

Original citation:

Baker, Jen (2017) *Traditions and anxieties of (un)timely child death in "Jude the Obscure"*. *Thomas Hardy Journal*, 33. pp. 61-84. 142.

Permanent WRAP URL:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/101761>

Copyright and reuse:

The Warwick Research Archive Portal (WRAP) makes this work by researchers of the University of Warwick available open access under the following conditions. Copyright © and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable the material made available in WRAP has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Publisher's statement:

Reproduced with kind permission from The Thomas Hardy Society.

A note on versions:

The version presented in WRAP is the published version or, version of record, and may be cited as it appears here.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: wrap@warwick.ac.uk

TRADITIONS AND ANXIETIES OF (UN)TIMELY CHILD DEATH IN *JUDE THE OBSCURE*

JEN BAKER

Fair images of sleep!
Hallow'd, and soft, and deep!
On whose calm lids the dreamy quiet lies,
 Like moonlight on shut bells
 Of flowers in mossy dells,
Fill'd with the hush of night and summer skies.

Felicia Hemans, 'The Sculptured Children' (1826)

The death of a child, as it was perceived, imagined, idealised, and memorialised in British cultural ephemera of the nineteenth century, must be 'good' and must be beautiful: the passing of the child from life to death ought to be calm, peaceful, and take place in aesthetically nurturing surroundings, whilst in manner the child should epitomise qualities such as piety and grace. In death, the corpse will be picturesque, it will embody innocence. As Julia Thomas has noted, the death-bed was 'a *scene*, something to be viewed', which provided an essential function as cultural tableau because such scenes, 'like the images of the Crucifixion, were regarded as morally edifying'.¹ Thomas explains that the place of death 'was a site of emotional intensity, but also one that was carefully managed, and in highly pictorial terms', as evidenced in the reciprocal relationship between the way death-beds were actually laid out and the prescribed visuals for the perfect scene in various literatures.² Poems such as 'The Sculptured Children' and 'The Child's Last Sleep' (1826) by Felicia Hemans, which was based on Francis Chantrey's 1817 sculpture 'The Sleeping Children', fictionalised scenes such as Dickens's prose-elegy to Little Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) and its iconographic depiction by George Cattermole, examples of life-writing which accounted for the last few hours of a child's life, and post-mortem portraiture exemplified this desire for the good and beautiful child death. Such depictions also aligned death with notions of eternal sleep in order to heighten the sense of vulnerability and innocence of the child, and to

comfort the bereaved with the illusion of peace. Lynn Cain explains that this ‘had pagan and Biblical roots’ but ‘gathered force in the nineteenth century as a popular image of death as the “final rest”, the “repose of the dead”’ and was ‘especially notable in cases of child death’.³

Furthermore, coupling the cult of childhood with what Pat Jalland, Gary Laderman, and others have identified as the other major ‘cult’ of the period – that of death – a significant divergence from earlier Christian traditions and beliefs, in which the fate of the child’s soul in the afterlife was at best uncertain, was invested in the emerging ideal of childhood death.⁴ Unable to locate unequivocal doctrinal evidence for infant salvation through baptism, and the necessity of the rites for regeneration and admittance to heaven, theologians had continually debated and reviewed their teachings over the centuries. Some argued that the unbaptised or sinful child resided in *limbus infantum*, or *limbus puerorum*, which was envisioned as a felicitous realm in a region of light just above the earth. Most adopted a disconsolate outlook however, turning to pre-Christian philosophical teachings for inspiration, such as Virgil’s unique and isolated place for the weeping souls of infants in the underworld that was represented ‘as being a region cheerless and gloomy – not properly a place of *punishment* ... but one, the infant tenants of which are all *miserable*’ [original emphasis].⁵ Following the Reformation, further divisions arose, for while some made an exception for the baptised, others consigned *all* such children ‘as may have contracted any impurity since their baptism to the fires of Purgatory’, until they had undergone the ‘fiery Purification’ that would convert their souls to heaven.⁶ Even the factions of Protestantism which attacked and refuted the idea of purgatory could not offer a definitive doctrine for the child’s salvation after death to its followers.

Rejecting what they saw as the archaic and cruel theologies of the Established Church, Catholicism, and Calvinist/Puritan churches, dissenting denominations reframed the afterlife of the child as a positive event, which was subsequently reflected in the cultural documents, particularly from the early nineteenth century. These ideas filtered through from the staunchly devout to the casual believer and to the sceptic, so much so that Gillian Avery and Kimberley Reynolds identify a mainstream and widespread glorification of child death that Judith Plotz suggests bordered on an unhealthy frenzy.⁷ Yet, a counter-culture of anxieties from different cultural groups is also visible in literatures of the period. High infant and child mortality rates across the classes,

in which children were subject to debilitating disease, accidental and intended deaths, abuse and neglect, were indiscriminate, and for some, the theological truth of these fervent claims of child salvation was tinged with doubt – especially once they experienced the loss of children. There were those who still subscribed to traditional ideas that the unbaptised, the deviant dead (such as those who are murdered or who commit suicide), or any who may have contracted sin since baptism, would be denied the glory of Heaven, but were troubled by this exclusion of children. Others worried about the earthly as well as the celestial consequences for those ethically or categorically responsible for the bad deaths of children. These anxieties are present in various fictional representations of the period, and are often manifested in haunting and folkloric imagery that questioned and sometimes defied the mainstream glorification. It is through this framework of counter-cultural expression that I consider the haunting notion of child death in Thomas Hardy’s final novel, *Jude the Obscure*, as a culmination of his scepticism over competing religious and cultural conceptions found in his earlier prose works. I examine the related narratorial tropes as providing a conflicting commentary: a bitter mockery of the iconography of death as peaceful sleep, a commentary on the burden of ideals of childhood innocence, and a simultaneous rejection of traditional models of purgatory that damned the child.

Hardy and the child: before *Jude*

In an 1891 letter to his friend and fellow author Rider Haggard, a few years before the publication of *Jude*, Thomas Hardy expressed his sympathy with the Haggards for the recent loss of their child, but continued, ‘Though to be candid, I think the death of a child is never really to be regretted, when one reflects on what he has escaped.’⁸ Sally Shuttleworth expresses incredulity at Hardy’s frankness, and yet his views corresponded with those consistently presented in a variety of contemporaneous literatures. Religious consolation works such as *Solace for Bereaved Parents: or, Infants Die to Live* (1846), *Early Lost, Early Saved* (1859), and ‘Profiting by the Death of Children’ (1868), depicted death in childhood as preferable because, in a departure from the traditional position of the established church and of folklore, it meant that ‘the destruction of the infants of the antediluvian world was not wrath but mercy; not cruelty but kindness’.⁹ Outside the theological agenda, from the early part of the century many dismissed the celestial and lay concerns for a more pragmatic approach that focused on population

control. In 1822, for instance, radical trade reformer Francis Place wrote that he did not ‘regard a new-born child with any superstitious reverence’, for he would rather ‘a child should perish in the first hour of its existence than that a man should spend seventy years ... in a state of misery and vice’.¹⁰ Hardy’s letter to Haggard suggested a sympathy with the latter view, yet there is evidence throughout accounts of his life and his works that he had also struggled with the traditional and disconsolate High Church conceptions of the afterlife and the child’s place in it, as well as with the idealised versions that sought to refute them.

