

Ghent University

Faculty of Arts and Philosophy



Charles Dickens: Judge and Partaker of Victorian Commercialism

Supervisor:

Prof. dr. Gert Buelens

Co-supervisor:

Mr. Jasper Schelstraete

May 2011

Paper submitted in partial

fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of "Bachelor in de

Taal- en Letterkunde: Nederlands-

Engels" by Sean Bex

0. Table of contents

0. Table of contents	1
1. Introduction	2-3
2. Commercialism in Victorian society	4-7
2.1. Commercialism and Victorian belief in progress	4-5
2.2. Commercialism and Victorian reality	6-7
3. Commercialism in <i>Bleak House</i>, <i>Great Expectations</i> and <i>Our Mutual Friend</i>	7-23
3.1. 'Commercial' institutions and stagnation	7-9
3.2. Characters working through institutions	9-12
3.3. The spread of commercialism	12-16
3.4. The detrimental effects of commercialism: deluded characters	16-17
3.5. The detrimental effects of commercialism: society's moral decline	18-20
3.6. A utopian solution	20-23
4. Conflicting images of Dickens's authorship	23-32
4.1. The magnificent Boz	23-25
4.2. A cunning businessman	26-28
4.3. Dickens and the literary marketplace	28-31
4.4. Reconciling both views	31-32
5. Conclusion	33-34
6. Works cited	35-38

1. Introduction

By the time of his death on the 9th of June 1870, Charles Dickens had amassed a fortune of over £90,000 (Slater 616). A somewhat surprising fact, one might note, considering the number of novels, articles and speeches 'the magnificent Boz' wrote condemning the increasing commercialism in Victorian England. This paper proposes to investigate the ambiguity between two seemingly irreconcilable images of Dickens's authorship. Comparing the romanticized image of an author who was never fully part of his time and so skilfully criticized the money-driven attitude of the Victorian age on the one hand, to the modern demystified view of an author who became deeply invested in the commercialized literary world of the nineteenth century on the other.

The first half of this study focuses on tracing the theme of commercialism in three of Dickens's later novels, showing how they criticize and systematically invert the Victorian progress narrative that was based on an almost unshakeable faith in commerce. The analysis of this theme ultimately coalesces into a powerful and multipronged attack on commercialism. Following a brief discussion of the socio-economic context of mid-Victorian England, *Bleak House* (1853), *Great Expectations* (1861) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) will be read as condemnations of utilitarian belief in social institutions, denunciations of the omnipresence of commercialism and warnings against the moral decline in society. The final part of this analysis will then look at the idealistic solution the novels offer the reader to combat society's fixation with money.

The second part of this study compares, contrasts and eventually harmonizes the type of author one might associate with these readings of *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* with the modern image of Dickens as a commercial writer. The

former will prove consistent with the image of authorship Dickens himself cultivated in his later career of an 'uncommercial traveller' (Schelstraete), the portrayal of Dickens by his earliest biographer and friend John Forster and the impressions of his readership. The latter ties into more recent biographies by Grahame Smith and Michael Slater, the authors of which have chosen to focus more on Dickens's professionalism and businesslike attitude to writing, placing him at the heart of the commercial world his novels so effectively criticized. This paper ultimately concludes that reducing Dickens's authorship entirely to one view or the other is, inevitably, an oversimplification of a man who was, throughout his career, constantly defining and redefining his position as an author in the literary marketplace.

2. Commercialism in Victorian society

This short introductory section does not mean to provide an exhaustive description of the socio-economic reality of the mid-Victorian age. It does, however, focus on the most important contextual facts that underlie the subsequent reading of *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* and explicitly links commercialism to the idealistic Victorian mindset and socio-economic reality.

2.1. Commercialism and Victorian belief in progress

The timeframe within which Dickens published these three novels coincides with what was generally perceived as a period of progress and prosperity, brought about by a combination of industrial innovation and commerce. In this period “[m]oney formed a crucial if often mystified vehicle of cultural awareness [...], an age of booming economic expansion and, as it seemed to contemporaries, of fabulous prosperity after the ordeal of the ‘hungry forties’” (Herbert 188-89). This image was consolidated in The Great Exhibition of 1851, which celebrated the newfound optimism in society and the belief in free trade that drove it (Gurney 397). By the 1850’s Victorian England had fully incorporated the laissez-faire liberalism as proposed by philosophers such as David Hume, who had linked commerce to the progress of the nation in the previous century:

The greatness of a state, and the happiness of its subjects [...] are commonly allowed to be inseparable with regard to commerce; and as private men receive greater security, in the possession of their trade and riches, from the power of the public, so the public becomes powerful in proportion to the opulence and extensive commerce of private men (Hume 156).

With money promising seemingly endless progress, the Victorians gradually institutionalized commercialism and allowed it to guide virtually all areas of public and private life. When inflation caused the market crashes of 1825, 1837 and 1839, the government's faith in corporatism was merely strengthened, and it took steps to grant the Bank of England the monopoly on money printing, thus linking the country's currency to one of its institutions (Bigelow 590-93). Similarly, "[s]olutions to complex social problems [were] sought within a fetishized sphere of capital, what we now call 'the economy'" (Bigelow 593). Bentham's utilitarianism undoubtedly reflects the Victorian attitude to social aid by linking its theory to the commercial mindset that dominated the age, attempting to solve problems by engaging with commercial institutions and centralizing aid for the poor. The solution was not to temper commercialism, but to allow even the poorest in society access to it. "Part of Bentham's imagined reformation of the poor involves granting them access to institutions the moneyed have, such as banks, that currently exclude them" (Stokes 713) and in this sense, division and diversity in society was merely seen as stimulating further progress (Stuchebrukhov 393). So great was the Victorians' faith in business and money that they believed it would eventually "civilize the savage both at home and abroad" (Gurney 398). It is, of course, precisely this type of "sanctity that attends big business and the accumulation of money [that] is particularly liable to attack by Dickens" (Engel 965) and, together with other social critics, he would try to show that this notion of endless progress was dangerously flawed (Herbert 188).

2.2. Commercialism and Victorian reality

For Dickens at least, the following recent analysis by Lorna Huett of the Mid-Victorian period would have seemed much more accurate than the dominant one-sided view of wealth and prosperity in his own time:

At a period where increasing wealth and social status for some was counterbalanced by abject poverty for others, when prostitution, corruption and disease were rife, and when London was both one of the foremost cities of the world and the Great Wen, this 'universal law' would by no means have seemed inviolable, and the idea of 'progress' would have been distinctly double-edged (Huett 63).

For while the Victorian belief in progress may have been true at an economic level, the idea that commercialism was effecting the utilitarian creed of 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' is highly doubtful at best. In a similar vein, Garrett Ziegler nuances the image of progress by indicating that "the period was also marred by a series of commercial scandals, bank failures, government ineptitude, and general malfeasance" (Ziegler 433), going on to conclude that the city of London was transformed from a vibrant living space to a dehumanized and purely economic space (Ziegler 436-37).

