“Why Buy the Cow When the Milk is Free?”: Changing Representations of Women and Cows, from Milkmaid to Milking Machine

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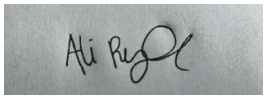
Signed: 

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Abstract

This thesis explores why representations of women and cows changed profoundly in England across early modern period (1500-1800) and nineteenth-century pedagogical and imaginative literature. Existing arguments in women's history have demonstrated that women were displaced from dairying, but the encroachment of male power into this traditionally female-occupied space has not been adequately analysed before the eighteenth century. Similarly, there has been little attention turned towards the historical relationship between dairywoman and cow, nor a detailed account of the process whereby cows came to be considered as amorphous members of a herd in the field of animal studies. Building upon such debates, this thesis argues that a new scientific philosophy that rose to prominence in seventeenth-century agricultural manuals positioned women as amateurs in dairying, while transforming the industry into one focused more on revenue than communal nourishment. The ramifications of this novel way of thinking ensured that cows came to be characterised as mechanical vessels. This thesis then contends that much of the imaginative literature (novels, poems, and ballads) evoked an emotional relationship between humans and cows to, after the seventeenth century, bring to the fore that such a connection was being lost. But such texts also demonstrate how women were no longer integral to dairying, representing a transformation of the traditional relationship between milkmaid and cow. The impact of mechanistic ways of dairying also affected how conceptions of animality and sexuality were thought of, aiding the separation of the human from the animal. This thesis thus argues that depictions of women and cows were deeply affected by the agricultural revolution, which not only had an impact upon how interactions between women and cows were conceived in literature, but upon how the metaphorical relation between woman and cow, human and animal – and even human and human – came to be culturally considered.

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Introduction

> If civilized people were ever to lapse into the worship of animals, the Cow would certainly be their chief goddess. What a fountain of blessings is the Cow! She is the mother of beef, the source of butter, the original cause of cheese, to say nothing of shoe-horns, hair-combs and upper leather. A gentle, amiable, ever-yielding creature, who has no joy in her family affairs which she does not share with man. We rob her of her children that we may rob her of her milk, and we only care for her when the robbing may be perpetrated. How little do we Londoners think of these patient, devoted animals — to which we owe so many necessaries and comforts — tied up by the neck in close, foul, stiving sheds, feeding upon hard, dry 'food, and never seeing the green fields, or breathing pure country air, from one year's end to another! … Perhaps if we were to pet our useful, hard-working animals more, we should be more worthy of the name of a humane people, and find it both to our credit and our advantage. ('Hard Case of the Working Brutes,' 1866, p.91)

This thesis spans four hundred years, as only by tracking how cows and women interacted with each other across this long period can one see how such a relation considerably declined and altered. Indeed, as I will outline in this introduction, my 2019 MRes thesis[11] demonstrated how the shared humoral identities of women and cows contributed to a different, cross-species perspective in sixteenth-century England, and observed that this different worldview was already under threat by the seventeenth century. I realised that to do this research justice, my thesis would have to culminate towards the end of the nineteenth century, as only then can it be adequately discerned how depictions of woman and cow similitude dwindled in favour of separating the categories of human and animal. As my current thesis progressed, I also uncovered how sexuality's bestial link to animality affected erotic representations of milkmaids over time, all while considering both human and animal labour under one lens. This radical new assessment of gendered working relations is further elaborated upon in this chapter, as the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis are greatly indebted to labour theory and ecofeminism, as well as the field of animal studies. This chapter also introduces a concept that I define as a 'mechanical character,' which I argue can be seen to emerge

[1] Ryland, Ali. *Conceptions of Milk and Milking in the Seventeenth Century*. University of Strathclyde, MRes Thesis, 2019.

in women and cow relationships from the seventeenth-century onwards, following the development of agrarian capitalism. This latter phenomenon will also be examined in this chapter, as it is key to understanding the historical backdrop of this thesis.

From Milkmaid to Milking Machine

He that buyes the Cow must keep the Calf.

He that can gett a quart of milk for a peny, need not keep a Cow. (James Howell, *Proverbs*, 1659, p.11-12)

This thesis's title, from milkmaid to milking machine, represents the broad historical timeframe that this doctoral project encompasses. This period of four hundred years – covering the early modern period through to the nineteenth century – was culturally significant to the development of England, transforming the country's agricultural economy, as well as the ideas and practices of many of those involved in farming. While this argument has been well-established by previous historical scholarship in agricultural studies, a direct focus on how women and cows related to each other and the wider dairy has not been traced until now. [2] And, while the field of animal studies has explored why nonhuman animals, particularly farmed animals, became further objectified after the early modern period, it has not interrogated the precise way the cow herself began to be considered as no longer an individual.[2]

The word "milkmaid" seems as long-lived as the practice of milking itself, conjuring images of young women working in the bucolic pastures of pre-industrial English society. However, unlike the older thirteenth-century term "housewife" (denoting a usually married woman who managed a household, including milking its cows), milkmaid only became popularised in written English in the

[2] In this thesis I use 'the dairy' to describe a dairy-farm and the human-animal workplaces contained within that locale (such as the yard, the field, the outhouse) in lieu of its other definition: a room for the keeping of butter and cheese.

mid-sixteenth century.[3] The term was used as a designation for a subordinate (and typically young and unmarried) female employee of the dairy, hence the pairing of the word "milk" with the term for both a female servant and an unmarried woman: "maid" (*OED*, 'milkmaid, n.;' 'housewife, n.').[4] Thus, to begin this thesis around c.1550 ensures the inclusion of key sixteenth-century texts that are necessary to understanding how the subsequent centuries developed new ideas on dairying; furthermore, the date is simultaneously consistent with the widespread usage of the term milkmaid. Indeed, it is interesting that milkmaid – a term of address for a junior servant – became prominent in written texts during a time when agricultural holdings were beginning to expand in size and productivity.[5] Whether being managed directly by the farmer's wife or a senior female servant in charge of the dairy, the rise of the term reflects how milking was no longer considered a joint enterprise between mother and daughter on a subsistence farm, but a (potentially multi-servant) undertaking that necessitated clearly defined roles.

Of course, while unmarried women have been milking cows for far longer than the term milkmaid existed in England, the mid-sixteenth century is a fascinating time to commence this inquiry, as new advances in agriculture began to affect how women and cows interacted. Indeed, this thesis covers the date when one particular agricultural innovation was first designed: the milking machine, an "uncomfortable" siphon contraption meant to reduce the time it took to milk

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[3] While the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) at oed.com records a Latin/English dictionary using the term in 1552, the *Early English Books Online* (*EEBO*) corpus at quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebogroup only finds instances of "milkmaid" being used with regularity from c.1580. Similarly, I use the term dairymaid interchangeably with milkmaid in this thesis, though it should be noted that the *OED* does not record the first instance of the former's use until 1616 ('dairymaid, n.'), while the *EEBO* demonstrates that the word was not popularised until the mid-

[4] Similarly, the *OED* lists that in the seventeenth century, the related terms "dairymaid" and "dairywoman" arose. I will also use these terms interchangeably in this thesis, as both words encompassed all women who worked in the dairy. However, dairymaid, like milkmaid, likely signified young and unmarried women who would make up the bulk of the staff who milked cows ('dairymaid, n.,' 'dairy, n.').

[5] As discussed in the 'Historical Considerations' section of this chapter.

a cow, initially patented in 1836 (Fussell, 'Dairy Machinery,' 223) and first made "commercially available" in 1878 (Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 86). I conclude at the end of the nineteenth century, at this significant juncture – when machines were first considered part of efficient dairying strategies – to relate this key development in animal husbandry to what I describe as the formation of a mechanical character that began to typify interactions between women and cows. However, I argue that this condition was materialising prior to the milking machine's appearance. As such, my use of the term mechanical character is not, for the most part, a reference to the literal introduction of machinery in the farmyard. For instance, Raymond Williams has noted that the word "mechanical" had a long history before it came to be directly related to the term "machine" in the nineteenth century, and by the seventeenth century there was a clear sense that the term was used to denote "routine, unthinking activity" (*Keywords*, 201).[6]

Here, the antonym of unthinking activity – thoughtfulness – could be used to characterise both human and animal working together to achieve a common goal: a milkmaid takes the time to sing to a cow to encourage milk flow, choosing the cow's preferred side, while the cow allows milk to be taken freely and without complaint. Unthinking activity, then, could be described as what occurs when the process is forcibly rushed (either by a hurried hand or through the use of machines) to increase milk output. In such cases, the cow is treated mechanistically as a tool for the extraction of milk, rather than thought of as a collaborator in the milking process. The treatment of cows as apparatuses, not living beings, signals the institution of a mechanical character between woman and cow interactions, as cows became increasingly objectified. I correlate this change to the increasing mechanisation of the dairy – from the hastening of hand-milking that enabled women to milk more cows, to the introduction of actual mechanical contraptions such as the milking machine – as it demarcates the process by which capitalist

[6] Jonathan Sawday has noted that "early modern people" were more accustomed to terms such as "invention," "engine," "device," or "instrument" to describe what we could call machines (2).

understandings of productivity became paramount in agriculture.[7]

Thus, my chosen end-date does not mark the wide-scale adoption of machinery in dairying, but instead marks when actual automatic devices began to be introduced into its knowledge and practice. While agricultural strategies were already distancing women and cows emotionally and physically, this new development additionally aided the institution of a mechanical character as it further limited close-contact interactions, replacing the stroking of the udders with, at first, "repeatedly forcing a foreign object into the teat." As Nimmo discusses, the engineers of such devices were "overwhelmingly male" with "little personal experience of dairy farming or milking cows" and they treated the "cow as an object and the udder as simply a milk-container." Hand-milkers, who tended to be in women, "in contrast to the disembodied functional abstractions of those designing the machines, and by virtue of their everyday embodied experience, were more likely to have a 'hands-on' appreciation of the process of milking another animal as an intercorporeal interaction between biological beings." Perhaps this was the reason why the first suction motion machine was, at the start of the twentieth century, invented by a woman, and mimicked a calf suckling rather than the human hand ('Mechanical Calf,' 86-87, 89).

As such, the rise of the milking machine highlights the encroachment of male-dominated industrial power into the dairy, a space that had traditionally been solely the province of women: their numbers began to wane in favour of men by the late-eighteenth century. Such important

[7] The importance that productivity had in agriculture grew in significance from the sixteenth century onwards with the rise of agrarian capitalism: a technical term that signifies when productivity and profit became the cornerstone of most farm holdings. For example, in Quick Cattle, Erica Fudge argues that such desires for productivity were already affecting herd sizes by the late-sixteenth century (119). Though agricultural historian Mark Overton argues that the "the decisive breakthroughs" that indicate evidence of the "agricultural revolution" having taken place were in the mid-eighteenth century, there is evidence that different regions of England experienced different rates of farming advancement. As economic and social historian Leigh Shaw-Taylor says, agrarian capitalism was instituted in the south and east of England by 1700, but not in the rest of England until 1800 ('Rise of Agrarian Capitalism,' 26). The terms agricultural revolution and agrarian capitalism can be used interchangeably; Overton's use of the former term is due to his focus on ongoing processes of output and productivity, while Shaw-Taylor emphasises that agricultural development is agrarian capitalism, because of his focus on proletarianisation. This chapter will elaborate upon these terms in more detail in due course.

historical changes reflect why this thesis deals with such a broad historical timeframe: to trace the gradual shifts in the ways the woman and cow relationship was represented and understood across this broad period, an era that saw great transformations in both agricultural and wider society. And, while the growth of agrarian capitalism across England was uneven, its development was still largely differentiated from the rest of Great Britain and Ireland, hence why this thesis focuses on this one country.[8] Studying historical relations between women and cows, informed by debates in agrarian history, labour theory, animal studies and ecofeminist theory, illuminates both the fluctuating agricultural and socio-economic landscape of the period, and the way representations of women and cows dramatically shifted across a range of textual material.

I am specifically focusing on changing representations of women and cows for four key reasons. One is to elucidate ways in which women and cows have shared experiences as gendered beings. In my MRes thesis, I investigated the way that both women and cows were deemed to inhabit an identifiably female humoral body, with shared similarities that were mirrored in both midwifery and husbandry manuals. Humoral science fell out of fashion following the seventeenth century, and this informs the second reason for the focus of this thesis: to understand how the making of the modern human led to women and cows being distanced from each other both literally and metaphorically.[9]

Another motiving factor was due to my interest in the origin of the modern-day proverb "why buy the cow when the milk is free?" The expression persists in the English language today to warn women that men will not wed them if they engage in pre-marital intercourse. This proverb evolved from a variation that was first recorded in English in James Howell's 1659 *Proverbs* as "He

[8] Additionally, there is far more textual evidence that was printed in England than the rest of Great Britain or Ireland.

[9] The significance of the making of the modern human – the way in which the category of the human became further differentiated from the category of the animal following the cultural ramifications of the Enlightenment and imperialism – will be outlined later in this chapter.

that can gett a quart of milk for a peny, need not keep a Cow" (12), meaning that it is better to pay for sex than keep a wife. How this adage evolved from cautioning men to not indulge in matrimony, to threatening women to guard their chastity, from cow meaning wife, to cow meaning an overly sexual woman, will be discussed in chapter four. But such a shift piqued my interest and provided the third reason for this thesis: to understand how changing representations of sexual practice informed how early modern- to nineteenth-century humans considered their own animality.[10] While there has not been scope to consider this question beyond gender – class and race both play important parts – the figure of the milkmaid highlights how intertwined representations of bestial sexuality converged in young women who worked with cows, and whose profession, as chapter four will demonstrate, was historically considered as loose.[11]

Finally, it is necessary to historical and literary research to uncover the roles of both women and cows as situated workers in the farming industry. Currently, gendered labour is rarely considered in cross-species terms, which means that our understanding of the concept could be radically changed by this new way of thinking. Here, labour is defined as work, while the following section will delineate why and how cows should be recognised as fellow workers in the dairy. While dairywomen and cows did not labour together on an equal footing, it can be argued that they were, in a sense, colleagues. Applying the notion of gendered labour to cows as well as women thus

[10] Animality is defined, by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*), as "the qualities and characteristics of an animal as opposed to distinctively human qualities … physical, instinctive behaviour or character" ('animality, n.'). Of course, the idea that there are distinctively human qualities is contested, as animals also have culture (Nimmo, 'Animal Cultures,' 173), as well as other attributes once considered the purview of the human (for instance, some animals can use tools). This thesis will use the term animality to similarly mean the bodily, the physical, and the instinctive, as this is how the definition has functioned for hundreds of years. However, it will attempt to veer away from an easy and unthinking use of the term.

[11] By in part focusing on eroticised images of women, this thesis reflects the influence of Carol J. Adams and the "vegan-feminist" methodology she founded in her 1990 text *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, a text that first showed how modern patriarchal values and meat-eating are interrelated. Unlike Adams, however, this thesis will not analyse contemporary sexualised iconography in order to demonstrate how pornographic depictions of women and animals work to naturalise both speciesism and sexism. Instead, historical representations of dairymaids are interrogated to understand how conceptions of both sexuality and animality shifted across a wide timeframe.

formsa large part of this thesis's methodology, and radically transforms academic concepts of historical labour by including another species in its remit.

Theoretical Considerations

This thesis is indebted to early work done in the field of gender and work studies, as emerging conceptions of animal labour are only possible thanks to the rise of feminist conceptions of economics that asserted that labour consists of various invisible types of work. This new theory gained prominence in the 1970s, as feminists including Ester Boserup and Lourdes Beneria indicated the inaccuracy with which women's work had been statistically reported. Though the seeming invisibility of women's economic contributions to societies across the world was discussed at this juncture, it was not until the 1980s that the term "invisible work" was coined by Arlene Kaplan Daniels. It was during this same decade that Marilyn Waring's groundbreaking feminist critique of male-centred economics, *If Women Counted* (1988), was published. In this text, Waring analysed a variety of national accounts and case studies in order to demonstrate that the way gross domestic product (GDP) was calculated by the United Nations System of National Accounts (the UNSNA, now the SNA) indirectly ignored women's labour. For example, while "among the nomad people of Iran's Zagros mountains, the men look after the animals" and the women "do almost everything else" – including hauling water, preparing meals, caring for children, milking and shearing the sheep and goats, and turning the milk and wool into cheese and clothes – this gendered disparity is not reflected in Iran's national accounts. As Waring remarks, the "only portion of the nomad women's work that will show up even as subsistence production is her output of woollen textiles and dairy products" (81). Subsequently, it was Waring's monograph that galvanised the UN into redefining GDP, with that same text going on to demarcate the field of feminist economics – a field that directly deals with the concept of women's invisible work. However, while Waring and other feminist economists highlighted that

the tending of animals by women is often overlooked when analysing economic production, conceiving of animals as fellow workers was not a consideration during the birth of this new field.[12]

In the twenty-first century, social scientists began to contemplate attending to animals as individuals who have similar experiences to humans. In 2003, Hilary Tovey's article 'Theorising Nature and Society in Sociology: The Invisibility of Animals' questioned why "despite an increasing intellectual and social interest in 'the animal question' in recent decades," social science had not yet embraced this academic trend. Though social scientists had begun criticising "Enlightenment thinking" in the 1980s (when conventional pedagogy in the field had previously taught that humans were exceptional and especially different from all other organisms), Tovey believes that such academics were not willing to expunge the long-held belief in human superiority over animals and nature. For example, while sociologists Dunlap and Catton coined the term "Human Exceptionalist Paradigm" during that decade to challenge the idea that humans are "exceptional" and thus free from "the ecological constraints which govern other species," Tovey highlights that these authors refused to incorporate animals into their methodology. Moreover, she maintains that the "'nature' which they want to bring back into sociological theory is depicted mainly as a supply department, a living space or habitat, and/or as a waste repository." The suggested formulation of a "New Ecological Paradigm" by the two sociologists is thus reproducing the same "Enlightenment thinking" that positioned humans (or rather, humans who were afforded such privileged humanity) as the rightful and supreme users of the environment's bounty.[13] Tovey

[12] Though Lourdes Beneria's article 'Accounting for Women's Work: The Progress of Two Decades' discusses the invisibility of female labour in the management of animals.

[13] Erica Fudge in *Brutal Reasoning* discusses how notions of a European, masculine superiority were used to ensure marginalised humans were deemed animalistic (53-55), while Virginia DeJohn Anderson's *Creatures of Empire* relates how this same viewpoint was used to colonise the New World. The farming of animals was deemed an indicator of civilisation, and used to oppress native Americans who rejected new and unsuitable methods of rearing livestock (1-12). Finally, Huggan and Tiffin also describe the negative impact of racist Enlightenment thinking in *Postcolonial Ecocriticism* (5-11).

argues that what is instead needed is a "New Societal Paradigm": one that would "introduce into sociology the recognition that we are not alone in the world, that other animal species also exist, have similar environmental experiences to our own, and are in many cases included within significant social relationships" (196, 209-210).

Interventions such as these in social science helped to pave the way for new sociological research, allowing for the field to begin to incorporate, at its fringes, the idea that animals can and do work. However, it remains controversial to state that animals reared to be eaten or milked are part of labour relations. While, as philosopher of science Vinciane Despret says in *What Would Animals Say if We Asked the Right Questions?* (2016), it could "be conceded that assistance dogs" work, as do "horses and oxen that pull loads, and a few others associated with professions: police and rescue dogs, minesweeping rats, messenger pigeons and various other collaborators … the proposition [that animals work] … is acknowledged as barely applicable to farm animals" (177).[14] Such a view is slowly being eroded, however, in academic circles. For example, Despret references the work of sociologist Jocelyn Porcher, whose research has involved interviewing farmers to investigate whether the animals they raise – such as cows – could be said to be labouring with them. Generally, Porcher found that farmers would not describe their cows as "working" animals. But, as Despret notes "animals actively collaborate in the work of their farmers … they do things … they take the initiative in a deliberate way" that is "neither visible nor easily thinkable" (177). As Porcher says of her research with Schmitt in their article 'Dairy Cows: Workers in the Shadows?' (2012): "Our results show that cows do more than simply function; they invest their intelligence and their affects in the work" (55).

Just as the invisibility of women's work began to be questioned nearly half a century ago, recent years has seen the same theory applied to animals. This is partly due to the many

[14] Here, the term 'farm animals' refers to sheep, cattle, pigs, chickens – a preferable term to livestock. It is not inclusive of other animals who live and work on a farm, such as sheepdogs.

similarities between these two methodological strands. As Tobias Linné remarked in 2016, "when domestic labor remains unrecognized, this masks processes of exploitation within the home. In a similar way, animal labor and exploitation in dairy production remains unrecognized, the cows' subsumption by the logics of the market being masked" (722). As such, as chapter two will demonstrate, when cows came to be described as numbers on a page (rather than individuals with their own temperaments and some limited control over their milk supply), their labour was masked by the capitalist decree that turned an animal fluid into a human commodity.

In the last decade, many fascinating texts have attempted to uncover the connections once again between animal and human labour. Jean O'Malley Halley's *The Parallel Lives of Women and Cows* (2012) determines that labour is posthuman, gendered, and intertwined in animal and human lives: "Cows' (unpaid) labor is living, staying alive as they engorge to the point of bursting, then dying at the hands of humans" (11). Halley's part personal memoir, part social history of the American beef industry, describes how her father's family "became wealthy, off of the backs of cows, and of course, off of the unpaid labor of women in my family" (29), identifying how gendered labour cannot only be considered a question and a problem for humans.[15] Indeed, querying the operation of gendered labour among early modern humans, and then among early modern cows, was such a large undertaking that the results of my research have been split between chapter one, and chapter two, respectively. Unfortunately, there has not been scope to compare the labour of cows to the work of oxen, bulls, and calves, though from my own research I know that there is much more to be said there.

In 2013, conceptions of animal labour were finally brought into the "messy" confines of an academic, theoretical framework by Lindsay Hamilton, an organisational ethnographer, and Nik Taylor, a sociologist, in *Animals at Work*. Utilising ethnographic data from a variety of workplaces,

[15] This text is itself a thought-provoking piece but was not relevant to this thesis as it focuses upon a specific (and very different) locale: the modern American beef industry.

they conclude that the "organizational culture" of these spaces is indebted to "mutual interactions with animals" (27). Hamilton and Taylor take Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as their theoretical basis: this methodological approach places emphasis upon the shifting nature of inter-connected relationships (human, animal, and object) and contends that such connections are constantly being forged and performed: both humans and nonhumans, including machines, are labelled as actors with agency, though not all are thought to possess intentionality. It is important to note that ANT has been criticised by posthumanist theorists such as Richie Nimmo, who argues that the theory mobilises "an abstracted conception of relationality which obscures the specificity of particular nonhumans." By doing so, "it becomes impossible to view human–animal relations as relations in their own right … 'things,' and especially technological objects, are allowed to take precedence over 'beasts' in defining the domain of nonhumanity" (*Milk,* 5).

Aware of the complications of blindly adapting ANT for their purposes, Hamilton and Taylor instead take "a post-human view" of animal-human interactions, hence why they say that it is "right for animals to remain outside the scope of 'things'." They convincingly argue that "things" cannot communicate or cooperate in the same ways that humans and animals can with each other, hence why both human and animal identities are "'in the becoming'"; they are intertwined and affected by each other through behaviours that are unachievable by objects. Thus, the two authors have circumvented the limitations of ANT in its refusal to differentiate things from animals, by "tentatively" naming their theory "'Animal-Network Theory'" (27).[16] This revision attempts to account for animals as workers with "very special and different forms of agency" (25) from humans, while disavowing any equation of object agency with animal agency.

[16] The concept that both human and animal identities intertwine and 'become' together is greatly influenced by Donna Haraway's *Companion Species Manifesto* (2003). This seminal text centres on what Haraway terms the "implosion of nature and culture in the relentlessly historically specific, joint lives of dogs and people, who are bonded in significant otherness" (*Manifestly Haraway*, 108). She coined the term "naturecultures" to highlight the mutual history (and conjoined present) of humans and animals. The term has been defined by Latimer and Miele as signalling "how humans – and everything that humans are and do – are always in connection with the other nonhumans that make up the world at any one time" (16).

There have been further attempts to synthesise the fields of (human) gendered labour and animal work. In *Animals, Work, and the Promise of Interspecies Solidarity* (2016), labour studies scholar Kendra Coulter attempts to bring together both fields, noting in her conclusion that "women's organizing and feminist political economy both offer food for thought" when considering the "compelling insights" from feminist economics "that could be enlisted for thinking differently about animals and work" (147). As of now, however, the aforementioned authors are some of the few who have attempted to build a bridge between the two fields. As Coulter notes, "feminist political economists have developed ways of highlighting and thinking about people's unpaid work which I argue are applicable across species lines, although so far they have not been given much attention by human-animal scholars" (62). As such, this thesis will be one of the first to map the invisibility of animal work onto the invisibility of women's work in relation to early modern studies. By considering the cow as a gendered worker and by considering this gendered definition in relation to her 'colleague' – the human female milkmaid – across a broad historical period, the field of feminist economics is conjoined with the study of animal labour to shine a new light on how past relations, and work itself, may have been understood. In doing so, this thesis will not only provide new ways of understanding labour, but will also change how women's work is currently viewed when a female animal is introduced into the debate alongside the human workers.

As this thesis in part focuses upon conceptions of animal labour, the ideas outlined in Hamilton and Taylor's *Animals at Work* were particularly influential when marshalling my own argument. But first, it is necessary to further outline how their theoretical framework sits among other academic discourse. For instance, the authors argue that "both human and animal identities" are derived from "different and non-verbal registers that shift and move, at times operating discretely from one another but at other times directly overlapping or clashing" (27). They then demonstrate how the workplaces they analysed (which they define as rescue shelters, slaughterhouses, farms and veterinary practices) allowed for cross-species intersubjective experiences, experiences that are constantly developing mutually conjoined human-animal

identities. This poststructuralist view deconstructs the notion of the essential subject, arguing instead that subjectivities are formed through mutual interactions, rather than existing a priori.

However, there are tensions between this form of poststructuralist analysis and animal rights discourse. As literary scholar Colleen Boggs has articulated, the latter "argues that our understanding of subjectivity needs to include animals" while the former "has a firm investment in erasing the subject" (3-4). While extending human-centred conceptions of subjectivity to animals can have short-term gains for animal activism, Hamilton and Taylor's Animal-Network Theory is important in that it dismantles harmful Enlightenment notions of the subject in the long-term.[17] It does this by deconstructing the idea of an essential self in humans and animals, suggesting that both are responsible for shaping shared cross-species subjectivities in the workplace. This method allows for animal agency and consciousness without instilling the idea that animals similarly have a fixed sense of self.[18] Instead, subjectivity is seen as a "relational category" (Boggs 65).[19] Thus, it could be argued that milkmaid and cow subjectivities were relational, and that their identities were formed together through interaction in the dairy. This relational identification, or what could be described as a 'co-forming' of identities, should not obscure the unbalanced power relations that existed between milkmaids and cows; milkmaids had more power over the cows' lives than the reverse.

[17] Enlightenment notions of the essential subject have tended to naturalise supremacist thinking, allowing for the oppression of humans due to race, gender, etc., as well as the domination of animals on the basis of species and ability (Nimmo, 'Animal Cultures,' 179).

[18] However, Hamilton and Taylor's ethnographic methodology is extending "the sphere of culture and subjectivity to encompass animals" when Nimmo believes we should be "deconstructing the anthropocentric categories of "'culture' and the 'subject' altogether" rather than conferring culture upon animals in this anthropocentric way ('Animal Cultures,' 187-188). Nevertheless, Hamilton and Taylor's project – to extend contemporary research methods to include animals – is crucial, in that it allows for a "powerful ability to challenge the status quo" (Hamilton and Taylor, 171). Similarly, while I recognise that the view that Nimmo takes is persuasive, I believe Hamilton and Taylor's methodological approach is important for acknowledging animals as active participants in their own cultures, as well our shared human-animal cultures.

[19] Here, Boggs's term is indebted to Donna Haraway's *Companion Species Manifesto*, in which Haraway argues that co-constitutive relationships are formed between humans and dogs where "none of the partners pre-exists the relating, and the relating is never done once" (103).

What my term co-forming instead suggests is that cows and milkmaids laboured together, and through that togetherness, mutual and shared subjectivities were formed.

It is this thesis's focus upon cows, as well as women, that sees it situated, alongside the work of Hamilton and Taylor, Richie Nimmo, Jean O'Malley Halley, and Kendra Coulter, in the field of animal studies. Here, animal studies is defined as an academic discipline that deliberately centres the animal in its approaches. The field of early modern animal studies is indebted to historian Keith Thomas's *Man and the Natural World* (1983), a text that sketched the changing perceptions of animals in the early modern period (an era defined by Thomas as 1500-1800). Thomas is not an animal studies scholar. His work was written without attention to, and before the appearance of, many of the theoretical concerns that are now central to much animal studies work. However, this thesis is indebted to the text, as Thomas was one of the first historians to include animals as beings worthy of consideration in human history. Other historians have since built upon his work, such as Virginia DeJohn Anderson. Her monograph, *Creatures of Empire* (2004), depicts animals as significant actors in historical events.[20] And, though she is a scholar of English, not history, Erica Fudge's work is also a historical contribution to the field of early modern animal studies that centres animals as agents; her scholarship is also a principal influence on this thesis.

In fact, Fudge has always been keen to stress that historical research, particularly as it concerns animal studies, is made up of varying contradictions. For instance, she has uncovered contextual discrepancies in Thomas's text, as she disputes his blanket assertion that the early modern period was typified by what Thomas described as a "cruelty of indifference" to animals that was alleviated in the eighteenth century due to the increase of practices such as widespread pet ownership. "What Thomas fails to note," she says, "is that the 'cruelty of indifference' was directed at other humans as well. Such indifference was a logical outcome of the nature of the discourse in

[20] Animal studies historians such as Anderson are distinct from scholars of agricultural history, who do not engage with the former field as they rarely consider animal agency (or if they do, it is only briefly).

which the focus was on the individual being cruel rather than on the victim of cruelty, in which the status of the self took priority over the status of the other" (*Brutal Reasoning*, 72). Moreover, in *Quick Cattle and Dying Wishes* (2018), Fudge found a history of empathy traced through early modern human-livestock relations that would not fit with this analysis. This recent research in early modern animal studies, critiquing as it does the idea of historical progress, adds to the idea that animal studies research is complicatedly "messy." Sweeping statements, enticing as they are to engender a sense of "clarity and order," not only obscure relations between humans and animals, but often ensure that animals "are lost" (Hamilton and Taylor 175) in academic research.[21]

Though this English thesis, like Erica Fudge's work, could be considered a historical piece of research, it stands apart from a traditional doctorate undertaken in history as, among other reasons, it does not rely on quantifying the relationship between human and animal as digits on a page. For instance, literary scholar Coral Lansbury, whose *The Old Brown Dog: Women, Workers, and Vivisection in Edwardian England* (1985) influenced later animal studies academics, warns against becoming an "intellectual historian … when emotions are the subject" of academic inquiry, as in such cases, "quantification and statistics have proved notably deficient, and the historian is wise to defer to the poet and the novelist" (xi).[22] In other words, historical research should be paired with an understanding of deeper contextual issues that are not easily grasped by tables outlining, for example, how many instances there are of cows being designated with the inanimate 'it' pronoun in the primary material. While I have the evidence to quantify my research in this way, an overreliance on statistics can distance the reader and researcher from the contextual background, as the

[21] This thesis stands apart from Fudge's work in *Quick Cattle*, as I track representations of women, as well as cows, across diverse forms of text, in lieu of focusing primarily on cattle in wills and early modern husbandry manuals.

[22] In 2005, Kenneth Shapiro and Marion Copeland outlined that the three goals of literary animal studies were to "deconstruct reductive, disrespectful ways of presenting nonhuman animals", to "evaluate the degree to which the author presents the animal 'in itself,' both as an experiencing individual and as a species-typical way of living in the world" and to analyse "human–animal relationships in the work at hand." In 2012, Copeland remarked that scholarly work in the field has continued to follow these three points (92).

complexities of emotion are rarely brought into focus through rigid approaches to the source material.

Additionally, much of my textual material is imaginative and fictional literature, which has traditionally not been deemed as worthy of consideration in historical academic circles when compared with the evidence brought by non-fictional materials. And yet, Shakespearean scholars of history such as Gail Kern Paster evidence the need to include literary sources alongside technical tracts. Paster's comparison of plays, poetry, and philosophical and other manuals demonstrated how animals and humans were perceived to both be connected to the cosmos at large through Galenic understandings of human biology in *Humoring the Body* (2004).[23] Indeed, the way that humans and animals inhabited a shared humoral world in the premodern period is almost impossible to represent without utilising an almost lyrical form of prose – a poetics aided by Paster's background in English literature.

Thus, a perspective grounded in literature – or what is called a literary animal studies – can convincingly characterise philosophical and complex conceptions of the world in ways that a purely academic historical outlook cannot.[24] For instance, scholar of English Laurie Shannon demonstrated in *The Accommodated Animal* in 2012 that formulations of "the animal" and "the human" were not framed in such "dualistic logic" (9) before the eighteenth century. Related conclusions have been formed by another early modern scholar in the field of English and animal studies, Andreas Höfele, in his text *Stake, Stage and Scaffold* (2011). He argues that in Shakespeare's plays, "animality, far from being simply condemnatory, can serve as a mark of special, even charismatic distinction that destabilizes commonplace moral certainties and the human–animal binary on which they rely" (40).

[23] Paster's work relates to this thesis as I discuss early modern conceptions of sympathy with animals in chapters three and four.

[24] There are, of course, many different and academic ways of writing history that would not fit this characterisation. Here, I refer to approaches common in the teaching of history at UK universities, whereby fictional material is eschewed in favour of non-fictional tracts that are deemed to be more valuable to such historical research.

Distinct conceptions of animality in the early modern period, then, are found in deep readings of literary texts, as such content played with diverse themes, orchestrated to plumb the emotional depths of its audiences: an insight into an alternative culture that does not appear in traditional historical documents, such as wills and treatises. As such, this thesis will pair historical research with literary scholarship, demonstrating that all texts – from ballads to manuals – are deserving of historical attention. The importance of empathy when reading the writings of the past, while acknowledging its limitations in understanding vast generational differences across large swathes of time, is also acknowledged in this thesis.

Ecofeminism

One field that relies heavily on conceptions of empathy in academic thought and practice, and that has also been a large influence on this thesis, is ecofeminism. Ecofeminism is primarily defined by its interrogation of how Western belief-systems have designated certain humans (but particularly women) as closer to nature and other animals. It is worth outlining the history of the discipline here to highlight how early modern conceptions of women and cows can and should be viewed through an ecofeminist lens. The term "ecofeminism" was coined by French feminist Francois d'Eaubonne in 1974 (Twine 1) and the field's key foundational texts followed not long after this date: Susan Griffin's *Woman and Nature* (1978) and Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature* (1980).[25] In the latter text, Merchant identifies that, while nature was once thought of as benevolent mother, the rise of a new science and the beckoning of the age of Enlightenment distorted these long-held conceptions. For example, in the seventeenth century, nature began to be considered a disruptive force that could be controlled. Here, Merchant notes that the distinction between nature and reason also became sharper during this period, remarking that such dichotomies reach back to

[25] Leading ecofeminist Greta Gaard argues that both texts were exceedingly important as they built upon not just feminist research, but the work of feminist and environmental activists ('Ecofeminism Revisited,' 28).

Platonic thought, where "both nature and matter were feminine, while the Ideas were masculine" (10).[26]

Thirteen years later, Val Plumwood – a key ecofeminist philosopher identified by Richard Twine as one of the pioneers of ecofeminism as an "academic discourse" (1) – would elaborate upon this point in her influential text *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (1993): "the feminine is explicitly and repeatedly associated in Plato with the lower order of nature as opposed to reason, associated with formless, undisciplined matter or primeval chaos" (77). [27] In this text, Plumwood critiques dualism, a concept that she believes invokes hierarchical and prejudiced assumptions. For example, she deconstructs the man-made belief in the dichotomy of reason/nature (or culture/nature), explaining that this dualism has allowed for the oppression of both women and the natural world in Western thought. Such dualisms must necessarily be exposed as a social construction, she says, to allow for any critical engagement with cultural ideas such as femininity and emotion.

Both Merchant and Plumwood's analyses have specific implications for early modern studies: they claim that Platonic representations of nature (where nature was characterised as both feminine and subservient to masculine reason) became more compelling within European philosophy in the seventeenth century. For instance, Merchant identifies Francis Bacon (1561-1626) as a principal influence on Enlightenment thinking through his advancement of what historian Brian Easlea has described as "the experimental philosophy" (128). This new science was particularly keen to represent nature as a feminised force to be controlled, while Bacon would commonly use

[26] It is important to note, however, that while such a shift can be traced by historians throughout the seventeenth century, such analyses generally focus upon male-authored texts; Sylvia Bowerbank and Susan Griffin have demonstrated how "the collective voices of ecological woman defy the debilitating process of disenchantment" with nature (Bowerbank 1).

[27] Twine also cites the philosopher Ariel Salleh and sociologist Karen Warren as other contributors to the emerging academic discipline of ecofeminism in the mid-1980s (1).

language that implied that men should dominate "her" at all costs.[28] In his *In Dignitate et Augmentis* (1623), Bacon remarked that "neither ought a man to make scruple of entering and penetrating into these [nature's] holes and corners, when the inquisition of truth is his whole object" (quoted in Merchant, 168). [29] The idea of masculine science "penetrating" nature's feminine secrets echoed Plato's hierarchical positioning of masculine reason over feminine matter but with, as Merchant identifies, remarkably violent imagery. Indeed, as Peter Harrison notes, "although the idea that Bacon exploited notions of judicial torture and interrogation for his natural philosophy has been greatly exaggerated, it remains true that Baconian methods called for an aggressive approach to the investigation of nature that was largely unprecedented" (191). As such, the widespread popularity and influence of Bacon's work on European philosophy and science is what led to Merchant arguing that "the development of science as a methodology for manipulating nature, and the interest of scientists in the mechanical arts, became a significant program during the latter half of the seventeenth century" (186).[30]

Similarly, Plumwood identifies the seventeenth century as having an immeasurable influence upon how nature was considered thereafter in Western thought. However, she recognises René Descartes (1596-1650), rather than Bacon, as "the heir of the Platonic and rationalist flight from and devaluation of the body, nature and the feminine." Descartes's belief that the mind ruled over the unfeeling matter of the body is discussed by Plumwood, who argues that such hierarchical distinctions between mind and body instrumentalised conceptions of the body, and thus the natural world. By denying that the body, like in Ancient Greek thought, was a part of the soul, and

[28] Bacon's aggressive stance towards a feminised nature is seen in much of his writing: "'when by art and the hand of man she is forced out of her natural state, and squeezed and moulded'" (quoted in Harrison, 191).

[29] I use the terms new science, and mechanistic philosophy, interchangeably in this thesis.

[30] The rise of the new science is also linked to the domination of the new field of obstetrics over the long-standing field of midwifery in the seventeenth century. As will be discussed in the first chapter, this saw male doctors replace female midwives as authorities in the birthing room, while discounting centuries of female-accumulated knowledge.

"eliminating mind/body overlap and continuity," Descartes reduced the "mindless" natural body to a state of inferiorised "dependency." And, by removing "any explanation which requires mind or teleology outside the human sphere" animals were now deemed to be completely without any capacity for thought (112). Additionally, this devaluation ensured that all concepts and beings associated with the body, such as emotions, women, "'primitives' … slaves and those who labour with their bodies" (116) were now further reduced and subordinated in philosophical and cultural terms.[31] Thus, Descartes's "hyperseparation" of the natural body and the divine human mind diminished the perceived power of nature by dividing "humans utterly from the rest of nature, from which mind is totally absent" (113).[32]

Despite their different focuses, both Merchant and Plumwood understand that Descartes's and Bacon's works are representative of the rise of new philosophical and scientific methods that were being propagated during the first half of the seventeenth century. This valuation of rationality over feeling allowed for the exploration of more profitable avenues in dairying. Indeed, the emerging mechanistic (if non-mechanised) forms of milking in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did not consider the wellbeing of milkmaids and cows in its calculations. These innovations, focused as they were on increasing productivity, reduced interactions between women and cows: a consequence of the Cartesian/Baconian tradition that, alongside the advent of capitalism, transformed the cultural landscape considerably.[33]

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[31] Postcolonial ecofeminism (see Huggan and Tiffin, Gaard, etc.) notes the inclusion of non-white Europeans in that oppressed category, as the classification of certain humans as more animal than others was aided by the increasing devaluation of nature. In chapter four, I will discuss how more privileged women came to somewhat transcend cultural conceptions of animality through the denial of sexual desire, an animal passion.

[32] Plumwood was not the first to expound upon the pernicious influence of Descartes. In 1986, Susan Bordo defined "Cartesian objectivism" as an "aggressive intellectual 'flight from the feminine' rather than (simply) the confident articulation of a positive new epistemological ideal" (441). While Plumwood recognised Bordo's contribution, her account is sensitive to the fact that the Enlightenment merely took up the Platonic mantle with gusto as it further subordinated women and nature. The seventeenth century did not create such dualisms anew.

[33] Early modern ecofeminist scholar Sylvia Bowerbank disagrees that "the 'rise of science'" in the seventeenth century can be identified as a "grand narrative of the disenchantment of nature" when "succeeding

Yet it would be inaccurate to state that seventeenth-century philosophy reinvigorated with Platonic ideals is the sole cause of this further distancing between human and animal, especially when considering that human behaviour towards animals may not have changed much in practice. For instance, Harrison is correct in noting that the experimental philosophy is merely "a new hermeneutical approach to the 'book of nature' in which dissection and experimentation represent a new exegetical practice" that was differentiated from using the "book of the ancients" as past natural historians had (188). And colonial interests, which served to dehumanise non-Europeans to the advantage of settlers, may have played an even greater role than new scientific methods when it came to shifting attitudes towards animals. For example, already "by the sixteenth century it had become customary for the English to boast that they kept their domestic stock at a distance; they despised the Irish, the Welsh and the Scots because many of them ate and slept under the same roof as their cattle" which was, as described by one contemporary, "'very beastly and rudely in respect of civility'" (Thomas 94). Meanwhile, Virginia DeJohn Anderson has described how the propagation of dairy farming was a racist project meant to "civilise" native populations in New England. English settlers deemed Native American farming traditions as unrespectable, particularly when the latter eschewed the supposed refining influence of cows for dirty pigs, whom Natives proceeded to treat, unforgivably, as closely as dogs ('King Philip's Herds,' 613-614). Resistance to English forms of husbandry was seen as barbarity, and gave further excuse to position the Natives as beasts, allowing the land to be claimed, rather than shared, by the purveyors of a supposed true humanity (Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning*, 53-55).

generations of rationalists gradually discredited and replaced the medieval vision of a spiritualized reality with a lawful and material universe that could be known and controlled for modern man's benefit" (1). While it is true that Bacon and Descartes are not the only thinkers who would define this new universe – others came before them – there is a definitive shift in these and other mid- to late-seventeenth-century writings that contrasts greatly with the mysticism employed in the sixteenth century. This will be discussed more in chapter one.

As such, the institution of distance between human and animal (both in real and metaphorical terms) served colonial purposes before the widespread propagation of new philosophies. Of course, many ecofeminists recognise this fact, arguing that both colonial rhetoric and the empirical science advocated by Descartes, Bacon and other seventeenth-century authors worked in tandem to deepen negative attitudes towards those believed to have closer connections to animals and the natural world (women, the lower classes, most non-Europeans, etc.).[34] As Huggan and Tiffin demonstrate in *Postcolonial Ecocriticism* (2010), "the very ideology of colonisation is … one where anthropocentrism and Eurocentrism are inseparable" (5), while Plumwood argues that "we can better account for the development of a dualised human identity in terms of a colonisation process taking place over a much longer period than the Enlightenment, and involving, as does colonisation itself, distinct stages and sites" (75).

Furthermore, the ongoing establishment of the colonial project worked to uphold the supposed inherent humanity of European populations. Before the nineteenth century, it was common to describe anyone who did not, or was unable to due to their class position, conform to social niceties, as less than human: "in Elizabethan Pembrokeshire George Owen saw young people herding cattle, burned black by the sun, 'their skins all chapped like elephants'" (Thomas 44). Owen here sees the English rural class as an exoticised and animalised mass – herders that could be on the plains of the Sahara, part of a very different England to the one he inhabits. But as chapter four will demonstrate, by the late Victorian period, to portray a working-class English woman like Tess Durbeyfield as vaguely animalistic, even as a realistic representation of the human experience, was deeply uncomfortable for contemporaries. By this time, animality was either undesirably racial, or so

[34] Maria Lugones has argued that "only white bourgeois women have consistently counted as women so described in the West. Females excluded from that description were not just their subordinates. They were also understood to be animals in a sense that went further than the identification of white women with nature, infants, and small animals. They were understood as animals in the deep sense of 'without gender,' sexually marked as female, but without the characteristics of femininity" (202-203). In other words, privileged white women have been identified as closer to nature, but have not been subject to the same violence of those women perceived to be further excluded from the category of humanity due to their class and/or race.

far from what the ideal of humanity had become that it was uncomfortable to consider that a milkmaid could be Hardy's titular "pure woman," and yet appear all too animal.[35]

This idea of humanity not being as beholden to animal instincts persists today, propagated by the same scientific principles that were developed in the early modern period. As "moral judgements are contra scientific principles and practice … science has been forced to deny similarities between humans and many animal groups" (Huggan and Tiffin 154) and has allowed for animals to continue to be "forced by science to yield to human will" (Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 87). In contrast to prevailing academic narratives in science and history, then, this thesis will instead strive to centre the cow as an agent.[36]

This assertion necessitates engagement with the emerging field of vegan theory, a methodology that lies at the intersection of critical animal studies and ecofeminism. Vegan theory has recently been conceptualised in *Thinking Through Veganism: Towards a Vegan Theory* (2018) as a theoretical approach that argues that "veganism is something more than it is assumed to be, offering theorizations beyond contemporary conceptualizations as a faddish dietary preference or set of proscriptions." The text's editors, Emilia Quinn and Benjamin Westwood, proceed to argue that vegan theory "explores the messiness and necessary contradictions involved in thinking about

[35] For example, Keith Thomas notes that "in Victorian times it was said to be a 'barbarous practice' that at hiring-fairs 'men and women should stand in droves, like cattle, for inspection'" (48) and that "animal devices were being less commonly used as street signs in the eighteenth century than they had been in earlier periods" (Thomas 99). These examples suggest that associating humans with animals, even lower-class humans, was not in vogue after the seventeenth century. However, this is not to suggest that women were suddenly no longer perceived as closer to animality than men, or that the lower classes were seen to be as civilised as the upper classes: merely that such usage of animal appellations became less common. This will be discussed further in chapter four.

[36] Although this thesis recognises that, by choosing to focus upon the cow, an animal that has been a staple of English life – even used by English settlers as a civilising force – it is guilty of bias towards a certain animal, one that is largely domesticated. Hamilton and Taylor are also aware of this problem with their work, acknowledging that a focus upon animals we are closer to renders them "as subjects here only insofar as they are incorporated into structures of meaningful interaction shaped by human social activities; they are cultural beings only insofar as human beings confer such a status upon them" (185). This is a contradiction with much animal studies research and it must be acknowledged, but it is not easily overcome.

or practicing a vegan way of life" as well as tracing "the ripples of the current vegan moment across different disciplines in the humanities" (5). I would argue that vegan theory is not only a distinguishable subset of critical animal studies (as both centre the animal in the theory's ethical core), but also ecofeminist theory. This is because vegan theory sprung from ecofeminist roots, chiefly being shaped by established ecofeminists including Greta Gaard, Carol J. Adams, Lori Gruen and Josephine Donovan.[37]

These theorists include in their work the anti-oppressive focus of critical animal studies, pairing it with an ecofeminist and postcolonial lens to produce a methodology that centres the animal, yet has "intersectional commitments" (Adams and Gruen 7) as it engages with how other power analyses operate. This thesis will diverge from these scholars by being one of the first to utilise ecofeminist thought within a detailed analysis of a historical, agricultural situation; it will also apply ecofeminist theory directly to thinking about the cow during a specific historical period. Accordingly, this new reading of the past will both complement and expose the presentism of this modern theoretical viewpoint.

Historical Considerations

The Development of Agrarian Capitalism

In this section, I provide a broad overview of the historical shifts that underpin the period of study, such as the movement from small to large farms, from subsistence to commercial enterprises, and the increasing emphasis on economical efficiencies in dairying. It should be noted first that,

[37] Gaard maintains that feminism and animal studies has ignored ecofeminism's contributions to these fields, claiming that in the 1990s "mainstream feminism" argued "against the inclusion of species and nature as analytical categories crucial for feminist thought." Now that it has become more fashionable to understand and identify animal experiences – and how they and we interact with nature – in both activist and academic circles, Gaard argues that many of those espousing these viewpoints are ignoring the ecofeminist roots that birthed them. To avoid, as Gaard says, "intellectual dishonesty" ('Ecofeminism Revisited,' 42), ecofeminism has been thoroughly established as an influential theory here.

before the eighteenth century, the term farmer was rarely in use. Instead, one might use the term "husbandman" to refer to the lowest rank of farmer: usually a poor and relatively uneducated smallholder or tenant farmer, who may also have hired out their labour to earn money above what the farm reaped. While subsistence "cottagers" were also engaged in farming activities – such as grazing their cow on the common and growing vegetables – they are commonly defined as labourers, because their main source of income would have been working for the landlord. "Yeomen" were wealthier farmers who owned their own land, though only half could potentially read, while "gentlemen" were the richest, most well-educated farmers, and "often held positions of office" (Overton 36). As such, the dynamics of the relationship between a milkmaid and her household in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would differ depending on the size and wealth of the holding. In the sixteenth- and early-seventeenth centuries, poor subsistence family farms run by husbandmen, housewives, and cottagers were still the norm, and the overwhelming majority of them would have had one, or possibly two, cows (Everitt 396; Humphries 21, 24). These cows would have been of vital importance to the family, and potentially bonded to a particular family member, as they would have been milked by the wife or daughter each day (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 66). The regarding of the cow with this "extra interest and attention" may well have seen some of them treated as companions and co-workers (Midgley 22).