As Robert Gittings, Michael Millgate, and others have noted, as a young apprentice architect in Dorchester in 1856, Hardy’s Anglican principles were challenged by his interaction with colleagues of different religious persuasions. His friend Henry Robert Bastow, who openly talked about his place in the Baptist church and their belief that only consenting adults should be baptised, was a particular source of fascination and disruption.¹¹ Hardy wanted to learn more about the arguments for and against paedobaptism, but struggled to find assistance from his own clergymen, turning instead to outside contemporary and historical readings, as well as studying the bible for the supporting liturgical rhetoric. Ultimately, however, he perceived ‘that there was not a shred of evidence for infant baptism in the New Testament’ and was ‘appalled at the feebleness of the arguments’.¹² Nevertheless, ‘he incontinently determined to “stick to his own side” ... at some costs of conscience’ and continued to debate the subject with his peers.¹³ The various academic arguments, as indicative of a wider contextual debate, are played out and replicated in Hardy’s 1881 novel *A Laodicean*. Architect George Somerset overhears heiress Paula Powers propose that she does not require adult baptism because she has already been christened, to which the Baptist minister indignantly and passionately exclaims that this was done ‘surreptitiously’ and ‘indefensibly’ during her infancy by an Aunt, without her parents’ consent and in a ‘church with which she was not in sympathy ... so that the rite meant and could mean nothing at all’.¹⁴ There is a sense of instability in his statement; for although he then suggests that her contact with paedobaptists has infected her moral principles, and refers to the rite as a ‘trumpery ceremony’, his earlier statement suggests that there *could* be validity in the rite if the parents were present and members of that congregation. Paula responds that her christening seems ‘sufficient’, and thus calls attention to the idea that in a time of uncertainty about whether baptism is necessary,

and at what age it should be performed, infant baptism mitigated the risk. The minister begs Paula to heed his reasons against it, and both she and the eavesdropping Somerset listen to him run ‘very ably through the arguments, citing well-known writers on the point’, which affords a deferential but not acquiescent view of the Baptist position (*Laodicean*, p. 48). Through habit, rather than sympathy, Somerset then assumes the role of advocate for paedobaptism, undeniably echoing Hardy’s experiences in Dorchester: Somerset was ‘[b]orn, so to speak, a High-Church infant [...] He had formed acquaintances with men of almost every variety of doctrinal practice in this country’, and had heard their arguments ‘before he had arrived at an age of sufficient mental stability to resist new impressions, however badly substantiated’ (*Laodicean*, p. 48). He proceeds to turn to the Bible for backing, but the minister quickly dismisses the ‘familiar’ arguments, and Somerset instead presents an insincere and long contention drawing from ‘Apostolic tradition’.

Although Paula does not enter the debate, and claims that she has not been influenced by scriptural or patristic authority, during an earlier tour of her house it can be observed that she possessed and had been reading a copy of *On Infant Baptism* (1846), a real text by Scottish Congregationalist Ralph Wardlaw and determinedly in favour of infant baptism, of the sort Hardy might have read to inform his own arguments. At this point it seems, therefore, that Hardy was still unsettled by the variants of the theological argument and had not entirely rejected the paedobaptismal stance.

It is not only the official position and rituals of baptism, but the wider notions of child death and the afterlife that seem to have impressed on Hardy and his works. In *The Return of the Native* (1878), for instance, the doctrinal and the secular merge during a scene with the unfortunate, but perhaps pertinently named, Christian Cantle. He explains that he only knows his age ‘by baptism’ as recorded in ‘the great book of the judgement day that they keep down in Church vestry’.¹⁵ His mother could not remember the exact date of his birth, she only remembers that there was no moon, and his companions immediately comment on this ominous sign: ‘The boy never comes of anything that’s born at new moon.’ Although lay customs interpreted baptism as a talisman to spirits, or, as recorded in West Sussex in 1878 to cure fretfulness, or because, as in many British and European traditions, unbaptised children were said to ‘wander in woods and solitudes, lamenting their hard fate’, or become lights which ‘flit about and hover between heaven and earth’, to

these ordinary folk its protective power cannot counter the effects of the moon.¹⁶ The lingering, haunting and detrimental impact of the rites of baptism and customs of burial, and their symbiotic relationship with the dead-child tradition, ensured a persistent and fraught dialogue between the past and the present in many of Hardy's works. Patrick O'Malley posits that in Hardy's 'neo-Gothic texts ... the narrative past is spun consistently through the historical past of Britain's conflicted relationship to Catholicism, a past that seems to be superseded and yet continues to erupt into political and social history', and this plays out in one of his most scathing portrayals of the ecclesiastic discourse surrounding the fate of the child, in a scene in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*:¹⁷

Fearful of the fate of her unbaptised dying child, Tess thought of the child consigned to the nethermost corner of hell, as its double doom for lack of baptism and lack of legitimacy; saw the arch-fiend tossing it with his three-pronged fork, like the one they used for heating the oven on baking days; to which picture she added many other quaint and curious details of torment sometimes taught the young in this Christian country.¹⁸

After her proud father refuses to let a parson attend to the child, Tess decides to perform a pseudo-baptism with the assistance of her younger siblings by reading from the Book of Common Prayer and imitating the gestures she has observed in the Church, 'reasoning that if Providence would not ratify such an act of approximation she, for one, did not value the kind of heaven lost by the irregularity' (*Tess*, pp. 95–6). She christens the child 'Sorrow', and by the morning it has died. The narrator laments: 'Poor Sorrow's campaign against sin, the world, and the devil was doomed to be of limited brilliancy – luckily perhaps for himself considering his beginnings' (*Tess*, p. 95). The bitterness of this eulogy reflects the attitude Hardy expressed in his letter to the Haggards which was composed around the time this pitiful scene was first published, as a slightly altered separate sketch entitled 'The Midnight Baptism' in *The Fortnightly Review* in May 1891. When Tess pleads with the Protestant parson to agree that her baptism was official, her hopes are initially threatened by his pride, but his 'nobler impulses' force him to concede. When she begs him to permit a Christian burial, he is more reluctant, and the narrator interjects and chastises: 'how the Vicar reconciled his answer with the strict notions he supposed himself to hold on these subjects it is beyond a layman's power to tell, though not excuse' (*Tess*, p. 97). Moved by Tess's desperation however, the parson consents, and 'the

baby was carried in a small deal box, under an ancient woman's shawl, to the churchyard that night, and buried by lantern-light, at the cost of a shilling and a pint of beer to the sexton, in that shabby corner of God's allotment where He lets the nettles grow'.¹⁹ Hardy not only alludes here to the historical practice of secreting the child in consecrated ground, but responds to contemporaneous high-profile cases across the century of ministers refusing to bury children baptized by a lay-person, or perhaps by dissenting ministers, much to the outrage of many members of the public.²⁰

