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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Puk Speckens', written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long horizontal stroke.

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# The Men in Eyre's Lives: A Study of Testosterone and Effeminacy



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## Abstract

Ever since its publication in 1847, Brontë's *Jane Eyre* has been one of the most popular novels that was produced during the Victorian era. This popularity was keenly felt ever since its life was started but more importantly demonstrated by its afterlives: adaptations. As within the Victorian era, *Jane Eyre* has always been linked to gender studies. Most of these studies have always been linked to women's studies, for Brontë was perceived as one of the mothers of feminism. However, these studies neglect the discussion of the manifestation of masculinities within the novel. This field of studies however, is of particular interest because the transition of the romantic period into the Victorian period marked a split into two polar opposite masculine ideals: the English gentleman and the new gentleman. This split, or the combining of these two *masculinities* were the cause for a lot of confusion and conflicting ideas in trying to adhere to one of these ideals. This thesis tries to uncover how these two differing ideas manifest themselves within the male characters of *Jane Eyre*. As a result, this thesis will find out what Brontë believes to be the ideal man. Once these determinations have been made, this thesis will try to unveil how these different images of masculinity translate themselves to the 1983 television adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. By first examining changes in masculine identity during the 80s, this study will uncover how these changes play a role in both the choices the adapter makes in adapting the novel and how the show might be received by an audience. Finally, by using adaptation theory this study will try to uncover in what way or form Brontë's ideal man is still present within the 1983 adaptation.

## Key Words

Brönte, manliness, masculinity, adaptation, Jane Eyre, Rochester, Brocklehurst, Reed, Rivers, auteur, Victorian, domesticity, fidelity, 1847, 1983

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## Introduction

*“Charlotte Brontë’s best known novel, Jane Eyre (1847), has not been out of print since initial publication, continues to sell well, and has been the source of at least twenty-one films. Beyond this, the novel has sustained a varied “afterlife,” appearing in or as numerous sequels, prequels, simultaneous tales, stage plays, a musical, comic books, parodies, postage stamps, and, of course, literary criticism.” (Hateley 1022)*

Not long after its publication in October of 1847 *Jane Eyre* became a best-seller, for within the first three months over 2500 copies were sold. By January the novel was reprinted and subsequently it reprinted again in April 1848 (Ingham 27). One of the questions that was on most of the Victorians’ minds was the question of the author’s gender. Charlotte and her sisters Anne and Emily were writing under the pseudonym Bell. Currer Bell, otherwise known as Charlotte Brontë, was believed to be a man for a long time; because it was easier to condone that the matters of “brutality, attempted bigamy, and an unmarried woman’s passion for a married man” that are present in *Jane Eyre*, were created by a man (Ingham 26-27). From the moment of its existence the story of *Jane Eyre* was shrouded by gender issues. Aside from its popularity, the novel also brought on a lot of academic criticism. Ever since gender studies became a prevalent theme within the academic world, *Jane Eyre* became a focus point within this academic circle. Present day feminists have even claimed Brontë as “one of the “foremothers” of the contemporary women’s movement” (Ellis 192). Before second-wave feminism, historical scholarship was mostly characterized by excluding women and strictly gendering the public and private sphere (Tosh 2). However, when gender studies first came into being it was part of the feminist agenda, which meant that there was a focus on the experience of one sex, “women” (Tosh 2). When the field of women’s history transformed into the history of gender, meaning a shift towards relationships between women and “men”, the term “masculinity” became available for analysis (Danahay 3). As a result, the “private” sphere, which used to only include women now includes men, and the “public” sphere now also includes women (Tosh 2). Nevertheless, most of the current gender studies are solely focussing on themes concerning women, *Jane Eyre* being one of the prime examples. This thesis on the other hand will take a different route by taking a closer look at the “men” in Jane’s life, and more specifically one of her afterlives.

Charlotte Brontë presents the reader with a total of seven male characters that play a role in Jane’s life. Of these seven, two have only a minor presence within the novel but shaped

Jane's childhood and perception of men during that stage of her life: John Reed and Mr. Brocklehurst. Of the other five characters, only two are truly of significance: St. John Eyre Rivers and Edward Rochester. These two men are the major male characters that come into play within the adult stage of Jane's life. These four characters all display different depictions of manliness through their character, appearance, and behavior. Although Jane needed the influence of all these men in her life in order to get her happy ending, Charlotte Brontë clearly tries to enlighten the reader on how a man should truly look, behave, or what his personality should be like. By shining light on certain qualities and behavior, the audience gets a glimpse of what Brontë thinks about men and how she pictures "the ideal man". This thesis would like to answer the following question: In what way has Brontë's idea of the "perfect man" manifested itself within the (1983) adaptation of *Jane Eyre*? In order to answer this question, this study will first need to put *Jane Eyre* (1847) into its historical context and determine the Victorian position on "masculinity" and "manliness"; or in other words the appearance, behaviour, and character that encapsulated the ideal Victorian man. Subsequently, this thesis will determine how this view correlates with the novel itself. In trying to uncover in what way this ideal has manifested itself within the above mentioned adaptation, this thesis will first need to put the work in its historical context and analyze this particular after life within the field of adaptation and gender studies. As a result, the factors that helped these manifestations take form will be revealed. In the end, this research will unveil whether Brontë's idea of the perfect is brought to life in visual form and what this might mean for the afterlives of Jane's men.

In order to make a comparative study of a literary source and visual sources, there should be an awareness of the characteristics of both art forms and what separates them. In analyzing them efficiently, different modes of analysis must be used, which means that the researcher should be aware of both literary and adaptation studies theories. In most cases, when a film or television show is compared to the literary work which it adapts, there is a focus on "fidelity" or "infidelity" (Hutcheon 6). The audience that has read the novel beforehand usually tries to determine whether the adaptation is successful on account of its fidelity to the original source (Whelehan 3). As a result, a lot of adaptations are seen in a negative light by academics and journalists, as noted by Polish American novelist Louis Begley adaptations are "belated, middlebrow, or culturally inferior" (qtd. in Hutcheon 2). However, whether an adaptation is successful, true to the source, or secondary is very much a subject of interpretation and subjective. As Linda Hutcheon expresses in *A Theory of Adaptation*, a thing of more interest is the fact that it should be understood that the adapter's

goal is not simply to reproduce the novel in visual form, but that “[a]daptation is repetition, but repetition without replication” (7). She continues by explaining that adapting is fuelled by many different intentions “the urge to consume and erase the memory of the adapted text or to call it into question is as likely as the desire to pay tribute by copying” (7). These intentions and the tools that the adapter uses to visualize his intended product should be subject to investigation.

The first thing that must be understood when analysing adaptations, is the duality of the definition of adaptation as: product and process (Hutcheon 22). Firstly, as a product, the adaptation is “a transposition of a particular work”, which means a shift of medium, genre, or context. As with almost all adaptations there is a shift in medium as with for example a novel into a game, a picture into a song, or a novel into film. Secondly, as a process, there is the process of “creation” and “reception”; in which the process of creation means (re-)interpretation and the process of reception sees adaptations as a form of intertextuality (Hutcheon 22). The emphasis on the “process” of adaptation helps researchers in trying to understand “how adaptations allow people to tell, show, or interact with stories.” (Hutcheon 22). These three modes of engagement all have quality of immersing their audience, though not all in the same respect or with the same intensity. As this thesis looks at an adaptation that shifts the “telling” mode to the “showing” mode, the “participatory” mode will not be discussed here. Authors use the telling mode, which mostly depends on the imagination of the reader. Everything the reader needs to know is on the page without the distraction and limitations of sounds and images. The reader is in control, and directs the words on the page to their own knowledge and experience, which if the story takes place in the reader’s historical comfort zone, can be limiting. As a result, the author lets the reader fill in the blanks. Entering the performance mode, meaning screen and stage adaptations, the director is in control and forces us as audience to follow the path that he or she has set for us. As Hutcheon puts it, the showing mode moves the audience from “the imagination to the realm of direct perception—with its mix of both detail and broad focus. The performance mode teaches us that language is not the only way to express meaning or to relate stories.” (Hutcheon 23). The intertextuality and historical context of the masculine ideal fitting the time in which the adaptation was produced and the context in which the adaptation was watched also plays a big part in the perception of a masculine ideal within the audience. For example, an audience member that has been restricted by knowledge and the ideals of the 80s would have a different view on whether Mr. Rochester presented as the ideal man compared to that of a 21<sup>st</sup> century audience member. Furthermore, images and motions are complex and

associative tools and by looking at the choices made by directors concerning casting, plot, script, acting, composition, lighting, and music; this thesis will look at how these choices manifest and make the audience perceive the work. This thesis will analyse the manifestations of these choices within the (1983) adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. The lack of a comprehensive analysis of the adaptation in question and especially concerning the male characters is what makes this study significant. Furthermore, as John Tosh has argued that there is a lack of research towards masculinity within the historical record. He explains that this is mostly due to the fact that western beliefs have found masculinity “unproblematic”. As a result men are “ubiquitous” and practically “invisible” within the historical records (Bradstock 2). Still, Tosh argues that during the last twenty years a lot of contemporary research on masculinity, otherwise known as “the new men’s studies”, has surfaced (Bradstock 2). Nevertheless, if compared to the amount of research in which women are analysed within their historical domain, the scholarly discussion of masculinity with Victorian times is still lacking. Therefore, this thesis will try to contribute to this scholarly field by linking the different Victorian manifestations of masculinity to Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* and subsequently uncover how Brontë’s perfect man is brought to life within the (1983) adaptation.

