children and

Sue's returning to Phillotson allowed Jude to see Christminster for what it was. Hoopoe speaks of the ghosts of Christminster in the spirits of the scholars Jude addresses on his first night at Christminster and with the final realization that they are only spirits. "With the vanishing of his most precious ghosts, his will to live disintegrated, for he could not exist in the world of men" (157).

Sonstroem finds a strong tie between the continual return to Christminster and Jude's defeated dreams. "Indeed, much of the poignancy of the novel hinges on Jude's expectation, which dies hard, that a change of place will bring about an improvement in his circumstances" (12). Guerard points to this as well when he comments that Jude shows us "The dismal unfaith and rudderless society of Jude" (3). The characters all seem to be continually on the move, looking and searching for something that will be right or will feel right to them. They are constantly running after goals or running away from the tenets of society. However, even despite all the moving and as the relationship between Jude and Sue changes, "Jude holds to the same or at least related goals as he moves from place to place, and he suffers in one place the consequences of his behavior in another. In other words, Jude's world is uniform and interconnected" (Sonstroem 12).

This ties back to Langland's supposition that Jude is looking for validation, if not of Christminster, perhaps that of life itself and that while unfulfilled, his goals are unchanging. Edwards and Edwards sum Jude's demise at Christminster in one simple statement. "He is the victim of too much thought, too much reason, too much conscious control" (79). Ultimately, it is the dreamer in Jude who allows society to trap and defeat him at Christminster. In going back to the premise of it isn't so much what happens to you that matters as it is what you do about it,

Jude became trapped by his own self and his own vision of what Christminster should be and his lack of ability to deal with the societal limitations of Christminster.

Jude's other obsession is that of Sue Bridehead. This obsession is not as single-minded or as straight forward as that of Christminster. It is interwoven not only with society and self, but also with the personalities and circumstances of all involved. It is at Christminster that Jude finally meets Sue. He thinks of her in the same ethereal way in which he views Christminster: ". . . a kindly star, an elevating power, a companion on Anglican worship, a tender friend" (91). He feels she is a saint, when she is not. Jude wants to study for the ministry. Sue purchases plaster statues of Venus and Apollo she describes to Jude as "my patron-saints" (105). Later she offers to rearrange Jude's Bible into a new New Testament, which shocks Jude with a sense of sacrilege (157). Jacobus feels that "From Jude's point of view, Sue's religion of pagan joy is a bitter irony; she first liberates him from his religious asceticism, then refuses to satisfy him. Seen from Sue's point of view, however, her paganism is primarily an expression of revolt" (401).

As Jude begins to know Sue better, he finds that she is different from how he had expected her to be, but that does not diminish his desire for her. While he is unwilling to see Christminster for what it really is, he does eventually see Sue for what she truly is. She is quite a complex character, and almost has the ability to be many different persons at once. "From the beginning, in major actions and lesser ones, Sue is consistently one thing and then another: reckless then diffident; independent, then needing support; severe, and then kindly; inviting and then offish. The portrayal of her is the major achievement of the novel" (Heilman 20:309). Forward points out the fact that "At times . . . her behaviour is conventional; yet at others she is rebellious. Jude calls her "modern"; she declares herself to be "ancient". Jude says she is "an

urban miss”; she describes herself as an “Ishmaelite”. The author depicts her as an ‘ethereal fine-nerved, sensitive girl’” (14).

It is the fact that she is an enigma that makes it difficult to understand what about her that obsesses Jude so, but it may also be just this ever-changing aspect of her personality that entraps him. Jacobus wrestles with this and says that Sue “continues to haunt and perplex us long after we have finished reading because she is neither case-history nor propaganda. She too is ‘obscure’ ” (304). One explanation may be the times in which this work takes place. Jude was written at a time of major change in Western society. It was the end of the Victorian age and the beginning of the modern age. It was in the modern age when women became more independent than they had been before. The rules were changing for all of society. Jude specifically seems to have a hard time transitioning from this change in society. We see this societal shift in both Sue and Jude. A simple illustration of this is where Jude and Sue meet to talk. He wants to meet in the cathedrals, while she wants to meet in the newer railroad stations. Langland also points out the old rules by saying “Jude’s susceptibility to the chivalric code of helpless women and protective and honorable men allows Arabella to use her claim of pregnancy to trap him into marriage” (37).

D. H. Lawrence offers an alternative view of Sue. “She is the production of the long selection by man of the woman in whom the female is subordinated to the male principle” (109). We do see Sue as strong and independent; and it is this independence that Lawrence is attempting to show us. It is this “male principle” in Sue that has caused critics to characterize Sue as a female version of Jude. Lawrence goes on to say: “One of the supremest products of our civilization is Sue, and a product that well frightens us” (109).