The narrative of Hardy's own birth, as relayed to him by family members, might also be identified as a biographical inspiration for the conflict between the idealisation of the child in theory, the reality of child birth and death, and religious versus folkloric conceptions that play out in many of his works. Gittings writes that Hardy's birth was very difficult and nearly cost his mother her life, and when 'the child itself appeared to be dead and was thrown aside into a basket by the surgeon trying to save the mother, until the midwife exclaimed, "Stop a minute: he's alive sure enough!"'²¹ Despite Hardy's comparative legitimacy, the sense of insignificance suggested by the interaction between a representative of the social institution and the child appears an extension of the social dynamic that rejects babies such as Sorrow Durbeyfield: 'So passed away Sorrow the Undesired – that intrusive creature, that bastard gift of shameless nature, who respects not the social law; a waif to whom eternal Time had been a matter of days merely' (*Tess*, p. 96). The narrator of *Tess* believes that ideas of legitimacy and the shame attached are merely 'generated by ... conventional aspect' that have nothing to do with the natural validity or worth of children, but recognizes how powerfully such ideals infect the imagination (*Tess*, p. 92). Four years later, these ideas of unwanted children, of baptism both lay and sacred, of miserable child deaths and the fleeting nature of Time, but also Hardy's continued uncertainties, were sensationally drawn together in *Jude the Obscure* (1895).

The death of Time: scene and unseen

A shriek from Sue suddenly caused him to start round. He saw that the door of the room, or rather closet – which had seemed to go heavily upon its hinges as she pushed it back – was open, and that Sue had sunk to the floor just within it. Hastening forward to pick her up he turned his eyes to the little bed spread on the boards; no children were there. He looked in bewilderment

round the room. At the back of the door were fixed two hooks for hanging garments, and from these the forms of the two youngest children were suspended, by a piece of box-cord round each of their necks, while from a nail a few yards off the body of little Jude was hanging in a similar manner. An overturned chair was near the elder boy, and his glazed eyes were slanted into the room; but those of the girl and the baby boy were closed.

Half-paralyzed by the strange and consummate horror of the scene, he let Sue lie, cut the cords with his pocket-knife and threw the three children on the bed; the feel of their bodies in the momentary handling seemed to say that they were dead.²²

The iconographic beautiful death that became a staple component of nineteenth-century literature and culture, meant to assure children and adults alike of the felicitous realm to which the sin-free child would be borne following a peaceful death, is denied the children of Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead. What is represented here in *Jude* is a grotesque perversion of the desired death-bed scene. No ‘Fair images of sleep’ are to be found in this room. The horror of the scene is concentrated in the bodies of the children, because, as intimated in the last line of the passage above, Jude’s experience of touch signifies the reality of their death. It is to their *bodies*, not to them as individuals, that the narrator refers, because their souls have moved on – though to which destination will be considered later. And yet, here, for Marjorie Garson, Sue’s fear of bringing forth “‘Shapes like our own selves hideously multiplied’” renders her biological offspring unrealistic characters in life; in death the children ‘are more vivid as the grotesquely undifferentiated trail of corpses, or as the little bundles of empty clothing hanging on the pegs’.²³ Somehow in death they become more real, more corporeal than they were in life.

Momentarily, as each child is suspended from rope, little Jude is aligned with the other two as part of ‘the triplet of little corpses’ (*Jude*, p. 272), and through the sense of uncanny visual repetition the children are equally stripped of identity. However, although all three children are reunited on the bed, their prior separation differentiates the two nameless infants, these ‘forms’, as unquestionable victims, where the status of little Jude is more complex. His body appears to preside over the scene in a physical and conceptual separation, having to hang himself from a nail as there were only two hooks on the back of the door, reinforcing the proposition that they were indeed, as his suicide note proclaims, ‘too

menny'. So too do the specifics of the bodies separate Jude from the other two children: firstly, they are differentiated biologically as the products of different mothers, but in this scene, it is the minutiae of their physical appearance and positioning that demarcates them. The two younger children have their eyes closed – perhaps because little Jude imitated this traditional mark of respect, or because he did not wish to look into their eyes as he died. Such an image emulates the illusion of the sleeping child so vital to mainstream depictions of child death in the nineteenth century, but makes clear that this is a distorted version of Hemans image of 'On whose calm lids the dreamy quiet lies'. Although the realisation that there was no one to close little Jude's eyes might evoke pity, this feature simultaneously distinguishes him as the executor of this horrible deed: he occupies a liminal space between victim and perpetrator, between pitiful and abhorrent.

As the narrative unfolds, the devastating sense of horror is exacerbated by the sincere but over-emphasised diminution of the children and their things that utilises those idealised tropes of innocence and beauty: the closet is little, as is the bed spread, the son of Jude, his shape, the children's corpses, and then the reader is confronted, like the parents, with 'the hanging little frock ... socks and shoes', and the children are buried in 'two little boxes', and Sue wishes to see her "'little ones again'" (*Jude*, p. 276). Neil Cocks, invoking John Locke's notion of the young child's malleability, notes how 'little' figures in nineteenth-century fiction are conceived as empty spaces conjuring an association with the spectral, with whiteness waiting to be marked.²⁴ What is specifically demonstrated through little Jude's dead body however, is a space that is no longer blank, for it has been written on:

The boy's face expressed the whole tale of their situation. On that little shape had converged all the inauspiciousness and shadow which had darkened the first union of Jude, and all the accidents, mistakes, fears, errors of the last. He was their nodal point, their focus, their expression in a single term. For the rashness of those parents he had groaned, for their ill-assortment he had quaked, and for the misfortunes of these he had died. (*Jude*, 273)

His body and face bears the traces of its own trauma, an inscription of life as well as death. Except that they are not *his* marks, not self-inflicted, but the inherited, figurative wounds inscribed upon him by his parents' choices and their contravention of the conventional family life prescribed

by society. That the marks can also be read as pseudo-stigmata supports Norman Holland Jr.'s convincing comparison between 'the boy's suicide and the crucifixion of Christ' as most obviously realised in the imagery of the three hanging figures, Sue as the Virgin Mary lying at their feet weeping, and through the boy's perceived intentions to save others from sin.²⁵ So too, the slanted eyes of little Jude are imitative of the gaze of the crucified Jesus often reflected in early art, and relate back to Julia Thomas' alignment between the moral and iconographic alignment between the Crucifixion and the death-bed scene more generally. Holland Jr. states however, that rather than edifying, the 'allegory criticizes specifically the Christian ideal of self-sacrifice, since Father Time's sacrifice not only failed in its object, but, ironically, precipitated the very catastrophe the child was trying to avert'.²⁶

This 'absurd little gnome' and 'weird little imp', is not, as proponents of paedobaptism like Robert Wardlaw claimed, inherently polluted, or an intentionally bad child, evil or wicked by nature. The child's development is as tainted and deformed as Jude and Arabella's feelings for each other before his birth, by Jude and Sue's later anxious determination for a progressive union that defies conventional marriage, and by Arabella's disregard for him as demonstrated in her refusal to name him and fostering him out to her parents.²⁷ Throughout, he is presented as a strange, uncanny, otherworldly, and yet piteous child, briefly descending upon the lives of Jude and Sue like an Angel of Death, whilst embodying all the miseries and imperfections of a real nineteenth-century childhood.