In this common scenario, most milkmaids would have been daughters of the house rather than hired help, while housewives were the head dairywomen. While the modern definition of the term housewife is indicative of a woman who stays at home to cook, clean, and mind the children, the term had a more pastoral meaning in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At this time, a housewife was generally the highest-ranking woman on the farm, tasked with completing a whole host of duties both inside and outside the home, as B.F's 1672 manual *Office of the Good Housewife* demonstrates:

> Countrey women look unto the things necessary and requisite about Kine, Calves, Hogs, Pigs, Pigeons, Geese, Ducks, Peacocks, Hens, Feasants, and other sorts of Beasts and Fowls, as

> well for the feeding of them, as for the milking and making of Butter and Cheese, and keeping of all things neat and clean about the house, getting and providing the labouring men their Victuals in due season; and furthermore they have the charge of the Oven and Cellar, and the handling and ordering of Hemp and Flax, &c. as also the care of looking to the clipping of Sheep, of keeping their Fleeces, of Spining and Combing of Wooll to make Cloth for the Family; of ordering the Kitchin Garden, and keeping of Fruits, Herbs, Roots, and Seeds; and moreover of watching and attending the Bees. (19-20)[38]

While this pedagogical text uses the terms housewife and dairywoman synonymously (19), the book's intended reader is wealthier than say, the female manager of a subsistence farm, as it states that a good housewife will "always have her eye upon her Maids, and be first at work, and last from it" (20). Similarly, Gervase Markham in his earlier book *The English Huswife* (1615) expected the housewife to have "maid-servants" (113), but to still be directly involved in dairying. These housewives would not be poor cottagers, or married to impoverished husbandmen, but would be the wives of wealthier farmers (such as yeomen). In this case, the milkmaid would be one of her maid-servants, but the housewife would not be so far in rank above her as to allow her to do all the work; she would still oversee the dairy, including the making of butter and cheese.[39] It is likely that emotional connections between women and cows could be forged even on such affluent farms during this period, as larger holdings were not yet tending numerous herds. On one seventeenth-century estate, "two female servants were responsible for milking fourteen cows" (Whittle, 'Probate

[38] What is interesting is that looking after the animals is expressed as the first task, perhaps because of their worth; the selling of animals and their products was the most lucrative part of a farm.

[39] In contrast, sixteenth-century agricultural authors like John Fitzherbert and Thomas Tusser suggested a farm would only have one maidservant. Tusser advised that the housewife not rely on her completely in the dairy, as the housewife would be far superior at the latter practice than "the dayry maide, her faut being knowne" (45).

Documents,' 62).[40] In this scenario, it is very probable that the same dairymaid would have milked the same cow daily, allowing for a close working relationship to be established.[41]

However, seismic shifts in economic status were already beginning to be seen in this century, as farms began to grow exponentially. As historian Jane Whittle demonstrates in *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household* (2012), certain elite seventeenth-century dwellings were already beginning to maintain twenty cows: more than triple the number that were reared by large-sized households of the previous century (ch.4).[42] Such an increase would have a negative effect upon milkmaid and cow relationships as existing milkmaids would be assigned an increased workload, necessitating a hurried pace that would upset existing intimate attachment. For example, a milkmaid might no longer have time to sing to each cow to encourage both tranquil behaviour and a higher milk yield (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 117).

Moreover, in certain instances, the workforce could have been supplemented by self-employed milkmaids, who, as a record from 1627 suggests, were "contracted to take a certain amount of milk" to later sell on the streets of London. Such a milkmaid "did not need to be concerned with the long-term welfare of the cows she milked"; nor would she spend as much time

[40] Whittle also remarked that relatively affluent households that afforded agricultural servants in the Kent area between 1600 and 1649 kept roughly ten cows ('Probate Documents,' 67). This figure is still low compared when compared with a farm in Salop in 1925 that advertised for a dairymaid to take "sole charge" of seventy cows (Verdon 12).

[41] It should be noted that the occupation of dairymaid could be transitory. Milkmaids might not renew their one-year contracts with their masters. They may instead choose to work on another farm, or get married. Some would stay, however; the median number of years in service for agricultural servants was six, though a quarter stayed for ten years, and eleven percent served "at least fourteen years" (Kussmaul 79-80). Potentially, a cow on a large farm at the time could have been milked by the same woman for the former's whole productive life.

[42] There is even evidence of commercial practices occurring before the seventeenth century. Fudge suggests that "growing herd sizes were making neat milking less likely" in 1588. "Neatness" refers to a "skilful" process that required time to allow the cow to express all her milk. Already the intimacy needed between dairymaid and cow to ensure effective collaboration in milking was being rushed by the need for expediency. Fudge reports that at this time, one Suffolk milkmaid was expected to milk twenty cows, instead of the eight or nine the maid herself suggested was optimum (*Quick Cattle*, 119).

with the cows as would a live-in servant. In this way, cows were already being "reduced to the status of fleshy machines for milk production" (184). Thus, a mechanical character was already being constituted in some women and cow interactions in the seventeenth century, as productivity and profit negatively affected the relationship.

Hence, it is unsurprising that the role of the housewife and the role of the dairywoman began to separate after the seventeenth century, as advances in productivity (which brought its own economic rewards) allowed for wives to delegate more and more tasks to their staff (Pinchbeck 7). This can be seen in one of the first (loosely) agricultural texts to be written by a woman, and a former servant: Hannah Woolley's *The Compleat Servant-Maid: or, The Young Maidens Tutor* (1704).[43] This book provides guidance to young women entering the domestic workforce and, as this manual is the first in which dairying instructions are directed to milkmaids rather than their employers, it highlights both the improvement of literacy rates across class boundaries, and the fact that housewives were no longer considered the main purveyors of dairying knowledge.

Additionally, the distinction between country and city housewives was becoming more marked in eighteenth-century housewifery manuals. For instance, Richard Bradley's *The Country Housewife* (1727) was one of the first English agricultural books to add the prefix to its title, distinguishing his text as a guide for rural female heads of households. Though in the previous century, B.F similarly differentiated between "country" and city-dwelling housewives – the latter, B.F noted, needed no knowledge of dairying – (24) by Bradley's era, the description of the rural housewife's duties was markedly different:

> …the Men have the most dangerous and laborious Share of it in the Fields, and without doors, and the Women have the Care and Management of every Business within doors, and

[43] I argue that Woolley's guide is loosely an agricultural text because of its six-page focus on how to be a dairymaid, which includes some advice on milking: "Kine by custom will expect" to be milked at the same time each day. It also gives instructions regarding the making of cheese and cream, despite the author finding it "altogether needless" to give "any Directions for the making of Butter or Cheese, since there are very few (especially in the Country) that can be ignorant thereof" (120, 122).

> to see after the good ordering of whatever is belonging to the House. And this, I conceive, is no less the Practice of these Days. (*Country Housewife,* vol1.viii) [44]

Here, Bradley seems to agree that a housewife was, at his time, only concerned with what goes on inside the house. Indeed, his text is mainly full of recipes, with a focus on using ingredients that are easily sourced by those who live on a farm. As Bradley clarifies in the subtitle to the first volume, his "directions for the dairy" are there to ensure that a country "table" can be "elegant" (n.p.). The recipes sit between other cookery suggestions, rather than alongside instructions on how to milk or breed cows; a marked difference from Markham's *The English Huswife* and B.F's *The Office of the Good Housewife*. Seemingly, the housewives that Bradley addresses have no need to know these facts anymore, even if they run a rural household.[45] Moreover, the rural housewife is designated as a lady. While earlier housewifery texts made a pretence that their readers were across the class spectrum, by the eighteenth century it is evident that such manuals are directed only towards women of high rank who manage large groups of servants.[46]

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[44] There is more evidence to suggest that such differentiation between country and city housewives was becoming common in the seventeenth century. For example, while the majority of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century housewifery manuals touched on dairying and related tasks, Forth and Ruthven's 1654 "cookery and housewifery" manual *The Ladies Cabinet Enlarged and Opened* (the original *Ladies Cabinet* having been published in 1639) did not include any information on any of the animal-focused chores of a housewife: even the medicinal cures are solely intended for humans. Though it is interesting that many of the recipes repeatedly mention that milk must be taken "warme from the Cow" (187), a detail that would necessitate the reader to be sufficiently near to a cow that one could take the milk from her that day. And, unlike *The English Huswife*'s mix of food recipes, veterinary care and dairying advice, there is no information on how to milk or care for the cow who will produce this milk. Nor is there a note, as with B.F's text, explaining that this guidance is excluded as it was thought to be common knowledge to women. Already housewifery manuals had begun to move towards solely cooking and indoor duties. This shift will be discussed further in chapter one.

[45] Of course, Bradley could have left out these details due to ignorance, being a botanist rather than an agriculturalist. However, the fact that he does not consider animal care among the housewives' tasks, and the fact that similar omissions occurred among other housewifery manuals of the time, would suggest otherwise. These suppositions are elaborated upon in chapter one.

[46] For example, Markham wrote that he wished to direct his texts towards the "honest plaine English Husbandman" (cited in McRae, 145) though it seems more likely that yeoman and gentleman would be the readers. While Markham and Tusser both outlined how the housewife should direct the dairymaid, Bradley's housewifery manual, as well as William Ellis' *The Country Housewife's Family Companion* (1750), suggest that, by the mid-eighteenth century, rural housewifery was more about managing extended groups of servants than one or two milkmaids. However, Ellis's text provides detailed instructions to housewives on how to manage an effective dairy, unlike the majority of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century housewifery manuals. This may be

The historian Ivy Pinchbeck has suggested that the estrangement of housewives and the dairy was a result of large farms increasing their productive land use and amassing larger quantities of wealth in the process, which in turn permitted elite rural women to delegate tasks to an increasing number of servants (7). However, there were other factors at play. For example, in the eighteenth century, the ongoing removal of common rights to the land had a particularly negative economic effect upon housewives and their families, as they could no longer provide free food for their cows through grazing on the common (188). This was particularly pronounced during the parliamentary enclosures of the late-eighteenth century. Women and children traditionally supplemented the male wage by keeping a cow on common pastures (Humphries 18), the annual income of which "was often more than half the adult male laborer's wage" (31). However, this possibility was curtailed by parliamentary enclosures, which continued to restrict access to the commons into the early-nineteenth century. Without such access to free land, no grass was available for the animals in summer, nor hay to feed them in the winter, its market value being too expensive (25).[47]

Consequently, women and their families were made "more readily available for domestic, proto-industrial, and industrial work" (41), leaving behind the cows to move in search of other employment. Small farmers and cottagers would be forced to sell or give up their lease on their plot of land, their animals either being slaughtered or falling into the hands of the wealthy landowners

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because Ellis expected the housewife to have extensive dairying knowledge for her own, and the farm's, benefit (v). As Arthur Young said in *The Farmer's Kalendar* (1771), unless a farmer "has a very diligent and industrious wife, who see minutely to her dairy, or a most honest, diligent and careful housekeeper to do it for him, he will assuredly lose money by his dairy; trusted to common servants, it will never pay charges" (164).

[47] In 'Labourers, Cows, Common Rights,' Shaw-Taylor challenges Humphries's assertion that all labourers lost cows due to the enclosure movement (101), but also intimates that the evidence is too vague to make such a judgment. Shaw-Taylor also argues that enclosure (non-parliamentary) and other forms of "restriction of the poor from common pasture" (126) were occurring before the parliamentary enclosures of the late-eighteenth century. This lends further credence to the idea that any close relationships between women and cows would already be put under strain from the seventeenth century. But, as Humphries suggests, the biggest period of such change would occur after parliamentary enclosure, up to and into the nineteenth century.

who were taking advantage of the economic benefits of increasing their farm holdings (Overton 168-171, 180). Engrossment (the buying up of smaller farms to create larger estates) became an easy way for wealthier farmers to increase their productive power. As these swollen farming estates employed "fewer people per acre," decreasing the average number of dairymaids, but increasing the median number of cows (Overton 127), it is not hard to understand how there would be far less chance for emotional attachments, or positive interactions, between women and cows by the nineteenth century.

Attitudes in farming were changing during this century as well, a point that will be central to the thesis. In brief, it has been remarked that "eighteenth-century writers were much more concerned with the profits of farming than their seventeenth-century counterparts whose main interests lay in the activity of farming itself" (Overton 129). This shift in outlook has been linked to Bacon's "experimental philosophy" becoming more prominent in agriculture; as the eighteenth-century agricultural reporter Arthur Young remarked, "experiment is the rational foundation of all useful knowledge: let everything be tried" (cited in Overton, 129). This experimental mind-set has its roots in the new mechanistic science that was pervading all areas of human life. It is likely, then, that a mechanical character was becoming established in attitudes towards animals, as well as practices.[48] Combined with the increasing replacement of traditional methods with male-dominated scientific practices in order to increase the profitability of the dairy, women's authority in that domain was eroded as male farm managers appropriated their responsibilities (Valenze 150).

[48] I would concur with Overton's remark that "in the late seventeenth century, agricultural production was seen as an activity in which the individual husbandman worked for himself and his family on his own lands. By the mid-eighteenth century the husbandman had become the farmer, and, instead of 'husbanding' nature, was seen as an entrepreneur, calculating the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action." He goes on to argue that "while the pressures of commercialisation and the market provided the essential stimulus to agrarian change, farmers' attitudes and expectations also had to change" (205-206). The institution of a mechanical character appears to have been necessary to the success of the agricultural revolution.

Moreover, women were even being supplanted in the less lucrative positions in the dairy. Larger farm sizes led to larger output, which in turn led to larger equipment. The agricultural writer Richard Bradley wrote in 1729 that the additional labour of a "lusty man" (in lieu of the solitary maid) was needed to make the butter in dairies with big churns (*Farmer's Guide,* 159). The displacement of women across the dairy can be seen in how commercial dairying "flourished" after the seventeenth century; as historian Deborah Valenze says, "In some instances, a 'manager,' either female or male, replaced the farmer's wife as overseer of the dairy, though the distinction between manager and farmer was sometimes blurred in dairying" (146). While it was not until the late-nineteenth century or even early-twentieth century that dairying came to be known – and still is widely known – as men's work (Valenze 167-8, McMurry 268), the trend was already being established in the eighteenth century. The decreasing need for a large agricultural labour force because of advances in agricultural productivity freed men for work in the dairy, their labour being deemed to be more valuable than the work of women. These shifts in gendered labour will be discussed further in chapter one.

By the end of this thesis's period of enquiry in the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, what has been described as the agricultural revolution or agrarian capitalism had definitively taken hold; large farm sizes were the norm and were more productive than they had ever been. Additionally, the term housewifery had become rooted in its more modern definition: the conducting of internal household tasks.[49] The 1830s, as Overton remarks, were also "an important watershed in the history of farm mechanisation because it was not until then that the agricultural engineering industry developed" (125). This mechanical revolution led to the contemporary farming practices now taken for granted: caged hens, robotic milking, and other advances in the name of progress. While the cows testing out their sore udders on the first milking machines in 1836 would have felt differently to those being

[49] For example, John Watson's *Housewife's Directory* (1825) and Robert Huish's *The Female's Friend* (1837) both lament how women are no longer taught the practice of dairying when learning housewifery.

coaxed into using robot milking machines at times of their own choosing in the early twenty-first century, what these experiences have in common is that they would be informed by the regimented march of mechanisation. This mechanisation is at the heart of the modern tendency to regard animals as machines rather than co-workers.[50] While there were certainly still some small farm holdings prior to the mid-twentieth-century's agricultural boom, they were now in the minority; it is likely that interactions between many women and cows would have become so limited that few would consider cows as fellow workers.

It is also interesting to note that the divorcing of the term housewife from its agricultural context happened long before the word husband came to be thought of solely in reference to a man's marital status – indeed, husbandry continues to be a term used in animal agriculture to this day. Even though women still worked with cows in the dairy, housewives were no longer considered to be engaged with them. Altering trends in the labour market alone cannot account for this shift. Neither can the fact that women were becoming displaced from the dairy by male workers and overseers. While historian Ivy Pinchbeck argues that "a new class known as 'dairymen'" appeared in the early-nineteenth century due to the (now richer) wives of farmers no longer wishing to partake in the "drudgery" of dairying (41), chapter one will demonstrate that housewives were eschewing dairy management before this time. Indeed, the overrepresentation of male knowledge in agricultural manuals in general suggests that there is more to these socioeconomic developments than just class considerations, hence why chapter one will return to these arguments in greater detail.

Temporal Subjectivities

[50] Although some twenty-first century modern robotic machines that allow cows to choose when to be milked have seen farmers, freed from their time constraints, spend more time with their cows individually (Holloway, Bear and Wilkinson 137).

Historical shifts need not only be traced in relation to the changing agricultural landscape; the animals themselves have a history that must be recognised. As Lewis Holloway states:

> Bovine subjectivity has a history rather than an essence, and bovine being and bodily capacities are relational in terms of the different technologies, economies, and social relations (with humans and with other cows) that cows are associated with. Thus, for example, the emergent subjectivity of robotically milked cows in the late 20th and early 21st centuries differs from that of hand-milked cows in the 19th century, and so on (and is clearly different from that of the `wild' progenitors of `domestic' livestock). Cows have thus experienced different ways of being, have been and are differently monitored, circumscribed, and related to by people, and have experienced different spatialities, ways of moving, rhythms, routines, and herd/individual relationships. ('Subjecting Cows to Robots', 1055)

As such, this section examines the complexity of considering subjectivities of the past. The interior mindsets of other humans, but especially other animals, are hard enough to parse in a contemporary setting, let alone hundreds of years previously. I have already discussed how Gail Kern Paster's research in *Humoring the Body* demonstrated how radically different viewpoints, springing from different knowledge of both the body and the cosmos, may have affected human ways of experiencing and living in the world. Similarly, Christopher Marsh in *Music and Society* (2010) has asserted how, in the early modern period, "music was also the beneficiary of an age where people felt things through their ears somewhat more acutely than we nowadays do … where nowadays we speak of 'eye-witnesses,' our ancestors spoke also of 'ear-witnesses'" (10). It is accepted in academic circles to believe that our human forebears may have thought differently to us because of their distinctive experiences. But, as Lewis Holloway has discussed, it is likely that animals similarly have different interiorities compared with their ancestors: a viewpoint that is less common.

Considering animal subjectivities as similarly malleable has become a topic of discussion in the field of animal studies. In 'Re-capturing Bovine Life: Robot-cow Relationships, Freedom and Control in Dairy Farming' (2014), geographers Holloway, Bear and Wilkinson examine how robot milking apparatuses construct bovine subjectivities through the biopolitical interference of technology that, in their Foucauldian analysis, disciplines and punishes cows into changing their

behaviour to accommodate these new automatic milking machines. Although they acknowledge that robotic milking – a process that allows cows to choose when they are milked – leads to certain individual cows appearing happier, the cows who seem "bad" or "lazy" for refusing to cooperate with the machine are "removed from the system" permanently (139). Even so, what their work demonstrates is that cow subjectivities are, like human subjectivities, determined through external stimuli and regimes of power.[51]

Additionally, Holloway et al claim that there is a "co-constitution of particular human subjectivities" along with cow subjectivities; this can take the form of a "co-disciplining of the farmer," as some are forced to change their entire management style and expectations due to the machine's introduction (137).[52] These assertions are similar to those made by posthumanist social scientists Lindsay Hamilton and Nik Taylor, who put forward that animal and human identities are formed together, rather than fixed in otherness (8). But such an argument can be taken too far. As Erica Fudge says in 'Milking Other Men's Beasts' (2013), "seventeenth-century cows may have been a different size from the Friesian/Holsteins that are familiar today, and much less well fed, but they seem, from the glimpses we have of them, to have responded to the world in ways similar enough"

[51] Another side of the argument sees agricultural writer Bernard Rollin claim that in pre-industrialised farming, animals were better able to express their "telos," their "natures … the 'pigness of the pig,' the 'cowness of a cow.'" "Pigs," he says, "are 'designed' to move about on soft loam, not to be in gestation crates. If this no longer occurs naturally, as it did in husbandry, people wish to see it legislated" ('Agriculture, Ethics, and Law,' 44). This view manifests itself among those who directly manage farm animals as well. In his 2007 research into farming upland cattle on "natural, biodiverse grassland," (more-than) human geographer Henry Buller reports how their farmers see the cows as expressing their essential natures in this grass-fed system. He notes that cows wandering, playing and choosing what they eat is favourably looked upon by their farmers "as an element and expression of 'natural' behaviour, a return to benevolent animality or 'telos'" ('Animal Vitalities and Food Quality,' 63). Animal subjectivities are seen as internally hidden, waiting to be released through a return to bucolic pre-industrial conditions, a view that may limit understandings of their contextual interiorities. However, such arguments can be useful in that they have led to increased welfare provision for farm animals. This can be seen with the "Five Freedoms," outlined by the Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) as "freedom from hunger or thirst; freedom from discomfort; freedom from pain, injury or disease; freedom to express normal behaviour; freedom from fear and distress" (McCulloch 961).

[52] And, in an earlier but related article, 'Subjecting Cows to Robots: Farming Technologies and the Making of Animal Subjects' (2007), Holloway again stated that there is no "natural" cow behaviour, positioning bovine subjectivity as historical (1045).

to the cows we research today (25). Likewise, while we should be aware that humans in past centuries may conceive of certain concepts in ways unfamiliar to us, there is perhaps enough similarity that we can make some suppositions about what they may have felt.

There is a danger, however, in believing that certain preconceptions applied to all humans. Previously, I discussed how Thomas's claim that there was a "cruelty of indifference" towards animals must be considered alongside more recent research that subverts modern expectations of the past as a wholly ruthless locale for animals. But this does not mean that this thesis valorises pre-modern farming, a nostalgic sentiment that can obscure the real relations between humans and animals. For instance, Bernard Rollin, a prominent theorist in the contemporary field of farm animal ethics, has argued that typical agricultural practices in pre-industrial society were morally superior to the factory farms of today.[53] In his 2016 article 'Agriculture, Ethics, and Law,' Rollin claims that agricultural ethics has shifted from what he describes as one underlying "maxim" that was "good husbandry" (32) in the early modern period, to the profit-motivated lawlessness of industrialized agriculture in the twentieth century and beyond. Similarly, in *Farm Animal Welfare* (1995), he defines good husbandry as a "contractual 'we take care of the animals, the animals take care of us' ethic" (99). Rollin believes that this ethic enshrined respect for farm animals – no needless cruelty or pain would be inflicted upon them – to reap the financial benefits (and the convenience) of rearing agreeable, healthy animals (4-5). While I agree that the industrialisation of agriculture allowed for heinous practices to be committed against farm animals on a wider scale than ever before, it seems odd to suggest that all early modern farmers were aware of, and supported, the moral implications of good husbandry.

[53] Rollin is not a historian, though it is interesting to examine his arguments through a historical lens to draw attention to prevailing contemporary assumptions surrounding common bovine experiences in the early modern period. This emphasises how ethical questions must be understood in their appropriate historical setting.

While ensuring human survival by taking good care of farm animals may well have been a major influence on methods of early modern farming, Erica Fudge believes that such ideas had their limitations. “Some creatures,” she says, “were clearly viewed as expendable and were worked while in curable pain because, it must be assumed, the pain did not interrupt the animal’s capacity to work. The zooarchaeologist Richard Thomas, for example, has found bones dumped at the end of the seventeenth century at Dudley Castle that show a horse suffering from a massive bone infection in its leg caused by an injury. There is no evidence of treatment on the bone” (61). Rollin’s romanticised view of early modern farming history is likely coloured by our modern treatment of farm animals as unthinking products. Human-animal relationships in the seventeenth-century farmyard were undoubtedly more personal, as chapter two demonstrates, but it would be easy to sentimentalise the degree to which cattle were treated with care when compared to the ongoing cruelty of factory farming. As in modern times, animals could still be construed as tools.

Additionally, ignorance in medical matters may have played a part in determining the welfare of farm animals. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, dairy cows were kept thin, as it was thought that excess fat would prevent milk flow. Consequently, poor nutrition would have affected both milk yield and bovine wellbeing (Hickey 137). Thus, Rollin’s assertion that the dairy was “an especially good example of the contract between animal and human” due to the “early realization that gentle, compassionate treatment of cattle leads to significantly better milk yield” (*Farm Animal Welfare*, 99) was not always a given. However, as chapter two makes evident, methods of dealing with uncooperative cattle were seemingly less brutal before the mid-eighteenth century – before the time when agrarian capitalism began to truly flourish. Thus, rather than assigning the reason to a quasi-mystical contract between human and animal fixated upon notions of yield, the evidence in fact suggests that it was intensifying focus on such profit-motivated ideals that led to the treating of cattle as an amorphous mass. Similarly, the resultant widespread displacement of women from dairying seemingly had a negative effect upon any of the “gentle,

compassionate treatment" that Rollin discusses, when women's "everyday embodied experience" may have allowed them more empathy with lactating animals (Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 87).[54]

As such, while I have disputed the idea that all farmers would feel pride at the good management of farm animals before industrial agriculture, it is true that cattle were "central to the economic, social, and emotional landscape of the past," which suggests that they may well have been appropriately cared for, playing as they did such an important role in a family's life (Fudge, 'Milking Other Men's Beasts,' 21). Aware of its contradictions, this thesis attempts to walk the line between understanding that early modern cows and humans were different to their modern-day descendants, and arguing that certain conclusions about the respective parties' mind states, and how they interacted with one another, can still be drawn from a contemporary conception of empathy.

[54] Chapter two will discuss in more detail how women and cows could have related to each other due to a shared, embodied experience. Of course, sympathies between humans and animals are not limited to bodily awareness, but perceptions of closeness could have been influenced by such gendered parity.

Methodology

Pedagogical versus Imaginative Literature

The primary sources examined in this thesis have been split into two main categories. The first of these, pedagogical literature, groups all the didactic, practical texts together. These provide the material for the textual analysis in chapters one and two. Such pedagogical literature consists overwhelmingly of agricultural manuals, texts for the teaching of farming practice and technique. These are the main sources in this grouping, though other technical texts like Thomas Bewick's *A General History of Quadrapeds* (1790) are also analysed briefly in chapter two. While Bewick's book is not strictly an agrarian manual, it fits into the pedagogical section as it is a text that provides instructional information. The second category I have named imaginative literature, and this consists of creative literary works that are generally considered fiction: ballads, poems, plays, and novels. These are analysed in chapters three and four.

But it should be noted that these two later chapters are not mirror images of chapters one and two. For instance, chapters one and two deal with the majority, if not all, of the early modern period's English dairying manuals that are still extant today, as the number of these texts was low enough as to be manageable for historical research. But, just as the proliferation of dairying handbooks in the nineteenth century ensured that I chose a smaller selection of agricultural manuals from that century, rather than encompassing as many as possible, attempting to include all English literary material that mentioned milkmaids and cows across this expansive period of study was impractical.[55] Instead, while chapters one and two trace broad themes across the selected dairying manuals as the evidence is ample, chapters three and four handle a smaller collection of imaginative

[55] Not *all* agricultural manuals from the eighteenth century have been included either, as this century saw a "surge" in the publication of such texts (Fisher 217). However, texts from the most famous authors that write on dairying have been included, such as Richard Bradley, William Ellis, John Mills, William Marshal, and Arthur Young. Due to this proliferation of agrarian handbooks in the eighteenth century, and the interesting shifts occurring within their pages, that century's manuals are the most well-represented in this thesis.

fiction. And, as the next section will outline, such literary materials consist mainly of working-class ballads and poems, rather than plays, and two case study novels, authored by two key novelists recognised as critically engaging with industrialisation: *Adam Bede* (1859), by George Eliot, and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles, A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented* (1891), by Thomas Hardy.[56]

This separation of the pedagogical and imaginative, then, somewhat simplifies the breadth of the material, while the terms themselves have been chosen to avoid confusion when stratifying the source material. For instance, while Thomas Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry United to as Many of Good Housewifery* (1573) is a poem, it is predominantly a didactic piece and regarded as an agricultural manual by agricultural historians; as such, it is perceived as pedagogical. Additionally, while there is an argument to be made that George Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859) is a technical and practical piece informed by agricultural research, it is primarily an imaginative, creative literary work (and not strictly didactic), and so belongs in the latter category.[57] I have avoided using the terms non-fiction and fiction as the agricultural texts are not necessarily representing real material conditions, but could be propagating a false illusion of farming life. Similarly, the imaginative literature, while generally written with fictitious characters, may have characterised the ramifications of agrarian capitalism more accurately than the agricultural manuals written predominantly by gentleman farmers with little experience in the practicalities of farming.

[56] There are other reasons as to why these two novels are ripe for literary analysis. As Alicia Carroll says, "the lush dairy settings in George Eliot's *Adam Bede* and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* have traditionally been perceived as timeless, 'natural' green 'landscapes' rather than as 'taskscapes,' gendered workspaces that are specific to separate historical moments and hence, separate ideologies and technologies of labor" (165). Carroll's article attempts to address this lack of scholarship by theorising how themes of human lactation and maternity have been employed through women's work in the dairy in these two novels; my thesis focuses less upon issues of human lactation, and more upon the ways in which cows and women are characterised in these gendered workplaces.

[57] Randall Ingram has argued that some works that would be considered imaginative and fictional today could be seen as examples of didactic literature in the early modern period due to the inclusion of an index by its publishers. The fact that an index was added to an early edition of John Donne's *Poems* (1633) allowed the reader to research different themes present in the text (Ingram 66-67). However, I would still classify poetry as imaginative, and not part of the didactic category.

Establishing whether such agricultural handbooks reflect real-life farming practices is particularly problematic in the eighteenth century, as this was when the pejorative term "book husbandry" was first introduced by husbandmen lambasting the century's successful agricultural authors (such as Richard Bradley, the botanist) who could not "hold a plough" (Fisher 317, 321). While some of the sixteenth- to seventeenth-century agricultural authors like Tusser and Markham may have been relatively experienced farmers (Thirsk 318), the proliferation of print led to the spread of texts in this century from gentlemen unlearned in ways of farming.[58] The uselessness of some of these manuals was made clear by the fact that some were often full of new and untried experiments that were expensive and inefficient for ordinary farmers to utilise (Overton 78, 129). "Books presenting knowledge based upon experiment and the credible observations of a gentleman were considered an advance on the local and experiential knowledge of common practitioners," James Fisher notes. "Agricultural authors claimed to possess a superior expertise to vulgar practitioners, because they not only offered instructions on how to do something, but a comprehensive understanding of why things worked that way" (317-318). In reality, such authors could claim little original knowledge, as will be explained in chapter one.

However, this thesis is not a historical inquiry trying to establish factual evidence; rather, it is primarily interested in how dairying, dairywomen, and cows are represented across different forms of literature during this wide period. Thus, imaginative literature is as important as the pedagogical texts that have traditionally been used for historical analysis, as the former can experiment with representations of women and cows in ways that the technical and practical manual cannot. For instance, earlier I briefly discussed how such agricultural manuals after the seventeenth century propagated a new discourse of improvement focused on profit. But what was not mentioned was that the imaginative source material tended to react against these new attitudes to farming, perhaps

[58] For instance, in Conrad Heresbach's *Four Books of Husbandry* (1577), the author suggests that his steward and his maid do most of the work on the farm, but "yf the weather and time serue, I play the woorkemaister mee selfe" (3). While Heresbach is more distanced from agricultural tasks as an overseer, he also suggests he is no stranger to getting his hands dirty as well.

reflecting the mood of a larger section of society – displaced rural workers – who were being negatively affected by new agrarian approaches. As such, imaginative literature communicates alternative cultural perspectives on the dairy and its human and animal workers, constituting a form of historical and literary evidence waiting to be unearthed.

The ability of imaginative fiction to be a lens through which we consider complex forms of history, philosophy or knowledge is known to scholars of both animal and gender studies. For instance, as "science as the reigning epistemology of the last two centuries has denigrated and dismissed anthropomorphic interpretations of animal behaviour," Huggan and Tiffin instead argue that "the complex interplays of similarity and difference that inform our attitudes to animals can best be harnessed by the literary imagination. Practised as writers are, in extrapolating otherness from self – be it in terms of gender, race, ethnicity or disability – the leap required to read observed animal behaviour and imagine animal being is perhaps not as profound as we conveniently like to believe" (154).[59] And, while Wiltenburg says that "literature is not life" as it does not "reflect reality," she remarks that "literary convention, for example, both responds to and helps shape cultural thinking about women, which likewise bears a reciprocal if convoluted relationship to real social interaction between the sexes." Therefore, she uses ballads to identify historical shifts that occurred across the seventeenth century, as "if the texts exerted power on their audience, the reverse was true as well, partly through authors' commercially motivated attempts to respond to popular tastes, but more importantly through audience uses of the texts themselves" (28).

[59] Huggan and Tiffin go on to argue that "in order to maintain what Bernard Rollin has termed the 'moral agnosticism' of an allegedly value-free science (because moral judgements are contra scientific principles and practice, i.e., unverifiable), science has been forced to deny similarities between humans and many animal groups … On the other hand, it has also sometimes been claimed that in likening animals to ourselves, we deny them a separate integrity. But as the 1987 American Veterinary Medical Association Report belatedly acknowledges, 'all animal research which is used to model human beings is based on the tacit assumption of anthropomorphism; and if we can in principle extrapolate from animals to humans, why not the reverse as well?'" (154).

Thus, using both pedagogical and imaginative literature is key for investigating how and why representations of cows and women changed drastically as time progressed. The former delineates the movement towards depersonalising interactions in the dairy for the pursuit of science and profit, while the latter reflects this same shift but also, at times, vociferously seeks to counter the relentless march of mechanisation. Indeed, some of the imaginative literature studied in this thesis, such as Thomas Hardy's *Tess*, is a powerful reminder that fiction can more persuasively relate why relationships between human and animal, woman and cow, should be valued.

Selecting the Texts

In this section, I discuss how and why I chose the texts to analyse in this thesis. I go into detail on the background behind the selected agricultural and related pedagogical texts, as well as ballads, poems, and novels, as these form the bulk of my analysis. In chapter three, I briefly examine certain plays by William Shakespeare, but there was not scope for a full investigation into this genre of imaginative literature. Indeed, due to this thesis's long period of inquiry, not every avenue can be explored in the source material. This is also why, although I did briefly study eighteenth- and nineteenth-century newspapers from across the GALE database, including *Nineteenth Century UK Periodicals*, there was not sufficient room to include an in-depth account of these sources. Similarly, though Dorothy Osborne's *Letters* (1652-1654) provides "one of the few pieces of direct evidence" of milkmaids singing to cows (Roud 254), there was not scope to peruse other early modern to nineteenth-century letters and diaries, thus they have not been included in this study.[60] I believe that the genres I outline below are more valuable to this thesis as, even though I did not investigate other sources as sufficiently as I would have liked, the chosen material still seems to provide the

[60] Osborne remarked that when she visited "the common" she saw that "a great many young wenches keep sheep and cows, and sit in the shade singing of ballads" (Osborne 68).

greatest detail on dairying. As such, I argue that the texts below consist of the most apt sources available to this thesis's inquiry.[61]

Didactic

When commencing my research of didactic material, I began by perusing the work of the agricultural historian G.E. Fussell, who provides detailed analyses of early modern to eighteenth-century agricultural manuals. While Fussell was writing in 1947, his research remains integral to modern scholarship on the subject, as there are few authors who have tackled this matter since.[62] Agricultural manuals form the basis of the didactic literature utilised in this thesis, and Fussell defines them simply as texts concerned with farming, such as "the cultivation of crops and the breeding of domestic livestock for food and for draught," as well as "the lives and living" of those who "own and work the land" (*Old English Farming Books*, 4).[63] To illustrate his point, Fussell goes on to differentiate between the first English book printed on agriculture – Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandry* (1523) – and another of the author's texts, *Surveying*, printed in the same year. [64] While Fussell argues that the latter was an important piece of work for the period, he does not regard *Surveying* as a "farming text-book" (8). This is because the book merely focuses upon issues surrounding land-use, and not the key practices Fussell believes are associated with farming: the growing of crops, and the rearing of animals.

[61] For instance, I considered various plays by seventeenth-century playwrights Ben Jonson and Thomas Middleton, but there were few representations of women and cows.

[62] Andrew McRae has written on seventeenth-century agricultural manuals more recently, and I respond to his research in chapter one.

[63] While some related agricultural texts have been chosen, like Bewick's book, there is not scope to include every text that mentions dairying during this wide timeframe.

[64] It is not known whether this book was written by John Fitzherbert or his younger brother Anthony, though Edwin Gay argues that John, being the "country gentleman," was the more likely candidate (592). Fitzherbert's text was very influential among agricultural writers. His conclusions were referenced in husbandry manuals until the eighteenth century.

While Fussell's *Old English Farming Books from Fiztherbert to Tull 1523-1793* (1947) and *More Old English Farming Books From Tull to the Board of Agriculture 1731 to 1793* (1950) do cite the bulk of the didactic material utilised in this thesis, some additions were found via J.C. Loudon's 1831 edition of his *Encyclopaedia of Agriculture* (a text that also forms part of my primary material). The encyclopaedia's original publication in 1825 marked the text as the first ever English agricultural encyclopaedia. It is thus a key resource in understanding which texts were regarded as significant enough to be listed in the "bibliography of British agriculture" (1206). As such, Loudon's book has been instrumental in aiding the search of guides that have been overlooked by agricultural historians, which ensures that the chosen publications are demonstrative of the range of manuals available during this period.

I expanded upon the research provided by these two authors by turning to the website *Historical Texts*, which has provided material rarely cited by any historian past or present.[65] One little-read text is Bartholomew Dowe's *A Dairie Booke for Good Huswives* (1588); this was not included in Fussell or Loudon's work, while Josiah Twamley's *Dairying Exemplified* (1787) is wrongly recorded by Fussell (and other historians) as the first book on dairying (*More Old English Farming Books*, 132). At first, I thought this oversight may be because Dowe's text did not conform to the style expected of an agricultural advice manual.[66] But Fussell does, however, include Thomas Tusser's *A Hundreth Good Pointes of Husbandrie* (1557) in his catalogue.[67] This text is written entirely

[65] The website *historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk* comprises a database of texts from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. I searched for texts containing the key words "cow," "milkmaid," and "dairymaid," which provided me with further evidence when analysing the didactic literature in chapters one and two.

[66] Dowe's text does not have a contents page or index, when even the very early Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandry* contains the former, which would have increased its usefulness as a practical resource. Instead, *A Dairie Booke* takes the form of a dialogue between the author and a "South-hamshyre woman" who was "desirous to have conference with me beeing a Suffolke man" concerning "the making of whitmeate" in his region (n.p.).

[67] This text was expanded in 1573, becoming *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry United to as Many of Good Housewifery,* to provide agricultural instruction to women as well as men.

in verse, and omits an index (at least in its first edition), and Fussell criticises the book for not being "a severely practical treatise of farming, being more in the nature of 'a series of good farming and domestic directions and actions.'" However, he adds that the latter text "not only provides guidance to the farmer in the conduct of his business … but also that of his family life, and for this reason has been many times reprinted and written about" (*Old English Farming Books*, 8).

It appears, then, that Fussell's inclusion of Tusser is not due to its merits as a farming book, but because of its popularity; its use as an agricultural text by contemporary readers, and by later historians, has meant that he cannot deny its influence. In contrast, Dowe's text has been overlooked in historical circles. Thus, to avoid making my selection of texts so narrow that I might omit such a crucial first manual on dairying, I instead define agricultural manuals as didactic literature that has devoted sections to farming methods (particularly dairying, which remains a focus), no matter its popularity. This is important, as while Fitzherbert, Tusser and Leonard Mascall (whose 1587 *The First Booke of Cattell* was the first English book that focused solely on the management of cows, sheep, pigs, and goats) are understood by contemporary agricultural scholars to have initiated the genre of farming books (Fussell, *Old English Farming Books*, 1-2, 8-9, 12; McRae 136), *A Dairie Booke* should take its place as the first English text that solely instructs on the practice of dairying.[68] Rarer texts are analysed alongside the popular and influential manuals, such as those by Gervase Markham – a prominent agricultural writer of the seventeenth century (McRae 161) – and the eighteenth to nineteenth-century author Arthur Young, one of the most industrious writers of the age.[69]

[68] While influential authors such as Fitzherbert, Tusser, and Mascall have been well-studied by agricultural historians, I am analysing these texts in new ways. For example, though limited attention has been paid to how these authors featured women in their work, their relationship to their cows has not been considered.

[69] Gervase Markham was the most famous husbandry author of the seventeenth century. His many texts were continually in print throughout this period (and beyond), and he became something of a "brand name" during this time (Curth 146). Meanwhile, Fussell describes the latter half of the eighteenth century as "the age of Arthur Young and William Marshall," arguing that Young, as the producer of more than 250 volumes, was the most prolific of all the agricultural writers who had so far existed (*Old English Farming Books* 70).

Despite my wide-ranging definition of what constitutes an agricultural manual, there has been a great difficulty in finding female agricultural authors during this timeframe. After all, it was not until the eighteenth century that examples of female-authored didactic literature became more common; one of the earliest I have found that touches upon agricultural matters is Hannah Woolley's *The Compleat Servant-Maid* (1704), while the first dedicated solely to dairying may well be Agnes Scott's short treatise *Dairy Management* (1860).[70] But, while Woolley's text does include some limited information for milkmaids, the eighteenth century also saw the practice of housewifery become separated from husbandry. Consequently, though housewifery guides came to be written more and more by women, such manuals did not explain how to run the dairy, but instead were more focused on cookery. For instance, *The Compleat Housewife: or, Accomplished Gentlewoman's Companion* (1729) by Eliza Smith sees a movement away from animal care, to the overseeing of internal domestic matters only, while Elizabeth Moxton's *English Housewifery* (1749) represents cattle and their by-products solely as ingredients. While William Ellis wrote *The Country Housewife's Family Companion* (1750) to provide instruction to women in the dairy (as did authors such as Markham and Tusser before him), Ellis's manual was the exception by the mid-eighteenth century.

This focus on cookery is further seen in Ann *Peckham's The Complete English Cook, Or Prudent Housewife* (1777); Susannah Carter's *The Frugal Housewife* (1775); J Miller's *The British Jewel, or the Complete Housewife's Best Companion* (1776), the anonymous *The Farmer's Wife; or Complete Country Housewife* (1780); Christian Isobel Johnstone's *Cook and Housewife's Manual* (1829); Deborah Irwin's *The Housewife's Guide, or, An Economical and Domestic Art of Cookery* (1830); and Alexis Soyer's *The Modern Housewife* (1849). In all these texts, cows are only alluded to in recipes.[71] It is intriguing that cows become the absent referents in female-authored housewifery

[70] Scott's text is not thoroughly plumbed here as, not only is it very short (there is little material for analysis as it is only twenty or so pages long), but it is also technically a Scottish text, and thus outside the remit of this thesis. Scott was a dairywoman from Peebles, and published her book in Edinburgh.

[71] There are a few exceptions, such as *The Housewife* by Laetitia Montague (1785), which mentions how to make butter, but nothing else. Martha Bradley's *British Housewife* (1760) does include some medicinal cures

manuals, being made invisible through processes that render them as products, not individual labourers.

While there is not time to develop this specific argument fully, chapter two will outline how the rise of mechanical practices saw agricultural manuals come to represent cows as little more than objects during this same period, regardless of the gender of the author. Similarly, chapter one will indicate why women may have been more hesitant to write on dairying practices, or why such texts have not survived today. Though the eighteenth century onwards saw a rise in female authors, female agricultural labour power was in decline, and across the pedagogical and imaginative texts one can observe women's waning agrarian clout.

Imaginative

The earliest form of source material I use are ballads, a type of narrative verse that is often considered by historians to be some of the best evidence of non-elite popular culture in the early modern period and the early-nineteenth century. While the provenance of many anonymous ballads is unknown, it is thought that the majority of broadside ballads– cheap printed pamphlets that began to be widely produced in the mid-sixteenth century – were published in urban centres (mainly London) and disseminated outwards to the English countryside. However, the fact that there was a considerable rural oral tradition could have seen the process work the other way as well, though there is, of course, less evidence for such a supposition (Roud 444). These ballads were selected for analysis in this thesis by searching for the keywords 'milkmaid,' 'cow,' 'dairy' (which includes results for 'dairymaid') and 'kine' on two of the main online repositories for extant ballads: *Broadside*

for cattle, but again not much in the way of dairying. Mary Holland's *Complete Economical Cook and Frugal Housewife* (1825) has a short section on making cheese, and when to take the calf away from the mother, but little else. John Watson's *Housewife's Directory* (1825) and Robert Huish's *The Female's Friend* (1837) provide instruction on dairying, but both lament the fact that they have to teach this to women who have since lost the ability to be a "good and valuable housewife, or the clever and active mistress of a family" (Huish iii).

Ballads Online (*BBO*) and the *English Broadside Ballad Archive* (*EBBA*).[72] Many of the ballads in this thesis were likely composed and circulated before being marked and dated by collectors, while some have no date given. In these cases, I have assumed which century they were from by their content and manner of writing, as the English language evolved in certain noticeable ways between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. I explain my reasons for placing them in which time period as and when such instances crop up in my analysis.

When turning to the eighteenth century, there are fewer ballads in the repositories containing such keywords. There may have been fewer collectors of pastoral ballads in this century. For instance, while Samuel Pepys was a prolific compiler of ballads in the seventeenth century, and there was an explosion of Victorians collectors in the nineteenth century (Marsh, *Music and Society*, 260; Roud 551), there is less evidence of enthusiastic ballad collectors in the eighteenth century. The relative dearth of eighteenth-century ballads about dairywomen and cows may be because such ballads were not recorded, or were recorded later; certain nineteenth-century ballads, like 'The Spotted Cow' were thought to have emerged in the previous century (Robson 26). But there is still much scholarship that could be done in this area, and one of the limitations of this thesis is that trends in balladry are difficult to trace. For instance, those found in the online repositories are those deemed to be valuable enough to be saved by past (and biased) collectors, which in turn have had to be found, saved, and scanned by modern scholars.

Such an argument could also be applied to the poems examined in this thesis, except for the fact that in the eighteenth century, there was a concerted movement to publish the poetry of the working classes. Indeed, I have mainly focused upon poems that originated from the eighteenth

[72] 'Milkmaid' in *ebba.english.ucsb.edu* (*EBBA*) returned 20 entries, and in *ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk* (*BBO*), 134; 'dairy' returned 69 and 9; 'kine' (an older word for a cow) 33, and 1; and 'cow' 665, and 172. Many of these results were repeated songs or not relevant, and because 'cow' returned so many entries, many were passed over quickly, searching instead for relevant titles. Moreover, the images without textual transcription supplied by the *BBO* were not always readable. As such, the ballads in this thesis were selected out of roughly two hundred that were thoroughly read.

century because this is a time when labouring-class poets began their ascension. These working-class poets were among the primary authors (that we know about) who were writing about their first-hand experiences in agriculture, and as such are of vital importance to this thesis. While it cannot be established for certain if the authors of the pastoral ballads or the pre-eighteenth century agricultural manuals examined here were close to farming and dairying processes, it is assured that Ann Yearsley, dubbed "the Bristol milkwoman" (Waldron 63), worked with cows. She used her close association with farm animals to take on a popular "eighteenth-century literary form … the pastoral." Yearsley often pushed the conventions of this form, which was commonly practiced by elites with little practical experience of outdoor work. For example, while the "conventional pastoral emphasises the innocence of rural lovers and their closeness to nature" (109), Yearsley, as Waldron identifies, undermines this innocence in her poem "Clifton Hill" (1785). Yearsley instead argues that "No high romantic rules of honour bind/The timid virgin of the rural kind" as dairymaids must "with mock disdain put the fond lover by" to "save the trembling bride" from the "ruddy swain" who would get her pregnant and force her into an unhappy marriage (45-66).

Here, Waldron notes that Yearsley is demonstrating to those readers and writers of rural courtship that "the reality is different … to 'polished life'" and that her representations lack the "restraint and courtesy" (110) seen in similar poems on the subject, such as James Thomson's pastoral epic 'The Seasons' (1730). But Waldron argues that she is also representing the very real experience of milkmaids who were seen to be easy to seduce, perhaps because women working alone in fields were less observed than those who worked domestic jobs inside.[73] Thus, it is "the fear of shame" (Yearsley 61) that prevents many maids from engaging with the swain rather than the "high romantic rules" (55) affected by more elite persons. Such insight demonstrates that Yearsley had a very close understanding of what it is to be a milkmaid. Indeed, she is one of the few verified dairywoman authors in this thesis, and certainly the most prolific. Of course, while some of the

[73] Representations of country courtship and milkmaid sexuality will be discussed in more detail in chapters three and four.

ballads may have been written, contributed to, or at least sung by milkmaids, there were surely more dairywomen authors whose voices have been lost to history. Elizabeth Hands is another key poet examined in this thesis as, while she was not a milkmaid herself, her status as a lower-class rural worker would have seen her interact with those who were. As such, these two female authors provide important alternative perspectives that would otherwise be missing from this thesis. I have narrowed my search in ballads and poetry to the dairying and related texts produced by the lower classes, to attempt to record a more authentic experience of dairying. However, future research comparing such poems with narrative verse produced by those in different classes would provide valuable insights.

Novels started to appear in the eighteenth century, and the first that I discuss is Samuel Richardson's *Pamela, Or Virtue Rewarded* (1740). While I do make mention of an earlier piece of narrative prose, *The English Rogue* (a book that contains a series of adventures related as a history), I analyse it alongside other seventeenth-century ballads, as its content appears to be more reflective of these forms of literature. Furthermore, there are few novels prior to the nineteenth century that make mention of dairying. For instance, Pamela is a housemaid, not a milkmaid. However, the novel does relate her brief dealings with cows due to her position as a young woman in service on a rural estate. However, from the nineteenth-century onwards, novels that tackled all aspects of rural life became more common, with George Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859) and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) being among the first to feature milkmaids as main characters. By this time, the advantages of increased social mobility were clear, as authors with a distinct interest in rural upheaval, and who were not unfamiliar with countryside practices, were able to utilise the advantages of a middle-class education to record the practices of agricultural labourers.[74]

[74] Though Eliot and Hardy both received "formal education" and thus were not perhaps the "great autodidacts" that they were later praised as, they did not go to boarding school and then Oxbridge "which by the end of the century was being regarded not simply as a kind of education but as education itself" (Williams, *Country and the City*, 109-110). Indeed, Eliot's characters were drawn from her years "prattling with the servants in the kitchen at Astley Castle or Packington Hall or in the housekeeper's room at Arbury" while her

Many of the texts chosen in this genre have been investigated by Raymond Williams in *The Country and the City* (1973); I build upon his analysis by specifically focusing on how these authors represented the relationship between women and cows. I have also included brief references to *Lark Rise to Candleford*, even though it is outside my period of study because, despite its publication in 1945, Flora Thompson wrote the initial series as a semi-autobiographical piece depicting life in the 1880s. She reflects upon how agricultural practices had shifted from the time of her grandparents during the time of her own childhood, as well as how culture continued to change into her later years, making it a valuable novel for understanding how attitudes transformed across time in rural Oxfordshire. Indeed, Steve Roud believed Thompson's novel sufficient as a historical resource, utilising her insights surrounding late-nineteenth century ballad culture in his renowned work *Folk Song in England* (2017). Similarly, the anonymous 'Ballad of a Tyrannical Husband' is supposedly from the fifteenth century, but has also been included due to its importance as the first extant ballad to mention dairying. Despite these brief references to a twentieth-century book and fifteenth-century verse, the period of study officially commences in 1523 with the publication of Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandry*, and ends in the 1890s with Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and James Long and John Morton's *The Dairy* (1896).

Literacy and audience

While this thesis is not strictly a historical piece of research, it would seem remiss to not include some observations on the likely readership of the selected texts to identify how they were engaged with across the early modern period and the nineteenth century. There is no need to make sweeping historical claims in this thesis, as literary representations can speak for themselves.

father "conducted business" (Martin, 'Introduction,' viii), thus she had some contact with lower-class workers. Hardy, as the son of a stonemason, was "born into the artisan tier of the labouring class" (Dillion 9), living, like "the class to which Tess's father and mother had belonged" both "side by side with the agricultural labourers" yet "ranking distinctly above the former" (Hardy, *Tess*, 373). Thus, Hardy would have certainly rubbed elbows with those involved in dairying, though not necessarily have partaken in any part of the process himself.

