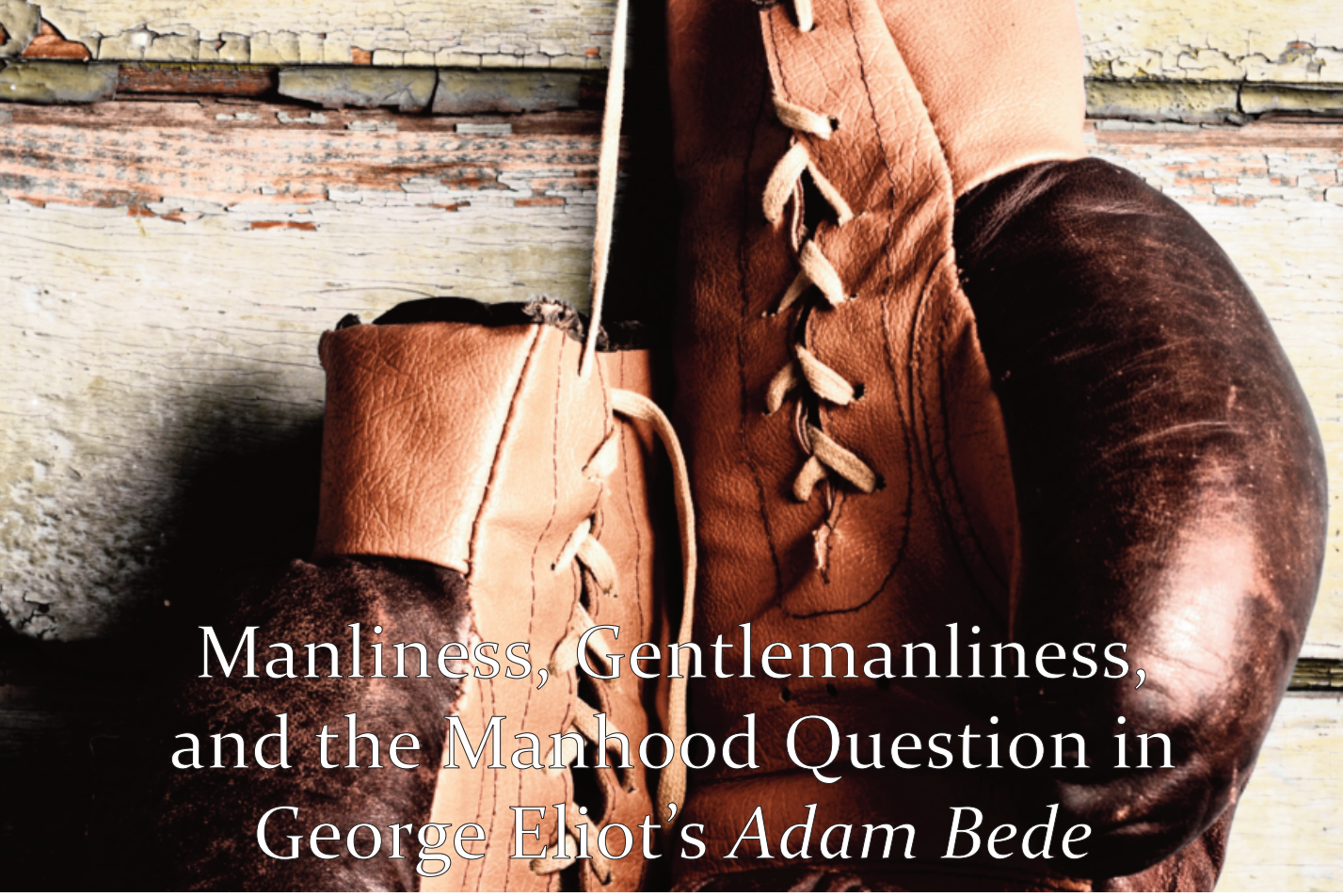

Manliness, Gentlemanliness, and the Manhood Question in George Eliot's *Adam Bede*

Dennis Gouws

Adam Bede *revisits topical changes to English manliness and gentlemanliness at the turn of the nineteenth century. In her novel, written almost sixty years into the 1800s, George Eliot recognizes how new thinking about these gendered concepts changed the traditional ways men governed their manhood. Arthur Donnithorne and Adam Bede most prominently represent contending late-eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century forms of manhood in the novel, and they fittingly test their mettle by boxing, which many contemporary Britons thought fostered manly and gentlemanly qualities. Both men are profoundly affected by their fight. Each learns the limits of his particular form of manhood: Arthur realizes that traditional gentlemanliness no longer entitles him to unaccountable behavior; Adam discovers that attaining manhood requires a commitment to managing manly conduct attentively.*