For contemporary readers and critics the scene's narratorial incongruity overshadowed the ethical dilemma of it.²⁸ Margaret Oliphant opined that the precarious social status of the protagonists had rendered the fate of the children a problematic plot device for Hardy, and she felt that, consequently, his solution brought 'this nauseous tragedy suddenly and at a stroke into the regions of pure farce which is a surprise of the first quality, only too grotesque to be amusing'.²⁹ In his otherwise favourable review, Havelock Ellis contended that,

Only at one point, it seems to me, is there a serious lapse in the art of the book, and that is when the door of the bedroom closet is sprung open on us to reveal the row of childish corpses ... we are thrust out of the large field of common life into the small field of the police court or the lunatic asylum, among the things which for most of us are comparatively unreal.³⁰

As implied by Ellis' wording, the 'childish' corpses – as if not really children's corpses, but an aesthetic illusion of such – are as sensationally and unexpectedly unveiled to the reader as they are to Sue and Jude. And for Penelope Vigar, Hardy's omission of 'the actual execution of the deed ... points at once to the purely dogmatic function of this little scene and also, perhaps, to Hardy's own lack of conviction in its emotional or practical acceptability'.³¹ Although, as I demonstrate later, ominous motifs and allusions to the children's deaths are secreted throughout the novel, there is very little development of suspense on the surface to prepare the reader for exactly what will happen, and so the events appear implausible and unanticipated. Jude attempts to console Sue and reason with this incongruity by repeating the doctor's hypothesis that it 'was in his nature to do it' (*Jude*, p. 273) and that this was part of an emerging trend among young males:

The doctor says there are such boys springing up amongst us – boys of a sort unknown in the last generation – the outcome of new views of life. They seem to see all its terrors before they are old enough to have staying power to resist them. He says it is the beginning of the coming universal wish not to live. (*Jude*, p. 273)

Although some reviewers found that the 'horror of an infant pessimist changed in a moment to ghastly farce by this inopportune generation of the "advanced" doctor', Barbara Gates explains that, in fact, 'many late Victorians were indeed deeply distressed by premature despair' which was seen to produce a seemingly contagious effect. Sally Shuttleworth's research also demonstrates that, despite many reviewers complaining that the scene was melodramatic and unrealistic, 'the problem of child suicide figured strongly in newspaper and periodical discussion of the 1880s and 1890s', and in England, 'child suicide as a phenomenon dates to the 1850s' with much emphasis on 'the role of heredity'.³²

Yet Ellis does not claim such events to be fantastical fabrications, and does not deny that they do occur in real life; rather he professes that these are incidents with which the general reading public has little direct experience except through sensational news stories and fiction. Hardy does, I argue, attempt to deal with the pragmatics (if, admittedly, as swiftly as the death-scene itself), by referring to the events and procedures post-mortem, the narrator reporting that, as was the standard procedure in the case of unnatural deaths, '[t]he jury duly came and viewed the bodies, the inquest was held; and next arrived the melancholy morning of the

funeral' (*Jude*, p. 275). Although brief and factual, there is also reference within the novel to the impact on the public which aligns with external contemporaneous responses to such events as horrifying spectacles to be visually consumed: 'Accounts in the newspapers had brought to the spot curious idlers, who stood apparently counting the window-panes and the stones of the walls. Doubt of the real relations of the couple added zest to their curiosity' (*Jude*, p. 275). Shortly before he reunites with Sue, Phillotson is apprised of the tragedy in much the same way as the Victorian public were in real cases:

he pulled the paper from his pocket and read awhile. The account of the 'strange suicide of a stone-mason's children' met his eye.

Unimpassioned as he was, it impressed him painfully, and puzzled him not a little, for he could not understand the age of the elder child being what it was stated to be. However, there was no doubt that the newspaper report was in some way true. (*Jude*, p. 289)

Even if the deviant nature of these deaths was comparatively unusual, as mentioned previously, the miserable reality of child death was not. The boy's murderous actions are framed, and often read, as somewhat compassionate therefore; a merciful killing intended to save his parents, and his siblings, from further hardships. In a conversation with Sue the day before the deaths, little Jude asks her, "if children make so much trouble, why do people have 'em?" to which Sue responds that "it is a law of nature" and that children cannot help being born (*Jude*, p. 270). Yet, the child reasons that "whenever children be born that are not wanted they should be killed directly, before their souls come to 'em, and not be allowed to grow big and walk about!" (*Jude*, p. 270) Little Jude's syllogistic reasoning – children are a burden, we are children, therefore we must relieve the burden by dying – does not align with precepts of life outlined publicly by religious doctrine and the social contract in which all life is precious. It also corresponds with Hardy's own proclamation that death in childhood provides salvation from later miseries. Furthermore, although child-murder was publicly condemned, the Malthusian premise of population control that underpins the child's logic was prevalent in contemporary social thought and had clear precedent dating back to Ancient civilisations. For instance, Aristotle declared in *Politics*, his philosophical consideration of social order, that 'when couples have children in excess, let abortion be procured before sense and life have begun; what may or may not be lawfully done in these cases depends on

the question of life and sensation.’³³ Very familiar with the philosophies of Aristotle and with cultural and theological histories, it is within this sacrificial framework that Hardy has (the heathen) Sue later insist the children’s deaths be legitimised and accepted, for she claims that their deaths saved her from an unholy union with Jude and returned her to Christian righteousness.

Portents: burial rights and rites

Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed.
Teach me to die, that so I may
Rise glorious at the judgment day.

