

Symbolization of Female Insanity in *Jane Eyre*

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The subject of female insanity was not only actively discussed in nineteenth-century medical journals, but was also frequently depicted in nineteenth-century literature¹; in particular, as Helen Small points out, “The monstrous madwoman emerges as a creation of domestic fiction of the 1840s, where she expresses a capacity for violence that has been expelled as far as possible from the political arena” (Small 141). Needless to say, Bertha Mason, whom Charlotte Brontë created as Edward Rochester’s lunatic wife in *Jane Eyre* (1847)², is one of the most famous ‘monstrous madwomen’ in early nineteenth-century English literature. Literally, she is not merely confined to the attic, but as Alex Woloch declares, “Bertha Mason is also shut up within the narrative discourse, revealed only in sporadic passages that present her in a fragmentary form” (Woloch 25). Since Bertha is represented as a mysterious and inferior Other, her problematic representations provide much to dispute; Bertha has been portrayed as a significant figure in a widespread realm of critical studies.³

In the nineteenth century, both racial and sexual issues were entangled with ideologies of empire. The relationships among Jane Eyre, Bertha and Rochester embody not only male-female relationships in the Western world, but also the relationship between the British Empire and its colonies, as Jane points out the similarity between “hiring a mistress” and “buying a slave” (266): “Hiring a mistress is the next worst thing to buying a slave: both are often by nature, and always by position, inferior: and to live familiarly with inferiors is degrading” (266). What Jane suggests exactly reflects the ideology in Western

countries in the nineteenth century; to explain European women and slaves in colonies by using the same terms is effective to produce/reproduce defined images of gender and sexuality in need of promotion and protection of “male/imperial authority by virtue of their weakness, innocence, and inadequacy” (de Groot 98). In particular, as Joanna de Groot suggests, in regard to the images of female sexuality, “images of oriental sexuality were a feature not only of western relationships with the Middle East but also of discussions of male-female relationships in Europe” (de Groot 108). In *Jane Eyre*, Jane and Bertha are potentially depicted as inferior Others, considering what de Groot suggests, but, with respect to insanity, their difference is undeniable: while Jane is barely on the side of sanity, Bertha is represented as a lunatic woman. Such a difference induces a query as to why Jane is capable of avoiding insanity, even though she potentially can go mad. In order to disclose how Bertha, who is a mere sign of female madness, functions as a significant component in *Jane Eyre*, this essay examines how the narrator Jane creates her ideal portrait of Jane Eyre by focusing on the acquisition of visual and narrative authority.

In *Jane Eyre*, the motif of imprisonment frequently appears. Jane Eyre’s progress from place to place embodies a journey or pilgrimage. On her way to the termination, Ferndean, there are her stopping-off points, Gateshead, Lowood, Thornfield and Morton; each stop is a closed and exclusive sphere which evokes confinement and a compulsive space such as a prison cell or school; in fact, Lowood is a school. Since, from place to place, Jane is threatened to be excluded, oppressed, and observed by her masters, recurrence of her struggle against adversity, resistance to her masters, and her achievements are significant sources for the argument in this paper.

The acquisition of visual and narrative authority represents power in *Jane Eyre*. In particular, in the relationship between Jane and Rochester, his gaze represents his power and her subordination.

Rochester's confession of his observation of her: "I observed you—myself unseen" (267) implies his visual dominance in Thornfield Hall, while his blindness after the collapse of Thornfield Hall figuratively represents not only his loss of power but also a reverse in authority; Jane overturns the structure of power between a man and a woman. As Peter J. Bellis writes, there are "two different modes of vision: a penetrating male gaze that fixes and defines the woman as its object, and a marginal female perception that would conceal or withhold itself from the male" (Bellis 639). Although interactions of eyes in *Jane Eyre* are more complex and slightly different from Michel Foucault's theory of univocal and oppressive gaze and power, the theory is adaptable to the argument of the structure of observation, narrative, and power.

To make the argument clearer, Jane's art of narrative needs to be examined. Since *Jane Eyre* is a fictional autobiography, it is written in the first person singular, purportedly by Jane Rochester, ten years after her marriage to Edward Rochester. The narrative technique of Jane is complex: she tells her past in retrospect, but with her interpretations of it. Since her narrative seems reliable and trustworthy, even though her narrative is complicated, it steers readers to interpretations of her autobiography in the way she intends. Apparently, Jane and Bertha are described as inferior Others; in particular, in their relationship with their master/Rochester, they are obviously considered to be his mistress/slave. However, an undeniable difference is found in their ability of narrative: while Jane has perpetually narrated and interpreted her past to create an ideal self-portrait, Bertha is represented as a mad, brutal, and inferior Other for lack of narrative ability.