Ironically, when the Victorians institutionalized commercialism and tried to apply it to all areas of society, they halted change and progress. The reality is thus that "[p]rimitive systems of accounting that made little provision for depreciation and replacement combined with Victorian principles of thrift to make survival, let alone innovation, a problem" (Wilson 197). What is undoubtedly also true about this period, moreover, is that the value of everything, both commercial and non-commercial, became intrinsically linked to the desire

to consume (Bigelow 611), even if that market-based ideology failed to deliver on its promise of endless progress.

3. Commercialism in *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend*

This section analyzes the theme of condemning commercialism in the novels *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* by engaging with the specific characteristics of Victorian society outlined above. The key concepts are the portrayal of stagnant institutions, the omnipresence of commercial attitudes and the moral decline in society.

3.1. 'Commercial' institutions and stagnation

“In his magazines and in his novels, he [Dickens] consistently evaluates social organizations according to how well they circulate human energies” (Kucich 108). The primary target for such an evaluation in *Bleak House* is the bogged down and all-consuming institution of Chancery, which is run like a business. Its main objective, as revealed in chapter thirty-nine, is self-preservation: “The one great principle of the English law is, to make business for itself” (Dickens *Bleak House* 621). Far from actually progressing the cases it is meant to deal with, it is, in effect, too concerned with its own welfare and power to take any notice of society (Bigelow 594). Parliament, represented by the quirky and inter-changeable characters of Boodle, Buffy and others, is similarly condemned for being “content to fiddle while Rome is burning” (Butt 5). The poignancy of this assault on immobile institutions stems from the backdrop of social ills against which the novel’s storyline is set. This leads Louis Crompton to conclude that “the magnitude of these symptoms of social distress is impressive, and equaled only by the completeness of the failure of those in power to deal with them” (Crompton 284). This critique becomes total when the reader realizes that

Chancery can be read as representing all social institutions (Fradin 99) and that the city of London is, in fact, a symbol of the nation as a whole (Ziegler 449). Thus, “[i]n *Bleak House* Dickens betrays a marked skepticism toward [...] egalitarian narratives or progress” (Heady 313).

If *Bleak House* represents failing systems (Bigelow 595), then *Great Expectations* represents failing individuals. The most likely example of stagnation in the latter novel must be Miss Havisham, both in her character and in the space she inhabits. She is completely alien from society and, much like Chancery, explicitly refuses to play the role it expects her to play. Despite her abundance of money, her progress is “arrested in time” (Brantlinger 281). When Pip first visits Miss Havisham in chapter eight, he notes the signs of wealth draped over her: “She was dressed in rich materials – satins and lace, and silks – all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white” (Dickens *Great Expectations* 59). Upon closer examination, however, he notices that the clocks have all stopped and that Satis House is actually in a state of decay: “It was when I stood before her, avoiding her eyes, that I took note of the objects in details, and saw that her watch had stopped at twenty minutes to nine, and that a clock in the room had stopped at twenty minutes to nine” (Dickens *Great Expectations* 60). Whereas the analysis of Chancery showed that institutions merely serve their own commercial interests without ever making any progress, Miss Havisham represents the stagnation and regression of an ‘institution’ that has nothing but money and past expectations. The notion of lost expectations will feature later in this paper as part of the dangerous delusion that befalls individuals in a money-driven society.

The general image of Victorian institutions that pervades these novels is, therefore, one of greed and corruption, as well as ineptitude and stagnation. This imagery clearly inverts the dominant Benthamite notion that “the institutional and apparently impersonal enables understanding and gives life, while reliance on arbitrary, inconsistent, personal judgment takes away meaning” (Stokes 717). Characters like Esther Summerson in *Bleak House* or Joe Gargery in *Great Expectations*, irrefutably forces of good in those novels, manage to help others at an individual level precisely by avoiding institutions. This should, however, not be read as a solution, as the dominance of institutions in the Dickensian world has spread to the extent that these positive characters can do nothing more than help themselves and several people in their immediate surroundings. In this respect, Joseph Fradin’s comments on Esther Summerson could be generalized to all characters like her, such as Joe Gargery: “perfect in being selfless and self-contained, they carry no larger hope in them, no hope that Esther or anyone else can restore the sun to the blighted landscape or halt the drift toward fragmentation” (Fradin 108). Because of this, any notion that a character could bring about progress is stifled by the evils of institutionalized society. Not even a middle class character like Mr. Rouncewell in *Bleak House*, backed by industrial money, could break the impossibility of progress created by an institutionalized society that desperately needs change (Fradin 107).

3.2. Characters using institutions

Of course, the institutions in *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* are not entirely void of life and many characters engage with them in some respect. One might even add that in *Bleak House* Chancery has seeped into the lives of all characters. Central to this part of the reading are the characters who abuse institutions to exploit others without ever

having to justify their evil acts. The novels suggest that such a development is an inevitable consequence of institutions becoming disassociated from the services they are meant to provide by the prevalence of capitalist principles in those whom they employ.

The specialized machinery of the state, put into place during the nineteenth century, produced and empowered a new professional class fraction of government servants who were sympathetic to the needs of capitalism but believed in centralized control, legitimated by generalized, scientific, and statistical forms of knowledge (Morris 684).

In *Bleak House*, the characters working for Chancery provide ample examples of this principle, classified by Crompton as “legal and commercial parasites” (Crompton 288). The harshest example is Mr. Vholes, who uses his position as a lawyer to prey on Richard Carstone and eventually bleeds him dry on both a commercial and a physical level. “His relation to the social system is made clear when Kenge argues that reform of the legal system is unthinkable, since it would jeopardize the livelihood of men like Vholes” (Crompton 300). Morality is, therefore, inverted by suggesting that the system serves Mr. Vholes’ pocket rather than society.

However, one need not work for an institution to exploit others through them in the London of Dickens’s novels. The avaricious characters in *Our Mutual Friend* soon discover social institutions as the ideal way to either control or exploit others:

[S]ome characters in *Our Mutual Friend*, such as the blackmailing Silas Wegg or the usurer Fascination Fledgby, not only behave transgressively but in doing so deploy both culturally sanctioned incentives and established institutional procedures to

make puppets of other people. Others, like Headstone the social-climbing headmaster and Veneering the parvenu, align themselves with available social institutions to increase their own power and prestige (Rothenberg 720).