However, it feels necessary to identify whether the selected literature may have exerted any influence over the people living through these profound societal changes.

When considering the ballads, for example, there is clear evidence that they were extremely popular with all ages, across villages, towns and cities, and even across class divides.[75] They were widely sung across vast swathes of the labouring classes, whether in the alehouse, while travelling long distances, or while working in various occupations. Indeed, milkmaids were both the characters of ballads, and lovers of them; as Steve Roud notes, the "general notion of songs being sung by milkmaids and women at their spinning wheels is a recurrent theme, right up to the eighteenth century" (227).[76] Broadside ballads were available to a large proportion of the early modern English population, as they were "stuck up on tavern walls and other public places," while "by the second half of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, broadsides were definitely aimed at the poorer end of the populace" (434).[77] Indeed, those men and women who were "young and single, often living in service with their board provided, were ideally situated to spend a few pennies on cheap print from time to time." Furthermore, "in 1631, Wye Saltonstall identified 'country wenches' as the people most likely to purchase such ballads at a rural fair" (Marsh, *Music*

[75] Ballads were looked down upon by the gentry in public, but often collected in private. Marsh notes that "at the top of society they were apparently held in low esteem," yet some ballad-singers still performed "at the mansions of the mighty," including in James I and VI's court (*Music and Society*, 256-257).

[76] However, Roud also cautions against accepting what could be romanticised notions of milkmaids singing ballads under cows in such "carefree" manners, as such representations have naturally been written by those observing, rather than partaking in, the activities that typified early modern rural life (254). Flora Thompson does mention, however, that outdoor singing was quite common right through to the late-nineteenth century (56).

[77] Moreover, the fact that "musicians held ballads in contempt, and the great poets rarely wrote in ballad metre" (Roud 222) has emphasised the idea that ballads were for ordinary people. While there is more evidence that the most popular ballads were written by urban professional ballad-singers and outsourced to the countryside rather than sourced from a lively rural oral tradition, the latter is, of course, much harder to prove (444).

and Society, 251) and, despite the prevalence of printing in London, there is evidence that northern ballad-singers composed their own material (252-254).[78]

Ballad singers were also "some combination of poor, young and female" because "balladry was a well-known recourse of the disadvantaged" (Wiltenburg 244), which suggests that the singing of bawdy tunes was not the male trait it became in the late-nineteenth century. Furthermore, "authors clearly anticipated a substantial female audience. Many of the ballad singers and sellers of later seventeenth-century England seem to have been women" (Wiltenburg 27). Thus, the ballads selected may have been read and sung by milkmaids, as Dorothy Osborne's letter to William Temple in 1653 makes clear: "a great many young wenches keep sheep and cows, and sit in the shade singing of ballads" (68). And, though commentators suggest that most composers of ballads were male, this does not mean there were no female authors (Marsh, *Music and Society*, 228). Thus, ballads could well have had an impact upon the lives of dairywomen; ballads were both common and easy to commit to memory as they were set to well-known tunes. Their enduring influence in the early modern period and nineteenth century across large swathes of the population demonstrates why ballads are heavily utilised in this thesis.

However, while musical history commentators like Marsh, Wiltenburg and Roud are clear that ballads had a wide-ranging audience, agricultural historians do not say the same of the agricultural manuals selected. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw manuals written to be, as Mascall writes in his preface to *The First Booke of Cattell* (1589), "plainely and and perfectly set forth, as well to bee understood of the unlearned husbandman, as of the unlearned gentle man" (n.p.).[79] But, while such authors, including Markham and John Worlidge, hoped that their "books of

[78] While much of the gentry disparaged ballads in public, many collected them in private, or had singers perform them in their stately homes, as their appeal transcended both class and gender (Roud 257).

[79] John Fitzherbert also addressed ploughmen in his landmark husbandry manual. However, historian Madonna Hettinger believes that the audience of the treatise were the managers of "large agricultural estates," not those involved in manual labour (50).

advice would reach humbler men," producing works that were "small in bulk and price, and were written, so he hoped, in plain style, suited to the vulgar," Thirsk relates that "peasants were more impressed by practical examples" (317).[80] Indeed, in the eighteenth century, Jethro Tull famously stated that he believed no one person could both hold "plough and pen" (318). But, while all the authors previously discussed were nearly all gentlemen, it is harder to decipher whether their readers were also, in the main, highly born men.[81]

For instance, David Cressy's landmark study in 1977, "Levels of Illiteracy in England, 1530-1730" ventured that, in the diocese of Norwich during this period, 79% of husbandmen, 35% of yeomen, 2% of gentry and 89% of all women were illiterate (5). If these statistics were extrapolated to cover England as a whole, it would suggest that the vast majority of readers of agricultural manuals were – at least until 1730 – gentlemen.[82] However, despite the fact that Cressy's work is still used as an indication of early modern literary rates, these figures are based on the assumption that all those who signed their name with a mark, rather than letters, were illiterate; a methodological approach that has been widely criticised by contemporary historians. In fact, Hedi Brayman Hackel suggests that many early modern English people learned to read before they could write, and that writing as a skill was not taught amongst those who had no economic need for the practice (55).

[80] As Curth has noted, the sheer number of editions and publications by Gervase Markham demonstrates that the material was popular (9), but it is likely that poor labourers still would not be able to, or care to afford them. Additionally, while Worlidge's texts were "directed at a broader readership of landed owners, including the emergent middling-ranks of yeomen and husbandmen" (Blomley 6), it is probable that his books would "fall into the hands of the professional or gentleman reader whose tastes they now suited" (Ingram 126).

[81] There were some exceptions. Joan Thirsk has noted that Walter Blith was a yeoman – or potentially only a husbandman, given his farm's means – although his heir later became a gentleman (307). Moreover, in *More Old English Farming Books*, Fussell mentions that William Ellis was "under the necessity of making a living" (6), suggesting he was a farmer, probably of yeoman rank.

[82] And such manuals would not have had a wide audience as, unlike the ballads, they could not transfer seamlessly into the existing oral culture as ballads could.

If the art of reading was more common, then Cressy's statistics that noted that only ten percent of women in seventeenth-century England were literate may be flawed.[83] Through not taking into account people who could read but not write, as well as not attending to gendered or class divisions, Hackel, Keith Thomas and Margaret Spufford have all argued that Cressy's analysis should be taken as the "bare minimum" of people who could read (Hackel 58). Additionally, literacy rates are widely considered by historians to have improved greatly from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, with England achieving a minimum 40% literacy rate across all people by 1840 (Schofield 438).[84]

Thus, as literacy rates were likely higher than Cressy suggested, it seems more likely that women and less-wealthy farmers (those who needed to make a living on the farm, unlike gentlemen who owned the land, without undertaking any physical labour) may have interacted with the manuals selected. Women in particular, for whom "reading was more acceptable … than writing" (Snook 4) were certainly reading some of these manuals by the eighteenth century. For example, in *Elite Women and the Agricultural Landscape: 1700-1830*, Briony McDonagh demonstrates how female landowners were both reading Arthur Young's works, and having their letters, addressed to the well-known author, published in his own texts (88). As the title of the text suggests, of course, these women were of the gentry, or even the nobility. However, it may also be the case that lower-class women read agricultural texts as well, particularly ones centred on both human and animal medicine. For example, Louise Hill Curth believes that agricultural women without considerable means would have "obtained their medical knowledge both from the oral and print tradition" like "most lay-healers" (65), hence why books such as the *Widow's Treasure* (1582) were aimed at a

[83] Hackel reports that this figure is based solely upon seventeenth-century loyalty oaths that "severely" underrepresent women and the poorer classes, particularly labourers and servants (56).

[84] For instance, in the farming manuals of the nineteenth century, John Clater and Robert Huish suggest that their texts are aimed at the middle classes. During the nineteenth century, print became cheaper and literacy rates were much improved, so a larger readership would be expected.

female readership (84).[85] Moreover, these lay-healers, as well as early modern London farriers who, while not being gentlemen, would need a "practical and pragmatic literacy" (61) may have read such agricultural texts as well. This may have been particularly true in the eighteenth-century, when preferences for smaller books led to the cheaper octavo volume becoming the norm for all the manuals I have selected after the seventeenth century; a move that would have widened access to the books through removing some of their prohibitive expense.[86]

However, historians have generally doubted the access lay-persons would have to such texts. Even if Cressy's figures were to be understood as reflecting the bare minimum of those who could read during this period, it is still acknowledged that husbandmen were at a disadvantage when it came to reading, and thus far less likely to have the opportunity to consume such texts (Overton 36). Consequently, the general view from historians has been that such texts were only read by the gentry and above – and sometimes not even then. "McDonald is a little optimistic," Fussell begins, "if he really thought the average Restoration squire was a literary man. A few were – Evelyn, the antiquarians, farmers like Worlidge and Edward Lisle – but the majority were so far from that style that if they could read the contemporary books on farming it was the maximum of their accomplishment" (*Old English Farming Books,* 69). While Fussell does not provide any evidence for this opinion, it seems prudent, given the other evidence outlined, to suggest that most agricultural texts were mainly read by gentlemen. And yet, there would have been a select readership of elite women who would, even before the eighteenth century, be reading the books dedicated to them, as well as the later works by Arthur Young.

[85] This text by John Partridge was printed in octavo throughout its many editions, meaning it would be cheaper and thus accessible to more people: a practice that would benefit female readers. Similarly, *The Office of the Good Housewife* was also printed as an octavo, and aimed towards women, at a time in the seventeenth century when most agricultural texts were quartos. However, it did not manage to be popular beyond its one edition.

[86] In some cases, these post-seventeenth-century manuals were sold as twelvemos, which would have been an even cheaper way to produce such books.

Female readers were certainly present at the start of the seventeenth century when Hugh Plat, in his 1602 *Delightes for Ladies,* argued that his recipe for "a larger and daintier cheese" is worth the "gentlewoman" paying for the volume (n.p.). Similarly, we cannot rule out that certain farmers (including housekeepers and dairywomen) of lower social standing would have read such texts either, particularly as educational opportunities among the working class became more abundant in the eighteenth- and early-nineteenth centuries. While Rebecca Bushnell argues that one gardening pamphlet that assumed a female reader was likely "rhetoric" (123), despite its cheap and ready availability, perhaps the simplest answer – that it was read by the women it was dedicated to – may at times be the correct one.

And it must not be forgotten that during the eighteenth century, farming families began to read more widely, while the search for female and labouring-class voices in poetry came to be in vogue. Poetry was not as popular as ballads, circulated as they were in more expensive books, though dairywomen in the eighteenth century certainly had access to the classics of literature (Waldron 28-29). And by the nineteenth century, the proliferation of print, and improved literacy rates, saw many poorer people reading novels. In any case, there is not enough evidence to determine whether any of the texts selected had any tangible effect upon the lives of women and cows. It is unclear whether dairywomen would have read the didactic manuals and applied any of the written practices that they were not familiar with at the time. Furthermore, many of the selected manuals are likely to have contained information that dairywomen already knew well from knowledge passed orally. And while imaginative literature had a wider audience than such farming books, we only know of one dairywoman, Yearsley, who was touched profoundly by the likes of Alexander Pope and John Milton, and went on to write her own poetry (29). But what will become evident in the next chapter is that some of the ideas and philosophies marshalled in the agricultural texts would make their way to the farmyard eventually – whether instituted from above or passed from more literate colleagues to less educated farmers – as the inevitable encroachment of agrarian capitalism would change human and animal lives forever. The ultimate evidence of this shift is

before our modern eyes when we look to the typical English farm and see mainly men, not women, milking cows via tubes, suckers and pumps.

While it is difficult to prove who read the texts, what remains important is the ways that they represent maids and cows, and it is these representations that are my focus in what follows. These depictions are valuable for understanding shifting attitudes and activities across a (relatively) diverse range of authors and texts, and provide more insight into changing patterns of behaviour than merely examining readership statistics.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter one begins by reviewing the feminist historiography on how midwifery became overtaken by obstetrics to parallel this related historical trend to the rise of male power in the dairy, while highlighting the fact that agricultural labour should be under the purview of feminist history. It discusses how tacit (female) knowledge warred against printed (male) knowledge at a time when new scientific and economic discourses were denigrating areas of female culture and labour. It then relates these considerations to the findings of the chapter's analysis of the pedagogical literature (the agricultural texts), demonstrating how such literature started to reflect and promote the usurpation of women from their customary roles in dairying.

Chapter two examines the same didactic literature, but instead traces how cows came to lose their individuality (and their status as quasi-colleagues) in the source material as a result of the philosophical and economic shifts that were occurring throughout the early modern period and beyond. It ends by focusing on how alienating language in such agricultural texts allowed cows to be denied consideration as individuals and even co-workers.

Chapter three then turns to the imaginative literature to consider whether the same trends (the denigration of female human labour power and the increased depersonalisation of cows) can be found across similar timeframes in the literary material. It finds that women were similarly displaced from the dairy and other agricultural work as time progressed but, in some cases, representations of cows as individual beings deserving of respect intensified. It demonstrates that this was because they were no longer considered fellow workers in reality, as such characterisations sit among literary sources that are lamenting the changes wrought by the estranging practices resulting from the rise of agrarian capitalism.

Chapter four prefaces its analysis of the same imaginative literature with how representations of animality and female sexuality historically shifted between the early modern

period and the nineteenth century. It then traces how milkmaid ballads came to be more detached both from the workings of a normal farm, and from their erotic content, after the seventeenth century. It then argues that the post-seventeenth-century veneration of human motherhood, and the denigration of animals (among other factors) created an ideal of English womanhood that was set apart from the bestial associations of sex. Using the figure of the milkmaid as a guide, it ends by demonstrating how she came to represent the separation of human from animal, and the casting of female sexuality as a contemptuous form of animality.

Chapter One: The Displacement of Women in Dairying

The content of woman's great science, rather is humankind, and among humankind, men. Her philosophy is not to reason, but to sense. (Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, 1764, p.79)

In the Introduction, I outlined certain economic reasons that partly explained why women became less involved in dairying, utilising existing historical evidence. Here, I turn to the history of science to substantiate how early modern empirical methods shaped agricultural knowledge. This will become important when considering how such an intellectual shift refashioned relations between dairywomen and cows, which in turn affected their representations in both farming books (discussed in the first two chapters) and in popular imaginative media (discussed in the next two). Due to the sheer volume of research that has been conducted on this topic, this chapter's focus will mainly be upon how women came to be displaced in the dairy through the marshalling of these new ideas, and how such a shift can be traced in the key agricultural manuals that I charted in the previous chapter. This chapter will utilise existing scholarship to demonstrate that the movement away from subsistence farming (where enough food was produced by a family to live, with any extra sold to supplement the household) to agrarian capitalism was partly achieved by combining scientific rhetoric with the discourse of profit, yield, and gain. It will then argue that such capitalist discourse propagated by elite men began to portray female dairying knowledge in a negative light in early modern agricultural texts.

Firstly, however, this chapter begins by examining midwifery as a parallel to dairying, as both fields saw the displacement of women from their time-honoured occupations for a variety of attendant reasons. While feminist historians have demonstrated that the professionalisation of midwifery led to the ascendancy of male midwives and obstetricians at the expense of its traditional female practitioners, few have applied this same argument to male encroachment into the dairy. Fewer still have related this historical shift to broader debates in ecofeminist theory, or to historical

analyses of the emergence of capitalism. Thus, this chapter draws on previous debates in women's history by arguing that a new scientific philosophy and arising capitalist discourse influenced the movement from midwifery to obstetrics in the early modern period, and then newly applies the argument to understand how dairying was transformed from predominantly female practice to male-dominated industry. As such, by the end of this chapter, I will have established that women were no longer recognised in agricultural manuals as the supreme authorities on dairying by the nineteenth century, not just due to economic circumstances, but because of a cultural movement that similarly reformed traditional ways to practice midwifery.

Scientific Power and Gendered Influence

> One of the ways in which the male scientific community began to harness midwifery and the space of the birthing room for its own purposes was through language. This practice did not only take the form of associating midwives with witchcraft and occult herbalist practices which would obviously marginalise their status in communities where they practised; male scientists also confronted the traditional, often orally disseminated, experiential remedies of (frequently female) medical practitioners in rural communities with the obfuscatory language of experimental science … During the course of the seventeenth century the separation of the discourses of New Science and traditional medicine became more pronounced. An increasingly technological and mechanical approach to the discipline refashioned it as a self-consciously masculine, professional discourse, and the similarly masculinised world of print disseminated the practice. (Julie Sanders, 'Midwifery and the New Science in the Seventeenth Century,' 1999, pp.77-78)

In modern times, professional expertise and education through the written word commonly go hand-in-hand. But skilful proficiency is not always demonstrated through qualifications, nor does book-learning always outweigh personal experience. In *When Species Meet*, Haraway discusses the case of C.A Sharp, an amateur dog-breeder who, despite not being a geneticist, uncovered the gene defect Collie Eye Anomaly (CEA) because of her close relationship with her dog, who had developed this defect. "Sharp's involvement in determining the mode of inheritance of CEA in her breed," Haraway says, "shows how 'lay' agency can work in 'clerical' canine genetics research and publishing" (109). This kind of lay agency was, at the start of the early modern period, the main way that medical and agricultural knowledge operated through their relevant communities. While such

information was passed on through conversations between peers, print's emergence as the accepted disseminator of expertise in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ensured that those who wrote and consulted books would become the primary agents of knowledge. Meanwhile, many manuals may have only been circulated in the male-dominated and elite world of educational establishments and professional consortia. When turning to the practices of midwifery and of dairying, this shift towards book-learning involved appropriating and gatekeeping knowledge from those who were once its purveyors: labouring women.

Labouring women – women working in the dairy, women who have been in labour, and those who have assisted with births – all gained proficiency from their travails in such spaces, spaces that were once trusted to female expertise. But their lay knowledge was frequently discarded by a professionalising tendency that began to exert control over traditional spheres of female work, and not necessarily for the better. For example, the act of lying flat while in labour came about after male obstetricians began to gain access to the birthing room, with one reason proposed for this unnatural position being that it was easier for the male midwife to intervene if complications arose.[87] However, a woman in trouble could be moved into a prone position at any time, so perhaps other reasons, such as "convenience," and the assertion of a new technique in order to ensure childbirth was seen as more of an "illness" to be dealt with by a male doctor rather than a female midwife, were at play (Dundes 637-638). This was in lieu of older, long-established methods that had allowed gravity to help with the birth by having the woman remain upright, shortening both the effort needed and the time taken during healthy deliveries (DiFranco and Curl 207-209).[88]

[87] DiFranco and Curl suggest that this shift in birthing position was due to the use of forceps (207), but they were not commonly used in births until the eighteenth-century (Dundes 639).

[88] DiFranco and Curl also note that traditional methods (such as squatting when in labour, a more effective and less tiring position) have only recently been taken up again by Western medical communities. They add that "midwives have generally been more open to the recommended changes than physicians and nurses, who often choose to continue doing what they have always done" (209-210).

Indeed, as discussed in the Introduction, and as will be further outlined in chapter two, other practices aimed solely at the convenience of human male practitioners began to insert themselves into the dairy. It can be argued that the invention of the forceps in the sixteenth century, and their increasingly common usage from the eighteenth-century onwards by licensed male practitioners only (Merchant 123), added an extra layer of male-dominated mechanistic professionalism to the birthing room that aided the ongoing exclusion of working women from its confines.[89] And, while the invention of the milking machine in 1836 is a separate and distinct historical moment to the invention of the forceps, and came into being much later than the latter, such a machine was also, at first, "extremely uncomfortable for the cow" (Fussell, 'Farm Dairy Machinery,' 222). Thus, just as the obstetrician's birthing room was primarily designed for the comfort of the doctor, the first milking machine was equally made with only the human in mind.

Similarly, the advent of another machine, the printing press (invented in 1440) oversaw the denigration of the oral forms of knowledge-making that were common in midwifery and dairying traditions. As Margaret Ferguson has remarked, "forms of literacy associated with the new technology of printing—new to Europe, at least—were often gendered masculine" (6). This began a cultural process that heralded the primacy of printed (and masculine) expertise over verbal forms of know-how, the latter being the common form of transmission of female-dominated practices. And, because "theories and practices we associate with Renaissance humanism have so powerfully shaped what most educated people in modern Western states have come to recognize and value as literacy" (76), conceptions of "literacy" still persist today that see the term defined as the reading and writing of written material. Indeed, the incredible influence Renaissance humanism – or what historian Julie Sanders has identified as the "new science" – has managed to exert over the Western

[89] Audrey Eccles notes that between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, midwifery "changed profoundly … two of the most obvious changes being the invention of the obstetric forceps, and the irruption of men into midwifery practice" (87). The forceps' invention was kept as a "family secret" for over a hundred years (14) hence why "the first illustration of the new instrument" was not made public until 1734, and its use was directed towards male, rather than female, readers (16).

world has wide-reaching implications that have affected both how scholars read the past, as well as on the development of medical and agricultural science.[90]

For example, the new science can be characterised as a mechanistic philosophy whose tenets are exemplified, as Sanders argues, in the satirical print, *Tittle-Tattle: Or, the Several Branches of Gossipping* (c.1603). This broadsheet "belittled" the role of the midwife, portraying them as mere "gossips," and implicitly classified men as the bearers of a purer knowledge – one that is developed through the written word (74). Here, Sanders concurs with Ferguson in that the printing press facilitated the birth of a new "masculine, professional discourse" through propagating such discursive practices, practices that additionally represented women as the disseminators of oral, traditional experience that was being recast, not as wisdom, but as "'tittle-tattle'" (78, 74).[91] "If women were mere gossips," Sanders says, "then men spoke the language of the New Science, an empirical discourse born of experiment and debate, not tradition and tittle-tattle" (74-75).[92]

Thus, the new science is here defined as an emerging culture that aimed to subsume the experiential by the experimental, and replace feeling with rationality. While such a movement away from what was later represented as folk knowledge has been widely considered scientific progress in

[90] Renaissance humanists advocated for a return to the ideals of the ancients, while the early modern scientific discourse advocated by Francis Bacon built upon classical thought, but did not merely repeat its claims. For instance, Baconianism advanced a scientific project that synthesised the knowledge of classical scholars with the observations of contemporary men of science.

[91] This is not to say that the "tittle-tattle" of women went wholly unrecognised as a form of knowledge-transmission. Sanders notes that: "in 1626 Ben Jonson had framed *The Staple of News*, his play about emergent print culture, with a meta-theatrical on-stage audience of female gossips, highlighting the interrelations between authorised male printed discourse and the 'tattle' of women. Jonson was acknowledging women's role in the communication of information, not simply parodying their worthless gossip in support of the male-dominated press-shops: the print-house and its propaganda, after all, explode in Act IV" (82).

[92] The tittle-tattle of midwives can be compared with how milkmaids were represented in seventeenth-century literature; in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (1623), Clown the Shepherd's son admonishes two young shepherdesses by saying "is there no manners left among maids?... is there not milking-time, when you are going to bed, or kiln-hole, to whistle of these secrets, but you must be tittle-tattling before all our guests?" (4.4.252-255).

action, it important to recognise that such progress was hindered through a blinkered approach to alternative forms of pedagogy. The new science was characterised as a pursuit that only men followed, and cultural biases prevented a useful synthesis of many logical conclusions drawn by women, whose traditional knowledge was commonly disregarded as amateurish or superstitious. After all, as Lisa Cody notes, "midwives, in contrast to their male counterparts, emphasized that they had become proficient at their craft through practice based on *feeling'* (Cody 35). This *feeling* was in the process of being stigmatised in favour of a scientific knowledge that discarded female forms of skill-sharing, leading to potentially less effective birthing practices that still permeate Western society to this day.[93]

There was little midwives could do to contribute to the printed sharing of knowledge; the lowered status of women meant that they were not the peers of the male readers and writers of print. However, there was some recognition of their competence in the early modern midwifery texts, and it is possible that some midwives availed themselves of these resources as well. While the oral transmission of expertise (alongside the practical experience gained from assisting other deliveries) is likely the main way midwives practiced and improved upon their trade, some early English texts on midwifery were dedicated to female midwives.[94] It is not clear whether all midwives could read, although Thomas Raynalde, in the first English book on midwifery, stated that "gentlewomen" had already been reading the book aloud to their midwives, while some "such as

[93] This is not to suggest that the advent of modern science did not also tremendously help births in other ways, but the discarding of valuable female-led data, and denying women the same medical education, hindered what could have been an effective synthesis of knowledge. Indeed, the adage "old wives' tale," defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "a widely held or traditional belief now thought to be incorrect or erroneous" ('old wife, n.'), demonstrates how oral storytelling and forms of wisdom that tended to the mystical were associated with the world of women, and denigrated as infallible. This is in spite of the fact that some of the information first gleaned through traditional female proficiency in herbalism and midwifery remains scientifically important to this day.

[94] This included Jacob Rueff's *Expert Midwife* (written in German in 1554, but first published in English in 1637) and the anonymous *Compleat Midwives Practice* (1656), a compilation of older manuals, including Rueff's text (Fissell 63).

could" had read it themselves (cited in Eccles, 12-13).[95] Additionally, women could even become the authors of such texts; the first English midwifery manual written by a woman was Jane Sharp's *The Midwives Book* (1671), a manual that was dedicated to the "midwives of England," her "sisters" (Sharp n.p). Thus, the tittle-tattle of the birthing room might have involved the use of such texts from as early as the sixteenth century.

However, Sanders has argued that Sharp's text was one of the few that was directed to women only; other midwifery manuals were "jointly addressed to surgeons and midwives – that is to say, to both male and female communities" (78). For example, Jacob Rueff's *Expert Midwife* (1637), is dedicated to "all grave and modest Matrons, especially to such as have to doe with women in that great danger of childe-birth, as also, to all young practitioners in Physick and Chirurgery" (Rueff n.p.). "The male texts," Sanders says, merely "serve to include, and to control the female practitioner" whereas Sharp's language was "plain … in an attempt to reach her informally educated audience, resisting therefore the discursive blockings that … enabled the New Science to consolidate its power" (78). In this case, Sharp's text may have been one of the few that was somewhat accessible to midwives. And it may have been one of the last; by the eighteenth century, women were no longer the writers, or deemed to be the readers, of such birthing books. As Audrey Eccles notes, by 1734, midwifery manuals were "more specifically designed for the male rather than the female midwife; a sign of the times and a foretaste of the future" (16).[96]

[95] While Raynalde stated this in the 1545 edition, *The Birth of Mankind* was first published in 1540, and was itself a translation of a 1513 German text.

[96] Indeed, the idea that midwives were incompetent was potentially believed well into the twentieth century, although midwives in small, rural communities were perhaps still well-regarded. For example, in *Lark Rise to Candleford*, Thompson remarks from her vantage point of 1945, that "in these more enlightened days the mere mention of the old, untrained village midwife raises a vision of some dirty, drink-sodden old hag without skill or conscience." But she defends the midwives of the 1880s, saying that "the great majority were clean, knowledgeable old women who took a pride in their office. Nor had many of them been entirely without instruction. The country doctor of that day valued a good midwife in an outlying village and did not begrudge time and trouble in training her. Such a one would save him many a six- or eight-mile drive over bad roads at night, and, if a summons did come, he would know that his presence was necessary" (140). She goes on to say that "the old midwife also had her good points, for which she now receives no credit" (141).

While Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford note that in 1720 women (particularly poorer women) still principally gave birth in a predominantly female environment (153), it was in the later part of the eighteenth century that male-midwives became far more prominent (Sanders 76), with male professionals dominating birthing rooms by the mid-to-late eighteenth century (Cody 44).[97] This coincided with a period when midwifery licences were predominantly given to male practitioners, while unlicensed female midwives "faced increasing restrictions" in the face of "male professionalization" (Mendelson and Crawford 153, 344). Additionally, the promotion of the forceps to male practitioners only, and the increasing educational opportunities offered to male midwives, allowed them to capture the economic potential of midwifery, immiserating many female midwives in the process (Eccles 16). While Mendelson and Crawford go on to argue that "male conspiracy seems too simple a view" to account for the increasing prominence of male practitioners, they do acknowledge that the "identity" of "male professionals" did depend on them "distancing themselves from those they categorized as ignorant and foolish women" (316). This distancing also had a clear monetary effect, as the unstable and poorer medium of unlicensed work would often be the only avenue open to working women.

While it would monetarily benefit these new male midwives to frame their female colleagues as incompetent, it cannot wholly account for why confidence in female-assisted deliveries declined following the seventeenth century. But what is clear that a cultural shift was occurring that was advancing male financial power. "During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," Wiltenburg

[97] The evidence used by Lisa Cody to demonstrate this is predominantly based upon records left by male and female midwives of the middle-to-upper classes. It is not representative of poorer women as, if unable to pay for a professional, these women would likely be attended to by female relatives – or they may call for an unlicensed (and thus probably female) midwife. While this would often be the reality for the majority of English women who existed during my period of study, what is clear is that public representations of midwifery in ballads, prints and papers were shifting; the foolishness of female midwives was often compared with the professional competence of male midwives and doctors through such mediums from the seventeenth-century onwards (Fissell 214; Sanders 74; Mendelson and Crawford 316). Culturally, men were becoming recognised as the authorities in the birthing room, even if women were still more often called upon due to economic necessity.

notes, “women suffered a substantial decline in economic power across wide areas of Europe, as population pressure and economic distress led to increasing restrictions on women’s work, and as advancing market organization tended to remove control of production from the household” (10). The opening of new, outside markets was a blow to women who were rarely afforded positions of power in trade; indeed, the growing invisibility of female domestic labour from market forces had a detrimental effect upon the financial power of all women, including midwives and, as the next section will demonstrate, housewives.

Agricultural Manuals and the New Science

> In the works of Fitzherbert and Heresbach, ‘good husbandry’ had signified order, economic stability and social hierarchy. Writers concerned with the smallholder had also acknowledged the contributions of women, albeit labouring within a gendered domestic economy. The writers of the Interregnum, informed by Baconianism and Puritanism, imagined rather a landscape revitalized by restless ingenuity and specifically masculinized endeavour. (Andrew McRae, *God Speed the Plough*, 1996, p.161)

At a time when midwifery was already in the process of being overtaken by the more lucrative and male-dominated obstetrics industry, capitalist practices were permeating the field of agriculture, as farming manuals in the seventeenth century became more focused upon profit. Andrew McRae has described this phenomenon as the “discourse of capitalist development,” a “specifically masculinized endeavour” (161) that overturned sixteenth-century characterisations of farming as a stable practice built upon longstanding folk wisdom.[98] Instead, a novel and experimental way of ameliorating

[98] This discourse was made possible by the fact that traditionally held ideas regarding agricultural and medicinal practice, as well as the very ordering of the state, the monarchy, and the church, were being questioned. McRae argues that this was seen most clearly during the Interregnum which, despite the defeat of republicanism at the Restoration, led to the strengthening of parliament and an erosion of many of the monarchy’s authoritative powers. Moreover, the hostilities surrounding the Civil War – Royalist and Parliamentarian forces were in almost perpetual conflict between 1642 and 1651 – were punctuated by the flourishing of various radical religious sects and libertarian political groups advocating for religious autonomy and civil liberties. While political factions like the Levellers and the Diggers were doomed to failure under Cromwell’s harsh reign, such movements contributed to the continuation of a radical undercurrent that espoused certain tenets of individual equality; ideas like universal (male) suffrage and an accountable government were not quelled during the Interregnum, nor after the Restoration. Such liberal tenets paved the way for the opening of markets with a focus on individual wealth-gathering through commerce, as this “discourse of capitalist development” came to be “widely embraced” after the dissolution of the Commonwealth of England (165).

agricultural practices gained a particular prominence. This innovative methodology, while arguably supposed to make the poor "rich, the rich richer," as one writer on husbandry, Walter Blith, espoused in 1649, instead caused widespread economic damage to poorer farmers through its promotion of the enclosure movement (McRae 151). The advancement of capitalist tenets continued into the eighteenth century and beyond, as husbandry texts began to focus far more upon yield and revenue than those in the preceding centuries (Overton 129).[99]

Notably, the development of this new economic discourse is directly related to the rising popularity of the new science. "The improvement of agriculture" Overton says, "took its place within a comprehensive Baconian programme which asserted empirical learning as 'a fruitful womb for the use and benefit man's life'" (158-159). Bacon's turns of phrase, like "fruitful womb," are designed to indicate the power of man over a characteristically feminine (and thus seemingly weak and malleable) nature. As Carolyn Merchant makes clear, Baconianism was "a new experimental method designed to constrain nature and probe into her secrets" that would both "improve and 'civilize' society" away from the perceived grip that the mystical and feminised natural world had over contemporary culture (148). Indeed, sixteenth-century husbandry manuals advocated traditional and mystical methods of farming that would be anathema to Baconian science; the latter began to be identified in farming books in the seventeenth century as these new discourses grew in popularity.[100]

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[99] This supposition is also supported in my analysis of the farming books in chapter two.

[100] A reliance on mysticism can be seen in Conrad Heresbach's *Foure Books of Husbandry*, published posthumously in 1577, as it details that one should sow lentils "from the fiue and twentieth day of the Moone to the thirtieth, so shall it be safe from Snayles" (34). Similarly, Leonard Mascall's *The First Booke of Cattell* (1587) warns that when it comes to gelding horses and the "cutting or letting blood", certain astrological signs are "most daungerous, if the Moone haue power ouer them" (51) and gelding should be avoided if the moon is temporarily in, for example, Taurus, or Leo. "Exact science had not, of course, been developed," says Fussell, when Mascall had lived, excusing why much of his work "is mixed up with superstition" (*Old English Farming Books*, 10). Of course, Fussell, writing in 1947, may be at odds with modern scientists by using the term "exact science," given the fact that scientific theories can never be wholly exact, but are continual investigatory processes designed to test what we think we know.

Similarly, the way women were written out of midwifery texts is comparable with the way in which, after the seventeenth century, agricultural manuals were overwhelmingly written with the male reader in mind.[101] Before this period, such texts were more likely to directly address women in relation to the role they had to play on the farm. For instance, John Fitzherbert's influential *Boke of Husbandry* (1534) has a whole section dedicated to "what warkes a wyfe shulde do in general" (60), tasks that included milking the cows and running the dairy. Another widely read text, Thomas Tusser's *Fiue hundreth points of good husbandry vnited to as many of good huswiferie* (1573), argues that housewives and their duties are essential in complementing the role of the husbandman. In addition, Gervase Markham, one of the most popular early-seventeenth-century agricultural writers, dedicated a book named *The English Huswife* (1615) to women.[102] Moreover, Louise Hill Curth has noted that early modern texts that "discussed both human and animal medicine were aimed at female readers" (84). For example, John Partridge's *The Widowes Treasure* (1588) contained information on curing farm animals with a "remdeye … for faint cattel" as well as alleviating the ailments of children with similar remedies for "Scabbes" and "Woormes" (n.p).

However, by the eighteenth century, despite a rise in the number of housewifery texts dedicated to women, only two of these texts featured advice on dairying: Richard Bradley's *Country Housewife* (1727) and William Ellis's *The Country Housewife's Family Companion* (1750).[103] Indeed, between 1700 and 1900, I have found only three other farming books that were designed for

[101] For instance, Keith Thomas has noted that the tendency to deride female knowledge came to be popular in the seventeenth century as "superstition," though he claims that such wisdom sprung from "common sense" roots (73-75).

[102] As did F.B, the author of *The Office of the Good Housewife* (1672).

[103] In the Introduction, I briefly discussed how the notion of housewifery became separated from dairying in the eighteenth century. This provides one reason as to why housewifery texts between 1700-1900 contain little or no mention of the practice, and the few that do make use of the 'country' prefix. Yet it is still notable that dairying advice shifted in favour of addressing men in lieu of women during this period, when the latter were likely still the main producers of cheese in England (McMurry 248-249).

women; a total of five.[104] This is a small proportion considering the vast number of dairying and related texts that were being printed during this long period, especially when bearing in mind the rising rates of female literacy.[105]

The fact that fewer agricultural texts were addressing women directly during this time suggests that creeping male dominance in this growing commercial industry went hand-in-hand with a representative decline of female labour power in agrarian literature. Indeed, as this chapter will demonstrate, women's labour in the dairy was relatively undervalued by male authors in the latter half of my period of study. While this chapter cannot make sweeping historical claims, as its attention is on how women came to no longer be represented as the authorities on dairying in technical farming manuals, the evidence outlined below brings into focus how the economic professionalisation of the dairying industry, alongside a new scientific discourse, allowed for greater mechanisation in the ideas and practices of the dairy, which in turn brought a greater influx of men into its confines.[106]

The earliest examples of manuals related to dairying (which tend to be housewifery manuals at this juncture) are in the sixteenth century, and were generally combined with accounts of

[104] The other three farming books dedicated to women during this period are Josiah Twamley's *Dairying Exemplified* (1784), Robert Huish's *The Female Friend* (1837), and John Burke's *Farming for Ladies* (1844), found through a study of over eighty texts on dairying and housewifery between 1700-1900. Interestingly, Huish's text was written to fill a gap in the market left by the fact that very few "middle class" women, in his eyes, were being educated on how to run a rural household (Huish iii, viii).

[105] Hundreds of dairying and related texts were printed between 1700-1900, with eighty of them studied succinctly. Even the texts almost solely concerned with dairying, such as William Harley's *The Harleian Dairy System* (1829), and Matthew Milburn's *The Cow* (1852), address the male reader only, when women were still exerting a fair amount of control over the dairy (McMurry 268). This is in contrast to earlier dairying texts, like Dowe's *A Dairie Booke* (1588), and Twamley's *Dairying Exemplified* (1784); both dedicate their manuals to women at a time when rates of female literacy were lower, and when there may have been more expectation that the information in the texts would be communicated second-hand. Thus, this later shift to exclude women from dairying texts does not appear to be a marketing strategy, nor does it accurately reflect the reality of gendered work in dairying at the time.

[106] A direct parallel with the practice of midwifery.

husbandry.[107] As previously discussed, the first agricultural text in English, John Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandry* (1534), details a housewife's many duties, including that she should "milke thy kye, secle thy calues" (60).[108] Similarly, Thomas Tusser's addition of housewifery to *A Hundreth Good Pointes of Husbandrie* (1557) in the newly named *Fiue Hundreth Points of Good Husbandry Vnited to as many of Good Huswiferie* (1573), aimed to provide some instruction to housewives: "Man, cow prouides, wife dayrye guides."[109] But, while most male authors at this time mainly focused upon giving advice to the male farmer rather than attempting to lay bare all the secrets of the dairy, there is one exception to the rule: Bartholomew Dowe's *A Dairie Book for Good Huswiues* (1588).

While Dowe's manual appears to be the first English text ever written on dairying, little is known about the author, and his text does not appear in the usual annals of celebrated past agricultural authors (such as in Fussell's 1947 *Old English Farming Books*). In contrast to the renowned texts by the likes of Tusser and Fitzherbert, Dowe's manual takes the form of a dialogue in the Platonic style between himself and an experienced dairywoman from South Hampshire – the latter having asked Dowe how cheese-making is conducted in Suffolk, his region of birth.[110] As dairying is still women's work, Dowe is conscious of the fact that it is unorthodox for him to speak on

[107] Unsurprisingly, the sixteenth century cannot boast a single housewifery manual written by a woman; not only were female authors rare at this time, but the concept of housewifery manuals was still nascent. The few agricultural texts that were printed in this century are mainly concerned with husbandry, didactically describing the practices undertaken by the principal male husbandman.

[108] After setting "all thynges in good order within thy house,"she is expected to "milke thy kye, secle thy calues, sye vp thy mylke, take vppe thy chyldren, and araye theym, and prouyde for thy husbandes brekefaste" (Fitzherbert 60-61).

[109] In this text, Tusser presents the housewife as a productive partner to the husbandman: "though husbandry semeth, to bring in ye gaines/yet huswiferie labours, seeme equal in paines" (44, 66).

[110] Dowe's manual is particularly interesting due to its unusual presentation as a Platonic dialogue. At this time, there was a resurgence of interest in ancient texts, while English-language plays were being printed for the first time. The emergence/re-emergence of these unusual formats for recognised literary media were challenging what was considered the norm in book writing. Dowe's new format, however, did not seemingly inspire proceeding agricultural authors.

the subject. Instead, he stresses that he is merely relating his own experience learned from "My Mother and her maides", and is not attempting to teach women their business:

> I praie you reporte that I haue not taken vpon me to teache you or others, how ye should make whitmeate, for it were vnseemely that a Man that neuer made anie, (but hath seene and behelde others in dooing thereof) should take vpon him to teache women that hath most knowledge and experience in that arte. (n.p.)

Dowe's belief that it would be "vnseemley" to tell a woman how to make cheese distances him from the practicalities of female labour, positioning himself as the uneducated observer, and women as the experienced practitioners. Thus, Dowe's deference to his mother, and all dairywomen, provides a way for women and their lived experiences to be heard through the male-dominated print industry.[111] Indeed, at the end of the manual, Dowe quotes a poem on housewifery written by his mother and, as Julie Fleming notes, its "survival" allows us to "reconstruct a story of filial admiration and loyalty"; the text brims with respect for his mother, the competent dairywoman (204). But, while Dowe's characterisation does give a woman a voice in print – something that was severely lacking at this time – he could indeed be exhibiting a new scientific perspective, in that he relies on the expertise of the dairywoman. The importance of experience to empirical truth is laid bare by Francis Bacon; writing later in 1620, he ventured that: "truth is not to be sought in the good fortune of any particular conjuncture of time, which is uncertain, but in the light of nature and experience, which is eternal" (30). As such, while Baconian philosophy in theory relies upon experiential evidence, new forms of scientific inquiry could also be used to invalidate those with hands-on understanding. As this chapter will demonstrate, ensuring dairying knowledge became rewritten in scientific language allowed such understanding to become a male preserve. Indeed, through Dowe's noble search for truth and accuracy, he was perhaps unwittingly paving the way for other men to appropriate women's work through the written word.

[111] Though a less charitable interpretation could be that, given the fact that other agricultural authors of his time were loath to delve into dairying methods, Dowe is merely opportunely filling this gap in the market. However, he was not seemingly rewarded for his efforts, and his text appears to have not been popular.

Such commandeering of female labour at the hands of male authorship can also be seen in Hugh Plat's 1602 *Delightes for Ladies*, one of the first manuals dedicated to the subject of housewifery. Here, Plat is playfully aware of his appropriation of knowledge, discussing how he "robbed my wifes Dairy" of the "secret" to making "a larger and daintier Cheese of the same proportion of milk then is commonly vsed or knowne by any of our best dairiewomen at this day." The use of the verb "rob" is interesting, given his wife's previous reluctance to give away her recipe, having "hitherto refused all recompenses that haue beene offered her by Gentlewomen for the same" (n.p.). Her eventual agreement to part with her recipe at least sees her given some credit for her work – and likely a share in any financial rewards reaped from the book's sale through her marriage – but many women may not have been similarly compensated. For instance, Gervase Markham, in his *The English Huswife* (1615), commits fifteen pages to educating women on dairying without referencing where he encountered such information.[112]

While it is not that unusual that one of the first texts on housewifery should contain such comprehensive information on the subject (a market for such information had been growing ever since Tusser updated his own text to include housewifery advice), Markham, unlike Dowe, does not apologise for writing about a craft reserved for women:

> The woman must sit on the neere side of the Cow … shee shall then milke the Cow boldly, and not leaue stretching and straining of her teats till not one drop of milke more will come from them, for the worst point of Hus-wifery that can bee, is to leaue a Cow halfe milkt. (177)

Such advice is unlikely to have sprung from his direct experience as this is clearly, as Markham states, a task that is undertaken by a woman. Additionally, the recipes for butter, cheese, and cream in the proceeding pages are presented without reference to their female originators. In sharp contrast to the near reverence Dowe gives to dairywomen in his opening pages, Markham presents

[112] In his other work, Gervase Markham only touches upon the role of the housewife. In *Cheape and Good Husbandry* (1614) he admonishes "foolish curious housewifes" for checking hen nests too early (113).

dairying knowledge as his own, and does not credit the women who conveyed their techniques to him. Indeed, one could argue that women's experiences have been fleeced to furnish both the printing press and the pockets of male authors. This is a marked difference to not just Dowe, but to agricultural authors of the sixteenth century. For example, Fitzherbert notes that his advice to women comes from what he has heard from "olde houswyues" (61) rather than from his own experience, while Tusser stresses that it is "good huswiues, know best how to guide" (44).

It is too early in this chapter to argue that Markham's text began the start of a trend to minimise women's role in the teaching of dairying, positioning men as the holders of knowledge, and women as merely the amateurish practitioners.[113] But what it does demonstrate is that, in certain seventeenth-century manuals, women were no longer considered as specialists of the craft.[114] This appropriation of female-designated capabilities into textual form may have emboldened other male authors to comment upon dairying practices and to offer advice on their improvement. For example, in his *The Second Parts of Systema Agriculturae* (1689) – the sequel to his popular *Systema Agriculturae* (1668) – John Worlidge incorporates a small section on dairying instruction, though he admits that he does not have any direct experience of it himself:

> And although I pretend not to trouble the Reader, with the Art of making *Butter* and *Cheese;* nor to have any other insight therein, than bare speculation and hearsay. (69)

While he does go on to "trouble the reader" with his scant knowledge, Worlidge makes sure to include a recipe, "found in the Annotations on Mr. Samuel Hartlibs Legacy of Husbandry" on "how to make better Butter than ordinary" by "a great Housewife dwelling in the Isle of Ely" (70). But even

[113] Though by the nineteenth century, women would begin to be displaced as the practitioners as well (Pinchbeck 40-41).

[114] There are some exceptions. Like the agricultural authors of the previous century, B.F's text *Office of the Good Housewife* (1672) merely touches upon how to avoid spoiling the products of the dairy as, by his own admission, he knows less than the "Country-House-Wife," and "to speak any thing here of the making, keeping and ordering of Butter and Cheese, would be impertinent; for I presume there is no Countrey-House-Wife but is well acquainted therewith, and for those that live in Cities and great Towns, it matters not whether they are skilled therein or not" (24).

though this credit validates the proficiency of the female butter maker, Worlidge seems to be at the forefront of a trend in agricultural literature that criticises women's expertise in, and attitudes to, dairying. For instance, my research suggests that his is the first extant English agricultural text that denigrates "tradition and opinion" in local cheese-making methods, and laments the fact that these women are unable to be persuaded to stop making their "vulgar" cheese (68).[115] He goes on to state that:

> … the Covetousness in some, and Ignorance in others, is a great occasion that bad *Butter* and *Cheese* are made of the same Milk; of which by good handling, very good may be had; for there is the same Philosophy in these transmutations, as is in the fermentations of Beer and Bread: And all Men are sensible of the differences of the strengths and tasts of those things, meerly from the Mechanic operations. (69)

Worlidge's complaint, then, centres on the idea that many dairywomen were failing to manufacture decent products because they were too stubborn, or too foolish, to change their methods. His allusion to "all Men" being aware of differences in taste, without reference to women, implies that men are privy to an innate knowledge of the "mechanic operations," meaning only they can inherently know the quality of the cheese. Though paradoxical considering the new science's assumed reliance upon the experiential, Worlidge's argument suggests that it is solely men who employ a form of scientific intuition; women who refuse to change a recipe based on the perception of a man who has no cheese-making ability is, to him, a sign of "covetousness" or "ignorance." He adds:

> All that is to be wish'd is that the good Housewives understood more of this sort of Philosophy, and [were] less wedded to Tradition and Humour; Then I am confident these Commodities would be very much improved. (70)

And yet, women were at the time prohibited from studying new experimental philosophies in various institutions and academies which, combined with a lack of material dedicated to their

[115] Though Twamley does applaud some "ingenious housewives" who have changed the historic dairying practices in their area to make what he calls "good cheese" (68).

instruction, prevented them from learning new methods through the same avenues that were open to men. Worlidge's alternative title, *The Mystery of Husbandry*, demonstrates that his manual is addressed to male readers and not to women, thus his recipe for good butter may have gone unnoticed by those who made butter: dairywomen. As such, the first explicit promotion of a new, mechanic philosophy in agricultural literature was used to denigrate those who were not actually invited to access any of its technical findings. This new science would continue to endorse book-learning over practical experience, and began to profoundly affect the way cheese-making was discussed in the next century.[116]

And yet, there are eighteenth-century manuals that still praise the work of dairywomen, such as Richard Bradley's *The Country Housewife* (1727); the cheese-making recipes it contains are owing to, as he says, "the most ingenious ladies'' who provided him with them "for publick Benefit". He adds:

> …It may seem necessary that I make some Apology for the work I now publish which, for the most part, falls within the Ladies Jurisdiction: but I hope I am the more excusable, as my Design is rather to assist, than to direct. (viii)

But Bradley was criticised by his peers, such as William Ellis in *The Country Housewife's Family Companion* (1750), for being a charlatan.[117] For instance, Bradley's excuse that that he cannot enter the "Ladies Jurisdiction" is seen by Ellis to be an admission of the fact that he knows nothing about "country" housewifery, rather than a sign that Bradley was being respectful towards women and

[116] It should be noted that women remained the authorities on cheesemaking in this century and are often celebrated for their craft in other agricultural texts. For example, Samuel Hartlib's *His Legacy of Husbandry* (1652) praises dairywomen as "ladies of transcendent goodnesse" (159). Indeed, Sally McMurray argues that women remained the main cheesemakers in England up until the early twentieth century (263) although, as this chapter will demonstrate, the praise and influence they received in earlier agricultural texts declined sharply from the eighteenth-century onwards.

[117] As I discussed in the Introduction, by the eighteenth century, farmers had come to deride the idea of "book husbandry" – that agricultural texts could supersede hands-on forms of learning – as many agricultural authors during this century, like Richard Bradley (a botanist) were ill-informed about aspects of agrarian life. However, opposition to such authors thought to be "reading too many 'farming romances' and living out mad fantasies as 'knights-errant in farming'" (Fisher 315) did not prevent the unstoppable tide towards book-learning becoming a key component of agricultural knowledge-sharing.

their craft. Indeed, Ellis not only sneers at Bradley, but ensures that the reader is aware that Ellis himself is a keeper of cows:

> A Book entitled *The Country Housewife*, without an account in it of the Advantages that Cows may yield, and how such Advantages may be acquired, would, in my opinion, render me a preposterous Author, and be a tacit Declaration I was never Owner of a Cow; or if I was, that I knew not how to write of her Qualities, which is perfectly necessary in the Work I have here undertaken; for Cows are certainly the most useful beasts belonging to a Country-house, because at Gentlemen's Country-houses and at Farms, their Produce of Milk, Cream, Butter, Cheese, and the management of them, generally belongs to and comes under the Woman's Province. (170)

To Ellis, measuring the advantages of each cow should be a key component to housewifery manual-writing, providing an example of how scientific, financial language was becoming a marker of serious didactic agricultural material. But what is also interesting is that, while he notes that "the management" of cows is "generally" left to women, his text makes it clear in other ways how men have encroached into the dairy. At one point, Ellis is given guidance on making butter by a male grazier who rears cattle for the market, while a "great dairyman" provides another recipe for "what the dairymen call Second-butter." The latter, however, is clearly a third-hand account; it is the dairyman's wife who, to make the "first and best butter… skims every 12 Hours in Summer" (170). Thus, while the recipe originated from the dairyman's wife, as women remained the main cheesemakers in England until the early-twentieth century (McMurry 263), the coining of the term "Second-butter" is attributed to dairymen. It is clear that Ellis's manual sees men recognised as sources of dairying knowledge in ways they were not before; not only are they labelled as dairymen for the first time, but they are also privileged as the primary authorities on the subject. Meanwhile, women were clearly being dethroned from the business by this male-dominated authorship, as written expertise (the writing of the recipe) came to be favoured over practice (the making and following of the said recipe).