Critics have echoed Phillotson's statement that Sue and Jude are "One person split in two" (241). Spivey says that this pairing reminds us of Emily Bronte's Heathcliff and Cathy. "In the case of both couples the two lovers are separated and are driven by an inner compulsion to become one" (187). This view of two parts of a single soul would help us to understand what it is that draws Jude to Sue.

We cannot speak of Sue without including a discussion of Arabella. Heilman indicates that Sue's original role was as a counterpart to Arabella and the other side of Jude (397) but she proves to be so much more. In comparing Sue to Arabella, we find that they both have similar qualities, while being very different individuals. They both are defined not only by being women, but also with their feelings about sex. Arabella is driven by sex. She uses it as her power and knows how to use it well. She traps Jude then uses it as a weapon against her next husband Carlett. She lures Jude back to her not once but twice with sex and as he lies dying alone in his room, she is seducing Vilbert for her next conquest.

The fact that Arabella seduced Jude was an unusual twist to an age-old theme. Hardy wrote Jude on the heels of Tess of the d'Urbervilles, which was the story of the more familiar theme of seduction, where a young woman is seduced and de-flowered by a wealthy older man. Casagrande feels that "He [Hardy] wished to show that lads fall as easily as maids, that women are as predatory as men in the matters of sex" (202). Casagrande goes on to describe the seduction of a male as a metaphor for self-willed corruption and "self-violation and is therefore akin to suicide . . . which happens to be an inherited tendency of Jude Fawley" (202). Jude does support this when he describes his seduction as "[what] could only at the most be called weakness" (61).

From the letters of Hardy we can surmise that part of what led him to write Jude was to try the same type of story as Tess but with a twist. We know that Hardy began thinking about Jude as early as 1888. Gittings proposes that the idea for both Tess and Jude were conceived at the same time.

It seems that two stories presented themselves as possible candidates . . . for the new novel The idea of Jude seems to have been fractionally first in the field, to judge by the well-known note he [Hardy] made on 28 April 1888 ‘A short story of a young man-- “who could not go to Oxford”--His struggles and ultimate failure. Suicide . . . ’ .

(Gidding 55)

Based on the evidence it appears that Hardy decided to show both sides of a single situation, allowing the reader to see that such seduction and betrayal can be as evident regardless of who is being seduced. Casagrande supports this as he quotes Hardy as having written in a letter just prior to the publication of Jude, “It has never struck me that the spider is invariably male and the fly invariable female” (qtd, 202).

Sue also uses sex, but instead of freely giving it away or tantalizingly dangling it before her, she withholds it. She lives first with an undergraduate in a non-sexual relationship and then with Jude in a similar one. When she and Jude finally begin a physical relationship, it is on her own terms, coming to him in his rooms, not the other way around. Because Sue does not give herself sexually to the undergraduate, or to any man, Jude continues to look upon her in a saint-like manner. It is this blind worship of Sue that traps Jude.

Of the two women, it is Sue that obsesses Jude, but Arabella still controls them both. It is when Arabella returns to England and provokes Sue that she finally gives herself to Jude not because she has changed her mind about the relationship, but because of sexual jealousy.

Casagrande calls this Sue's "downfall" (215). He goes on to compare Arabella to a female Iago, "Not just brutal, as has often been asserted, but also cunning, tenacious, and even intelligent in her understanding of those whom she manipulates and destroys" (215). Lawrence says: "Arabella was . . . amazingly lawless, even splendidly so. She believed in herself and she was not altered by any outside opinion of herself. Her fault was pride. She thought herself the center of life, that all which existed, belonged to her in so far as she wanted it" (102).

Nevertheless, why is Jude so obsessed with Sue? Is it the fact that she is "forbidden fruit"? When he ultimately meets her, he determines that he cannot have her; he lays out specific reasons why not and determines that she will have to be only a friend. Yet she seems to bewitch him. Unlike Arabella who goes after Jude on purpose with the intent of trapping him, Sue does not overtly do so; Jude seems to be more of the aggressor, going after her and being obsessed by her. Hardy said of Sue: "one of her reasons for fearing the marriage ceremony is that she fears it would be breaking faith with Jude This has tended to keep his passion as hot at the end as at the beginning and helps to break his heart. He never really possessed her as freely as he desired" (Hardy, *Life* 272).

We have an advantage in understanding Arabella and her relationship to Jude, as we as readers know what her thoughts are. She tells her friends. "I've got him to care for me; yes! But I want him to more than care for me; I want him to have me; to marry me!" (47). The narrator does not tell us what Sue thinks of Jude. We are left to come up with our own decisions, based on the action and dialogue of the book.

There is no clear-cut answer as to what it is about Sue that traps Jude. We do not know what her hold over him is or why he is powerless to break away from her. Langland does point out that "It is a striking detail of the novel that Jude longs for Sue before he sees her, before he

has even seen a picture of her” (34). I feel Jude is drawn to Sue because she remains so tantalizingly close but just out of reach, on several levels.