In contrast to *Bleak House*, where the central institution has a clearly defined social task that it fails to fulfill, the institutions in *Our Mutual Friend* remain abstract and distant, no longer even being associated with their societal obligations and merely functioning as a means to a commercial end for the likes of Wegg or Veneering. The commercial systems are, therefore, open to almost any abuse imaginable, whatever the human or moral cost. For examples of this one could consider how characters like “Fledgeby (who speculates in “waste paper”), Veneering (drugs), and Lamble (company promotion) all strive to use the anonymity of the share market to legitimate a form of avarice that is as dependent on the demise of others as, say, Wegg’s dirty reanimations” (Scoggin 114).

A crucial addition to this list of characters is the lawyer Mr. Jaggers in *Great Expectations*. Embodying all of the negative traits mentioned above, he gives a clue as to where such individuals stand in society.

Jaggers has a complete understanding of human evil but, unlike the living artist, can wash his hands of it. He is above ordinary institutions; like a god he dispenses justice, and like a god displays infinite mercy through unrelenting severity (Stange 16).

However, there is one important aspect of Jaggers’ character missing in Stange’s analysis which is key to this discussion, the fact that the lawyer consistently stresses that his actions are determined by whether or not he is being paid for them. The first example of this comes in chapter eighteen. After informing Pip of his ‘great expectations’, Mr. Jaggers emphasizes

his selfish businesslike motives by quickly dismissing any attempt at thanking him and adding: "I tell you at once, I am paid for my services, or I shouldn't render them" (Dickens *Great Expectations* 128). In their next meeting (chapter twenty), Pip finds Mr. Jaggers in a place adequately named 'Little Britain', where he is described as being at the head of a centre of financial and institutional power that cares little for the plight of the suffering.

The conclusion from the novels seems to be that by incorporating commercialism into the core of society, the door has been opened to the power-hungry avaricious characters examined above. By giving them access to centralized institutions, they have managed to claw their way to the top of the social ladder. Combined with the previous notion of immobility, institutions in *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* can be placed at the heart of socio-economic regression. A pertinent inversion, therefore, of the Victorian progress narrative that so believed those very same institutions would constantly innovate and improve society. Modern economic studies of the late Victorian 'Great Depression' seem to agree with the conclusion drawn in the novels, blaming the economic decline at the end of the century on the lack of innovation and change in society. Ashworth's article *The Late Victorian Economy* sums it up by concluding that the explanation for the economic downturn "will have to rest on failure to plant enough new seeds which the next generation could similarly bring to fruition" (Ashworth 32).

3.3. The spread of commercialism

Beyond the condemnation of commercialized institutions and the self-serving individuals that work for them, the novels open up a second point of attack on commercialism by exposing the detrimental effects of its omnipresence. As was pointed out in the contextual background above, commercialism eventually permeated almost all areas of Victorian life,

both in society and in the population's psyche. Christopher Herbert notes that it spread to areas that one would not readily associate with commerce, such as religion:

[L]iterary evidence [...] makes clear how widely perceived it was at the time that religious imagination and emotion—the passion for righteousness, sanctity, worshipful adoration—were prone in this age to transmute themselves into or redirect themselves toward the passion for accumulating wealth, which thus took on an aura of a kind of displaced spirituality (Herbert 189).

The Rev. Mr. Chadband in *Bleak House* is a prime example of how commercialism has corrupted the representatives of the church. He becomes so preoccupied with accumulating wealth that he no longer cares about serving his congregation and is “represented not as feeding his flock, but as being fed by them” (Crompton 294). Because of the novel's focus on Chancery, however, Crompton argues that “[i]t is not, in fact, the clergy but the lawyers who are identified with the traditional symbol for the corrupt functionary in pastoral: the shepherd who plunders his own flock” (Crompton 295). Though the emphasis of *Bleak House* is unquestionably on the evils in Chancery, the novel could instead be read as making the wider point that commercialism is omnipresent in society, through characters representing all manner of professions. The aforementioned characters in *Our Mutual Friend* from different social backgrounds, such as Wegg and Veneering, who abuse institutions for personal gain, constitute another example of how the Dickensian world is saturated with avaricious miscreants who take a commercial approach to expanding their own wealth and power.

“Dickens has a view of the place of finance and industry in the life of Victorian England that is always an operating force, and sometimes a central operating force in his fiction” (Engel

964). This is most definitely the case in *Bleak House*, but also clearly part of *Great Expectations*. In this novel, the rags to riches dream eventually reaches the countryside boy of Pip, who, when offered the chance, eagerly relinquishes his childhood innocence to blindly pursue commercial and social gains. *Great Expectations* proves that the reach of commercialism stretches far beyond the city of London that it already dominates in *Bleak House*.

Comparing the images of London in primarily *Bleak House* and *Our Mutual Friend*, a next characteristic of commercialism is revealed. By spreading to all areas of Victorian life like a cancer, commercialism eventually pushes out all human values. Dickensian London, a dead commercial centre that still contains traces of its past as a vibrant inhabited space, reflects the havoc that industrialism had wreaked on the old city by the 1850's (Ziegler 440-44). Reflecting on how characters are seemingly absorbed by the fog of commercial London, Ziegler goes on to say that "[t]he metonymic City smothers the living City until all that remains of the latter are stories, themselves unreliable and muffled by the passing of time and the weight of fog" (Ziegler 450).

By qualifying the statement that fiction preserves the living and non-commercial city, Ziegler touches on a final area to which commercialism spreads in the novels. Abstract human concepts, such as love and friendship, become tainted by the introduction of commercial principles. *Bleak House's* Esther Summerson gets passed around a whole host of men who treat her as a valuable object that must be entered into market circulation at the correct value. "[S]he is [...] exchanged between men, and the reliability of the market system is tested through the problem of establishing Esther's value" (Bigelow 609). *Great Expectations's* Pip represents the same spread of commercialism, but from the viewpoint of

the valuer. Far from a romantic transcendent love, “Pip's love for Estella is fused with the deeper meaning of ‘expectations’” (Kucich 102). Once Mr. Jaggers grants Pip money, “[h]is love for Estella [becomes] inseparable from his snobbish desire to rise in the world regardless of merit” (Meckier 250). This tainting of love by commercialism returns in a most delightful example of Dickensian comedy in *Our Mutual Friend*, in the form of the newly-wed Lammles. Both the bride and groom, greedy as they are, enter into a marriage which they see as a business arrangement from which they hope to benefit. Marriage bliss soon disappears, when it turns out that they are both penniless and neither of them is able to hold up their end of the bargain. Molly Clark Hillard is content to define the Lammles as a “grotesque iteration of [...] grasping avarice” (Hillard 961), but there are several clues that invite the reader to consider the Lammles as infected by a specific brand of greed, commercial greed. The chapter in which the Lammles are introduced, chapter ten of Book the First, is called ‘A Marriage Contract’ (Dickens *Our Mutual Friend* 118), implying a businesslike arrangement between man and wife that will, as the chapter progresses, turn out to be based on mutual exploitation. Mr. Lamble’s mind is described as dominated by the share market, which suggests that he views his marriage as a stock exchange:

[he] has to do with the trafficking of Shares. As is well known to the wise in their generation, traffic in Shares is the one thing to have to do with in this world. Have no antecedents, no established character, no cultivation, no ideas, no manners; have Shares. Have Shares enough to be on Boards of Direction in capital letter, oscillate on mysterious business between London and Paris, and be great (Dickens *Our Mutual Friend* 118).