And yet, despite the label of "dairymen," Ellis's text suggests that these men were the managers of the business side of the dairy, and not involved in the process of cheesemaking

themselves. Their knowledge would have likely been sourced from their wives or female employees, who were no longer being acclaimed for their expertise. Overall, Ellis's text illustrates growing male confidence in the dissemination of dairying methods, as it is now men, not women, who are being consulted. This practice was concurrent with the proliferation of what was termed book-farming in this century; labourers were continually being observed, and their labour appropriated in book form (but never credited), which aided the flourishing of the agricultural book industry. Thus, dairying – a practice once firmly separated from husbandry through its designation as women's work – was being closely observed by male overseers for a multitude of economic reasons. This is also shown by Ellis's increased confidence in applying the knowledge he has learned to new uses. While in Ellis's text it is still a "maid'' who carries out the milking, the author claims to have watched the process, and provides the reader with instruction on how not to be a "slow milker" (175) – a task that is hard to learn through observation alone.

Additionally, while Ellis still includes accounts of dairying by women who are presented as authorities, as seen by the section 'A Somersetshire Dairy-Maid's Account of Making Butter with Scalded Cream' (321), his treatment of women in its pages seems brusque. He quickly finds fault with dairymaids, whom he calls "idle sort of milkers," accusing them of thievery and ignorance (175-176).[118] Not only is Ellis's attitude markedly different to the tone of earlier writers such as Dowe, he also does not efface himself from the conversation by announcing his embarrassment at dealing in women's affairs. Instead, he argues that his "few hints will suffice to the Intelligent" housewife (v). The implication here is that women who do not take these instructions on board are imprudent, an attitude concurrent with Worlidge's assessment of the "ignorant" dairywoman.

While Ellis clearly had some experience with agricultural matters, his knowledge would still have been limited compared with those who handled such tasks day in and day out. Indeed, Ellis

[118] Tusser and Markham also warned against the inexperience of young milkmaids, but argued that the housewife would know how to take her household in hand. Ellis implicitly distinguished between the "intelligent" housewife (one who listens to him) and the foolish woman, who does not (*Country Housewife*, v).

seems to imply that he is better suited than women to advise on matters of housewifery, it being his duty to prevent "the great losses that have accrued to Country Households, by a wrong Management of their House-hold Affairs" (i). Seemingly, the appropriation of dairying expertise (a process that Markham arguably began) has continued with Ellis. While both Markham and Ellis observed women undertaking their tasks on a dairy farm, Ellis positioned himself as an expert in a more forthright manner than the latter author.

And in 1787, Josiah Twamley's landmark text *Dairying Exemplified* was published, considered by historians (Fussell, *More Old English Farming Books*, 132) and by Twamley himself to be the first ever dairying manual. However, as discussed in chapter one, such a supposition omits Dowe's 1588 *Dairie Booke for Good Huswives* from the annals of agricultural literature. Dowe's manual was unorthodox, as his decision to structure his text as a dialogue, and include one of the only pieces of sixteenth-century English dairywoman poetry, ensured that the dairywoman's voice was plainly and directly heard. In contrast, Twamley's guide begins with a complaint about ignorant and intractable dairywomen:

> I am well acquainted, how unthankful an office it is, to attempt to instruct or inform Dairy-women, how to improve their method, or point out rules, which are different from their own, or what hath always been practised by their Mothers, to whom they are often very partial, as having been esteemed the best Dairy-women of their time. (10)

Here, Twamley voices his anger at the one of the most common refrains he hears from dairywomen: "what does he know of dairying, or how should a man know anything of Cheese-making?" His reply seems reasonable at first: "But let these remember, that I have had frequent opportunities, of consulting the best of Dairy-women, in many counties, who I knew from experience did know how to make good Cheese" (11). However, he still has not undertaken the practical labour himself; Dowe's words that it would be "vnseemely that a Man that neuer made anie, (but hath seene and behelde others in dooing thereof) should take vpon him to teache women that hath most knowledge and experience in that arte" (n.p.) come to mind. Even Twamley's dedication in the preface to "the most

excellent dairywomen of Great Britain" is coloured by his belittling of the huge role they will have played in his consultations with them: "from them I had the first hints that led me to the performance … joined with my own knowledge and experience" (v). Yet, due to his position as a wealthy cheese factor (McMurry 254) it is very unlikely that his knowledge extended into milking cows, or any further than watching the work of women, hearing their experiences, and eating the fruits of their labour.

But a lack of practical expertise did not dissuade male agricultural writers from, in true Baconian style, attempting to "probe" the secrets of the dairy, despite being met with a certain amount of resistance. For instance, another eighteenth-century author of farming books, William Marshall, was wont to complain that dairywomen shielded their art in "mystery" that, as he said, "so far from being scientific, it is altogether immechanical" (quoted in McMurry, 255). Such complaints, McMurry has argued, demonstrate the "frustration" (256) that these authors had in gaining access to the dairy, and suggests that women were aware of what would happen if they surrendered all their secrets to male print. Just as many eighteenth-century dairywomen refused to support the movement towards factory-made cheese, recognising that it would not only potentially compromise the end result, but see them out of a job (Valenze 168), perhaps dairywomen were coy with their knowhow for the very same reason.

Hence why it would have been economically useful to displace women as the proprietors of dairying knowledge, after allowing their closely held techniques to be replicated (and then profited from) by businessmen. Such a move could have been set in motion as soon as the first manual that mentioned housewifery was produced – John Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandry* (1534) – and committed to (linen) paper those tasks "a housewife shulde do in general" (60). The directing of female affairs through the medium of a new technology that was far less accessible to the average woman certainly did not help matters. But these earlier authors understood that female experience in dairying was paramount, an assumption that was first explicitly challenged by Worlidge. The

latter's "wish" that "the good Housewives understood more of this sort of Philosophy" (Worlidge 70) can thus be read as a precursor to Twamley's desire that there be "proper methods'' to the operation of dairying, based upon "rational principles" (Twamley iii, 9). But cheesemaking requires being able to determine "proper temperature and time" involving precise "measurements literally incalculable without modern instruments." As such, only learning and observation from long-held experience in the dairy could result in its manufacture before the twentieth century (Valenze 153). Similarly, Twamley's argument that dairywomen have never called "in the alliance of either Philosophy" (Twamley 16) relies on the same assumption that Worlidge made: because women have not been formally educated in scientific methods, they are presumed to be unable to parse certain natural principles. Instead, Twamley belittles the hard labour undertaken by dairywomen, shaking his head over the "great number of inferior dairies" (7).\

I have identified John Worlidge as the first agricultural author to set in motion this need for men to uncover the principles of dairying. However, Deborah Valenze argues that Twamley and William Marshall are the writers who "effectively displaced women from positions of authority by appropriating the role of instructor and obliterating the agency of women in dairy production" (155). But while Twamley's text certainly condescends dairywomen, and utilises new scientific arguments as an excuse for male interference, Marshall seems the keener proponent of male dairy managers. Twamley, for instance, like Dowe, Worlidge and Bradley before him, cited the women whose recipes he incorporated, and only mentions "dairymen" once; to relate that they are "generally the breeders of calves" (Twamley 102-103).[119] Marshall, however, in compiling volume two of *The Rural Economy of Gloucestershire* (1789), mainly visited dairies that were overseen by men (156), despite the fact that a "mistress" or "experienced dairymaid" was still the main "superintendant" of all dairies at this time (263). And, though he acknowledged Mrs Badon of Deyshire as an "experienced and intelligent

[119] This is nothing new. Husbandmen in the early modern period would often handle the breeding and the selling and buying of cows, though housewives would have been involved too. This is why Markham includes such guidance in his *English Huswife* (1616), a text dedicated to women.

manager," his uppermost praise was afforded to a dairyman named Rich Foxham, "whose cheese has long been held in the highest estimation … and which is …. the most highly flavoured dairy of cheese I have anywhere tasted." Meanwhile, Foxham's female staff are not mentioned. And, while referencing one of the few times a man was directly involved in the cheesemaking process, Marshall sees an opportunity to argue that dairywomen are no longer suited to larger dairies:

> A dairy of eighty or a hundred cows, is too great labour for any woman; it is painful to see it. In one instance in this district, a man was employed in this laborious department, and, in a large dairy, it is certainly a man's work. (156)

I would agree, then, with Valenze, that Marshall supplanted "the authority of the dairywoman with that of the male manager" (Valenze 162) as, even though the former would have had more direct experience, he preferred to record the voices of the latter. For instance, volume one of *The Rural Economy of Gloucestershire* (1789) – a text that also portrays women as bullishly resistant to new methods of dairying – sees Marshall prioritise Mr Bigland's account of the dairy over that of one of the "'first dairywomen of the district'" (Valenze 162). Just as Ellis attributed the instructions for second butter to dairymen instead of the women who produced said recipe, Marshall obscures female labour in aid of the dairyman. While Markham's reticence as to where his source material originated can perhaps be explained by the fact that he was considered a great plagiarist (Fussell, *Old English Farming Books*, 24), Marshall exaggerated, or at least brought to greater prominence, the growing influence of male managers in the dairy business by allowing dairymen to take credit for the work of women, while at the same time denigrating the strength of the latter.

The tendency to diminish the value of women's work in the dairy and laud the experience of the dairyman continued into the nineteenth century. For example, while John Watson's *Housewife's Directory* (1825) provided advice on the management of the dairy because the "men" who had written such manuals were not "competent" to give such guidance (v), his section on dairying does not credit dairywomen; the irony of another male author giving unsolicited dairying instruction is not

addressed. And, while Watson does praise the "instructions of Mrs Watson and myself" for producing daughters who are "patterns of careful and economical housewifery" (vi), Mrs Watson is not heard of again, nor is she a co-author of the manual.[120]

Similarly, Robert Huish's *The Female's Friend* (1837) was written to provide "observations" to young women in the "middle classes of society" (vii), as, when "we cast a glance at the prospectus of 'A Respectable Establishment for Young Ladies,'" he says, "where do we find a single branch of knowledge inculcated which is calculated to form a good and valuable housewife, or the clever and active mistress of a family?" (iii).[121] However, Huish does this without seemingly conferring with women. He has instead been "aided by other literary and professional men," while his entry on the dairy consults a male farmer, "Mr Moubray." As such, no women are mentioned, despite Huish's note that dairying still "belongs to the sphere of the female" (i, 259, vi).

And yet, Huish's observation was beginning to fall out of date, as by this time men were firmly involved in the dairying business in England; or at least, that is what the agricultural manuals suggest. Though the intended audience of Burke's *Farming for Ladies* (1844) was "ladies in the middle ranks of life" (iii) and includes testimonies from dairywomen like Mrs Glasse (407), it is the "dairymen" who have control over the cows' wellbeing; they decide when the cows are allowed outside (386), rather than allowing women to manage their own herds. Likewise, in John Morton's *The Handbook of Dairy Husbandry* (1860), Morton pronounces that it is dairymen who generally

[120] This appears to be the norm in the agricultural manuals of this century. As Valenze explains, "the female dairy manager was absent as an essential character" in tomes such as John Lawrence's *New Farmer's Calendar* (1802). However, she was "nevertheless the source of his expertise: he admitted that he obtained his knowledge of the dairy from his wife." Valenze also notes that James Anderson's *Recreations in Agriculture, Six Vols* (1799-1802) similarly referenced his wife as the source of his knowledge in passing, but both texts seem to diminish their wives' contributions through the brevity of their acknowledgement and, in Anderson's case, by belittling "her independent contribution to the science of dairying" (156).

[121] The term "housewife" has changed again by this time, as Huish distinguishes between housewives and mistresses throughout the text. For example, good housewives are skilled at a wide variety of domestic tasks but may not always be the mistress of the house. A "clever and active" mistress could also be a good housewife, or could merely be good at directing the housewives and maids in her employ.

"yield" "butter and cheese" (2), not women. While in early modern England, the wife generally had chief control over the cows and their end products (Markham, *English Huswife*, 177-174), after the eighteenth century, English agricultural manuals make clear that this is the dairyman's task now. As John Lawrence noted in *The New Farmer's Calendar* in 1802, "the dairy-man must be the perfect judge of the live flock he entertains" (161) while in 1852 Matthew Milburn argued that "the dairyman is very careful in selecting his cows." Likewise, Milburn demonstrates that the dairyman has ultimate control over when the calf can be taken away – a practice that Milburn believes "too many dairymen" are now doing "the moment" the calf "is dropped" (48, 76). This is not to say that women did not still oversee important aspects of cow care, rather than being relegated to the buttery. John Lawrence in *A General Treatise on Cattle* (1802), in repeating the advice of "a very thorough dairy-woman" at his "elbow" who knew all about "the nature of the cow, the quality of the food, the season" (122), revealed a woman very much in charge. Agnes Scott's *Dairy Management* (1860) makes clear that, in her native Scotland at least, she had overall control of her cows' housing and feeding regimens to produce the best milk and cheese (Scott 5-7). Similarly, Morton includes a "monthly calendar of dairy operations … from the pen of a thoroughly accomplished and experienced dairy-woman" who managed her business adroitly (88).

But while women were still often the de facto managers of many, if not all, aspects of the dairy, their authority had been eroded. It was no longer assumed that only women milked cows and made cheese. For instance, McMurry describes how "Mr. Willis won a prize for cheese in 1861, but when queried about it by other farmers at a club meeting" said it was entirely his wife's doing (255), exemplifying how, though women still mainly directed the actual cheese-making process, men regularly queried each other on recipes that had once been the sole purview of women. Likewise, men like Mr Willis would also reap the praise and benefits of such a business – much like Marshall's Mr Foxham a century before. By 1896, the third edition of James Long and John Morton's *Handbook of The Dairy* was only addressed to the dairyman in charge of operations: "our chief purpose is to supply in full the information which the dairyman rather than the farmer needs" (2). This text

compiled much of Morton's 1860 *Handbook* into a newer format that completely elides mention of women, save for once: "in large dairies milking lasts about an hour each time, and ten to twelve cows are allotted to each man or woman" (Long and Morton 50).

Indeed, as the latter comment makes clear, men had begun to take over the actual practice of milking as well by the mid-nineteenth century.[122] Previously, even in the beginning of that century, generally only women were described in manuals as milkers; in 1844, John Burke derisively suggested that a male milker "should be put in petticoats" (408).[123] But Matthew Milburn noted in 1852 that "foremen" or "masters" now commonly milk as well, though he contends that "women are by far the most capable of milking; their hands are more gentle and delicate, and the cows seem generally to prefer them" (78). Additionally, Henry Stephens said in the 1871 third edition of *The Book of the Farm* (first published in 1841) that while "it is rare to see a cow milked in Scotland by any other than a woman … men commonly do it in England."[124] Stephens, like Burke, finds this an "office unbefitting" man, stressing that "the term *dairy-maid* implies one who milks cows, as well as performs the other functions of the dairy" while "*dairy-man*" should just indicate "one who owns a dairy" (413).

But while Stephens revels in the importation of new scientific methods – what he describes as agriculture "rejoicing in the light of acknowledged Science" – when it comes to the improvement of "livestock" and the adoption of new machinery (v-vi), his distaste at men milking cows, a

[122] By 1860, "large dairies" were seeing "9 or 10 cows … allotted to each man; women are not always even generally employed for the purpose" (Morton 42). Marshall's wish was seemingly coming true.

[123] For instance, all the texts studied prior to the mid-eighteenth century in this thesis, describe only women milking, and men are not commonly described as partaking in the practice until later in the nineteenth century.

[124] This suggestion that milking continued as part of female practice in Scotland begs further investigation, though it is interesting that *Dairy Management*, an 1860 text by the Scottish author Agnes Scott "revealed an accomplished dairywoman intimately versed in every aspect of her cows' diet" (McMurry 254). In contrast, I have found no English dairying manuals written by women before the twentieth century.

traditionally female occupation, is a necessary result of this upheaval.[125] Similarly, John Walker in *The Cow and Calf: A Practical Manual on the Cow and Calf in Health and Disease* (1887) laments that male milkers are now the norm due to their less-than-gentle methods, and that they "should only be employed under the eye of a good man" (68). It is ironic that those who were part of a process that denigrated long-held dairying customs over book-learning were beginning to mourn the fact that certain gendered conventions were no longer being upheld.

As such, while women were "central to cheesemaking" up until the early-twentieth century, the fact that they were being written out of agricultural manuals in the eighteenth century – long before they were ejected from the dairy – resists Pinchbeck's suggestion that women voluntarily withdrew from the travails of dairying (McMurry 279, 41). Valenze also challenges Pinchbeck's theory, arguing that "new scientific agriculturalists, joined by men of commerce, made serious efforts to lay bare the dairy's store of secrets," allowing for the "expansion of commercial dairying in the eighteenth century" which in turn "introduced new criteria for production and instigated conflict over the value of female labour" (143, 168-169). However, McMurry does not countenance that there was a replacement of "traditional knowledge (the province of women) by formal scientific education (possessed mostly by men)" as she argues that women made up "a significant portion of the student body in such institutions as the British Dairy Institute" in the nineteenth century (266). And yet, her argument falls short when turning to the organisation of twentieth-century dairying.[126] For instance, once governmental intervention undermined farmhouse cheesemaking practices in 1933 (268-269), women were not left as the ones running the factories and large-scale dairies in the oncoming industrial farming age.

[125] Furthermore, Stephens makes clear that his text is an "educational work … to teach young men … the art of rural husbandry" and includes detailed information on milking cattle (ix). Though he believes women should be the chief milkers of cows, his book is not dedicated to women, suggesting that women should only continue with the lower-paid tasks.

[126] Additionally, McMurry acknowledges that it was men who were the "systematizers, teachers, and researchers" in such institutes (266).

While economic gain is too simple an explanation as to why women were written out of agricultural manuals – male authors would likely prefer sourcing their information from male dairymen for various reasons – it is clear that many such writers stigmatised women's agricultural expertise in a strikingly similar way to how midwives came to be denigrated in the seventeenth century. Just as female midwives were maligned as ignorant and superstitious women, Worlidge's comments about dairywomen's veneration of "tradition" and their seeming "ignorance" over the "mechanic operations" aided women being sidelined as peddlers of amateurish arts. Consequently, I would again argue that the decline of female authority in the birthing room and in the dairy are similar historical trends; the weakening of women's grip upon these areas can be traced back to the emerging science of empiricism, and the privileging of rationality over intuition and traditional expertise.[127] Such a movement towards a Baconian distaste for the uneducated woman is observed in related texts, like the preface to Thomas Topham's *A New Compendious System on Several Diseases Incident to Cattle* (1781), wherein the anonymous editor argues that the practice of cattle doctoring is "fallen and degraded" as it is "practised by the most ignorant Old Women" alongside "Barbers , Blacksmiths, Taylors and Weavers" (xi). He advises that the "profession of Physic" be left "to those who have opportunity, learning, and capacity to study it" (xvi). This preface provides a clear example of how agricultural learning was wrested from women and other members of the working classes who utilised traditional methods, rather than money and power, to make a living.

The housewifery and related manuals analysed in this chapter would concur with the fact that women were not displaced from the dairy solely for economic reasons, but also due to a movement that prioritised written over oral knowledge, and the expertise of the male observer over the female practitioner. This supposition is supported by the fact that a similar displacement occurred when midwifery was superseded by the practice of obstetrics a century earlier. Thus, a

[127] Baconian empiricism was itself associated with writing, print and experimentation. Bacon himself decried the tittle-tattle of gossiping women as a form of knowledge-making.

trend that can trace its roots to the seventeenth century oversaw the belittling of women's work, while overrepresenting men's contributions to dairying. Indeed, female labour was made more invisible as it was appropriated for the book market as the centuries progressed. As dairying began to be erased from housewifery manuals, and agricultural texts diminished the significance of the dairywoman's expertise, it is no wonder that the industry became male-dominated by the twentieth century. As men were presented as the only gender sensible of "the Mechanic operations" (Worlidge 60), they were well-placed to succeed women in the dairy as interest in the science behind dairying grew. Finally, the milking machine can be seen as the new science and capitalist discourse expressed technologically. The male engineers inventing and refining the machine throughout the nineteenth century would come into conflict with the (often female) milkers whose jobs they were trying to make "redundant," while at the same time using "brutal" and "obtuse" methods to perfect their machines, as they considered the cow as little more than a "container" of milk (Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 86-87). And yet, the rise of a mechanical character that would characterise relations between human and farm animal, woman and cow, did not begin with the machine's invention but, as the next chapter will demonstrate, centuries earlier.

Chapter Two: Gentle Bovine Mothers to Fleshy Machines

And this not onely witnesseth, that Beasts have lesse reason than men, but that they have none at all… its Nature onely which works in them according to the disposition of their organs. As wee see a Clock, which is onely composed of wheels and springs, can reckon the hours, and measure the times more exactly then we can with all our prudence. (René Descartes, 1637, *A Discourse of a Method*, 1649, p.94)

In the previous chapter I argued how the displacement of women from dairying was epitomised in key agricultural manuals, manuals that may have had a hand in women's declining agricultural power. In this chapter, I demonstrate how these same agricultural and dairying handbooks represented relationships between women and cows, as well as how such texts presented the capacities and emotional lives of the cow themselves. I will argue that, in the books that were published between 1500-1700, cows and women seemingly collaborated in the workplace that was the dairy. Though cows would sometimes resist efforts to be milked, such incidents were not portrayed as sites of interspecies conflict that necessitated punitive action. However, from the eighteenth-century onwards, discord appears to have become more commonplace between cows and humans. Certain practices restricted freedom to cattle and shut down negotiations between cows and humans, while a shift in the lexicon of agricultural manuals saw the balance tipped more in favour of viewing cows as resources to be plumbed, rather than cared for as living beings. The depersonalisation of cows in these texts is thus representative of how cows were being treated more as objects, rather than as co-workers labouring alongside their human colleagues. I will then claim, drawing upon historical evidence from the Introduction and chapter one, that this mechanical character emerged between women (indeed, all humans) and cows due to the economic realities of agrarian capitalism, a new scientific discourse, and the encroachment of men into the dairy.

Touching the Gentleness of Kine

Touching the gentlenesse of kine, it is a vertue as fit to be expected as any other; for if she be not affable to the maide, gentle, & willing to come to the paile, and patient to haue her duggs drawne without skittishnesse, striking or wildnesse, shee is vtterly vnfitte for the dayrie. (Gervase Markham,

The English Huswife, 1623, p.176)

Before the eighteenth century, agricultural manuals overwhelmingly portrayed cows as gentle mothers, who are "loving to that which springs from her" (Markham, *English Huswife*, 176). In contrast, from the eighteenth century onwards, while some manuals still argued that it would be "utterly injudicious" to the cow to take her calf away immediately (Milburn 76), many more had begun to depict cattle as little more than "fleshy machines for milk production" (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 184). Indeed, cows became likened to milk-containers to illustrate that it was now "clear profit alone that should be considered" (Young, *Farmer's Kalendar*, 163). It is perhaps not surprising that such a shift occurred during a period when farming became a big business enterprise, centralised into the hands of fewer, wealthier farmers. For instance, while agricultural author Arthur Young had no small hand in encouraging the second enclosure movement that impoverished small farmers, he began to lament the changes that his propagation of a "spirit of improvement" had wrought upon agrarian communities (Williams, *Country and the City,* 47), as can be observed in his *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Suffolk* (1794):

> Much of the present distress certainly arises from the monopoly of farm, which is an increasing evil to the community. On these farms, eighteen families were formerly brought up above the condition of mere peasantry; now they are in six opulent hands. Very few cows are now kept, whereas, forty years ago, every one of these farms had a dairy, and grew pigs and poultry for the supply of the neighbourhood. (Young 255)

As discussed in the Introduction, where once small dairies were the norm, the impact of the enclosure movement saw poorer cottagers unable to graze their animals on the common, thus many left farming altogether. This was a boon to the larger farms, who cornered the marketplace while employing a reduced (and increasingly more desperate) workforce to maximise profits. As Young reports, "a farmer at Baddingham, who has forty-eight cows, and has neither wife nor housekeeper, hired a dairy-maid at 9d per firkin of butter" (186). The milkmaid, receiving (instead of a yearly wage) nine pennies per roughly

thirty-kilogram barrel of butter produced, would have been a relative bargain for the wealthy Baddingham farmer – as would the fact that she alone milked forty-eight cows. In the previous centuries, a woman able to milk even ten cows a day would have been deemed considerably swift, hence why large dairies had typically employed more women to cows than Baddingham's farm (Whittle, 'Probate Documents,' 70). Thus, it is not surprising that from the late-eighteenth century onwards, this hurried pace of productivity and what Young called "improvement" would sour relations between women and cows, humans and animals. Indeed, while I briefly touched upon sixteenth- and seventeenth-century treatment of cattle in my Introduction, I will develop some of the conclusions made there to highlight how and why women and cows transformed from collaborative partners to servants extracting their bovine resources for firkins of butter. I will then return to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century representations in more depth.

While the first English translation of René Descartes' *Discourse on the Method* (1637) was published in 1649 – widening access to the philosopher's theory that animals are, in effect, machines – his theories were not popular in his lifetime, despite the lasting effect his philosophy has had on contemporary culture today.[128] Instead, animals, including cows, were generally considered sentient, individual beings, and were even respected somewhat as workers in the dairy in large swathes of early modern England. For example, Erica Fudge in *Quick Cattle and Dying Wishes* has at length demonstrated how both Dowe and Markham portrayed milking as a collaboration between woman and cow. "Cows," she says, "knew their milkers and required – you might say, demanded – that the same person approach them every day" (117). This, she says, is something that is understood in Dowe's dialogue, as he describes a cow that "hath had such a minde and fantasie to one of my Maides, that in her presence the Cow would neuer stand to be milked of anie other but of her onelie" (n.p).

[128] Keith Thomas relates that "the theologian Henry More was more representative of English opinion when he bluntly told Descartes in 1648 that he thought his a 'murderous' doctrine" (34).

Milking itself was a "conversation" (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 117) between woman and cow; as Markham relates in *The English Huswife*, the maid "shall not settle her selfe to milke, nor fixe her paile firme to the ground till she sees the Cow stand sure and firme" (178). These "conversations" were key to mediating relations in the dairy. As Keith Thomas relates, cows were "frequently spoken to, for their owners, unlike Cartesian intellectuals, never thought them incapable of understanding… 'Bawk up.' said the Suffolk milkmaid, as she tied up her cows. 'Rynt thee,' said her Cheshire counterpart, meaning 'Move over, I've finished'" (Thomas 96).

Thus, just as "a successful workplace requires decent lines of communication" (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 116), both cows and women needed to be understood by one another. Indeed, in Jocelyn Porcher and Tiphaine Schmitt's ground-breaking sociological study in 2013, 'Dairy Cows: Workers in the Shadows,' the authors identified "evidence of cows' subjective investment in their work" (44) in the dairies they observed, not because cows are "conditioned to do so," but because they wished to be actively involved (55). It is their cooperation in milking that ensures the smooth-running of the dairy, labour that at first seems invisible to untrained human eyes. Vinciane Despret, commenting on Porcher and Schmitt's article, argues that "the very reason why the work was invisible" to most modern onlookers was because "the work did not become noticeable, a contrario, except when the cows resisted or refused to collaborate, precisely because this resistance showed that, when all is functioning well, it is because of an active investment on the part of the cows" (180). But in early modern agriculture, grasping that there needs to be a "shared understanding" between cows and milkmaids would have been imperative (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 116), as any refusals to work would have meant the difference between a family's satiation or starvation:

> As Sir Kenneth Digby remarked in 1658, "there's not the meanest cottager but hath a cow to furnish his family with milk: 'tis the principal sustenance of the poorer sort of people. … which makes them very careful of the good keeping and health of their cows. (Thomas 98)

Digby's comment suggests that treating cows as co-workers would further incentivise them to collaborate in the dairy; the fact that they were "often dressed up with bells, ribbons and other finery" (96) would have similarly emphasised a cow's status as a cared-for individual. Indeed, there appears to be a concerted drive to mitigate a cow's apprehensions in many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century agricultural manuals. This may have been an economic necessity (happy beasts do not kick over pails) but perhaps also a recognition that cows know their own minds, and thus deserve a certain level of respect. Just as Dowe's cows were particular about their milking partners – and even expected them to "sing" or they "will not stand to be milked" (n.p.) – Markham noted that "gentlenesse" (*English Huswife,* 176) is the key to fostering good workplace relations between the two. Both cow and maid, he says, must have this same nature, and the latter must do "nothing rashly or suddenly about the Cow, which may affraight or amase her" so that as the cow "came gently, so with all gentlenes she shall depart" (178). An irritable cow is not just a hindrance to the functioning of the dairy, but to the social fabric of the interspecies community. For instance, in William Gouge's *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622), discordant housewives and cows are regarded as being alike in temper; when the former "grieue their husbands" through "such powting and muttering … they shew themselues like to a curst cow, which hauing giuen a faire soape of milke, casteth all downe with her heele" (335). In contrast to this, one should not be a "harsh" husband, and should at times yield to a wife's requests with "grace" (365); here, cooperation is the glue that binds human and nonhuman members of the household.

As such, a "curst cow" who kicks the pail, or refuses to be milked unless certain conditions are met, is engaging in a form of cow resistance that can and should, as sociologists Lindsay Hamilton and Nik Taylor discuss, be described as a workplace confrontation. "Cattle," they say, "can resist by kicking out and they can behave in erratic and unpredictable ways that makes contact difficult and sometimes even impossible. In common with the ways that office staff were occasionally resistant, there is often a degree of indeterminacy in settling the relations between different actors be they human or otherwise. Power is not simply one-way" (61). But this is not to

suggest that cows are the same as exploited workers. A cow is, in effect, both "victim and agent in the dairy" (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 119) as cattle "reproduce their own value in themselves (as a raw material) whilst simultaneously doing labour" (Barua 13). And, while it seems likely that cows were considered to be individual beings with emotional capacities in early modern England – certainly this is the case in the pre-nineteenth century agricultural manuals analysed here – they were also, more complicatedly, killed and utilised as profit-making beings as well.[129]

But, while modern forms of farming often position farm animals as an "amorphous 'herd'" or "products" without "personality" (Hamilton and Taylor 60, 77), Dowe and Markham's manuals make clear that cows have their own individual desires and wants; a fact that was likely shared by those working closely with them. "The closeness to a dairy cow would have been very particular," says Fudge. "Someone – likely a woman – would have leant up against the animal's flank day-in-day-out for years, and maybe this very physical closeness … allowed for a distinct emotional bond" (*Quick Cattle*, 105). Such intimate familiarity can be seen in certain manuals that suggest that cows should be groomed similarly to horses. As B.F remarked in *Office of the Good Housewife* in 1672, "there is nothing that doth them so much good, and keep them so well in health and good liking, (their Meat and Fodder excepted) as the clean and neat keeping of their Houses; let them be rub'd along the back, about the neck and head, and no more, with a wisp of straw hard writhen together" (21). These shared moments would have engendered stronger attachments between maid and cow, as each got to know the other's particularities and preferences.[130]

[129] Early modern texts imbued animals with capacities that would be considered anthropomorphic in certain circles today. As Karen Raber notes, Edward Topsell's 1607 "account of beavers as builders… constructs a whole castorine economic system, replete with signifiers of class status and a labor strategy involving fellow beavers" (133). Referring to animals in such a way would become unfashionable after the rise of new scientific discourse, as discussed in chapter one.

[130] Close attention was a necessary part of living with many domestic animals at the time. Leonard Mascall in 1587 argues that "the lambing of young yeawes ought to be looked vnto, as though they had midwiues," demonstrating that the birthing of animals and the birthing of humans was intertwined at this time (246).

And, as I discussed in the Introduction, smaller herd sizes would allow for closer working relationships between dairywomen and cows, as each would be known intimately to the other. Indeed, as Erica Fudge, Keith Thomas, and Virginia DeJohn Anderson have all argued, dairy cows in the early modern period were generally given names, exemplifying the "close intertwining of humans and their animals" (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 93-93).[131] Then and now, naming is an important custom in human culture; when a name is bestowed upon a human or nonhuman, it signifies that this being has worth as an individual.[132] For instance, when Hamilton and Taylor collated sociological evidence of interactions between humans and animals in animal sanctuaries, they noted that "without exception, all of the animals which were brought to the sanctuaries either already had a name or were named by the staff." They go on to say that "the process of naming was crucial to establish both a degree of individuality as well as a distinctive biography and, in so doing, these techniques helped to establish a unique personality for animals at the shelter." Such a practice is not normally extended to laboratory animals, as naming validates one's personhood – or beinghood – while engendering a "sense of responsibility for those named" – practices that are at odds with treating animals as blank test-subjects (98). Thus, the naming of dairy cows further cements the theory that there were close, personal links between human and bovine workers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[133]

[131] DeJohn Anderson discusses how English settlers in New England clashed with native Indians when trying to transplant their forms of husbandry to the New World. The colonists tried to encourage Indians to rear dairy cattle as they saw the practice as having a "civilising" effect, but the Indians preferred pigs, using them in a similar way to dogs; hogs would come when called, and "fended off predators" ('King Philip's Herds,' 613). However, to the English, "swine … were slovenly creatures that wallowed in mud, gobbled up garbage, and were rumored to kill unwary children," – treating pigs like dogs was not refined. Instead, "cattle were docile and, to the English mind, superior beasts … Colonists named their cows Brindle and Sparke and Velvet; no one named pigs" (614).

[132] Though Keith Thomas argues that cows were given "descriptive epithets, often suggestive of an affectionate attitude on the owners' part" but not "human" names, as "distance had to be preserved," he does note that a squire named a cow "Matthew" (96).

[133] This does not mean that animals with names could not be instrumentalised, of course. As Sune Borkfelt notes, "when we name, we are thus in fact exercising a power over the animals we name, even if we may fundamentally believe our power over them should not determine their lives." But likewise, "not naming can

Perhaps such closeness is why, even though cows at this time walked the ambiguous line between working companion and resource, some of the manuals imply that they were afforded the luxury of not being killed as soon as their profit-making period was over. Though perhaps not a common practice, Leonard Mascall remarked in *The First Booke of Catell* (1587) that one can "labour… barren kyne after nine yeeres, when as they bring no more calues. Therefore they are put vnto the vse of drawing in the yoke as the oxen are" (64). Mostly, however, old cows were for "the shambles", hence why their "bignesse of bone" would be useful for fattening for meat once their milk dried up (Markham, *English Huswife*, 174). But as Fudge has noted from her analysis of early modern wills, certain unprofitable dairy cows may have been kept because of emotional reasons (*Quick Cattle*, 81-82), and at a great cost; a complication of the farming contract when "up to 20% of arable production" was needed to keep them (63). But there may have been another reason why they were not killed: because they were understood to be co-workers.[134] For instance, Keith Thomas notes that:

> There had long been a prejudice against killing indispensable working animals for food: horses, dogs and, in parts of Europe, oxen, all came under this prohibition. In the seventeenth century the objection to eating oxen survived in many Mediterranean countries and also in Ireland, where, it was said, 'the common sort' would never kill a cow. The rise of the cult of the roast beef of England closely paralleled the decline of the ox as a working animal. (54)

But perhaps Markham's harsher comments, that see him advocate sending unproductive cows to slaughter, were a sign that times had already moved on somewhat by the seventeenth century. For example, in the sixteenth century, calves were not necessarily quickly separated from their mothers. Leonard Mascall notes that one can still obtain milk from the cow while the calf is suckling, as "many kine wil keepe milke enough to serue for her calf" (54), while John Fitzherbert

mean distancing ourselves from other animals and disregarding their likeness to ourselves, which makes it easier to justify harmful treatment through reference to the difference between 'them' and 'us'" (123).

[134] And, though she had a rather romanticised view of "the rural poor," seventeenth-century author Margaret Cavendish argued they do not "needlessly waste animal life or indulge in luxuries" (quoted in Bowerbank, 74).

similarly suggests the husbandman rear calves between "Candelmasse and Maye, for that season he may spare mylke beste" (38). In the following century, though, Markham advises that housewives "not suffer [calves] to run with the dammes" when "she only hath respect to her Dairy" (*English Huswife*, 177), a sign of how dairying was becoming more business orientated even by this period. This is despite the fact that Markham clearly believes that cows who are "gentle to her milker" and "kind in her owne nature," will be "fruitfull to nourish, and louing to that which springs from her", meaning she "bringeth foorth a double profit" (176): a healthy calf, and the best milk. While "for Markham, maternal instinct and money slide into one another and being a good mother is regarded as necessary to being a profit-making thing" (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 120), a cow is still a gentle mother who should not be mishandled.

And in the eighteenth century, agricultural manuals began to report clashes between cows and humans with greater frequency, with calves regarded as a common reason for these increased skirmishes. Take Edward Lisle's *Observations in Husbandry*, first published in 1707:

> My next neighbour has a calf penned up, and the cow grazed in a ground by it, and the cow being kept from her calf, and yet able to come up and near the pen, grew unlucky to the pigs that were routing in a dunghill near, and gored one of them in the eye, whereupon she and her calf were turned out together, but then the cow would not give down her milk to them that milked her… the cow would give down her milk to the calf … the cow would hold her milk up from the maid: and so, she said, other cows were apt to do. (139)

Lisle's description illustrates the perils of separating cows from their calves, a practice that became increasingly common during the eighteenth century, as larger farms became more specialised and profit motivated. Such struggles between cows and milkmaids can be read as forms of workplace resistance. For example, Lisle also describes how a cow, who had "usually given good milk," had begun to "hold up her milk" because it was likely being extracted "in a very slow manner," meaning that "the cow's patience will be tired, and so she will get that trick" (140). The cow, in response to this substandard effort on the maid's part, performs a "trick" of her own – withholding her labour through refusing to give down her milk. The milkmaid in these two passages is presented as an

interloper, as the cow is deliberately holding "her milk up from the maid" (139) in order to provide for her calf. Previously, it was milkmaids who may not have left the cow "well milked or stroked" as they were "disposed to goe to dauncing" (Dowe n.p.) rather than finish their milking. Now the cow is demonstrating her unwillingness to be milked by leading the maids on a dance of her own. Perhaps, as dairymaids were less able to spend quality time with the cows due to their ever-increasing workloads, the cows would be less obliging to them. Cows may have been particularly hesitant towards this period's influx of new and unfamiliar self-employed dairymaids, whose sole interests were in selling, rather than carefully extracting, milk (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 184).

This deliberate withholding of milk is also referred to in eighteenth-century German texts. Jadon Nisly has discovered reports in such texts that "cows that are hurt during milking learn to withhold their milk" while "in the [German] prince-bishop's archives a finance minister wrote in 1782 that some cows will have to be sold each year, because 'they often out of malice don't let themselves be easily milked'" (60). Yet this "malice" on the part of the cows could have been a response to an increase in them being subject to more painful conditions, as new ways to interact with cows in the dairy swept Europe. Before the eighteenth century, one can observe Markham advising milkmaids not to behave "rashly" *(English Huswife,* 178) around cows, as gentleness was expected both from cow and woman. There is no indication that the maid will hit a cow, merely that she may scare her accidentally with harried movements. But after this century, William Ellis in his *Country Housewife's Family Companion* (1750) writes about "a young ignorant Milker, who, because the Cow don't just please her, roughly strikes or scolds at her." It seems odd that such behaviour would be allowed on a dairy in the first place – it already being well-known that "gentle Behaviour would incite the same in a Beast." And yet, Ellis's solution to dealing with uncooperative cows is far from gentle:

> How to hinder a cow from holding up her milk: For this there have been several Devices made use of: At first to twist a Rope hard about the Cow's Body while she is milking: Secondly, to fling cold Water over the Loins, and then directly to milk her: But this should be done for several Days: Or if the Cow is to be suckled, milk her first, and let the Calf draw

> away the rest, for a Cow will (or is forced to) give it a Calf, when she will not to a Milker. (176)

Ellis suggests that compulsion is the key to maintaining a dairy, with harsh methods recommended to deal with cow resistance. A cow is no longer a loving mother who wishes to provide milk for her calf, but one that is "forced to," as if out of unthinking instinct. Ellis's advocacy of coercive action is again glimpsed when he posits how to deal with what Gouge would describe as a "curst cow":

> Some Cows will kick to that Degree, that they must have their Legs fetter'd, by tying them above the hind middle Joints. Others again are so unlucky, that to prevent the Damage of their kicking, they must be milked through a Hurdle. (174)

This is a marked difference to Markham's treatment of cattle. The latter argued that a cow must be "patient to haue her duggs drawne without skittishnesse, striking or wildnesse" otherwise "shee is vtterly vnfitte for the dayrie" (Markham, *English Huswife*, 176). This, as Fudge has stated, would mean that "skittish" cows would be sent to slaughter (*Quick Cattle*, 118). Yet at the time that Ellis was writing in the mid-eighteenth century, it seems that confining her was more profitable. This extracted the important resource rather than respecting the cow's decision to not be milked. As Henry Buller has remarked in 'Animal Vitalities and Food Quality,' investigations into contemporary farming have revealed that "events of contact between stockperson and stock animal are negative and 'predatory'; intrusions, physical manipulation, restraint and so on, notably within a context of growing mechanisation." This sees the latter become "frightened of humans" and denies "the animalian realities of farm animals," relegating them to "'thinghood'" (59). Thus, when a cow's agency is taken away through creeping mechanisation (such as the use of fetters and hurdles), this in turn denies her individuality by rendering her means of resistance inconsequential. And, if the response to her aversion is further punitive action, then humans have effectively closed all negotiations.

Furthermore, these eighteenth-century manuals appear to use severer language than the earlier authors when describing the slaying of cows.[135] While Markham does mention that "when either age, or mischance shall disable" a cow, "she may be fed, and made fit for the shambles & so no losse, but profit," he adds that "any other to the paile" should be "as good and sufficient as her selfe" (*English Huswife*, 174). This addition not only suggests that her replacement should provide good milk, but also emphasises that the cow's labour (be she old or incapacitated due to some sort of accident) has been appreciated as both "good and sufficient." But in the following century, "age, or mischance" are not the only reasons as to why a cow would be replaced. In *Dairying Exemplified* (1787), Josiah Twamley indicates that "disposing" of a cow who goes off her milk for any reason is the most efficient way to run a "vigorous" dairy:

> In these prolific Dairys, the owner made a point of never keeping a Cow that was too old Milcht, or Milk'd too long from the time of Calving, or when any Cow went off her Milk either by any accident, or otherwise; then the Dairy-man always replaced her with a new Milcht one, either drying the old Milcht one for feeding, or disposing of her. That so the Dairy by that means was kept in full vigour through the Grass Season. (23)

Such close surveillance of a cow's milk production can also be observed in Arthur Young's *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Suffolk* (1794): "In order to secure such products (i.e. an abundance of milk and cream), several circumstances must unite: no cows are to be kept that do not milk well" (187). The rigorous monitoring of a cow's output continues into the nineteenth century. In 1800, John Lawrence argued that "the dairy-man must himself be a perfect judge of the live flock which he entertains, and they of the improved species; no bad milkers must be kept, nor indeed any kept too long" (*Farmer's Calendar*, 161). Similarly, Loudon in 1825 remarked that "the most valuable quality which a dairy cow can possess is that she yields much milk," while "a cow … that does not milk well will soon come to the hammer" (1017). Additionally, Milburn in 1852 argued

[135] In Thomas More's *Utopia* (1551), the fictional island excludes "the killings fields from the towns" and has slaves, rather than citizens, butcher animals. Perhaps, then, there was a sense during this time that the slaying of animals that labour alongside you could be viewed as a form of "moral contamination" (Raber 176).

that "if she promises well as a milker, she is kept for a cow; if not, she is consigned as a 'drape' to the grazier for the butcher" (48). And by 1887, John Walker was declaring that "it is of little matter which course is deemed advisable to dispose of the beast; but one thing is quite certain, and that is, that the man who breeds his own stock should never have any old animals about his ground" (71).

These manuals diverge from the earlier texts, as old cows past their prime are no longer allowed to remain, whether to pull a plough, to provide companionship, or to avoid the needless waste of a familiar (even favourite) animal still giving some milk. Nor is their expended labour seemingly recognised as good work. The spent cow is not remembered as "good and sufficient" (Markham*, English Huswife*, 174), thanked as she is fattened and then sent to the shambles. For instance, Walker does not think it matters where the cow is "disposed of." Meanwhile, Loudon's use of "hammer" likely means the auctioneer's hammer at the cattle market – a distressing locale for an old cow – but also carries connotations of hammering, as in to kill. These later texts' aloof language and focus on profit demonstrates that the cow, by the nineteenth century, was considered in a thoroughly modern manner as an "obscure, ultraflexible subproletariat that is exploitable and destructible at will" (Despret 180).

Furthermore, the forms of restraint seen in Ellis's 1750 *Country Housewife's Family Companion* continued to be recommended in nineteenth-century manuals. For example, Lawrence argued that one should "suffer no cows to be milked, without having both head and legs secured; for the quietest cow alive, milked loose, always kicks her pail of milk down, once or twice a year, at least" (*Farmer's Calendar*, 561). Now even the calmest cow must be confined to avoid the possibility of one drop of milk being spilled. Perhaps instances of cow defiance had risen by this time, and were causing issues in dairies. Though it was a known phenomenon before the eighteenth century, only agricultural manuals after the seventeenth century discuss strategies for dealing with the withholding of milk, while many focus upon the poor behaviour of cows. Indeed, Ellis relates the "mischief" that cows can instigate, describing "Kickers" that "are very apt and prone to buck other

Cows" (*Country Housewife*, 174). Furthermore, praise is meted out rarely; when Ellis describes a "healthful" cow, "hardy, gentle, and easy milked," he remarks that "such a *Cow* as this deserve to have her Breed increased; for where one *Cow* merits this Character, there are twenty that do not" (171). While Markham observed that as a cow "came gently, so with all gentlenes she shall depart" (*English Huswife*, 178), Ellis's manual suggests that cows rarely acquiesce so kindly to milking. However, as humans were by now widely trialling new, mechanistic methods in agriculture and beyond, experimentation in pursuit of surplus profit cannot be ruled out as a reason for the increased promotion of instruments of restraint.

But the nineteenth century could well have seen discord between women and cows intensify, as the latter may have been reacting to their diminishing standards of living. As Charles Martin reports in *The Ox* (1840): "In Messrs. Rhodes establishment, for example, the cows are never untied while they are retained as milkers: some have stood in the stall for more than two years" (94). Such bleak conditions were not the case for all cows, but their freedom of movement was becoming severely restricted, as a rise in instances of inter-cow conflict suggest:

> It is a very common and very shameful sight, in a dairy of cows, to see several of them gored and wounded in several places, merely from the inattention of the owner, and the neglect of tipping the horns of those that butt. The weaker animals should be drawn and fed apart. (Lawrence, *Farmer's Calendar*, 226)

Such casualties were likewise discerned by John Burke *Farming for Ladies* (1844), as he remarked that a hornless breed of cow "may be so far considered an advantage as depriving them of the means — so common among many cows — of goring each other" (351). This "common" sight is not an occurrence mentioned in any of the previous manuals collated in this thesis (beyond Lisle's cow goring a pig in the early-eighteenth century), which may suggest that these incidents were not widespread until the early-nineteenth century. This intraspecies goring was likely the painful result of too many cows being kept in too small an enclosure; another consequence of agrarian capitalism. Thus, data from the agricultural manuals suggest that relations between cows themselves, and

between cows and humans, soured amid an influx of mechanistic and profit-motivated practices in dairying.

Despite these severe methods, and the lowering of welfare standards for cows, agricultural authors during the nineteenth century still recognised that these animals had individual wants, needs, and emotions. For instance, while Lawrence suffers no cow to be milked without tying the head and legs, he described himself as "a warm advocate of the continental practice of currying and brushing both milch cows and fattening bullocks, convinced that it is attended with both pleasure to them, and profit to their keeper" while remarking that "cows will not give down their milk freely to strangers" (*Farmer's Calendar*, 561). He reiterates that "all animals should receive the most patient, gentle, and humane treatment, milch-cows in particular, which are necessarily, from their condition, subject to an increased share of irritability" (560); dairy cows, like pregnant women, are likely to be irascible. Thus Lawrence, like Markham, knew that cows had strong emotional capacities. Profit is more important than the happiness of the cow, as Markham would likely agree, but for Lawrence it also superseded encouraging her good behaviour; it is hard to see how forcefully restricting a cow would bring about her collaborative conduct. Similarly, in *The Harleian Dairy System* (1829), William Harley argues that "cows should never be struck or scolded, but spoken to and dealt with in the kindest manner" (111), yet also advocates the use of stalls and restraints.[136] Despite this, these nineteenth-century authors knew that poor relations led to worse outcomes, as seen in Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Agriculture*:

> The milker, whether a man or woman, ought to be mild in manners and good tempered. If the operation be performed harshly, it becomes painful to the cow, who in this case often brings into action her faculty of retaining her milk at pleasure; but if gently performed, it seems rather to give pleasure, as is exemplified on a large scale in Tiviotdale, and Switzerland, where the cows come to be milked at the call of the milkers. Many instances have occurred, Dr Anderson observes, in which cows would not let down a single drop of

[136] Harley also seems to believe that cows are still individual beings with their own desires, like the ability to enjoy music: "cows, like many other animals, are partial to a pleasing sound. It was found by experience at Willowbank that cows were very fond of having a tune hummed or sung by the dairymaid whilst milking" (111).

> milk to one dairy-maid, which let it flow in abundance whenever another approached them; exhibiting unequivocal marks of satisfaction in the one case, and of sullen obstinacy in the other. For the same reason, when cows are ticklish, they should be treated with the most soothing gentleness, and never with harshness or severity; and, when the udder is hard and painful, it should be tenderly fomented with luke-warm water, and stroked gently, by which simple expedient the cow will be brought into good temper, and will yield her milk without restraint. (1040-1041)

There appears to be a disconnect, then, in the guidance of these manuals, as they advocate both kindness and cruelty. For instance, in 1852 Milburn argued that "a greater violence done to common sense cannot be imagined" than taking away a calf at birth (a practice now done by "too many dairymen"), as it renders the cow "peevish and sulky" or even "vicious."[137] However, though he supported the idea of the calf remaining near during milking to prevent bad behaviour from the mother, he still recommended a form of restraint should that prove impossible: "when tied by the feet she should also have a noose passed over her hams, to prevent her kicking" (76-77). Similarly, John Burke in 1844 suggested the calf should remain with the mother to "soothe" her (375), saying, "it is undoubtedly an unnatural and a somewhat cruel practice to deprive the cow of her young one" (378), while advocating that "the dairymaid should … give the cow a name, and mildly call her by it; pat her, and caress her when about to milk her" (409). However, the fact that Burke is encouraging the naming of cattle implies that this is no longer standard practice. Moreover, his argument that one should keep the calf if one has room partly for "the pleasure of nurturing the little animal as a pet, and bringing it up as a sort of playfellow" (379) is completely at odds with the profiteering spirit found in the other farming handbooks; even the early manuals do not encourage such an action, though of course pet-keeping only rose to prominence in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[138]

[137] Notably, dairymen are now the ones taking calves from cows too early, not the housewives whom "only hath respect to her Dairy" (Markham, *English Huswife*, 177).