Adam Bede revisits topical changes to English manliness and gentlemanliness at the turn of the nineteenth century. In her novel, written almost sixty years into the 1800s, George Eliot recognizes how new thinking about these gendered concepts changed the traditional ways men governed their manhood. Since the fourteenth century, men's identities and conduct had been conceived of as a question of manhood; *manhood* had elucidated men's difference from women and boys, men's sexuality, men's duty to

society, and men's courage.[1] Manhood, moreover, had traditionally been contingent, a reputation that a man had to attain and maintain. In newly industrial nineteenth-century, the manhood question considered traditional and new ways a man might grow into and sustain a meaningful, productive, and commendable type of manhood. Arthur Donnithorne and Adam Bede most prominently represent contending traditional and new forms of manhood in the novel, and they fittingly test their mettle by boxing, which many contemporary Britons thought fostered manly and gentlemanly qualities.

Manliness and gentlemanliness contributed to the manhood question established concepts for assessing repute. From the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries, men primarily understood their gender-specific, socially prescribed conduct as an issue of manliness, and they customarily expressed their manliness by behaving with fortitude.[2] Attaining manhood, therefore, depended on recurrent demonstrations of manly vigor and self-discipline. In addition, as John Tosh observes, "manliness expresses perfectly the important truth that boys become men, not just by growing up, but by acquiring a variety of manly qualities and manly competencies as part of a conscious process which has no close parallel in the traditional experience of young women" (*Manliness* 31). Men alone bore the responsibility of managing their manliness, and although their actions certainly impacted women and children, men's inattention to this monitoring had uniquely serious sociopolitical and personal consequences. If a man failed to sustain manly behavior, he might have become unmanned, a passive condition described by the *OED* as "deprived of courage," or "made weak and timid." An unmanned man would be considered unmanly and consequently condemned for his lack of determination (commonly referred to as *pluck* or *bottom*) and, possibly for being effeminate.

Although nineteenth-century Britons became increasingly alarmed at its subversive homoerotic potential, effeminacy had traditionally denoted both irresponsible political conduct (demonstrated by corrupt manners and military unpreparedness) and insalubrious personal conduct, exemplified by luxury (indulgent extravagance) or unconventional sexuality (often exemplified by a love-struck man's willing surrender to his desire for a woman.)[3] The Regency dandy; defined by Ellen Moers as "a man solely devoted to his own perfection through a ritual of taste" who "stood for superiority, irresponsibility, inactivity"; was its most conspicuous turn-of-the-century exemplar (13). Many thought that infirm, undisciplined state leadership was a symptom of effeminacy and, consequently, a threat to national security; in addition, men who were overly concerned with politeness and sensibility were often considered effeminate.[4] Effeminacy was believed to have infected body politic and Britons alike. At the turn of the nineteenth century Britons believed that it inevitably threatened the health of the body politic because it modelled *louche* foreign manners ostensible in Orientalist fantasies, Italian culture, and French politeness. Carolyn D. Williams suggests this was because, "[t]he association between luxury, warm climates, and perceived oriental degeneracy encouraged assumptions that luxury and effeminacy took their rise in the south-east, flowing towards the north-west in an ineluctable current that threatened to engulf all manly virtue in its path" (23).[5] Suspicious

eighteenth-century Britons lampooned as effeminate Italian and French culture, and their idiosyncratic flaws were notably personified in caricatures of the opera singer (otherwise the *castrato*) and the mannered fop. According to Williams the *castrati* embodied, "the enervating effects of luxury, and the degeneration of ancient Rome to modern Italy," and after the publication of John Dennis's *Essay on the Opera* (1711) and *Essay upon Publick Spirit* (1726), many in Britain believed that all male opera singers were *castrati* (183). Moreover, Williams notes that for Alexander Pope and his *milieu*, "Italian opera [was] the malign reverse of epic: an art form destructive of manliness, patriotism, and public spirit" (181). Effeminate Italian opera, therefore, was considered antithetical to and corrosive of manly British patriotism. In late-eighteenth Britain, French culture and military power had most urgently threatened British sovereignty. French manners influenced the British aristocracy, and these aristocrats' love of luxury led to a form of trickle-down effeminacy which, as Kathleen Wilson observes, "was chiefly objectionable because it had produced a weak and enervated fighting force that was undermining Britain's position in the world by relinquishing to France her 'Empire of the Sea'"; consequently, "the aristocratic state was identified with 'French influence' and corruption at home and with timidity, effeminacy and ignominy abroad" (189). The British nobility were perceived as effeminate for valuing luxury over patriotism. The influence of French manners on British politeness also contributed to the effeminacy problem. In the eighteenth century men increasingly indulged in what was perceived to be the women-centered, "refined kind of suffering that preoccupied cultivators of sensibility" (Barker-Benfield xx). Men's sensitivity to women's concerns potentially compromised manliness. Michèle Cohen notes, moreover, that gentlemen practiced French manners in the company of women, where men were expected to converse with formal civility: "politeness and conversation, though necessary to the fashioning of the gentleman, were thought to be effeminating not just because they could be achieved only in the company of women, but because they were modeled on the French. The question is could men be at once polite and manly?" (47).

