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NEXT WEEK!! — : DESIRE, DOMESTIC MELODRAMA, AND THE EXTRAVAGANT PROLIFERATIONS OF *EAST LYNNE*

By Mary A. Armstrong

I: What Ever Happened to East Lynne?

ELLEN WOOD'S *EAST LYNNE* (1861) exhibits the exhilarating characteristics of a Victorian sensation novel and then some: degenerate aristocracy, a sneering villain, flight, adultery, a child born out of wedlock, disfigurement, disguise, extended deathbed scenes, murder, and more (e.g., fake accents, false identities, an electrifying homicide trial, and a spectacular train wreck). But at the center of all the disaster, transgression, pathos, coincidence, and extremity, *East Lynne* is (mainly) the story of the aptly-named Isabel Vane, the beloved but patently bored wife who abandons her husband and children to run away with a handsome seducer. Overcome by remorse (and conveniently both disfigured and presumed dead), she returns to the home of her remarried husband to act as governess to her own children and to witness (at length and in painful detail) the life she might have had if she had denied her perpetually irrepressible but inappropriate feelings — feelings not so much of lust for another man, but of annoyance and tedium with the man she actually has. *East Lynne* urges (usually in the form of multiple diatribes from the third person narrator) that the wives and mothers of mid-Victorian England be content with their lot, employing a moral didacticism that insists on female domestic responsibility — and the attendant obligation of female suffering — with sadistic pleasure. And yet, when not lingering over the agonies of Isabel, the narrative gushes, seemingly despite itself, with sympathy for the heroine's life of monotony and misery. Indeed, *East Lynne*'s compelling power comes in large part from the novel's skillful, lingering walk on a ledge of its own making and its protracted vacillation between condemnation and empathy for an unhappy heroine gone astray.

And oh how well that potent mix of misery, masochistic charm, sadistic relish, and sympathy played out on stage! *East Lynne* was not only a remarkably popular novel. It was one of the most consistently, persistently (relentlessly? remorselessly?) produced plays of the later nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries, its theatrical career characterized by countless reincarnations. *East Lynne* the play ranked as the apotheosis of staged melodrama in both Britain and the United States for many decades, the frequency and impact of its manifestations paralleled only, perhaps, by the novel-to-stage phenomenon of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.[1] The play quickly became a touchstone of cultural repetition and a shared experience

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for which audiences clamored — and paid — to see again and again. *East Lynne*'s capacity to pull in audiences eventually came to represent the essence of giving theatergoers what they want. By 1910 the play was so thoroughly established as the essence of public appeal that the *New York Times* (in an article on long-lived theatrical standards) noted: "*East Lynne* is just as good as good as it ever was, and brokers are honing for the time when [French playwright Alexandre Bisson's] *Madame X* shall be released for stock. They believe it will last forever there, like *East Lynne*" ("Plays Never Too Old" 4).

But lasting forever is not an easy task. Despite its once tremendous popularity, *East Lynn* the play has now largely disappeared. Hence Nina Auerbach's question:

> What, for instance, happened to *East Lynne*? Many essays dwell on Pinero's . . . *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* (1893), but all are silent on the earlier, phenomenally popular domestic melodrama *East Lynne*. Perhaps *East Lynne* still embarrasses us. It is such a sentimental cliché of a weeper – [B]ut *East Lynne* is not just tearful. Its play with women's being embodies Victorian theatricality before the theatre achieved smart Edwardian awareness. (10–11)

Despite its remarkable fame, *East Lynne* the play (which became many plays) did not achieve immortality, and today it is known not for its content but as the source of the theatrical advertising maxim "Next Week – East Lynne!!," a phrase still recognizable as code for tired but dependable fare that can be counted on to stimulate the box office when business gets slow. *East Lynne* is enshrined in dramatic history not as a theatrical experience, but as a reliable means of capturing people's interest and cash, its value reduced to its talismanic ability to sell tickets to a committed consuming public. "Next Week – East Lynne!!" is a cultural remnant that testifies to the fact that for a very long time, *East Lynne* offered something that was powerfully desired, strongly gratifying, and worthy of repeated investments of emotion, time, and money.

The play's notorious ability to generate both deep feelings and paying customers has obviously outlived its content. And it may well be, as Auerbach argues, that the extreme sentimentality of domestic melodrama has simply ceased to resonate with our norms for both performance and spectatorship. But I want to argue that tracking the fortunes of *East Lynne* offers us more than an occasion to speculate about the reasons behind our changing tastes. It also offers an opportunity to apply some critical pressure to the fact of its popularity and to more closely interrogate the meanings to be found in a history so fraught with intense public interest. Thus, with the novel ever in mind, this project seeks to recover the surprisingly diverse fortunes of *East Lynne* the play and ask: what was being "performed" and what was being "seen" when sensation-novel-turned-melodrama *East Lynne* was enacted, over and over, before habitually-spectating nineteenth-century audiences? What lies behind its history of adaptation and repetition? And what can we learn from the vantage point of the play as we look backward towards the sensation novel from which it originated, and forward to the many early twentieth century film versions that emerged later?

It has long been theorized that a great deal of the force of the sensation novel comes from its precarious balance of morality and thrills as the genre both appeals to and complexly circumvents conventional middle-class Victorian values. *East Lynne*'s contemporaneous critical history is certainly typical for the sensation genre: it is praised for its exciting plot and vilified for its vulgarity, commended for its moral voice but condemned for stirring up the basest human instincts in both characters and readers alike.[2] More recently, feminist

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critics in particular have argued about the ultimate effects of a paradoxical genre that both aggressively promotes and powerfully subverts middle class morality in general and idealized femininity/female sexuality in particular.[3] This dynamic is clear in *East Lynne*: although it would be difficult to find a more overtly conformist plot, especially regarding gender, power, and the expression of desire, *East Lynne* startles the careful reader through the powerful sexual and personal independence of its wayward heroine, as well as the undeniable force of her emotional and erotic capacity.

It is within this critical context that I want to complicate the notion that sensation literature is either moralistic *or* seditious, or even simultaneously moralistic *and* seditious, by examining *East Lynne* in terms of its painful albeit compelling desires, the specific expressive shape of those desires, and attendant reader/spectator pleasures. First, I discuss how narrative desire is organized in *East Lynne* the novel through material experiences or, more specifically, how excessive narrative desires are both performed and managed through eroticizing and longing for the present-yet-always-lost objects of Victorian middle-class domesticity. The novel uses the experience of pleasure in and yearning for the everyday domestic object to articulate the transgressive desires and sufferings of a Victorian heroine, creating a narrative in which the object transcends its metaphorical functions as a substitute for husband, family, or class status. Attendant on those fraught domestic pleasures are the delights afforded the readers who are enjoined to both sympathize with and eagerly consume the spectacle of the heroine's material and emotional domestic losses, as well as her relentless punishment and suffering.