The first part of chapter 1 will contextualize the position of middle-class to upper-class men within Victorian society. First of all, the chapter will explain what it actually meant to be a man during the Victorian era and how most men actually went through their stages of life. Following, the reader will be given an impression on how Victorians believed a man should behave, what they should look like, and what their personalities should reflect. The second part of this chapter will discuss *Jane Eyre* specifically and will analyse the four above mentioned male characters and their behaviour, appearance, and personality within the story as a manifestation of conflicting masculine ideals. Subsequently, this chapter will examine how these analyses correlate with the views on the perfect Victorian man, only to shine a light on how Charlotte Brontë wanted her men to be. As with Chapter one, Chapter two will first give a short contextualization of the position of men during the time in which the (1983) adaptation of *Jane Eyre* was produced. A focus will be put on the qualities that were encouraged in men, and how these views might have played a part in the decisions that a director might have made in adapting *Jane Eyre* but also in how a 80s or 21<sup>st</sup> century audience would have received it. The second part of this chapter will take a closer examination of the tools and the choices made by director Julian Amyes concerning casting, plot, script, acting, composition, lighting, and music within the television series. As a result these choices show in what way Brontë’s perfect man is resurrected. Expectations are that the differing historical

contexts between a 1980s audience member and a 21<sup>st</sup> century audience member are crucial as to what they believed to be the ideal man and thus their differences in viewing the characters of St. John and Rochester. Furthermore, this study also expects to find out that the tools of casting, lighting, and composition are the most effective in their display of the adapter's view on what Brontë's "ideal man" was and thereby might have transferred this view onto the audience depending on their historical context.

## 1. Brontë's Eyre of Manly Musk

*“From being a site of anxiety, the masculine body was restyled into – contradictory as the term appears – a highly defensive non-weapon, its movements declaring a new mode of thinking about problems of vulnerability in the urban space. Therefore, the things and commodities discussed here are not only ideas, but are sometimes also ideals.” (Godfrey 14)*

*“I know what it is to live entirely for and with what I love best on earth. I hold myself supremely blest -- blest beyond what language can express; because I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine.” (Brontë 519)*

### 1.1 Views on Manliness during 1800-1850

While entering the Victorian era in the 1830s, the air of the romantic period was still ever much present. The previous twenty years, which were part of a period called the Regency, were characterized by the reigning of luxury and the aristocracy. It was a time in which people sought “to revive the elegance of eighteenth-century fashionable life in a moral atmosphere reminiscent of the Restoration” (Altick 9). However, one of the most prevalent themes within the nineteenth century are social relations and more specifically how gender determines these social relationships. As Emma F. Quinn explains in her 2014 honors thesis *Sexing The Male: Manifestations Of Masculinity In Jane Eyre, Wuthering Heights, And Villette*, sentiments of the Romantic period helped the Victorian people believe in the idea of companionate love (4). These new companionships that came into existence “shifted the way men and women viewed each other, reshaping what was desired in a mate and therefore which aspects of masculinity and femininity were ideal” (Quinn 4). With the start of the nineteenth century, a transitional period for both genders was introduced. Leading to the disappearance of “sensible women” and the transformation of the “flamboyant gentleman,” “English gentleman,” or “gentry masculinity” (Danahay 5) into a new man that saw the power and strength in masculine qualities (Quinn 4). Furthermore, women came to accept their docile and domestic position. Most academic studies concentrate on this new female position of the “angel in the house” and also the creation of the “new women” that sounded the start of feminism. Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* can be seen as a sounding board for these complex new social relations. Although most academics studies look at the manifestations of position of the Victorian female within its literature, the second part of the chapter will examine the position of men and the presentation of manly qualities within *Jane Eyre*. In order to properly

analyze the male characters that are presented in Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, the actual Victorian man and the ideal Victorian man must be uncovered.

However, in uncovering these images of masculinity, it is important to look at the nature of women first. For as John Tosh describes in his 1999 work *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-class Home in Victorian England*, these two themes cannot be separated from each other, for the masculine ideal can only be defined in relation to the feminine ideal; one cannot be understood without the other (2). Scientists of the day believed that both the women's and man's function and qualities within society were determined by biology. Patricia Ingham 2006 study *The Brontës* argues that "women's nature and role was essentially based on seeing them as lacking in male characteristics" (52), as determined by nature. Anthropologists, doctors, and biologists laid down the characteristics that women do possess "frailty, passivity, submissiveness, silence, and desexualized affection" as inherent to the female form (Harrison 158). J. F. C Harrison's 1991 study *Late Victorian Britain, 1875-1901* explains that these stereotypes of inferiority were ingrained into the Victorian Mindset (158). These scientists gave the impression that men and women were polar opposites and should not travel within the same spheres unless strictly necessary. Therefore it seems logical that the characteristics that were linked to the "ideal man" are the opposite of the aforementioned female characteristics: strength, activity, dominance, loudness, and sexualization. Although this gives the impression that the male characteristics are deemed positive, the transference of these characteristics to women and vice versa were held as something abhorred and grotesque and the cause for a lot of anxiety (Ingham 148). Nevertheless, there are some feminine qualities that women possessed that were believed to make women superior in a sense: "intuition," "nurturing ability," and "maternal instincts" (Ingham 51). All of these characteristics can be ascribed to motherhood, which was as John Tosh believes "came to be seen as the fulfilment of a woman's femininity" (Tosh 81). Furthermore, the wonder of childbirth was not just integral to the completion of women's femininity but was also the mark of a "fully formed masculinity" (Tosh 79). The ability to have children, especially sons, was a sign of masculine status and ensured the family name (Tosh 80).

The transitional period from the Romantic to the Victorian brought complications as to what was considered masculine. The characteristics of the romantic man "passionate and flamboyant, often emulating sensible qualities that were associated with effeminacy, and his power was very much tied up in his wealth and status" (Quinn 9) lingered. However, with the introduction of the industrial revolution, "Victorian masculinity" or "the new gentleman" or

“hegemonic masculinity” was born, with a “focus on hard work, encouraging men to be strong and aggressive while simultaneously in control of their natural passions” (Quinn 9). Dandies were usually those who strayed farthest from this new identity and they were considered to be “about as close as any man could come to rejecting his masculinity” (Danahay 6). Strength and self-control became the building blocks for the Victorian masculine identity. This strength was also reflected through their appearance, which was muscular and harsh. This harshness was amplified after the late thirties, when beards and moustaches came into fashion and as Wingfield-Stratford saw the connection “between . . . aggressive manliness and the almost equally aggressive hairiness flaunted by the male sex at the time” (qtd. in Houghton 202).

Men were expected to be useful participants of society and in order to maintain that function they were required to be rational and “abstain from any activity that was self-indulgent, including sexual and passionate pleasures” (Quinn 9). In some ways you can view the Victorian man as the opposite of the Romantic man. Giving in to your carnal desires was a sign of weakness and linked to effeminacy. The contradictions between these two types of men resulted in an internal conflict concerning how men should behave. Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* effectively displays this duality of masculinity, “both among pairs of characters and within single heroes; these binaries depict the earlier vision of gentility as being in competition with later Victorian masculine qualities” (Quinn 22). Consequently, the private and public spheres presented a duality within men. Men were constantly being pushed to be both “a man of men” and “a man of women”, resulting in tensions. These tensions were enhanced by advice pamphlets like William Cobbett’s *Advice to Young Men And (Incidentally) to Young Women in the Middle and Higher Ranks of Life. In a Series of Letters, Addressed to a Youth, a Bachelor, a Lover, a Husband, a Father, a Citizen, or a Subject*, which was released in 1829. As the title suggests, this manual demonstrates that there are contradictions on how men were expected to act as a father, a husband, or citizen. As Quinn puts it, there is a plurality to masculinity, in which there is both a sense of energy and control (11). Due to this continuing fluidity of masculinity, men needed to find solace in the constancy of femininity, which in turn gave them stability. The angel in the home would keep the private sphere stable through completely submitting to her husband’s rule. As the female position was perceived as biological, it was also unchangeable. While the concept of “manliness” on the other hand, can be seen as a process and “something which developed over an extended period” (Tosh 103). Being manly became an achievement as a way to justify the continual changes of masculinity. Due to the fact that Victorian society could not draw a complete and definite picture of the definition of

masculinity “the construction of gender relied on a stable understanding of femininity in order to better frame a definition of the masculine” (Quinn 13). However, the mark of feminine stability was not a reality for most men, as can be observed in *Jane Eyre*.