This description summarizes all of the above points about the omnipresence of commercialism. It claims that the world is dominated by market transactions (shares), shows the spread of market concepts to extramarket areas and explicitly tells the reader that being part of the market is the only thing that matters in this commercialized society.

3.4. The detrimental effects of commercialism: deluded characters

Following the inversion of the progress narrative and the omnipresence of commercialism, the novels expose the dangers faced by individuals who still believe in salvation through wealth. The idea of progress through money that pervades commercial society generates unattainable goals for certain characters who, either willingly or unwillingly, pursue the dream of wealth and social climbing. The three clearest examples of such delusions in *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* are to be found in respectively Richard Carstone, Pip and Bella Wilfer.

Richard Carstone and Pip are examples of characters who willingly allow themselves to become deluded by the promise of wealth. As the story of *Bleak House* progresses, Richard is eventually corrupted by the inheritance case 'Jarndyce and Jarndyce' and decides to pursue his claim at all cost. Interestingly, Crompton notes that, evil as he irrefutably is, Mr. Vholes does not initiate the exploitation of Richard and merely gives "Richard's dementia free play to involve him in self-destruction" (Crompton 299). The main danger of pursuing such delusions is revealed at the end of *Bleak House*, when a mentally and physically drained Richard realizes that the entire inheritance has been consumed by legal costs. As Richard's mind increasingly directs itself to money throughout the story, the danger of alienation, linked to the selfish commercial delusion, takes hold.

Blindly hopeful that wealth will come to him from the settlement of the lawsuit, Richard's morbid suspicion that he is being cheated of his inheritance estranges him from those who love him and have his welfare sincerely at heart (Crompton 297).

The abstract nature of what Pip pursues, enforces the unattainable nature of what a commercial society promises the individual. The result is that “what Pip ‘expects’ is vague; it is only something that others seem to have, that he does not” (Kucich 102). Pip taking up commercial endeavors is linked to alienation in *Great Expectations*, much like it was for Richard in *Bleak House*.

If Pip is a prisoner, the reason is not that no one will free him or love him, but that he locks himself up in his dream of owning Estella and Satis House, and thereby locks Joe out. Since Magwitch's money generates the dream, the chain symbol is well chosen (Hynes 262).

Our Mutual Friend's Bella Wilfer provides an interesting twist on Richard and Pip's delusion, because she largely has the delusion forced upon her by the dead industrialist Harmon Sr. through the specific conditions of his will. By accepting old Harmon's money through the Boffins, “Bella must respond to [its] obligations or presumably follow the mercenary path of Wegg and Headstone, or more aptly, the Lammles and the Veneerings” (Scoggin 113). Having these obligations unexpectedly forced upon her does not, however, mean that she does not fully and gladly accept them. Before John Harmon cleanses her of commercialism, Bella frequently stresses that she is “the most mercenary little wretch that ever lived in the world” (Dickens *Our Mutual Friend* 316). Bella differs from Richard Carstone in that she, and Pip to a certain extent, manages to transcend her commercial view of the world and find happiness by the end of the novel.

3.5. The detrimental effects of commercialism: society's moral decline

Thus far, the analysis of *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* has shown both evil and good individuals being dominated by commercialism, resulting in misery for a plethora of characters in all corners of Dickensian world. What binds the victims and perpetrators, is that they are all part of a society in moral decline. No good directly comes of money in Dickens, “[h]is attitude toward finance and speculation was simply hostile—he could see nothing good or real in it. In some way money itself was repugnant to him[...].” (Engel 964). Though this statement definitely applies to the world of his novels, this paper will go on to argue that this was quite simply not the case for Dickens as an author.

Great Expectations, both in title and plot, “reflects unfavorably on a national attitude it considers detrimental; it critiques an unhealthy state of mind” (Meckier 253). This unhealthy state of mind is reflected in characters like Pip or Wemmick, who consider all money, no matter how immoral its origin, to be good. “Wemmick with his concern for the ‘portable property’ he receives from condemned criminals is not without his affinity to Pip, for the latter's property also has its source in the underworld” (Hagan Jr. 61). Similarly lacking in morality is Richard Carstone’s aforementioned blind pursuit of money, which ignores the immoral actions caused by ‘Jarndyce and Jarndyce’ and the despicable institution dealing with the case. The link between immorally obtained money and institutions features strongly in the character of Mr. Veneering in *Our Mutual Friend*, who “successfully use[s] his money from the drug market to run for and win a seat in Parliament” (Scoggin 104).

Scoggin goes on to conclude the following from *Our Mutual Friend*'s imagery:

Throughout *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), Dickens carefully outlines how the demands of mid-Victorian capital have successfully naturalized the most nauseous of economies;

according to the logic of equivalent exchange, the refuse of death — body parts, paper, waste, and dust — are never safe from being recycled and made to turn a profit (Scoggin 99).

The unacceptable becoming acceptable in a commercially oriented society not only runs through that novel, but all three of the novels being discussed in this paper. Commenting on Pip's first visit to Satis House in *Great Expectations*, Hynes notes that while Pip describes several tradesmen's lack of morality, he "is about to join his brothers and these tradesmen in a state of moral collapse" (Hynes 280). Finally, *Bleak House's* Grandfather Smallweed symbolizes the transition from the traditional basis for morality, religion, to a commercial one. The novel describes this extortionist's moral foundations as follows: "[t]he name of this old pagan's God was Compound Interest. He lived for it, married it, died of it" (Dickens *Bleak House* 333). Therefore, the image that pervades these novels is one of a nation in moral decline that is constantly attracting more followers.

Mr Boffin's decision to have Wegg read to him from Edward Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in *Our Mutual Friend* constitutes a strong incentive to link the commercialism that permeates the novel to the nation's regression. When Wegg exclaims "And now, Mr. Boffin, sir, we'll decline and we'll fall" (Dickens *Our Mutual Friend* 187), it is hard to ignore the two separate implications his statement encapsulates. In summarizing the discussion of Mr. Boffin's reading in J. Hillis Miller's *Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels*, Palmer makes the first implication explicit and notes: "[i]t is clear that, for Dickens, nineteenth-century England is repeating the fall of Rome" (Palmer 487). The second implication could then be directed at the commercially obsessed middle classes,

implying that Mr. Boffin must carefully avoid the precipice at which his recently acquired wealth has placed him.