Keeping this dynamic in mind, I further interrogate the ways in which conversion to the stage (and, to some extent, to film) transformed *East Lynne* into a new domestic object circulating frenetically within the public marketplace. In tracking the proliferation of *East Lynne* as consumable domestic spectacle, I outline the history and cultural impact of the novel's copious progeny and investigate how new genres connect (or fail to connect) to narrative articulations of domestic pleasure. I argue that the potency of *East Lynne* the play was related, at least in part, to the novel's powerful trajectories of (thwarted) domestic longing and not/possessing, as well as its voyeuristic investments in purchasable domestic pleasures. I round out my examination of the play with a look at a few of the surviving early twentieth century film versions, tracing how cinematic versions drain away *East Lynne*'s power as an object of domestic delight.

I chose the pivot of the "desired but never quite possessed domestic object" as an analytical departure point because it conveys the novel's multi-tiered articulations of both longing/pleasure and links the novel to the play. The novel can be understood as driven by the erotic trajectories around longings for the beautiful domestic "thing." The compelling theatrical experience of *East Lynne* emerges from similar longings as a purchasable middle-class object of (also unattainable yet endlessly consuming) domestic desires.[4] Moving critically from novel to play (and, eventually, to film) enables an examination of how the Victorian commodity object opens up an erotic space of narrative significance, and how that space helps us rethink the ways in which domestic desires are reproduced and consumed in other forms. Tracking the many voracious desires of *East Lynne* enables us to trace how both household objects and the household as object organize evolving, interrelated pleasures. *East Lynne* — as novel, play and film — illuminates how domestic longings of the most excessive and queer kind shape a sensation novel and its progeny.

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II: East Lynne *the Novel: Objects of Desire*

THE NOVEL *EAST LYNNE* sets up a model for desire that is about looking, but not touching; seeing, but not having. It is also about the agonies and pleasures captured through the voyeuristic process of observing the subject who is performing those things. For much of the novel, Isabel Vane gazes on a domestic scene that is both endlessly appealing and hopelessly out of reach; simultaneously, the reader of *East Lynne* is drawn along a similar trajectory, watching the watcher yearn. And *East Lynne*'s focus on a fallen heroine's elaborately concealed (and constantly revealed) anguish presents those agonies to a public readership *en masse*, making group participation a distinct part of the readerly experience:

> Young lady when he, who is soon to be your lord and master, protests to you that he shall always be as ardent a lover as he is now, believe him if you like, but don't reproach him when the disappointment comes. (198; part 2, ch. 20)

> Oh, reader, believe me! Lady — wife — mother — ! should you ever be tempted to abandon your home, so will you awake! (283; part 2, ch. 29)

> If we all did just what we "ought," this lower world would be worth living in. You must just sit down and abuse [Isabel], and so cool your anger. (591; part 3, ch. 59)[5]

There is, as critics have noted, a powerful convening effect in *East Lynne*, as the narrator consistently "assumes a shared experience and a community of values" with readers (Pykett 119). Indeed, much of the narrative's potency originates in how it continually addresses (and hence persistently conjures) an observing public, rendering the reader of *East Lynne* part of a community, part of a crowd. How the novel and the stage play both utilize this doubled emotive layer of individual response and community experience is, I would like to claim, a key to the connection between them, and to the radically powerful (though also differently organized) desires that drive *East Lynne* as both narrative and theatrical experience.

It is in this context that *East Lynne* the novel specifically produces its strong strand of narrative desire through a fetishistic obsession with household items, a manic specificity for cataloguing everyday material objects that is aligned with a powerfully eroticized longing. This is a formula for readerly pleasure that is readily apparent throughout Wood's fiction. An 1874 reviewer, contrasting another Ellen Wood novel (*St. Martin's Eve*) with Mary Elizabeth Braddon's work, identified this fixation with the domestic object as Wood's particular gift at conveying the "gorgeous commonplace," praising the "Philistinism of Mrs. Henry Wood" as one of the writer's greatest strengths ("Lost for Love"). By 1891, George H. Lewes had christened this relentlessly cataloging style of late-Victorian narrative "detailism" (qtd. by Colby 22).

East Lynne exemplifies Wood's penchant for object-fixated prose. The objects in question are made available to readers with palpable detail clearly intended to produce profound gratification, conveying the "unashamed delight in commodities" and "preoccupation with [portable] property" that characterizes many of Wood's works (Wynne, "Big Wide Bed" 90–91). The pages of *East Lynne* teem with an obsessive object indexing that revels in both precision and descriptive fervor. Indeed, the novel often seems driven forward not only by sensational events, but also by the seemingly endless pleasures of "doting verbal

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photography" that focus on how household items (small and large) delight the senses (Litvak 140). The result is a narrative that can read like a deeply gratifying Victorian home goods catalogue:

> Everything was ready in the grey parlour; the tea-tray on the table, the small urn hissing away, the tea-caddy in proximity to it. A silver rack of dry toast, butter, and a hot muffin covered with a small silver cover. These things were to her sight as old faces: the rack, the small cover, the butter-dish, the tea-service; she remembered them all. Not the urn; a copper one; she had no recollection of that. It had possibly been bought for the use of the governess . . . (402; part 2, ch. 40)

> The old familiar drawing-room; its large, handsome proportions, its well-arranged furniture, its bright chandelier! It all came back to her with a heart-sickness. No longer her drawing-room . . . (404; part 3, ch. 40)

And such gorgeous details find their way into narrative descriptions that are meant to have distinctly other effects, such as the minute but pretty details that surround Isabel's dying child, William: "A little white bed, with William's beautiful face lying on it . . . . By the bedside stood a saucer, some currant jelly in it, and a teaspoon; there was also a glass of water" (425; part 3, ch. 41). The enticing domestic objects of *East Lynne* exude a palpable seductive force that pulls the reader into a realm where almost any domestic scene is a scene of sensory indulgence. And the domestic object is not only sublimely beautiful in and of itself but doubly fraught through the longings of the protagonist and the narrative's infatuated descriptions.

It is within this framework of descriptive detail that we can recognize Isabel Vane's (and the narrator's) object-centered longings as an essential aspect of the erotics of the text. Elisabeth Jay has noted how "the sexually symbolic [representing Isabel's desire for her husband] is swiftly overwhelmed by Wood's inclination to lasciviate over an inventory of the ideal interior" (xxxiii). I would argue, however, that "the [hetero]sexually symbolic" is not so much "overwhelmed" by rhapsodic descriptions of the domestic object as much as largely replaced by such descriptions. It is possible to understand Isabel's pleasure in things not as a muted or diverted version of heteroerotics, but as inherent to those objects, that is, as real. This new perspective on "detailism" effectively queers the erotic trajectories of the narrative, and the delightful domestic object moves into and occupies the erotic space created by such lush narrative description (and the spaces left open by Isabel's relatively weak interest in both her husband and her seducer). This acknowledgment of the primacy of the object as site and locus for textual desire effectively realigns the narrative, enabling the domestic object to take up principal residency in the overall structure of narrative articulations of pleasure.