[138] Laura Brown discusses the "rise of widespread bourgeois pet keeping" (20) in the eighteenth century in her text *Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes* (2010).

But Burke's manual is incongruous among the other agricultural texts the era. His is directed to "ladies in the middle ranks of life who study healthful domestic economy either for the pleasure or the profit which it affords," and not to the revenue-focused dairyman. Ladies, in his mind, might want to emulate Queen Victoria, who "erected a dairy" for the "amusement of herself and the royal children" (iii) and certainly not for money or sustenance. Yet, despite his kind words, profiteering sentiment can still be glimpsed as he demonstrates that an "unruly cow" "must be [milked] in the house, having her head secured, and even her hind legs 'hobbled,' with a strap twisted round each foot just above the hoof, and buckled together." And even if one has a quiet cow that can be milked in the field, "the hobble is not a bad precaution, as she sometimes, if teased by a fly or instigated by a freak, will kick down the pail, or put her foot into it" (408-409).[139] As such, though Burke seems to believe that farm animals now have another value to women of means than sustenance, the importance of not spilling one drop of milk remains paramount.

Burke's methods certainly appear kinder, however, than those described by Arthur Young, who, in *The Farmer's Kalendar* (1771), argued against cattle roaming "where they will" in order to maximise "clear profit" (281) – letting them "out of the yards" in November will only make them "lose flesh" (322). Instead, Burke advocated the use of open sheds to "give the cow the liberty of going in and out as she pleases" (386).[140] But Burke knew that cows were not being kept as pampered pets by bourgeois women; his earlier comments about the frequency of goring underline how close confinement was the norm. Young's comments, then, were too enticing for most farmers, focused as they were upon making a living.

[139] Burke does argue that if a cow kicks over milk, "she should neither be beaten, nor harshly spoken to" as "patience and gentleness will overcome the most perverse disposition" (409). And yet, this gentleness seems at odds with the use of restraints.

[140] But while Burke recommends "the retention of a cow-calf, for the continuance of the stock" to ladies who only have one cow, or "who have spare ground enough around their house for pasture" those who do not, or whose cow produces a male calf, should see them weaned "after a few days old" (379-380), then sold or killed not long after. Such practices were seemingly common from the seventeenth century onwards.

Calls for cow to be placed indoors became commonplace in agricultural manuals once Young had voiced his support. Henry Stephens who, writing between 1841 and 1871, described how "calving in a byre does not seem to produce any disagreeable sensations in the other cows … when the cow gives vent to painful cries, which is rarely, the others express a sympathetic sound" (404). Though Stephens recognised that cows are empathetic beings, his ongoing promotion of stalls throughout the text is part of what the author called "rejoicing in the light of acknowledged Science" (v-vi). Stephens's praise of agriculture's new, mechanical methods is due to his delight in the ways the industry has improved its yield; he, like Arthur Young, knew that keeping cows in smaller enclosures ensured greater profits. But the movement away from pasture and towards indoor enclosures has been identified by Bernard Rollin as no longer respecting the "telos" of the animal (44), while Henry Buller has described how "grass-based systems" offer animals greater agency and enjoyment ('Vitalities,' 63). Thus, while certain authors repeat gentleness as the mantra (while others, like Young, are not concerned), they all have a vested interest in promoting new, discomforting methods. The tender soothing of cows is a sidenote to these new approaches, suggesting that what was occurring in reality was the pursuit of profit – and its literally gory side effects.

As such, it is not a stretch to consider that humans might respond in kind to the discontent cows would have towards these new profitable approaches to dairying; keeping the cows in line through threats and assaults.[141] Such behaviour is discussed in John Walker in *The Cow and Calf: A Practical Manual on the Cow and Calf in Health and Disease* (1887), who argued that "the small holder who milks his own animal has an advantage" rather than having "to depend upon hired men." "Women," he says, "are the best milkers, and to women the cows will give down their milk when they would not do so to a man. The woman is gentler and kinder in all her dealings with the cow,

[141] As discussed in the Introduction and chapter one, by the mid-eighteenth century, men began to be more commonly employed as milkers as well.

and this animal appreciates such treatment to a high degree. The rough-handed coarse milkman, with his threatening attitude, is quite sufficient to induce the cow to withhold her supply" (66-67). Burke said something similar in 1844, arguing that women should milk cows because of their "good temper," comparing the practice with looking after children in "the nursery," for "as to a man milking a cow, the fellow should be put in petticoats, and, in Ireland, would be hooted by every woman in the village" (408).[142] But, by the late-nineteenth century, the "threatening attitude" of the dairyman was seemingly more commonplace – at least in England – while withholding milk was one of the few forms of resistance left to cows. What is somewhat ironic about Walker's statement is, as discussed in the previous chapter, the movement from dairying as small-scale endeavour to fully-fledged business is what caused the displacement of women from their traditional roles on the farm and necessitated hurried and painful methods of milking. Indeed, while Walker notes that he would "never approve of lads for milking, for they are not to be depended on" he goes on to say that "they should only be employed under the eye of a good man" (68) – as women, by this time, seemingly had less say in the running of the dairy.

Indeed, perhaps the women who had little stake in this new dairying business would not care to emulate the thoughtfulness of the good housewives of earlier centuries. In any case, Walker's nostalgia for returning to the days when farming entailed a clear demarcation between women and men's work is clear. "The cow," he states, "by nature only gives milk to her calf, for which she has great affection. How far then is nature lost sight of when the coarse, ill-tempered man substitutes the loved offspring" (67). It may be true that dairywomen would have been more considerate of cows and their wellbeing due to their shared embodied reality; pregnancy and lactation transcend the species barrier, and recognition of this fact may have ensured more care was

[142] Milburn agreed in 1852 that, "while the "foremen" or "masters" milk, "women are by far the most capable of milking; their hands are more gentle and delicate, and the cows seem generally to prefer them" (78).

taken when milking.[143] And thinking through the process of lactation from a standpoint of empathy rather than practical efficiency is perhaps why the first suction motion milking machine, that mimicked a calf suckling rather than a human hand pulling, was invented by a woman (Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 89). Furthermore, accounts of women being "softer and kinder" with animals are still present today; Hamilton and Taylor noticed that in contemporary slaughterhouses, work is divided between the genders because women, who are deemed to "have a way of getting [animals] to do everything calmly," are sent to work with them in the lairage, rather than on the killing floor (78).[144]

But authors like Walker were vastly oversimplifying the relationship between women and cows. A cursory glance over early modern agricultural manuals indicates that not every woman was caring, nor would every cow respond well to each maid; dairywomen who were unkind or unfamiliar were not welcomed by their charges. More likely, then, is the fact that a creeping mechanical character was infecting relationships between these co-workers in the dairy. This process was already causing deteriorating relations between women and cows, long before women became eclipsed in the dairy by male workers in the late-nineteenth century. While dairymen might not be as careful with cows due to a lack of respect for female bodies, it is also clear that the changing agricultural landscape was facilitating uncaring behaviour, regardless of gender. Finally, while the changing material conditions of dairying was one cause in the establishment of a mechanical, thoughtless character in relations between humans and cows, there were many other factors at play. For example, an

[143] Even where the milkers were maids who had never been pregnant, recognising that sore udders are alike to sore breasts could have engendered such cross-species familiarity.

[144] The contemporary and pre-modern view that women can draw "upon supposed 'feminine skills'" (Hamilton and Taylor 78) to grant them an affinity with animals was discussed in the Introduction and chapter one. Briefly, as women have historically (and still are) positioned as closer to animals and nature, they are deemed to be better able to empathise with the former.

ongoing depersonalisation of cows through a deployment of alienating language in agricultural manuals was taking hold in the eighteenth century.

Linguistic Distancing

The language used to discuss farmed animals is an important signifier of how they are considered in wider society. Hamilton and Taylor have noted, with respect to the ecologist Arran Stibbe, how "technological industry-speak metaphorically reconstructs pigs as inanimate objects," which is seen when workers discuss "animals as units or hear them lauding the efficacy of the machinery and how it enables them to process massive volumes of 'product' in such a short timeframe" (81). Such language obviates the brutality of the processes of killing that occur in large-scale modern slaughterhouses and is reflected in agricultural texts from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. As previously discussed, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, cows were more disposable in ways they were not before. Even the language used to describe their deaths – "bad milkers" (Lawrence, *Farmer's Calendar*, 161) should be sent to "the hammer" (Loudon 1071) – was increasingly more detached than in the earlier manuals, where cows no longer fit for the dairy were praised as having been "good and sufficient" (Markham, *English Huswife*, 174). After all, by the nineteenth century, it is likely that one is no longer killing a well-known animal, but just another body in an increasingly larger herd.[145]

The growing use of technical, unemotional language can be observed in Arthur Young's works, where revenue is prized above quality. As Young said in 1771, "the product of the cows has nothing to do in the enquiry: it is the clear profit alone that should be considered" (*Farmer's Kalendar,* 163). It seems a far cry from B.F. arguing that grooming cows, to "keep them so well in health and good liking" (21) is a worthwhile endeavour for the cow's (and thus the human's) benefit. Instead, the human pursuit of profit is prioritised, as a cow's wellbeing no longer matters when they

[145] Though it should be noted that the authors of such manuals were generally gentleman farmers, rather than husbandmen involved in the practicalities, thus their work cannot speak for the average agricultural labourer.

can be easily disposed of or restrained with new tools and machinery. Moreover, while William Harley recognised that cows have feelings and are deserving of kindness in 1829, his description of the buying and selling of cows for the dairy does not deal with names – and we know that cows before this time were commonly named – but rather reduces cows to numbers:

> When new cows were bought, each had a running number in the cow-book, which was put upon a ticket and placed upon her stake with paste… her price was likewise entered in the money column. (109-110)

This movement from named co-workers to numbered beings echoes how, in modern large-scale agricultural systems "the individual animal is subsumed into a functional collective of normative material life" (Buller, 'Mass,' 158). Even among veterinarians, Hamilton and Taylor noticed how cattle "were spoken of as an amorphous 'herd' but were rarely 'personalized' or individualized except when the vets spoke to each other about medical anomalies and curious cases. Cows were never named, then, but they were numbered" (60). As Buller, paraphrasing Despret and Porcher, says, "numbers help us to stop thinking" ('Mass,' 158).

Thus, through treating animals as little more than statistics, and prioritising financial income over all else, animals become bereft of any value other than what can be rendered from their bodies. This trend continues today; when contemporary slaughterhouse workers discuss the animals they kill, they take care to use the terms like "yield and output" to ensure that "the animals lost any 'personality' or 'individuality.'" As such, "the whole animals were displaced by a variety of technological and economic jargon. The jargon served as a reminder of the animal's primary purpose in the slaughterhouse; that is, to become a financially viable product" (Hamilton and Taylor 77). Such contemporary ways of framing farming can in fact be traced back to the beginning of the early modern period. For instance, Erica Fudge has discussed in *Quick Cat*tle how, in the seventeenth century, "animals that had been perceived as 'a little less than kin and more than kind' were being transformed into figures on a page: i dead, lx to go" (205). But it is not until the mid-eighteenth

century where there is a clear intensification of the lexicon used in agricultural manuals to distance humans from being sentimental about the cows they milked.

For example, *The Complete English Farmer* (1771) by Henry David sums up how the cow came to be further positioned as a product, not a worker, through the use of alienating jargon: "the cow differs much from the ox; she is valuable, not for the labour she is to performe but for the milk she is to yield" (76). Thus, both the methods used, and the mechanical language centred on these approaches, detrimentally affects viewing cows as individual beings. This can be glimpsed when Young supports the restriction of available grazing – "cows will yield as large a produce in this manner" (*Farmer's Kalendar*, 162) – while providing tables of statistics that demonstrate the profit margins that can be gained from various species and breeds of animals (274). Such tables, increasingly common in agricultural manuals after the mid-eighteenth century, made it easier to monitor a cow's "output." As discussed, this would determine whether she should be put to an early death, while similarly positioning her as a mechanical product.

We can further trace the introduction of a mechanical character into the farming books through their application of pronouns to cattle. Before the mid-eighteenth century, calves were most generally given, with patriarchal logic, the pronoun 'he,' though there were certain instances of calves being labelled as 'it.' The use of the 'it' pronoun for calves at this time often arises in the context of having been "too young to have emerged into his or her full bovine personhood" (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 108), as even human babies were referred to as 'it' throughout the early modern period and nineteenth century.[146] For instance, in Markham's 1614 *Cheape and Good Husbandry* he recommends that "if your Calfe bee calued in the fiue dayes after the change, which is called the Prime, doe not reare *it* [my italics]" (44), the young and soon-to-be-dead calf is not worth a personal

[146] For example, very young infants could be referred to as 'it': "parents dreaded lest their infants should die unbaptized and be committed to the earth 'like dogs'; hence the distress in 1539 when the French foster-parents refused to bury an English nurse-child who had died in their care, and returned it to Calais 'as if it has been a dead calf'" (Thomas 48).

pronoun. Similarly, Thomas Tusser uses 'it' when he describes a very young calf being weaned: "House calfe, & go sockle it twise in a daye" (34). Yet a strong calf is a 'he,' as seen in Lisle's manual: "his calf was lusty, at about a fortnight old, to take from him a pint of blood". Though in the same text, weak (and feminised) calves are afforded the 'it' pronoun – "the calf must be a cow-calf, for otherwise it would eat strong at that age" (124) – as they are not robust enough to be given an animate pronoun. In all the agricultural and related manuals that this thesis has studied before c.1750, the aforementioned examples are the only times when a calf is referred to as 'it'. 'He' is still by far the most common pronoun utilised for any calf, suggesting that they were conferred some form of individuality.

But, from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, it is more common to see 'it' than 'he' used even for more mature calves in the farming books; a further indication of the increased depersonalisation of all farm animals.[147] For example, when Harley elaborates upon his numbering system for the dairy, he mentions how if a cow was "in calf she was credited with the price got for it" (110). And when Loudon discusses an "an animal … in a state of rearing" he argues that such a calf could be considered as "a vessel open at both ends, in which the supply and the waste being nearly equal it can never be filled" (1024). Calves are now explicitly presented as vessels for human endeavour, and it was not long before cows came to occupy a similar place in agricultural literature.

In fact, in related texts on the cusp of the nineteenth century, cows were already being assigned the 'it' pronoun. This is made plain in Thomas Bewick's *A General History of Quadrapeds* (1790): "The age of the Cow is known by its horns and it must be allowed, that the Cow, in its faculty

[147] Ellis's various volumes of *The Modern Husbandman* tend to use 'it,' but once uses 'he' in volume two (156). Otherwise, 'it' pronouns tend to be used for calves across later agricultural manuals: "the better a Calf is kept, the sooner it will take Bull" (Ellis, *Country Housewife*, 348); "the Calf should suck it full about an hour before it is kill'd (Bradley, *Country Housewife*, 75); "a calf is troublesome to rear, because it will not readily take the teat" (Mills 286); "when you design to rear a calf, it should be removed from the cow in ten days at the farthest" (Holland 282); the dairy maid puts one of her fingers into the mouth of the calf when it is fed" (Loudon 1023); "the calf is so far enlivened by the licking of its dam as to begin sucking" (Burke 374); "he found a hidden calf two days old, very lean and feeble; but, on stroking its head, it nevertheless rose" (Milburn 12).

of giving in such abundance, and with so much ease, its milk" (21). Similarly, in John Ramsay's *A Descriptive and Statistical Account of the British Empire* (1837) he noted that: "all sorts of cattle are met with in the dairies, the beauty of the animal being reckoned of inferior importance to its quality as a milker" (175). This tendency to call cows 'it' reaches farming handbooks later in the nineteenth century. In 1852, Milburn though he more commonly uses 'she' for a cow (12), describes her as 'it' when detachedly discussing the features of a cow that are suitable for milking (18). In 1860, Morton remarked that "the quantity of butter and of cheese which milk will yield depends upon the breed of the cow and its individual character" (1). Furthermore, Walker related in 1887 that, "while the Herefords reach within measurable distance of the top of the … bovine standard in meat-producing qualities, it is by no means a remunerative milker" (11-12). And by 1885, an article in the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society* was stating that "if the cow is viewed as a machine, it is evident that it will run more perfectly if all its parts are in good condition" (Hazard, quoted in Nimmo 'Mechanical Calf,' 87).

While such manuals exemplify that cows have come to be represented as Cartesian machines, there was less inclination to call cows 'it' before this time. For instance, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, dairy cows were commonly named; this would suggest that they would be given the personal pronoun 'she,' to avoid the objectifying conferral of 'it' – associated, as that pronoun is, with the inanimate and mechanical. And indeed, this thesis has not examined a single agricultural manual in the early modern period (spanning 1500-1800) that uses the 'it' pronoun for a cow (only for calves); the former is a phenomenon of the mid-nineteenth century and beyond. But what is interesting is that, like Ramsay and Walker, agricultural manuals start to use the term 'milker' to mean cow from the mid-eighteenth century. Prior to this period, the word milker solely referred to the person doing the milking: "though homely be milker, let clenly be cooke" (Tusser 76); "a Cow must be gentle to her milker" (Markham, *English Huswife*, 176). There is also a slight indication that the term is derogatory, probably because the milker was a lower class, young woman. So, when Ellis describes one maid as "a young ignorant Milker" (*Country Housewife*, 176), it is

perhaps purposefully pejorative. To be a milker is not the highest of offices, but a dirty job, as Robert Huish in 1837 makes clear: "the milker should never be suffered to enter the dairy in a dirty apron, covered with hairs from the cow-house" (260). But when the term came to be applied to cows, it acquired a particular mechanical character.

For instance, the *OED* notes that in 1801 "milker" was first used to describe a cow "of a specified productivity," positioning her as a vessel that produces milk ('milker, n.1.'). In 1744, what appears to be one of the first instances of "milker" applied to a cow can be found in the second volume of Ellis's *Modern Husbandman*: "a deep-bodied Cow is reckoned not so good a Milker as the more rounder-bodied" (95). Here, it is clear that "milker" refers to the yield of the cow. While earlier manuals stress the aspects of a cow that are deemed the best quality when it comes to providing milk for the dairy, the instigation of the term milker further reduces the cow to the product that she supplies. When maids are called milkers, even disparagingly, they are still the active participants in milking; when cows are called milkers, they are the fleshy machine. In fact, cows are less active than a machine when taking into account the fact that, by 1850, a "milker" also referred to a milking machine (*OED*, 'milker, n.1.'); the machine is the actant doing the milking, whereas a bovine "milker" is the passive receptacle from whom milk is being extracted.

The term milker was not always used pejoratively, however. For example, Marshall describes a "milker" who "has had few equals; and, in my eyes, she is, or rather was, one of the handsomest and most desirable dairy cows I have yet seen" (122). Here, both the cow's milk-producing abilities, and her aesthetic qualities, are lauded. But the term reifies her to one purpose, while the fact that she is now categorised as "a good or bad milker" (Dickson 777) or a "deep milker" (Lawrence, *Treatise*, 124) exemplifies the close surveillance of her output. This calls to mind the words of Lawrence earlier: "it is extremely unprofitable to keep a small milker" (*Farmer's Calendar*, 556), thus "no bad milkers must be kept" (161). Such language facilitated the reduction of cows to objects and may have reinforced treating cows as such in reality. For instance, if cows are mere vessels, then it

would be unproblematic to keep them tied up "while they are retained as milkers" (Martin 94). Bovine feelings are unimportant when they are simply there to provide milk to humans. While agricultural manuals before the late-nineteenth century are not inclined to depersonalise cows through the 'it' pronoun, Walker's way of referring to a cow as "it is by no means a remunerative milker" (12) has not appeared out of thin air. The use of the impersonal pronoun merely demonstrates that the developing thingification of cows, illustrated by the earlier use of the term milker, has culminated in their complete depersonalisation. Indeed, when Peter J Bowden in *The Wool Trade in Tudor and Stuart England* (1962) referred to sheep farmers as "wool growers" (Fudge, 'Renaissance,' 43), one can see how the twentieth-century tendency to prioritise the resource over the being was, by this time, entirely normalised in agricultural and related texts.

Thus, the term milker is merely another way to aggregate cows into a nebulous mass. Indeed, Gunderson, Stuart and Schewe have argued that the life of a modern cow can be related to Marx's theory of alienation: "the dairy cow's life is perpetual self-estrangement: her actions, movements, and genetics have been harnessed to increase production. Like the human worker, the cow becomes 'a living appendage of the machine'" (210). They go on to say that "like the human worker, the industrial dairy cow's product is external to her and dominates her" (210), and as such, "the cow has departed from what it means to be a cow" (211). While whether there is a fixed cow identity is an argument that still incites philosophical debate, what is clear is that a cow is further alienated from her work through these changes to her welfare. Positioning her as a mechanical entity rather than a fellow labourer emphasises this disaffection. "Like the concept of human work based on a mechanical representation of the 'human machine,'" argue Porcher and Schmitt, "the construction of 'animal science' (zootechnie) as 'a science of the exploitation of animal machines' in the 19th century was based on notions of energy and yield" (41).[148]

[148] As such, "the underlying organization of work in animal production is inherited from the 19th century" (Porcher and Schmit 41). Reading agricultural texts from c.1750-1900 was an uncomfortably familiar

Indeed, as the terms 'yield' and 'milker' became more commonplace in the mid-eighteenth century, one can trace a direct route from this estranging jargon to the cow being viewed "as a machine" that "will run more perfectly if all its parts are in good condition" (Hazard, quoted in Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 87) in the nineteenth century.[149] Much of this new discourse was influenced by the economic situation, as Overton relates:

> In the late seventeenth century, agricultural production was seen as an activity in which the individual husbandman worked for himself and his family on his own lands. By the mid-eighteenth century the husbandman had become the farmer, and, instead of 'husbanding' nature, was seen as an entrepreneur, calculating the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action… mentalities and attitudes change, and while the pressures of commercialisation and the market provided the essential stimulus to agrarian change, farmers' attitudes and expectations also had to change. (205-206)

As such, the changing "mentalities" of farmers were not influenced purely by financial pressure, but also due to a new scientific discourse.[150] While this chapter has mainly focused upon the effect the changing material conditions had upon human and cow relations, the movement towards maximising profit was, as discussed in the previous chapter, tied up in Cartesian and Baconian concepts that promoted a "mechanical philosophy" to "enable men to become 'masters and possessors of nature'" (Easlea 142).[151] Worlidge and his successors implied that the "mechanic operations" (Worlidge 69) and

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experience due to the ways these manuals echoed the unfeeling modern approaches of industrial farming – or rather, because of the way modern factory farming repeated and built upon the cruel nineteenth-century practices described in the manuals.

[149] The mechanical character can also be observed in an 1866 poem named 'London Pastorals,' printed in a July edition of the paper *Punch*: "I thank thee pretty cow what gives/The pretty milk on which I lives/Which it don't make me werry plump/For thank I thank thee, pretty pump!" (10). The cow is now a pump, a machine that the author has likely never seen, though she is, conversely, also described as pretty: a feminised object.

[150] Overton's supposition that husbanding changed at this time from small business to entrepreneurial commerce is supported by my own analysis of the chosen agricultural manuals.

[151] As Barbara Noske says, it was Bacon who "definitively succeeded in wedding the doctrine of human mastery over nature … to the practicing of experimental natural science… the conquest of nature became equated with general social and moral progress" (60-61).

"rational principles" (Twamley 9) of cheesemaking made the business of dairying a better fit for men than women; the latter were deemed to not be well-versed in scientific "Philosophy" (16). As such, the manuals' continuing emphasis on this new form of experimental knowledge-making reduced all non-humans to cogs in a machine powered by humans.[152]

The dissemination of the new science and its mechanistic inventions had dire consequences for farm animals. When Arthur Young argued that "experiment is the rational foundation of all useful knowledge: let everything be tried" (quoted in Overton 129), such a theory allowed for trials that brutalised the animals involved. This chapter has already discussed the use of fetters and the hurdle, but in 1836 the first milking machine was patented, a machine that inserted tubes into the teats of the cow in a way that must have been "extremely uncomfortable" (Fussell, 'Dairy Machinery,' 223). The engineers and farmers who introduced such machines to experiment upon cows did not have the feelings of the latter in mind. As Nimmo relates in 'The Mechanical Calf':

> The first milk tube device was made commercially available in 1878 … though initially capable of emptying the udder more rapidly than was possible by hand-milking, by wholly neglecting the biology of cows and the physiology of the udder and teats in their design, milk tube devices soon led to damage to these organs and a subsequent diminution of milk … the calf, having already been made physically absent in order to facilitate the appropriation of its mother's milk, was equally absent from the thinking of the engineers, who failed to see their task as a matter of how best to approximate the action of a calf suckling, but instead saw it in narrowly technical terms, as a question of how best to remove a fluid from its container … insofar as the biological body of the cow appears to have entered into their thinking at all, it was as a recalcitrant 'nature' which could be— indeed had to be— forced by science to yield to the human will. (86-86)

[152] Similarly, with the "coming of more complex machines" as Marx noted, "where once people had worked with machines, now machines worked with people" while the "fate of the machine 'operative'… was to be subordinated to his or her machine" (Sawday 73). Thus, lower-class humans arguably became positioned as automatons as well.

The experimental philosophy employed by these male engineers did not respect or integrate the knowhow of the human milkers; a large proportion of them were still women, and lower-class labourers, particularly female ones, would not be asked for their opinions.[153] As with midwifery, the practical experience of women was overlooked in favour of applying a new science, which in turn stripped notions of empathy from interactions with animals. Instances of science denying compassion in the name of logic, imbued as the word is with preconceived conceptions of masculinity, are still common today. For example, when interviewing small animal veterinarians, Hamilton and Taylor found that these generally male vets utilised a "'rational' and 'logical' approach" when interacting with their clients. This approach allowed them to feel that they were counteracting the assumption that their profession is "'caring' work rather than 'science' work." Here, the world of animal care is necessarily feminised and thus "devalued" next to the supposed superior masculinity of the farm animal vets. However, their "scientific training … on occasion stands in opposition to the perceived emotional ways in which their human clients interact with their animals" (161), suggesting that a blinkered approach – whereby science/masculinity and empathy/femininity are viewed as binary opposites in which the first pair necessarily dominates the other – comes into conflict with the messy word of animal-human interactions.

Indeed, the professional prioritisation of science over feeling in the context of animal-human relations can be discerned when considering the support vivisection gained in the early-twentieth century. In *The Old Brown Dog: Women, Workers, and Vivisection in Edwardian England* (1985), Coral Lansbury remarks how worship of the "new gods of science" (169) sanctioned the previously unspeakable things done to animal bodies in science's name. The pursuit of scientific knowledge thus exculpated humans from guilt

[153] Nor would they be willing to tender advice, as the milking machine threatened their jobs further (Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 87).

through prioritising the servicing of a higher power. She goes on to reveal that the physiologist Claude Bernard, the man who made vivisection acceptable to scientific communities in the late-nineteenth century, was directly influenced by the Baconian project to "master" nature:

> Bernard was convinced that the physiologist now had within his grasp the means to master and modify the animal kingdom, which included his own nature and destiny. Like Dr Moreau he had only to learn the intricacies of the animal machine to be able to fabricate new and more complex machines from living tissue and become the creator of a second genesis. (154)

Here, as with industrial farming, the belief that animals were machines, and thus tools for humans to use, led to their mutilation and destruction in the name of science.[154] The deification of this novel scientific method allowed for animals to be treated as unfeeling objects when "the altar was translated into the operating table" (165). But in the context of industrial farming, the new altar to be worshiped at was the machine. For instance, in contemporary slaughterhouses, Hamilton and Taylor have reported how "some of the workers who we spoke to demonstrated a sense of awe, and possibly pride, in the technology and machinery they worked with. Similarly … the processes and the machinery seemed to be invested with a life of their own. This further served to reduce human complicity in the killing … In essence, humans were seen as secondary to the needs of the machinery and the imbued drive for profit that dominated the entire system" (80). Machines, then, are sites of animal suffering, and are venerated by human workers in a similar way that many of those in scientific professions praise the forwarding of experiential research by any means possible.

[154] Indeed, experimenting upon animals was mentioned by Bacon in *New Atlantis* (1627), where nonhumans are used for "dissections and trials" in order to "gain knowledge about what may be wrought upon the body of man" (Bacon 263).

The promotion of a scientific philosophy that prioritised profit and mechanisation not only deprived cows, but women too. The previous chapter delineated how dairymen took over women's traditional roles of employment in the name of science and business. By 1825, Loudon was remarking that "in the cheese districts, men often milk the cows, and manage the whole process of the dairy; but females are surely much better calculated for a business of so domestic a nature, and where so much depends on cleanliness" (789). Though women were still milking "commonly" (1040) across much of England, fewer and fewer were managing dairies by this time. And, by the twentieth century, the new milking machines were generally operated by men (Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 87). However, women lost more than their employment and any emotional relationships they had with individual cows during this period. As Jessica Eisen has discussed, contemporary advertising in the US for products such as cow vaccines, with the tagline "[i]f she can't stay pregnant, what else will she do?" demonstrate that "the valuing of the bodies of female cows as 'reproductive machine[s]' often explicitly invokes a similar devaluing of female humans" (94). In other words, arguing that pregnancy is the inherent reason for the existence of the cow-machine reifies all wombs to a singular and naturalising purpose.

Thus, the agricultural and related texts are illustrative of how the material conditions of the agricultural revolution, alongside changes in how cows were thought and written of, likely gravely impacted their welfare. And, just as the previous chapter surmised that the decreasing representations of women in dairying literature may have mirrored and even helped bring about the estrangement of them from the dairy, the increasing depersonalisation of language could be both a reflection of, and a contribution to, mechanistic ways of thinking about cows.[155] But it should be remembered that an increase in mechanistic ways of interacting (through uncaring forms of milking) was already

[155] However, those who worked more closely with cows than the manuals' authors (like farming smallholders) may have held out longer against the tide of mechanisation, both through their equipment and through their use of language. Unfortunately, there is little available evidence.

beginning in the seventeenth century, while the use of restraining mechanisms in the eighteenth century precedes the nineteenth century's invention of uncomfortable milking machines. As Fudge has noted, "the mechanization of milking … had its (human) beginnings in the commercialization of the role of the milkmaid in the seventeenth century" even though it was not "(mechanically) under way" until the late-nineteenth century (*Quick Cattle*, 214). Furthermore, escalating herd sizes in contemporary England would have destroyed "the sense of a working relation between humans and animals" by limiting "the possibilities and occasions for interaction between stockperson and animal." Meanwhile, as the general public's access to individual cows declined throughout the early modern period, it would have become easier to further deny the latter's "material co-presence." She would no longer be a fellow co-worker, or an individual, but one of many thingified beings that produces milk. "Here too," Buller says, "the animal disappears" ('Vitalities,' 58-59).

Chapter Three: Imaginative Fiction's Pastoral Lament

A few of the younger, more recently married women who had been in good service and had not yet given up the attempt to hold themselves a little aloof would get their husbands to fill the big red store crock with water at night. But this was said by others to be 'a sin and a shame', for, after his hard day's work, a man wanted his rest, not to do ''ooman's work'. Later on in the decade it became the fashion for the men to fetch water at night, and then, of course, it was quite right that they should do so and a woman who 'dragged her guts out' fetching more than an occasional load from the well was looked upon as a traitor to her sex. (Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, 1945, pp.7-8)

The previous two chapters discussed how agricultural manuals across this thesis's period of study first represented women's waning influence in dairying, then delineated the movement of cows from co-worker to mechanical animal, trends that are supported by the existing historical evidence. This chapter notes that these same developments are present in imaginative fiction, but outlines how these diverse forms of text – ballads, poems, and novels – respond differently to the changing agricultural situation. It ends by focusing on two crucial texts by key novelists known to have critically engaged with industrialisation: George Eliot and Thomas Hardy. While the agricultural manuals discussed in the previous two chapters attempt to portray a realistic image of farming to inform readers (generally gentleman farmers) on the practicalities of dairying, literary works generally have distinct meanings and agendas, both from the farming handbooks, and from each other. Though many of the texts incorporate realist techniques, their authors – such as Elizabeth Hands and Thomas Hardy – are not attempting to instruct on more progressive (and thus more efficient) modes of dairying, but to craft a world where the emotional upheavals of human and animal life are represented in all their messy realities.

As such, this chapter relates how various imaginative works reflected *and* disrupted the agrarian manuals' projections of dairying. This sets it apart from the following chapter, which will more firmly centre on the female characters of *Adam Bede* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* to understand how changing representations of female sexuality resulted in denying notions of animality in certain women. In this chapter, what will be made clear is that the selected creative

fictional narratives do not dispute what the agricultural manuals and historical evidence suggests occurred; women and cows did become more distanced from each other as time progressed. However, the imaginative literature tends to deliberately undermine the discourse of improvement that was initially hailed by agricultural authors like Arthur Young, implicitly advocating for a return to more traditional dairying methods. Furthermore, I argue that the trend towards the depersonalisation of cows in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is reproduced in *Adam Bede*, but subverted in many of the period's dairying poems and ballads, as well as in *Tess.* Here, cows are made present as characters to deliberately emphasise that spaces for such interspecies interactions had decreased, while the attendant displacement of women from the dairy similarly led to fewer cross-species emotional attachments being able to endure in that locale.

Bawdy Ballads

Ballads are an early form of literature, and one of the first designed for mass consumption in England; the ease with which they can be read or committed to memory by following an already well-known tune led to their incredible popularity. As discussed in the methodology, ballads were disseminated widely among the labouring classes through both public and private performances, as well as through the ready availability of cheap print. The sheer number of ballads that seemingly depict everyday life in early modern pastoral communities exemplify exactly why rural workers would be inclined to learn them: because they connected at a personal level to the songs (Marsh, *Music and Society*, 4, 22, 225). While many ballads were products of their time, depicting, for example, misogynistic portrayals of unruly wives who cruelly cuckold their husbands (a common theme in seventeenth-century literature), a large number often feature a strong, independent female main character (Wiltenburg 255). Indeed, ballads that portray the complexities of gendered labour on a farmstead tend to be respectful of the hard work that typifies a housewife's duties. For instance, as early as the fifteenth century, the anonymous 'Ballad of a Tyrannical Husband' sees a housewife switching jobs with her husband, the "angry" ploughman, for a day, to demonstrate the

intensity of her labour (14). She "ryse whyll ye be slepande" – rises while he sleeps – to prepare everything for him, laying "her flesche for to stepe" and giving him full instructions on how not to burn the "malt" amid other tasks (87, 98, 101). The wife, being both "fayre and bolde" (11), does not mind relating to her husband the pains she takes in maintaining the household:

> Whan I lye al nyght wakyng with our cheylde,
> I ryse up at morow and fynde owr howse wylde;
> Then I melk owre kene and torne them on the felde.
> Whyll yow slepe fulle stylle, also Cryst me schelde! (45-48)

Here, nursing her child and milking her "kene" (cows) are activities that allow her no rest throughout the night, as milking started as early as four or five in the morning. Gail Kern Paster's contention in *Humoring the Body* that the premodern world had a different form of humoral "psychophysiology" is made more apparent when considering texts like these.[156] For instance, the dairywoman milking herself, shortly followed by milking her cows, would reinforce the idea that both she and her dairy cows "belonged to a part of the natural order jointly occupied by humans and animals" (12, 135). This ballad thus explicitly evokes a shared, embodied reality between woman and cow, while arguing that both milking and breastfeeding are an integral part of women's work. What is more, the woman's lament in this piece chimes with Thomas Tusser's observations in *Five Hundreth Points of Good Husbandry United to as Many of Good Huswiferie* (1573) a century later. Here, the housewife knows best how to "guide" the dairy (44), and she works as hard (or harder) than her husband:

> Though husbandry semeth, to bring in ye gaines
> yet huswiferie labours, seeme equal in paines

[156] As I touched upon in the Introduction, Paster argues that in the early modern world, the "imagined physical and psychological environment" was "epistemically prior to post-Enlightenment dualism" and thus the body was "phenomenologically indistinguishable from its passions" (*Humoring the Body*, 244, 22). These passions were similarly present in animals. The prevalence of Galenic science prior to the eighteenth century allowed for "identification across the species barrier," which was "compelling for the early moderns because it seemed both to reinforce affective self-experience and to offer an escape from it into the imagined self-sameness of animal passion" (150).

Some respit to husbāds, the weather maye send
but huswiues affaires, hath neuer none ende. (66)

Tusser's instructional poem demonstrates how the line between agricultural manual and narrative verse was blurred in this earlier period. For example, Dowe ends his dairying manual, *A Dairie Booke for Good Huswives* (1588) with a "saying" written by "the dairie wife … Ka. Dowe" (n.p.), a name that Juliet Fleming ascribes to Katharine Dowe, his mother and the "acknowledged source of all the information contained in her son's pamphlet" (204).[157] While this poem does not specifically mention dairying, this could be one of the earliest known instances of a piece of literature authored by a dairywoman in English that is extant today:

Arise earelie.

Serue God deuoutly.

Then to thy worke busilie.

To thy meate ioyfully.

To thy bed merilie.

And though thou fare poorely,

And thy lodging homelie.

Yet thanke God highly. (quoted in Dowe, n.p.)

What is clear from these three narratives is that dairying was an intensive occupation that housewives performed diligently by rising early every day. Moreover, they were in close contact with cows, with whom they knowingly shared certain similarities: the expression of milk.[158] As such, these

[157] Fleming notes that the poem "reminds us of a world that is invisible not only because it is lost but because it was never subject to those kinds of scrutiny that render social practices visible in the first place" and that it is so "deeply embedded in non-literary practice that it is scarcely visible as literature even now" (204). The poem serves to highlight how many other works of literature by dairywomen have too been lost due to the cultural disengagement (or exclusion) of women with print culture.

[158] All of these early instances of rural poetry contain directives for household management. For example, 'Ballad of a Tyrannical Husband' asks "good serrys" to not "wronge" their wives by taking their labour for granted (7-9), thus ensuring domestic peace. Though it could be argued that these poems are merely representing the ideal, the fact that ensuring good household economy could mean the difference between

early verses differ from the prose of the agricultural manuals as they centre female experience, revealing a world where premodern dairywomen considered themselves equal partners on the farmstead, as well as close to the cows they milked.

In the seventeenth century, women were similarly given respect for their good management of the dairy in the ballad 'The Woman to the Plow and The Man to the Hen-Roost, or, a Fine Way to Cure a Cot-Quean' (1681-1684) by Martin Parker. This ballad greatly resembles 'The Ballad of a Tyrannical Husband' in that the central couple also exchange their duties on the farm to ascertain who works the hardest, with comic effect. For instance, the husband churns "all day, with all his might/And yet he could get no Butter at night" (Parker, 'Plow,' 47-48), and subsequently fails when trying to milk:

> He went to milk one Evening tide,
> A Skittish Cow on the wrong side,
> His pail was full of milk God wot,
> She kict and spilt it every jot,
> Besides she hit him a blost o,th face
> Which was scant well in six weeks space (31-36).

Here, the husband lacks the vital experienced needed to be able to calm the cow, or know her correct side; the affinity the cow and housewife share is not present, leaving him with a large welt on his face. And, as the wife is similarly unsuccessful at ploughing, the moral to this tale is that men should stick to their duties, and women to theirs. While Parker's ballad argues against meddling with a naturalised gendered division of labour, it does stress the importance of practical experience in

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abject poverty and eating well suggests that these narratives are not dealing with romanticised versions of rural life, but instead offer a significant insight into the realities of the lives of ordinary people. It should be noted, however, that Tusser does reproach an "ill huswife vnskilful, to make her owne cheese" and argues that dairying duties should not be left to fall to servants (444), suggesting that there is a divide between those who can afford to be unskilful, and those who cannot.

farming, which in turn allows for dairywomen to be held in equivalent esteem. Meanwhile, in another of Parker's ballads, 'The Milkemaide's Life' (1633-1669), the fact that "the gentle Cow" does "allow" milkmaids to milk her "as they know how" (87-89) demonstrates that sympathy and understanding between cows and women encouraged gentleness.

Similarly, in 'Womens Work is Never Done' – the date is unknown, but the verse is linguistically like other seventeenth-century ballads – a dairywoman laments being married to a "fool," as she does all the work:

> In the Field I am expected,
> for to milk my Cattel there,
> For it must not be neglected,
> thus I make my constant care.
> Tho I am both wet and weary,
> I must to my labour run,
> Serve my Hog, and tend my Dairy,
> womens work is never done. (41-49)

Her unceasing labour sees her milk in the field, a skill that would require her to be well-known to the cattle, so that they will stand still and easily for her.

One reason that these narratives are very aware of the heavy workload of housewives could be that the audience for such ballads were likely women. For example, women had to "endorse" some ballads as they were meant to "entertain not only men but also women" (Wiltenburg 48). And, as Christopher Marsh says of 'The Woman to the Plow, and The Man to the Hen-Roost' in his article bearing the same name:

> The fact that the female role model in this particular ballad is the more positive of the two may tell us something about the core audience for the song.

> Although it begins, 'Both Men and Women listen well,' there is a
> sense in which Parker appears to aim particularly at female consumers,
> allowing and encouraging them to laugh at their interfering husbands. (85)

We also know that women were the singers and peddlers of such ballads themselves (*Music and Society*, 2). Perhaps, then, women being the intended audience of ballads that feature dairying would explain why they differ from the many ballads that were "frequently deployed in order to illustrate arguments about marriages that were threatened from within primarily by female failings … admirable wives are thin on the ground" ('Woman to The Plow,' 67). Or perhaps the fact that dairying was such an essential (and still female) profession during this period meant that its practitioners were afforded a certain level of respect. For instance, in 'Robin's Delight, Or Kate the Dairy-Maid's Happy Marriage' (1685-1688), Robin has "grown wealthy" since his inheritance, as he now has "good Corn and Cattel, Eleven Milch Cows/With Horses and Harrow, and two or three Plows" and can afford a wife (7-12). However, even though he can now aspire to marry "Sarah and Susan, Lace-makers by Trade" (and both of a higher class than a farm labourer) he will "have none but a right Dairy-maid" (17-18). In this ballad, the constant refrain of wanting a "right Dairy-maid" is stressed; Robin's heart is set on Kate, as only a dairywoman can know how to run a working farm. Cows were one of the most valued animals at this time (perhaps why Robin makes mention of them even before his horse) and thus needed a capable woman to manage them; lace-making would be a useless endeavour on a farmstead. Similarly, in 'The Country-mans Delight, Or, The Happy Wooing' (1672-1696), when John the serving-man attempts to court Joan the milkmaid, he also stresses how important it is that he has a cow to offer:

> Quoth John to Joan wilt thou have me?
> I prithee now wilt thou, ile marry with thee
> My Cow, my Cow, my House and Rents,
> All my Lands and Tennements. (1-5)

His cow, his cow, as well as his land, induces Joan to eventually marry him – or at least that's what is suggested by the narrator's wry preamble, arguing that "If not of him, she does his Wealth approve/So women for base Gold their Beauty sell" (n.p.).[159] Thus, even in the late-seventeenth century, a cow and a rented farm were seen as relative riches. During this time, then, one could assume that even one cow is a symbol of wealth, while a competent dairywoman is needed as a wife to manage even the smallest of dairies.[160]

While the latter ballad's preamble misogynistically portrays Joan as a woman grasping for money, there are still a plethora of ballads that depict milkmaids in a far more positive light than other portrayals of women in street literature. More progressive narratives are seen with ballads such as 'Love in a Barn' (1670), where a milkmaid plays a successful prank on a Lord attempting to seduce her. While the Lord expects a sexual liaison in the barn, he ends up being tied up in the nude; as the ballad says, "the country girls are not such fools/For to be taken in," and will retaliate if asked to exchange their virginity for jewellery (70-71).[161] And, in 'The Milkmaid's Resolution' (1672-1696), there is significance placed on the woman who "delights for to milk the brown Cow" as she "May sure be as good, be it well understood/as the Looby that follows the Plow" (40-42). In both of these ballads, it is the men who are feeble, and the women who control them with their sexual agency, as is made clear in the latter poem:

> But if you stand off and at them do scoff
> youl find they will burn like a fire
> When you make them to bow, let your reason know how
> to grant them the thing they desire brave

[159] The ballad itself would suggest that Joan is in fact wooed by his persistence, following early modern courtship rituals that would see women rebuff men before accepting them.

[160] In 'The Conquer'd Lady' (1664-1703), a "rich farmer's son" named Robin attempts to court "Madam Nelly, a nobleman's daughter" by remarking that he has "Two Hundred a Year and more/With Seventy Cows" (28-29) – certainly a "treasure store" (27) at that time. This ballad demonstrates that class mobility is perhaps on the cultural agenda, as certain farmers began to have more money than the aristocracy.

[161] See also the ballad 'Amintas and Claudia/Or, The Merry Shepherdess' (1678-1688), where the shepherdess sends her would-be lover to sleep (probably with alcohol).

to grant … (72-76)

It is interesting that milkmaids are held in relatively high regard in these seventeenth-century ballads.[162] Even when the verse turns bawdy, milkmaids are not mere passive agents of ridicule; the 1681-1684 ballad 'Jovial Lass' sees a lustful milkmaid, Doll, get the better of Roger, the man soliciting her for sex in the field. When Roger "leaps" off his horse he "started the cow," thus "poor Doll follow'd after/ till she was wet up to the Thighs" (6, 9-10). This annoys Doll at first – "pox take you, (quod Doll) for frighting my Cow" – until the brazen milkmaid "…falls on her nock, & pulls up her Smock/that Roger her Merking might see" (11, 24-25). Doll starts to use her hand to aid Roger to orgasm, upon which he remarks "what tickleth this/and runneth down my Reins" (49-50). Doll replies "Oh foolish Hodge 'tis Milk (Quoth Doll) … 'this pleasant 'tis good 'tis neat/ Oh, I had rather stroak a Man/than draw at the Cows Teat" (51-55). Here, "neat" refers to neat milking, a "skilful" process that required time to allow the cow to express all her milk (Fudge, *Quick Cattle*, 119). By using a term associated with dairying, Doll's scornful response demonstrates Roger's inexperience at both forms of milking; not only does he not know what milk is, he does not realise that its expression is natural, even enjoyable. Milking a man, however, requires far less work for her talents; she would rather milk him than her cow because it takes less time. Not only is she "nimble and brisk" at the procedure (her milking skills seamlessly transfer to sexual acts), the fact that Roger did nearly "spend" his "milk" before she even began suggests the naïve boy would never have been a challenge for her well-worked hands ('Jovial Lass,' 60, 50). Indeed, it is Roger who is the "clownish fool" who "Like a great Mome to his Mother went home" following this brief encounter, after which Doll seems to have returned to her milking (58-59). While the audience is invited to laugh at the unsophisticated Roger, the boldly sexual Doll has the upper hand.

[162] Other seventeenth-century ballads appear to support the theory that milkmaids are represented relatively well overall. 'The Bonny Milkmaid' (1683-1703) discusses how those who "Do carry the Milking Pail" are superior to London women (13), while Martin Parker's 'The Milke-maids Life' (1633-1669) defends the important job that milkmaids undertake.

It is undeniable that stories of lascivious milkmaids proliferate across ballads and other literary texts in this century. In my MRes thesis, I discussed how Shakespeare often chose milkmaids to be his "vehicles of sexual indiscretion" because the profession of dairying was considered to be loose (Ryland 76). Dairying was, after all, a "well–known courtship venue," while "the entire outdoors served as the theatre of plebeian courtship: 'to give a woman a green gown' was a euphemism for rural lovemaking" (Mendelson and Crawford 111-112). But the fact that milkmaids were actively engaged in the expression of milk provided authors like Shakespeare with access to a ready supply of innuendo. In *Measure to Measure* (1623), Lucio says to Claudio (who is sentenced to execution for engaging in pre-marital sex with his now pregnant fiancée):

> and thy head stands so tickle on
> thy shoulders that a milkmaid, if she be in love,
> may sigh it off. (1.3.56-57)

Here, Lucio can pun on the fact that Claudio's "head" is both the head that is for the chopping block, as well as his penis, while the reference to a milkmaid makes clear that Lucio cannot help but joke about Claudio's unfortunate ejaculation that led to his predicament; it was known to Shakespeare's audience that a proficient milkmaid can easily express any man's milk, while the imagery used here ghoulishly recalls a vicious beheading.

The violent undertones of Claudio's beheading/ejaculation take on a deeper meaning when taking into consideration the strain that gendered relations were undergoing at this time, particularly concerning sexual matters. Early modern scholars have noted that the seventeenth century was a time rife with male "anxiety" about the power of female seduction, as succumbing to such desire was perceived to be yielding to an "effeminising" and "base corporeality" (Breitenberg 6, 31, 49). Meanwhile, tales of adulterous wives abounded, at a time when (at least before 1670), a man could not legally separate from his wife and potential bastard child (Crawford 118). With such concerns potentially in the mind of the average seventeenth-century man, Shakespeare's *Measure*

for Measure plays upon them by, as Meredith Skura notes, positing sex as "the trap" for men. Sex "puts Claudio in prison and threatens his head, and Angelo seals his fate even as he embraces Isabel and gives Mariana the means to marry – and behead him. This is the brutal measure for measure which the woman always threatens to extract: a head for a maidenhead" (51). Even though outside of the play, pre-marital sex was not illegal, the threat (and humiliation) of being cuckolded, and forced to raise another's child, was perhaps considered nearly as serious as being for the chopping block itself; the removal of manhood is the removal of the head.

While on the surface, Doll's upper hand suggests a celebration of female erotic desire or power, we might find within these bawdy explorations of female sexuality evidence of patriarchal anxiety. Joy Wiltenberg has noted that "English street literature was somewhat less preoccupied with sex [in the sixteenth century] than in the seventeenth" (146) as the latter saw an increased focus on the concept of cuckoldry, suggesting that "men's uneasiness about their ability to keep the upper hand" led to them reaffirming "the notion of woman as a purely sexual being" (156). Though such an affirmation need not necessarily be a negative one, Wiltenburg argues that, even though "the English women's demands, whether for sexual satisfaction or household authority, often dominate the scene," the "chief aim" of these female-focused ballads was likely to "discourage female self-assertion by tarring it with the brush of sexual deviance" (182). Thus, 'Jovial Lass,' in showcasing the sexual prowess of the woman against the naïve incompetence of the man, may actually be an example of "street literature's tendency to define women's power in terms of their sexual relations with men" (Wiltenburg 257), a literary attempt to privatise struggles over power between the sexes. For example, any issues with "male dominance" in such ballads are instead problems that can be solved in the boudoir (the man must do more to please his lusty woman),

while the increasing economic influence of men over women is downplayed in favour of emphasising women's superior sexual authority (156, 10).[163]

But milkmaids do not always reign above men as superior sexual beings in this century. Indeed, across the seventeenth-century literary texts that feature milkmaids, there is the sense that men are entranced by the motion of a milkmaid's hands on a cow's udders, and that this is what beguiles them into seeking out these proficient milk-expressers. When Touchstone in *As You Like It* (1623) describes the wooing of the milkmaid Jane Smile, he cannot help but mention being sexually excited by the thought of "the cow's dugs that her pretty chapt hands had milk'd (2.4.40-41), said "dugs" being a stand-in for his member. This image leads him to attempt to woo and rudely proposition her, exhibiting how seventeenth-century courtship still handed power of pursuance to men. Similarly, an early book *The English Rogue* (1665) sees the lead character overcome with "amorous passion" after seeing a milkmaid's "pretty little hand stroking the Duggs" of a cow (255).[164] But, unlike the consensual relationship in 'Jovial Lass,' this action leads the rogue to sexually assault her. Thus, desirable milkmaids are not necessarily sexual deviants, but victims of men.