Yet the birthplace and development of masculine qualities start at home. The home was a focal point, as it was the place where according to Tosh “the boy was disciplined by dependence, and where the man attained full adult status as householder” (2). The changes surrounding the connection to this private sphere signalled a shift in manifestations of gender within social dynamics (2). Although, historical scholars used to strictly gender the two spheres, nowadays scholars have broken this divide. The perspective that “the private sphere of family and household was women’s—and thus outside history—just as the public sphere belonged to men—and should therefore be written about without reference to women,” began to crumble. Through analysing Victorian literature, it becomes apparent that the spheres do not exclude gender but limit the complete view of male and female lives. However, the difference between men and women is that men have the freedom to pass between the public and private at will (Tosh 2). In addition to the home, the development of the man’s masculinity as a social construct also takes place at “work and all-male association” (Tosh 2). Therefore, in analysis of literature that is written by men about men, provides a more complete view on the manifestation the masculine ideal. On the other hand, if Charlotte Brontë’s character Shirley should be believed when she says “women read men more truly than men read women” (qtd. in Hogan 58) in the (1853) *Shirley*, women had a better understanding on how men should adhere to the standards of the ideal Victorian man. Therefore, in analysing *Jane Eyre*, the next part of the chapter will provide a truer understanding of how the masculine ideal manifested itself in Victorian society, as the story is written by a woman that is looking at men through the eyes of a woman, actively breaking the mould of the public and private spheres that confined their sexes. In doing this, this chapter will uncover Charlotte Brontë’s own creation of the “ideal man”.

## 1.2 *Jane Eyre* (1847)

### 1.2.1 John Reed

Although at the start of *Jane Eyre*’s life, the book was believed to have been written by a man, it must be understood that this was not the case. From the first page onwards Brontë lets the reader experience Jane’s story through her eyes. While most of the scenes are written as if the reader is experiencing the scenes as if the reader is there at that moment. A lot of the

time it is as if Jane is telling the story to someone and not experiencing it herself, for she often addresses the reader directly. Due to this technique, the reader gets the impression that they are provided with a look into the mind of a real Victorian woman and thus getting a glimpse of her ideals and desires. The first time that Jane actually encounters the male form within the story, the scene is told as if she is experiencing it at that moment. In this scene, the minor character of her cousin John Reed is introduced. The first impression that the reader gets is that of a spoiled young man that firmly knows his position within the private sphere in which they dwell. When Jane asks John “What do you want?” John responds with “Say, ‘What do you want, Master Reed?’”(12), immediately affirming his masculine position of being the master of the house. Quickly followed by Jane’s description of the boy:

John Reed was a schoolboy of fourteen years old; four years older than I . . . large and stout for his age, with a dingy and unwholesome skin; thick lineaments in a spacious visage, heavy limbs and large extremities. He gorged himself habitually at table, which made him bilious, and gave him a dim and bleared eye and flabby cheeks. He ought now to have been at school; but his mama had taken him home for a month or two, “on account of his delicate health.” Mr. Miles, the master, affirmed that he would do very well if he had fewer cakes and sweetmeats sent him from home; but the mother’s heart turned from an opinion so harsh, and inclined rather to the more refined idea that John’s sallowness was owing to over-application and, perhaps, to pining after home. (Brontë 12)

Even though achieving masculinity was seen as a process, this description gives the impression that John Reed will not rise to the Victorian ideal man. Especially the emphasis on the fact he is being babied by his mother shows the fault of the lingering presence of the young boy within the private sphere. Although boys are in need of maternal care during their early years, boys needed to develop a sense of independence early on. They needed to stand on their own two feet, which was learned through the hard and just hand of the father and through the early immersion into the homo-social sphere of school. As John was fatherless from an early age, there was no masculine force to guide him. As with a lot of boys, John’s masculine identity seemed “threatened by the attentions of the mother” (Tosh 7), which is why “a rising proportion of middle-class youth was educated away from home” (Tosh 7). Meaning that Mrs Reed keeping John out of school is some sort of foreboding on how John will turn out. This foresight is soon confirmed when Bessie comes to visit Jane at Lowood as she tells what has become of him up until that point:

Well, and what of John Reed?" "Oh, he is not doing so well as his mama could wish. He went to college, and he got—plucked, I think they call it: and then his uncles wanted him to be a barrister, and study the law: but he is such a dissipated young man, they will never make much of him, I think." "What does he look like?" "He is very tall: some people call him a fine-looking young man; but he has such thick lips."  
(Brontë 108)

Although the first mentioned scene had described John as a person with not a very appealing appearance, this scene describes him as something quite the opposite. Although he is not described as handsome, he is generally thought to be fine-looking. Nevertheless, the mentioning of the thick lips give the impression that his appearance is in line with the flamboyant Romantic masculinity, which is as Bessie sees it not an attractive feature. Furthermore, Bessie describes John as a "dissipated young man", who was kicked out of college and who will not amount to much. Finally, Jane receives a message that John has died after wrecking his life to "strange ways" (Brontë 255). As it is being described what went wrong in John's life, the following phrase sticks: "His head was not strong" (Brontë 256). The John that is described could not abstain from "extravagance" (Brontë 256), which meant that he could not uphold to the ideal Victorian man's characteristics of "strength" and "control", thus becoming his downfall.

### 1.2.2 Mr Brocklehurst

The second man to whom Jane is introduced is Mr Brocklehurst. The first impression that he makes on Jane is that he is a man of scrutiny and watchfulness. Without even letting him say a word, Brontë focuses on Brocklehurst's eyes, with which he "examined me with two inquisitive looking grey eyes which twinkled under a pair of bushy brows", and gives the reader the impression that Brocklehurst is a man who misses nothing. In describing his appearance Jane unveils that the man does not adhere to the standards of Romantic appearances, but is instead "tall," "large," "harsh," "prim," with "large prominent teeth" (Brontë 39). Brocklehurst being a man of faith converses with Jane about religion. The focus of the conversation lies in Brocklehurst's intent to unveil Jane's religious upbringing and emphasizes that it is the cornerstone to development of young minds. Especially when Jane reveals that she does not like psalms, Brocklehurst feels the need to brag about his sons love for Psalms and his proficiency in reciting them. This shows the importance of religion in the creation of the ideal Victorian man. Furthermore, as the conversation continues, Brocklehurst

presses the matter of “consistency” that will shape Jane at Lowood and thereby conforming Jane to the model of femininity (42). Later on in the story, Jane asks Helen Burns whether Mr Brocklehurst is a good man and Helen answers “He is a clergyman, and is said to do a great deal of good” (Brontë 60). This answer gives the impression that he is not a good man at all, but the fact that he is a clergyman and has done a great deal of good might fool people into thinking he is a good man. This short and double-layered answer gives the reader insight as to what Brontë thinks about how Brocklehurst preaches his beliefs onto others. Brontë hereby comments on the set way in which Victorian males held religion and used it as tool to excuse their behaviour. Later on, this opinion becomes more obvious when Miss Temple describes Mr Brocklehurst: “Mr. Brocklehurst is not a god: nor is he even a great and admired man: he is little liked here; he never took steps to make himself liked” (82). Focus should be put on the fact that this scene alludes to the fact that Brocklehurst believes himself to be a god. This hints to his belief that he has, as Victorian men should, achieved ideal masculinity. Therefore he should not have to make efforts to be charming or gracious for he has reached his final goal. However, eventually Brocklehurst becomes obsolete and is replaced by “gentleman” with “more enlarged sympathising minds” and with the ability “to combine reason with strictness, comfort with economy, [and] compassion with uprightness” (Brontë 99-100). Jane elaborates by stating that with Brocklehurst’s departure Lowood improved and became after a while “truly useful and [a] noble institution” (100). Showing that by not completely adhering to the standard of the ideal Victorian man, greatness could be achieved.