This important framing of the manhood question, as an issue of reconciling politeness and manliness, was addressed, as Cohen notes, by a change in attitude to politeness: "By the 1780s, priorities had been significantly altered....The particularly affinity between French and politeness which, early in the century, had served to deplore English monosyllabic harshness and taciturnity, now served as a foil to celebrate these very same traits" (56) Popular British attitudes to politeness (and the French who exemplified them) shifted from diffidence to defiance. To prevent unmanly, effeminate conduct (resulting subjecting oneself to overpowering desire for a woman and adopting polite manners in their sphere of influence), manly behavior required chivalric courage (on behalf of a desired woman) and plain speaking rather than formal politeness.[6] A revived interest in chivalry, a code of "disinterested bravery, honour, and courtesy" (*OED*), enabled men to understand their manhood as manly, gentlemanly, and civil—or, as Cohen argues, "chivalry provided a vocabulary for refashioning the gentleman as masculine, integrating national identity with enlightenment notions of progress and civilization" ("'Manners'" 315). This new,

progressive chivalry enabled men to be direct, manly, and (even if not so by birth) gentlemanly.

Manly neo-chivalric nationalism and imperialism (its foreign-policy form), celebrated in those predominately male arenas of war and politics, could effectively calm anxieties about an increasingly effeminate body politic in Britain. Evident in Williams' discussion of the *castrati* was a vivid cautionary tale about the degenerative impact of luxury on society. Barker-Benfield similarly notes, "Those who warned Englishmen that effeminacy was the inevitable effect of luxury had the most powerful of all precedents in mind, the history for the degeneracy of Rome, from virtuous republic to luxurious empire" (104). A virile patriotism would cure what ailed the body politic, uniting Britons in a manly common sociopolitical cause. In addition, as Wilson observes, "empire—its attainment, acquisition, settlement and preservation—was now represented as the antidote to aristocratic 'cultural treason' and effeteness, the bulwark and proving ground of the true national character, of national (and middle-class) potency, identity and virtue" (189). This middle-class militarism, inculcated "not just by direct incentives or because of pressure from above, but also by idealism, by a desperate concern for their homeland and by their youth" as Linda Colley puts it, served both manliness and nationalism (302). Karen Downing similarly argues that, "the surge in membership of volunteer and militia regiments after 1793" suggests broad middle-class interest in "demonstrating manliness" as a means of attaining and sustaining manhood (348). By the early nineteenth century Colley notes that "more young, unmarried men were available than ever before, brash, eager, hungry for a chance to fight (particularly perhaps on home ground) and desperately concerned not to seem a coward in the eyes of friends and lovers" (303). Cowardice implied both unpatriotic social opprobrium and unmanliness. Nineteenth-century Britons inherited this manly remedy for the declining health of the body politic evident in both an increasing national and imperial pride and a masculine poetics, texts informed by topical men's deeds, consisting of what Colley calls a "cult of heroic endeavour and aggressive maleness" (303).[7] This new form of manhood countered constitutional effeminacy with a chivalric, disciplined, and powerful assertion of national unity, and one of its most popular manifestations was boxing.

Boxing occasioned social unity and an honorable opportunity for betterment. Fist fighting was popular with working men, and as Philip Mason observes, "through [the eighteenth century] and into the next, an indulgence, sometimes an affection" was felt for a rich man who listed among his accomplishments "an amateur of boxing" (82).[8] An important reason for this broad interest in boxing was a growing consensus about what made a man honorable. Downing observes that, "a shared meaning of honor was becoming established during the eighteenth century across the social spectrum as the idea spread that individual virtue could be earned through deeds rather than heredity" (334). Regardless of their rank, men could earn respect through the skilled and disciplined use of their energies in fair competition. Reflecting the topical shift from valuing polite manhood to manly manhood, honor, as David Castronovo notes, had gone "from being a matter of forms and appearances to being a matter of character" (30). Turn-of-the-century boxing matches could certainly be

controversial: Michael Brander reports that, "Pickpockets at any such meeting were an accepted hazard, but the prize-ring roughs far exceeded them, even being successful on occasion in stopping the fight if it was not going the way they wished" (170). The ideal prize fighter, however, was popularly described as, "mild and sociable in demeanor, conducting himself with discretion and civility, displaying respectable manners"; however, when he was fighting, he was, "steady in his strategy, was cool of temper (quickness to temper and submission to unrestrained passions were the cause of failure), was capable of giving and taking powerful blows, and had unquestionable 'bottom'" (Downing 334). These manly traits suggest that the mastery of social conventions (including respectable rather than refined manners) and an honorable character could earn a man esteem and social advancement. As Downing notes, "There was great appeal, therefore, in a boxer who seemed to have found a self-controlled equilibrium: one that embodied not only the characteristics of a champion but also those of a gentleman" (346). Most fighters were artisans or laborers; distinguishing themselves as gentleman boxers could earn them a more agreeable form of manhood.[9]