If only he could get over the sense of her sex, as she seemed to be able to do so easily of his, what a comrade she would make; for their difference of opinion on conjectural subjects only drew them closer together on matters of daily human experience. She was nearer to him than any other women he had ever met, and he could scarcely believe that time, creed or absence, would ever divide him from her. (259)

It is Sue’s paganism that seems to attract Jude, but it is her sex that bewitches him. Alvarez sums it up by saying “Jude’s tragedy . . . comes from inner tensions which shape the action Jude is as frustrated by Sue, his ideal, intellectual woman as he is by Oxford, his equally shining ideal of intellectual life. Frustration is the permanent condition of his life” (114). Sue traps him in her tantalizing nearness and approachability; she is the brass ring that he can just almost reach. He does not have to go to her as he had to travel to Christminster; she comes to him or beckons him to her and he is powerless to her hold over him.

The critics cannot seem to agree why Sue has such a hold on Jude. Alvarez appears to have found a good explanation of that hold:

Until the closing scenes, he [Jude] manages to make her conform to his ideal by a kind of emotional sleight of mind: he dismisses his glimpses of the unchanging conventionality below the bright surface of her nonconformity by invoking both his own worthlessness and that vague marriage-curse which has been the lot of his family. (118-119)

The point that Hardy is attempting to convey in Jude's relationship with Sue is not as strong as his statement about the class system or the education system. Jacobus quotes Kate Millett in her work Sexual Politics as saying: "Jude the Obscure is on very solid ground when attacking the class system, but when it turns to the sexual revolution, Hardy himself is troubled and confused" (307). The answer to this criticism seems to lie with Hardy himself. Langland tells us: "Feeling the increasing interest of his Sue plot, Hardy confessed to Florence Henniker in August 1895, 'Curiously enough, I am more interested in the Sue story than in any I have written.' Furthermore, dissatisfaction with his representation of Sue kept Hardy tinkering with her character through several revisions of the novel" (37). It appears that the strength of the character of Sue was not in Hardy's original intention and it is that which makes her hold over Jude less apparent.

There is no question that it is Jude's response to Sue that traps him. It is her sexual power over him that he cannot escape. It is his own self, against the tenets of society, which unites Jude with Sue and traps him. Again, applying the test of, it isn't so much what happens to you that matters, as it is what you do about it. Jude seems to do little about his connection with Sue. It is his own decision and will, that he be connected with Sue. Jude traps himself with Sue against society.

Hardy at one time called the opening section of the book "The Dreamers" (Ingham 27:29) which seems appropriate. Oxford, which is the model for Christminster, is known as the "City of Dreaming Spires." In Jude, we learn the dreams of Jude, Arabella, and Phillotson. All of these characters either fail or continually adjust or pursue in vain those dreams. Jude's dreams blind him to the realities of the world. Jude is a naïve romantic. The question is what is Jude's downfall? Is it his romantic ideals of how things should be that are Jude's undoing? Hardy

himself weighs in on this question in a letter where he says, “The ‘grimy’ features of the story go to show the contrast between the ideal life a man wished to lead and the squalid real life he was fated to lead. The throwing of the pizzle at the supreme moment of his young dream is to sharply initiate the contrast” (qtd. in Hardy, Biography 244).

Jude traps himself in life by seeing it as he wishes it to be, not as it really is. He lives in a world of his own making. Hoopes weighs in on this as she says:

Jude persistently idealized the ‘real’ world of men and attempted vainly to live in the ghostly world he had created, which was visible and real only to him.

Happiness was unattainable for Jude because he was perpetually confronted with the sordid earthy world of men, opposed as it was to his glorious ideal. (154)

Jude sees that things are different in the real world, and yet he chooses to ignore them. We see this in a variety of places. Jude says to Sue: “you are often not so nice in your real presence as you are in your letters” (171) and when he looks at Christminster in the light of day, “What at night had been perfect and ideal was by day the more or less defectively real” (84). It is evident that “through out the novel Jude shows a reluctance to face up to conditions that are not in accord with his mental and emotional state” (Kramer 148). It is almost as if Jude does not want to grow up. As a child, he has pre-conceived notions of how things are and is continually disappointed. When he finally receives from Phillotson the Greek and Latin grammars, “He learnt for the first time that there was no law of transmutation, as in his innocence he had supposed . . . but that every word in both Latin and Greek was to be individually committed to memory” (26).

Jude does seem to have the ability to occasionally see reality when there is no other way around it. He goes about learning Latin and Greek, and accepted the reality of that situation.

This was, however, not before he had “wished he had never seen a book, that he might never see another, that he might never been born” (27). This type of response is understandable in an adolescent, who Jude was as at the time, but he never seems to grow out of that reaction to life.