Thomas Ken, ‘All praise to Thee, my God, this night’
(c.1674)

In Part the Second, when Jude wanders through Christminster, projecting scholarly spectres of the past onto the landscape and holding imagined conversations, despite the fact that he is not at this point a parent (or is at least unaware of his first son’s existence), child death and bereavement are the two references to occupy his mind. Distinguishing child death from death more widely, the penultimate phantom, the celebrated essayist Joseph Addison, reasons that, although his heart melts with compassion when confronted ‘with the grief of parents upon a tombstone’, when he sees ‘the tombs of the parents themselves’, he considers ‘the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow’.³⁴ The final phantom, Bishop Thomas Ken, lulls Jude to sleep with an incomplete recitation of the above stanza, familiar to Jude from his childhood. Ken’s hymn was often reproduced in nineteenth-century hymn and nursery rhyme books for children as a moral, pedagogical aid, and includes one of numerous references to the sanctity of child death that characterised the period. In Jonathan Seymour’s *The Infant School and Nursery Hymn Book* (1829), for instance, the above verse is singled out and accompanied by an analysis which requires the child reader to consider its meaning: ‘What do you ask God to teach you? If you be a good child, need you be afraid to die? Need you be afraid of the grave any more than your bed? [...] If God teach you to die, how will you be raised on the judgement day?’³⁵ Although Jude appears comforted by the perceived positive sentiment of the speech and hymn, and later both he and Sue attempt to cling to this ideal that the child is better off dead, when confronted by the

stark realities and grief of their bereavement, horror, dread, and anxiety threatens to overthrow the apparent “comfort” offered. It is a doubt that can even be read in the hymn itself: despite Seymour’s interpretation, a double and pitiful connotation may be ascribed to the idea of a grave ‘as little’ as your bed. For rather than dreading the grave hardly at all (in the same way you would not dread your bed), the diminutive can be read as a reference to the grave/bed being very small because it is for a child – something supported by the omission of a comma after ‘dread’ and the preceding enjambment. Read this latter way, the child, likely oblivious to scholarly interpretation and the theological imperative, may actually live in dread of the grave: mirroring the anxieties of many adults that this was not, perhaps, the preferable destination of the body and would not preface the glorious translation of the soul.

Critics have identified various general portents of doom that persist throughout the novel, predominantly as they relate to Jude. However, there are a number which, like the aforementioned, specifically foreshadow the children’s deaths, and the mode of death, before little Jude’s arrival at Jude and Sue’s house.³⁶ In the introduction of the boy to the novel, for instance, the narrator observes that he had ‘large, frightened eyes, and wore a white woollen cravat, over which a key was suspended round his neck by a piece of common string: the key attracting attention by its occasional shine in the lamplight’ (*Jude*, p. 224). The attention drawn to both the string around his neck and the close-fitting cravat intimates a noose-like motif – one of many to pervade the text – accompanied by the expression of fear in his eyes, may be retroactively imbued with adverse significance when the reader encounters the death scene. In becoming acquainted with the boy’s mannerisms, the two adults observe that little Jude was ‘in the habit of sitting silent, his quaint and weird face set, and his *eyes resting on things* they did not see in the substantial world’ (*Jude*, p. 227) [emphasis added]. This vision of a gaze that is fixed and otherworldly is then prescient of the boy’s optic focus in death.

Another significant portent can be recognised when, before their attempt at conventional marriage, friend and family member Mrs Edlin tells Sue and Jude a tale of a supposed relative of Jude’s who was immortalised in folklore for being ‘gibbeted’ (that is, hanged and displayed) for burglary because, wanting his deceased son to be buried with his own family, he attempted to steal the coffin and body from his estranged wife (*Jude*, p. 229).³⁷ For the duration of the story, little Jude is silent and still, and is unnoticed until, at the end, he slowly rises from the

gloom to utter a disembodied, eerie proclamation from the fireside, ‘as if out of the earth’ (*Jude*, p. 229). In her portentous response to the tale, Sue declares she feels ‘as if a tragic doom overhung [the] family, as it did the house of Atreus’ – a story which includes sibling murder and death by hanging. Jude invokes the biblical allegory of the house of Jeroboam, who, according to 1 Kings 13:1–6, was a King of Israel who encouraged the worshipping of false idols (including Moloch, to whom children were apparently sacrificed), led his people to sin, and was warned by a ‘man of God’ of the birth of a child who would lead the destruction of this heathen idolatry.³⁸ Despite the earlier Christ-like connections with little Jude, such as Jude’s acknowledgement that ‘the *advent* of the child disturbed him’ (*Jude*, p. 227), the child is not free from negative, or at least monstrous connotations. Anna Czarnowus notes that for centuries the linguistic and iconographic imagery of child-hagiographies was plagued by an ambivalence that suggested the interdependence of holiness and monstrousness. Little Jude’s duplicitous role as Child and as Death itself – foreshadowed in life through his affiliation with the popular literary and commercial trope of Father Time that had a long iconographic association with Death – consolidates all his strangeness and casts him as a preternatural and powerful being.³⁹ Following the deaths, Sue interprets the events and the role of the child as the will of providence: ‘Arabella’s child killing mine was a judgment – the right slaying the wrong’ (*Jude*, p. 284). Little Jude, although an innocent himself, is simultaneously a Herodesque figure massacring other innocents. As Jude and Sue await the coroner after the deaths of their children, Sue cries ‘Oh, my comrade, our perfect union – our two-in-oneness – is now stained with blood!’, to which Jude responds ‘Shadowed by death – that’s all’ (*Jude*, p. 274). Yet, by actively ensuring the early mortality of his siblings the boy is both the Shadow *and* Death. This conjunction reaches its pinnacle on the day of the children’s burial when, in a scene seemingly presaged by Mrs Edlin’s fireside tale, the grieving Sue tries to persuade the sexton to open up the graves so that she may see their bodies once more. The deaths of her own children breed further death like an epidemic, for Sue is carried home from the graveyard and the doctor is called, informing Jude that another child ‘had been prematurely born, and that it, like the others, was a corpse’ (*Jude*, p. 277).

The portended and actual deaths of the children draw together lay beliefs about the afterlife with the pragmatics of burial: When little Jude is asked the reason for his lack of real name, he explains, ‘if I died

in damnation, 'twould save the expense of a Christian funeral' (*Jude*, p. 227) – and if he was not named, then he was not baptised. After his death, when telling Phillotson that little Jude was her biological child, Arabella declares, 'Yes, poor little fellow – born in lawful wedlock, thank God' (*Jude*, p. 290). Theoretically this should make little difference, however, for although Sue and Jude declare they will christen him once married, they never do marry, and so he remains unbaptised and the other two children die, like Sorrow, unbaptised and illegitimate.

Furthermore, according to custom, in cases of unnatural death, whether the child was baptised or not, there was further cause for concern because the corpse would be classified among the 'deviant dead' – a status generally ascribed to those who died by criminal or suspicious means, who were believed able to rise from the dead, and would therefore receive uncommon burials.⁴⁰ Jude and Sue's children might therefore have been buried apart from hallowed ground like Sorrow, who is buried 'where all unbaptized infants, notorious drunkards, suicides, and others of the conjecturally damned are laid' and will be consigned to limbo (*Tess*, p. 97). In being told why he has no official name, little Jude is confronted directly with an unromanticised and distinctly pragmatic view of death that contradicts the literature of the period proposing an early death as a blessed event. This neoteric tension between the desired spiritual salvation of the child and the reality of the economy of death is thus stressed: an unbaptised child could not be buried in (the more expensive) consecrated ground, and therefore could potentially be disposed of anywhere.