From this interpretive viewpoint, the domestic object no longer has to be understood as a mere symbolic representation, allegory or metaphor for the protagonist's desire for lost home or for lost husband. And, in order to open up this line of thinking further and center it narratologically, I want to take up Elaine Freedgood's useful work in attending to the particular metonymic work of objects in the Victorian novel and, in particular, the generative readerly possibilities that such objects invoke and allow. Freedgood's work unties objects in realist narrative from representational functions that fluctuate between the purely metaphorical (directly representative "symbols") and the relatively meaningless (background objects that create and sustain what Barthes theorized as the "reality effect"). Within

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this gap, Freedgood adroitly theorizes the liminal space of objects' endlessly proliferating metonymic possibilities in narrative, reimagining their radicalizing narrative function within the expansive possibilities for narrative meaning that they facilitate. And, while Freedgood's work pursues far more literal readings of specific objects than I want to attempt here, the space she opens for thinking about quotidian objects in the realist novel imagines that the flurry of everyday domestic objects in *East Lynne* can be understood in and of themselves as significant sites for narrative meaning and desire.

Prioritizing metonymic slippage over metaphorical stability illuminates myriad possibilities for other forms of narrative desire — desires less normative and less stable but which are also easily generated through prosaic, everyday things. Through attention to metonymy then, normative quotidian elements can be understood as the purveyors of the transgressive. Naomi Schor's work, for example, amply demonstrates how detail — "gendered and doubly gendered as feminine" — imperils seemingly stable arrangements of both representation and power by de-centering the focus of representation and reversing or distorting its intended effects (4). Similarly the textually queer (as Lee Edleman argues) also "lives" in and is articulated through metonymy, its contravening presence made possible (and to some extent also rendered invisible) by the stabilizing work of metaphor (8–9). The powerfully subversive yet generative work of metonymy (to whose influential and potentially subversive narrative effects Freedgood, Schor, and Edelman all point) makes possible the slippage of desire between normative, expected modes (Isabel's assumed longings for her husband) and the delights of domestic materiality (Isabel's more expressive longings for — and the narrative's deeper interest in — household possessions). From this perspective, it is possible to claim that the everyday object of the home can be understood as the very stuff of which desire itself is made, giving Wood's particular middle class domesticity a double and contrary function as it both relies on the centrality of the heterosexual domestic arrangement but also opens, through a proliferation of beautiful domestic objects, a world of other possibilities for longing.

In working to understand the power of the mid-to-late nineteenth-century domestic object as intensely fraught and fetishized commodity, it is important to also acknowledge to Karl Marx's work in this regard. In his commodity fetish critique (which emerges almost contemporaneously with the publication of *East Lynne*), Marx posits that social relations in a newly industrialized society are partially structured by the new, particular powers of consumable objects. He labels the new role of the commodity in capitalist society as "fetishistic" in the sense that the symbolic attributions of the object render it something to which people attribute particular powers and which is then interacted with as if it actually possessed such powers or characteristics.

Relative to *East Lynne*, Marx's work is perhaps most useful for helping us recognize how the seemingly private domestic object takes on a meaningful and relatively coherent social resonance as object. The potency and power of the domestic object is at least partially accrued by the projection of meaning and (often) via a social agreement, lending it the kind of shared understanding of significance that characterize fetishes in the Marxist sense.[6] However, a Marxist approach cannot fully explain the intensity and effects of the narrative's focus on the domestic thing. There is something more at work, too, in which (as Litvak somewhat understatedly points out) *East Lynne*'s intense focus on delightful domestic objects "produce[s] a pleasure not entirely reducible to the *frissons* of commodity fetishism" (140). I would argue that as the domestic objects of *East Lynne* create "unashamed delight" such

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delight resonates both from sensual pleasures (diffused from the dense metonymic valences of the narrative's many domestic objects) and also from the social effects of the commodity fetish, which imbue objects with binding cultural significance (Wynne, "Big Wide Bed" 90). In short, the object constituting the domestic scene brings both intense narrative pleasure and an equally intense, shared sense of social meaning. And, as I will show, this combination of personal pleasure and social effect constitutes part of how *East Lynne* the play achieves its extremely potent public effects.

However the reader of *East Lynne* experiences and enjoys the "gorgeous" representation of the objects of desire — objects and desires in which the reader is allowed (perhaps commanded) to revel — it is always significant that those objects are cruelly and flamboyantly held back from the longing protagonist. The narrative's elaborate and persistent sadism amplifies the circulation of desire as the domestic object is not only rendered desirable because it exudes both sensuous pleasure and social significance but also because it is simultaneously lost, out of reach, constantly longed for but always ultimately withheld, and a clear source of sadistic (or masochistic) pleasure to the reader. As the beautiful, lost Isabel longs for her beautiful, lost things, she is berated by a narrative voice that both sympathizes with her pain and relishes the exhibition of it. The reader of the novel is made witness to this hopeless longing and the narrative's reveling in both this display of distress and the emotional delights of empathy for the longing heroine — all the while also taking pleasure in the objects that are withheld yet elaborately presented for the reader's consumption. The result is what Winifred Hughes terms a "prolonged, luxurious orgy of self-torture," a particularly apt descriptive phase that very neatly acknowledges and captures the pronounced duration, flagrant extravagance, and deeply sexualized effects of Isabel's pain (115).[7]

Through the domestic object, the reader of *East Lynne* encounters multiple trajectories of potential pleasure: the vast metonymic derivatives of the lovely domestic object itself within a narrative that cannot stop addressing such objects, the fetishization of the domestic commodity within a bourgeois Victorian home, and the painful yet satisfying effects of witnessing irreparable loss, even as what has been lost is (circularly but delightfully) always right before the reader's eyes in sumptuous detail. It is this highly charged, complex relation to the spectacle of domesticity and domestic desire, I want to suggest, that clarifies the link between the popular novel and the popular play — and helps us understand the extraordinary history of the latter.

III. Next Week!! — And Also the Week after That

IF THE PLEASURES OF *EAST LYNNE* the novel are connected to the readerly delights of the everyday object, and to witnessing that object's loss, how might such pleasures be connected to the intense popularity of *East Lynne* as stage melodrama? The genre transition is no surprise, of course. Victorian novels were routinely adapted as stage plays and many of the particular formal characteristics of Victorian realist fiction — driven by external action, characterized by plenty of dialogue and direct exchange — made it easy for such novels to be converted into theatrical productions.[8] As Michael Booth has noted, melodramatic fiction in particular was especially suitable for the transition from novel to play because its focus on exciting and complex plots, physical action, and intense emotion offered "every possible ingredient of popular appeal" (150). But even so, *East Lynne*'s prominence as a theatrical piece was extraordinary even within the framework of melodrama's general popularity.