Langland addresses this aspect of Jude in her essay “Becoming a Man in Jude the Obscure.” It is her contention that Jude never wanted to grow up and uses the excuse of following Sue’s belief system to avoid facing the realities of life. “I will argue here that Jude increasingly embraces the relationship with his cousin as a means of self-fulfillment. He seizes upon her as an answer to the difficulty of growing up, his feeling that he did not want to be a man” (35).

Benvenuto does agree but not to the point that Jude did not want to grow up. Rather, he contends that Jude is simply a sensitive person. “Early in the novel, the narrator spoke of Jude’s weakness of character and his sensitivity to cruelties inflicted on life which suggested that he was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life” (35).

Kramer, while arguing against the assertion that Hardy is presenting his personal point of view rather than a work of fiction, sees this rather as irony (146 -147). I do not agree with Kramer and while I accept what Benvenuto is saying, I agree more strongly with Langland. I also feel that there is in Jude an overhanging pall of fatalism. This seems most apparent in the character of Little Father Time, who although he is given the name Jude continues to be called Father Time (313).

Little Father Time is yet another dimension of Jude and how he views the world. “Father Time makes his image of self conform to his conception of the universe. Jude makes his conception of the universe conform to his image of self” (Langland 72:45). The strong fatalism

that the child brings to the story is almost overwhelming. He cannot understand why people laugh (290) or enjoy flowers, as he knows they will die (312). There is nothing pleasant or endearing or warm about this character. He is the specter of doom, death, and darkness in this work.

Alvarez feels that Father Time “fails as a symbol . . . [because] his ominous remarks, desolation and self-consciously incurable melancholy are so overdone” (121). He is a more two-dimensional character and his presence seems to be a ploy Hardy uses to present his most shocking tragedy in the story. It is hard to explain the suicide of Little Father Time. Southerington at least is honest by saying, “The suicide of Little Father Time and the murder of the children are the neurotic expression of something whose analysis defied even Hardy himself” (143).

Why did Sue and the children end up in the final circumstances that they did? Jude could not let go of the injustice that he felt for not being able to study at Christminster. He keeps Sue and the children standing in the rain far too long to watch commencement, making it impossible to find lodgings. His selfishness caused them to have to go pityingly from place to place to find somewhere to sleep (346). Lawrence asks why the proprietor questioned Jude and Sue if they were married and points out that there were many couples in England living together with children who are not asked if they are married or not. He then goes on and answers that question in saying: “Only because of their own uneasy sense of wrong, of sin, which they communicated to other people. And this wrong or sin was not against the community, but against their own being, against life” (118).

The death of the children, Sue’s miscarriage and breakdown essentially become the end of Jude. He can no longer fight and is defeated and isolated. Indeed, the reader is left defeated

and deflated as well. Jude goes through the motions, but he is a broken man, physically and emotionally. “Searching for the cause of his failure, he [Jude] blames Nature” (Edwards and Edwards 80). He is finally trapped by the circumstances that he put himself in and the choices he made. He seemed to have trapped himself into a life he did not like, with a woman whom he could not possess, aspiring to an education he could not have. In the end, he had little to show for his existence. While he had been willing to fight, the fight was out of him and he gave up.

Did Jude waste his life chasing after things that did not exist, as he wanted them to be? Would it have been better if he did succeed in committing suicide or that he had never been born? Lawrence sees his inability to accept reality as a waste of Sue and Jude’s lives.

Jude and Sue are damned, partly by their very being, but chiefly by their incapacity to accept the conditions of their own and each other’s being. If Jude could have known that he did not want Sue, physically, and then have made his choice, they might not have wasted their lives. (117)

As Jude dies alone in Christminster, he repeats the lament of Job: “Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, there is a man-child conceived” (426). Jude is feeling that he, like Job, should never have been born, that none of life has been worthwhile. Benvenuto disagrees with Jude on his self-assessment:

Jude curses himself and bitterly denounces those ideals and actions that made up his life and gave it tragic power and won him our approval and respect. We can understand Jude's vision of himself as a modern Job, but I cannot agree with him that it would have been better had he never lived. (36)

He goes on to assert that it is Jude’s “weakness to be a strength of character, because we see Jude's sensitivity from another, more humanizing perspective than that of the general scheme

for which it is a defect” (35). Edwards and Edwards feel that it is the internal struggle that traps him: “Jude projects his own pessimistic fatalism onto the physical world.” They go on to say, “The tale told by Jude's course is one of entrapment in circumstance” (12).

Langland feels that it is just that battle that makes Jude the Obscure the great book it is. “Part of the novel's brilliance derives from Hardy's ability to represent Jude's battle with the class and gender self-constructions his culture offers him. His embattlement gives the novel its richness and generates its tragic denouement” (33). She goes on to say that “Thus he is trapped from within and without” (76).