Despite their parents' heretical beliefs and practices, and the circumstances of the deaths, however, all three children in *Jude* are permitted to be buried in the local churchyard; but due to their financial troubles they are interred in a common grave where other strangers may already have been, and would in future be, buried. As Julie-Marie Strange explains, in contrast to a family or private grave, the communal grave 'drew on notions of anonymity, poverty, and bodies whom "nobody owned" (or, by implication, loved)' and had an 'insidious stigma' attached to it.⁴¹ When Arabella says to Jude that he can make the grave look nice with an engraved headstone, therefore, his assent is reluctant and mechanical, possibly because he had realised, where she had not, that this would not be possible with a common grave.

Hardy also demonstrates how official doctrines pertaining to the afterlife of these souls influenced lay beliefs: little Jude's lack of name

(and therefore baptism) and the domestic instability (passed between the adults) that precedes his downfall, recall the circumstances that generally lead to the presence of wandering child-spirits in folkloric tales. James Napier noted some superstitions in which ‘until that rite was performed, it was unlucky to name the child by any name. When, before the child had been christened, any one asked the name of the baby, the answer generally was, “It has not been out yet.”’⁴² The hanging itself, and its relation to baptism, also has connections with the dead-child in folklore. In Edwin Hartland’s *English Fairy and Other Folktales* (1890), a copy of which Hardy owned, Hartland relays the tale of the Irish missionary St Ludgvan who provided his Cornish community with blessed water and ‘prayed that all children baptised in the waters of this well might be protected against the hangman and his hempen cord’.⁴³ Unbaptised, little Jude has no protection in life or the afterlife.

Andrew Radford proposes that, as is apparent through Hardy’s correspondence, his friendships with leading folklorists, and his fiction, he was well-versed in folklore, for he was ‘keenly alert to the dislocating complexities of a hectic modernity yet impelled by a historical responsibility to exhume, record, and reanimate forgotten traditions’.⁴⁴ However, perhaps the most convincing evidence of the influence of folklore on the configuration of the little Jude lies in Hardy’s familiarity with John Brand’s *Observations on Popular Antiquities* (1777). This tome, says Radford, ‘became for Hardy and other erudite, non-academic Victorians “an automatic reference” on “antique custom and odd superstition”’.⁴⁵ Hardy does not necessarily engage with exact records of specific customs and superstitions as he claimed to do elsewhere; rather he offers a diffusive essence of these converging ideas and motifs.⁴⁶ As well as his allusions to wandering and lamenting child spirits, Brand also references other dead-child traditions where it is considered ‘very *unlucky* to go over their graves. – It is vulgarly called going over “*unchristened* ground.”’⁴⁷ When Jude finds Sue at the graveyard, he sees that she is ‘stood in the half-filled hole’ (*Jude*, p. 276), and whilst it is only metaphorically unchristened ground (because of the children’s status), sure enough, further tragedy follows. The strong sense of taboo and superstition associated with the children’s deaths is solidified by ‘[t]he idlers who had followed to the spot by reason of the tragedy’ (*Jude*, p. 276). That same impression of forbidden spectacle is found at the place of the deaths too, where the landlord hopes to ‘to have freed his house from the exasperating notoriety it had acquired’ (*Jude*, p. 276) by

the end of the day, and where 'idlers' had begun their morbid pilgrimage to gaze at the house.

Reframing death

Despite little Jude's apparent intentions, the shadowy spectral memories of little Jude and his victims continue to haunt the protagonists and ensure that Jude and Sue do not reconcile. Her excessive grief provokes a complete change in, and suppression of, her character. Sue deliberately informs Jude of her decision to return to Phillotson at the cemetery, 'beside the graves of those who died to bring home to me the error of my views' (*Jude*, p. 293). In the original, serialised and thrice retitled version of *Jude* that appeared in the family-oriented American journal *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1894–5, little Jude's murder and subsequent suicide were featured, but it is not Jude and Sue's children who are killed.⁴⁸ There are no natural offspring aside from him, but one other unnamed, adopted boy of an unspecified age whose 'parents died, and left him at the mercy of the world'.⁴⁹ In this version little Jude hangs alongside the other boy and there is no subsequent graveyard scene. Although the outcome of the plot is the same in the initially serialized version as in the final novel form, the changes made by Hardy regarding the child deaths, and the resulting emphasis on Sue's hysteria, are integral to the emotive discord that characterises the story and to his allusions to the ecclesiastic position. When, in the serial, Sue attempts to assure Phillotson that she is willing to return, she exclaims, 'Those children – almost like my own – are dead – perhaps it is best that they should be! They were sacrificed to teach me how to live – make me reflect – their death was the first stage in my purification'.⁵⁰ However, in the novel it is amended to '*My children – are dead – and it is right that they should be! I am glad – almost. They were sin-begotten. They were sacrificed to teach me how to live! – their death was the first stage of my purification*' (*Jude*, p. 295; emphases added). Slight though the changes may seem, and necessary because of the exchange of an adopted child for her biological children, the effect on the role of the children and its relation to traditional customs is substantial, for the emphasis is now on the state of their souls, and the additional exclamation mark and proclamation of its rightness emphasises the grip of her hysteria. In the serial, Mrs Edlin chastises Sue's religious severity and self-punishment by focusing on Jude: 'What do ye use such words for, and condemn your tender and loving cousin that's lost to 'ee!'⁵¹ In the novel, however,

Mrs Edlin's line and its context are changed completely to reflect Sue's proclamation that the children are born in sin: 'What do ye use such words for, and condemn to hell your dear little innocent children that's lost to 'ee!' (*Jude*, p. 296). In the serial, 'condemn' seems to be used less literally, as an expression of disapproval, but the revision in the novel has new connotations as the children's condemnation to hell – as the unbaptised and sinful child was suspected to be – and the meaning of their being 'lost' implies not only loss of the body, but also of the soul.

The differentiated uncanniness of little Jude provides a symbol of incongruous temporality; he seems to alight from a distant period, not only a symbol of Christian suffering in his self-sacrifice, but an ancient pagan symbol of child sacrifice in the killing of his siblings. Yet, so too, as Margaret Oliphant observed, is little Jude sacrificed by Hardy – perhaps so that he does not suffer the miseries of life.⁵² Unlike the beautiful, peaceful child deaths insisted on by mainstream Anglo-American visual and literary culture, the deaths of little Jude and his siblings are aberrant. Yet, while Hardy may not subscribe to the intense glorification of the death-bed scene, nor the exultant heavenly kingdom to which it was suggested the child's soul will reside, he does seem to believe that death is preferable. This belief is encompassed in the shadowy and ghostly images Jude calls to as his life draws to an end, in a scene entirely absent from the serial edition, in a passage derived from the Book of Job and which contradicts the idea that the unbaptised, or that any child is not peaceful after death:

'Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly? ... For now I should have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest!'
(*Jude*, p. 328)

As such, they indicate a perpetuation of Hardy's uncertainty about the conceptualisations of child death both past and present: if death *is* preferable, then what does that say about their treatment in life?⁵³ The boy's arrival, the death he inflicts, and the lingering shadow of those deaths, suggest that, despite society's insistence on its own progressive ethos, the union and philosophies of Jude and Sue are not compatible with an age which is characterised by the antiquated social and ecclesiastic laws that comprised the narratorial and topographical architecture. This particular 'time' would not accommodate them, and so the child's act, though horrifying, can be interpreted as a merciful killing that passes

comment on the dangers that societal intolerance and ignorance present to children. They do not acknowledge Jude's declaration: 'Why does it matter, when you come to think of it, whether a child is yours by blood or not? All the little ones of our time are collectively the children of us adults' (*Jude*, p. 223).