Criticism has considered the red-room to be a figurative space which reflects feminine rage, sexuality, and madness. As for the art of narrating, the scene of the red-room connotes a suggestive element to analyze how the narrator Jane interprets and reconstructs her past. The narrator Jane explains in detail the process by which she becomes unconscious in the red-room: she realizes "a light gleamed on the wall" (13), and she wonders if it is "a ray from the moon penetrating some

aperture in the blind” (13). Here, the narrator Jane effectively inserts her interpretations of unconsciousness in the present tense: “I can now conjecture readily that this streak of light was, in all likelihood, a gleam from a lantern, carried by some one across the lawn” (13). The verbal tense is then switched to the past tense: “but then, prepared as my mind as for horror, shaken as my nerves were by agitation” (13–14), and she concludes “the swift-darting beam was a herald of some coming vision from another world” (14). Suddenly, her heart beats thickly, and she suffocates. Her descriptions, seemingly, are objective and reliable, but her explanations in the present tense clearly suggest that the narrator Jane rationally analyzes her traumatic experience. In addition, the narrator Jane effectively and dramatically closes the scene: “I suppose I had a species of fit: unconsciousness closed the scene” (14). The usage of the word ‘suppose’ emphasizes the uncertainty of what happens in the red-room, which implies that the scene is interpreted and re-created by the narrator Jane.

The defined images of sex and race are closely related to representations of femininity in *Jane Eyre*; since language is closely related to authority in *Jane Eyre*, their masters’ usage of words potentially represents Jane and Bertha, although the narrator Jane’s participation is a significant element for the creation of Bertha and her images. In feminist criticism, resemblances between Jane and Bertha have been frequently argued: in the imagery of blood and fire, and the red-room and the attic,⁴ though their differences are undeniable. In physical appearance, they are utterly different; Jane is a “little small thing” (363), “almost like a child” (363) and plain, while Bertha is “a fine woman, in the style of Blanche Ingram” (260), “tall, dark, and majestic” (260), and “the boast of Spanish Town for her beauty” (260). Paradoxically, Jane and Bertha are frequently described with similar words, which implies that they are inferior non-human creatures such as “a mad cat” (9), “the revolted slave” (11), “little elfish” (222), “a mere sprite or salamander” (223), “a thing than an angel” (223), “a monster” (226), “a savage face” (242), “a goblin appearance” (243), “some strange wild

animal” (250), and “Mrs. Rochester” (234). Interestingly, Jane and Bertha are constructed and defined/redefined by similar words which the masters use. The control of words clearly represents their superiority and power: they are in a position to identify Jane and Bertha as Others. Their words are intentionally selected in order to promote the fixed and defined framework of male-female relations of domination and subordination.

In *Jane Eyre*, the motifs of imprisonment and a limited world function to produce a peculiar space which is isolated and removed from the outer world; the master rules and establishes law and discipline there. The language of the master is an important element in establishing law and in defining the meanings of words in his residence. In Thornfield Hall, the master, Rochester, controls language and defines its meaning. Jane tells of her encounter with a mysterious woman in white who is “tall and large, with thick and dark hair hanging long down her back” (242). Rochester gives her his explanation about the woman and what she has done:

It was half dream, half reality: a woman did, I doubt not, enter your room: and that woman was—must have been—Grace Poole. You call her a strange being yourself: from all you know you have reason so to call her—what did she do to me? What to Mason? In a state between sleeping and waking you noticed her entrance and her actions; but feverish, almost delirious as you were, you ascribed to her a goblin appearance different from her own: the long dishevelled hair, the swelled black face, the exaggerated stature, were figments of imagination; results of nightmare: the spiteful tearing of the veil was real: and it is like her. [...] Do you accept my solution of the mystery? (243)