3.6. A utopian solution

For all the strength of their denunciations of commercialism and its supposed benefits, *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* offer very little in the way of an actual solution. Particularly lacking in this respect is *Bleak House*, which could, therefore, be seen as the 'darkest' of these three novels. Esther's aforementioned goodness is restricted to a local level and a genuinely positive character like her guardian John Jarndyce seems to have achieved that state of mind by simply running away from society to the estate of Bleak House, ironically one of the happiest homes in the novel. One refuses to engage with society, however, at one's own peril; a notion the novel itself suggests by having Esther contract smallpox from the wretched street sweeper Jo. "[T]he fog and the miasma of disease in *Bleak House* are represented as seeping across all social boundaries" (Morris 684). In this sense, Rouncewell's decision to stay out of parliament could be read as benefitting his personal life, while doing nothing to improve society (Fradin 107). The same applies to Joe Gargery in *Great Expectations*, who steers clear of commercial life, but who inevitably remains a latent force of good. Similarly, some of the women in *Our Mutual Friend* wish to make a stand against commercialized society and alter its lacking morality.

[T]he morally concerned and questing female characters in *Our Mutual Friend*-Lizzie Hexam, Bella Wilfer [...] [want] to replace the rules and attitudes under which they have been forced to live and make a new set of rules based upon a completely different set of values (Palmer 491).

The female characters in *Our Mutual Friend* are yet another reiteration of the need for change in society, but they too, like Esther Summerson, only manage to help those in their immediate environment and have little effect on the very fabric of society that is in desperate need of reform.

Our Mutual Friend, however, seems to offer the most complete method of solving society's problems, primarily in the characters of John Harmon and Eugene Wrayburn. At the start of the novel John Harmon almost drowns, because, "[l]ike Wrayburn, he must be submerged to be restored" (Hillard 963). Restoration for John Harmon means both a detachment from society's expectations and its commercialism. After being cleansed, he is able to engage with money without it corrupting him. "Importantly, Harmon's living-deadness should not necessarily be thought of as a gesture of economic disinterest; obviously, he still cares for his money" (Scoggin 101). The difference between Harmon's interest in money and for example Silas Wegg's, is that Harmon incorporates money within a larger sense of morality. For both Eugene Wrayburn and John Harmon "a better future cannot come until a moral rather than a material change of form can be accomplished" (Palmer 489). By almost dying, John Harmon becomes disentangled from commercialism and "a dirty fortune is cleansed by touching the talisman of the beyond" (Scoggin 106). Money per se is, therefore, not the problem, its omnipresence and dominance, as the preceding analyses have shown, are, however, the cause of great evil. In his extensive study of misers, Mr. Boffin reaches that very same conclusion. "His choice of the history of misers as the main tool in his demonstration is also fitting because the most powerful and falsest value the past has raised and which Boffin realizes must be replaced is the Victorian reverence for money" (Palmer 488).

Eugene's transformation is effected by both his 'rebirth' and his love for Lizzie Hexham. "[H]er love [...] can redeem Eugene Wrayburn from the monotony and aimlessness of his life. Her riches are the riches of the heart and his poverty is his inability to love and to cast off the 'essence' that society has imposed upon him" (Palmer 490). The novel encourages such an interpretation of Eugene when considered in the light of his introduction in the novel at a society meeting with his friend Mr. Lightwood (Dickens *Our Mutual Friend* 17-27) and the last chapter of the novel, where Mr. Lightwood must attend a similar social gathering alone (Dickens *Our Mutual Friend* 792-97). Even though they remain friends throughout the novel, Eugene does not accompany him to the Veneerings' final social gathering and remains separate from the society that corrupts his morality in the novel's opening chapters.

The feebleness of this solution becomes painfully clear though in Scoggin's summary of it in his article "A Speculative Resurrection: Death, Money, and the Vampiric Economy of *Our Mutual Friend*":

As a solution, the novel suggests that the faithful way to assuage the fears of one's inevitable demise is to raise a guiltless fortune, a safe investment that can hypothetically (and speculatively) be done without but is possessed nonetheless (Scoggin 107).

Our Mutual Friend seems to be suggesting a common sense solution to a nation that, as all three of these novels show, is no longer able to think straight, making it idealistic at best. *Great Expectations* may give the impression of offering a slightly more substantial answer by focusing on the development of Pip, but is in essence describing a similar development to that of Eugene Wrayburn and John Harmon. After Pip recovers from a severe illness and

leaves London, “[a] happy ending can be dispensed with because Pip, knowing that he has adjusted himself to expectations of a greater value than is found in the marketplace, does not even wish for the putative happiness of marriage and prosperity” (Lindberg 122). Another good example of this utopian solution, *Hard Times* (1854), falls outside the scope of this paper but within the timeframe of the publication of *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend*. *Hard Times* does not entirely condemn industrialism, only the fact that the characters in it are dominated by commercial thoughts. Brantlinger notes that in this novel, “England's bane is not the factory system, not this or that blot on the social landscape to be cured by this or that Morison's Pill, but a lack of moral responsiveness[...]” (Brantlinger 283). The tragedy is then that the common sense solution to commercialism only partly succeeds within the Dickensian world and can only be read as a utopian one at best with regard to actually resolving the issues in Victorian England the novels so poignantly reveal and criticize.

4. Conflicting images of Dickens's authorship

This section compares and contrasts a romantic and a commercial view of Dickens's authorship. Though a subsequent analysis of Dickens's attitude to the literary marketplace will then go on to reconcile these two seemingly contradictory views.

4.1. The magnificent Boz

In the preface to his biography of Charles Dickens, Peter Ackroyd somewhat poetically describes the moment after Dickens's death as follows: “[t]he family beside him knew how he enjoyed the light, how he needed the light; and they understood too, that none of the conventional somberness of the late Victorian period – the year was 1870 – had ever

touched him” (Ackroyd X). The image which is conjured up is one of an author who hovered over his time, never partaking in any of its more gruesome realities and, therefore, in an ideal position to criticize the “self-interest [that] was, as Dickens saw it, the age’s besetting sin” (Slater 208). This is the type of author most readers would associate with the strong condemnations of commercialism as revealed in the aforementioned aspects of *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend*. In this respect, modern popular opinion still seems to be that “if he was the chronicler of his age, he also stood apart from it; he was always in some sense the solitary observer, one who looked upon the customs of his time as an anthropologist might look upon the habits of a particularly savage tribe” (Ackroyd XII).