The battle has been fought, the dreams have been dreamed, the obsessions have been faced, and Jude is done. In looking back and taking measure of this man, he lived a miserable life. Did he bring it on himself, or was he a hapless victim of the folly of the gods? I believe that the answer lies a bit in both. It was the class system and society that did not allow Jude to gain entrance to Christminster, but it was Jude who gave up after one try. It was society that did not accept the relationship that Sue and Jude had, but it was their own reaction to it that gave society power over them. It was Jude's idealistic view of society that came crashing down when he found that it was populated by mere men. It was first Arabella's and then Sue's sexuality that trapped him, but only because he allowed it to happen.

None of us gets to pick what happens to us in life. It truly is what we do about what we are faced with that matters. Jude squandered his gifts and trapped himself in his own sensitivity and self-absorption. Along the way, he pulled down those that stayed with him. Ultimately, Jude did not fight; he lived the life of a victim who went through the motions of trying to make things conform to what he wanted with little consideration of the affect on anyone else. He is

close only to Sue, and yet he has no real connection with her because she is not real to him and the Christminster he aspired to was not real either.

Reaction to the Work

The reaction to Jude the Obscure left no doubt as to the public's outrage toward the work. It was damned immediately and from a wide number of sources, not only in England but also in the United States. While there is evidence that Hardy did anticipate some negative response to the work, he was nonetheless quite overwhelmed by the intense personal attacks on him as well as on the work.

“Nothing so coarsely indecent as the whole history of Jude in his relations with his wife Arabella has ever been put in English print” (Margaret Oliphant qtd. in Lerner and John Holmstrom 72:126-30). This review, which first appeared in Blackwood's Magazine in January 1896, was just one of many that expressed the great outrage that greeted the work when it was first published in November 1895. Oliphant goes on to say that “There may be books more disgusting, more impious as regards human nature, more foul in detail, in those dark corners where the amateurs of filth find garbage to their taste; but not, we repeat, from any Master's hand” (31). She entitled the review “The Anti-Marriage League” and obviously feels that Hardy is attempting to single-handedly attack marriage in England at the time.

The negative response toward the book was widespread, came from a variety of different sources, and was uniform in its condemnation. “The Guardian [the Church of England newspaper] called it . . . ‘a shameful nightmare, which one only wishes to forget’ . . . The Pall Mall Gazette review . . . headed ‘Jude the Obscene’ . . . the London World under the title ‘Hardy the Degenerate’ retracted its earlier protest against the bowdlerization of the serial version of the novel” (Millgate, Biography 369). The reaction in the United States was equally as strong. The review by a “maiden lady” in New York World said: “It is almost the worst book I ever read I thought that Tess of the d'Urbervilles was bad enough, but that is milk for babes compared to

this . . . aside from its immorality there is a coarseness which is beyond belief” (Hardy, Life 279). Bishop Wakefield in York had announced “that he had thrown ‘such garbage’ into the fire. To which Hardy . . . said he doubted if the Bishop had a fire to burn a thick novel in the summer” (Gittings 83). While he was glib in his public response to the criticism, Hardy was even more hurt when he found that the Bishop allegedly instructed the W. J. Smith Library to remove it from their circulating library (Tomalin 260).

The critics found much wrong with Jude. They felt it was not only an attack on marriage and the lack of morality of the time, but also on the Christian community and belief system. Interestingly enough, I did not find any critic who berated Hardy for his treatment of the university system. We know from Hardy’s notes that it had been his intent to point out this injustice and make a case for a change. While as I noted in the prior section of my paper that Hardy was recognized later by Alvarez and Millett as having made a difference in the perception of the educational system, there was no evidence that this aspect of the work was praised or noted by its detractors. They all seemed to have missed his point and focused on the other aspects of the book instead.

The critiques of the work that were the hardest for Hardy to accept were those that were made by his family and friends. Not only were there social “slights” when he and his wife went to London socially (Tomalin 260), but long time friends also criticized the work. Sir Edmund Gosse, Hardy’s good friend, published a public review of Jude that had pleased Hardy so much that he had written a series of letters thanking him. Gosse went on to write a more extended view of the novel for international publication (Millgate, Career 325). Yet, when Hardy met Gosse in London at a common table in a restaurant, “Gosse told Hardy publicly to his face that Jude the Obscure was the most indecent novel ever written” (Gittings 80).

Hardy had not allowed his wife Emma to read Jude in its original manuscript form. This was an unusual circumstance, as she had assisted in writing out the “fair copy” of his prior works to submit for publication. For Jude he had hired a typist, which was new technology, to assist him with the work (Tomalin 250). Emma was an aspiring author. While Hardy had paid little attention to her attempts to write, by Emma’s assisting him in his writing, she felt that she was not only helping but also contributing to the success of his novels. She identified herself as partly responsible for their final form. “Now she was faced with a book in which she could not believe, and whose message, as she understood it, she detested” (Gittings 80). Because of this cut, she felt that she could be frank in her feelings about the work and “to say how much she disliked it in his presence” (Tomalin 259).

