

by Austen's heroines – possess great importance to feminist criticism, to which he does not refer. Had Tandon made these decisions explicit and justified them, they would not necessarily have detracted significantly from his investigation. In the absence of any such acknowledgment, Tandon's study – for all its pioneering interdisciplinarity and breadth of reference – seems incomplete.

Juliette Wells

***New Approaches to the Literary Art of Anne Brontë*, edited by Julie Nash and Barbara A. Suess. Gateshead, Tyne & Wear: Athenaeum Press, Ltd., 2001. Xiv + 232. ISBN 0-7546-0199-4.\$74.95 (hardback).**

The image of Anne Brontë as the “also wrote” Brontë sister has been reconsidered. The title of several recent studies feature the idea of reassessment, including the “New Approaches” of the book under review. A quick electronic check of the MLA Bibliography shows how much work could still be done: there are 1,199 entries for Charlotte, 688 for Emily, and 154 for Anne. At least she beats out Branwell who has 37 entries; but then again he never wrote a novel and Anne wrote two. Why this need for reconsidering Anne? Basically, her work has been under-appreciated beginning with the earliest critics, including her own family.

The brief Preface by Julie Nash and Barbara A. Suess addresses the myth of Anne Brontë as “Waiting Boy,” seen as “nothing, absolutely nothing” by her brother, and as a severely limited writing talent by her sister Charlotte, only capable of reproducing details from her own life “as a warning to others” (qtd. ix). The authors contend that her writings “transform experience into art by coupling careful literary techniques with a boundless imagination” (x). The essays in the volume offer new readings of her life and novels and suggest “new critical frameworks with which to approach them” (xiii). Certainly this is a welcome accomplishment.

The only deficiency in this current volume is the lack of range of the essays. Four essays relate to *Agnes Grey*; seven essays examine *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Only one begins outside Anne Brontë's two novels – Maria Frawley focuses on the notes made in Anne Brontë's personal Bible. While this volume is limited to Anne Brontë's “literary art” and so would not include articles primarily connected with her artistic creations (reference to her drawing occurs only in a footnote to Deborah Denenholz Morse's essay), certainly articles on her poetry would be expected.

Frawley scans Anne Brontë's own Bible as a source for information on her religious belief, life, and works. At the start of Anne Brontë's reading program for herself, begun when she was twenty, she asks, “What, Where, and How Shall I Be When I Have Got Through?” (qtd. 1). Frawley remarks on the similarity between this statement and others in Anne Brontë's diary papers and suggests they are

indicative of “her lifelong concern with self-examination and the ways in which the self could be transformed by experience” (10).

The four essays concerning *Agnes Grey* are all close readings of the text. Questions of narration may be the most frequently pondered in this volume and Larry H. Peer starts off by looking at the first chapter of *Agnes Grey* and brings in Anne Brontë’s experiences in her family. Peer compares her narrative strategies to others at the time and finds it within the Continental tradition of the *Bildungsroman*, but perhaps without the “surface appeal” of her sisters’ novels. James R. Simmons, Jr. looks at contemporary stories, both fictional and autobiographical, of governesses and believes the unhappiness of the governess to arise from her class consciousness, and finds no exception in *Agnes Grey*. Examining references to food in the first half of *Agnes Grey*, Marilyn Sheridan Gardner compares the use of food in the Grey parsonage with that of the Bloomfields “to measure degrees of civilized behavior” (45). In a refreshing change of pace, Bettina L. Knapp emphasises the positive critical responses to *Agnes Grey*, beginning with George Moore’s description of the novel as “the most perfect prose narrative in English” (qtd. 63), and builds a picture of a determined writer who did not shy away from moral issues in her works and created her own kind of feminist heroines.

From the seemingly simplistic surface of *Agnes Grey*, this volume moves to the interlocking narratives of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Garrett Stewart looks at the structure of this novel, focusing on the layers of reading and readers. Andrés G. López reads *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* as a satire. Although he makes a convincing argument about *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, he does so with minimum reference to other satiric novels of the era despite his essay’s intriguing subtitle, “Brontë’s Domestic *Vanity Fair*.”

Anne Brontë, whose mother died when she was under two years of age, came under the religious sway of her aunt, who had a Wesleyan Methodist heritage. Many of the essays in this volume concern the foundation of Anne Brontë’s religious beliefs. Deborah Denenholz Morse examines the process of witnessing in the novel in a context of eighteenth-century literary tradition and *Wuthering Heights*. Lee A. Talley views Anne Brontë’s religious beliefs and use of religion within *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* with reference to the *Methodist Magazine*, a legacy from Anne Brontë’s mother and thus part of her family heritage. Basing her ingenious argument on these same magazines, Melody J. Kemp studies the tenets of Methodism within this novel and suggests that Anne Brontë’s “exposure to Methodism, which led her to believe that character could be deliberately (re)formed, especially by means of writing and reading personal narratives” (195) parallels the placement of Helen Huntingdon’s diary within the frame of Gilbert Markham’s letters.

The union of Helen Huntingdon and Gilbert Markham has been a subject of debate for many critics of this novel. Marianne Thormählen writes about the nature of love in *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* and finds that by the end of the novel Gilbert Markham has grown to become worthy of Helen Huntingdon. Andrea Westcott’s re-

examination of the ending of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* and the character of Markham in terms of several other Victorian novels leaves one wanting more. For example, how does it compare with the equally debated union of Dorothea Brooke and Will Ladislaw at the end of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*?

This volume has started the process of examining Anne Brontë's novels in a manner that reaches beyond the context provided by the framework of her life, beyond the perspective of those novels written by Emily or Charlotte Brontë, to the milieu provided by other contemporary novels. We can only hope for future reassessments to go even further.

Abigail Burnham Bloom

***The Alternative Sherlock Holmes: Pastiches, Parodies and Copies*, edited by Peter Ridgeway Watt and Joseph Green. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003. 361p. ISBN: 0-7456-0882-4. £45 (hardback).**

In 1968, Jorge Luis Borges declared, "I suppose the future will bring all things in the long run, and so we may imagine a moment when Don Quixote and Sancho, Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson will still exist, although all their adventures may have been blotted out. Yet men, in other languages, may still go on inventing stories to fit those characters – stories that should be as mirrors to the characters." Borges, who counted Holmes and Watson, along with Mr Pickwick, Huckleberry Finn and Peer Gynt, as "dear friends," might have revelled in Peter Ridgeway Watt and Joseph Green's entertaining compendium of alternative Holmesian fiction. A plethora of alternative adventures had already appeared before Borges's death in 1979, and Watt and Green have undertaken the a catalogue raisonnée of the variations published in the period from 1893 (when Doyle's friend James Barrie wrote the first spoof, "The Late Sherlock Holmes") to 2001.

Watt and Green do not claim to have compiled a comprehensive annotated bibliography. Nor would a definitive listing be possible in print format while the Internet mushrooms with citations of further ancient and modern "mirrors to the characters" beyond the Watt and Green pale that are already available in electronic as well as print media. We can be thankful at any rate that Watt and Green have issued such a commodious, portable and often uproariously funny *vade mecum*.

The *Alternative Sherlock Holmes* summarises individual stories under four main headings: Watson's unchronicled cases and their pastiches, period pastiches, non-period pastiches, and parodies and imposters. A brief chapter notes and summarises pastiches based on minor canonical figures, and another short chapter sensibly gives short shrift to the rivals of Sherlock Holmes. Bibliographies and comprehensive indexes are particularly good supplements to the material in each chapter. Separate indexes list authors, titles of stories, copies and rivals, and parodic