In this romantic view of his authorship, Dickens pitted his publications and own imagination against an increasingly market-based society that did little to help the impoverished lower classes, believing that “‘Fancy’ – and by implication journals like *Household Words* – can stop people from feeling like machines or commodities” (John 195). Refusing to believe money held the answer to social ills, Dickens stresses that “their [impoverished workers] deepest need is for more fun rather than for more money” (Brantlinger 281). This image of Dickens as a great entertainer and anti-commercialist is consistent with the way in which Dickens wanted to be perceived by his readership. Commenting on his immensely popular and lucrative public readings, Susan L. Ferguson focuses on “[h]ow Dickens’s public readings participated in the construction of [...] a new idea of the author as intimate companion [...]” (Ferguson 730). He consolidated this image by giving himself several endearing nicknames, such as ‘the inimitable’ and ‘the magnificent Boz’, none of which imply even the remotest involvement with the commercial side of publishing.

His first biographer and lifelong friend John Forster did little to detract from this image in his description of Dickens's life and, if anything, consolidated his image as a loveable literary genius. In his discussion of the years after 1870, Michael Slater summarizes Forster's account of Dickens as follows:

As far as his private life was concerned, he was pitied as a great, wonderfully humane and extraordinarily gifted, man who had been badly [sic] treated as a child by his parents and who had later been unlucky in love and suffered much from an unhappy marriage to an inadequate wife and also from the incapacity of his many children (Slater 622).

The only real shock in Forster's biography for Dickens's readership would have been the revelation of his traumatic and deprived youth (Slater 619-20), which only further strengthened their idea that he wrote for the abused lower classes. Even Grahame Smith's Dickens biography, which takes his professionalism and commercialism as its scope, notes:

[h]e saw the necessity of simple, and even crude pleasures for those whose lives were marked by toil and deprivation, but he never slackened in his pursuit of refinement of popular taste, a passionate quest to which his own novels stand as the ultimate testimony (Smith 105).

This first view of Dickens's authorship closely links in with the image a reader would expect from an author whose novels so utterly denounce commercialism. The next subsection will now contrast this overly romantic view with some of the more recent descriptions of Dickens as a quintessential representative of the Victorian publishing business, undermining any possibility of the narrator's voice in *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* coinciding with Dickens as a professional author.

4.2. A cunning businessman

Contradicting the aforementioned part of his preface, the postscript to Ackroyd's biography of Dickens claims that "[i]t may be true that he created or recreated his age in his own image but, as we have seen in this history, in his own person he experienced powerfully the most genuine forces of his time" (Ackroyd 577). Whilst this statement, as will now be shown, is far from untrue, it does reiterate the ambiguity central to this discussion. Was Dickens a literary genius that floated above his time or rather an author deeply invested in the literary market of his time? The latter interpretation definitely pervades Grahame Smith's *Charles Dickens: A Literary Life*, which concludes its discussion of Dickens's authorship and literary production in the first chapter by stating that "[i]t is within this personal context that I shall place my biographical emphasis on Dickens's professionalism as a writer" (Smith 19). Michael Slater gives his biography a similar scope, writing that "'mindful of Dickens's words in his will about resting his claims to the remembrance of his country upon his published work, I have focused primarily upon his career as a writer and professional author[...]" (Slater XIV).

From the publication of *Sketches by Boz* onwards, the market became saturated with Dickens's writings (Smith 17), a feat achieved, at least in part, by a knack for adapting his writing to the popular form of serialized publication. "[...] Dickens became a master in the art of serialization. He developed a special technique, or pattern, for his weekly serials" (Grubb 156). This shows that Dickens did at least adapt his literary production to the expected patterns drawn up by the literary marketplace of his age. Similarly, the idea that he was not commercially savvy in his position as a writer and publisher, as well as "the suggestion that he was taken advantage of by his contributors is indeed difficult to accept" (Buckler 1180). Once again, Dickens's public readings form an excellent example of his incredible feel for

what his readership would buy into. “In the extensive cuts from the published version [of *A Christmas Carol*] for the reading version lie traces indicating Dickens’s shaping of his performances” (Ferguson 736). Realizing that these readings were an untapped source of income, he “performed about 472 public readings in Great Britain and America between 1853 and 1870” (Ferguson 730). After meticulously setting up this lucrative new business of public reading, Ackroyd writes that “the great novelist was now the great entertainer” (Ackroyd 510), a transition that could not have been completed without Dickens’s commercial aptitude.

All three of the modern biographies quoted thus far stress Dickens’s preoccupation with earning money from his writings. Michael Slater, for example, notes that after several frustrations with his publishers, “[h]e was determined that the lion’s share of the anticipated profits [for *A Christmas Carol*] should find its way into his own pockets rather than into those of any publishers” (Slater 220). Grahame Smith even goes as far as saying that Dickens enjoyed being better at playing the literary market than other writers, noting that “Dickens’s pleasure in his power over the problems of serialization is to be found in his ill-concealed delight at the failures of others to master it [...]” (Smith 37). These insights beg a revision of Dickens’s purely altruistic motives as a writer and one may be tempted to conclude, as Juliet John suggests, that “his continued attempts to seek to influence popular opinion and make money in the process [...] could be read [...] as hypocrisy” (John 196).

Regardless of whether or not one accepts such a negative view of Dickens, it is no longer possible to view Dickens as entirely removed from the commercial aspects of writing and publishing. It is clear that Dickens “represented the Victorian character” (Ackroyd 577) when it came to approaching his work as a professional businessman. Unlike the romantic

image of Dickens as an author writing for the working classes, his readership was, in fact, just like Dickens himself, middle class. His publication "*Household Words*, therefore, [...] became an acceptable way for the middle-classes to consume the products of the leading authors of the day" (Huett 70). As a middle class professional author, Dickens was gravely concerned with sales figures and profits. In this respect, the publishing process of *Great Expectations* provides an uncanny example of how he shortened his intended story in order to run it through his journal *All The Year Round* sooner than planned to halt falling circulation figures (Grubb 147-49).

The fact that Dickens so clearly partook in the commercialism of his age did not go unnoticed by some of his more radical contemporaries. John Ruskin, a social thinker and contemporary of Dickens, argued that "Dickens was tainted by a happy acquiescence in shabby modern ways" (Collins 654) and did not speak up enough against the industrialism that was, according to Ruskin, ruining Victorian England (Collins 654); essentially blaming Dickens for being too invested in the commercial world to criticize it. The contrast could hardly be greater with the aforementioned image Dickens himself actively cultivated of 'the magnificent Boz', who was supposedly so far removed from the grim realities of commercial society; an image most of his readership would have readily accepted, considering how anti-commercial novels such as *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* have proved to be in this study.

4.3. Dickens and the literary marketplace

Accepting that Dickens was part of the commercial aspect of being an author is, however, not to say that he remained uncritical of it. During his first trip to America in 1842, he experienced firsthand what it meant to be treated as a commodity.

Dickens's perception of everything in America was mediated by his own experience of celebrity – by the experience, that is, of feeling himself turned into a commodity whose exploitation was outside his control (John 184).