There are a number of legends to Emma’s response to the book that Gittings dismisses as fabrication (81) but others accept and repeat (Hardy, Biography 265). True or not, they do convey her feelings about the book. One such story that was reported by Ford Madox Ford is that Emma traveled to London to speak to Dr. Richard Garnette at the British Museum and asked him to suppress Jude and offered to burn the manuscript (Gittings 81). We are told “her own nephew has told us that she strongly objected to the work . . . [because] she was a very ardent churchwoman and a believer in the virtues of women in general” (Hardy, Biography 265). The pressure of the public’s response to Jude did have a negative affect on her health as we learn that she “had been ill with shingles, a stress condition possibly caused by tension over Jude” (Gittings 83) and no doubt her negative feelings had an equal affect on her relationship with Hardy.

The book did receive some positive response, other than that of the public critique by Grosse of the work. The poet Algernon Swinburne wrote to Hardy: “The beauty, the terror, and the truth are all yours and yours alone . . . the man who can do such work can hardly care about

criticism or praise” (qtd. in Tomalin 260). He went on to say, “the tragedy was equally beautiful and terrible in its pathos” (qtd. in Hardy, Biography 245). W. D. Howells took on the more tragic aspects of the novel when he wrote, “They make us shiver with horror and grovel with shame, but we know that they are deeply founded in the condition if not in the nature of humanity” (qtd. in Tomlin 259).

In addition, there were other positive reviews. “It was ‘the most splendid of all the works which he had given the world . . . one of the most touching records in all our literature’ ” (Hardy, Biography 245). Millgate points out that the later reviews “were distinctly more favorable to the novel than the early ones had been” (Biography 371). However, the negative responses far outweighed the positive ones.

Tomalin does tell us that while Hardy could at times laugh at the criticism that was thrown not only at Jude but also at Hardy himself, it did have an affect on him. She cites the fact that during the winter after the publication of Jude he “sank into gloom at the disapproval piled on him” (260). Millgate however quotes Hardy in a letter to Mrs. Henniker as being indifferent to the reviews and wrote to Sir George Douglas: “I have really not been much upset by the missiles heaved at the poor book--not nearly so much as my own opinion on its shortcomings. Somehow I feel that the critics are not sincere” (Millgate, Career 339-340). He further echoes this in his response to the author of the New York World’s critic who wrote him to ask for his side of the story. “My respect for my own writings and reputation is so very slight that I care little about what happens to either” (Hardy, Life 280).

While he publicly put on a “good face” about the outcry, Millgate’s Biography categorizes Hardy’s response to the critics as “anguished.” Hardy wrote to his friends that “Jude was not at all intended as a purpose novel, least of all as a ‘manifesto on the marriage

question' . . . [and fears] that the book would be perceived not as hostile to morality but as all too supportive of the Christian exhortation to mercy" (369). Hardy also responded to his critics in a tone that sounds somewhat like alarm when he said "It is curious that one paper should look upon the novel as a manifesto on 'the marriage question'. . . seeing that it is concerned first with the labours of a poor student to get a University degree" (Hardy, Biography 271). This public reaction to Jude stayed with Hardy and as late as 1896 his writing shows that "the stress of the publication of Jude is still affecting him" (Tomalin 261). Millgate says in his Biography of Hardy, that it would "be absurd to describe the reception of the novel in many quarters as other than exceptionally and unreasonably hostile" (371).

Hardy is described by several critics as being "thin-skinned" or "overly sensitive" about the criticism of Jude, especially by his friends and acquaintances. There are those who say that he should have been more successful in separating his literary self from his personal self with regard to the public reaction, but it was very difficult for Hardy to do this. Millgate sums this up by saying, "it is quite clear that for Hardy the conventional distinction between the professional and the personal, the world of the imagination and the world of the everyday, simply did not exist" (Biography, 373). One explanation for this may be found in the observation: "Some paragraphists knowingly assured the public that the book was an honest autobiography, and Hardy did not take the trouble to deny it until more than twenty years later" (Hardy, Life 274). We have been able to draw direct correlations between Jude and Hardy's own life and it may be that the critics cut just a bit too close to the quick for Hardy.