Gentlemanliness traditionally denoted a man's distinguished rank as well as his appropriately chivalrous and refined conduct.[10] Before the nineteenth-century a British gentleman could only be of noble birth or from the gentry (the social rank between the aristocrat and the yeoman). Access to the gentry traditionally depended on what Robin Gilmour calls "a system of subtle exclusions" which

> conferred gentility on the army officer; on the clergyman of the established church, but not the Dissenter; on the London physician, but not the surgeon or the attorney; on the man of "liberal education," but only if he had received that education at Oxford or Cambridge, from which the Dissenters were excluded and which was, in effect, a training-ground for Church of England clergymen. (*Idea* 7)

This arcane system ensured "the prestige of those occupations which reinforced the stability of social hierarchy based on the ownership of land," but initially "had little to offer the new men who were creating the industrial revolution" (*Idea* 7). Nineteenth-century gentlemanliness, however, gradually accommodated new kinds of men. Gilmour observes that "it was not the possession of a caste, like the French *gentilhomme*"; gentlemanliness was not exclusively based on blood and was, therefore, open to the kind of redefinition that occurred in the nineteenth century (*Victorian* 20). This social elasticity enabled upward mobility, eventually including self-made men and captains of industry among the ranks of gentlemen, but the values of these generally manly gentlemen often conflicted with those reputedly unmanly (even effeminate) gentlemen from the aristocracy or the gentry. Gilmour notes that "Between what Dickens understood by 'manly' and what Lord Chesterfield would have accepted as 'gentlemanly' an important change in attitudes has taken place," and that *manly* derived "much of its force from the attack on the supposed effeminacy of dandyism and being used generally to connote a wholesome disregard for the niceties of etiquette and the cramping decorum of the 'fine gentleman' ideal" (*Idea* 17, 85). The new manly gentleman valued meritorious honor and integrity over heredity and appearances, and

Eliot dramatizes the conflict between Arthur's traditional gentlemanly manhood and Adam's manhood, which anticipates this new manly gentlemanliness.

In her journal Eliot remarks that "the character of Adam" and "his relation to Arthur Donnithorne" were central to her first thoughts about the novel, and in its events she provides sufficient details about each man for readers clearly to discern his position *vis-a-vis* the manhood question (*Journals* 297). Arthur and Adam both imagine successful manhood involves doing one's duty; what distinguishes them are those rewards each feels he might justly reap as a result. Arthur's manhood depends on his reputation as a gentleman. His "love of patronage" was primarily selfish because he "liked to do everything that was handsome, and to have his handsome deeds recognized" (208). Moreover, he "liked to feel his own importance" and "cared a great deal for the good-will" of the people in his community (309). His imagined future manhood involves him performing a benevolent public role:

> all his pictures of the future, when he should come into the estate, were made up of a prosperous, contented tennantry, adoring their landlord, who would be the model of an English gentleman—mansion in the first-rate order, all elegance and high taste—jolly housekeeping—finest stud in Loamshire—purse open to all public projects.... (170)

When he does inherit the estate, he thinks he "would show the Loamshire people what a fine country gentleman was," imagining himself, "spoken well of as a first-rate landlord; by-and-by making speeches at election dinners, and showing a wonderful knowledge of agriculture; the patron of new plows and drills, the severe upbraider of negligent landowners, and withal a jolly fellow that everybody must like" (483). This public performance of his duties would be complemented by those of his future wife, "who would play the lady-wife to the first-rate country gentleman" (484). Arthur's gentlemanly exhibition would even include a "picture" of married Adam and Hetty Sorel in its "panorama" (485). Away from public scrutiny Arthur would, as a traditional gentleman, "have property enough to support numerous peccadilloes" whose possible adverse consequences he could remedy with a "handsome" pension or "expensive *bon-bons*, packed up and directed by his own hand" (170). His rank entitles him to appear a respected gentleman, and his money would license him discreetly to indulge his appetites without serious consequences. Arthur's repute, however, would depend on his ability to demonstrate dutiful manhood and manly self-discipline. Although Adam believes him to be, "one o' those gentlemen as wishes to do the right thing, and to leave the world a bit better than he found it," the narrator wonders "whether he would have self-mastery enough to be always as harmless and purely beneficent as his good-nature led him to desire" (314, 170). This concern about his manliness is corroborated by the topical luxurious and sexually unconventional tropes that frame Arthur's desire. He discloses, for example, a homoerotic childhood Orientalist fantasy when he recalls, "I used to think if ever I was a rich sultan, I would make Adam my grand-vizier. And I believe now, he would bear the exaltation as well as any poor wise man in an Eastern story" (106). Arthur's cultural tastes seem *outré*. When contemplating an encounter with Hetty he sings a song from Gay's *Beggar's Opera* that, Stephen Gill remarks,