### 1.2.3 St. John Eyre Rivers

The first time that the reader encounters the character of St. John Eyre Rivers is in chapter twenty-eight, when he and his two sisters rescue Jane from certain starvation and hypothermia. However, during that scene Jane’s mind is not coherent enough to present a lasting impression of St. John’s character. It is in chapter twenty-nine, when Jane has recovered to a certain extent that she gives the reader the first inkling of what kind of man St. John actually is. The first thing that comes to mind while describing St. John is his ability to focus on the book he is reading. Jane even compares St. John to a statue, which gives the suggestion that he is in total control of his body. This sense of control was one of the main characteristics of the masculine ideal of the “new gentleman”. Next she goes on to describe St. John’s appearance as “tall, slender [with a] face [that] riveted the eye; it was like a Greek face . . . straight, classic nose . . . an Athenian mouth and chin . . . eyes large and blue . . . high

forehead . . . fair hair” (Brontë 396). The focus on comparing his features to the classics is significant. It turns out that St. John’s appearance fits the masculine appearance that is ascribed to the “English gentleman”. Like the English gentleman, St. John is described as pleasing to the eye, because his features are symmetrical and “harmonizing” (Brontë 396). However, Jane immediately presses that the gentleness of his features are not reflected within his stance and behaviour as she mentions “Yet he whom it describes scarcely impressed one with the idea of a gentle, a yielding, an impressible, or even of a placid nature” (Brontë 396). Linking to the first part of this chapter, this is the first way in which the duality that is inherent to the Victorian masculine ideal manifests itself within St. John.

Although St. John’s outside appearance suggests that he follows the standards that were set for the masculinity of the English gentleman, looks can be deceiving. His personality, stance, behaviour, and goals in life suggest otherwise. One of the most significant features in St. John’s life is that he holds his “deep and sincere faith” (Hogan 66) as one of his most important qualities. Everything that St. John does in his life is inspired by his need to “fulfil God’s work” (Hogan 66). Jane describes him as a man that is “commanding but not open . . . his eyes, bright and deep and searching, but never soft . . . [with a] tall imposing figure” (Brontë 496), which are characteristics that are mostly in line with the Victorian masculine ideal and refuse femininity. However, the symmetry and beauty of his features are again linked to femininity. Furthermore, St. John presents himself as the perfect English gentleman, by being polite and charming at all times. Although the tasks that he has set for himself and the behaviour that is described presents him as a deeply caring and loving person, his actions are actually driven by his sole need to please the Lord. His investment in the creation of schools for poor boys and girls and his wish to be become a missionary in India are both driven by the need to serve God. Jane describes it to Rochester as follows: “He is untiringly active. Great and exalted deeds are what he lives to perform” (Brontë 508). Even though it is clear to all that St. John loves his family and most of all loves Rosamond Oliver with the deepest of passions, Jane believes that his biggest fault is his constant need for “extreme self-suppression” (Hogan 66). He is obsessed with controlling every aspect of his life: body and soul. The only time that flints of passion slip through are when he presents his feelings towards religion. As a result he comes off as “severe . . . cold as an iceberg” (Brontë 511). By suppressing his emotions, feelings of love, desires, and sexual fulfilment, St. John displays the total control and strength that was required by the Victorian masculine ideal. In asking Jane to marry him, St. John does not display his an expression of love. Jane believes that the desire for this social arrangement is just a means to an end that helps him achieve

absolute Victorian masculinity (Quinn 36). Nevertheless, most Victorian marriages were just social arrangements and did not come into existence due to the need for romantic love. Jane on the other hand is not looking for a mate whose passions fit “the Victorian mold of religious and social passion” (Quinn 36), which becomes apparent when Jane explains to Rochester why she has not married St. John:

He is not my husband, nor ever will be. He does not love me: I do not love him. He loves (as he can love, and that is not as you love) a beautiful young lady called Rosamond. He wanted to marry me only because he thought I should make a suitable missionary’s wife, which she would not have done. . . He is not like you, sir: I am not happy at his side, nor near him, nor with him. He has no indulgence for me—no fondness. He sees nothing attractive in me; not even youth—only a few useful mental points”. (511)

Jane fears that his need for control would not challenge or complement her, but “forced to keep the fire of [her] nature continually low, to compel it to burn inwardly and never utter a cry, though the imprisoned flame consumed vital after vital” (Brontë 470). Though she admires and respects his commitment to religion and his practice of religion, she clearly disapproves of his “approach to choosing a partner in life” (Hogan 67). Quinn believes that “Jane [has a] desire for an emotionally passionate mate more reminiscent of a Romantic gentleman” (36).

#### 1.2.4 Edward Rochester

Looking back on the experiences, behaviour, and changes of outside appearance that characterize Rochester, it becomes apparent that in some ways Edward Rochester can be seen to both emulate “Romantic male heroes” and “Victorian ideals” (Quinn 38). The changes that Brontë makes Rochester undergo before Jane actually decides to spend the rest of her life with him, reveal Brontë’s idea of the perfect mate.

The first time that the reader hears about Rochester is when Jane asks Mrs. Fairfax what kind of master their employer is. In her quest for answers, Jane is not interested in Mr. Rochester’s wealth, status or experience; but asks questions that are directed towards finding out about his character and personality:

Is Mr. Rochester an exacting, fastidious sort of man? . . . Is he generally liked? . . . Well, but, leaving his land out of the question, do you like him? Is he liked for himself? . . . But has he no peculiarities? . . . What, in short, is his character? . . . In what way is he peculiar?” (124)

After receiving Mrs. Fairfax's account, Jane comments on Mrs. Fairfax and society's tendency to define a man through his wealth and status: "Mr. Rochester was Mr. Rochester in her eyes; a gentleman, a land proprietor—nothing more" (124). Jane on the other hand strives to get a notion of Mr. Rochester's identity. Instead, Mrs. Fairfax focuses on his genteel qualities by giving the following answers:

[H]e has a gentleman's tastes and habits, and he expects to have things managed in conformity to them." . . . the family have always been respected here . . . I believe he is considered a just and liberal landlord by his tenants: but he has never lived much amongst them . . . His character is unimpeachable, I suppose. He is rather peculiar, perhaps: he has travelled a great deal, and seen a great deal of the world . . . I dare say he is clever, but I never had much conversation with him . . . you cannot be always sure whether he is in jest or earnest, whether he is pleased or the contrary; you don't thoroughly understand him, in short—at least, I don't: but it is of no consequence, he is a very good master." (124)

Mrs. Fairfax apparently believes a good master is characterized by genteel qualities like "wealth" and a respected family. Nevertheless, Jane does find out that Rochester is an educated man and his opinions or personality can sometimes be confounding.

The first time that the reader actually encounters Rochester in the flesh, the characteristics of this English gentleman are contradicted by his exterior. The first time Jane sees Rochester in the light of the moon she describes him as a man with "a dark face, with stern features and a heavy brow" (134). Later in the story she still describes him as with a "form [that] was of the same strong and stalwart contour as ever: his port . . . erect, his hair . . . raven black . . . [with] athletic strength . . . [and] vigorous prime" (Brontë 497). Moreover, Rochester will never be described as a handsome man but his appearance does possess the strength with which the ideal Victorian male was identified. In contrast to most Victorian women, Jane is not shocked or disgusted by his features. Instead, her "theoretical reverence and homage for beauty, elegance, [and] gallantry" makes her uncomfortable around the "handsome" and "heroic-looking young gentlem[en]", for in her mind they could not possibly sympathize with someone like her. It was the "frown [and] the roughness of the traveler [which] set [her] at ease" (134). Jane Eyre seems to be of the belief that appearances can be misleading and that there was some sort of truthfulness about a less pleasing exterior, which was comforting to her. Instead of the Grecian appearance of St. John, concealing his coldness and lack of passion; Jane is attracted to the masculine power that emanates from Rochester's being (Quinn 90). She actually mentions this when Rochester asks her whether she finds him

handsome:

I am sure most people would have thought him an ugly man; yet there was so much unconscious pride in his port; so much ease in his demeanour; such a look of complete indifference to his own external appearance; so haughty a reliance on the power of other qualities, intrinsic or adventitious, to atone for the lack of mere personal attractiveness, that, in looking at him, one inevitably shared the indifference, and, even in a blind, imperfect sense, put faith in the confidence. (155)

Hereby it becomes clear that it is his “indifference to his own external appearance” that attracts her to him. Quinn believes that Jane is not trying to “convince herself that he is handsome [and] find[s] him objectively unattractive” (90), but by accepting him for who he is she constructs a new set of values for ideal masculinity (90). However, this view greatly differs from how Rochester actually sees himself. When Jane finally returns to Rochester and he asks her about St John, he compares himself to him:

The picture you have just drawn is suggestive of a rather too overwhelming contrast. Your words have delineated very prettily a graceful Apollo: he is . . . tall, fair, blue-eyed, and with a Grecian profile. Your eyes dwell on a Vulcan,—a real blacksmith, brown, broad-shouldered: and blind and lame into the bargain. (509)