Rochester defines the “tall and large, with thick and dark hair” (242) woman in white as ‘Grace Poole’. Certainly, it seems that his definition is used properly and is acceptable in Thornfield Hall. When Jane is near

the attic, she listens to “a curious laugh” (91): “While I paced softly on the last sound I expected to hear in so still a region, a laugh, struck my ear. It was a curious laugh; distinct, formal, mirthless” (91). Then Mrs. Fairfax replies to Jane’s inquiry: “‘Some of the servants, very likely’ she answered: ‘perhaps Grace Poole’” (91). Her answer is obviously unacceptable to Jane, “for the laugh was as tragic, as preternatural a laugh as any [she] ever heard” (91). Here, the name ‘Grace Poole’ includes a peculiar meaning which is comprehended only by the servants in Thornfield Hall: Mrs. Fairfax says, “‘Too much noise, Grace’” (91), which implies that Mrs. Fairfax also considers the woman who laughs dramatically and ghostily is ‘Grace Poole.’ Moreover, Grace Poole also accepts Mrs. Fairfax’s statements, which indicates that Rochester’s definition of the woman who laughs and behaves like a ghost as ‘Grace Poole’ is the authorized definition, for he is the master in Thornfield Hall, and the master/authority defines the meanings of words.

As for the definition of insanity, like the meanings of words, its identification depends on authority. In regard to the exertion of authority, Michel Foucault writes that the authorities exercise power by branding dualistic divisions: “sane/mad, dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal” (Foucault 199). In *Jane Eyre*, as Foucault declares, the authority identifies the different realms, sane and insane; Bertha is labeled a mad woman by her husband Rochester. Although the narrator Jane reconstructs Rochester’s account of his wife’s madness, he definitely certifies his wife Bertha as a lunatic, that is, Bertha as a mad woman is constructed through language by others.

In addition, for the lack of the ability to narrate, Bertha’s identification is narrated and authorized by her husband, Rochester. Bertha’s physical features imply not only her race but also her hereditary disease. Rochester states that his bride’s mother is alive, and “she was only mad, and shut up in a lunatic asylum. There was a younger brother, too, a complete dumb idiot” (260-1). Moreover, “the doctors now discovered that *my wife* was mad—her excesses had prematurely developed the germs of insanity” (261). Bertha’s mental

illness is represented as a hereditary disease from the maternal line. In the Victorian period, incorrect information and discrimination spread in regard to mental illness and its genetic components. As for a hereditary mental disease, Elaine Showalter demonstrates that “Brontë’s account echoes the beliefs of Victorian psychiatry about the transmission of madness: since the reproductive system was the source of mental illness in women, women were the prime carries of madness, twice as likely to transmit it as were fathers” (Showalter, *Female* 67). Her madness is depicted not only as a reflection of ideologies in a patriarchal society, but also as that of the beliefs of Victorian psychiatry.

It may be likely that Bertha embodies Jane’s rage and insanity as her double, as Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar indicate, mad Bertha is “in a sense [Jane’s] own secret self” (Gilbert and Gubar 348), and her “dark double” (Gilbert and Gubar 360). But, following Foucault’s theory, insanity is branded by power, which indicates that the authority categorizes Bertha as ‘insane’ and Jane as ‘sane’. Considering Jane’s traumatic childhood, it is deniable that Jane may go mad. But, as Jane declares “I was sane, and not mad—as I am now” (270), she presents herself as definitely sane. As Foucault points out, the division between sanity and insanity suggests a difference between authority and subordination. Since she grasps narrative and visual authority, the narrator Jane intends to control her creative world in order to make readers believe she is ‘sane’. For this reason, although resemblances between Jane and Bertha are readily found, they are far from a double; indeed, in terms of narrative, Bertha’s inferiority seems obvious.

Bertha Rochester is a symbolical figure of female insanity and female subordination; the loss of her subjectivity is considered to be her characteristic, which figuratively represents feminine oppression and subordination. Since she is unable to narrate her own behavior, her laughter and growls are represented as signs of her insanity. Her own perceptions are disregarded, and she thus becomes a sign, ‘a madwoman in the attic’, to the others. For this reason, first, she is labeled ‘Grace Poole.’ Since she is a sign, her name is easily changeable; she is referred

to as “Mrs. Rochester” (234), ‘a mad woman,’ ‘a wild animal,’ and a woman of “a goblin appearance” (243). Since nobody is able to understand her language, her utterances are misinterpreted; in truth, her utterances are opaque signifiers.