NOTES

¹ Julia Thomas, 'Happy Endings: Death and Domesticity in Victorian Illustration' in *Reading Victorian Illustration, 1855–1875: Spoils of the Lumber Room*, ed. Paul Goldman and Simon Cooke (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 79–96 (pp. 79–80).

² Thomas, p. 81.

³ Lynn Cain, *Dickens, Family, Authorship: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Kinship and Creativity* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), p. 116.

⁴ Cf. Patricia Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford University Press, 1996); Gary Laderman, *The Sacred Remains: American Attitudes Towards Death, 1799–1883* (Yale University Press, 1999), and for the sordid aspects, Ruth Richardson's *Death, Dissection and the Destitute: The Politics of the Corpse in Pre-Victorian Britain*, 2nd edn (University of Chicago Press, 2001), and Michael Sappol, *A Traffic of Dead Bodies: Anatomy and Embodied Social Identity in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2002).

⁵ William Anderson, 'Historical Sketch of the Question of Salvation of Deceased Infants' in *Words of Comfort for Parents Bereaved of Little Children*, ed. by William Logan, 5th edn, (London: James Nisbet, 1868), pp. 27–52 (p. 33).

⁶ Anderson, 'Historical Sketch', pp. 33–4.

⁷ Gillian Avery and Kimberley Reynolds, (eds.), 'Introduction' in *Representations of Childhood Death* (Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp. 1–10 (pp. 7–8); Judith Plotz, 'Literary Ways of Killing a Child: The 19th Century Practice', in *Aspects and Issues in the History of Children's Literature. Contributions to the Study of World Literature*, No. 60. ed. by Maria Nikolajeva (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 1995), pp. 1–24 (p. 23).

⁸ Richard Little Purdy and Michael Millgate, eds., *Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy*, I: 1840–1892 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 325.

⁹ Thomas Smyth, *Solace for Bereaved Parents: or, Infants Die to Live. With an Historical Account of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation* (New York: R. Carter, 1846), p. 88.

¹⁰ Francis Place, *Illustrations and Proofs of the Principle of Population* (London: Longman & co, 1822), p. 142.

¹¹ Geoffrey Harvey, *The Complete Critical Guide to Thomas Hardy* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 10. Jan Jedrzejewski, *Thomas Hardy and the Church* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), pp. 9–10.

- ¹² Robert Gittings, *Young Thomas Hardy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975), p. 51; Thomas Hardy, *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy*, ed. Michael Millgate (London: Macmillan, 1984), p. 33.
- ¹³ Millgate, *Life*, p. 33.
- ¹⁴ Thomas Hardy, *A Laodicean*, ed. John Schad (London: Penguin, 2011), p. 47.
- ¹⁵ Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, ed. Tony Slade (London: Penguin, 2011), p. 29.
- ¹⁶ Charlotte Latham, 'West Sussex Superstitions', *The Folk-Lore Record*, 1.1 (1878), 4–67 (p. 11); John Brand, *Observations on popular antiquities: including the whole of Mr. Bourne's Antiquaries Vulgares* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, [1777] 1810), p. 74; William Henderson, *Notes on the Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties of England and the Borders* (London: Longmans Green, 1866), p. 100.
- ¹⁷ Patrick R. O'Malley, 'Oxford's Ghosts: *Jude the Obscure* and the End of the Gothic', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 46:3 (2000), 646–671 (p. 652).
- ¹⁸ Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, ed. Tim Dolin (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 93.
- ¹⁹ Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, p. 97.
- ²⁰ By 1400 AD the Church had 'forbidden the burial of stillborn and unbaptised children within consecrated ground' and so, as a popular antiquary of the early eighteenth century explains, 'Burial in the Church Yard North of the Church "is the part appropriated for the Internment of unbaptized Infants, of persons excommunicated, or that have been executed, or that have laid violent hands upon themselves"': John Brand and Henry Ellis, *Observations on Popular Antiquities: Chiefly Illustrating the Origin of our Vulgar Customs, Ceremonies, and Superstitions*, Vol.2, (London: Nichols, Son, and Bentley, 1813), p. 196. Cf. Johnson Grant, *A Summary of the History of the English Church, and of the Sects which have Departed from Its Communion*, Vol. 4. (London: Hatchard & Son, 1825), pp. 461–2; Frederick George Mastin, Thomas Hay Sweet Escott, *A Full Report of the Case of Mastin V. Escott, Clerk, for Refusing to Bury an Infant Baptized by a Wesleyan Minister* (London: Crofts and Blenkarn, 1841).
- ²¹ Gittings, *Young Thomas Hardy*, p. 9.
- ²² *Jude the Obscure*, ed. Ralph Pite (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016), p. 272. Subsequent references are to this edition.
- ²³ Marjorie Garson, 'What does a Man Want?', *Jude the Obscure: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. by Penny Boumelha (Houndmills, Hampshire: Macmillan Press, 2000), p. 195.
- ²⁴ Neil Cocks, *The Peripheral Child in Nineteenth Century Literature and its Criticism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 28.
- ²⁵ So too, as Susan Gubar has discussed, the interplay between Jude, little Jude and the 'shadowy kinship of Judas Iscariot, Saint Jude, and Job', also suggests a link between little Jude's role and the conflicted scriptural portrayal of Judas Iscariot who was seen by some as the one to sacrifice himself to shame and degradation in order that Jesus could save mankind – that is, the instigator of the

prophecy – and by others a devil and the worst of criminals. Susan Gubar, *Judas: A Biography* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009), pp. 241–2.

²⁶ Norman Holland Jr, ‘*Jude the Obscure*: Hardy’s Symbolic Indictment of Christianity’, *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 9:1 (1954), 50–60 (pp. 53, 58).

²⁷ Margaret Oliphant, ‘The Anti-Marriage League’, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, 159: 963 (1896), 135–149 (p. 141).

²⁸ Richard Nemesvari, ‘Hardy and Victorian Popular Culture: Performing Modernity in Music Hall and Melodrama’ in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Thomas Hardy*, ed. Rosemarie Morgan (Farnham: Routledge, 2010), pp. 71–86 (p. 85).

²⁹ Oliphant, ‘The Anti-Marriage League’, p. 141. A reviewer in the *Illustrated London News* considered that ‘the death of the children’ was ‘a strain on the reader’s credulity’, and the *Pall Mall Gazette* blithely and scathingly summarised the whole plot as concerning ‘infants “hanging each other with box-cord on little pegs all around the room”’. Reproduced in *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by R. G. Cox (London: Routledge, 2005), p. xxvii

³⁰ Havelock Ellis, ‘Concerning *Jude the Obscure*’ [1896] (London: Ulysses Bookshop, 1931), pp. 18–19.