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East Lynne the novel appeared as a serial in 1861, was published in book form in 1862, and promptly became an enormously popular piece of fiction (see Maunder, "Introduction"). The novel was converted into a play with speed characteristic of that era, appearing on the US stage in 1862 via a production entitled *Edith, or The Earl's Daughter* by B. E. Woolff; the second production (also in the US) was Clifton W. Tayleure's 1862 (or 1863) *East Lynne*. These first two productions were understood to be in direct and intense competition with each other (Bolton 395). In Britain, early versions were J. W. Archer's *Marriage Bells, or the Cottage on the Cliff* (1864), John Oxenford's *East Lynne* (1866), and George Conquest's *East Lynne* (1866) (Bolton 396–97). T. A. Palmer's 1874 stage version of *East Lynne* was a very commonly produced version (the abridged script of this particular version is appended to Broadview Press's 2000 edition of *East Lynne*). For several decades, plays emerged on both sides of the Atlantic at a fast and furious pace.[9]

While this very general list of early plays effectively illustrates the velocity of transition and reinvention, it still does not give a glimpse of the extent of the proliferation or the degree of incredible variation as *East Lynne* became more-than-standard theatrical fare. Version after version of *East Lynne* came out and flourished over the following decades. There is a long list of stage adaptations, often by obscure or unknown playwrights, and an even longer list of different productions. H. Philip Bolton's recent compilation *Women Writers Dramatized: A Calendar of Performances from Narrative Works Published in English to 1900* lists well over 250 diverse performances of *East Lynne*, many of which appear to be distinct. Because many versions of *East Lynne* are listed as having anonymous authors it is difficult to know how many different versions were being produced, but there were clearly dozens and dozens of them.

Obviously, something was working well, both on stage and in the market place as *East Lynne* yielded astonishing amounts of revenue: during a March 23 to April 15, 1863 run of the play at Tripler Hall in New York City, the box office brought in "never less than $700 a night" (Bolton 395).[10] And, in the face of such popularity and such money, sub-genres predictably got into the act (so to speak) as the sermonizing tone of the original theatrical production was lampooned by endless parodies, burlesques and broadly comic versions, such as W. J. Harbon's *Little Billie Carlyle; or the Bell and the Hare* (1881) and *East Lynne*; *or Isabel that Was A Belle* (author unknown, 1884).

One of the earliest of these comic pieces is an 1877 "afterpiece" by T. R. Hann entitled *[Y]East Lynn; or, the Humors of Lady Isabel*. Theatrical afterpieces, "without exception humorous, with few pretensions toward enlightenment," flourished on the New York stage from the mid-1860s through mid-1870s (Kattwinkle 2). This particular afterpiece was rhymed slapstick, and in it Lady Isabel's focus is usually on the whiskey she keeps offering everyone, including her dying child Willy. The scene in which Isabel reveals to Willy that she is his mother — a dramatic climax in many play and film versions — is rendered with a different tone:

Willy: A kingdom for my cough drops I would give! (*staggers to bed, followed by Isabel, who takes out the flask*)

Isb: Cough drops be blowed! Take this my child, and live! (*gives him drink from flask, several times*)

Willy: Galluptious! Beautiful! – O dear! – O my! – More! More!

Isb: All gone! (*shows that flask is empty*)

Willy: Why, then, it's time to die! (*gets in bed*)

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Isb: Before you die, let's tuck you up in bed! (*comic Bus of tucking Willy in bed*)
Behold your Mother, Willy! (*Takes off cap and specs, Willy dies, with a kick*)
Ah, he's dead! (Hann 151)

Burlesque theater's tradition of capitalizing on both the popularity and the pathos of *East Lynne* continued as part of the play's historical trajectory, with Harry Newton's 1913 *East of Lynn, Mass.* — featuring a protagonist named Lady Ringabell whose alias is Madame Tomato Vine — holding up the tradition four decades later.

There was also a parallel stream of new and serious versions (such as Edmund Gurney's rather unimaginatively titled 1908 *The New East Lynne*) that were being produced even as fresh burlesques were being generated and the original *East Lynne* was moving into theater history. That latter process took place via works such as Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windemere's Fan* (1892) where the tellingly-named Mrs. Erlynne is revealed to be Lady Windemere's mother, who had abandoned her husband and child for a lover years hence. Presumed dead like Isabel Vane, Mrs. Erlynne is alive and secretly watching over her child. And because this is Oscar Wilde's story and most decidedly not Ellen Wood's, *Lady Windemere's Fan* concludes with Mrs. Erlynne triumphantly headed for marriage with a Lord, her social and economic well-being quite intact.

East Lynne spawned a tradition of associated music, and the theatrical versions of *East Lynne* were closely connected with several songs. Perhaps predictably, one of these was entitled "Home Sweet Home," which is noted in many of the earliest scripts. Another was "Then You'll Remember Me," which appears in Wood's novel, in many popular editions of the play, and in many film versions (some of the early silent productions include extended shots of the sheet music). This song is an aria from *The Bohemian Girl*, an opera composed by Irish composer Michael William Balfe and librettist Alfred Bunn. First performed in 1843 at London's Drury Lane Theatre, the opera's most significant legacy is the still-popular "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls."[11] "Then You'll Remember Me" is *The Bohemian Girl*'s less famous ballad and it was a standard for theatrical and cinematic productions of *East Lynne*:

When other lips and other hearts
Their tales of love shall tell,
In language whose excess imparts
The power they feel so well:
There may, perhaps, in such a scene,
Some recollection be
Of days that have as happy been,
And you'll remember me!

When coldness or deceit shall slight
The beauty now they prize,
And deem it but a faded light
Which beams within your eyes;
When hollow hearts shall wear a mask,
'Twill break your own to see:
In such a moment I but ask
That you'll remember me! (Balfe)