In *Jane Eyre*, Jane describes Bertha’s madness in detail. Describing her physical appearance as that of a beast or a wild animal implies that Jane considers Bertha a lower animal, not a human being, which obviously suggests Jane’s sense of superiority to Bertha: Bertha is a wild creature with “a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane” (250) which “ran backwards and forwards” (250), and “snatched and growled” (250). Her madness is described in her grotesqueness and wildness. Jane uses such fierceness and savagery in order to emphasize her powerlessness and Bertha’s dangerousness, which justifies herself as an innocent victim, because she also “uses Bertha’s attacks as opportunities to advertise her own utter harmlessness” (Sternlieb 469); in a sense, Jane ‘needs’ Bertha’s lunatic attacks in order to portray herself as an innocuous victim.

Furthermore, Bertha’s madness not only functions as an opportunity to gloss over questions of adultery and bigamy, for her madness demonstrates the reliability of her narrative. In particular, in the process of creating Bertha as a madwoman, the innkeeper serves a significant role in portraying Bertha as a madwoman:

She was kept in very close confinement, ma’am; people even for some years was not absolutely certain of her existence. No one saw her: they only knew by rumour that such a person was at the Hall; and who or what she was it was difficult to conjecture. They said Mr. Edward had brought her from abroad; and some believed she had been his mistress. But a queer thing happened a year since—a very queer thing. (363)

One of the significant features of the narrative can be observed in the above dialogue: as ‘rumour,’ the innkeeper narrates the lunatic’s

existence and Jane's experience in the Hall. The insertion of a third party's point of view appears to be trustworthy evidence, which provides support to the narrative. The innkeeper says: "a queer thing happened a year since—a very queer thing" (363). "[A] queer thing" (363) implies the disclosure of the hidden secret; the lunatic lady is "Mr. Rochester's wife" (363), and he falls in love with a governess who is "a little small thing, they say, almost like a child. I never saw her myself" (363). Since his narrative is constructed of 'rumour' and hearsay evidence, it should not be considered reliable, but the similarity between his utterances and Jane's narrative prompts readers to consider that what he tells is reliable paradoxically because it reinforces her narrative. For her idealized self-image, the recurrence of the narrator's comments on her life functions as a fundamental factor. The frequent insertion of dialogue between Jane and others not only objectifies her narrative but also cleverly distracts us from moral questions of adultery and bigamy, as the narrator Jane intends to do.

Their difference seems clear in *Jane Eyre*, because Jane's domination over Bertha is obvious. In regard to the mechanism of observation and power, Jane's possession of them is undeniable, even though the novel *Jane Eyre* does not escape from the masculine structure of power. While Jane gazes at and narrates others, Bertha lacks the opportunity to tell her own story. She appears to be merely the sign of a 'a mad woman' in order to conceal the hidden facts in the relationships among Bertha, Rochester, and Jane.

A penetrating male gaze, in general, defines the woman as its object, and in particular, as a projection of sexual desire. In *Jane Eyre*, since Rochester's univocal gaze represents male superiority and power connotes his domination, Jane rejects Rochester's proposal, not to be "Fairfax Rochester's girl-bride" (220), and declares that "I will be myself" (221). Although she is ignorant of the existence of his secret wife, Jane refuses to be gazed at as his object. Since the gaze is closely related to

authority, to be fixed and defined as its object by Rochester is equivalent to being subject to him. Furthermore, to be Rochester's object implies that Jane is regarded as an inferior Other like Bertha.

In *Jane Eyre*, reflections of self in the looking-glass function as a significant motif of psychological depictions of female characters; in the red room, Jane looks at "a great looking-glass" (11), and she finds her reflection, "the strange little figure", gazes at her who has "a white face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still, had the effect of a real spirit: I thought it like one of the tiny phantoms, half fairy, half imp" (11). Describing her reflections, here, the words she uses, "a white face", "the tiny phantoms", "half fairy, half imp" (11), resemble the words that Rochester uses to express his affection for Jane after his proposal. He asks: "Jane, you look blooming, and smiling and pretty", and he said, "truly pretty this morning. Is this my pale, little elf? Is this my mustard-seed?" (220). He also describes Jane as "young Mrs. Rochester—Fairfax Rochester's girl-bride" (220); he longs to adorn "these fairy-like fingers' with rings" (220); and in addition he admires her beauty: "You are a beauty, in my eyes; and a beauty just after the desire of my heart,—delicate and aerial" (220). His expressions clearly reveal his preference. He is likely to use terms which evoke a fairy and an angel: "you little elfish" (222); you are "a mere sprite of salamander" (223). In nineteenth-century literature, the use of words which equate women to children or infants is common, which is necessary and justifiable in order to accept the ideology that the superior sex/race rules the inferior, according to de Groot.⁵ Numerous uses of the 'child' metaphor for colonials in Kipling's works are found, which can "be paralleled by comparable images of femininity ranging from Dickens's child-women to Burke's ideal of 'infantine' female beauty and Carlyle's addressing a girl child as 'little woman'" (de Groot 98). Clearly, Rochester's choice of words and phrases are reflections of this ideology, and the inequality of sexes and races is to be used to promote the theory of the relationship between superiority and inferiority, male and female, and Self and Other.