Thus, while critics such as Wiltenburg and Breitenburg argue that seventeenth-century representations of female sexuality exemplify male unease with their own virility, I would contend that such representations are more complex than they first seem. Wiltenburg's own research acknowledges that "sexual desire retains an important place" in relation to marital feelings, and women are "lusty, expecting to enjoy sexual activity as much as men" in street literature (Wiltenburg 145-146). While she goes on to say that such depictions were included to mark women as perverse,

[163] Of course, many ballads existed to maliciously satirise women. For instance, my research uncovered a ballad called 'The Valiant Dairy-Maid' (1685-1688) in which a milkmaid robs some tailors using her rolling pin. Wiltenburg has written that "the incongruity of [the] violence" in her readings of other ballads that feature female-on-male aggression "helps explain its comic appeal" while distancing it "from real life" (108).

[164] In *The English Rogue*, the titular rogue sees the milkmaid "opening a gate to milk her cows" (255); just one maid enters the field to milk, as seems to be the case across the seventeenth-century literature, suggesting that female milkers on small farms is still the norm.

it may simply be that such ballads portray a realistic expression of sexual agency, as yet unmarred by the following two centuries' suppression of female desire. For example, Marsh in *Music and Society* notes that women liked to sing "bawdy songs" as well (2); likewise, Roud argues that women also derived pleasure from lewd musical revelry before the nineteenth century (285). Indeed, one seventeenth-century ballad, 'The Milkmaid's Morning Song' (1671-1702) is an interesting counterpoint to the idea that female sexuality naturally threatens male dominance.[165] The verse starts with the male narrator spying "A Merry Milk-Maid on a time …A Milking of her gentle Kine" (1-3). He hears her singing "A pleasant and delightful Tune," though the milkmaid herself sounds rather vexed as she laments that she has not found a "young man" to which to lose her "maidenhead" (9, 72, 23). The milkmaid envies "The Marry'd woman" who "doth boast/how rarely she doth live/While I Distracted run almost/no comfort I receive" (65-68). The ballad ends with her resolution to find a man:

> And now Virginity adieu,
> I'le venture once to try,
> And steal what I account my due,
> a Maid I will not dye:
> And so farewell my Lovely Cows,
> for I am almost mad,
> But do resolve to keep my vows,
> if Man be to be had. (73-80)

While this milkmaid is undoubtedly fuelled by erotic desire – her sexual frustration evident in her remark that she spends "long and tedious nights" rolling in her "restless Bed" – her urges are

[165] A potentially slightly later ballad, 'The Merry Milkmaid' (1675-1696) is composed of similar content to 'The Milkmaid's Morning-Song,' though it is perhaps satirising the former as it pokes fun at how married women become gossips (playing on the idea that women who attended births were called gossips, and the fact that women together *do* gossip). This ballad does not make mention of cows, but the image on the printed edition shows a woman milking one; thus, cows still featured in some form.

not presented as unnatural (31-32).[166] The narrator, for example, remarks that the song "to Lovers all it doth belong" – both men and women feel such desire, and the ballad seems to be instructing those lucky enough to have a lover that they should not take their partner for granted (13). This thought is reiterated when the milkmaid reminds the audience that "Loves delights" (30) do not just provide sexual satisfaction, but comfort and security: "How happy are those women kind/who do not lye alone/But comfort find, in heart and mind" (25-27). Of course, the ballad still falls foul of the misogynistic seventeenth-century notion that women are more susceptible to uncontrollable lust than men, and more vulnerable to such animal passions due to their perceived increased closeness to animality (Mendelson and Crawford 61-62). For example, the milkmaid is "almost mad" ('Morning Song,' 78) from her amour. This could be a reference to the fact that what was called "green sickness" (now thought to be a form of anaemia) was common in young women, who were thought to be suffering from a lack of sexual activity. In reality, the affliction would likely have been exacerbated by the onset of menstruation. "Lust, said one writer, was inevitable in the young, therefore marry them off" (Crawford 57).[167] But as female desire was more normalised during this century, the milkmaid is not perceived as perverted. Instead, she is a woman who physically needs sex to avoid being *abnormal*.[168]

Indeed, as the next chapter will demonstrate, such sexually explicit songs may implicitly disparage women for being overly lustful, but do not condemn female sexual desire outright. Sex before marriage, particularly in rural communities, occurred somewhat regularly in the seventeenth century (Mendelson and Crawford 149), especially considering the fact that "betrothal – not the

[166] Of course, the fact that the desiring heroine is a milkmaid is significant, given the fact that milkmaids were often regarded as sexual creatures who could easily have liaisons (milk men) out of doors.

[167] Crawford notes that a ballad 'A Remedy for Greensickness' (1683) also humorously remarks that a young woman needs sex to cure her ailment (66).

[168] While the milkmaid says she will "steal" her "due," this likely just means she will steal away furtively, presumably from the farm (potentially her family farm) where she milks her cows.

church wedding – customarily opened the door to sexual intercourse" (Phythian-Adams 92). As such, a hasty marriage may have been a relatively normal way that an attractive milkmaid became a proficient housewife and dairywoman. Of course, domestic abuse and other inequalities plagued women during this period, but the number of ballads praising female labour would suggest that equality in marriage was somewhat necessary to the smooth-running of a farm. Furthermore, even those seventeenth-century ballads that focus more on eroticism than work demonstrate the affinity that women would have with cows, another valued member of the household. For instance, even though cows are not its focus, 'The Milkmaid's Morning Song' hints at a bond between the milkmaid and her cows as they are "gentle" to her, and she is sorry to say "farewell" to her "Lovely Cows" (3, 77). But perhaps this milkmaid is a harbinger of the stark changes in farming to come. The fact that she must leave her farm to find a man would suggest that there are no eligible young men left in her community. As discussed in the Introduction, proletarianization was already occurring by the late-seventeenth century and would have led to increased migration to urban centres. As such, the ballad can also be read as heralding the advent of industrialisation, and the fact that women would soon be saying farewell to both their lovely cows, and their respected statuses as competent dairywomen.

Political Poems

Prior to the eighteenth century, ballads that feature cows are not that dissimilar in content from the early agricultural manuals analysed in the previous two chapters, despite the former's tongue-in-cheek sexualisation of its characters. The vast majority of the texts analysed in this period respected women's work in the dairy, while suggesting that women and cows had an emotional connection – indeed, a biological sympathy – that men could not understand, excluded as they were from the dairy and its secrets. Though some seventeenth-century media, such as 'The Milkmaid's Morning Song' (1671-1702) or Worlidge's *The Second Parts of Systema Agriculturae* (1689) hinted at the impacts of industrialisation as the workings of the dairy were turned over to male managers (and

eventually, male milkers), by and large the agricultural manuals and ballads appear to be reflecting a similar reality.[169]

Equally, the selected imaginative texts and agricultural manuals of the eighteenth century both indicate how changing material conditions during this time were undermining female labour and leading to decreasing instances of sympathy with cows.[170] And, while discerning historical truth is not the object of this chapter, it is interesting that the chosen eighteenth-century poems by a new breed of labouring-class authors with verifiable experience of rural work contain arguably more dependable accounts than those found in the agricultural manuals.[171] Working-class writers like Ann Yearsley, dubbed 'the milkwoman of Clifton,' used the name 'Lactilla' to reference her vocation in her poetry, the word 'lac' meaning 'milk.' She employed her Lactilla alter ego for the first time in the 1785 poem 'Clifton Hill' – one of the first extant pieces of English imaginative literature authored by a named dairywoman since Katherine Dowe:

> …half sunk in snow,
> Lactilla, shivering, tends her fav'rite cow;
> The bleating flocks now ask the bounteous hand,
> And crystal streams in frozen fetters stand. (20-22)

Here Yearsley, as Lactilla, is likely recalling her travails at milking in similar wintery conditions. Such an observation sees Yearsley stand apart from the more privileged pastoral poets. For instance, Mary Waldron has discussed how 'Clifton Hill' echoes 'The Seasons: Winter' (1726), a

[169] Even though the manuals were largely written by, and for, yeoman and gentleman, while ballads were written and enjoyed by the lower classes.

[170] As will become apparent, the imaginative literature will diverge from the agricultural texts of this century as the former underlines the deleterious effects of agrarian capitalism that will lead to bovine depersonalisation, while the latter merely reflects the result of scientific inquiry on the treatment of animals.

[171] These new authors distinguished their poems somewhat from the lofty heights of the pastoral genre by providing a different, and sometimes less pleasant (one could say more realistic) perspective on life outside of urban centres. Labouring-class poets, however, were still beholden to the whims of their wealthy patrons, and thus had to employ more subtle methods of subversion while maintaining respectability; their writings therefore had a different audience (and agenda) to the cheap and widely available broadsides designed to make easy money.

piece by the well-educated pastoral poet, James Thomson, as both relate "the farmer's winter duties to his animals." However, Yearsley's poem sees "the point of view … shifted from observer to participant" (111), in recognition of her actual familiarity with the field. Moreover, she was not afraid to relate her close personal relationship with a cow, as the appellation of "fav'rite" indicates. Yearsley, like many dairywomen, would have had a preferred cow, likely a well-behaved one who would stand to be milked in such adverse conditions. Furthermore, Yearsley identifies actively with the sheep that flee from Lactilla later in the poem, writing "ye bleating innocents! dispel your fears/My woe-struck soul in all your troubles shares/'Tis but Lactilla — fly not from green" (Yearsley, 'Clifton Hill,' 106-108). Yearsley's "troubles" are alike her flock's, in that she feels unable to determine her own direction in life, both her and her sheep trapped in immiseration that sees them shy from the rest of the world . Yearsley's expressed affinity with other animals is remarked upon by Anne Milne, who reads Yearsley as empathising with insects in another early poem, 'Night. To Stella' (1785), demonstrating that Yearsley considers herself "part of a writhing dynamic world" (Milne 94). The idea that Yearsley felt intertwined with her natural surroundings recalls the early modern Galenic theory that saw emotional identification across the species barrier as rote (Paster, *Humoring the Body*, 150), even though such sympathetic understandings were waning in eighteenth-century treatises and manuals.[172]

This analysis suggests 'Clifton Hill' does not follow the mechanising trajectory of the eighteenth-century manuals, and thus echoes the conclusion drawn about the earlier ballads and agricultural literature: that milkmaids and cows share a sympathetic link, implicitly based upon the idea of cross-species lactation, which is strengthened by the act of them working together regularly. However, Yearsley's later poems, composed after she separated from her wealthy and snobbish

[172] Galenic doctrines "of correspondences and sympathies" were still "decidedly anthropocentric by design" (Paster, *Humoring the Body*, 154) but understood emotions to be passions shared between humans and animals. New ways to envision emotions were prominent by Yearsley's time, but many years of working with animals may make it likely that a dairywoman would feel kinship with her cows.

patron Hannah More, are markedly different to her earlier writings.[173] They rarely alight upon the subject of milking again; despite her continued use of Lactilla to describe herself in other poems, cows do not feature beyond 'Clifton Hill.' Indeed, animals in general disappear from Yearsley's emotional consideration. In 'Written on a Visit' (1787), Yearsley described the aesthetic lamb displayed in the groomed fields of Alexander Pope's former Twickenham villa as an "emblem of whitest innocence" (Yearsley 13), leading Milne to remark that the lamb is presented as "simultaneously beautiful and unnatural." (Milne 89). The "spotless lamb" who "forgets to bleat" (Yearsley, 'Written on a Visit,' 10) is instead represented, not as a working animal fleeing from the compassionate Lactilla in a conjoined natural world, but as an unrelatable object. Milne reads the lamb, in part, as a symbol for Yearsley's own movement from "laborer to laboring-class writer" (Milne 95); from a working milkwoman to an author enjoying higher domestic comforts. Additionally, the silence of the lamb who "forgets" to bleat represents, to Milne, the silence of poets beholden to the whims of their patrons, whose "purpose was not to envoice the laboring-class woman writer," but to use their prestige as their own (15).

The contempt Yearsley was held in by her patron is evident in Hannah More's letters to her literary circle, where the former is characterised as a "poor Creature born and bred a Milkwoman whose whole life has been devoted to the lowest of offices such as milking Cows" (More, quoted in

[173] Labouring-class poets had a complicated relationship with their patrons. For example, one might assume that Yearsley's owning of the name Lactilla demonstrated her pride in milking – the realistic, if brief, snapshot of dairying life in 'Clifton Hill' bolstering this claim. And yet, Yearsley was rankled by the constant references to her being a milkwoman. For instance, Raymond Williams remarks that she "was encouraged to publish as Lactilla" (*Country and the City*, 88), and there is evidence that the origin of the name sprung from uncharitable circumstances. Horace Walpole appears to have coined the name for Yearsley when writing to her patron, Hannah More, warning her that Yearsley "must remember that she is a Lactilla, not a Pastora, and is to tend cows, not Arcadian sheep." In other words, Yearsley should not give up her day job of milking when her poetical aspirations might come to naught, leaving her bereft and "starved" (quoted in Waldron, 57). The name stuck, utilised by More in her letters, and by eminent writers like Anna Seward to describe the poet (Waldron 61, 63, 76). While Waldron does not specifically state that Walpole coined the name, Kerri Andrews in the first volume of *The Collected Works of Ann Yearsley* believes this to be the case, likely because this appears to be the first written instance of Lactilla (365). While Yearsley may have seized the opportunity to build upon an established brand by continuing with the name Lactilla in her poetry, her prickly relationship with More, whom she later parted from on disagreeable terms – in part due to More's dire treatment of her – may have led her to distance herself from animals in her later work.

Waldron, 55). But when Yearsley began to write of her experiences, instead of living them, she was appreciated as more than the average dairywoman. By harnessing the power of the pen – a "masculine, professional discourse" (Sanders 78) – she could attain a more authoritative and valued position in society. Just as the male authors of dairying manuals from the eighteenth-century onwards were held in higher esteem than the women practicing the trade, Yearsley potentially recognised that distancing herself from the perceived commonness of dairying allowed her greater respect.[174] Considering this, I would draw out the implications of Milne's analysis further, by arguing that the "spotless lamb" is more of an abstracted metaphor than a real character not just because Yearsley was making a point about gaining an uneasy freedom from an overbearing patron, but because she herself no longer empathised in the same way with the animals that she used to write about. The increased fame and comfort she found in her authorial pursuits allowed her to discontinue her original profession, which she described as "laborious employment" (Waldron 241).

Conceivably, then, Yearsley could have been one of the dairywomen who wished to escape the "drudgery of dairying" (Pinchbeck 41). Though in chapter one I disagreed with the theory that women primarily parted from the profession voluntarily, I did not disregard the fact that many women would have preferred other work, if given the choice.[175] Yearsley's later poems, once freed from the shackles of her condescending patron, are still representative of how women had begun to leave behind their "lovely cows" in search for a better life, whether they did so willingly (as Yearsley

[174] It is not a stretch to believe that an aspirational desire to gain respect from the higher classes could have permeated Yearsley's thoughts when she was made to feel like a performing animal herself. Despite her obvious talent, her status as an immiserated milkwoman was exaggerated and used by her publishers to sell her work, the proceeds of which she was not trusted to hold (Waldron 66). As she was constantly described as "selling the milk about the Streets and feeding Hogs to support a miserable existence, and feed six small children, and yet who writes most excellent verse" (More, quoted in Waldron, 55) she may have wished to prove that she was more than a milkwoman engaged in lowly tasks. Furthermore, increased monetary comfort would have been a boon to any dairywoman.

[175] Prevailing elite pretentions over ballads, and elite condescension towards those who worked with animals, could have affected how Yearsley viewed herself; Waldron argues that her poetical syntax and content sees her more "at home with the cultured and educated" than with "the community into which she had been born" (116).

was able to do), or whether they, like the titular milkmaid of the 'The Milkmaid's Morning-Song,' were forced to find other opportunities elsewhere.

Further poems demonstrate how women's work in agriculture was under threat from all fronts in the eighteenth century. While the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuals and ballads respected the work of women, female labour tends to be belittled more frequently after this period.[176] For instance, labouring-class poet Stephen Duck wondered in 'The Thresher's Labour' (1730) if the hands of the "prattling Females" making hay were "so active as their Tongues/How nimbly then would move the Rakes and Prongs?" (163, 168-169). The tittle-tattle of the birthing room that Julie Sanders identified has thus been transferred to conceptions of female labour in the fields, and similarly suggests that women repose more than the male professional: "that soon dispatch'd, they still sit on the Ground/And the brisk Chat, renew'd, afresh goes round" (173-174). But women were not to take such attacks lying down, as Mary Collier's 'The Woman's Labour' (1739) demonstrates:

> For my own part, I many a summer's day
> Have spent in throwing, turning, making hay;
> But ne'er could see what you have lately found –
> Our wages paid for sitting on the ground. (49-52)

Despite Collier's stern remonstrance, female agricultural labour continued to be ridiculed, from within by male colleagues (Duck was a rural worker himself) and by elite eighteenth-century literati: the related condescension found in the period's agricultural manuals is neatly echoed. But it is not yet evident whether other trends endure in the imaginative literature, such as the successive depersonalisation of cows in the eighteenth, but particularly the nineteenth, centuries. Yearsley

[176] Women were offered fewer opportunities in the agricultural sector compared to their male counterparts in the eighteenth century, as the advent of new technology caused job losses across the sector.

does connect emotionally to her “fav’rite” cow – though she then never mentions her again – which at least suggests that a dairywoman and her cow were still sympathetically linked prior to any professional ruptures. Furthermore, a cow tellingly features as a main character in domestic servant Elizabeth Hands’s 1789 poem ‘Written, Originally Extempore, on Seeing a Mad Heifer Run Through the Village Where the Author Lives.’ The poem begins with “a lovely scene/And people's minds were, like the air, serene,” but the harmony is broken when “Sudden from th' herd we saw an heifer stray/And to our peaceful village bend her way” (1-6). This heifer, undoubtedly an agent with her own desires, “spurns the ground with madness as she flies” and “bellows loud (7-9), leading the male villagers to take up “old broken rakes” (11) and other useless weapons to ward her off, to no avail, until:

> At last the beast, unable to withstand
> Such force united, leapt into a pond:
> The water quickly cool'd her madden'd rage;
> No more she'll fright our village, I presage. (19-28)

There are a few different ways to read this short poem. The heifer can be seen as the author struggling against the bounds of her wealthy patrons and male-dominated society but, as Anne Milne has observed, seeing the heifer as purely a metaphor “‘kills’ the heifer or at the very least subsumes the identity of the heifer into that of the female poet” (72). Indeed, the very title stridently underlines the fact that Hands is recording a true occurrence, an event that she felt was important enough to begin writing about immediately afterwards. The heifer, then, is as real as Hands; as Milne notes, “the extemporaneity of the poem creates an imperative for recognition of the animal and her agency, just as it forces the reader to recognise the laboring-class woman poet in a new way – because the event ‘really happened’” (74). Indeed, there is a sense that Hands identifies strongly with the heifer, perhaps because they share a connection as similarly commodified individuals in the worlds of publishing and dairying respectively; a connection that the upper class cannot comprehend. For example, the poem highlights the fact that the bourgeois Camilla, when

confronted with the heifer charging towards her, “walking, trembled and turn'd pale/See o'er her gentle heart what fears prevail!” (23-24). Here, the cowardly Camilla is unable to grasp the gritty realities of rural life that would lead to a disruptive cow bursting onto an otherwise idyllic scene.

Thus, Hands’s poem reveals the insight a rural female servant has into the mind of an uncontrollable female animal straining the bounds of propriety.[177] But it also exposes how new systems in farming were modifying ways of handling cattle. Milne posits that perhaps the heifer is “bolting from an attempt at insemination” as, from her reading of Henry Stephen’s *The Book of the Farm* (1841), the mishandling of mating can cause heifers to be frightened, and run off; consequently, the heifer in escaping “is decisive, energetic, and fully subject over and above any reader’s attempt to make her the object of ridicule” (Milne 77). However, Stephens’s book was first published in 1841, while Hands’ heifer emerged fifty years previously. It is not clear what insemination practices the farm where Hands’ heifer escaped from used, as these will have differed depending on the size of the farm and its region. Yet, as discussed in the previous chapter, cowhouses were becoming more common from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, and it is entirely possible that the heifer was running from a more cloistered environment than from the fields of the previous century, where cows were impregnated by a bull on the common. As Elaine Tan demonstrates in “’The Bull is Half the Herd:” Property Rights and Enclosures in England, 1750–

[177] The inability of elites to comprehend Hands’s writings is satirised in another of her works, ‘A Poem, On the Supposition of the Book having been Published and Read’ (1789):

O law! says young Seagram, I've seen the book, now
I remember, there's something about a mad cow.
A mad cow! — ha, ha, ha, ha, return'd half the room;
What can y' expect better, says Madam Du Bloom?
Some pieces, I think, that are pretty correct;
A stile elevated you cannot expect
To some of her equals they may be a treasure,
And country lasses may read 'em with pleasure. (88-101)

This mocking of the “mad cow” is demonstrative of how even the mention of farm animals as a focus for a poem could presumably cause laughter from the upper classes. Indeed, such a poem must only be of interest to “country lasses,” to those with direct experience of handling heifers, and not the privileged few who prefer their poetry to incorporate animals only as aesthetic embellishments. As such, to comment upon when dairying goes wrong is not of concern to the gentry.

1850,' the impacts of the enclosure movement would have seen "the loss of the subsidized common bull," meaning that "the cow keeper also had to internalize new costs of monitoring mating activities" – among other new costs – implying that the movement towards bull "privatization" would result in mating taking place in byres increasingly from c.1750 onwards (480).

Thus, when Milne demonstrates that certain remedies were in circulation in order to force the cow to "take the bull" (77), this was likely a greater desire to increase oestrous in cows, as the new costs of bull rentals would have incentivised such action (Tan 480). But it is still not clear if Milne is right in supposing that the reason behind the heifer's invasion of the village was a "community sanctioned or collective 'rape' of forced insemination as natural agricultural practice" (84), or if the heifer was running from any of the new and uncomfortable methods instituted on farms to increase profits. If she had just dropped her first calf, the heifer could have been attempting to find her offspring, or merely running away from the milking fetters.[178] In any case, while the source of her madness is unknown, the upset she brings to the "peaceful village" demands that both the villagers and the reader recognise that the cow is an individual. When she "spurns the ground," perhaps the cow is telling her captive audience that she herself has been spurned, treated with a contempt that has led her to this moment. The cow is then quickly restrained, or killed, to prevent further disturbances. This abrupt ending – "No more she'll fright our village, I presage"– warns that such frenzied elements will be harshly controlled, whatever the legitimate reasons for her escape (Hands 7, 6, 28). Milne reads this rather dour ending as a "fallacy"; the countryside cannot be preserved timelessly forever, without similar "disruptions" to its serenity:

> Hands' prediction, even as it documents her internalization of dominant agricultural and human-animal values, also points to the inevitability of mad heifers, the sense that these things happen from time to time, that nature, despite science and farm management, is not ultimately reliable, controllable, or predictable. (83)

[178] Heifers are defined as young cows who have not had any calves, or not more than one (*OED*, 'heifer, n.').

While Milne's conclusions ring true, it must also be emphasised that such 'hysterical' heifers have not been represented in prose before this time, and are only alluded to in agricultural manuals from the eighteenth-century onwards.[179] Perhaps this is because authors such as Hands, involved in agricultural processes, have been more willing (and now more able) to document these acts of resistance. Or perhaps the implementation of new forms of "science and farm management" could have led to more and more mad heifers stomping through said villages, demanding to be heard. In any case, Hands's poem signals the way in which popular literature was diverging from agricultural manuals in its dealings with cows. Instead of advocating restraint to better control them, Hands (as with Yearsley, and the ballad authors) acknowledges the realities of cross-species affinity by making the then unusual decision to centre a cow in her work. She convincingly relates the heifer's struggle as if it were Hands's own. In fact, the poem recounts the heifer's journey mainly through the eyes of human women, as the only people to be named individually are Hands herself, the titular author; Camilla, the timid gentlewoman; and "A mother" who "snatch'd her infant off the road" (Hands 21). The men form the mob attempting to corral the cow; some "sturdy plough-boys" (15) are the ones with the weapons, while the women are observers, or witnesses, to this male-dominated intervention. It is significant then, that the term "heifer" could also be applied to women at this time (Milne 70), adding to the idea that Hands's young cow is also representative of women's decreasing power in farming communities. While Hands's heifer is the driving force of the poem, and Hands identifies with her enough to immediately relate her story on paper, both Hands and the heifer become passive participants in her struggle. The heifer is slaughtered, while Hands (and the other named women) merely observes the whole event – an indication of the way women were losing

[179] There was, of course, written accounts of the grief that cows feel when their calves are taken away. Erica Fudge has noted that a passage that references this fact in Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part Two* (3.1.210–220) recognises "the tie of the cow to her calf as unquestionably, and recognizably, emotional" (*Quick Cattle*, 121). But discussions of such extreme circumstances as goring, and escaped cows barrelling through villages, are not present before the eighteenth century.

overall control of an increasingly efficiency-driven industry, becoming onlookers, not participants, in dairying.

As such, Hands's poem raises awareness of the more destructive forms of male-dominated dairying practice that were becoming common in the eighteenth century, while demonstrating how cows and women were still somewhat entangled in a web of cross-species female sympathy. But such gendered empathy would necessarily recede due to an increase in male dairy workers. So far, this thesis has discussed the influx of male managers to that former female locale, but by the end of the eighteenth century, lower-class men were being hired to milk as well. This is exemplified in labouring-class poet Robert Bloomfield's 'The Farmer's Boy: A Rural Poem' (1800), a piece based on his own experiences as an apprentice at a farming estate when he was young. It is Giles, the farmer's boy, both "fatherless and poor" (27) like Bloomfield, who "with well-known halloo calls *his* lazy cows [my italics]" before he, with the dairymaid and "mistress" (193), ensures "the full-charg'd udder yields its willing streams" (197). While for the mistress "the DAIRY claims her choicest care/And half her household find employment there" (211-212), Giles both milks the cows and calls them in to the yard. But, although Giles works with these cows regularly, there is not the suggestion that he, like Yearsley, has a "fav'rite." Bloomfield, who "ran away, at fourteen, from his work as a farmboy" (Williams, *Country and the City*, 89), gloomily casts the cows as a subservient mass:

> Reluctance marks their steps, sedate and slow
> The right of conquest all the law they know:
> Subordinate they one by one succeed. (Bloomfield 178-180)

One reading might suggest that, just as Hands identifies with the maddened fury of the heifer who is prodded at by the "old broken rakes" and "rotten stakes" of men (Hands 11-12), Bloomfield sees himself in the cows as similarly subordinate to the gentry who own the estate, and their managerial servants. This is supported by the fact that Giles's is seemingly resentful of the fact that his rank is below that of the women he works with: "the clatt'ring dairy-maid immers'd in steam/Singing and scrubbing midst her milk and cream" as she "bawls out, 'Go fetch the cows: ...' he

hears no more" (Bloomfield 165-167). Her "bawling" is to be attended to immediately, as her valuable work in the dairy supersedes his status as farmer's boy who completes the less high-status tasks. But it is more important to read the cows as cows in their own right, and to recognise that their "reluctance" to be called likely demonstrates a lack of connection between them and their milkers. While the casting of the cows as a subservient mass initially suggests they lack agency, it is clear that they are still individuals, as Bloomfield accounts how "And one among them always takes the lead/Is ever foremost, wheresoe'er they stray/Allow'd precedence, undisputed sway/With jealous pride her station is maintain'd/For many a broil that post of honour gain'd (181-185). Such quarrelling may be part of a bovine pecking order, but the cows, like the boy, appear to have an ill humour. Indeed, they are shown to be engaged in acts of resistance:

> Pen'd in the yard, e'en now at closing day
> Unruly Cows with mark'd impatience stay,
> And vainly striving to escape their foes,
> The pail kick down; a piteous current flows. (221-224)

Perhaps the cows are irascible because they have been penned in later than normal, or perhaps it is because this "pen" is a too small space for too many cows, with no room to escape their "foes." Here, any suggestion of solidarity between cows, cows and humans, or human workers and their fellows, is lacking. Thus, Bloomfield's poem exposes a grim view of dairying that, while admitting that cows have individual wants, obviates sympathy between humans and cattle, or cows and other cows; conquest and survival is all that remains. Hands's poem is similarly depressing in terms of its depiction of human-animal relations and, while the cow is respected as a significant individual, a lack of female influence (both human and animal) is bleakly implied. Yearsley the milkwoman remains the most closely connected to her cow, but her refusal to describe animals with more agency in her later work is ominous. She has lost pride, or the ability to express any pride, in both the cows, and in her work, when engaging with those of a higher social status. It is remarkable that, while both Yearsley and Hands hint at the sympathetic links they feel with farm animals, there is a sense that such feminine rapport is waning. For instance, Bloomfield's poem demonstrates that

interactions with cows were becoming more male-orientated than in previous centuries, and this new situation is reflected in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ballads.

Lamentations of Loss

While the idea of men milking cows was a laughing matter in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century street literature, ballads from the eighteenth century onwards begin to normalise such interactions. Though in 'Simple Simon's Misfortunes' (1728-1731), the fact that Simon's overbearing wife gives him "charge" (17) of all of her animals and forces him to "milk the cow" (39) is likely part of the joke at his feeble expense, it also reflects the fact that men were no longer opposed to milking cows.[180] And remarkably, many later ballads seem to portray the relationship between man and cow as even more emotional than between woman and cow. For instance, 'The Farmer's Lamentation For the Loss of Colly his Cow' (1730) focuses upon a distraught husbandman who has killed and sold his cow to the "tripe man," "tanner" and "horner" (11, 15, 19):

> Ah! my poor Colly, poor Colly my Cow
> Poor Colly is dead, and can give no
> milk now. (4-6)

The remorse felt by the farmer indicates the fact that a deep, personal relationship existed between him and Colly. The fact that he knows the texture of her coat, as well as her milking schedule suggests that he was the one actually milking and caring for her: "The skin of my Colly was softer than Silk/And three times a day did poor Colly give/Milk" (20-23). Another ballad, 'The Parson's Cow' (1786) sees cows not tended by women, but by a vicar and male farmer.[181] And in the following

[180] 'Simple Simon's Misfortunes' does find it humorous that a man is told to look after all the farmyard animals, but the ballad's comedy rests on his wife being an abusive alcoholic more than Simon's failings at undertaking a vast workload alone. This implies that upturning traditional notions of gendered labour was not as amusing as it was in the previous century, perhaps because such notions did not exist in the same way.

[181] There are still some ballads that describe women's relationships with cows, but they are rarer in this century. In 'A Dialogue Between Jack and his Mother' (1720), it is still the mother who owns the dairy, offering

century, Charles Dibdin's 'Jackey and the Cow' (c.1805) relates how the family cow "moan'd and moan'd" (22) for Jackey after he leaves the farm to apprentice in London:

> And even if Jackey had been her own calf
> She could not have loved him more dearly. (20-21)

The cow in her misery roams about, until some "rogues cut off her/tail" (25-26). The farmer's wife then argues that she should be killed or "pound," because "ten't our kiaw, she's got never a/tail" (31-22). However, it is her husband who is more sympathetic to the cow's plight: "poor creature I'[m] glad we have found her" (30). While the older woman is said to be "fond" of the cow at first (2), the cow enjoys more kindness from the husbandman and his son than from the housewife. Indeed, in these post-seventeenth-century ballads, the bond is definitively between man and cow. The fact that female cross-species kinship is no longer taken for granted in such texts suggests that male attachments to cows were being given precedence in popular fiction, perhaps to reflect a new reality of gendered labour. As such, the separation of beloved cow from male milker both signals a reduction in female connection to the dairy, and reiterates the increasing disappearance of emotional attachment (male or female) in a world in which Jackeys (Jacks and Jaquelines) were commonly leaving their farms.

But this does not mean that male encroachment into dairying ensured that feminine sympathy between women and cows was erased in such media. For instance, in 'Three Acres and a Cow' (c.1880?), the labourer's wife calls the cow 'her,' while the husband first describes the cow as an 'it' (19), suggesting that a feminised empathy is at play – the wife recognises the gender of a fellow female. However, it is the male narrator who is troubled with the cow's yield and antics, which would imply that he is her primary handler. These ballads, then, like Bloomfield's 'The Farmer's Boy,' seem to support the theory that women were more absented from dairying than they

to part with "half her goods… and good milsh cows" (27-28) in order to secure her son a wife, who will then take care of the cows (and the fowl) the mother has given them.

were in the previous centuries. In fact, one of the first ballads to mention "dairy-men" appears to be from 1750, namely 'The High-Prizd Pin-Box.'

Even though women were no longer the sole or even primary caretakers of cows in the eighteenth century, their displacement was not necessarily final; men were often the authors of these ballads, and their utilisation of a focal male main character, in lieu of a female perspective, is thus more understandable. Additionally, these ballads, like the poems, are more politicised than earlier forms of street literature; during this period, men from all classes came to be represented more in the political arena, and it seems likely that they would be the chosen individuals in tales lamenting the increasing alienation of farmers from their traditional occupations.[182] Raymond Williams has written extensively on how imaginative literature began to exhibit various forms of pastoral nostalgia during the early modern period and beyond, arguing that it is in the eighteenth century when "a new and more serious social version of the lost peace and virtue of country life" emerges. While certain literary works by elite authors "served to cover and to evade the actual and bitter contradictions of the time" (*Country and the City*, 48, 34) by idealising a version of country living that was being lost to time, these post-seventeenth century ballads protest against such veneration by exposing the harsh social realities behind rural life.

For instance, 'The Farmer's Lamentation For the Loss of Colly his Cow' sees the poor farmer being asked what "do you mean/For killing poor Colly when she was so/lean" (7-10). The fact that Colly is described as "lean" suggests that she was not receiving enough food; it is likely that, at a time when the commons were being enclosed, many farmers would be killing their cows because they could not maintain them, which could be the source of this lament. Thus, the greater emotional weight given to cows in ballads featuring male farmers is not wholly indicative of diminishing female

[182] Women's unofficial participation in democratic politics began much earlier than the gaining of the right to vote in the twentieth century, but men were (and are) still overrepresented in political spheres before this time.

attachment. For example, though the consequences of agricultural upheaval had an injurious effect upon all the human and animal occupants of small farms, the emotional disturbances the resulting hard times caused were more commonly related in ballads from a male, not female, perspective. But what the ballads do hint at through their preoccupation with impoverished husbandmen is how farmhouse cheesemaking (primarily undertaken by women) would eventually be superseded by an industrialising business overseen by more affluent dairymen.

As such, the displacement of female authority on the farmstead had a corollary in how poor husbandmen were similarly being ousted from agriculture due to the turmoil caused by enclosure and other innovations. As ballads in the eighteenth century came to reflect this new state of affairs, they necessarily became more politicised. For instance, 'The Parson's Cow' (1786) features a couple who "still, tho' rare, rent a small farm" (10). The modest farmer, after hearing a lecture from the vicar on charity, decides to give the very same parson his cow. The parson greedily accepts the gift, tying his new cow next to his current one, "so they might to each be known" (28). However, the farmer's cow is not satisfied with this turn of events:

> With scanty fare unruly grew
> So kicking soon did force the door
> and hence away the other bore
> The Parson's cow reluctant went
> Long use, not fare, had taught content
> But farmer's beast well fed and strong
> Perforce the other led along. (30-36)

Here, the farmer's cow regains "her well known stall" (38) with the other cow in tow, which the farmer believes is an act of God: "Look, wife, the Parson told us true/For one the Lord has sent us two" (41-42). In an amusing turn of events, the farmer then swiftly sells the Parson's cow to "pay his rent" (46). Like 'The Farmer's Lamentation,' this ballad serves a political purpose; the poor farmer

is suffering economically due to the ramifications of agrarian capitalism, and must trade the spare cow to keep a roof over his head. But he, unlike the avaricious vicar, "plump with tythes and malt liquor" (2), is a good and honest man, hence why his cow receives the best food despite their poverty. As such, the farmer's well-treated cow refuses to stay where food is lacking, her superior temperament seeing her lead the ill-fed Parson's cow with her to the better food and company awaiting her at home. Indeed, while the vicar is presented as corrupt, and the farmer perhaps rather naïve for giving away his cow, the farmer's cow is the real heroine of the tale; she brings some fortune to the good farmer, and tricks the morally dubious vicar.

The political theme of the ballads continues with 'Hovey's Gala Day' (1810-1831), which describes the one day a year that "every freeman has the power/Of putting two cows on the moor" (9-11). This moor was likely once a non-enclosed commons. One trickster tries to cheat by grazing four cows there rather than the allotted two, so the "herbage committee" (89) decide that no one will receive free grazing again. The moral of the story is to avoid making "false vows" (101), but also demonstrates the fact that grazing land was so precious that one would lie to feed their cows by this time. In this ballad, the cows are not strictly present as beings in themselves, as in 'The Parson's Cow'; instead, they are representative of the failings of the humans that own them. The cow was an important sign of prosperity, and the loss of them, and the means to keep them, demonstrates how the traditional agricultural systems were failing.

It is curious that all of these post-seventeenth century ballads, barring 'Hovey's Gala Day,' classify cows as individuals, even heroines, at a time when agricultural manuals were denying their autonomy. When comparing popular literature to the farming books of the same period, one late-nineteenth century ballad 'Three Acres and a Cow' bears further investigation. Firstly, the ballad is not progressive; it mocks Liberal land reform campaigners from the 1880s who wished to alleviate rural poverty by awarding families with "three acres and a cow" by demonstrating how such a

programme would no longer be economically or practically sufficient. Liberal advocates believed that this measure would allow a family to be self-sufficient, but the verse ridicules such a belief:

> And I've got three acres
> Three acres and a cow
> And now I've got it I don't know how
> What to do wi' it now,
> The blooming cow it worries me
> And leads me such a rig
> I wish that they would take it back
> And let me have a pig. (9-16)

In this ballad, which likely dates from c.1885 due to its content, the cow is described as an 'it,' though in all the earlier ballads compiled by this thesis, she is gendered as 'she.'[183] Perhaps this is a sign of the times; while cows were increasingly instrumentalised in early modern farming, relationships were seemingly less personal by the nineteenth century. As discussed in the previous chapter, in an 1885 article, the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society* remarked that "if the cow is viewed as a machine, it is evident that it will run more perfectly if all its parts are in good condition" (Hazard, quoted in Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 87). And, even before the late-nineteenth century, many agricultural manuals would 'thingify' cows by reference to their yield and output; hence it is no surprise that in this ballad, her failure as a cow is once again accompanied by the impersonal pronoun: "I'm blowed if *it* would yield us even/Half a pint of milk [my italics]" ('Three Acres,' 31-32). Her inadequacy as a *milker* is accompanied by the depersonalising 'it' that positions her as defective merchandise.

But perhaps the initial use of the impersonal pronoun is because the supposed narrator is not a farmer who would have been used to working with cows, but a poor labourer, with little

[183] The slogan "three acres and a cow" was used by political campaigners during the 1880s, and while the date of this ballad is unknown, it was likely circulating before 1886. This is because another ballad called 'Three Acres and a Cow,' dated between 1886 and 1917, appears to be responding to the satirical message in the former: "for nothing but the land and cow/will keep me from the lump" (8-9). The latter ballad argues for the political motion, and is firmly against the wealthy elite, though the cow is not present as a character, but an idea.

knowledge of cattle. This argument is supported by the final stanza, wherein the narrator yields to the personal pronoun when describing the cow's antics:

> I've seen a few cows in my time
> But this cow cows the lot
> If she tries her tricks on anymore
> I'll let her have it hot. (33-36)

Here, the cow is a "she" once she becomes an individual agent, and thus once an affinity between the two is underway – even if the narrator describes this new relationship as an antagonistic one, as he does not have the agricultural knowledge, or training, to manage her. As discussed in the previous chapter, when a cow resists, she is either afforded power as an agential being, or restrained as a malfunctioning product. In this ballad, the former occurs, and the cow is transformed from a political cipher into a living creature with needs and desires of her own.

Though the ballad is clearly a piece of conservative propaganda that belittles the extension of voting rights to poor men, it demonstrates the naivety of urban politicos who believed cows were merely products to be bestowed. The cow instead becomes an unruly, quasi-member of the family through the enforced intimacy of the Liberal programme:

> And when the cow comed home my wife
> She says to me why Joe
> We've got no place to put her in,
> Where be the cow to go,
> By gum says I to her
> I never thought of this some how,
> So in our bedroom we have been,
> Obliged to keep the cow. (17-24)

While in earlier centuries, a cow would have shared the bedroom with poorer farmers in winter, it being the only room, they were moved into "separate accommodation" during the early modern period (Thomas 40). Thus, the ballad mocks the idea of the bedroom as a place to keep a cow, representing as it did a backwards movement away from the more 'civilised' byres and cowhouses,

even as this enforced intimacy could be the reason why the narrator eventually recognises the cow as a 'she.'

While the Liberals – the narrator and the party itself – are the source of ridicule (the narrator for being too idiotic to think ahead, and the Liberal Party and its followers for being out of touch with countryside concerns), what is more interesting here is the fact that cows are no longer suitable for the poor, rural homesteader; pigs are deemed less fuss, and more affordable.[184] Perhaps the cow has been playing "tricks" precisely because there is nowhere suitable to keep her anymore, and no one with hands-on experience to manage her. There is no competent milkmaid to stroke and calm her. As keeping a cow had become more expensive due to a lack of access to free grazing and bulling, only large farms could afford to house them, and did so in greater and greater herds to maximise yields. Such cows would no longer be a human's "fav'rite" once time became money, and profit became paramount. Though the cow in the ballad eventually came to be seen as an individual by the male farmer, opportunities for such cross-species identification were already receding. Rural communities were never given three acres and a cow, and the amount of small dairies today remains low compared to the large enterprises where the majority of England's milk is produced.

But while these post-seventeenth-century ballads directly reflect the changing agricultural situation also described in the farming manuals, they seem to contradict the depersonalising shift seen in the latter; instead, cows are presented as personalities with impressive influence. The earlier ballads do not deny this, of course; when the husbandman goes to milk the cow in 'The Woman to the Plow and The Man to the Hen-Roost,' the cow steadfastly refuses him, advancing her own interests. But it is evident that cows do tend to feature more prominently as characters in ballads such as 'The Farmer's Lament,' 'Jackey and the Cow,' 'The Parson's Cow' and 'Three Acres and a Cow.' Yet, these four ballads are also examples of how such small-scale dairying operations were

[184] In *Lark Rise to Candleford*, Flora Thompson describes how pigs are the animals generally kept by poor rural families in the 1880s, with milk being a rarity gotten from the richer, neighbouring farm (9, 17).

becoming lost to history. One farmer has to sell his cow in part so he himself can survive; Jackey's cow keens for him because he, like many others, has left the country for the city; the Parson's cow is sold to prevent a couple being evicted from their farm; and the cow gifted by the Liberals is a hindrance, not a help, as space is so limited. It is conceivable, then, that cows become more centred as characters in these ballads to emphasise the fact that cows could no longer command such respect in the new, industrialised reality. The (generally male) authors of such nostalgic ballads, mourning a way of life that appreciated farm animals as a significant part of the wider agricultural community, hark back to a time when cows were known to have personalities and agendas of their own, but from a decidedly male perspective.

This pastoral nostalgia is also found in Yearsley's lamb who forgets to bleat – the lamb being a groomed centrepiece in a visitor mansion, set apart from the real herds that used to dot the commons. Similarly, Hands evinces the familiar lament at a loss of a serene countryside, and at the fact that an unruly heifer must now be killed to avoid any dangerous human contact – the heifer is not to be calmed, but controlled. Finally, Bloomfield's reluctant and angry cows are a victim of agrarian aggression, and the detrimental pursuit of profit. While cows, in these poems, be they narrative verse or imitative of the pastoral poetry genre, have some autonomy, there is sense that the changing agricultural landscape will profoundly affect the lives of cows and how they are perceived. It is not always known whether the cows in such texts are to be slaughtered or sold into a larger herd, but both eventualities necessarily result in their ongoing depersonalisation. Meanwhile, women are side-lined in the later ballads, not because they were actively being excluded from popular dairying media, but because new male involvement in the practice allowed men to position themselves as having sympathy with cows before opportunities for such attachments closed

completely.[185] Turning to the novel, a form of literature that saw its origins in the eighteenth-century, these themes of bucolic loss and displacement continue.

Novel Milkmaids

This section will focus mainly upon *Adam Bede* (1859) and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented* (1891) as these two texts critically engage with the topics of industrialisation in the dairy, as well as the shifting place of women and cows in that locale.[186] First, however, it is necessary to sketch a brief history of how prior novels have represented cow and human relations to situate the aforementioned texts within their earlier genre and context. While eighteenth-century novels make little mention of cows, Raymond Williams has noted that many still evince a notion that rural estates were rapidly modernising. He remarks that both Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson were concerned in their novels with marriages that would link large farming estates; in *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749) and *Clarissa Harlowe* (1748) respectively, "what is dramatised, under increasing pressure, in the actions of these novels, is the long process of choice between economic advantage and other ideas of value" (*Country and the City*, 44). The notion of economic advancement is particularly stark in this century, as agrarian property development (including increasing the size of the dairy) was normal practice for those with large assets.[187]

The result of such dairying expansion was made plain in eighteenth-century ballads and agricultural manuals that recounted increased instances of bovine pain and resistance, and Fielding

[185] And in reality, farmers with one or two cows, no matter their gender, would have had the opportunity to grow close to them.

[186] The next chapter will focus in more detail on the characters of Hetty and Tess to discuss how they are sexualised and animalised.

[187] There are not yet clear examples of a decrease in human and cow interactions in the eighteenth-century novels. For instance, in Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), the titular character is confronted by a couple of cows that have overrun the bounds of the estate, coming right up to the door, while a "poor cook-maid has had a bad mischance" and "been hurt much by a bull in the pasture, by the side of the garden" (142). Here, the bull is not controlled in the same way as the unruly heifer fifty years later, but is merely an animal to be avoided.

also identified growing discontent in the cow population. His novel, *Tom Jones*, is one of the first narratives of that kind to represent the emotional ramifications of overcrowding in dairies:

> As a vast herd of cows in a rich farmer's yard, if, while they are milked, they hear their calves at a distance, lamenting the robbery which is then committing, roar and bellow; so roared forth the Somersetshire mob … made up of almost as many squalls, screams, and other different sounds as there were persons, or indeed passions among them. (154)

While Fielding is satirically drawing a connection between an unruly, dehumanised mob of people and a herd of cows, it is more interesting here that he describes the "robbery" of milk as an injustice to the latter, and specifically notes that only a "rich farmer" can afford a "vast herd." The wealth of the dairyman is significant because such proceeds have been gained by separating calves earlier to produce a surplus of milk, as discussed in chapter two. An increase in bovine anguish – the "roar" and "bellow" – was an attendant part of such a move which, as Fielding implies, took place under the control of more affluent male managers.

In the nineteenth century, the result of cows being pushed into more congested and squalid conditions is paralleled in Dickens's novels with the fate of the working class. Both groups have been forced to move into urban centres where, in *Oliver Twist* (1838), "a thick steam" was "perpetually rising from the reeking bodies of the cattle, and mingling with the fog, which seemed to rest upon the chimney-tops, hung heavily above" (164).[188] The enforced closeness of cows to the city figured in Smithfield Market does not produce a cohesive intermingling of animal and human bodies that the earlier ballads hinted at, but a pungent and hostile mixture that clings to the chimney-tops – those soot-covered bastions of industry – while a displaced orphan is compelled through London's ruthless

[188] Other examples of novels grappling with the consequences of urban migration can be seen in Benjamin Disraeli's *Sybil* (1845). Chaffing Jack describes how quickly Mowbray has changed from idyllic countryside "where the lads came and drank milk from the cow with their lasses" (301-302) to urban sprawl. Meanwhile, Caroline remarks that if she was "a lady, I would never drink anything except fresh milk from the cow" (87), suggesting that in cities, only the rich can afford to drink milk in the traditional fashion.

streets. The city is a locality that is stripped of compassion, for both vulnerable humans and animals alike, as they combine in an uncomfortable mass:

> All the pens in the centre of the large area, and as many temporary pens as could be crowded into the vacant space, were filled with sheep; tied up to posts by the gutter side were long lines of beasts and oxen, three or four deep. Countrymen, butchers, drovers, hawkers, boys, thieves, idlers, and vagabonds of every low grade, were mingled together in a mass; the whistling of drovers, the barking dogs, the bellowing and plunging of the oxen, the bleating of sheep, the grunting and squeaking of pigs, the cries of hawkers, the shouts, oaths, and quarrelling on all sides. (164)

The strained "bellowing" and "lunging" of cattle in the market are similarly echoed in Dickens's *Dombey and Son* (1848) when the manager, James Carker, upon fleeing France sees "rows of mudbespattered cows and oxen … tied up for sale in the long narrow streets, butting and lowing, and receiving blows on their blunt heads from bludgeons that might have beaten them in" (816-817).[189] This scene is portentous for Carker, who is about to be killed by a train when returning to England, but was also reflective of the now casual cruelty of the larger-scale cattle markets.

It is no surprise that novels, like the earlier ballads and poems, are relating how industrialisation has had dire consequences on farm animals and impoverished humans. It is why many such texts similarly evoke a sense of pastoral nostalgia, to disregard, or protest, the alienation of the present day by venerating a bucolic past. For instance, Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford* (1853), based on the author's early life in 1840s Knutsford, presents the small town of Cranford as an idealised rural fantasy. For instance, in the novel, a community of "Amazons; all the holders of houses above a certain rent are women" (3), care for one another in ways that appear at odds with the callousness of Dickensian England.[190] Some residents lavish the same generosity and affection on

[189] Here, the plosive sound of the alliteration reinforces the thudding cruelty of the weapon on the heads of the cows.