Though these frustrations concerning his commoditization did not stop Dickens from becoming infuriated at the realization that lax American copyright legislation was costing him a fortune in royalties (Smith 16). This ambiguous response to the commoditization of authors and their works goes to the heart of Dickens's attitude to the Victorian literary marketplace. He does "not believe that authors should shun the marketplace" (Hack 694), but strongly believes that "the market value of one's work should not be the sole basis for its remuneration" (Hack 694). Considering that position, "[h]is logic in the debate about copyright combines a pragmatic, unRomantic [sic] acceptance of market forces, with a [...] Romantic, transcendent, and moral discourse" (John 181). Dickens clearly wanted to be more than just a commodity in a literary marketplace and in light of this understanding it becomes hard to accept the following assertion by Grahame Smith:

If [...] creative agony and an almost supernatural inspiration are not essential to the appearance of art, it may be possible to demystify this romantic conception of the artist[...]. One way to do this is to substitute the word 'production' for the word 'creation' and to see Dickens as a literary producer of texts rather than as a solitary, Romantically-agonized creator of works of imagination (Smith 4).

In fact, this is precisely the type of reductionist view of his authorship that aggravated Dickens upon his arrival in America. The thought that in going from "Dickens the defender of the people [to] Dickens the persecuted celebrity" (John 180), his writing would be considered a mere product of an almost mechanical publishing business.

A good illustration of how Dickens tried to balance commercialism on the one hand and literary ideals on the other, is referenced in the dedication of *Bleak House*. It reads: “DEDICATED / AS A REMEMBRANCE OF OUR FRIENDLY UNION / TO MY COMPANIONS / IN THE / GUILD OF LITERATURE AND ART” (Dickens *Bleak House* 4). This Guild’s goal was to provide aid to struggling authors so that they may maintain their independence and not let their literary activities become entirely determined by market forces (Hack 698-99). The notion of ‘independence’ was key and also meant that financial aid provided by the Guild, which Dickens helped create, should not be seen as a return to the days of aristocratic patronage. In a speech to members of the Guild, Dickens was “[a]nxious as always to expunge the least hint of patronage from the Guild’s activities, he emphasized in his speech [that [...] writers or artists [...] would be [...] ‘receiving a mark of respect, and assurance of high consideration, from some of their fellow workers’” (Slater 538). The primary worry for Dickens was that, after the days of patronage, the commoditization of literature would once again limit the creative liberties of writers. In that sense, “efforts to institute or expand nonmarket systems of authorial support are also driven by this antipathy toward begging and charity, as much as and often more than any hostility toward the market itself” (Hack 693). Ironically, the Guild would be dissolved in 1897 by an Act of Parliament after having existed in a largely dormant state for most of its existence (Slater 339), not unlike the Court of Chancery in the novel dedicated to the Guild.

The examples of Dickens’s experiences in America and the principles upon which The Guild of Literature and Art was based, nuance his relation to the Victorian literary marketplace. Neither diametrically opposed to it nor entirely in compliance with it, Dickens was engaged in trying to reform the creative market from within. If anything, “[t]ransforming

culture from the inside was a confusing business” (John 197) and it would seem wise to bear that in mind when trying to define Dickens’s position as an author.

4.4. Reconciling both views

Relating his position in the literary marketplace to the two previously discussed views on authorship, it is clear that Dickens was both “a passionate advocate of the freedom of imagination” (Stuchebrukhov 407) as well as “part of the mechanism that generates and sustains ‘the moral code’ which controls Victorian society” (Stuchebrukhov 407).

Dickens was drawn towards the idea of a utopian model of popular culture which offered social unity through cultural experience. But at the same time, he was a media mogul, laying the ground for today’s mass market as it has since exploited and constructed the Dickens we know now (John 180).

If that is indeed the case, both the romantic and the commercial definitions of his authorship are inevitably equally flawed and unrealistic. Instead, a definition must incorporate what Juliet John calls “a conscious blurring [...] between the imaginings of the creative and the commercial (artist), the novelist/travel writer and the advertiser” (John 188). If, as Ackroyd suggests in the previously quoted part of his postscript, Dickens was characteristic of his age, he was so in “an inconsistent modern commercial society” (Herbert 201). The suggestion that he remained constant while that inconsistent society weighed in on him is highly improbable. The reason Dickens did not condemn industrialism as Ruskin did, was simply because “he was in two minds about industrialism, as any sensible man would be, confronted with this enormous, unprecedented, and many-faced phenomenon” (Collins 671). In discussing his authorship, it would seem logical to consider widening this nuance on industrialism to Dickens’s position in the cultural realm.

Symptomatic of his attempt to combine commercialism and high culture is the eventual failure of the Guild of Literature and Art, the difficulties of which “[stemmed] from a failure to go *far enough* in challenging the hegemony of the marketplace and its logic of exchange” (Hack 704). The fact that Dickens did not push the anti-commercial basis of the Guild ‘far enough’ serves only to show how he never fully wanted to let go of the modern market . “The point is that Dickens is not talking about the superiority of the real past to the real present. He does not reject industrial England in favor of pre-industrial England” (Engel 970). Far more likely is that he was constantly trying to combine human values with the commercial market he so actively and willingly partook of. In seeking to demystify the image of an alienated literary genius, modern research has perhaps gone too far in stressing Dickens’s professional life. Therefore, a necessary nuance of both views is needed in order to define his authorship realistically. This conclusion should come as no surprise, considering Dickens’s own words on the subject: “I would rather have the affectionate regard of my fellow men, than I would have heaps and mines of gold. But the two things do not seem to me incompatible” (Dickens *The Speeches of Charles Dickens: A Complete Edition* 21).

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to note that Dickens argued against the absolute commercialization of society in the articles and speeches he produced in his capacity as one of the main Victorian authors. It is also key to remember the incredible poignancy and strength with which *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* criticize Victorian commercialism, systematically inverting the entire progress narrative it had created. Finally, it is critical to recall Dickens's negative experiences during his first voyage to America and the purpose of organizations such as The Guild of Literature and Art in order to understand the way in which he stood against the commoditization of creative artefacts. These three aspects of Dickens are significant because they expose the oversimplified view of his authorship as a commercialized author who saw his literary produce as a commodity.

However, this study has also revealed the naivety of a romanticized notion of Dickens, by drawing on recent research that has managed to show just how deeply invested he was in the literary marketplace. Indicted by more radical social commentators like John Ruskin for not being more absolute in his rejection of commercialism, Dickens actually did not advocate a complete expulsion of market forces. More than just a commentator on his age, he was perhaps better than any other author at adapting his product to boost sales figures. After showing how *Great Expectations* denounces commercialism, it became apparent that Dickens subjected the publication of that very same novel to his own commercial needs. Evidence of Dickens's own commercialism strongly contrasts with the image he wished to create of himself through anti-commercial novels such as *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend*. Considering the fact that he so fully engaged with the business side of publishing, traditional perspectives of Dickens as a purely non-

commercial figure are, therefore, as flawed as those that wish to simply classify him as a ruthless businessman.