This passage suggests that Rochester believes that Jane desires a man with a “Grecian profile” and could never want a “Vulcan” like him (509). By linking himself to the Roman god of fire, Rochester suggests that he represents the destructive force of fire. Although this destructive force does become apparent when Bertha tries to burn Rochester’s bedroom in the middle of the novel, the fire in the end shows the fertilizing powers of fire. Even though he loses some of his bodily function, the fire cleanses him from the genteel quality of “wealth” and leaves him the constancy of physicality. She still sees him as the “strong,” “stalwart,” and unattractive man that she had come to know (Quinn 33). This suggests that what Rochester sees in himself and in St. John is completely different to what Jane sees. As a result, the audience gets a glimpse of how Victorian men “were confused about the shifting definition of masculinity, and about what women desired” (Quinn 36). Moreover, Rochester and Jane confine themselves to the complex set of rules that society has set concerning the outer appearance of masculinity, which in turn determines their view on what the other desires in a mate. Both characters do not recognize the good qualities in themselves, but both do see them in each other. As a result they both expect the other to uphold the set values, while not holding them of much importance themselves. In effect, through these views on physicality, Charlotte

Brontë links Mr. Rochester to the Byronic hero or the nineteenth-century anti-hero.

Although the end of the novel depicts a Rochester whose outside has been tainted by fire, his physicality has not changed. However, personality wise, Brontë depicts a man that undergoes a significant internal transformation. Firstly, from the moment that Jane meets Rochester, he transcends her expectations of him. As his appearance, status, behaviour, and personality do not complement each other, he is able to surprise her. Just like Rochester's appearance not meeting his status of gentility, his behaviour also goes against the grain. Most of the significant ways in which the novel displays this turn from genteel customs is displayed by Rochester's interaction with Jane. Although, during their first conversation there was a clear sense of the customary relationship between master and employee; the second conversation blurs the line between master and employee. He blurs this line by placing Jane at an equal footing with himself through his interest in her opinions. He even goes as far by saying that he does not "wish to treat [her] like an inferior" (156), but "desire[s] [her] to have the goodness to talk to [him] a little now, and divert [his] thoughts" (156). Furthermore, he is of the belief that the only reason for him having the right to be "a little masterful, abrupt, [and] perhaps exacting" (157) is grounded on the fact that he is superior in age and experience; instead of his position as master or in in him being a man. Throughout the story he confides in Jane and it becomes clear that he feels like he needs to justify or explain his past and present behaviour to her. Most of all, it is his ability to love someone that was considered inferior, "poor, obscure, plain, and little" (292), that shows that he does not uphold genteel customs. By choosing to marry Jane instead of a gentlewoman like Blanche Ingram, he shows that he wants a marriage that is based on love and not on social expectations.

In addition to the binary nature of Rochester and St. John's external appearances, their duality is amplified through their "treatment of passion" (Quinn 38). As discussed earlier, St. John adheres to the "Victorian ideal man" by displaying complete control of his passions, suppressing them till the point of coldness and stoicism. Only when trying to achieve his goal of doing God's work he displays an inkling of passion. Rochester on the other hand is not very open to his emotions either. However, when Rochester and Jane are confined to their private sphere and there is only the two of them, Rochester is able to become vulnerable and express his feelings towards Jane. Furthermore, Rochester is much more susceptible to change and his less set in his ways. It can almost be said that Rochester possesses a mercurial personality as Jane first describes him to be "very changeful and abrupt" (149). During that first moment Rochester comes off as all doom and gloom, but during their next encounter his whole countenance has changed:

Mr. Rochester, as he sat in his damask-covered chair, looked different to what I had seen him look before; not quite so stern—much less gloomy. There was a smile on his lips, and his eyes sparkled, whether with wine or not, I am not sure; but I think it very probable. He was, in short, in his after-dinner mood; more expanded and genial, and also more self-indulgent than the frigid and rigid temper of the morning . . . (Brontë 153)

It is through these changes in countenance that Rochester's true feelings for Jane become apparent. From the moment that Jane starts working at Thornfield, Rochester is adamant about wanting her to be near to him. However, for most of the story Rochester links this need for proximity to her duties as a governess. It is only just before his proposal of marriage that he explains what her nearness does to him. He professes that he "sometimes [has] a queer feeling with regard to [her]—especially when [she is] near [him]" (291) and that they are connected by a string that would snap if he left him to go to Ireland, resulting with him "bleeding inwardly" (291). Hereby Rochester links both the physical and the emotional to their bond. He shows that he is not afraid to take a leap and displays his emotional side. By explaining to her that his mental and physical health depend on their relationship he gives her the power over both his body and soul. This display of vulnerability and romantic love can also be perceived as a display of femininity on the man's part (Quinn 42). However, as Jane's emotional and physical stability also seems to be linked to Rochester, romantic love seems to help both these characters exert control over each other. As a result Brontë introduces a man that had become "more sensitive and self-sacrificing in relationships" (Quinn 42). The control over these passions is what separates St. John from Rochester. The cause for these losses of control on Rochester's part are the complexity of spheres within the novel. As Quinn puts it the novel is a place where "the public and private are repeatedly intertwined, and sometimes portrayed completely nonexistent" (77). Instead, the novel displays spheres that are neither public nor private but admit both genders. Rochester himself undermines his position within the public sphere and private sphere by transforming Thornfield into both a place that is home to him and his employees and a place of amusement. Furthermore, by inviting Jane to an evening gathering when Thornfield is visited by Blanche Ingram and her party, he blends both spheres. Coming back to the notion of control, Rochester seems to like fighting his passions, while not completely suppressing them. It is only in the fear of losing Jane that Rochester truly loses control of both his emotional and physical faculties. This loss of control is emphasized by Jane's description of him when she returns to Thornfield at the end of the novel: "But in his countenance I saw a change: that looked desperate and brooding—that

reminded me of some wronged and fettered wild beast or bird, dangerous to approach in his sullen woe” (497). By comparing Rochester to a wild animal Brontë presents that the loss of love is the source of this great love of control and that Jane is the only that can put Rochester together again.

Finally, it can be said that through the construction of romantic love Brontë has created the man that Jane chooses as her life partner; and consequently her ideal man. Brontë created a man that embodies a “sense of strong, introspective masculinity” that was in line with the ideal Victorian man (Quinn 5). However, Rochester also takes on a lot of the qualities that are linked to the Romantic Byronic hero, and is thereby more seen as an anti-hero. This new man was characterized by both qualities of the Romantic ideal of masculinity and the Victorian ideal. However, one thing that is most significant is Brontë’s belief that Rochester’s masculine status is defined by a woman: Jane Eyre. His appearance generally found unattractive was the first thing that set Jane at ease, which soon developed into attraction. Without Jane’s admiration and the acceptance of his exterior Rochester could not have preserved his masculinity. Brontë does not celebrate wealth but hard work, prefers passion over morals, favours truth over beauty, and aspires men to be both “respectful yet sexually aggressive” (Quinn 5). Most of all Brontë believes that the most significant quality of the ideal man is the capability to change. Especially a change that is fuelled by the search and acquisition of true romantic love. Rochester is the manifestation of that changing man, for everything that he undergoes is in service of his love for Jane. It can be said that everything that happened to Rochester and everything he did was in order to become the man that both Brontë and Jane needed in their lives (Quinn 90).

## 2. The 1980s: Adapting Jane's Men

*“This was an era of prodigious change in culture and society’s frame of thinking on gender. Yet it seems each representation is not without its equally compelling and sometimes damaging reaction.” (Peckham 13)*

*“What, I cannot help asking myself, would they make of Mr. Rochester? And the picture my fancy conjures up by way of reply is a somewhat humiliating one. What would they make of Jane Eyre? I see something very pert and very affected as an answer to that query. Still were it in my power, I should certainly make a point of being myself a witness of the exhibition.” (qtd. in Nudd 139)*

### 2.1. Views on Manliness during the 80s

The 1980s can be perceived as a period in which masculinity was elaborately reconstructed. Meaning, that the 1980s were a time in which the forces of commerce and economics radically transformed the masculine ideal (Beynon 98). Next to the economic and commercial changes, social changes like the introduction of first-wave feminism highly influenced developments in masculine ideals (Pechham 13). Both in the UK and in the US there were pro-feminist men that emphasized with this movement and tried to align their fellows to change their beliefs and create a “new man” that was “more caring, sharing, [and] nurturing” (Beynon 100). However, not all men felt an alignment with these views, particularly the middle to higher classes and educated were linked to the creation of the “new man” (100). Changes in the career and domestic dynamics resulted in “the new man as an ideal” (100). The “new man” countered the “old man”, who was characterized by “hardline masculinity epitomized by the paranoid, macho men with stifled emotions” (Beynon 100). Nevertheless, for a long time, this new man was still part of a minority.