[190] Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848) similarly extolls the pastoral virtues that can still be found outside of large urban centres. She describes Green Heys Fields as a place where "townspeople" who have left Manchester "but half-an-hour-ago … deafened with noise of tongues and engines, may come to listen awhile to the delicious sounds of rural life: the lowing of cattle, the milk-maids' call, the clatter and cackle of poultry in the

animals; the narrator, Mary Smith, discusses how the eccentric Betty Barker looks upon her Alderney cow "as a daughter" and lauds her "wonderful milk" and "wonderful intelligence." When the cow fell "into a lime-pit" and came out "naked, cold, and miserable, in a bare skin," Betty is advised by one of the few men in Cranford, Captain Brown, to "kill the poor creature at once'" (7), but her attachment to her cow prevents her from taking his advice:

> Miss Betty Barker dried her eyes … set to work, and by-and-by all the town turned out to see the Alderney meekly going to her pasture, clad in dark grey flannel. I have watched her myself many a time. Do you ever see cows dressed in grey flannel in London? (7)

As the women of *Cranford* commonly go against their own economic interests to care for one another through sympathetic gift-giving (Rappoport 95), this story provides a similar example of how feminine nurture, even across the species barrier, is a mainstay of this romanticised village. Just as the ballad 'The Farmer's Lamentation For the Loss of Colly his Cow' (1730) showcased a deep bond between human and cow, *Cranford* evokes a similar connection, but from a middle-class woman's perspective; Betty can afford to keep her dear cow, even when disaster strikes. Furthermore, while the aforementioned ballad evinces how emotional connections came to be ruptured due to the need for human (male) survival in an increasingly harsher world, *Cranford* stresses female solidarity by ensuring that the cow is not killed, but protected as a daughter of the family. In the previous section, I explained why certain eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ballads showcased a profounder sentiment between men and cows than between women and cows; because such ballads were written from a male perspective at a time when men could both finally work with cows without blatant mockery, while having a vested interest in decrying the consequences of agrarian capitalism. The explicitly familial relationship between Betty Barker and her Alderney in a novel written by a woman, about women, substantiates my conclusion that female perspectives on the relationship between cows and women in imaginative literature were likely

old farm-yards" (5). This area is now the site of a large ASDA superstore and a major Heineken brewery in inner-city Manchester.

similarly emotional during these centuries. For instance, the love between Betty and her cow is the strongest example of sentiment between human and cattle in all the literature analysed in this thesis, and it is decisively female.

However, the fact that Betty dresses her cow in flannel serves as a comical way for the narrator to point out the fact that such an occurrence would never happen in London, demonstrating how the bucolic Cranford is set apart from busier towns and cities through its very irregularity. The juxtaposition of this moment of cross-species care with the capital turns on the fact that such actions are divorced from the outside world – they are a peculiarity of Amazonian Cranford, where women (also peculiarly) rule. The cruelty of the city sketched by Dickens and his contemporaries is implicit in Mary Smith's query about cows in London; the narrator's satirical comment knowingly infers that the male-dominated streets of the latter, full of "countrymen, butchers, drovers, hawkers, boys, thieves, idlers, and vagabonds" (Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, 164) focused upon individual monetary gains, are bereft of feminised notions of compassion and charity. In this way, Gaskell reminds the reader that only an unmarried and relatively well-off woman in this odd town of the recent past could, or would even wish to, defend her cow from the butcher. Thus, though *Cranford* demonstrates that great depth of feeling can still exist between women and cows, the relationship is idealised; few women would have been able to afford to keep a cow as a member of the family by this time.[191] Indeed, later novels like Flora Thompson's *Lark Rise to Candleford* (1945) – set during the author's childhood in the 1880s – sketch a reality that concludes that

[191] Though Burke in *Farming for Ladies* (1844) argued that middle-class women with enough land would find "pleasure" in "nurturing" a calf "as a pet, and bringing it [sic] up as a sort of playfellow" (379) such "ornamental dairies" (Carroll 168) described in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were generally only accessible to elite women who enjoyed cow-keeping. In *Silas Marner*, Eliot suggests that Priscilla's interest in her dairy is unusual by the early 1800s: "the women of her generation — unless, like Priscilla, they took to outdoor management — were not given to much walking beyond their own house and garden, finding sufficient exercise in domestic duties" (233). Yet the middle- to upper-class Priscilla is interested in her dairy because of her particular temperament and situation; unmarried and "ugly," her interests lie not in vanity, but in overseeing her dairymaid and "conquering the butter" herself. As she tells her sister-in-law Nancy, "'you'll never be low when you've got a dairy'" (231).

women's displacement from the dairy, and their alienation from cows, was much more complete towards the end of the nineteenth century, when smallholders had definitively swapped cows for pigs.[192]

Though an all-female community in a peaceful small town untouched by industrialisation would have been unusual in the 1840s, relating the relatively slow-paced antics of Cranford's Amazonian women was a new form of literary practice, as it made the "unhistorical" – women and the working class – "historic" (Kingstone 72). Similarly, *Adam Bede* and *Tess* are the first novels to feature milkmaids as major characters, as "a recognition of other kinds of people, other kinds of country, other kinds of action on which a moral emphasis must be brought to bear" were a result of this "change in literary bearings" that brought "into focus a persistent rural disturbance that had previously been excluded or blurred" (Williams, *Country and the City*, 108). As with *Cranford*, these novels are set in the recent past; *Adam Bede* in 1799, sixty years before its publication, while *Tess* is set twenty years before its publication in the 1870s. Elaborating on why so many Victorian authors chose to set their novels in "the recent past within memory – the period just out of reach," Helen Kingstone has argued that that locale, "is the pre-eminent site of nostalgia, that term originally invoked in the nineteenth century as a longing for home" (148). But it is also because Victorians, in having their previously traditionalist assumptions constantly challenged by rapid advancements in

[192] For instance, the small hamlet of Lark Rise now has only one dairy farm, overseen by "the rich old man at the Tudor farmhouse" (40). This is a marked difference to when old Sally, "was a girl" in the early-nineteenth century, at a time when "country people had not been so poor … or their prospects so hopeless. Sally's father had kept a cow, geese, poultry, pigs, and a donkey-cart to carry his produce to the market town. He could do this because he had commoners' rights and could turn his animals out to graze" (73). Back then, it was "Sally's job … to mind the cow" (74). Thompson's novel substantiates earlier conclusions made in this thesis, as it demonstrates that women's affinity with cows was significantly lessened by the 1880s. For example, it is "a cowman" who had to show Laura, Thompson's alter ego, how to interact with a herd of cows she initially fears (589), while many of Lark Rise's residents tend to not have personal dealings with cows. This can be seen when Laura recounts "one new old saying … used on an occasion when a woman, newly widowed, had tried to throw herself into her husband's grave at his funeral. Then someone who had witnessed the scene said dryly in Laura's hearing: 'Ah, you wait. The bellowing cow's always the first to forget its calf'" (522). The use of the impersonal 'it' for a cow is a late-nineteenth century appellation, thus is relatively new for the 1880s. However, an adage that argued that grief affects both cows and women harks back to when such assumptions were the norm. This could mean that the "new old saying" derived its content from earlier adages where such sentiments were common, but its execution (describing a cow as inanimate) is decisively modern.

science and technology detached from "natural explanations," were now concerned with "a rethinking of the problem of difference" through their own recent history (Ermarth 165). "How – and whether – the recent past could be written into the national historical narrative" was now on the table (Kingstone 4, 14). Thus, Eliot and Hardy could effectively draw out the implications of agrarian change due to "a different social tradition" that allowed the valuing of experiences of those not in one's social class (Williams, *Country and the City*, 108).

While the labouring class poets drew on their direct involvement with agrarian life, George Eliot instead conducted extensive research for her setting of the small, agricultural community of Hayslope to understand the processes by which lower-class farmers had lived. Her research directed her to some of the very farming books analysed in the previous chapter: Henry Stephens's *The Book of the Farm* and Arthur Young's *A Six Month Tour Through the North of England* (Maitzen 1). Indeed, in *Adam Bede*, the twenty-one-year-old grandson of the squire, Captain Arthur Donnithorne, demonstrates his interest in such agricultural manuals, and his own ambitions to introduce new ways of farming to his future estates:

> I don't think a knowledge of the classics is a pressing want to a country gentleman; as far as I can see, he'd much better have a knowledge of manures. I've been reading your friend Arthur Young's books lately, and there's nothing I should like better than to carry out some of his ideas in putting the farmers on a better management of their land; and, as he says, making what was a wild country, all of the same dark hue, bright and variegated with corn and cattle. My grandfather will never let me have any power while he lives, but there's nothing I should like better than to undertake the Stonyshire side of the estate—it's in a dismal condition—and set improvements on foot, and gallop about from one place to another and overlook them. I should like to know all the labourers, and see them touching their hats to me with a look of goodwill. (Eliot, *Adam Bede*, 154)

Eliot cleverly mirrors the tensions that had arisen by 1799 between the new "book-farmer" landlords, like the aspiring Donnithorne, and his future tenants. During this period, leaseholder farmers often considered that agricultural treatises "were mere 'farming romances,' at best encouraging good general principles, but certainly no guide for practise" as they often led to higher rents, taxes, or other negative consequences for those who worked the land (Fisher 325, 323). For

example, after Donnithorne's speech, his friend and confidant, the rector Mr Irwine, warns Arthur that "I'm not sure that men are the fondest of those who try to be useful to them. You know Gawaine has got the curses of the whole neighbourhood upon him about that enclosure." To this, Donnithorne argues that it was merely Gawaine's manner that was the issue: "and if fair allowances were made to them [the tenants], and their buildings attended to, one could persuade them to farm on a better plan, stupid as they are" (Eliot, *Adam Bede*, 155).

In the end, however, it is Donnithorne who looks foolish as he is forced to forgo his plans to become a successful gentleman farmer. He falls in love with the young milkmaid Hetty, the niece of his local tenant Mr Martin Poyser, and, despite knowing that "no gentleman, out of a ballad, could marry a farmer's niece" (126), he impregnates her and returns to his militia. Hetty hides her condition but decides to go in search of him when her time is near, which leads her to give birth unexpectedly while travelling; she then exposes her newborn to the elements to die, and is sentenced to hang (a sentence later commuted to transportation to Australia) for the crime of child murder. This series of events leads to the mournful Arthur handing over the operation of the estates, after his grandfather's death, to Mr Irwine. Arthur's departure from Hayslope allows the Poysers, and Hetty's fiancé, Adam Bede, a stonemason who also manages "the old woods," to continue taking care of the land. As Donnithorne says, it is "much better for them in the end to remain on the old spot, among the friends and neighbours who know them" (418-419). Mrs Poyser is also saved by the grandfather's death from having to abandon her thriving dairy. In one of the most compelling speeches in the novel, she confronts the old squire, who was threatening the Poysers with eviction if they refuse to manage a prospective neighbouring tenant's dairy:

> I'll not consent to take more dairy work into my hands, either for love or money … As, for all I'm a woman, and there's folks as thinks a woman's fool enough to stan' by an' look on while the men sign her soul away, I've a right to speak, for I make one quarter o' the rent, and save another quarter (312-313).

Thus, despite the misfortune that befalls Hetty, the Poysers are no longer threatened (at least for a time) with any changes to their land and livelihoods, allowing for as happy an ending for them as could be expected from a time that saw the expulsion of rural lower classes from their generational homes.[193]

It is evident from this brief sketch of the plot that *Adam Bede*, as Elizabeth Ermarth remarks, "records the lingering end of a rural, feudally organized social culture governed by customs, not laws"; we see how "the young man of the manor, Arthur Donnithorne, avails himself of the ancient squire's privilege over milkmaids" but the urbanised outer world adjudicates on the disastrous consequences of the affair. Similarly, Mrs Poyser's small farmhouse dairy is threatened by the outside forces of capital attempting to extend their reach over her produce, despite her traditional stance; as Ermarth notes, "Mrs Poyser makes her butter, as she and her forebears always have, for the sake of her family and neighbors. She has no interest in making more butter, only better butter: and no butter for strangers" (174). Ultimately, Mrs Poyser's way of working is upheld, though the question remains – for how long? For instance, most dairies during the time of Eliot's writing would likely have been overseen by a male manager. But this is not the case with Mrs Poyser in 1799; she still has complete authority over the dairy. She corrals her maidservants, makes cheese, and decides what breeds of cow are suitable for her domain. This means that those who give too little milk, like "short-horned Sally," are in the firing line for their breed deficiencies, and Mrs Poyser's knowledge on this matter allows her husband to be "proud of his wife's superior power of putting two and two together; indeed, on recent market days he had more than once boasted of her discernment in this very matter of short-horns" (Eliot, *Adam Bede*, 171).

[193] The Satchells, the neighbouring tenants, might also have been saved by Mrs Poyser's refusal to take on the work of the prospective tenant who would have replaced them after Mr Satchell was "laid up" (310). Despite this happy ending, Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth has astutely noted that there is a sense of great change to come as "the industrial world visible in the margins presses in upon this colourful and naturalized order of things, bringing the milkmaid to judgement in a law court and the whole sunlit world of 'natural' society to the point of collapse" (174).

Thus, by setting *Adam Bede* in the recent past, Eliot could relate the realities of managing a late-eighteenth century dairy in a way that respected the hard work women undertook, before their displacement from the business became more advanced. Her portrayal of Mrs Poyser also describes the obvious adeptness that the latter has for increasing efficiency and the business of farming:

> The woman who manages a dairy has a large share in making the rent, so she may well be allowed to have her opinion on stock and their 'keep'—an exercise which strengthens her understanding so much that she finds herself able to give her husband advice on most other subjects. (170)

Eliot's descriptions of Mrs Poyser's dairy were deemed accurate enough by historian Ivy Pinchbeck that this very quote is used by her as an example of how, in the eighteenth century, the most important aspect of women's work was the dairy. This industry required savvy business acumen and meant that the female heads of household, like Mrs Poyser, "superintended every stage of the business and performed all the more difficult operations herself" (Pinchbeck 11).[194] While the eighteenth century was seeing more men at work in the dairy, these new changes had not made their way to Mrs Poyser yet (all her milkmaids are young women), something that underlines how female economy formed the backbone of most pre-industrial farms' finances.[195]

Mrs Poyser's dairy is relatively modest, but no subsistence farm. As the old Mr Poyser, Hetty's grandfather, at one time decries Hetty's mother for marrying "a feller wi' on'y two head o' stock when there should ha' been ten on's farm" (304), it can be assumed that Mrs Poyser's dairy has at least ten cows. As in the eighteenth century "it was generally agreed that one woman could milk and process the liquid of up to ten cows" (Whittle, 'Probate Documents,' 70) then, on the

[194] Excepting the wealthiest, who would choose "an experienced dairymaid as manager" (Pinchbeck 11).

[195] At least one of the milkmaids was working in the dairy each day, including Sundays. When Adam calls for Mrs Poyser's niece Dinah, he is told by the old Mr Poyser, Martin Poyser's father, that "everybody was gone to church 'but th' young missis'—so he called Dinah—but this did not disappoint Adam, although the 'everybody' was so liberal as to include Nancy the dairymaid, whose works of necessity were not unfrequently incompatible with church-going" (452).

understanding that operating the dairy is a heavy workload for her and a couple of dairymaids, it seems unlikely that Mrs Poyser's dairy comprises of more than thirty cows. The historical evidence outlined in the Introduction suggests that the probability of emotional relationships being formed between the cows and women of the dairy would be relatively high, if less common than in the seventeenth-century, when households did not contain more than ten cows (67). However, while there is at least one cow who is named – Sally, the short-horn – it is not clear if all are given such friendly appellations. Indeed, there appears to be not much love lost between the cows and the maids:

> The milking of the cows was a sight Mrs. Poyser loved, and at this hour on mild days she was usually standing at the house door, with her knitting in her hands, in quiet contemplation, only heightened to a keener interest when the vicious yellow cow, who had once kicked over a pailful of precious milk, was about to undergo the preventive punishment of having her hinder-legs strapped. (Eliot, *Adam Bede*, 423)

This punishment for uncooperative cows was the advice given by the agricultural manuals of the late-eighteenth century, and thus Mrs Poyser appears to be reflecting the business-orientated mindset prevailing in farming books at this time.[196] Her standing in the door, rather than by the side of the animal, and the restraining of the unnamed "vicious yellow cow" reveals the souring of the traditional collaboration between cattle and women. Furthermore, other than the incensed cow, and the defective Sally, no other cows appear as characters, nor is there talk of a favourite. In fact, cows are not always given the 'she' pronoun:

> 'Why, Mrs. Poyser, you wouldn't like to live anywhere else but in a farm-house, so well as you manage it,' said Adam, taking the basin; 'and there can be nothing to look at pleasanter nor a fine milch cow, standing up to'ts knees in pasture, and the new milk frothing in the pail.' (196)

[196] Indeed, Eliot's interest in cutting-edge agricultural science ensured that she read widely (Scown 392) and would have been both up to date with new dairying methods, as well as aware of historical practices. The idea of such a punishment may have been drawn from farming books such as William Ellis's *Country Housewife's Family Companion* (1750), in which he advocates restraining "kickers" (174).

While Adam's use of "to'ts" (to its) to describe a cow may be because Adam is not a farmer and thus is unused to seeing cows as individual beings, it could also be evidence that the depersonalisation of cows was more widespread by the time that Eliot was writing.[197] It is evident that Eliot does not ascribe cows with personalities to the same extent as she does with dogs, such as Bartle Massey's Vixen.[198]

For example, the cows themselves are not described (beyond the aforementioned two) as having any particular agency. They are rather described as an amorphous mass "standing one behind the other, extremely slow to understand that their large bodies might be in the way" (170). Furthermore, they are depicted as beings whose femininity is a mark of their vulnerability rather than signalling the realities of cross-species gendered labour. They are described as "patient beasts" that "ran confusedly into the wrong places, for the alarming din of the bull-dog was mingled with more distant sounds which the timid feminine creatures, with pardonable superstition, imagined also to have some relation to their own movements—with the tremendous crack of the waggoner's whip, the roar of his voice, and the booming thunder of the waggon" (423). What is interesting is that both the gendering of this description – "the timid feminine creatures" – and the speed of the cows is undermined when Eliot links what she calls "rustics" in the novel to the lethargic solemnity of cows. An unnamed and unspeaking "slouching labourer" is said to have "a slow bovine gaze" (17); "the mild radiance of a smile was a rare sight on a field-labourer's face, and there was seldom any

[197] For instance, Eliot's research was drawn from agricultural manuals written by men like Arthur Young, who were not farmers themselves, and thus had few interactions with cows – presumably, Eliot had few experiences with cattle as well.

[198] Eliot did include dogs as characters in her novels, however, so is not without interspecies sympathy. As Anna Feuerstein notes, the characters of Gyp and Vixen in *Adam Bede* "do not solely function as a way to highlight the morals or personalities of human characters" but instead "bring animals" – or at least dogs – "into realist fiction in a way that remains faithful to realist philosophy and aesthetics" (38).

gradation between bovine gravity and a laugh" (463); "villagers never swarm: a whisper is unknown among them, and they seem almost as incapable of an undertone as a cow or a stag" (17-18).[199]

Of course, Eliot's characterisations of rural labourers were "drawn from above" (Kingstone 200), and thus were not softened by the experience of belonging to that social class. But the fact that *Adam Bede* was written in what Eliot defines as an earlier and slower age may explain why she describes the majority of her labourers and cows as particularly leisurely: to highlight that their unhurried pace was soon to be disrupted, as cowhouses became congested, and workers proletarianized. Implicitly, then, the measured attitudes of the two groups are proven to not be as "stupid" (Eliot, *Adam Bede*, 155) as the foolish Arthur Donnithorne believes; just as Dinah retreats from intellectual preaching to a more contented and simpler way of living, the gentle and sluggish lives of the cows and the people who work alongside them are happier than they will be once farms become engrossed. Thus, despite the narrator's apparent initial hostility towards the conservatism of the bovine labourers, the overall message of the novel appears to side with them; in this way, the ambivalent narration manages to "maintain a balance between nostalgia and progressivism" (Kingstone 153).[200]

[199] Mr Irwine continues the trend of associating rural labourers with cows in an undesirable manner: "Why, yes, our farm-labourers are not easily roused. They take life almost as slowly as the sheep and cows. But we have some intelligent workmen about here. I daresay you know the Bedes" (84). But what appears incongruous is how these farmers can be both slow and busy; how the cows can be both patient and vicious. As Mrs Poyser says, "there's no lettin' the cows know as they mustn't want to be milked so early to-morrow mornin'" (22). Thus, the characterisation of cows and lower-class rural workers as lazy seem unmerited when considering the work required on both sides of the species divide.

[200] For instance, Kingstone remarks that in *Felix Holt* (1866), Eliot evokes nostalgia for "a slower pace of life pre-steam engines" but in *Middlemarch* (1871), she shines a light on the progress the railway would bring (167). Eliot's descriptions of lower-class workers in Adam Bede as slow may be a narrative device, but it does appear odd to modern eyes. For instance, describing how "the jocose talk of haymakers is best at a distance; like those clumsy bells round the cows' necks, it has rather a coarse sound when it comes close, and may even grate on your ears painfully" (Eliot, *Adam Bede*, 188) seems relatively hostile. Penny Boumelha has noted that *Adam Bede*'s "authoritative … novel-narrator" has an "assertively male tone" (*Hardy and Women*, 31) that incongruously jostles with her some of her more progressive subject matter, which likely adds to this uneasy sense of the narration. Raymond Williams in *The Country and the City* has similarly criticised Eliot's tone of voice (109).

And yet, the way that cows are treated at Mrs Poyser's dairy already suggests that a mechanical character has emerged between women and cows, with no great sympathy expressed by the narrator for the latter. The restraining of the furious yellow cow is quite a different relationship from that of *Cranford*'s Betty Barker and her pet Alderney. But the constant reminders that Mrs Poyser is adeptly managing an intensive business (and in a more level-headed way than any of the men in the novel) indicates a reason why she has adopted the alienating methods advocated by male agricultural authors; a hard-headed woman of industry would not have the time or the money to spare any milk.[201] Though *Adam Bede* is nostalgic for older methods of farming (such as female supremacy in the dairy), capitalistic practices have already arrived. Mrs Poyser, despite adopting some of the tactics of the male managers, was still nearly ousted, signalling the precipitous displacement of women from the business. Perhaps *Adam Bede* reflects the agricultural manuals' depersonalisation of cattle to highlight that the start of industrial farming is nigh; perhaps Eliot was loathe to include instances of cow and woman sympathy as she wished to emphasise that such "timid feminine creatures" share little with the indomitable and authoritative Mrs Poyser.[202] Either way, the lack of rapport between cows and women in even a modest-sized dairy at this time prophesises the future to come.

[201] Additionally, Eliot's novels emphasise that workers are just cogs in a machine; Adam works in his workshop methodically and mechanically, as does Silas in *Silas Marner* (1861), who becomes one with his loom: "he seemed to weave, like the spider, from pure impulse, without reflection"; "Marner's face and figure shrank and bet themselves into a constant mechanical relation to the objects of his life, so that he produced the same sort of impression as a handle or a crooked tube, which has no meaning standing apart" (14, 18). Cows in Mrs Poyser's dairy are like tools; the same as Silas's loom, or Adam's saw. However, the humans become like machines themselves, suggesting that the limited characterisation of cows may be a narrative device to emphasise the disaffection involved in creeping mechanisation.

[202] For instance, Eliot's essay 'Silly Novels by Lady Novelists' (1856) exemplifies Eliot's negative feelings towards certain tropes of femininity. The previously long-held belief that milking was a female-only custom was linked to ideas of biological Galenic sympathy, which were likely deemed superstitious nonsense by Eliot and contemporaries. In postmodern thought, emotional connections between women and cows based upon a sense of shared embodiment do not need to imply a universalising tendency etched in biological sex, but this would not have been the case in the nineteenth century.

Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is set over seventy years after *Adam Bede*, and there are substantial differences between Mrs Poyser's relatively small farmhouse dairy, and the "large" Talbothay Dairies that Tess comes to work at following the death of her son (the product of Alec D'Urbervilles's rape). At the latter, the milking is overseen by a "master dairyman" named Crick and conducted in stalls by both male and female milkers (123-124).[203] There are "nearly a hundred milchers under Crick's management, all told; and of the herd the master-dairyman milked six or eight with his own hands." Dairyman Crick gives himself the cows that "milked hardest of all," for one reason:

> His journey-milkmen being more or less casually hired, he would not entrust this half-dozen to their treatment, lest, from indifference, they should not milk them fully; nor to the maids, lest they should fail all in the same way for lack of finger-grip; with the result that in course of time the cows would "go azew"—that is, dry up. (124-125)

The transient nature of dairying labour and the upturning of long-held gender norms (for many centuries previously, women milked all cows no matter how firm their udders) demonstrate that Talbothays departs vastly from Mrs Poyser's tight-knit all-women dairy. Crick, a male manager, is master of his domain; his off-hand sexism sees him ensure that the milkmaids (all casually hired) only milk cows of "the kindlier natures" lest their supposed "lack of finger-grip" lose him a drop of milk (124-125).[204] Dairyman Crick's mistrust of female strength in the dairy is reminiscent of the agricultural manuals. For instance, William Marshall in 1789 argued that a "dairy of eighty or a hundred cows is too great labour for any woman; it is painful to see it. In one instance in this district, a man was employed in this laborious department, and, in a large dairy, it is certainly a man's work"

[203] *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) is not the first time Hardy chose a milkmaid as a main character. His short story, *The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid* (1883) does not make dairying its focus in the same way as his most famous novel, but the novella's setting is similar to Talbothay Dairies; men are in charge, and the cows are milked in stalls by a mix of men and women. For example, the dairy that Margery works within is overseen by her father, "Dairyman Tucker" (Hardy, *Milkmaid*, 2).

[204] As labour was now more transient, both men and women would find it harder to milk the harder-teated cows, as they would be less able to develop a rapport with them.

(*Rural Economy of Gloucestershire,* volume two, 156). As chapter one discussed, such conclusions were not drawn out of concern for women's welfare but were part of a strategy – though not necessarily a conscious one – to install men into such profit-making enterprises that they had previously been unable to access. Crick's main concern is not that women will be pained by surlier cows, but that any hindrance to the milking process will lose him money.

There are other signs that the traditional dairy is a thing of the past when considering the dairyman's wife, Mrs Crick. She deems herself "too respectable to go out milking herself" (Hardy, *Tess*, 128), leaving all the outdoor management to her husband. Mrs Crick embodies the supposition that middle-class women left dairying voluntarily; what agricultural author Thomas Middleton in 1807 described as women refusing "to go into a dirty cow-house, and submit to the drudgery of milking, and attending the calves." While Mrs Crick has "sacrificed her former economic independence according to the extent to which she ceased to manage her household and contribute to the wealth of the family," she has gained "an advance in the social scale" and, by not joining her husband in milking, she does not experience "any material hardship" (Pinchbeck 41-42).[205]

It is unclear whether women's agricultural influence and power primarily waned because women like Mrs Crick began to prefer indoor work, or because men like Stephen Duck and Josiah Twamley had long been disparaging of women's agricultural abilities. What seems undeniable, however, is that a different form of sexism had permeated farms by the late-nineteenth century. The dichotomy of gendered labour on early modern farmsteads was a result of custom dictating that only women (those who lactate) could handle milk (Whittle, 'Probate Documents,' 70). Similarly, women were assigned to caring for those smaller and often younger animals, such as chickens, lambs, and calves, because doing so was seen as a feminised occupation. But by the Victorian period, agricultural labour was perceived as hard and gruelling work pursued in large, burgeoning industries,

[205] The supposition that social standing led to women removing themselves from manual work is supported in *Lark Rise to Candleford* (Thompson 7-8). However, as chapter one demonstrated, the actual reasons why women left dairying were more complex than avoiding hard labour.

and thought to be unsuitable for women. Such a view is reflected in *Tess*. For instance, Alec takes exception at Tess working at steam-threshing (an occupation she turns to after having to leave Talbothays), telling the farmer that "he has no right to employ women … It is not proper work for them, and on all the better class of farms it has been given up, as he knows very well" (Hardy 255). But the strong-willed and physically robust Tess refuses to halt her work despite Alec's protestations. Even so, the fact that she has been given such a task is already unusual; as Thompson relates, by the 1880s "one of the smaller fields was always reserved for any of the women who cared to go reaping. Formerly all the able-bodied women not otherwise occupied had gone as a matter of course; but, by the 'eighties, there were only three or four, beside the regular field women, who could handle the sickle" (257-258). Here, handling the sickle is a skill that has been lost to women, just like handling harder-teated cows is no longer presumed to be their forte in *Tess*. While *Adam Bede* and pre-eighteenth century literature esteemed women's agricultural work – though the former recognised that such a state of affairs was unlikely to continue – Hardy's novel identifies that the disparagement of female labour is common by the late-nineteenth century.

Indeed, as Deborah Valenze has made clear, by the Victorian period a large commercial dairy would no longer entrust such significant assets to female management (166-168). Talbothays is such a business; Tess is immediately awe-struck by its size. Having moved from her birthplace named "the Vale of Little Dairies" to the sizeable farm in Egdon, she notices the differences: "the enclosures numbered fifty acres instead of ten, the farmsteads were more extended, the groups of cattle formed tribes hereabout; there only families. These myriads of cows stretching under her eyes from the far east to the far west outnumbered any she had ever seen at one glance before" (*Tess*, 118).[206] But "while Tess envisions the dairy as a recuperative setting, Hardy steeps it in images that make it a fecund wasteland" (Carroll 186). For instance, "the cries" of the cows which were "spread as if by

[206] The operating of such a large dairy means the calves are sold not long after weaning: "in the interval which elapsed before the calves were sold there was, of course, little milking to be done, but as soon as the calf had been taken away the milkmaids would have to set to work as usual" (*Tess*, 219).

contagion" (Hardy, *Tess*, 121) are not signs of a contented and natural landscape. As Carroll notes, "Talbothays is a precursor to the factory that exploits an exhausted country and a surplus of seasonal human labor for profit" (187). An unusually large number of cows have left the surrounding land "exhausted, aged and attenuated" (Hardy, *Tess*, 120). But such herd sizes are needed to supply the ever-growing city of London with milk, a practice that Tess remarks upon wanly when she sees Talbothays' product transported on the railways to "'noble men and noble women—ambassadors and centurions— ladies and tradeswomen—and babies who have never seen a cow'" (205).

The reminder that the dairy supplies an alien capital where people drink milk divorced from its origin, the subtle descriptions of a countryside in the process of being ruptured to do so, and Crick's stern marshalling of his transient labour force, are all indications that Talbothays is not the quaint and idyllic dairy it may at first seem. Hardy continues to demonstrate that the farm is not the "timeless, 'natural' green 'landscape'" it has oftentimes been read as (Carroll 165) through his portrayal of how unashamed nature comes into conflict with the aloofness of human industry.[207] For instance, Hardy implies that the necessary cooling of milk to make it safe for such transportation has introduced hygienic codes that sanitises the border between animal and human. When Tess first arrives at Talbothays, she drinks some fresh "milk as temporary refreshment—to the surprise — indeed, slight contempt—of Dairyman Crick" (*Tess*, 124). Even though drinking milk "warm from the cow" had been an old saying used to indicate the freshness of the milk, by this time in the late-nineteenth century, Crick is unused to seeing anyone quaff unpasteurised raw milk. Crick's "suspicion of the milk in its unmediated state" is, as Richie Nimmo has noted, a trend that started in

[207] One can discern the impacts of industrialisation in other aspects of the novel. "Annual migrations from farm to farm were on the increase" in Tess's birthplace of Marlott. As "when Tess's mother was a child the majority of the field-folk about Marlott had remained all their lives on one farm, which had been the home also of their fathers and grandfathers; but latterly the desire for yearly removal had risen to a high pitch" (*Tess*, 372). Additionally, villages that had not that long ago escaped the ties of feudalism were made available exclusively to serve the ruling agricultural class, as the "agriculturalist" landlord turns out the Durbeyfields. This is in part due to the abused Tess returning home and causing a scandal, though the primary reason appears to be to give their cottage to working tenants following her father's death.

the mid-nineteenth century which saw milk "treated for economic purposes as exclusively the product of human producers acting upon an inert nature, rather than as the hybrid co-product of both cows and humans and as much a 'natural' substance as a manufactured good" (*Milk*, 53). But Tess is unlike the dairyman, as she recognises that milk is a natural fluid that she both expresses – when "courageously" suckling her baby (Hardy, *Tess*, 102) – and consumes without shame of her animal self.[208]

The ramifications of dairying engrossment are clearly outlined in the novel through the reiteration of these new codes of conduct that erect extra barriers between humans and cows to maximise material gain. While English agricultural manuals since their inception have warned maids to be clean, there is the sense that a bad batch of milk carries more risk for such large enterprises. This is seen when Crick scolds the "non-resident milkmaids" for turning up late and not washing their hands: "upon my soul, if the London folk only knowed of thee and thy slovenly ways, they'd swaller their milk and butter more mincing than they do a'ready; and that's saying a good deal" (147). [209] However, some traditions are still preserved. For example, Tess's intrusion into the dairy as a "new hand" (125) who seemingly spooks the cows sees the dairy workers strike up a ballad to entice the cows to give down their milk, a technique used for many centuries. However, such a ballad is performed upon Crick's orders, with "business-like tones, it is true, and with no great spontaneity" (126). While Talbothays' cows are not restrained like those at Mrs Poyser's, the commercial nature of modern dairying is felt in both narratives.

[208] Further discussion of this scene, as well as Tess's animality, is found in the following chapter.

[209] As Nimmo remarks, "while sanitary concerns about dairying were not unjustified, the emphasis on milkers' practices was no doubt fuelled to a certain extent by gender-inflected class contempt, and it is notable in the historical documents that for every acknowledgment of the labor and skill involved in hand-milking there are more comments concerning the routine lack of cleanliness said to be pervasive among milkers" ('Mechanical Calf,' 85).

What is interesting is that, unlike at Mrs Poyser's dairy, emotional connections exist between the cows and their milkers at Talbothays; the cows are named individuals with their own preferences and personalities.[210] When Angel Clare, Tess's future husband, suddenly "leaves his pail to be kicked over if the milcher had such a mind" in order to embrace Tess under her favourite cow, Old Pretty, the latter "looked round, puzzled; and seeing two people crouching under her where, by immemorial custom, there should have been only one, lifted her hind leg crossly. 'She is angry—she doesn't know what we mean—she'll kick over the milk!' exclaimed Tess, gently striving to free herself, her eyes concerned with the quadruped's actions" (166). Such moments in the novel emphasise that cows, despite being pushed into larger herds, are not an amorphous mass for Tess, but have their own thoughts and feelings. Moreover, it is not only Tess who has this relationship with them. Each milkmaid is said to have her favourite cows, and each cow to have her preferred milkmaid, further underlining their distinctiveness:

> In general the cows were milked as they presented themselves, without fancy or choice. But certain cows will show a fondness for a particular pair of hands, sometimes carrying this predilection so far as to refuse to stand at all except to their favourite, the pail of a stranger being unceremoniously kicked over. (137)

Such a preference undermines Crick's "rule to insist on breaking down these partialities and aversions by constant interchange, since otherwise, in the event of a milkman or maid going away from the dairy, he was placed in a difficulty," given the nature of the industrialising dairy. But Crick's plans are subverted by his milkmaids and cows:

> The maids' private aims, however, were the reverse of the dairyman's rule, the daily selection by each damsel of the eight or ten cows to which she had grown accustomed, rendering the operation on their willing udders surprisingly easy and effortless. (137)

[210] Hardy, "more than any other major novelist since this difficult mobility began he succeeded, against every pressure, in centring his major novels in the ordinary processes of life and work" (Williams, *Country and the City*, 131). Indeed, Hardy's depictions of rural customs were, as Dillion has noted, "authentic"; he maintained that he based his folkloric sources on, for example, "true records" and not "inventions" (13) which may explain why the background characters (both human and animal) that inform the rural setting appear fully realised.

The irony is that here, the cows' udders are noticeably "willing" when milked by their favourite maid, which suggests that the practice of favouritism is a more efficient method. Moreover, women appear to be preferred over the male milkers. Perhaps Hardy here alludes to the once conventional notion of female sympathy between women and cows. After all, Crick is too focused upon labour shortages and profit margins to admit to having a favourite, enforcing a mechanical character between himself and his cows out of deference to a masculine pursuit of new capitalistic and scientific business strategies.[211] Even so, the dairyman cannot undo what has been customary in dairying for centuries; both milkmaids and cows gravitating towards those they preferred.

But though Crick claims to always take the hardest milkers, the constant familiarity is why the cows give up their milk to him more readily, not because his fingers are stronger. For instance, Tess "like her compeers, soon discovered which of the cows had a preference for her style of manipulation … Out of the whole ninety-five there were eight in particular— Dumpling, Fancy, Lofty, Mist, Old Pretty, Young Pretty, Tidy, and Loud—who, though the teats of one or two were as hard as carrots, gave down to her with a readiness that made her work on them a mere touch of the fingers" (137). As Tess has an affinity with two hard milkers that prefer her hand, one can assume that Crick's "six or eight" (124) cows with tough udders similarly yield to him due to a shared empathy. But Crick, unlike the milkmaids, refuses to acknowledge his connection with his cows, save in one aspect: their names. Even though there are nearly one hundred cows in the dairy, they are all still named, a practice that interlopers like Angel Clare are encouraged to learn: "Clare was now so familiar with the spot that he knew the individual cows by their names when, a long distance off, he saw them dotted about the meads" (186). In spite of Crick's remonstrances against preferential treatment, or his veiled threat to slaughter Winker, a cow who holds up her milk (125), Crick and the other dairyworkers recognise that the cows are as separate and diverse as humans. As such, the business

[211] As discussed in chapter one, the new science and capitalistic discourse were related phenomena that were seen to be a part of masculine endeavour.

of milking cannot be separated from the sympathetic connections formed between cows and their milkers, and such a practice may help, not hinder, Crick's efforts to turn a tidy profit.

Why, then, do the cows matter little in Mrs Poyser's small farmhouse dairy set over seventy years previously, but are treated as individuals at the advanced and sprawling dairy of Egdon? Perhaps because Hardy wished to emphasise the futility of attempting to separate animal emotion from close contact relationships. The cows and the milkmaids (who have little to gain from Crick's strategy to counteract the pitfalls of transient labour) conspire to work with their favourites.[212] Tess and Angel, despite knowing their union would be troublesome, cannot prevent their animal attraction towards each other either, and get married.[213] Hardy's keenness to represent the disorderly reality of feeling – his female characters in particular "experience their bodies in ways that drew shudders from his critics" (Morgan xi) – explains why his novel undermines the simple trajectory of depersonalisation seen in the nineteenth-century agricultural manuals, or in *Adam Bede*.[214]

It may also be the case that Hardy is engaging in pastoral nostalgia to idealise a more personal way of dairying that may have been foundering among larger farmsteads.[215] For instance, if Tess had no connection to the cows she milked, then her departure from the dairy would not arouse the same sympathy. Her parting is already mingled with misery, as she hears from Angel that just

[212] Similarly, though the milkmaids all love Angel, they do not compete meanly over his affection, but congratulate Tess on her upcoming marriage: "'You will think of us when you be his wife, Tess, and of how we told 'ee that we loved him, and how we tried not to hate you, and did not hate you, and could not hate you, because you was his choice, and we never hoped to be chose by him'" (Hardy, *Tess*, 217-218). Here, the bonds of female friendship are not so easily broken.

[213] And in *Jude the Obscure* (1895), sexual attraction is similarly represented as disruptive, but inevitable.

[214] Hardy's representation of emotion is discussed further in the next chapter.

[215] This attitude is not merely found in Hardy. "As the factories multiplied, the nostalgia of the town-dweller was reflected in his little bit of garden, his pets, his holidays… Whether or not the preoccupation with nature and rural life is in reality peculiarly English, it is certainly something which the English townsman has for a long time liked to think of as such; and much of the country's literature and intellectual life has displayed a profoundly anti-urban bias" (Thomas 14).

after Christmas is "a time of year when he [Crick] could do with a very little female help." Upon hearing that female workers are no longer needed in the dairy, Tess is sorrowful, even though it means that she and Angel can now leave to be married:

> Ah—is it that the farmer don't want my help for the calving? O I am not wanted here any more! And I have tried so hard … 'Tis always mournful not to be wanted, even if at the same time 'Tis convenient. (220)

Tess's sadness at her displacement from the dairy by male hands is further compounded by the fact that she must leave cows like "Dumpling and Old Pretty, who loved Tess's hands above those of any other maid" (165). And her sought-for happiness with Angel is no solace, as when Tess confesses that she had a child in a non-consensual union, Angel reacts poorly, causing the couple to separate. The day after the confession and their ruined honeymoon, they return to Talbothays, during which time Tess "went and bade all her favourite cows goodbye, touching each of them with her hand." This honest and tender interaction is made starker by the fact that she and Angel are keeping "their estrangement a secret," so their parting from the dairy workers is spoiled by their "onnatural" manner (271). Thus, Tess's relationship with her cows is made even more significant because her interactions with the humans closest to her have been tainted by circumstances out-with her control. [216]

Through her removal from dairying, then, Tess's femininized empathy with her cows, and with nature itself, is ruptured completely. Despite the warnings that Talbothays may one day become a callous and destructive enterprise, for Tess the dairy was a peaceful rural landscape, a "pilgrimage" that filled her with a "zest for life" (120). Upon seeing the cows for the first time, she chants "O ye Sun and Moon … O ye Stars … ye Green Things upon the Earth … ye Fowls of the Air … Beasts and Cattle …," a "half-unconscious rhapsody" (119-120) characterised as pagan spiritual joy in nature. But her connection to the land and its inhabitants is severed following her departure; Angel

[216] Tess's affinity with cows will be discussed more in the following chapter.

leaves alone for Brazil, and Tess's family are turned out of their cottage. This series of events forces Tess to become Alec's mistress to keep a roof over their heads. When Angel returns to find Tess, his search leads him to an expensive boarding house in the town of Sandbourne, and wonders "where could Tess possibly be, a cottage-girl, his young wife, amidst all this wealth and fashion? The more he pondered, the more was he puzzled. Were there any cows to milk here? There certainly were no fields to till" (398). Tess's expulsion from her rural home and occupation – dairying being the work "in which she excelled" (43) – has led to a complete reversal in her circumstances. Her dream was once to be the head dairywoman on her and Angel's farm; being forced to exchange housewifery for whoredom, the rural for the urban, she instead lives her nightmare.[217]

Accordingly, one could argue that Tess's fate not only represents the lot of abused women in an unforgiving society but epitomises the forfeiture of an arcadian vision of farming. As Tess the milkmaid became Tess the mistress, she swaps the dairy for the townhouse, what was once a respectable and (relatively) safe profession for a punishing and cruel situation. Yet the dignity of female dairying work was fast becoming part of the past, a process that is reflected throughout the imaginative literature and the dairying manuals analysed in this thesis. Hardy highlights the growing disregard for female agricultural workers by reference to the "too respectable" Mrs Crick, as well as by noting Tess's incongruity as a female steam-thresher, despite her obvious skill. Indeed, Hardy's distaste for this new state of agrarian industry is constantly made present throughout the novel:

> Cottagers who were not directly employed on the land were looked upon with disfavour, and the banishment of some starved the trade of others, who were thus obliged to follow. These families, who had formed the backbone of the village life in the past who were the depositaries of the village traditions, had to seek refuge in the large centres; the process, humorously designated by statisticians as "the tendency of the rural population towards the large towns", being really the tendency of water to flow uphill when forced by machinery.

[217] As the reason for Angel's apprenticeship under Crick is to learn how to be a dairy farmer, his argument to his parents, and to himself, is that a future wife of his should "be able to milk cows, churn good butter, make immense cheeses; know how to sit hens and turkeys, and rear chickens, to direct a field of labourers in an emergency, and estimate the value of sheep and calves" (Hardy, *Tess*, 180).

(372-373)[218]

The mechanistic description of migration underlines Hardy's own acknowledgement of a mechanical character infecting labour relations. While dairyman Crick has attempted to institute such a modus operandi within his dairy, he has not (yet) succeeded because of what Hardy dramatizes as a natural propensity for interspecies connection. However, the future atomisation of the human and animal workforce is hinted at throughout the novel and has potentially already arrived by Hardy's time of writing. While the emotional link that Tess forges with her cows may or may not have reflected the realities of transient dairying labour at that time, such relationships are all the more heart-wrenching for their inclusion. As with the cows of the politicised post-eighteenth-century ballads, their characters are brought to the fore to emphasise the disconnection between the country and city, while recognising that such close relationships were under threat. Furthermore, Hardy emphasises that women and cows form stronger bonds because they do not prioritise the masculine ideals of science and industry. But the narrative, framed as a loss of innocence, demonstrates how milkmaids and cows were about to be separated through the ramifications of male-driven capitalism.[219] The dairywoman, once a strong woman among a group of many, becomes a migrant worker (and an odd fixture among the male employees) and eventually a kept woman. While Tess's destiny is more tragic than the average woman's displacement from dairying, the forced migration towards the city is one that many women of the time could relate to, as they may have been similarly sad to bid their lovely cows adieu.

[218] As Williams notes, "here there is something much more than the crude and sentimental version of the rape of the country by the town. The originating pressures within rural society itself are accurately seen, and are given a human and social rather than a mechanical dimension" (*Country and the City*, 129).

[219] The fact that the other milkmaids at Talbothays had to leave dairying altogether as well (Marian finds Tess a job with her at the brutally run farm Flintcomb-Ash, where they dig swedes) is another sign of the changing economic landscape.

Chapter Four: "Farewell My Lovely Cows" – Animal Passions Excoriated

Students of eighteenth-century British fiction are often struck by the difference between the women imaginatively portrayed in the fiction of the earlier part of the century and the women imagined in the fiction of the latter half of the century. The rakish heroines of Restoration drama, the self-advertising amorous adventurers of the love-and-intrigue novels of Aphra Behn, Delariviere Manley, and Eliza Haywood, and the freewheeling protagonists of Daniel Defoe's Moll Flanders and Roxana stand on one side of this cultural divide, while on the other side are those latter-day paragons of virtue, Evelina, Sidney Bidulph, and Emmeline, as well as Samuel Richardson's heroines Pamela, Clarissa, and Harriet Byron – each one arguably more sexually repressed and sexually repressive than the one before. (Ruth Perry, 'Colonizing the Breast: Sexuality and Maternity in Eighteenth-Century England,' 1991, p.210)

The previous chapter tracked how the bawdy ballad featuring the seductive milkmaid became less common, while as early as the seventeenth century imaginative literature began to exhibit the loss of an arcadian vision of farming. Cows were deliberately made present in certain eighteenth-century ballads, and Hardy's *Tess*, to highlight the fact that they were disappearing from much of human consideration entirely. This chapter will argue that there was a concomitant loss of lasciviousness in representations of women, as Victorian sensibilities began to deny the validity of female sexual desire, reflected in ballads and other forms of popular media. By the end of this chapter, I will have argued that the advancement of these new cultural ideas surrounding female sexuality cannot be extricated from the institution of a mechanical character between not only human and animal relationships, but relations between urban men and women. Such a character was a by-product of the intensive industrial practices that were beginning to appear, leading to a philosophical shift in how not only sexuality, but animality, was perceived. As milkmaids and farm animals came to be less a part of everyday, familial life, humans (particularly mothers and men) became less directly associated with animals in both physical and linguistic terms. However, marginalised women, such as sex workers, were still thought to have bestial natures, and animal appellations acquired an increased negative and sexual context when applied to them. Thus, this chapter argues that the fact that female sexual desire came to be deemed as unnatural in mainstream nineteenth-century literature and criticism is partly a consequence of the agricultural revolution, as waning proximity to

animals allowed for conceptions of animal urges to be considered in a more derogatory way than they were previously.

Conceptions of Carnality

This chapter begins by discussing how cultural ideals surrounding female sexuality, and its intertwined cousin, animality, shifted during the early modern period and into the nineteenth century, to preface the analysis of the primary texts with their historical context. In chapter three, I discussed how seventeenth-century ballads indicated ways in which female desire was culturally normalised; a supposition that is supported by other historical evidence. For instance, Wiltenburg believes that the affirmation of "the notion of woman as a purely sexual being" served a political function at this time; due to "men's uneasiness about their ability to keep the upper hand … the problems of male dominance were placed in the sexual arena" (156). While I disagreed in the previous chapter with her argument as a whole, as seventeenth-century representations of sexuality are more complex than being part of an overarching strategy to shore up male power, her next point is interesting:

> The evidence of street literature suggests that these sexual tensions retained their hold on the popular imagination into the eighteenth century, perhaps only giving way when the desexualisation of women's image provided an improved cultural strategy for dealing with their threat. (156-157)

Cultural strategy or not, women in the eighteenth century were beginning to be represented as non-sexual beings, which in turn denied women any authority they had potentially enjoyed in the bedroom. Before, women were portrayed as vessels of uncontrollable lust, which was in turn seen as part of women's perceived closeness to animals. As Mendelson and Crawford note, early modern proverbs demonstrated that women "held a lower status than men in the Great Chain of Being" and were, like beasts, more carnal. "Cats," they say, "considered sly, deceitful, and sexually promiscuous, were identified with the female sex, as were other animals symbolizing crude sexuality, like the 'salted bitch'" (61). Similarly, I argue that the seventeenth-century proverb discussed in my

Introduction, "He that can gett a quart of milk for a peny, need not keep a Cow" (Howell 12) exhibits another way in which women were likened to animals; the "cow" being the stand-in for the wife, while the "milk" is the sex one can pay for, in lieu of marrying.

But while women were portrayed as closer to the animal realm and were thus decreed more "lustful … by nature" (Mendelson and Crawford 62), these adages were not necessarily controversial to early modern eyes. For example, in their 1891 text *Slang and its Analogues*, Farmer and Henley discuss how the word "cow" to mean woman is "now opprobrious; but in its primary and natural sense the usage is ancient" (194).[220] The pair then incorporate one of James Howell's seventeenth-century proverbs "Who Bulls the Cow, must keep the Calf" as an example of an old "law-proverb" (Howell 2) that they deem not to be scornful towards women.[221] After all, animal adages were, in the seventeenth century, applied to men as well, who were often described as bulls. Of course, due to the lowered status of women, such expressions tended to denigrate them more than men, as can be seen with William Gouge's *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622). Gouge argued that women who are "sullen" and "grieve" their husbands with their "lowring" – mooing – do "shew themselues like to a curst cow, which hauing giuen a faire soape of milke, casteth all downe with her heele" (334-335). Here, women are alike to rebellious cows, creatures who refuse to obey their supposed superiors. But men who never yield to their wives are also upbraided (if not quite as severely) by Gouge for the "harshnesse of their disposition"; such men also resemble a "hard-milch-cow" who only grudgingly "letteth downe her milke" (365), as they deliberately withhold what they can give freely.[222]

[220] Similarly, in 1931 Eric Partridge remarked that to call a woman a cow was only considered "low colloquial" from the eighteenth-century onwards, while the word's attendant meaning, "harlot," only arose in the nineteenth century (185).

[221] This proverb states that even if the husband believed his wife's offspring may not be his, he was still legally required to provide for them due to the terms of marriage.

[222] It was unusual to compare men to cows rather than bulls, however – I have not found another instance of likening a cow to both sexes.

Such "continuing use of animal analogy and metaphor in daily speech" in the early modern period, as Thomas notes, "reinforced the feeling that men and beasts inhabited the same moral universe and that terms of praise or reproach could be applied interchangeably to either." He adds that "such analogies are still used today, but they lack the immediacy conveyed in the early modern period by the sheer proximity of animal life" (99).[223] In the previous chapter and the Introduction, I touched on how Gail Kern Paster, in *Humoring the Body,* demonstrated that shared humoral understandings of animal and human bodies (prior to the eighteenth century) bolstered the idea that the human could not be separated from the animal so easily. This supposition was developed in my 2019 MRes thesis, as I discussed how "breasts" came to mean only human teats, while "dugs" came to only be used for animal udders towards the end of the seventeenth century.[224] Previously, these terms had been used interchangeably across the species divide (Ryland 48). Indeed, Farmer and Henley trace how "dugs" in the late-nineteenth century indicated breasts or, as they called them, "the paps; once used without reproach of women; now only in contempt, except animals" (340). While the pair do not discuss the reason why calling the breasts the "dugs" had become opprobrious to women, the linking of human and animal had clearly, by the late-nineteenth century, become a more contemptuous practice.