In attempting to create a realistic perspective on Dickens's role as an author and in order to resolve these two ambiguous and ultimately flawed takes on Dickens, one must, therefore, be willing to accept a certain flexibility of thought. Flexibility to allow for the constant changes to the literary marketplace in the first age of mass printing and mass publishing; to incorporate Dickens's complex struggle to balance commerce and high culture and ultimately, to acknowledge that Dickens, perhaps more than other men, underwent great changes in his life that inevitably influenced his position as an author. A further analysis of the image Dickens wished to project of himself through his works could prove key in future attempts to achieve that flexibility. An accurate image of his authorship will then include those insights and accept that Charles Dickens was an author constantly defining and redefining his place within the literary marketplace and Victorian society as a whole.

6. Works cited

Ackroyd, Peter. *Dickens*. London: Random House, 2002. Print.

Ashworth, W. "The Late Victorian Economy." *Economica, New Series* 33.129 (February 1966): 17-33. Print.

Bigelow, Gordon. "Market Indicators: Banking and Domesticity in Dickens's Bleak House." *ELH* 67.2 (Summer 2000): 589-615. Print.

Brantlinger, Patrick. "Dickens and the Factories." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 26.3 (December 1971): 270-85. Print.

Buckler, William E. "Dickens the Paymaster." *PMLA* 66.6 (December 1951): 1177-80. Print.

Butt, John. "'Bleak House' in the Context of 1851." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 10.1 (June 1955): 1-21. Print.

Collins, Philip. "Dickens and Industrialism." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 20.40 (Autumn 1980): 651-73. Print.

Crompton, Louis. "Satire and Symbolism in Bleak House." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 12.4 (March 1958): 284-303. Print.

Dickens, Charles. *Bleak House*. Ed. Bradbury, Nicola. London: Penguin Books, 2003. Print.

---. *Great Expectations*. Ware: Wordsworth Edition, 1992. Print.

---. *Our Mutual Friend*. Ed. Poolep, Adrian. London: Penguin Books, 1997. Print.

---. *The Speeches of Charles Dickens: A Complete Edition*. Ed. Fielding, K. J. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960. Print.

Engel, Monroe. "The Politics of Dickens' Novels." *PMLA* 71.5 (December 1956): 945-74. Print.

Ferguson, Susan L. "Dickens's Public Readings and the Victorian Author." *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 41.4 (Autumn 2001): 729-49. Print.

- Fradin, Joseph I. "Will and Society in Bleak House." *PMLA* 81.1 (March 1966): 95-109. Print.
- Grubb, Gerald Giles. "Dickens' Pattern of Weekly Serialization." *ELH* 9.2 (June 1942): 141-56. Print.
- Gurney, Peter. "'The Sublime of the Bazaar': A Moment in the Making of a Consumer Culture in Mid-Nineteenth Century England." *Journal of Social History* 40.2 (Winter 2006): 385-405. Print.
- Hack, Daniel. "Literary Paupers and Professional Authors: The Guild of Literature and Art." *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 39.4 (Autumn 1999): 691-713. Print.
- Hagan Jr., John H. "Structural Patterns in Dickens's Great Expectations." *ELH* 21.1 (March 1954): 54-66. Print.
- Heady, Emily. "The Polis's Different Voices: Narrating England's Progress in Dickens's Bleak House." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 48.4 (Winter 2006): 312-39. Print.
- Herbert, Christopher. "Filthy Lucre: Victorian Ideas of Money." *Victorian Studies* 44.2 (Winter 2002): 185-213. Print.
- Hillard, Molly Clark. "Dickens's Little Red Riding Hood and Other Waterside Characters." *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 49.4 (Autumn 2009): 945-73. Print.
- Huett, Lorna. "Among the Unknown Public: Household Words, All the Year Round and the Mass-Market Weekly Periodical in the Mid-Nineteenth Century." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 38.1 (Spring 2005): 61-82. Print.
- Hume, David. *Selected Essays*. Ed. Stephen Copley and Andrew Edgar. Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks, 1998. Print.
- Hynes, Joseph A. "Image and Symbol in Great Expectations." *ELH* 30.3 (September 1963): 258-92. Print.

John, Juliet. "'A Body without a Head': The Idea of Mass Culture in Dickens's

American Notes (1842)." *Journal of Victorian Culture* 12.2 (Autumn 2007): 173-202.

Print.

Kucich, John. "Action in the Dickens Ending: Bleak House and Great Expectations."

Nineteenth-Century Fiction 33.1 (June 1978): 88-109. Print.

Lindberg, John. "Individual Conscience and Social Injustice in Great Expectations." *College*

English 23.2 (November 1961): 118-22. Print.

Meckier, Jerome. "Great Expectations, 'a Good Name?'" *Dickens Quarterly* 26.4 (December

2009): 248-58. Print.

Miller, J. Hillis. *Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1958.

Print.

Morris, Pam. "Bleak House and the Struggle for the State Domain." *ELH* 68.3 (Fall 2001): 679-

98. Print.

Palmer, William J. "The Movement of History in Our Mutual Friend." *PMLA* 89.3 (May 1974):

487-95. Print.

Rothenberg, Molly Anne. "Articulating Social Agency in Our Mutual Friend: Problems with

Performances, Practices, and Political Efficacy." *ELH* 71.3 (Fall 2004): 719-49. Print.

Schelstraete, Jasper. Personal Interview. 19 May 2011.

Scoggin, Daniel P. "A Speculative Resurrection: Death, Money, and the Vampiric Economy of

Our Mutual Friend." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 30.1 (2002): 99-125. Print.

Slater, Michael. *Charles Dickens*. London: Yale University Press, 2009. Print.

Smith, Grahame. *Charles Dickens: A Literary Life*. London: Macmillan Press, 1996. Print.

Stange, G. Robert. "Expectations Well Lost: Dickens' Fable for His Time." *College English* 16.1

(October 1954): 9-17. Print.

Stokes, Peter M. "Bentham, Dickens, and the Uses of the Workhouse." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 41.4 (Autumn 2001): 711-27. Print.

Stuchebrukhov, Olga. "The "Nation-Less" State of Great Britain and the Nation-State of France in Household Words¹." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 38.4 (Winter 2005): 392-413. Print.

Wilson, Charles. "Economy and Society in Late Victorian Britain." *The Economic History Review, New Series* 18.1 (1965): 183-98. Print.

Ziegler, Garrett. "The City of London, Real and Unreal." *Victorian Studies* 49.3 (Spring 2007): 431-55. Print.