reveals "Arthur's state of mind"; the lyrics describe a man's luxurious surrender to his desire for a woman: "Her Kisses / Dissolve us in Pleasure, and Soft Repose" (600). The powerful influence of this effeminate desire on Arthur is clearly articulated both when he concedes, "he would have given up three years of his youth for the happiness of abandoning himself without remorse to his passion for Hetty" and when the narrator observes, "a man never lies with more delicious languor under the influence of a passion, than when he has persuaded himself he will subdue it tomorrow" (330, 334). In keeping with his effeminate preoccupation, Arthur's reading matter at the time notably includes Dr. John Moore's racy novel about a morally corrupt Italian nobleman-seducer, *Zeluco*. Arthur's traditional gentlemanliness consequently affords him to opportunities to indulge in the kind of effeminate luxury that could compromise how he manages his manliness.

Adam's manhood depends on his honorably performing his manly duty. He strives to do "a man's plain duty" which consists of having "the skill and conscience to do well the tasks that lie before [him]" (258). This Carlyle-inspired productivity topically defines the individual responsibility a man had to manage his manhood as an ethical question of meritorious labor and anticipates the "quintessence of individualism" and close identification with work that Tosh argues were central to Victorian manliness (*Manliness* 93, 92).[11] The narrator notes that, "Adam had confidence in his ability to achieve something in the future; he felt sure he should some day ... be able to maintain a family, and make a good broad path for himself" (254). Although Adam "was very susceptible to the influence of rank," he decisively defers to men with useful knowledge and personal integrity, choosing to "admit all established claims unless he saw very clear grounds for questioning them"; if, however, he saw fit, "he would have maintained his opinions against the largest landed proprietor in Loamshire or Stonyshire" (209). Adam's confident reasoning is a tribute to his commitment to furthering his education (at Bartle Massey's school) and Eliot's acknowledgment of a trend to self-improvement evident among nineteenth-century working-class men. Just as turn-of-the-century masculine poetics described new, manly ways of attaining manhood, popular biographical and fictional literary examples of appropriate industrial manhood increasingly became available to working-class Victorian readers—one of which was Eliot's first novel.[12] Gilmour recognizes this significant trend (and Eliot's part in it): "Industrial society had its own legitimating myths and models.... The independent, night-school attending, self-helping artisan was one of the models which middle-class writers held up to the working class, in novels like George Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859)" (*Victorian* 21).[13]

Adam's diligence and integrity are central to his sense of honor, and he is esteemed for it. Mr. Irwine, for example, asserts, "when a man whose duty lies in that sort of work shows a character which would make him an example in any station, his merit should be acknowledged. [Adam] is one of those to whom honor is due, and his friends should delight to honor him" (313). Arthur shares this respect for Adam and wishes him "all the prosperity in life that he deserves" (312). These tributes acknowledge that growing nineteenth-century consensus that merit should earn honor from all ranks of society. Adam's open, manly manhood, evident to all in his duty, integrity, and

honor; contrasts favorably with Arthur's gentlemanly manhood that consists of an overt show of dutifulness and a covert sense of entitlement. This impression that Adam is honest and meritorious while Arthur is duplicitous and a dilettante is strikingly apparent in their perceived military capability.

At a time when military preparedness and a man's ability to fight were important indicators of manliness, Adam seems more inherently martial than Arthur. Adam is praised for his soldierly demeanor even though he is not a soldier. He is described as having, "the air of a soldier standing at ease"; Colonel Townley, moreover, describes him as, "marching along like a soldier" and asserts, "We want such fellows as he to lick the French (50, 61). Adam's battle-ready manliness convinces while Arthur military bearing does not. Although he is a captain, Arthur lacks military discipline and training: he is "only a captain in the Loamshire militia," and consequently, as John R. Reed observes, neither "a trained warrior," nor "a genuine officer" because "[at] the time in which the narrative is set, militias were almost comical," serving primarily as vehicles for youthful demonstrations of manliness (*Adam* 104; "Soldier" 272). Arthur laments being away from his regiment not because he is foregoing training with them but because they were "enjoying themselves at Windsor" (172). Adam Bede, on the other hand, has the manly discipline and "soldierly bearing" that make up what Reed calls, "soldierliness" (277, 278). Arthur's and Adam's true pluck is tested when their disagreement concerning Hetty turns physical.