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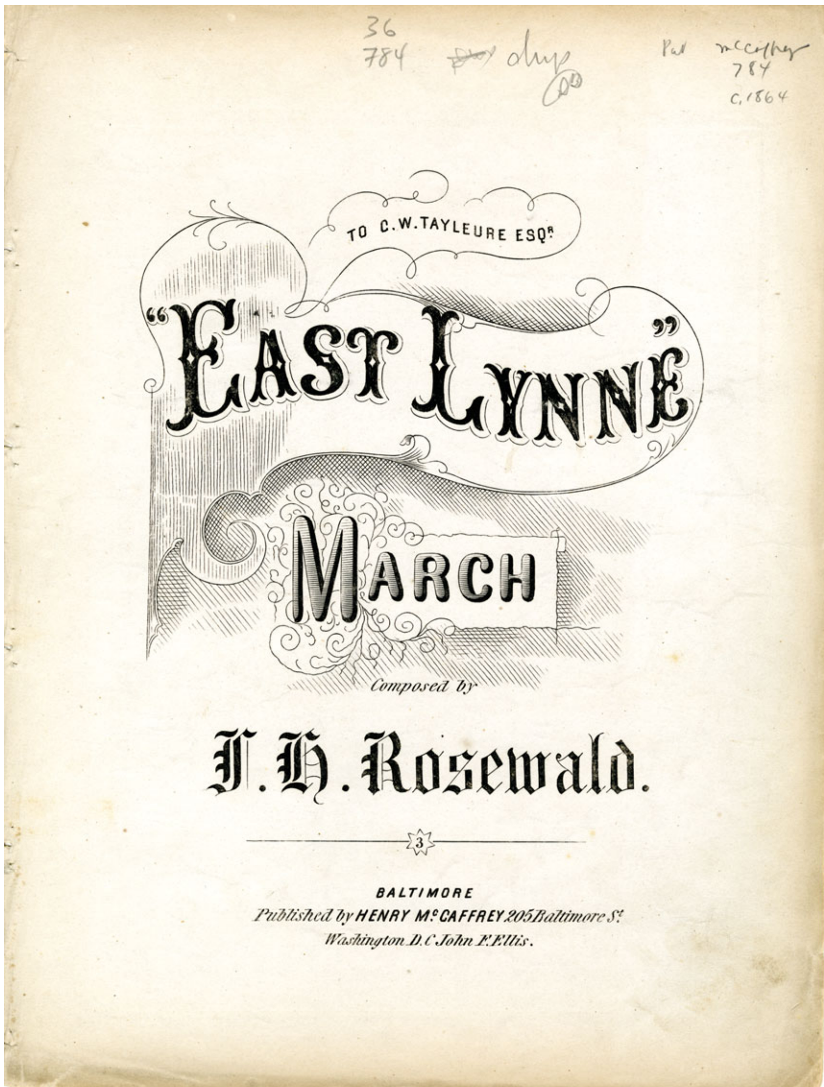

Figure 2. (Color online) Cover of the "'East Lynne' March" by J. H. Rosewald, Historic American Sheet Music Collection, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

T. H. Rosewald's instrumental piece *East Lynne March* is closely linked to the stage play. Published in the US *circa* 1864, and dedicated to Clifton W. Tayleure (author of one of the most popular early versions), it incorporates musical leitmotifs from "Then You'll Remember Me" (Figure 2).

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IV. Consuming Desires

THE PLAY'S POPULARITY is evident in both its many versions and the abundant pieces of popular culture that it spawned. But what helps explain *East Lynne*'s extraordinary success as a play? For anyone who mulls through the 1862 Tayleure, the 1866 Oxenford, or the widely-produced 1874 Palmer stage versions, the structural and content differences between the novel and the play seem expected. Along with the necessary compression of a lengthy sensation novel's numerous subplots, two genre-related differences are predictable: first, the absence of the third-person narrative voice and, second, the elimination of the story's descriptive fixation on the domestic object. The missing narrative voice leaves an especially conspicuous gap because it is the novel's omniscient narrator who speaks directly to the reader, explicitly directing so much of the novel's emotional charge as it vacillates incongruously between relentless cruelty and generous understanding:

> [Elizabeth was left] to battle her as best she could with her breaking heart. Nothing but stabs; nothing but stabs! Was her punishment ever to end? No. (553; part 3, ch. 55)

> I agree with you [the reader] that [Isabel] ought never to come back [to East Lynne]; that it was an act little short of madness; but are you quite sure that you would not have done the same, under the facility and the temptation? (591; part 3, ch. 59)

With the move to stage script that inconsistent narrative voice no longer directs our attention to Isabel's suffering or requires that we linger on her longings for extended periods of time. And along with the narrator's voice, the novel's "detailism" — descriptions of the "gorgeous commonplace" and the lovely "Philistinism of Mrs. Henry Wood" — is likewise lost through the genre change, as the plethora of domestic objects is, in every standard version of the play, reduced to specific and comparatively unremarkable props.[12]

But even with the loss of the narrator's directives, and the fading of so much object cataloging (the central mechanisms for conveying longing and pleasure in the original text), *East Lynne* on stage was superbly compelling for decades — for diverse audiences and in both the UK and America. And I want to argue here that the play's rooting of itself so deeply into both British and American popular culture — and producing repetitions, revisions, humor, parody, music, and films — was a product of its tapping into complex and consuming desires for the domestic object. Through the particular form of melodrama and the dynamics of shared longings expressed through public consumption, *East Lynne* the play was a perfectly structured object of purchasable domesticity, a consumable object through which complex domestic desires were (like the desires of the novel) articulated to a public, purchased, lost, revisited, and always just contained.

Melodrama, especially Victorian melodramatic theatre, is famously understood as a site of ideological struggle, rearrangement, and relocation. Peter Brooks classically tied melodrama's seemingly clear delineation of the good and the villainous to struggles around matters of authority, especially moral authority, claiming that melodrama "becomes the principle mode for uncovering, demonstrating, and making operative the essential moral universe in a post-sacred era" (15). Conversely, Elaine Hadley's *Melodramatic Tactics* argues that melodrama (specifically within the Victorian period) offered complex ideological

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disruptions and a challenge to "the bourgeois version of social order, even in its hegemony" (136).

I specifically note these two influential and opposing viewpoints because they so usefully frame my own claim at this juncture: that Victorian domestic melodrama functions in a paradoxical way that echoes the conventional-and-yet-subversive tension inherent in the sensation novel — a tension that is evident, as I noted earlier, in both *East Lynne*'s contemporary reviews and later feminist critiques. As both novel and play *East Lynne* is firmly on the fault lines of current social and cultural stresses, situated (as melodrama often is) in a place where the palliative and the subversive transpire simultaneously. In both the moral and social realms, there is a clear parallel in sensation fiction's and theatrical melodrama's shared potential for simultaneously offering analgesic and disruptive dynamics. And like sensation fiction, domestic melodrama is powered by an inherent internal *frisson* and an excited motion towards the deep contradiction — and the deep interdependence — of seemingly opposite effects.

Sensation fiction and theatrical melodrama both shore up conformity and break the rules, but it is not that well-documented paradox I am in interested as much as the space that such a contradiction opens up. I want to conjecture that this particular domestic melodrama, by some measures the most successful and iconic domestic melodrama of the nineteenth century, manipulates that space with particular power. The play delivers a charge that is structured similarly to the domestic commodity erotics of the novel, employing not the "everyday object" but rather the purchasable theatrical "domestic scene" to carry forward intense (albeit thwarted) longings and domestic desires. And through its ability to powerfully both present and withhold these desires, the play itself quickly evolved into a fetishized, commodified variation of a domestic object, one which created an emotional consumer experience that was (much like the novel readers' experience) one of both intensely private emotional pleasures and profoundly communal public effects.