Jude was initially published in serialized form, and then it was followed by publication in book form. After the success of Tess of the D'Urbervilles, Hardy had contacted Harper's New Monthly magazine to offer his next work to them for serialized publication, which was to be

Jude. The publisher, J. Henry Harper, expressed interest in the new work but cautioned Hardy that “for obvious reasons, we must first be assured that it would be in every respect suitable for a family magazine” (qtd. In Ingham 27:27). There had been some outcry over Tess and while anxious to have another work of Hardy’s to publish, they were obviously cautious about such a new work. Harper does indicate that sometime later he was contacted by Hardy concerning this stipulation, to inform him:

That he was distressed to say the development of the story was carrying him into unexpected fields and he was afraid to predict its future trend. With the keenest sense of the awkwardness of the situation, he promptly and magnanimously proposed that we should cancel our agreement with him and discontinue the story. (qtd. in Ingham 27:28)

We can see from this that Hardy was well aware of the potential response to the work, but was going to stay true to himself and not change it for the publication. It does, however, seem that even Hardy was surprised by the response the public had of Jude. He complained that those who criticize the work were “nice minds with many nasty ideas” (Hardy, Biography 270) and had read more into the work than he had intended.

Jude was subsequently published in a bowdlerized form with some of the alterations made by Hardy himself. Tomalin says the cuts to the work were made “to an idiotic degree” but goes on to point out that the changes did little to reduce what a distressing work it was to read (254). Evelyn Hardy does point out that it is in the book form that the work takes its hardest hits from the critics and not in the “meaningless and emasculated form of the novel as it appeared in serial instalments [sic]” (Hardy, Biography 245).

Hardy made several concessions to his original text to meet with the wishes of the publisher. “In view of our protest Hardy, without any expression of irritation [sic], rewrote one of the chapters, and we made some modifications as the story ran through the magazine” (Ingham 27-28). The editor had given Hardy guidelines in how to judge the acceptability of the work. “Our rule is that the magazine must contain nothing which could not be read aloud in any family circle. To this we are pledged” (Ingham 28). Yet even with his work being edited for the magazine publication, Hardy remained true to himself with this work. After the serialization and before the publication of the work as a novel, he returned the work to its original form. As Tess was published under similar circumstances, I can surmise that this was also the case with that work.

The re-editing of Jude for publication in a non-serialized form was an odious task for Hardy. He wrote in his journal “On account of the labour of altering Jude the Obscure to suit the magazine, and the having to alter it back, I have lost energy for revision and improving the original as I meant to do” (Hardy, Biography 269). Ingham does note the changes that Hardy made to the text as it was being restored and when it was in its published proof state, “Hardy was still making alterations and additions, some of them quite long” (27). We therefore have no definitive explanation of what Hardy would have done to the work as it moved into its book form of publication. What we can point to however, is the fact that he did not bend to the outrage of the work by society and leave it in its bowdlerized form but stayed true to himself and the original work for final publication.

It could be said that the alternations he made to Jude when he restored it made it even more shocking and tragic. In the serialization version, Sue does not tell Little Father Time that she is pregnant and the conversation he has with her about the trouble that bringing more

children into the world will bring only appears in the final work (Chase 157). The number of the children changes between the two different publication methods, and while the subsequent murder-suicide does occur, it is the conversation that Little Father Time and Sue had that was lost. Critics of Sue have cited that conversation as immaturity on her part; and, in her failure to comfort Little Time in his distress of the new baby, hold her somewhat responsible for the actions that he takes (Casagrande 213). By adding this conversation to the final publication, we can see that it does somewhat alter the readers' perception of Sue as well as change the outrage of the murder-suicide. The poignancy and pain that Little Father Time expresses in this conversation heightens the shock and pain that the reader experiences when the murder-suicide unfolds.

Not all the changes from his original manuscript to serial form were lost when Hardy recompiled the novel. Both Ingham and Chase point exhaustingly to the detail of the changes and editor's marks. Ingham does believe that she discovers Emma Hardy's hand in some of the editing marks made to the book. She speculates that Emma "perhaps at some stage prepared to help make it [Jude] less obnoxious" (35). There is no other evidence that I was able to find that Emma had any hand in Jude's re-writing. In fact, because we know she publicly decried the book, it would not seem in keeping with that outcry that she would have anything to do with the text. In fact, it was during this time that the marriage of Emma and Thomas began to crumble. Tomalin points to the fact that Hardy had not consulted with her about the writing of Jude and it appeared that he no longer wished to engage her with his writing. "She could not forgive him for no longer consulting her about his work, for refusing to encourage her in her efforts to write, for failing to help her find an agent or a publisher, as he did for his women friends" (269).

The scandal that Jude produced had a very positive effect on the sales of the work. Sales of the novel exceeded 20,000 in the first three months of publication (Gittings 83) which provided Hardy with considerable financial success. The recently enacted International Copyright Law provided copyright protection of works published in America (Ingham 27:29) and with this change and the large sale of the book, left Hardy on much more stable financial ground than he had been subsequently, as not only Jude but his prior works were covered under this new law.