Arthur and Adam seem capable boxers, yet their attitudes to fighting differ. Both men are physically able: Arthur, who "could hit better than most men at Oxford," is described as "looking as if he could deliver well from the left shoulder, and floor his man"; Adam, who has "an iron will as well as an iron arm," had once fought "for fun" but will now only fight when another man "behaves like a scoundrel" (105, 212, 211). Like the rich "amateur of boxing" observed by Mason, Arthur merely considers pugilism one of his gentlemanly accomplishments. Adam demonstrates the "respectable manners" and the ability to "give and take powerful blows" described by Downing, but his "quickness to temper" prevents him from attaining that "self-controlled equilibrium" evident in an ideal gentlemanly boxer. He admits being "the cause o' poor Gil Tranter being laid up for a fortnight" and according to Bartle Massey had "pommelled young Mike Holdworth for wanting to pass a bad shilling before [he] knew whether he was in jest or earnest" (211, 290-91). While Arthur and Adam argue over the primacy of gentlemanly entitlement and chivalrous, manly honor in this chapter; they box because each is unable to control his manliness.

When confronted by Adam in the woods, Arthur postures like a dissolute Regency dandy: having drunk "more wine than usual at dinner .... he sauntered forth with elaborate carelessness—his flushed face, his evening dress of fine cloth and fine linen, his white jewelled hands half thrust into his waistcoat pickets" (342). He makes light of having just kissed Hetty and feels entitled to ignore Adam who, resolved to conduct a manly defense of Hetty's honor, "had told himself that he would not give loose to passion, he would only speak the right thing" (342). From this point in the chapter the narrator intrusively sides with Adam, contrasting Arthur's duplicitous performance with Adam's honorable integrity. Arthur is "preoccupied with the part he was playing";

however, neither the narrator nor Adam accept it (343). Arthur is shocked by Adam's defiant attitude: "you don't deceive me by your light words" Adam asserts, and the narrator agrees that Arthur had "thrown quite enough dust into honest Adam's eyes" (343). Adam, on his chivalrous high horse, holds Arthur accountable for the probable consequences of his entitlement and defends Hetty's honor: "You know, as well as I do, what it's to lead to, when a gentleman like you gives kisses and makes love to a young woman like Hetty" (344). Displaying his characteristic independence of mind, Adam argues that this matter concerns honorable conduct rather than appropriate deference to rank.

They fight because they feel slighted. Arthur throws the first punch because he feels insulted by Adam's insubordinate remarks challenging him to "fight ... like a man" and accusing him of being "a coward and a scoundrel"; Adam is enraged because he claims that because Arthur considers him "a common man," he feels entitled to "injure' him "without answering for it" (346).[14] The narrator naturalizes Adam's victory as physically inevitable because he is manly and strong, while Arthur is effeminate and weak:

> The delicate-handed gentleman was a match for the workman in everything but strength, and Arthur's skill in parrying enabled him to protract the struggle for some long moments. But between unarmed men, the battle is to the strong, where the strong is no blunderer, and Arthur must sink under a well-planted blow of Adam's, as a steel rod is broken by an iron bar. (347)

This passage topically suggests that skillful evasion is no match for physical competence when men contest as equals; that when a gentleman is not protected by rank, the manly worker will deservingly beat him if he is of stronger constitution. In addition, his triumph will be deemed honorable because it resulted from his demonstration of manly character, which as Castronovo notes gained increasing currency in nineteenth-century Britain. It is, however, a hollow victory for Adam because he feels "sickened by the vanity of his own rage" and he "[shudders] at the thought of his own strength" (347). His passionate vanity led him to assume a chivalrous defense of Hetty was appropriate because of false assumptions he had made about her feelings for him. Girouard observes that "one of the great dangers of chivalry was that it could make people totally out of touch with reality" resulting in them "revering women who did not want to be revered, serving others, who would have preferred to serve themselves, gallantry charging in the wrong direction" (270). Adam has been unmanned because his judgment was clouded by his chivalrous feelings. Concerning his strength Adam later concludes about knocking down Arthur, "I felt what poor empty work it was, as soon as I'd done it" (509). He now "distrusted himself: he had learned to dread the violence of his own feeling" (509). Unlike the gentlemanly boxer, Adam was unable to temper his feelings with careful thoughts and strive for "a self-controlled equilibrium." After the fight, Arthur loses his reputation as a gentleman and is temporarily unmanned. He keenly feels a twofold loss because alongside his