If *East Lynne* the novel is organized through domestic longings driven by a tendency to "lasciviate over an inventory of the ideal interior," the many spectators of the play enter a similar trajectory of desire: if the novel is about the repeated spectacle of Isabel watching and longing for the domestic object, the stage play allows for an even more direct consumption of such longings and losses as the audience consumes not a set of domestic objects but the scene of ideal domesticity itself, offered over and over again as a broadly available commodity. Driven by the pleasures and delightful pains of watching someone who cannot have what they desire but passionately longs for it, the *novel* fetishizes the domestic object; *East Lynne* on stage becomes the consumable domestic fetish object, offering a space in which to purchase and publically fixate upon private domesticity as object and as experience of intense desire and loss.

It is possible to argue then, I think, that *East Lynne* on stage became the consumable household object itself, a form of purchasable domestic loss and pleasure in that loss: audience members watched Isabel Vane long for the "perfect home" that she cannot bear and that she cannot live without, and which is always fully present and perpetually just out of reach. And that highly fraught, deeply felt ambiguous relationship to domesticity is exactly what so many spectators — so many of them women — would purchase in order to both have and to lose again and again and again.[13] *East Lynne* the novel about objects becomes, as play, the consumable object *par excellence*, domesticity purchased and endlessly taken away (or escaped) through the cathartic experience of watching and feeling, an exhilarating

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double effect of attainment and loss that mirrors that of its own heroine Lady Isabel. The tragedy — a broken family, lost husband, dead child, loss of status as wife and mother, loss of middle class life — both highlights and disrupts the domesticity that the public eagerly consumed, purchasing the domestic thing repeatedly in order to lose it over and over again. This loss was a mixed experience of both sorrow and delight, a complex intertwined drama of horror and relief. In *East Lynne*, the pleasure of crying is confronting fear of loss and the glorious, giddy thrill of an emergent unthinkable female subjectivity: sexually uncontained, uncontrolled by husband, childless, freed of the literal confines of home (at least for an evening or afternoon). Martha Vicinus has noted that in domestic melodrama nineteenth century audiences saw "primal fears clothed in everyday dress" (128) but I want to argue that audiences also saw complex and often transgressive desires fulfilled there, too. These audiences bought the everyday dress in order to both wear it and see it ripped away, to be reassured that it was there and also to be freed of it, purchasing the domestic in order to see it present and absent, simultaneously. *East Lynne* the play became the object of so much attention because it finally became the object of its own desires.

V. Film and Finis

AND THIS COMPELLING STRUCTURE of desire changed yet again as the new century dawned and film shifted *East Lynne* away from both the desires of domestic melodrama and frantic popular interest. As with theater, British and US versions emerged nearly concurrently, with a 1902 UK film production followed by an American one in 1903. After that, a total of at least ten cinematic versions were produced over the century's first three decades. Predictably, most of these early-cinema iterations of *East Lynne* are now lost. However, surviving US versions from 1916, 1925, and 1931 enable an illuminating sampling of the cinematic fortunes of Isabel Vane.[14] And this (partial) tour through *East Lynne*'s film history usefully demonstrates how representational energies were reorganized as the sufferings and pleasures of domestic desires withered away and such energies coalesced with increasing force around paradigms for maternal longings.

The 1916 silent version (directed by Bert Bracken) has the notable distinction of being both one of the earliest extant film versions of *East Lynne* and one of the few surviving films of Theda Bara, the early Hollywood sex-siren known as "The Vamp" (and earliest purveyor of that oft-misquoted line, "Kiss me, my fool!"). Along with the ironies of Hollywood's manufactured symbol of uninhibited female sexuality portraying the guilty wife and mother Isabel Vane, the film is equally remarkable for the clarity with which it demonstrates how early century films began to restructure *East Lynne*'s original fault lines for longing and for pain. Emphatically underscoring the innocence of Isabel Vane, Bracken's adaptation sanitizes the narrative, pushing the emotional dynamics of the film hard towards female blamelessness and purer spectator sympathy and away from illicit desires. Delving deep into the Hallijohn/Hare murder subplot, the film features scene after scene in which a (literally) mustache-twirling Levinson misleads a distraught Isabel into believing in Carlyle's supposed affair with Barbara Hare. But where the book carefully manipulates and exploits the tense margin between Isabel's desire for Levinson and her growing anger at Carlyle, the overall effect of Bracken's march towards the virtuous is to render void the passionate conflicts over domestic duty, love, and desire that drove the story of *East Lynne*'s complex relation to domesticity.

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This effect is largely achieved because the 1916 *East Lynne* both embraces a form of melodrama that leaves the pains and delights of the domestic scene behind by offering an emotional resonance organized almost exclusively around Isabel's maternal role. Of course, the novel and (even more so) most stage versions also famously depict Isabel's inability to bear separation from her children as a force that drives her back home to suffer and live alongside them in disguise. But while Isabel's deception by Levinson is recounted in multiple scenes, the film invests little energy in Isabel's domestic experience and instead focuses on her relationship to her child. After donning dark glasses and wig, she applies for the job of governess, hears Barbara play "Then You'll Remember Me" on the piano (we see the sheet music in a long, lingering shot) and visits Willie. The pains, delights, and drama of the domestic are reduced to mere minutes in the feature-length the film and, immediately after Willie dies, Isabel rolls her eyes, collapses, and expires in Carlyle's arms at the foot of the child's bed.

The pattern of turning away from the classic stage "domestic melodrama" and towards a version of early cinema's popular "maternal melodrama" (in which a mother sacrifices everything for her unknowing children) becomes even more pronounced in the 1925 *East Lynne* (directed by Emmett Flynn). In this version, Isabel's desire for Levinson is more apparent: the film is attentive to pre-marital flirtations between them and Isabel needs less convincing to abandon her husband and home. But her relationship to the domestic is now fully undone by the centrality of the maternal tragedy. In this version Isabel does not return as a governess at all: she returns to East Lynne as a counterfeit visiting nurse because she has heard (while working, post-train wreck, as a secretary at a hospital) that one of the Carlyle children is ill. She returns not as an imposter/governess but as an imposter/medical figure, walking directly into the high-drama death bed scene clothed as a nurse and without any apparent longing for her old domestic life.

While Isabel's desire to see her sick child drives her to return to East Lynne, what happens next surprises even more: once returned to East Lynne, she regains some direct access to her role as wife and mother. This is an access which the novel and the plays entirely forbid her and upon which their dynamics of thwarted domestic desires depend. But in this film, her bedside behavior with her sick son exposes her to an observant Carlyle, who recognizes and confronts her. If Isabel's on-stage erotic powers (and the pleasures of her masochistic/sadistic spectators) come from her silent sufferings within a home she cannot have, those powers evaporate as her longings are now partially satisfied: her husband knows her and seems to still love her, and her famously dying child fully recovers thanks to her attentive care. On her own deathbed, Isabel is carefully tended by Carlyle while (once again) an unsuspecting Barbara Hare plays "Then You'll Remember Me" on the piano in the next room. Alone with her loving husband, serenaded by her rival, and certain that her child will live, Isabel becomes a version of wife and mother again. The powers of her domestic desires cannot be sustained in large part, quite simply, because they have been fulfilled.