Similarities between the words which Jane and Rochester use imply that Jane belongs to the world constructed by male language, which implies her incapacity to represent her true self-image through language. It is clear that Jane confronts difficulty in describing herself, which indicates her lack of narrative authority. The fragility of her authorization suggests that Jane is threatened to be in the position of female or non-Western Other in defence of the ideal identity that Western men had developed and needed.⁶ As insanity is branded by power, femininity is also defined/redefined by authority. Because of the absence of her own language, Jane faces difficulty in describing herself; she is constrained to follow the language that her master uses. That is to say, what the narrator Jane depicts is based on the norm, law, and discipline established by masculine authority.

On the other hand, Jane resists Rochester's definition of herself as his angelic, girl-like, beautiful wife. Her attempts to deny his definition/redefinition of herself invites an investigation: she asks him, "Don't address me as if I were a beauty; I am your plain, Quakerish governess" (220). Interestingly, Rochester also uses similar expressions to represent Jane: "You have lived the life of a nun: no doubt you are well drilled in religious forms" (105). Since she entered Gatehead Hall, Jane has been labeled as a demonic and brutal child such as "a mad cat" (9), which implies that Jane is perpetually threatened to be branded and defined/redefined by her masters. It is supposed that there are differences between what the masters call her and what Jane creates as her self-portrait. She denies the given labels and declares: "I am not an angel"; and "I will not be one till I die: I will be myself" (221). Her assertions indicate her resistance to the masters/the authorities. Furthermore, as de Groot points out, "Brontë used oriental motifs to illuminate contradictions in westerners' sexuality" (de Groot 109). The narrator Jane describes Jane Eyre with oriental and exotic phrases: I "sat cross-legged like a Turk" (5); she is "like any other rebel slave" (9); and Jane also asks, "Am I a servant?" (9); "I am a Jew-usurer?" (223); and she also inquires: "'Why?—am I a monster?'" (226). Jane's choice of words

suggest her awareness and recognition of her position; she does not dominate, but she is subordinate to the authority as a female, a non-Western Other. In the nineteenth century, oriental and exotic images contribute to the discourse of the feminized, sensual Orient.⁷ That is to say, her use of words show that Jane is unable to escape from the dominant male world.

Furthermore, in the formation of Jane's self image, as this essay has demonstrated, looking glasses are used effectively to develop her self-portrait. Like her reflection in the mirror in the red-room, in *Jane Eyre*, self-reflections in mirrors contribute to create her self-image. After Rochester's proposal, Jane interprets her face in the mirror:

While arranging my hair, I looked at my face in the glass, and felt it was no longer plain: there was hope in its aspect, and life in its colour; and my eyes seemed as if they had beheld the fount of fruition, and borrowed beams from the lustrous ripple. (219)

Her reflection is distinguished from that in the red-room. Because of the proposal, Jane 'sees' that her face is "no longer plain" (219), but it brightens up with pleasure. In a sense, it is impossible to see one's face; one can see only a reflection of one's face in a looking glass. Since it is a reversal of one's face, the reflection is not a real image but a creation. As it is clear in the above case of Jane, one's reflection in the mirror is an interpretation of oneself. In general, the difference between oneself and an image perpetually exists, which is one of the reasons for uncertainty and unreliability in Jane's self-portrait.