> sensitiveness to opinion, the loss of Adam's respect was a shock to his self-contentment

> which suffused his imagination with the sense that he had sunk in all eyes; as a sudden shock of fear from some real peril makes a nervous woman afraid even to step, because all her perceptions are suffused with a sense of danger. (356)

Arthur's public persona and private desiring self implode, exposing him as unmanly—Eliot's devastating simile suggests his womanly trepidation about his future manhood. This exposure has taught Arthur how crucial an honorable reputation is to gentlemanliness. Both men are profoundly affected by the fight. Each learns the limits of his particular form of manhood: Arthur realizes that traditional gentlemanliness no longer entitles him to unaccountable behavior; Adam discovers that attaining manhood requires a commitment to managing manly conduct attentively.

Both Adam and Arthur eventually attain respectable forms of manhood, but their achievements require a gambit. Having learned more effectively to manage his expectations and his manliness, Adam marries Dinah, even though doing so meant that "there was a tinge of sadness in his deep joy" (578). Adam has, moreover, learned a valuable lesson about the unintended consequences of misplaced chivalrous behavior. Arthur is now a colonel, but he is ill, unmarried, and exiled from his home community. His last words in the novel acknowledge "the truth" of the Adam's assertion that, 'There's a sort of wrong that cannot be made up for'" (584). Arthur accepts that to earn their respectability, gentlemen must be held accountable for all of their conduct. Although English manliness redefined gentlemanliness in the nineteenth-century, both concepts continued to be useful indicators of men's attempts at attaining and maintain manhood. In this retrospective novel George Eliot famously claimed, "I aspire to give no more than a faithful account of men and things as they have mirrored themselves in my mind" (221). She certainly succeeded in describing the drama and the costs incurred by embodied men such as Adam and Arthur who strove to improve their lives while managing their appetites and their dutiful relationships with others.

Notes

[1] The *Oxford English Dictionary* (hereafter, *OED*) cites the first such occurrence of *manhood* in 1340; distinguishes men from boys and women in 4.a and 4.b; describes a man's sexuality in 4.d; and notes men's societal duty and courage in 3. and 5. respectively. Peter N. Stearns concisely traces significant classical, religious, and socio-economic influences on the history of Western manhood his second chapter, "The Tradition of Manhood: Western Patriarchy."

[2] The *OED* lists definitive examples of such expressions of manliness occurring from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries in 2. Defining *manliness* as "the traditional word for prescriptive masculinity," Tosh briefly surveys the history of the term in *Manliness and Masculinities*, chapter one, "The Making of Manhood and the Uses of History" and chapter three, "The Old Adam and the New Man," 72-76. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall examine the religious, sexual, and commercial views of late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century manliness in *Family Fortunes*, chapters two, "'Ye are all one in Christ Jesus': men women and religion," nine, "'Lofty pine and clinging vine': living with gender in the middle class," and five "'A man must act': men and the enterprise." Elizabeth Foyster discusses how prior to the

nineteenth century men managed their aggression, negotiating a "manly self-control and governance" that did not smack of foppishness, understood as a surrender of "all the traditionally manly virtues of hardiness, courage and strength" (165). Harvey Claflin Mansfield briefly but usefully surveys prominent sixteenth- through nineteenth-century philosophers (Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, Burke, Kant, Hegel, and John Stuart Mill) on their association of manliness and liberalism in chapter six, "The Manly Liberal." Carolyn D. Williams examines eighteenth-century assumptions about maleness and manliness on 10-16.

[3] Foyster notes that

> in the seventeenth century 'effeminate' was a term that was applied to those men who were deviant in some way within their heterosexual relationships, it was not until the mid-eighteenth century that it began to connote homosexuality. The deviancy which was typical of men who were in love with women was that they fell so excessively in love that they relinquished their control and power to their lovers. (56)

By the mid nineteenth century, anxieties about effeminacy's subversive potential were expressed in what James Eli Adams calls a "hermeneutics of suspicion" concerning male monastic and artistic communities. This suspicion arose from "a gendered rhetoric that facilitated the subsequent sexualizing of gender transgression, in which 'effeminacy' was seen not as a public failure of forthright courage, but as the outward manifestation of a private sexual deviance" (*Dandies* 227, 17).

[4] Williams discusses the corrupting impact of effeminacy and luxury on the body politic in eighteenth-century Britain in chapter one, "Manliness and the Body Politic." On concerns about men's ability to bear arms see Tosh Manliness 65-66. Linda Colley discusses British recruitment of men for war in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in chapter seven, "Manpower," and the decline of British military preparedness after the Napoleonic wars in chapter eight, "Victories?"