Finally, 1931 offers a watershed grand finale for *East Lynne*, with no less than three feature-length versions being released, including an American version (directed by Frank Lloyd) that was nominated for an early Academy Award for Best Picture.[15] It is the particular contours of this latest version that help us track the final shifts around *East Lynne* as it both leaves the realm of passionately desiring domesticity and departs the larger public cultural landscape, as well. Lloyd's film completes the trend towards innocence, now entirely expunging all of Isabel's sexual transgressions, eliminating the sharp tension between

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sympathy and moral condemnation that characterizes both the novel and the play and fully siphoning off sexual waywardness. Isabel is caught in a compromising situation with Sir Francis Levinson, but she refuses all his advances. And while she resents the interference of Carlyle's sister Cornelia, she begs to be taken back by Carlyle as soon as she threatens to leave. Isabel and Levinson only become lovers when they meet later, en route to Paris, and she is divorced.

Levinson himself (rewritten as a member of the British Foreign Service) is no longer a sexual threat. He is a narcissist, a flirt, and a weakling, but not a heartless scoundrel, and he is understood to have sent exonerating letters to Carlyle and to have testified on Isabel's behalf at the divorce trial. All of Isabel's emotional resonance and regret come from her desires to see her child. As the impoverished Isabel and Levinson wander the continent during the Franco-Prussian war, Levinson proves to be a national traitor as opposed to a sexual one; he is removed from the British Foreign Service for his crimes and then neatly eliminated by a falling wall. The injured Isabel returns home at the very end of the film to be with her (entirely healthy) son. Back at East Lynne only for the busy final fifteen minutes of the film, she sees her sleeping child, sings "Then You'll Remember Me" to him, goes blind, wanders out of doors, and promptly falls off a nearby cliff to her death.

Clearly, by 1931, *East Lynne* had become a very different kind of melodrama. The innocent heroine is unwillingly cast out of her home, her cruel seducer is an ineffectual national traitor, her longings for her husband are gone ("Then You'll Remember Me" is now a song for her son), and her regrets center entirely on her child (who not only survives but is never ill). Yet even amidst these transformations, perhaps the most significant change is that *East Lynne*'s domestic structure has entirely vanished. As Isabel and Levinson wander through Europe, from nightclubs in Vienna to garrets in Paris, Lloyd's *East Lynne* abandons the domestic scene entirely. Isabel's pain is not only changed, it is utterly reframed, no longer playing out in parlors, passageways, and living rooms. The 1931 film completely discards the novel's original affective source: the hidden heroine at home who secretly sees and longs for a world she cannot have. As the vital tension between sympathy and moral condemnation has evaporates, desire is uncoupled from the domestic and bound almost entirely to the maternal.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, new configurations for spectator pleasure and pain signal the end of a particular era for melodrama. As Leslie Fishbein notes in her work on early century melodramatic films, the Cult of True Womanhood associated with the Victorian heroine intersected with early century portrayals of The Vamp and the New Woman. Fishbein claims that the Cult of True Womanhood was challenged as both female sexuality and marriage came under critical scrutiny via newer, modern films. But I want to argue that the sanitizing processes of films like *East Lynne* don't reveal Victorian ideas about angelic womanhood so much as they reconstruct the past, particularly the Victorian erotic past, against which the modern struggled to define itself. From this perspective, part of what allowed modern films to interrogate gender, sexuality, and desire was the reconstruction of Victorian narratives like *East Lynne* as cinematic foils. Such rewrites mask the complex longings that Victorian narratives convey, amplifying the social critique offered by modern stories by eliding the contradictory yet powerful critique offered by Victorian ones such as Wood's *East Lynne*.

With the move from the conflicted "domestic melodrama" to the more ideologically serviceable "maternal melodrama," *East Lynne* on film was remade by new representational investments in angelic womanhood and driven by different formulas for audience interest

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and desire. And this change helps us think about *East Lynne* the film's audience reception and its disappearance in the larger cultural context. Historian of early film Lea Jacobs notes that audience reception and interest in the "maternal melodrama" was consistent in the silent and early film periods, but that that particular formula was increasingly perceived as outdated. Films like *East Lynne* ran in ever-smaller venues where the maternal melodrama formula for emotion stayed popular just a little longer and the very late 1931 version was arguably made only because filmmakers briefly returned *en masse* to the stabilizing effects of well-known theatrical productions during the delicate transition to sound between 1928 and 1932 (Jacobs 133). *East Lynne* follows maternal melodrama as a genre, locked into a structure that was not its original formula for desire and which helped drag it down to oblivion.

This glance at *East Lynne*'s cinematic fortunes is US-focused and not exhaustive. But even though it is partial, it illustrates how the domestic desires of *East Lynne* in print and on stage evolved into at least one additional (and different) blueprint for longing — and how, as that more conservative formula became rote and tiresome, audience interest in *East Lynne* diminished. It would have likely faded away in any case (as its theatrical fortunes indicate) but it is important to note that the film versions that fell out of fashion were no longer the same *East Lynne*, at least not in terms of domestic desire. Indeed it is possible to argue that *East Lynne* disappeared not when it was no longer performed on stage, but when it moved to film and that it was already vanishing — at least in terms of its original effects — once it became part of the maternal melodrama genre. After 1931, almost half a century will pass before audiences will see another film version of the once-ubiquitous *East Lynne* — and the experience does not seem to have been missed.[16]

VI: Conclusion

IN THE END, "popularity" is about the populace, specifically the formation of that populace. Lynn Voskuil argues for understanding "the experience of sensation theatre as one of processes by which Victorians believed themselves to have formed social bonds, a process . . . enabled by the burgeoning consumer culture of late Victorian England" (251). Voskuil's work allows us to understand the event of "domestic melodrama" as both consumed by the public and creating a consuming, "theater going public" — a public with extremely sophisticated interests and a knowing ability to manage affect and emotion. My claim, added to Voskuil's valuable rethinking of the public effects of sensation theater, is that understanding *East Lynne*'s affective processes requires us to recognize its inherently unconventional desires: the pleasure of its cruelty and masochistic potential as well as its empathy, its voracious longings as well as its fervent guilt, and its deep queerness. The play relies on the erotic feelings and associations woven around the consumable/consumed thing and getting *that* sensation — the particular *East Lynne* sensation of purchasable domestic desires made both simultaneously present and absent — was a substantive part of what made people choose to come back to (indeed, to purchase) the *East Lynne* experience again and again.

Sensation novels can open a liminal space between conventionality and defiance; translated to stage, sensation theatre can create exploit that same opening — but it is an opening whose edges are organized through pleasures of both personal and public participation/consumption. *East Lynne* the play fills that opening with the excitement of domestic commodity desire, inviting the public to consume that excitement directly and

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at multiple levels of longing. Recognizing the erotic charge of domestic objects in the novel opens a space for both linking the novel to the play and recognizing the play as an object of public consumption through which radical desires move through the melodramatic experience. Early century films shut this process down, moving away from domestic desires and collapsing sexual tensions into a maternal paradigm that refuses the domestic *frisson*. But the cinematic closing down of domestic desires perhaps only more sharply reveals the domestic powers of the novel and the plays — and it is ultimately these effects that invite us to newly consider the erotic potential of the sensation novel and the domestic melodrama, as well as the meaningful links between them.