The fragility of Jane's self-image is also found in that of her creativity. Jane explains the process by which she depicts things:

The subjects had, indeed, risen vividly on my mind. As I saw them with the spiritual eye, before I attempted to embody them, they were striking; but my hand would not second my fancy, and in each case it had wrought out but a pale portrait of the thing I had

conceived. (107)

Jane declares that she always confronts difficulty in drawing the subjects which have risen vividly on her mind, even though she has seen them with “the spiritual eye” (107). Her portrait is different from what she attempted to represent. In regard to herself as well, a clear difference between creations and facts emerge due to her poor creativity. Literally, it is based on Jane’s experiences, but, because *Jane Eyre* is written in the first person singular, what she records rests on her perspective and interpretations, which implies that her autobiography, *Jane Eyre*, is not an objective and disinterested record of her life at all, but her own narrative of her desires. Jane Rochester grasps power to narrate and create ‘Jane Eyre’s life’ as she wishes.

In *Jane Eyre*, in terms of both imperialism and the male-female relationship, Bertha and her insanity performs an important function: Bertha is represented as the projection of the Empire’s terror of an impending colonial revenge, and a justification for British interventionism in its colonies. In the male-female relation, Bertha is represented as an inferior, brutal, grotesque, immoral and monstrous Other in order to define Jane and Rochester as superior and moral beings. Bertha’s insanity is formed as a necessary image in order to ‘solve’ or disguise complex moral problems such as bigamy and adultery. Since Bertha’s inner self is disregarded, she becomes a sign of female insanity. Because of her lack of verbal and visual authority, Bertha is perpetually defined/redefined by Rochester; that is, she is merely the image of ‘a madwoman.’

The reliability of a narrative depends on the art of the narrative and the formation of an ideal self-image in *Jane Eyre*. It is supposed that Jane’s purpose is to gain self-esteem and equality of status in a matrimonial relationship with Rochester, but, as de Groot points out, *Jane Eyre* ends with the reputation of the missionary St. John Rivers in

India, which indicates that “the affirmation of male achievement (and sacrifice) is given pride of place over the ‘feminine’ goals of marital and domestic happiness” (de Groot 122). As to imperialism, Jane is obviously on the side of the Empire, because she bears Rochester’s legitimate son, of pure English blood, who inherits his pedigree and his nation: the Rochesters and the British Empire. While Bertha is merely a sign created by male language, Jane is defined/constrained by the dominant patriarchal discourse.

In *Jane Eyre*, the acquisition of a penetrating gaze and narrative authority embodies power. Although Jane’s monopoly of both visual and narrative authority implies her acquisition of power, however, the complexity of narrative, the idealization of the self-portrait, and representations of a madwoman undermine her project. Like Bertha, Jane is not only under Rochester’s observation but also narrated and defined/redefined by him. Since Rochester grasps power and language in Thornfield Hall, his definition of insanity and sanity is authorized there. The transition from the observer to the object means that the observer is “totally seen, without ever seeing” (Foucault 202). In the relationship between Jane and Rochester, his gaze fixes and defines/redefines Jane as his subject; she is thrust to the periphery; she is defined as the Other. That is, deprivation of visual and verbal authority has the potential that she would be defined as insane. In the end, even though it is feeble, the recovery of Rochester’s eyesight suggests that Jane confronts difficulty in escaping from the world established by male language, in other words, fulfilling its norm, law, and discipline, yet unlike Bertha, she is defined as sane.

Notes

- ¹ See Jane Wood, *Passion and Pathology in Victorian Fiction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 110.
- ² All quotations in the essay are from *Jane Eyre: A Norton Critical Edition*, Ed. Richard J. Dunn, 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 2001.
- ³ While, in feminist criticism, Bertha is considered as a symbol of feminine oppression, she is considered an essential figure who embodies the conflict

between the Empire and its colonies in post-colonial criticism. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism." *Critical Inquiry* 12 (1985): 243–61. Susan Meyer, *Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Women's Fiction*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996. In terms of feminine insanity in the Victorian period, many critics have examined and pointed out Bertha's representations. See Helen Small, *Love's Madness: Medicine, the Novel, and Female Insanity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Jane Wood, *Passion and Pathology in Victorian Fiction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

⁴ For example Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977. Also see Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830–1980*. London: Penguin, 1987, and Sandra M. Gilbert, and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*.

⁵ See Joanna de Groot, "'Sex' and 'Race': The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century." *Sexuality and Subordination: Interdisciplinary Studies of Gender in the Nineteenth Century*. Ed. Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall, p. 98.

⁶ See Joanna de Groot, p. 99.

⁷ See Joanna de Groot, p. 108.

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