The appearance of the new man was also coupled with the surfacing of a new “hard-soft” masculinity, which took a singer like Rod Stewart as their example (Beynon 102). The only things these young men had to do to in order to qualify for this new type of masculinity, were: drinking, singing, picking up girls, and be interested in football (Beynon 103). It can be said that these men are similar to the current Geordie men. Furthermore, these young men also became more interested in changing their body shape, resulting with the male body becoming an object of voyeurism. Although it had not yet reached the point at which men as Ronaldo were projected on huge billboard posing in their briefs, the objectification of the male form had begun. Commercialization demanded the appearance of the “male-on-male” gaze (Beynon 103). Thereby the public was introduced to the “macho-man” in the form of for example Arnold Schwarzenegger (Peckham 13). Although fashion became a huge part of this

objectification, due to the contribution of the homosexual community within the fashion industry, it also marked the belief that men's fashion became feminized (104).

These two new masculinities can also be characterized as the “nurturer” and the “narcissist”. The nurturer or otherwise known as the “new man” came into existence because of the changing of gender politics. As to what characterized the nurturer, the name says it all. This new man felt comfortable around the house, and fully contributed to domestic tasks as cleaning, cooking, and childcare (Beynon 120). Furthermore, the nurturer was in a sense close to the aforementioned “English gentleman” in that he was sensitive, able to express his feelings, and was in some ways effeminate (121). In addition, he respects the opposite gender, understands differences in sexuality and can relate to them. Besides that, he is opposed to violent modes of expression and is radical and forward thinking (121). The narcissist on the other hand, is very aware of appearances and thereby cares about the fitness and musculature of his body with the addition of being fashion-forward (121). Furthermore, like the ideal Victorian man, the narcissist is highly competitive and strives to achieve a certain level of success in order to maintain the masculine ideal (121). In order to maintain this ideal, the narcissist is concerned with maintaining the image of wealth by buying expensive goods. Lastly, this new male form spends his time pulling women and is concerned with all things adventurous and daring (121). The questions that remain are: What effect do these changes in masculine identity have on the manifestation of masculine identity from another era when adapting a novel such as *Jane Eyre* in 1983?; What effect do the changes in the historical context of masculine identity have on the reception of the adaption by a 1980s and 21<sup>st</sup> century audience?

## 2.2 *Jane Eyre* (1983)

### 2.2.1 General Information

Before the release of the (1983) adaptation of *Jane Eyre*, ten adaptations had already been made. After 1983 only two more television adaptations were produced. Of these thirteen adaptations, the (1983) version was one of two adaptations that is actually remembered. The television show starring Zelah Clarke as Jane and Timothy Dalton as Mr. Rochester consists of eleven episodes. Every episode takes about twenty-six to thirty-one minutes, giving a total of 298 minutes of screen time. The television show was distributed by BBC and directed by Julian Amyes. The rest of the production crew consists of: Barry Letts (producer), Charlotte

Brontë (author), Alexander Baron (script writer), Paul Reade (music), Oliver White (editor), and Ian Collins (editor).

### 2.2.2 Choices in Cast, Plot, and Script

Apart from directing, Aymes was also responsible for casting the actors that shine in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. In any case the casting process of a film or television series is very complex. With reboots and especially adaptations this process is almost impossible. The adapter has to take a lot of issues into account. First of all, the adapter keeps the audience and their expectations in mind. The expected audience determines what kind of adaptation is made. If the adaptation is directed to an audience that is unfamiliar with the original source and the social mores of the time in which the original was made; the adapter has much more leeway to transpose the plot, characters, and time in which the story takes place. Usually this choice is also made due to production limitations. For example, films can be quite limiting due to the fact that their screening times only range from an hour and a half to two and a half hours. It is quite the difficult feat to adapt a five-hundred page book to only ninety to hundred-fifty minutes of screen time. However, a television series like the (1983) *Jane Eyre* version of Brontë's novel has the opportunity to not let itself be limited by the lack of time. Therefore things like the plot and the script turn out to be almost identical to the novel. However, it is important to understand that by going from the telling mode to the aural/visual mode, the audience loses Jane's analysis of the characters. In a lot of adaptations, the story is told by a 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient narrator, due to the switch to the aural/visual mode the audience loses Jane's direct voice to the audience. Nevertheless, this is not the case at all times, Aymes did include a technique in which there is a voice over at certain parts in which Jane recorded by Zelah Clarke reflects on certain parts of the story. However, in the cases where it is necessary to get the inside scoop from Jane's brain in which the reader gets her view on male characters, the audience only gets to see the her visual response. Meaning, the translation that the adapter made of those thoughts, which then again performed by the actors leave room for interpretation.

Although Aymes' present the audience with a plot and script that are almost identical to Charlotte's novel, with the audience in mind Aymes does seem to take a few liberties concerning casting calls. One of the first minor male characters that Aymes presents the audience with seems to have the right air as John Reed's character. Although, Brontë describes him "as large and stout for his age, with a dingy and unwholesome skin; thick lineaments in a spacious visage, heavy limbs and large extremities" (12), the young actor that

Aymes chose seems to be less revolting than imagined. Although the actor's dinner jacket seems to be a bit tight around the waist he does not seem to be as stout as imagined. As for the rest of his features, the young actor Alan Cox displays a healthy and rosy visage and to all account would be considered a normal to handsome child. Thereby, intentionally or not, Aymes gives a less horrific reflection of the young Victorian male. Not long after having been introduced to John Reed, Aymes's Mr Brocklehurst makes an appearance. Although Brontë never clearly states that Mr. Brocklehurst is of a ripe age, the fact that he leaves his position at Lowood only ten years after Jane arrives there confirms it. Aymes' Mr. Brocklehurst being played by a fifty-nine years old actor Robert James at least fits that bill. As for the other external characteristics that Brontë mentions "tall," "large," "harsh," "prim," with "large prominent teeth" (39), except for the large teeth, Robert James does seem to fit this mould. However, due to the lack of duality within Brocklehurst's character and the perception of him by an audience, it might have been easy to cast Robert James. Concerning, John Reed on the other hand, Aymes might have chosen an actor less fitting in appearance in order to contrast the external to the internal.

With the introduction of Aymes' St. John and Rochester the issue of attraction comes into the mix. Meaning that the audience's need for a more attractive man might have influenced Aymes in casting Timothy Dalton as Rochester. As Patsy Stoneman mentions, "the 'hideous' Rochester of the text . . . has . . . been replaced . . . by a mythical Romantic hero" (qtd. in Rubik 12). Of all the Rochester that have been translated to the screen, Timothy Dalton is viewed as the most attractive casting. Furthermore, as Dalton played Heathcliff in the (1970) version of *Wuthering Heights* and four years after *Jane Eyre* came to play James Bond he could be as Ingham suggests a representation of "what in the 1980s and 1990s was thought to be a handsome man" (238). Many fans of the novel even consider him to be too handsome and that Aymes presents the audience with a completely different external Rochester. However, the question that remains is whether Timothy Dalton's Rochester is just too handsome or whether the perception of what was handsome and attractive during the 80s and the 21<sup>st</sup> century has just changed. As Rubik notes:

a change of perception which is possible due to the fact that a male's outward appearance which a Victorian girl would regard as lacking grace and beauty might be decoded as physically attractive by a modern reader, for whom a "dark face, with stern features and a heavy brow", "ireful" eyes, "black hair", a "decisive nose", "grim mouth" and athletic "broad chested" figure, together with roughness of manner and a

somewhat choleric temperament, may correspond to modern ideals of rugged masculinity. (12)

Thus Timothy Dalton might actually be the spitting image of the Rochester that Brontë imagined, it is just our view on what is attractive that has changed. Consequently, what Brontë perceived as beautiful and masculine might appear plain and boring to a 80s and 21<sup>st</sup> century audience. Brontë believes St. John to be handsome and masculine in appearance and describes him as “tall, slender [with a] face [that] riveted the eye; it was like a Greek face . . . straight, classic nose . . . an Athenian mouth and chin . . . eyes large and blue . . . high forehead . . . fair hair” (396), which to a modern audience might be translated as effeminate instead of masculine. Nevertheless, Aymes’ version of St. John played by James Marcus is almost identical to Brontë’s description of him. The difference lies in the fact that although standards of what is not beautiful might have changed, the normative beauty still remained. However, this normative beauty which James Marcus displays might be considered as bland and surely is less exciting to a modern audience. Nevertheless, the message that Brontë tries to get across gets lost due to this change in perception. Brontë’s Jane prefers truth and roughness over beauty and symmetry. Even though Aymes’s Jane verbally describes Rochester as not handsome, the form of Timothy Dalton might contradict this view to a modern audience and thereby becomes less powerful.