Lafayette College

NOTES

I thank the staff of the UCLA Film and Television Archives for providing me with access to Lloyd's film, the staff of The Film Study Center of the Museum of Modern Art (New York) for providing me with access to the films by Bracken and Flynn, and Lafayette College for support of my archival research while at UCLA and in New York.

1. The history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as wildly popular novel, play, performance piece, and cultural phenomena is well documented. It is worth additionally noting that (much like *East Lynne*) *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is also extraordinary because of the theatrical success it achieved on both sides of the Atlantic. As Sarah Meer notes, the nineteenth century saw "very few London plays transferred to New York or vice versa" (Meer 138). *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *East Lynne* are particularly notable exceptions to that rule.
2. For some illuminating examples of the deeply divided nature of *East Lynne*'s contemporary reviews, see Elisabeth Jay's "Introduction" (xiii-xv).
3. See Cvetkovich, Flint, Liggins and Duffy ("Introduction"), Mitchell (*The Fallen Angel* and "Introduction"), Showalter, Walker, and especially Pykett's *The 'Improper' Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing*.
4. Numerous critical works significantly resituate the function of the commodity object in Victorian narrative. Early among these are Nunokawa's *The Afterlife of Property: Domestic Security and the Victorian Novel* (1994) and Miller's *Novels Behind Glass: Commodity Culture and Victorian Narrative* (1995). These studies offer important interventions in understanding how the Victorian novel intersects with a commodity culture that newly shapes Victorian identity and social experience, and vice versa. Wynne's more recent (2010) work usefully centers on the formal relationships between women and objects in the Victorian novel within the cultural and legal contexts of those relationships.
5. Ellen Wood, *East Lynne*, 1861, ed. Elizabeth Jay. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005. All subsequent quotes from the novel will be taken from this edition.
6. Marx's "commodity fetish" concept is a major contribution to theorizing the role of the object in consumer society that addresses not only how the commodities themselves are fetishized, but also the particular fetishization processes of commodity production and consumption. As with all work that addresses the fetish *per se* it is useful to clarify distinctions between a Marxist view and other models (such as the Freudian or ethnographic). See Ofek 18–22. Despite my interest in the object erotics of *East Lynne*, I have not pursued a Freudian approach because of its emphasis on the fetish's role in managing intra-psychic conflict, particularly around the castration complex. A fully psychoanalytic reading of *East Lynne*'s narrative fixation on objects would indeed be a rich one, especially relative to character development. However, I have chosen to focus on how the changing genres of *East Lynne*

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illustrate the shifting mechanisms by which domestic desires are linked to a consuming public, a project better suited for a more historically-situated examination of the fetish.

7. Critics have noted the links between masochism and Victorian melodrama (Rosenman, in particular). However, I want to additionally call attention to the particularly sadistic (readerly, spectating) pleasures that *East Lynne* calls forth — that is, not just Isabel's pain, but also *East Lynne*'s determined, repeated tapping into the sadistic pleasures of watching Isabel suffer.
8. Consider Hadley's work addressing the interplay between theatrical history and the history of the Victorian novel. See also Litvak.
9. It is interesting to note that *East Lynne*'s appeal reached the European continent, albeit in a very limited way. *Miss Multon: Comédie en 3 actes* (1869), by Eugène Nus and Adolphe Belot, was recognized as "obviously founded" on *East Lynne* (Matthews 45). *Miss Multon* was produced in English as well as French and was performed in the US as late as 1903, when a revival production in New York enjoyed a moderately favorable review in the *New York Times*.
10. *East Lynne* did not monetarily benefit the novel's author. While Ellen Wood's story generated considerable proceeds for others, she herself did not profit from the novel's successful theatrical existence. She wrote to another much abused author — Charles Dickens himself — for advice on securing her rights, but Dickens was at a loss as to how to help her (Jay xxxvii).
11. "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls" is referenced in James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* and two of his *Dubliners* stories. It has been recorded by serious vocalists such as Jessye Norman and Dame Joan Sutherland, as well as by popular Irish artists Enya and Sinéad O'Connor.
12. Close review of the scripts for standard stage adaptations reveals only minimal interest in the domestic objects. Performance notes and stage directions for British versions (like Oxenford's 1866 and Palmer's 1874), as well as American ones (such as Spencer's Universal Stage 1870 version) call for few props and are unconcerned with the few domestic objects that they do suggest. While this seems at first surprising, it in fact supports what I want to argue is a shift away from the object-oriented desires of *East Lynne* the novel as *East Lynne* on stage becomes, in and of itself, the object of consuming domestic desires.
13. Speaking broadly of "audience" in this context of course elides significant differences in place and time: *East Lynne* was regularly produced on both sides of the Atlantic over many decades. The effects of domestic melodrama relative to "audience identity" (especially working class and female audiences) have been noted as far back as Vicinus's seminal 1981 work and (specifically relative to working class audiences) as recently as Maunder ("poverty and neglect"), 2006.
14. Both the 1916 (Bracken) and 1925 (Flynn) versions of *East Lynne* are held by The Film Study Center of the Museum of Modern Art (New York). See Kaplan for close readings of the Bracken and Flynn versions. The Film and Television Archives of the University of California, Los Angeles holds the only known complete copy of Lloyd's 1931 *East Lynne*.
15. The other versions from 1931 are a shorter American version entitled *Ex-Flame* (directed by Victor Halperin) and *East Lynne on the Western Front* (directed by George Pearson), a UK send-up in which bored WWI soldiers entertain themselves by getting into drag and putting on a show that absolutely everybody knows: *East Lynne*.
16. The end of the twentieth century brings fewer echoes, but they exist. It is still possible to visit East Lynne, Missouri (incorporated in 1871, current population 304) and East Lynn, Illinois (incorporated in 1872, current population 78). Full scale BBC TV versions of *East Lynne* were produced in 1976 and 1982; BBC Radio 4 ran an adaptation in 1987, on the centenary of Wood's death (Jay xxxviii). A dash of *East Lynne* can be found in the 1993 film *Mrs. Doubtfire* (directed by Chris Columbus), in which recently divorced Daniel Hillard (Robin Williams) transforms himself into a nanny in order to return home and be with his children. *East Lynne: A Musical in Two Acts* (1977) is still available for production ("Looking for a full scale musical that sparkles with warmth, charm and humor?") through Pioneer Drama Service — a prospect that may appeal to the East Lynne Theatre Company ("Equity Theatre in Cape May, New Jersey"), founded in 1980 and still going strong.

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