³¹ Penelope Vigar, *The Novels of Thomas Hardy: Illusion and Reality* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 208.

³² Sally Shuttleworth, “‘Done because we are too menny’”: Little Father Time and Child Suicide in Late-Victorian Culture’ in *Thomas Hardy: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Phillip Mallett (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 133–135 (138).

³³ Aristotle, *Politics*, < <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/ancient/aristotle-politics.txt>> [accessed 3 July 13] Book 7. XVI. See Michael Millgate, ‘Thomas Hardy’s Library at Max Gate: Catalogue of an Attempted Reconstruction’, University of Toronto Library, 2014. <<http://hardy.library.utoronto.ca/hardycataz.html>> [accessed 8 August 2016]

³⁴ Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, 3rd edn, ed. Ralph Pite (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016), p. 70. All subsequent references to this edition are given in brackets following quotations.

³⁵ Jonathan Seymour (ed.) *The Infant School and Nursery Hymn Book*, 2nd edn (New York: A.W. Corey, 1829), p. 57.

³⁶ Cf. Richard C. Carpenter, ‘How to Read “A Few Crusted Characters”’ in *Critical Approaches to the Fiction of Thomas Hardy*, ed. Dale Kramer (London: Macmillan Press, 1979), pp. 155–171; Brigitte Hervoche-Bertho, ‘Seminal Gothic Dissemination in Hardy’s Writings’, *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 29:2 (2001), pp. 451–467.

³⁷ The last use of gibbeting was, perhaps significantly, in 1832, a year after Any Bird Bell’s execution, at the beginning of the period under discussion, and before Hardy was born.

³⁸ James F Driscoll, ‘Jeroboam’, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 8. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910). Retrieved July, 2016 from New Advent: <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08340a.htm>>

³⁹ Cf. Samuel L. Macey, *Patriarchs of Time: Dualism in Saturn-Cronus, Father Time, the Watchmaker God and Father Christmas* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2010), p. 64. It might also be possible to read little Jude as Changeling, owing firstly to his position as an abandoned ‘starving imp, an aged, useless member of the elfin tribe’ with an ‘old, distorted face’ which Carole G. Silver notes characterised the mythic creatures. Silver, *Strange and Secret Peoples: Fairies and Victorian Consciousness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 60. Nor is it impossible that this child was somehow substituted – after all, he journeys without the accompaniment of adults, and although Sue declares to Jude “‘I see you in him!’” (p. 226), they had no picture of, or prior meeting with the child, and Arabella had not seen him since his birth when she spies Jude, Sue, and the boy, at an agricultural fair. As Carole G. Silver explains, changelings were in fact ‘very much part of the Victorian world’, not only because of the popularity of ‘their Scandinavian and Celtic folklore inheritance’ but because ‘newspapers and journals reported the widespread survival of belief in such beings, as well as numerous cases of death or injury caused by the practices used to exorcise them.’ Silver, pp. 59–60.

⁴⁰ In the folktales, there is crossover between these classifications of ‘restless’ and ‘deviant’ dead. Cf. Leszek Gardela & Paweł Duma, ‘Untimely Death: Atypical Burials of Children in Early and Late Medieval Poland’, *World Archaeology*, 45:2, (2013), 314–332.

⁴¹ Julie-Marie Strange, *Death, Grief and Poverty in Britain 1870–1914* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 144, 135.

⁴² James Napier, *Folk Lore: Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland, Within this Century* [Paisley, 1879] (New Jersey, Lethe Press, 2008), p. 43. Hardy also owned Edward Clodd’s, *Tom Tit Tot; An Essay on Savage Philosophy in Folk-Tale* (London: Duckworth and co., 1898) which offered several similar references to baptism and folklore (pp. 91–93, 104–5), but it was first published four years after *Jude* and so that particular book would not have been a direct influence, but is indicative of the type of volumes Hardy owned and read. See Millgate’s catalogue.

⁴³ Edwin Sidney Hartland, ‘The Well of St Ludgvan’ in *English Fairy and Other Folk Tales* (London: W. Scott, 1890), pp. 176– 179 (p. 176).

⁴⁴ Andrew Radford, ‘Folklore and Anthropology’ in *Thomas Hardy in Context*, ed. Phillip Mallett (Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 210–220 (210).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁴⁷ John Brand and Henry Ellis, *Observations on Popular Antiquities: Chiefly Illustrating the Origin of our Vulgar Customs, Ceremonies, and Superstitions*, Vol.2, (London: Nichols, Son, and Bentley, 1813), p. 74.

⁴⁸ R.G. Cox explains, for instance, that at least two readers had told Hardy that they had burned his book. *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by R. G. Cox (London: Routledge, 2005), p. xxx. It was retitled as ‘The Simpletons’, ‘Hearts Insurgent’ and ‘The Dreamer’.

⁴⁹ Thomas Hardy, ‘Hearts Insurgent’, *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, v.91 (June–Nov 1895), p. 426.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 758.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 759.

⁵² Oliphant, 'The Anti-Marriage League', p. 141.

⁵³ James F. Scott, 'Thomas Hardy's Use of the Gothic: An Examination of Five Representative Works', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 17:4 (1963), pp. 363–380 (p. 364).

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Patrick Armstrong has recently completed his MPhil in Criticism and Culture at the University of Cambridge. His interests include the interrelations between literature and science, with a particular focus on microscopic activity, in the prose fiction of Thomas Hardy and Samuel Beckett.

Amanda Auerbach is a PhD candidate in English at Harvard where she is completing a dissertation entitled *Getting Lost: Forms of Animation in the Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century British Novel*.

Jen Baker is currently a Teaching Fellow in nineteenth-century literature at the University of Warwick, and completed her doctorate at the University of Bristol in 2017. Her research examines haunting depictions of child death in literature and culture of the long-nineteenth century, on which she has authored articles and book chapters, and is adapting for her first monograph. She is also co-founder and co-Editor-in-Chief of the journal HARTS & Minds.

Catherine Charlwood wrote her PhD thesis on memory and versification in Thomas Hardy and Robert Frost at the University of Warwick, where she was also a part-time tutor, and continues to work on poetry and memory.

Stephanie Meek completed her Master's degree at the Open University, and is now a doctoral research student at the University of Exeter, working on ideas of literary censorship. In addition to writing the essay included here, she is the winner of the 2017 Patrick Tolfree essay competition, and that essay too will be published in the Society journals.

Richard Sainsbury is Emeritus Professor of Geriatric Medicine, University of Otago, Christchurch, New Zealand. He has recently written an MA thesis on 'Older People and Ageing in the Fiction of Thomas Hardy'.

Reproduced with permission of copyright owner.
Further reproduction prohibited without
permission.