[5] Williams explains, "In early modern Britain, the same paradigm was applied to different countries. Italy was now portrayed as a source as well as a victim of corruption, especially by critics of the Roman Catholic Church. The most consistent vituperation, however, was reserved for France, whose geographical proximity, military rivalry, and pervasive cultural influence made her an object of suspicion, envy, and contempt" (23).

[6] Cohen convincingly argues that, "since the middle of the eighteenth century," a shift occurred "from the hegemonic ideal of politeness to a new ideal of gentlemanliness incorporating elements of a revived chivalry" ("'Manners'" 325). Mark Girouard concisely surveys the history of English chivalry and its late eighteenth-century revival in chapter two, "Survival and Revival."

[7] Fiction also celebrated new homosocial opportunities for proving oneself manly. Herbert Sussman observes that "British writers often set the masculine wild zone in remote geographic space, the ships of the British Navy, the colonies, or the imperial war," locales whose purpose Tosh notes mirrored a British imperialism that enabled masculinities that satisfied aggressive needs, that diffused domestic anxieties about masculine toughness, and that accommodated forms of homosociality unavailable at home (*Victorian* 44). On imperial aggression and its presence in masculine poetics see Patrick Dunae, "Boy's Literature"; Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* 234-64 and 406-24; James Louis, "Tom Brown's Imperialist Sons." On domestic anxieties about masculine toughness see Davidoff and Hall, "The Family" 105 and Elaine Showalter *Sexual Anarchy* 4-6 and 78-95; on homosociality see Dunae's *Gentlemen Emigrants: from the British Public Schools to the Cana-*

dian Frontier and Tosh's *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* chapter nine, "Manliness, Masculinities and the New Imperialism, 1880-1900." Colley cites as evidence of the combination of heroism and aggression "that was so pronounced in patrician art and literature at this time was just as prominent in popular ballads and songs" a Newcastle song, "The Pitman's Revenege [sic] against Bounaparte," whose jingoism anticipates nineteenth-century imperial masculine poetics:

> Then to parade the pitmen went,
> Wi' hearts both stout and strong man,
> God smash the French we are so strang;
> We'll shoot them every one, man:
> God smash me sark if I would stick,
> To tumble them a down the pit,
> As fast as I cou'd thra a coal.... (qtd. in Colley 303)

[8] Downing discusses the class dynamics of boxing on 330, 225-340.

[9] Downing notes that, "There were pragmatic motivations for rural laborers and their urban counterparts in London and the new industrial towns to step in to the ring.... Many fighters came from the lowest paid trades ... and from occupations such as coal heaving, where the job requirement for physical strength was an asset in the ring. The bulk of fighters came from the largest single group in the population—artisans and laborers" (36-337).

[10] The *OED* definitions suggest the traditional importance of both social position and conduct to being a gentleman: "A man of gentle birth, or having the same heraldic status as those of gentle birth; ... but also applied to a person of distinction without precise definition of rank" (1.a); "A man in whom gentle birth is accompanied by appropriate qualities and behaviour; hence, in general, a man of chivalrous instincts and fine feelings" (3.a.).

[11] Eliot's phrase references "The Everlasting Yea" in Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus.* Teufelsdröckh learns from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* to "*Do the Duty which lies nearest thee*" (148).

[12] R. K. Webb usefully surveys the tastes of and changes to the pacific and diverse nineteenth-century reading population in "The Victorian Reading Public." Interestingly, in a observation whose numbers are at odds with Gilmour's below, he remarks on "a tiny minority of the working classes...sober and intelligent artisans" for whom "knowledge was power" (198).

[13] Gilmour's subsequent discussion concerning models for working men's aspirations exemplifies new aspirations to respectability and gentlemanliness, useful to understanding respectable, productive industrial manhood in many of Eliot's novels, but most notably in *Felix Holt*:

> Smiles did not so much develop a new model as codify an old one, which seems more appropriate to the pre-factory stage of industrial development and to the minority which has usually been seen as the 'labour aristocracy'; yet recent work in Victorian history has argued that the aspiration to an independent 'respectability' was much more widely spread in the mid- and late-Victorian working class.... The ideology of self-help appealed to this and to the individualism which was the religious inheritance of the new industrial proletariat, and may explain something of their resistance to trade unionism in the nineteenth century. Self-help, like the gentleman—and Smiles's final chapter is called 'Character: the True Gentleman'—may have played an important part in reconciling new groups to the respectability-seeking thrust of the new society. (21)

[14] Downing mentions a "writer known only as an 'amateur of eminence'" who "believed that the higher orders should be skilled in boxing to guard against 'the insults of inferiors' who took advantage when they thought 'genteel' men could not defend themselves" (339).

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