#### 2.2.4 Acting

Although, as discussed earlier, the plot of Aymes’ adaptation is almost identical to its original source; the acting abilities of the actors that play in the television series determine in what way the actions, behaviour, and emotions that they act out are experienced by the audience. Nevertheless, in many ways Brontë’s novel can be read as a script, complete with instructions on how what the characters should be acted out. Brontë describes changes in the tone of their voice, the lingering touch of a hand and even facial expressions. In watching the series it soon becomes clear that the screen-writer Alexander Baron did not take that many liberties when it comes to dramatizing the text. Most of the series’ script and direction are directly taken from the novel itself. Nevertheless, at first glance, the performance of male lead seems to “conform to a process of ‘flattening out’” (Wootton 233). Due to the extreme eroticising of Rochester in Aymes’ *Jane Eyre*, Timothy Dalton became the exemplification of Brontë’s “brooding” Byronic hero (Wootton 233). All of the actors’ performances seem to put emphasis on “female suppression” by “focusing on John Reed’s physical abuse, Mr Brocklehurst’s sadism . . . resurfaces with the hero’s attempts to dominate his governess

(when, for instance, he orders Jane to “do as you are told” . . . and violates the private landscape of her imagination by scrutinising and then discarding her paintings) (Wootton 234). Although Dalton’s frequently raised voice and oaths tend to provide the audience with the notion that Rochester is the “autocratic patriarch”, he stays an ambiguous character (234). Just as in Brontë’s novel Mrs. Fairfax mentions that “you cannot be always sure whether he is in jest or earnest, whether he is pleased or the contrary” (Brontë 124). Both sources focus on his changeability early on, consequently Amyes focusses on this throughout the whole series. Amyes even goes so far that he makes Dalton moods alter in a matter of seconds. This changeability is the most notable when Dalton’s face “when proposing, becomes eerily preternatural – simultaneously luminous, as it reflects the moonlight, and shadowy” (Wootton 234). Even though Dalton towers over Zelah Clarke’s diminutive figure, Zelah depicts a woman that is perfectly self-sufficient (Ingham 238). She has the character of a woman who knows who knows herself as becomes clear from the steadiness of her voice. Dalton’s Rochester on the other hands seems much more influenced by Clarke’s Jane and ever since their first meet seems to change “accommodate[s] her physically and emotionally” (Ingham 238). In a way, Dalton’s Rochester is starting to reflect a “faint tinge of the New Man” (Ingham 238).

### 2.2.5 Composition: Angles, Lighting, and Music

When analysing adaptations, focus is usually put on plot changes and the casting choices. As a result, critics forget the effects that structure and composition can have on transferring the “atmosphere” that is present in the novel and the views that authors might have had. Within the telling mode, a feature like focalization and point of view is crucial towards transferring these important qualities within a text (Whelehan 10). Just as in the telling mode, when adapting literature to the aural/visual mode focalisation is just as important. As discussed earlier, Jane’s internal point of view is lost most of the time and is sometimes regained through voice-overs. However, at some points when necessary, voice-overs are not possible because the audience would not be able to follow the scene’s conversation or actions anymore. Furthermore, it is very difficult to assign ownership of the “gaze” with the tool of a camera lens instead of the use of a narrative’s “first- or third-person” perspective (Whelehan 10). Even while the camera is depicting the viewpoint of one character like Jane, the “eye of the camera . . . cannot help afford us of an omniscient perspective” (Whelehan 14). Even though the voice-over technique in *Jane Eyre* simulates the first-person perspective of Jane, as George Bluestone suggests even during a voice-over “the viewer is

aware . . . of a level of objectivity in what is shown, which may include what the protagonist sees but cannot help including a great deal else as well” (qtd in Whelehan 14). This focalization and the angles at which the characters are shot hold a lot of meaning in respect to how the characters are viewed. Camera angles are a tool that is used to help the audience to get in a certain position that helps them better comprehend the connections between characters.

The first time that camera angles display the actual status and position of men is in episode 1 at 2:27 when St. John smacks Jane down for not calling him “Master Reed”. During that moment John puts Jane in her place as he is looking down on her and even when she gets up the close-ups of his face are still looking down even though he is not much taller than Jane. The second moment when the position of men in contrast to women is clarified is when Mr. Brocklehurst is introduced within the series. The first camera shot that is seen is a close-up of Brocklehurst’s face looking down on Jane and even though there is quite a height difference, the audience is immediately presented with the fact that Brocklehurst is looked up to. He is presented as an authority figure with power, which he maintains throughout the whole scene. As for Aymes’ Rochester, the first time that the audience comes into contact with him, he starts off at a higher position but is immediately taken to a level lower than that of Jane’s. As Rochester’s stumbles to get up the camera does show a wide frame in which he is looking down on Jane, immediately followed by him needing Jane’s help in mounting his horse. The second time that the audience sees him, the director even places him on the higher ground of the stairs to further emphasize his position. As the story continues however, this position is diminished. The first time when they truly have a conversation in episode four it is Jane that looks down on Mr. Rochester. Mr. Rochester having been injured during his fall is in a seated position with Jane standing next to him. However, not long after the director instructs Clarke to instead and thereby putting Jane at an equal footing as Rochester, neither of them elevated nor diminished. Throughout the rest of the series Aymes seems to go out of his way to place the two characters on the same level, assuring the audience of their equality. As for Aymes’ St. John on the other hand, he starts off in a comforting and equal position. However, this position soon changes in to one in which St. John is always towering over Jane. During their scenes Jane is almost always seated and when they stand as during St. John’s marriage proposal St. John is standing higher up the hill looking down his nose at Jane. In conclusion, Aymes displays a St. John that is always in a position of superiority and dominance through the placement of Jane and Rochester within the space of a scene.

Apart from the focalization and camera angles, lighting is also a very significant tool for creating or amplifying meaning within films and television series. It can help change the atmosphere in a scene and present changes within character's personality. Within Aymes' *Jane Eyre*, light is mostly used as a tool to present the audience with the changeability of Rochester's character, but also to amplify the different moods he is in. The first time that Jane meets Rochester is under the cover of night, displaying the brusque and irritable nature of Rochester's personality. The next couple of times the director presents Rochester in the light of day. During those times Rochester seems to be in stoic and in control of his emotions with the momentary slip up. This stoicism disappears in the scene where Jane rescues Rochester from death by fire. After they both extinguished the fire in Rochester's bedroom Rochester first seems irritated and quick to put out all questions surrounding the origins of the fire. Although he first comes off as demanding and harsh Timothy speaking in low and sharp tones, his voice soon becomes softer and he starts to show his caring side. When Rochester returns from looking into the cause of the fire he provides Jane with no true explanation and directs Jane to go to her room. Immediately followed by the first showing of his passions for Jane during their followed conversation. The whole of this scene take place in the dead of night, with only a couple of candles to light their view. As a result the atmosphere of the room is loaded with gloom, mystery, and passion. Throughout the scene, half of Rochester's face is completely covered by shadows, displaying the duality of his purpose meaning and character. The cloak of night seems to have an unleashing effect on Rochester's soul. Similarly, the gipsy scene also takes place in a dark room, thereby foreboding mystery but also disguising Rochester's true form and personality. When the cloak of darkness is thrown off Timothy presents the audience with a laughing and playful Rochester, which is quite different from the Rochester that has already been seen. However, the scene in which light and darkness have their most effect is in the proposal scene in episode seven. At the start of this episode Rochester summons Jane to the drawing room and unknowingly to Jane starts his proposal. In the light of day he seems all control and emotionless, which is in complete contrast to Jane's demeanour. After Jane storms out the room Aymes quickly fades the audience to Jane sitting in the garden at night. Even though there are no candles present, the light of the moon seems to find Jane's face and gives way to her emotions. When Rochester enters and starts speaking to Jane he is completely covered in darkness and therefore the audience cannot make out his demeanour through the emotions on his face or his stance. Instead, it is his voice that betrays his passions, which is soft and hesitating at first but as soon as the light hits his face becomes surer of purpose. With the light of the moon on his face, Rochester's passions flow from his

being and all the control slips away. Therefore, through the shadows the audience is lead into the light and comes to know new facets of Rochester's being.