Jude the Obscure was the last novel that Thomas Hardy wrote. After its publication, he did publish another work, The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved. This was a revised version of a serialized work he had done for Harpers in 1891. The public outcry as well as the newly found financial freedom from the sale of his works allowed Hardy to turn to poetry for the remainder of his career. Hardy himself said that the criticism of Jude had taken a toll on his continuing to write fiction. Tomalin further proposes, “. . . he had long wanted to return to poetry proper, while being forced to earn his living through fiction” (260). Hardy speaks in Life about this subject and says that prose was

A form of literary art he had long intended to abandon at some indefinite time, and resume openly that form of it which had always been more instinctive with him, and which he had just been able to keep alive from his early years, half in secrecy, under the pressure of magazine writing. (291)

Yet it was obvious that the outcry over the work had a major influence in Hardy’s decision to stop writing prose. Alvarez points out that the “effect was serious enough: ‘the experience’ Hardy wrote later, ‘completely cur[ed] me of further interest in novel writing.’” (113).

Hardy's first interest in writing was in the form of poetry. Tomalin said that "later in life he insisted that he was primarily a poet and that his novels were merely his craft, taken up as a means to a livelihood" (91). Millgate says, "It must have seemed to Hardy a highly propitious moment for his long-contemplated return to poetry. Direct evidence is lacking, but the crucial decision almost certainly preceded the publication of Jude, and perhaps even its composition" (Millgate, Career 341). He goes on to say that "in Jude itself the very forcefulness of the social criticism suggests that he knew the novel was to be his last and deliberately incorporated views and feelings which had been largely suppressed" (Millgate, Career 341).

Alvarez does not agree that poetry was calling him back. Instead, he wonders, ". . . if Hardy was not being slightly disingenuous when he claimed that the treatment of the book by the popular reviewers had turned him, for good, from the novel to poetry. After Jude the Obscure there was no other direction in which he could go" (122). Guerard seems to support this view. He says, "It was long believed he gave up novel-writing because of the harsh moralistic attacks on [Tess and Jude]. But one may also argue that in Jude Hardy had at last made a full and definitive statement on evil and mischance and self-destructiveness, on the social and cosmic absurd" (1).

Hardy himself seems to support the poetry theory somewhat. At the end of his life Hardy speaks of it and says: "It's natural to me to write poetry--I was never intended to be a prose-writer, still less a teller of tales" (qtd. in Tomalin xxiv). Tomalin goes on to say that "He [Hardy] said he was prouder of his poetry than of any of his prose, even of his great novels, because he felt that in all the novels there was an element of compromise" (xxv).

I tend to feel that it was the financial success following the publication of Jude that allowed Hardy to return to poetry, rather than the outcries of society forcing him to give up

prose. Hardy was true to himself in his writing of Jude and other works of prose. He did not bow to the pressures of critics and censors of his work as it moved from serial to volume form. He did not stop after the criticism of Tess, but continued to say what he felt needed to be said in Jude. He then returned to his true love of poetry and was able to do it on his own terms and was true to himself and not the pressure of society.

My own reaction to Jude has changed since I first proposed it for this paper. I had read Jude years ago and was haunted by it. It was a book that I had read for pleasure rather than for a class. The first critical reading of this work as I prepared to complete this project gave me new insight into the work. I began to see the work on many different levels and from a variety of different aspects. For me it no longer became a simple story of lost dreams and indecisiveness in life's journey. I became fascinated by the connections I could make between Jude and other works, not only as I pointed out in my Reflection section of the paper, but also as I continued to write and read what the critics had to say about the work.

This has proved to be an excellent cumulating experience of my degree program. I have been able to see the work in a variety of lights and while I do not intend to teach, should I have that opportunity, I could easily take this work and ask my students what they found in it and no doubt, they would find things that I did not. The reaction of my personal society as I have been talking about this work has been interesting. While many know of Thomas Hardy and some of my non-literary friends have even read some of his works, few are familiar with Jude. While I do not find that surprising, I do find it sad because I believe that Hardy has a lot to tell us about society and ourselves. I suspect that it is the very powerful and tragic end to which the characters come that is almost more than the reader can bear and that keeps this book off many reading lists.

Jude is a work that transcends the society in which it was written. I believe that we can all see ourselves in the character of Jude Fawley and that the power that a dream deferred or smashed can have on us all. Hardy teaches us that we need to get on with our lives and that to be truly happy, we must be true to our own selves. He shows us that while we cannot control what happens to us, we can control what we do about it. Jude did not make good use of that personal power and serves as a lesson of what we need to do. While Arabella is by no means a role model, we can see that even if a person such as Arabella can take control of the circumstances that life hands her that we can survive and not perish like Jude, or self-destruct like Sue. In completing this project, I have come to agree with D. H. Lawrence in his essay on Thomas Hardy that Jude and Sue wasted their lives. It is a lesson, and a warning to us all not to repeat that same mistake. It is the waste of life that is what truly makes Jude the Obscure a tragedy.

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