In most films and television series, music is used as a tool of amplification. The choice of music can in some cases enhance emotions like fear, anxiety, happiness, anger, frustration, loneliness, and vulnerability. With the developments in scene editing and cinematography, music has become of much more importance to the identity, feel, and understanding of films and television series. In a lot of cases music can also become iconic and immediately recognisable as belonging to that film or adaptation. However, these developments had not yet taken root during the 80s. Therefore it is not surprising that the music within the (1983) adaptation of *Jane Eyre*, is not that effective in bringing about the above mentioned emotions. Throughout the whole television series, music is mostly used to start the episodes or to end them. In the other cases, the series uses almost always the same motifs. Nevertheless, some of these motifs are nicely used to introduce to feeling of scene, or the countenance of a character that is introduced within that scene. In episode one this technique is effectively used to introduce the character of Mr. Brocklehurst. The scene takes place in episode one and starts at the time of 16:53 with the young Jane walking down the stairs. As soon as her foot reaches the first step, single solemn tones of a harp are played. When she lands at the bottom of the staircase, low tones of violin music are heard and subsequently move even lower as she approaches the door of the drawing room. As soon as she enters the room, there is the dramatic sound of a bow drawing across the strings of a violin, in a low and menacing way. This sound is immediately followed by the close-up of Mr. Brocklehurst's face looking down his nose at Jane. Hereby the frightening and menacing nature of the scene and Mr. Brocklehurst's character are enhanced. As a result, the character of Mr. Brocklehurst is immediately questioned.

Another occasion when music plays a big role in stirring emotions from the audience, is when Jane accidentally causes Mr. Rochester to fall off his horse. The scene which starts at 23:00 at the end of episode three, with music that is aesthetic and harmonious with some happy higher notes. However, not long after the harmony is shattered by the introduction of a barking dog and the low strokes of a violin, which stay on the background for the first fifteen seconds of the scene. Hereby, an ominous and dangerous feeling is linked to the character of Rochester. In episode four this ominous feeling is lessened when in the scene that starts at 8:14, a horseback riding Mr. Rochester is introduced by some dramatic and light aesthetic tones of a flute. Consequently, the man that is introduced in this scene is no longer hard and fierce, but is instead cheerful and buoyant. His air is lighter and he seems like a completely

changed man. Throughout the rest of the episode music is used to amplify the changeability of Rochester's character. Nevertheless, for most of the following scenes, music is just used to give the story a more dramatic and historical feel. The music helps to bring the period to life and in addition to the scenery and costumes gives the adaptation a sense of "authenticity" (Whelehan 14).

## Conclusion

This thesis began with the success of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, which gained general literary acclaim due to the lingering gender issues that are associated with it and due to its popular adaptive afterlives. However, as mentioned before, this literary criticism seemed to only be focused on one particular sex: women. Furthermore, the field of adaptation studies is also lacking in its analysis of the (1983) adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. Therefore, it seemed logical to combine the two lacking studies and thereby present something new. The goal of this thesis was to answer the following question: In what way has Brontë's idea of the "perfect man" manifested itself within the (1983) adaptation of *Jane Eyre*? In trying to answer this question, this thesis first had to determine the Victorian ideals of "masculinity" and what their construction of "ideal man" turned out to be. Consequently, this would help in discovering the presence of the Victorian ideals of "masculinity" and Brontë's own construction of the "ideal man" within *Jane Eyre*. In order to effectively analyse this adaptation, this thesis first uncovered the kinks of adaptation studies in order to know what to look for. Instead of focusing on fidelity this thesis looked at the adapter's tools and how they helped manifest the ideals of the before discussed "ideal man". Furthermore, it became apparent what helped influence the adapter in the production of *Jane Eyre* and what might have changed the perception of this "ideal man" by changing audiences.

The transition from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century introduced a discordance between two opposite masculinities. The development from the "romantic English gentleman" to the "new gentleman" saw the different characteristics of these two all jumbled up. Men came to be confused as to whether they should display romantic characteristics like being passionate, sensitive, flamboyant, and wealthy or they should display the Victorian values of strength, aggression, and control. The same goes for the presentation of these qualities in an external fashion. There was a conflict between the lean, Grecian symmetry of the "English gentleman" and the harsh and muscular outside appearance of the "new gentleman". As a result, masculinity came to be linked to plurality in which there is both energy and control. The Victorians tried to explain this through emphasizing the fluidity of manliness. They believed it was a process with masculinity as the achievement. In order to finally create this stability, men needed the constancy of women. It was an era of continual deconstruction and reevaluation of manliness and for the construct of masculinity to stay standing it was essential for the feminine ideal to be stable. Within Brontë's *Jane Eyre* this stability is presented in the form of Jane Eyre, for it is her constant proximity to him that keeps him from falling apart. Without this heroine, the masculine ideals of the Brontë hero

become mute, through Jane's presence the reader is able to interpret the function of the males within the story.

The conflict within these ideals of masculinity are presented through Brontë's four most significant male characters: John Reed, Mr. Brocklehurst, St. John Eyre Rivers, and Edward Rochester. Brontë starts off with the character of John Reed, who represent the boy that grows up in the world of the romantic English gentleman. Through this character Brontë shows the repercussions of this life-style early on in the story. Brocklehurst on the other hand depicts the complete other end of the spectrum and is a manifestation of the Victorian ideal. Brontë presents him as a man that is always in control of his passions, is harsh, and strives to achieve ultimate masculinity. However, she also shows that he is cruel and in the end therefore becomes irrelevant. St. John and Mr. Rochester on the other hand represent the duality and binary quality of the Victorian masculine ideal within men. As for St. John for example, his appearance has all the external qualities of the romantic English gentleman: tall, lean, fair hair, symmetry, and harmonious features. However, his internal qualities of control, piety, and strength to a point of coldness are in complete alignment with the Victorian masculine ideal. Edward Rochester on the other hand is considered as not being handsome at all, his rough and dark exterior being closer to the qualities of the new gentleman. At first glance, his qualities of wealth and his respected family name hint to his gentility. Nevertheless, his behaviour, demeanour, and personality seem to actually hint at a more of a Victorian male identity at first. At the beginning of the story Rochester seems very stoic, harsh, demanding, and most importantly in control of his passions. However, from the moment that Rochester and Jane start to converse this wall starts to crumble and the changeability of his character becomes apparent. This ability to change, which St. John lacks, appears to be one of the most important characteristics of Brontë's "ideal man". In the end, Jane or in other words Charlotte choses a man that displays his confusion on what a man he should be through changing for Jane. Jane needs a combination of the Romantic and the Victorian, which resulted in the production of Rochester as the Byronic anti-hero. She chooses Rochester because his exterior is truthful, not beautiful; which makes him attractive to her. She prefers Rochester's ability to change for romantic love and passion instead of St. John's control that serves the work of God. She needed a partner, not a master: "I hold myself extremely blest—blest beyond what language can express; because I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine. No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am: ever more absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh" (Brontë 519).

Interestingly the changes of masculinity within the 80s eventually resulting with the creation of the “new man” are quite similar to the creation of the Byronic anti-hero. Therefore the changing masculinities might have had less impact on the adapter’s job to manifest Brontë’s ideal into this visualisation. Due to the change from the telling mode to the aural/visual mode, Jane’s first person perspective of the male characters is lost. Although Aymes uses voice-overs to create the sense of a first-person perspective, these are controlled by the director and not used when necessary: during Jane’s descriptions of the characters. Even though the director has kept the script and plot almost completely identical to the original source, without the explicit descriptions the rest of the adaptive tools of casting, acting, music, lighting, and camera angles are open to interpretation. As a consequence, the choice of Timothy Dalton as Rochester can be considered completely wrong due to the modern view that he is too handsome. However, a Victorian audience might have considered Timothy Dalton’s exterior too hard and dark to be called handsome. Even though at some point in the series Jane actually says that Rochester is not handsome, this view is undermined when watched by a modern audience. As a director Aymes also seemed to instruct Timothy Dalton to emphasize the changeability of Rochester’s character by making him change his tone of voice and facial expression from happy to gloom, from stoic to passionate in a matter of seconds. However, the use of music, lighting, and camera angles are more open to interpretation. Throughout the series, Aymes uses camera angles to clarify the position that Jane holds in comparison to the men. With regards to Rochester these camera angles that with the suggestion that he is above her station, but almost immediately places her in an equal position and eventually sometimes even above him. Music on the hand is used as a tool to amplify Rochester’s changing moods. Just like music Lighting also tries to emphasize Rochester’s ability to change. By placing him both in the light, the dark, and the shadows Aymes displays all facets of his personality, which is in contrast to all the other male characters whom are only seen in the light of day. In the end it appears as if most of the internal qualities of Brontë’s ideal man have been successfully transferred to the aural/visual mode. However, the clarity is lost due to the loss of Jane’s first person perspective. As a result many different perceptions are created concerning the perfect exterior of the “ideal man”, now known as Mr. Edward Fairfax Rochester.

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