Before the eighteenth century, as I outlined in my MRes thesis, this was not necessarily the case. One Henry Buttes in 1599 rated the "milke of yong beastes fedde in the choise pasture," by placing "Womans" milk first above "Cowes," the second best of the animal milks (n.p.).[225] While the

[223] As Groves notes of the seventeenth century, "proverbs were not a low-status form of speech but formed a common ethical framework" (145).

[224] This research was influenced by work produced by Gail Kern Paster in *The Body Embarrassed* (1993), as she stated that the term "dugs … may well have been undergoing semiotic debasement in the seventeenth century" (230).

[225] The idea that women would be compared to animals in an anatomical way has completely disappeared by the eighteenth century. Indeed, in 1776, agricultural writer John Mills believed it remained only as a German affectation: "The curious, especially the Germans, make an anatomical comparison of the horse with some parts of a woman, and of different animals … They say then, that a horse, to be good, ought to have three parts of a woman, a wide cheil, plump buttocks, and long hair" (8).

ranking demonstrates that women occupied in the cultural imagination a closer place to animals, analogies like these were not intended shame women with such comparisons. As Wiltenburg notes, "an early sixteenth-century German pamphlet exhorts women to careful regulation of their bearing lest they seem proud and wanton; an honest woman should walk 'wie eine müde Kuh [like a tired cow]'" (23). Here, being a tired cow is considered respectable, despite the obvious misogynistic undertones behind the reason for the expression. Of course, calling a woman a cow could have been negatively received before the eighteenth century as well. As E. Phillips noted in his *New World of Words* (1696), a cow could be "the Emblem...of a Lazy, Dronish, beastly Woman" (quoted in *OED*, 'cow, n.1.'). And cows may also have been linked to wantonness; Shakespeare, for example, used "cow" as a verb to mean "to play the whore," and the word "cow" to mean "whore" (Rubinstein 204, 210).

But there is an argument to be made that the term cow, as applied to women, became particularly prejudicial following the early modern period. For example, both Farmer and Henley and Eric Partridge have argued that the appellation was not deemed to be derogatory before the eighteenth century. But by the nineteenth century, the supposition that "cow" meant "prostitute" became more prominent (Farmer and Henley 194; Partridge 185). Farmer and Henley also demonstrate that, by the late-nineteenth century, a new "term of opprobrium" was now being directed towards "women deformed by parturition or debauchery": "cow-cunted" (194-195). For example, the term "heifer" progressed from its original innocent meaning of "wife" in the seventeenth century, to having sexual and derogatory undertones two hundred years later (Milne 70). Meanwhile, the appellation of cow came to be further sexualised and derided as part of a Victorian cultural movement that condemned the flourishing prostitution industry. Thus, the making of the modern human removed the alleged taint of animality from its more 'respectable' members, while sex workers, among other marginalised women, were condemned to the double-bind of a

voracious, bestial sexuality.[226] The birth of a new animal appellation to apply to such vulnerable women, cow-cunted, signifies the intertwined nature of animality and female sexuality, and how such designations intensified reproach for women exhibiting carnal appetites.[227]

As such, the Howell adage further compounds how lust in women, and to a lesser extent men, was censured after the seventeenth century. "He that can gett a quart of milk for a peny, need not keep a Cow" (Howell 12) morphed, from a proverb about the benefits of men paying for sex over marriage, to the modern-day expression "why buy the cow when the milk is free" (Speake n.p.). In the preface to his dictionary, Howell uses the saying (among others) to argue against marriage, as "doting so farre upon any one Female … is but blind Reason" (n.p.). This sanctioning of men indulging in the services of sex workers did not stand the test of time, and the adage today serves primarily to warn women to guard their chastity, and to not have sex "for free" before marriage.[228]

Of course, withholding sex from men to induce marriage is seen in seventeenth-century ballads and other pre-modern media, but it is interesting that the proverb shifted in these centuries from placing the responsibility on men (to use prostitutes instead of marrying) to making women accountable for their desires. Today, the adage suggests that the goal of marriage is out of reach for women (not men) who engage in pre-marital sex, transferring sexual responsibility from the latter to the former. Finally, the cow in the modern saying "why buy the cow when you can get the milk for

[226] However, Sarah Grand in 'The New Aspect of the New Woman Question' (1894) used the descriptor "cow-woman" in a different sense, to refer to the docile good wives used for breeding, as apart from the "scum-woman," who is a sex worker (271). The word cow could also have been changing its meaning in feminist circles during this time, but to refer to female breeding practices, rather than sexuality.

[227] Boumelha discusses the Victorian preoccupation with prostitution, which was more vociferously condemned than in previous centuries, despite its increased "prevalence." Indeed, "the polarisation of women into the chaste and the depraved" is particularly prominent during the nineteenth century (*Hardy and Women*, 11).

[228] For example, one 2015 *Thought Catalog* article by Mike Zaccchio, 'Even When The Milk Is Free, If He Likes The Cow, He'll Buy It' demonstrates how tropes surrounding female chastity and animality persist today, as does any internet search of the proverb. Of course, such articles tend to be from the United States – a more Christian and conservative nation than Britain in certain respects – but I can attest to hearing the expression used to warn young women to not have indiscriminate sex in twentieth-first century Britain.

free" is no longer a cipher for the wife, but for the too-sexual woman. Through this modern transformation, one can further observe how the word cow has shifted meanings from wife to whore, as well as how such anxieties surrounding sex work, female power, and the animal body persist today. The evolution of these cultural mores will be discussed further as this chapter now turns to ballads to understand how female carnality, and representations of animality, changed in popular imaginative media, in part due to the consequences of urban migration.

Bonny Ballads

This thesis has thus far demonstrated that figures like Tess, who "bade all her favourite cows goodbye" as the farm needed "very little female help" were commonplace during the late-nineteenth century (Hardy, *Tess*, 271, 220). Indeed, the previous chapter established that the late-seventeenth century ballad 'The Milkmaid's Morning Song' hints at the displacement to come, as the dairymaid is forced to say "adieu" to her "lovely cows" to find a "young man." Her lament is likely directed at the lack of eligible youths in farming communities; as she is described as "a fair Maid" with a remarkable voice, her inability to catch a husband does not stem from any faults of her own (77, 72, 7). In fact, this chapter will argue that the bidding adieu of her cows is symbolic not just of the agrarian upheaval occurring across England through these centuries, but of a perceived loss of female sexuality. For instance, later ballads represent the milkmaid as a blank slate awaiting signification by male desire, rather than a sexual agent who would leave her rural home in search of erotic and romantic fulfilment.

First, it is necessary to expand upon the conclusions drawn in the previous chapter, where I discussed how seventeenth-century ballads represented the contemporary cultural idea that women were inherently sexual, particularly in reference to the milkmaid. Indeed, much street literature from this time portrayed country courtship as a ritual that necessarily involved a free exchange of sex. The previous chapter expounded this argument through reference to 'Jovial Lass' and 'The Milkmaid's Morning Song,' though there are other examples. In 'The Merry Plow-Man and the Loving Milkmaid'

(1671-1702), the male narrator boasts that “we that do lead a Country Life/in pleasures do abound” as he can engage in sex with milkmaids regularly (1-2). This is similar to ‘The Happy Husbandman’ (1685-1687), who describes how his “young Mary do’s mind the Dairy” while his “delight” from her is “cream and kisses” (1, 6). While the narrator says that they have more joy of a “harmless kiss” than the “London Miss” who “masters your breeches/and takes your riches,” sexual activity still occurs: “in the soft Daizy field/freely our pleasures we here enjoy” (57-59, 64-65). And, in ‘The Dairymaids Mirth and Pastime On May Day’ (1685-1688) it is “with innocent Mirth” that both dairymaids and plough-boys enjoy “all the pleasures on earth” (62-64). Both men and women are described as “amorous” (42, 52), which suggests a certain equality to these interactions. These ballads were composed in the late-seventeenth to early-eighteenth centuries, thus their sexual subject matter is caught up with the spectre of industrialisation. All of them either denigrate London (and its materialistic women) directly, or greatly stress the benefits of the country over the city, highlighting the fact that mass migration to urban centres was already a cultural concern.

In any case, a free and easy sexual competence is afforded to not only milkmaids in such ballads, but male agricultural workers. For instance, the ballad ‘The Conquer'd Lady’ (1664-1703) sees a young (but rich) farmer emphasise his certain qualities in order to woo a noblewoman:

> Sweet Lady believe me now,
> I solemnly swear and vow,
> No Lords in their Lives
> E'er pleasur'd their Wives
> Like Fellows that drives the Plow. (66-78)

This latter ballad pokes fun at the nobility who were by now having to “marry a farmer’s son” (39) to maintain their lifestyles; agrarian development allowed certain farmers to prosper, as the power of the aristocracy began to wane. While the theme of these ballads, written on the cusp of the eighteenth century, exaggerates the sexual availability and prowess of rural residents to praise their

qualities against the alleged corruption of the city, it still indicates how the character of the milkmaid was perceived in street literature at this time. She is sexual in the correct ways; while the woman, if not a sex worker, then at the very least a money-grabbing wife, in the 'The Happy Husbandman' only cares for riches, the dairymaid freely acquiesces to what is characterised as an innocent tumble in the fields. In fact, I have only found two ballads that argue that chaste milkmaids are superior to city women, or that lustful dairymaids negatively partake in "leachery" (quoted in Preston, 332).[229] Instead, street literature during this period represents milkmaids (and male farm workers) as being sexually available, and that being no bad thing indeed.

Of course, the ballads that laud innocently sexual milkmaids over money-driven London women should not be read as authentic vignettes of the rural past; female sexual consent was liable to be embellished for effect. Moreover, women are not the focal characters or the narrators of such ballads; representations of their sexual prowess could be a way that male authors titillated male consumers. As Cathy Lynn Preston has noted, the tendency for many ballads to have a male narrative voice means that female rural labourers were presented as "objects to be discarded" (331). However, the previous chapter demonstrated that there were still many ballads (such as 'Jovial Lass,' 'Love in a Barn' and 'The Milkmaid's Morning Song') that foregrounded milkmaids with considerable sexual agency as the obvious protagonists, despite the presence of male narrators. Moreover, other sources suggest that milkmaids were not wholly reproached for pre-marital sex. 'There I Mumpt You Now' (1650) switches between the voice of Meg and her old sweetheart, a veritable villain who has got "two lasses in the countrey," and an erstwhile "honest maid" with child (41, 49). He has also impregnated five of six milkmaids he courted in Islington; his "promise was to every one/that she should be thy wife," which leads Meg to argue that a "more cunning knave art thou" (33-38). In this

[229] The first is 'The Down-right Country Man, Or the Faithful Dairymaid' (1672-1696), as its praises a chaste milkmaid over London women, and the second is the ballad that Preston identified, 'Tying the Garter' (1656).

ballad, Meg is far more sympathetic to the pregnant women that he deceived, resting the blame on her former lover.

It seems, then, that women were not necessarily presented as lecherous for having pre-marital intercourse. Certainly, having children out of wedlock could see women "stigmatized as 'bastard bearers'" (Mendelson and Crawford 148); sexual activity outside of marriage was still proscribed, and women engaging in it would be reprehended more than their male suitor. However, there was an extent to which a blind eye could have been turned to youthful sex, particularly in the seventeenth-century countryside. For example, Mendelson and Crawford note that "in a sample of rural parishes, it has been calculated that about 21 per cent of brides were pregnant" while "the percentage was less in London: only 16 per cent" (149). In small communities where the church may have been a few miles away, sex commonly occurred at betrothal, not marriage (Phythian-Adams 92) and, if no pregnancy occurred, the breaking of such engagements could be excused. While the pre-eighteenth century pastoral ballads are perhaps idealising rural living as an Eden where one can couple unashamedly, such representations of passionate men *and* women are consistent with the historical evidence that suggests that country dwellers may have experienced more sexual freedom than urban citizens.

What is interesting is how many of the seventeenth-century milkmaid ballads suggest that urbanisation has begun to reshape sexual politics, similar to the way industrialisation impacted woman and cow relationships. Just as the latter became more distanced from one another through the institution of techniques that turned the family dairy into a business run by men, London men and women become sexually estranged from each other by the materialistic corruption of the city. Indeed, the city has even turned women into avaricious paramours that take "your riches" ('The Happy Husbandman,' 59). Unquestionably, the proliferation of such anti-urban themes was motivated by different factors, including tailoring content to the then large, rural audience; consumers in the countryside would prefer ballads that rejected the perceived smugness of city

dwellers in favour of the hardiness of the agricultural worker. For example, in 'The Bonny Milkmaid' (1683-1703), while it is said that "the London Lass/In e'ery place/With her brazen face/Despises the Grace/Of those with the Milking Pail" (74-78), the London woman's shameless resentment is shown to be at fault. Not only are the milkmaids jollier than the "Town Lass," they have a better complexion than her "deadly pale" features; in contrast, the robust milkmaid's cheeks "glow" (34, 38). Indeed, reiterating how country living was healthier than city life may have not only been a means to court a rural readership, but could have been a response to the fact that women were starting to leave their arduous travails in the dairy for indoor work. For instance, Martin Parker's ballad 'The Milke-maids Life' (1633-1669) acknowledges that while "those Lasses nice and strange/that keep shops in the Exchange" have more comforts than the rural labourer, such indoor luxuries are no match for what the milkmaid receives. As the former sit inside maliciously gossiping and making clothes instead of walking abroad "in frost and snow/to carry the milking paile," they fall ill with the green sickness, implying that they lack the healthy sex life that the robust milkmaid enjoys from having found a pleasant "sweet-heart" outdoors (66-79).[230]

But another reason why such ballads portrayed the city as a greedy and soulless locale, beyond bolstering the countryside's appeal, may be because previously close-knit ties between men and women were being severed by the advent of agrarian capitalism. For example, what is deemed "strange" about the women who have clothing stalls in Parker's ballad is that their migration to the town means they now belong "to some other place or neighbourhood"; they are "not of one's own kin or family" and may find it hard to start a family of their own because they are no longer part of a strong, rural community. Additionally, a "strange woman" is also another word for a "harlot" (OED, 'strange, adj. and n.'); a single woman without a husband in a large urban area has recourse to sex work if her employment becomes unstable. Such a profession was growing as fast as the municipalities themselves, as many former inhabitants of the countryside were forced into urban

[230] Whether such a ballad convinced milkmaids of the worth of their profession, and not to leave it, is unclear.

poverty. Thus, the anti-urban ballads may well be portraying how a mechanical character was affecting sexual relations between city-bound men and women.

For instance, the newly atomised nature of labour led to more carnal services being transacted outside the familial bounds of marriage and betrothal in such areas. Indeed, writing in the 1890s, feminist Olive Schreiner suggests that the impact of mechanisation had reduced the need for a large workforce by this time, culminating in the women going "through life not merely childless, but without sex relationship in any form whatever; while another mighty army of women is reduced by the dislocations of our civilization to accepting sexual relationships which practically negate child-bearing, and whose only product is physical and moral disease" (64-65).[231] The corrupting influence of machinery and its effect on the human character had, in her mind, spawned childless women and sex workers; community ties forged through the medium of agricultural work had become redundant by the late-nineteenth century.

Consequently, these ballads, biased as they are, provide an insight into how rural conceptions of family, and acceptable forms of sexual activity, were already being affected by migration to the city. The ballads even suggest that sexual desire in the overcrowded city was not the free pleasure enjoyed by country youths, but a transactional service bereft of feeling, as the struggle to compete with so many other earners required that such gratification be no longer gratis.[232] The rise of a money-driven and sizeable urban society has thus mechanised sexual relations between certain men and women in a similar way to the estrangement of women and cows in the dairy; one of the parties has become objectified as the instrument of production or desire (the heifer

[231] As a very early feminist, Schreiner has not considered the prospect that sex work and marriage count as forms of work, and discriminates against sex workers in particular.

[232] Of course, marriage had long been considered a transactional process as well, but to a lesser extent among poorer communities who would have had less money for dowries.

or the harlot), while what was once a collaborative effort (between woman and cow, or man and woman) has become a purely financial relation.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the subject matter of the ballads begins to shift; there are few milkmaid ballads that are quite as sexual during this period. Incidentally, there are fewer ballads in both the *EBBA* and the *BBO* that feature a male passer-by espying an attractive milkmaid in the eighteenth century. Those few that have been reprinted during this time (such as the 1684 ballad 'The Wiltshire Wedding') already avoided any suggestion of lewdness.[233] But in any case, milkmaid ballads that represent the sexual side of human relations are thin on the ground in this century. Perhaps fewer ballads feature milkmaids because there was a dearth of collectors interested in rural street literature in the eighteenth century; perhaps the decline of dairying as a traditional sphere of female work had an influence on the content of new ballads.[234] Regardless, the re-emergence of milkmaid ballads in the nineteenth century coincides both with rising Victorian interest in an idyllic pastoral past (Roud 551), and with a new cultural concern with sanitising much of the bawdy content that had previously been rife in such literature.

Take, for instance, 'The Spotted Cow' (1820-1824). In this piece, a lost cow is the pretext for a milkmaid to ask her lover to help find her, during which they "hugg'd and kiss'd/And love was all our tale" (15-16). This ballad is now "considered pastoral 'romantic' rather than 'bawdy'" but was thought to be more risqué by Victorian collectors (Roud 562). To a seventeenth-century audience, this ballad would probably have been considered relatively tame, demonstrating the way in which representations of sexuality are markedly dissimilar between different eras. Indeed, bawdy ballads

[233] Once again, this suggests the decline of a traditional sphere of work for women in the eighteenth century, while the increased number of milkmaid ballads in the nineteenth century could suggest that pastoral nostalgia was intensifying.

[234] Eighteenth-century country courtship is better represented in poetry during this time. For instance, elite pastoral poets commonly described rural love as innocent (Waldron 109-110) but Yearsley presented sexual relations between milkmaids and "the swain" in a negative light, arguing that milkmaids would be subject to a "fear of shame" if they were coerced into sex before marriage ('Clifton Hill,' 45-66).

were out of fashion in the Victorian era, and were likely censored or passed over by Victorian collectors (551). Thus, one caveat is that there may be fewer bawdy ballads because they were deemed too crass to archive but, given the amount of Victorian porn available to archivists, this seems unlikely. Whether or not the collectors were hesitant to include lascivious literature, collective humour still appears to have shifted. For example, Bob Nicholson has demonstrated that, between the original 1739 publication of *Joe Miller's Jests; or, the Wit's Vade-Mecum*, and its 1835 expanded edition, 49 jokes "of a sexual nature were cut," as they "were now considered off-limits" – particularly those witticisms that emphasised "women's sexual agency and promiscuity" (22).

There are also indications that the censuring of female desire may not have just affected the sensibilities of (more educated) authors and ballad collectors, but potentially permeated into rural communities. Flora Thompson has suggested that Victorian viewpoints on sexualised content pervaded rural responses to bawdy ballads by the 1880s, where only the male farmers enjoyed semi-pornographic songs away from women's company (47-48). This contrasts with the seventeenth century where, as I discussed in the previous chapter, the evidence suggests that both women and men revelled in bawdy tunes.[235]

It is clear, then, that cultural conceptions of female sexual agency had diminished by the nineteenth century. This change is reflected in the street literature; few see milkmaids enthusiastically consenting to sex.[236] Instead, one ballad, 'The Milkmaid and Squire' (1802-1819), depicts the rape of a dairymaid by a gentleman. Under threat of his anger, she "quitted" her "pails" in order "to oblige him," but when she "strove to get up" he "still kept [her] down," though she

[235] However, Thompson's comment comes at a time when only a few women "still did field work" (48-49) and thus were perhaps by proxy not invited to sing bawdy songs due to this bifurcation in employment.

[236] Only 'The Buxom Dairymaid' (which has no date but likely originates from, at the earliest, the late-eighteenth century) revels even partially in the sexual explicitness found in 'Jovial Lass.' The narrator of 'The Milkmaid and the Ploughboy' (1863-1885) says he did "embrace her while milking her cow" (20), seemingly getting her pregnant, but the ballad is not particularly bawdy.

"beg'd to go home" (5-10). The squire promises to marry her, but then vows her to silence on the matter and absconds, leaving her pregnant. This ballad reveals the darker side of sexual activity across class divides, with none of the merriment seen in 'Love in a Barn,' in which a powerful milkmaid teases a lord into submission. The milkmaid has instead become a victim of a grave injustice – especially when she relates that her abuser has become "possessed" of her "heart" (16-17).[237] While 'The Milkmaid and the Squire' relates an arguably more realistic tale than that of a milkmaid marrying far above her station, the fact that the dairymaid is forced into becoming an instrument of desire, and then discarded as an object, suggests that a mechanical character has permeated nineteenth-century street literature when it comes to their representations of human sexual relationships.[238] For instance, there are many examples of rough and forced sexual contact in the exclusive Victorian pornography written by and for elite men. Coral Lansbury has discussed how women in such pornography are treated like horses (who are in turn treated like machines) who "must learn to submit willingly to all men, just as a horse must stand for every rider who seeks to mount it" (103).

Though not all ballads from this period are as bleak as 'The Milkmaid and the Squire,' it is interesting that when the theme of the bonny milkmaid reappears, she is more intensely idealised, as seen in 'Milking the Cows in the Farm' (1800-1899) and 'Bonny Lass Milking her Cow' (1850-1855).[239] These nineteenth-century ballads are not concerned with the milkmaid's prowess with her hands ('Jovial Lass'), nor are they ultimately charmed by her witty pranks ('Love in a Barn'). Instead, they show that men are primarily motivated to marry the milkmaid due to her rustic beauty: "the

[237] Rape and sexual relations across uneven power divides are topics in other nineteenth-century literature as well, such as *Tess* and *Adam Bede* but, unlike this ballad, such books very obviously condone the male perpetrators.

[238] Lansbury also notes that instances of male-on-female rape were also prevalent in Victorian pornography (103).

[239] The former sees the milkmaid scoff at the hunter who passes by that he will, as her husband, be able to "turn the cows to the farm" (24). In 'Bonny Lass Milking her Cow' (1850-1855), the male passer-by marries a "young damsel a singing/The bonny lass milking her cow" (7-8).

fairest that nature did form" ('Milking the Cows,' 6). Her modesty as a "plain country girl" ('Bonny Lass,' 15) is what is now entrancing to the male narrators, her presumed virtuous state venerated even though prevailing culture had previously indicated that milkmaids were not chaste. For instance, milkmaids were previously considered "loose" because milking in the fields allowed for opportunities for clandestine sexual activity (Mendelson and Crawford 111-112). But in the nineteenth century, milkmaids became "sexually idealized by townsmen as the epitomes of chastity" (Pyhthian-Adams 99), offering an albeit positive separation of maid from animal.

The sanitisation of the milkmaid image suggests that such ballads are engaging in pastoral nostalgia rather than depicting the antics of actual men and women; they are no longer concerned with relating what milkmaids could get away with in the fields, nor the ins-and-outs of farmyard management. While the seventeenth-century ballads were already idealising rural life, albeit in a sexualised manner, later ballads place the milkmaid on a pedestal, with no reference to the exertions of farming life. For instance, in 'Robin's Delight, Or Kate the Dairy-Maid's Happy Marriage,' (1685-1688) Robin wished to marry "a right dairymaid" (5) so she could run the dairy; the male narrator of the nineteenth-century milkmaid ballad is predominantly entranced by the milkmaid because of her symbolic beauty. The fact that the milkmaid's "symbolic significance seems to have waxed as her status as a labourer waned" (Valenze 166) is interesting. As I intimated earlier, there may be fewer ballads about milkmaids in the eighteenth century than the seventeenth because milkmaids were not as common. Their numbers declined until, in the nineteenth century, the impact of a perceived loss of country values (alongside noticeably fewer dairywomen) may have brought the milkmaid into focus again.[240] Yet when she reappears, she is neither a named person (such as Kate) nor a sexual agent (like the Jovial Lass), but a decorative part of the agricultural landscape. Her transformation from real woman to idealised symbol in street literature would have coincided with

[240] Though there are still seemingly fewer milkmaid ballads originating in the nineteenth century than in the seventeenth century.

the milkmaid's withdrawal from the mucky outdoors.[241] Indeed, the dirty content (both the grimy and the crude) of the earlier ballads – in 'Jovial Lass,' both characters slip in the mud – is completely absent from nineteenth-century street literature.

Even the cows are generally accessories to the milkmaid's loveliness, rather than realised creatures in motion. In 'Bonny Lass,' the cow is not mentioned at all beyond the fact that the maid is in the process of milking one when the narrator arrives, as is the case with 'Milkmaid and Ploughboy'; meanwhile, cows are non-existent in 'Buxom Dairymaid' and 'The Milkmaid and the Squire.' In the earlier 'Jovial Lass,' the cow is "started" by Hodge hopping into the field, suggesting the cow is present as an actual being; and in 'The Milkmaid's Morning-Song,' the milkmaid has an emotional connection with her "lovely cows." However, after the seventeenth century, such interactions between women and cows in ballads are few and far between. While many seventeenth-century pastoral ballads suggest that cows are a clear incentive for marriage, by the nineteenth century, cows are not integral to courting a milkmaid, save in 'Milking the Cows in the Farm.' However, in the latter ballad, the keeping of cows is presented as a hindrance to marriage, as the milkmaid wonders if the male passer-by now has the skills needed to "turn the cows to the farm." As such, only 'Milking the Cows in the Farm' and 'The Spotted Cow' – a ballad that may have emerged in the eighteenth century (Robson 26) – represent cows as important to romantic relations. In the other ballads, cows are not mentioned as valued animals anymore, and the interactions

[241] For instance, it is less likely that an interloper would stumble across the milkmaid during a period when there were fewer women milking openly. Perhaps more public acts of sexual activity were only possible on small farms, where the milkmaid would not be observed in taking time from tending her cow to roll about in the fields. 'Love in a Barn' demonstrates the need for privacy in such matters: "The cow-house was the chamber/In which they us'd to court/At length he must be fooling/Under her petticoats" (78-81). Such heavy petting occurs out of sight of her father, or other servants, the milkmaid seemingly being the only one who minds her "father's dairy." It could be argued, then, that once milkmaids began to be concentrated on large holdings, opportunities for romantic or sexual experiences would be more limited. As such, the Lord who "ofentimes beheld her/A- milking in the moon/And he must go to drink the milk/From the cow while it was warm" (17-20) before deciding to confront her "as she a-milking were" (36) would have had less chance to pursue his conquest.

women have with them are more limited, signalling how the consequences of agrarian capitalism have separated the two workers into atomised objects.

The absence of cows and milkmaids as actualised beings is significant because such nineteenth-century ballads herald the coming of a new reality shaped by perceptions drawn from urban life, not country living. And the fact that female sexual pleasure is censored also telling.[242] While romanticising the bonny milkmaid is not a new phenomenon, the possibility of such seduction is now presented as rarer and more sought after by male narrators who are unused to rural settings. The dairymaid's chastity (another instance of her unavailability) has become a source of titillation to the outsider, when in the past her readiness for sex with her fellow rural workers was part of her charm. As the swelling of urban populations has ensured that more and more ballads are enjoyed by those who live in such municipalities, their content has clearly become focused on entertaining the urban, rather than the rural, consumer.

The fact that the milkmaid became a sanitised object rather than a fully realised field worker is indicative of the advancement of a mechanical character in both human and animal relations. While cows became more intensely objectified through the processes of capital intruding on dairying relations, dairymaids were transformed from labourers to symbolic items of male desire. In this sense, ballads also became further tilted in favour of the male consumer, as such representations ensured that the milkmaids were awaiting signification by the male narrator and reader, rather than giving the fictional dairymaid any such agency herself. It could be said, then, that seventeenth-century street literature anticipated the transformation of rural culture by the expansion of the city. And in the nineteenth century, milkmaid ballads demonstrate the effect of such a transformation; dairymaids and cows have become unimportant to the majority of Victorians except in how they can be instrumentalised.

[242] For instance, other than 'The Buxom Dairymaid,' eighteenth- and nineteenth-century milkmaid street literature does not dabble in lewdness,

The lack of lewd representations of lovemaking in their balladry also signifies that a related cultural shift was taking place in Victorian and Edwardian England through the way that its literature was proscribing sexual activity. However, certain literary enthusiasts may have looked kindlier on countryside sex due to the perceived closeness of rural dwellers to animals and the natural world. For instance, George Meredith in the poetic narrative *Modern Love* (1862) argued that the couples who get to "country merry-making on the green … must be, I think, wiser than I am/They have the secret of the bull and the lamb" (n.p.). However, the poem then condescendingly stipulates that such free and easy lovemaking is likely only due to the influence of beer. As such, though Meredith laments modern love (in which marriages are untenably bound by legal and social constraints, not sentiment), he still suggests the former requires the use of reason, while country courtship requires nothing but unthinking emotion. Likewise, in the early-twentieth century, bucolic bawdy ballads began to be exonerated by critics; Roud has demonstrated that what was described as "folk erotic" was deemed "relatively pure and clean because it was a rural tradition, based on the underlying sexual nature of the natural world, the growth of crops, the breeding of animals, and their fundamental links with human fertility." At this time, ballad-enthusiasts integrated the seventeenth-century pastoral mantra of street literature, which proclaimed "'country (good) and town (bad),'" but used such a mantra to argue that "'the rustics' are 'simple, open and natural'" when singing about sex (551).

These patronising views of rural and early modern sexuality linked countryside intercourse to animality, vindicating bawdiness because they believed such 'rustics' could not help being influenced by the animals they lived alongside. The idea that past rural inhabitants were permitted to have carnal urges because they were in closer contact with nature (and alcohol) necessarily implies that the cultured ballad collector or author is above such animal instincts. This supercilious shift in how bawdy ballads were considered suggests that denying the animality inherent in humanity was a reason for the prohibition of sexual material in the public arena between the

eighteenth and twentieth centuries.[243] Conceptions of female lust were particularly controversial during this time, as can be seen in the novels of the period. Indeed, the next section will demonstrate that the denial of female sexual appetites went together with a reinvigorated repression of the animal within.

Not-so Naughty Novels

Pamela, Or Virtue Rewarded (1740) is one of the first examples of the way female erotic desire began to be sanctioned in popular media. While ballads such as 'Love in a Barn' had already tackled the subject matter of a rapacious Lord attempting to seduce a young working woman, ending somewhat dubiously in a happy marriage, Richardson's novel plays out differently. For instance, the ballad's milkmaid uses her wits and her sexuality to trick the former. First, she tempts him with the promise of sex, letting him "be fooling/Under her petticoats" (80-81) while getting him drunk. Once he passes out, she enlists the "gypsies" who stay in her father's barn to strip and tie him while he lies insensible, leaving him to run into the village naked and afraid the next day. Despite this, the Lord is impressed with both the keeping of her "virtue" (182) and is "well pleased/With the pranks that she has play'd" (178-179), suggesting that her roguish humour is also the reason for his eventual proposal. Richardson's novel, on the other hand, places great emphasis on the fact that it is Pamela the housemaid's strict moral conduct that prevents the repeated attempts of sexual assault against her. Her endeavours to leave are halted by her fear of a bull – a spectre of animal sexuality – that is roaming the estate, and she has "not the courage" (Richardson 153), unlike the heroine of 'Love in a Barn,' to do anything other than pray to God for her deliverance. However, her prayers are answered, as her continued rejection of her abuser, the gentleman Mr B., garners his respect, and he marries her. Thus, the titular heroine transcends traditional class boundaries with her marriage, not owing to any intellectual or sexual prowess, as with 'Love in a Barn' or the aforementioned 'The

[243] Victorian pornography was generally banned, and usually only available underground at proscriptive prices to the discerning gentleman (Lansbury 128-129).

Conquer'd Lady,' but because of pious chastity (and denial of the animal presence) alone. Furthermore, Pamela has no sexual appetites herself; she is presented as entirely free of supposedly wanton thoughts.

Indeed, Ruth Perry has remarked that Pamela is part of a "progressive desexualization of fictional heroines" as the text marks the start of literature that punishes "fictional women for what was rapidly becoming improper and tragic sexual behaviour" (210). Instead of representing women as vehicles of passion, Perry argues that heroines bereft of all sexual impulses, like Pamela, were becoming more common from the eighteenth-century onwards. During this period, "maternity came to be imagined as a counter to sexual feeling, opposing alike individual expression, desire, and agency in favor of a mother-self at the service of the family and the state" (209). Importantly, this was attended by a similar decrease in ascribing animal appellations to mothers. Perry remarks that "Alexander Pope's slanderous portrait of the novelist Eliza Haywood in *The Dunciad* [1728] as a sluttish mother ("Two babes of love close clinging to her waist"), heavily and even brutishly physical ("With cow-like udders, and with ox-like eyes") … clearly belong to an earlier period, before motherhood sanctified women and removed from them the taint of sexuality." She adds that "such bovine sexual energy as Pope represented was fast disappearing from the cultural landscape by the 1760s, repressed as a motive in fictional heroines and antiheroines alike" (215). Indeed, as discussed earlier, the linking of human and animal lactation was disappearing as early as the seventeenth century, as animal-like terms such as "dugs" to mean breasts (or breasts to mean udders, when applied to mammals) came to only be used as insults.[244] Thus, where once the same terms applied to

[244] However, a reaction to motherhood being uplifted as a human and transcendental ideal was occurring in the feminist movement of the late-nineteenth century. For instance, Sarah Grand declared the "cow-woman" to be a docile mother, a negative trait in comparison to the vigour of the "new woman" (271). Similarly, feminist Olive Schreiner compared mothers with blood-sucking parasites in *Woman and Labour* (written in the 1890s, but published in 1914), thus animal comparisons to mothers were not off-limits in feminist circles by such a time. However, Schreiner did use this metaphor to describe all women, discussing how woman must find "new forms of labour" or sink "slowly into a condition of more or less complete and passive sex-parasitism" (81, 77). Seemingly, some feminist circles had begun to rebel against the eighteenth- to nineteenth-century veneration of motherhood.

female body parts and so implied a shared embodied experience with another species, such closeness was not only waning but uplifting the human as separate from the animal (Ryland 48).

The purification of female sexuality that saw "maternal practice" positioned as the "heart of real femininity" (Perry 234) removed sexualised notions of animality from all mothers and would-be mothers who occupied the acceptable realms of English society. As such, "the desexualization of women was accomplished, in part, by redefining them as maternal rather than sexual beings" (213), which in turn deemed that those women who qualified for 'respectable' motherhood were more human than animal.[245] Similarly, the eighteenth-century discovery that women did not need to climax to conceive, which in turn led to medical treatises describing the "purported passionless" of women (Laqueur 149-150, 161), aided the idea that women were without sexual desire.

I argue that George Eliot reproduces this theme of maternal veneration while rejecting notions of overt female sexuality in *Adam Bede*. Dinah, the pious heroine, is never shown to have carnal urges, and is rewarded with a happy marriage and children.[246] However, Hetty, who exposed her own child to the elements, is represented as both more sexual and more animal. Hetty is the personification of the pretty country dairymaid and, while her sexuality is not quite as explicit as the heroines of the bawdy ballads, her cleverness at "making up the butter" draws attention to her deft hands:

> And they are the prettiest attitudes and movements into which a pretty girl is thrown in making up butter—tossing movements that give a charming curve to the arm, and a sideward inclination of the round white neck; little patting and rolling movements with the palm of the hand, and nice adaptations and finishings which cannot at all be effected without a great play of the pouting mouth and the dark eyes. (77)

[245] For example, women who were not white (or even not English) or who were sex workers, would be outside such perceived respectability.

[246] One might question how happy this marriage is as Dinah had to give up her loved profession of preaching to become a mother, but the novel's conclusion with her marriage to Adam indicates that this was the best outcome for her. Here, motherhood is the goal.

Both Hetty's sexualised pout and her profession make her a target for male affection, while she is often characterised as an animal such as a "calf" or a "kitten" (77, 323). Indeed, she is even eroticised as an inanimate object: "people who love downy peaches are apt not to think of the stone, and sometimes jar their teeth terribly against it" (139).[247]

But while Hetty shares her prettiness with other fictional milkmaids like Tess, she does not seemingly share in the fullness of Tess's intellect. Her love for the gentleman Arthur Donnithorne, and the supposition that he may marry her, is characterised as "foolish thoughts" that occur because she is an uninformed girl from the past: "all this happened, you must remember, nearly sixty years ago, and Hetty was quite uneducated—a simple farmer's girl, to whom a gentleman with a white hand was dazzling as an Olympian god" (91-92).[248] Her naïve nature links her to the cows that she works with, negatively: "Hetty's was a spring-tide beauty; it was the beauty of young frisking things, round-limbed, gambolling, circumventing you by a false air of innocence—the innocence of a young star-browed calf, for example, that, being inclined for a promenade out of bounds, leads you a severe steeplechase over hedge and ditch, and only comes to a stand in the middle of a bog" (77).

While critics have commonly remarked that Hetty appears to be simple, Rebecca Mitchell argues that Hetty has been misread, as she has "a gift of insight … her studied primping displays a vanity that is both controlling and controlled, through which she can affect the conclusions others

[247] Donnithorne has been likened to a peach when alongside Hetty: "Such young unfurrowed souls roll to meet each other like two velvet peaches that touch softly and are at rest; they mingle as easily as two brooklets that ask for nothing but to entwine themselves and ripple with ever-interlacing curves in the leafiest hiding-places" (*Adam Bede*, 120). However, as the "downy peach" (139) appears to be a stand-in for female genitalia, it is Hetty who is more intensely eroticised.

[248] The seventeenth-century ballad 'Love in a Barn' argues, "country girls are not such fools/For to be taken in" (70-71) by the promises of gentlemen, thus it seems incongruous that Hetty's decision to have sex out of wedlock is ascribed to her living in 1799. But Eliot wished to demonstrate that real-life is vastly different to the stories of literature, and Hetty's beauty cannot be used to transcend class boundaries without status to accompany it. Even so, the punishing of Hetty for being aware of her prettiness, and for indulging in sexual activity, feels jarring to modern feminist eyes.

draw about her" (56). Though it is true that Hetty is not the fool that the narrator appears to cast her as at times – she is naïve, but calculating – the fact that only Hetty, and the unnamed "lazy" villagers, are described as bovine, is telling. Such animal appellations are deemed to be undesirable across the novel even though, by the end of the novel, the reader's sympathy leans towards Hetty and the villagers.[249] And yet, the way in which the narrator defends the noisy villagers who are "almost as incapable of an undertone as a cow" (Eliot, *Adam Bede*, 17-18) implies that such a practice needs defending. Indeed, in the novel, animality is never represented as a positive characteristic. For instance, once "the lambs and calves have lost all traces of their innocent frisky prettiness," they are described as becoming "stupid young sheep and cows" (225); by linking Hetty with the "innocent frisky" calf who becomes "stupid," both Hetty and cows are cast as idiotic animals that give in to base urges.

Furthermore, Hetty is harshly denigrated for refusing motherhood. Her lack of delight in young children or juvenile animals is seen as part of her vanity: "the round downy chicks peeping out from under their mother's wing never touched Hetty with any pleasure; that was not the sort of prettiness she cared about, but she did care about the prettiness of the new things she would buy for herself at Treddleston fair with the money they fetched" (141). A large flaw in Hetty's character is that she finds her aunt's children "tiresome": "Hetty would have been glad to hear that she should never see a child again; they were worse than the nasty little lambs that the shepherd was always bringing in to be taken special care of in lambing time; for the lambs *were* got rid of sooner or later" (140).[250] By not showing an appropriate level of feminised compassion towards the young and

[249] Mitchell has argued that by the close of the novel, Hetty has overcome her egoism to recognise "what even the pious Dinah cannot"; that there are "fundamental differences" between Hetty's "reality and the expectations of her community" (59). Moreover, in the previous chapter I argued that the novel's end affords some sympathy to the villagers, whose way of life was coming to an end.

[250] While Hetty does not (or cannot) connect with animals in the same way as Tess, none of the other characters appear to do so either. Hetty is presented as being unable to enjoy her natural surroundings, while Dinah is the one who "delighted in her bedroom window… She liked the pasture best where the milch cows were lying" (142). And yet, as discussed in the previous chapter, neither Dinah nor Mrs Poyser seem particularly well-disposed towards any of the animals, who are restrained if they rebel.

vulnerable, Hetty is initially condemned in the eyes of the Poysers and the narrator. Her "moral deficiencies" are described as "hidden under the 'dear deceit' of beauty" (141), while her displeasure in nurturing children is seen to be at odds with her looks: "And yet she [Hetty] looked so dimpled, so charming, as she stooped down to put the soaked bread under the hen-coop, that you must have been a very acute personage indeed to suspect her of that hardness." When Mrs Poyser laments that "Molly, the housemaid, with a turn-up nose and a protuberant jaw, was really a tender-hearted girl" but "her stolid face showed nothing of this maternal delight" (141), the implication is that feminine beauty is a trait that is associated with motherhood. This is a marked difference from the seventeenth-century ballads that saw prettiness in a milkmaid as a sign of healthy sexual availability. Instead, the veneration of maternity has become commonplace in the society of Hayslope, and seemingly by Eliot's time of writing.

Mitchell believes that Hayslope's fundamental misreading of Hetty means that the community shares in the blame for her predicament, as they failed to recognise her difference and to educate her accordingly (59). The fact that her looks have been misinterpreted as goodness is not the fault of Hetty alone; as the narrator cautions the reader, "before you despise Adam as deficient in penetration, pray ask yourself if you were ever predisposed to believe evil of any pretty woman" (139). Even so, the fact that Hetty is so harshly treated by the narrator and the villagers until the close of the novel implies that she is being punished for denying maternal womanhood. She is even likened to a witch (a childless and unconventional woman set apart from the community) who has "bewitched" Adam (139). Hetty, like Tess, is constantly at the mercy of men's affections due to her beauty but, because she delights in this more than the latter, her downfall is not treated as sympathetically as Tess's sorry tale. The tone of *Adam Bede* throughout suggests that the overly sexual and egotistical Hetty is still partly to blame for her behaviour, even if some responsibility rests with the other residents; the reader is led to believe that it is Hetty's "stupid" nature combined with

her "hardness" that leads her to commit one of the most heinous crimes of child murder.[251] Thus, the overall message appears to be that those who transgress the bounds of appropriate womanhood by indulging in sex, and spurning motherhood, are as self-interested and senseless as the tricky calves.

Conversely, the rest of this chapter will demonstrate that Hardy represents Tess as both morally-upright and alike to animals, maternally minded yet sexually receptive in his nostalgic evocation of rural life. To begin, it is necessary to state that Tess is a remarkably pretty and competent milkmaid; an attractive image that would be at home in balladry. Her proficiency in "milking or butter-making processes, which she had learnt when her father had owned cows" and helped by her "being deft-fingered" (Hardy, *Tess*, 43), recalls the hyper-sexualisation of the milking process which traditionally positioned milkmaids as skilful at sexual acts as well.[252] But Hardy's sub-title, *A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented*, reveals his intent to depict Tess as "pure," not in one sense of the meaning "sexually undefiled; chaste; virgin" but in the other: "of unblemished character or nature; morally untainted; guiltless" (*OED*, "pure, adj., adv., and n."). Tess is portrayed, not as the chaste milkmaid "sexually idealized by townsmen" of the nineteenth century (Phythian-Adams 99), nor the woman who falls to sin, but as someone entirely innocent of the circumstances that befall her. As Boumelha has indicated, "the inevitability of a sexual response from men is what crystallizes Tess's experience of herself as the 'nature' of woman. Endlessly provocative without intent, she comes to feel guilty by virtue of her female body alone" ('Introduction,' xxiv).

Tess, like Hetty, is an example of how beauty is not an asset for the working-class young woman, but may instead be a trap. In this way, she is markedly different to the seventeenth-century

[251] For instance, Josephine McDonagh argues that the close of the novel, through remembering "the wrong perpetrated by Hetty" that can, as Arthur says, "'never be made up for,'" the "new community" is defined "by remembering that Hetty herself will never be assimilated, destined as she is for eternal abjection" (152).

[252] This description also links Tess to the cows her father had owned, whereas Hetty's butter-making is described without reference to its bovine producers.

milkmaids of the ballads, who can manipulate their own attractiveness into attaining what they want, be it marriage or sex. She believes her "fleshly tabernacle" (Hardy, *Tess*, 329) to be a hindrance to her, even though the novel makes clear that she cannot help embodying a romanticised representation of a bonny milkmaid. Her looks, like Hetty's, are misread, but in a slightly different sense; Angel believes Tess's prettiness is a sign of her virginity. "What a fresh and virginal daughter of Nature that milkmaid is!" (136) he exclaims, though he later cannot believe that she is not, in his mind, "absolutely pure. Nature, in her fantastic trickery, had set such a seal of maidenhood upon Tess's countenance" (257). One of the tragedies of the novel is that Angel has internalised Victorian suppositions that require that a pure woman be defined as one who has not been sexually violated.

Such a tragedy may have been avoided if Angel the townsman had not acted exactly like the urban passer-by in a Victorian ballad espying a pretty milkmaid. His idealisation of Tess, like the romanticisation of the milkmaid in 'Bonny Lass,' unwittingly sees him identify her as a symbol of a fresh and chaste countryside that is at odds with reality. As his initial attraction grew, Tess went from being, patronisingly, "though but a milkmaid" (140) to "a visionary essence of woman—a whole sex condensed into one typical form" (146). The fantasy is ruptured once she tells him of Alec's assault, becoming in his mind "'one person; now … another'" (248) as he callously tells her he believes he has in fact been loving "'another woman in your shape'" (249). But Tess has always refuted his idealisation of her, rankling against him calling her "Artemis, Demeter, and other fanciful names." "'Call me Tess,' she would say askance; and he did" (Hardy, *Tess*, 146). Her antipathy towards being held up as a transcendental figure is a common theme across the novel. For instance, she remonstrates against her father's D'Urberville aristocratic ancestry, saying that: "'Pooh—I have as much of mother as father in me … All my prettiness comes from her, and she was only a dairymaid'" (118). Tess merely wants to be who she has always been: a milkmaid. She thinks to herself that "on one point she was resolved: there should be no more d'Urberville air-castles in the dreams and deeds of her new life. She would be the dairymaid Tess, and nothing more" (113). But

Angel – the man named after a divine being himself – refuses to allow Tess to live in the practical, material world, alongside the cows and the dirt. His reiterated proposals of marriage, that Tess eventually accepts, result in her ruin. Angel leaves her upon discovering her past, a fate that Tess had foreseen.

Through his fickle love of Tess, Angel exhibits his own inconstancy, which is further expounded by his cold-hearted treatment of her colleague Izz Huet, whom he asks to be his mistress, before quickly rescinding the offer. Angel's behaviour towards the dairymaids – any pretty one will do – is shown to be no different than the conduct of the urban interloper of the nineteenth-century milkmaid ballads. And yet, an even-handed reading of Angel draws attention to the fact that the residency at the farm had begun to change him. Not only does he start to incorporate country sayings into his language that his family find uncouth, but he has also started to realise that other subjectivities than his matter: "the impressionable peasant leads a larger, fuller, more dramatic life than the pachydermatous king. Looking at it thus he found that life was to be seen of the same magnitude here as elsewhere" (179, 172). Even though Angel has found that the countryside is not some abstracted locale full of simple people, he still cannot shake the preconceptions gained from living outside of it for most of his life. For instance, his surprise that Tess has complex reveries though she is "but a milkmaid" (140), and his behaviour towards her after learning her secret is like a child having a fit upon discovering the world is not as he wishes it. In contrast, the way Tess engages with Angel is more practical and logical, and even shares some commonality with the free and easy way milkmaids of the seventeenth-century ballads; for instance, she implies multiple times that she would rather be Angel's lover than his wife, knowing that he would not accept her hand in marriage once he learned the truth (189, 193).

Tess's virtuousness, then, is not akin to Pamela's sanitised lack of desire. Her initial rejection of Angel's proposal was made harder because she was unable to deny her sexual attraction towards him. As they got to know each other, both "unconsciously studied each other, ever balanced on the

edge of a passion ... All the while they were converging, under an irresistible law, as surely as two streams in one vale" (144). The imagery of the two waterways joining to become one river undoubtedly suggests the naturalness of Tess and Angel's desire for one another as does, as Morgan has noted, the erotic nature of the garden scene; Tess is drawn to Angel's playing of his harp, where "thistle-milk and slug-slime … rubbing off upon her naked arms" (Hardy, *Tess*, 138) are the literal stand-ins for the "mucosa and emissions of biological sex" (Morgan 87) that permeate around Tess. The whole scene heightens her physical senses, drawing her in as she "undulated upon the thin notes of the second-hand harp" (Hardy, *Tess*, 139); a kind of "orgasmic dilation" (Morgan 88) that highlights Tess's brimming sexuality, while acknowledging such passion as part of the biological drive that similarly moves both flora and fauna. Indeed, the fact that all the milkmaids at Talbothays brim with desire for Angel is another example of how such sexual feeling is normalised in the novel.[253]

Morgan remarks that such sensual descriptions shocked Hardy's Victorian audience, who deemed Tess "excessively voluptuous," so much so that they "doubted … her moral purity" (84). While Hetty's erotic inclinations were conservatively characterised as both foolish and reprehensible, Hardy made clear that "the voluptuous woman, the sexy woman" does not have to be "dumb nor loose in morals" (Boumelha, 'Introduction,' xii). Indeed, Hardy's "complete lack of puritanical censure, his complete faith in the healthy, life-giving force of free, unrepressed sexual activity" and his "commitment to active, assertive, self-determined women" (Morgan x) were unorthodox for the time. Similarly unconventional was Hardy's repeated assertion of "the 'naturalness' of the sexual instinct" (Boumelha, *Hardy and Women*, 130) which may have led critics like Virginia Woolf to announce that "the woman is the weaker and the fleshier" in Hardy (2). And yet, critics writing after the mid-twentieth century, such as Boumelha and Morgan, were some of the first to vociferously deny these points. Tess's weariness that led her to the sleep preceding her rape,

[253] Though they all are attracted to Angel, Ermarth has noted that the milkmaids' "solidarity is not undermined" by this common fact. Indeed, Tess's "happiest moments, though ephemeral, are those where she shares activity with other women" (219).

and her demanding work as a thresher that sees Alec describe her as looking "weak as a bled calf" (Hardy, *Tess*, 355), are not signs of weakness, but highlight the unceasing labour she undertakes that leads her to the edge of exhaustion. Her "efforts to keep body and soul together – her family's as well as her own" (Morgan 89) are mental and physical ordeals that signal her fortitude and strength as both an unremitting agricultural worker, and the only hope for her family.

As for Hardy's women being "fleshier," it is evident that men are subject to the same physical constraints as women in his novels. Both Angel and Alec appear more carnal and more brutish than Tess, while the titular Jude of *Jude the Obscure* has his academic plans derailed, in part, by "animal passion for a woman" (85).[254] The "fleshier" appellation as applied to women could thus be part of what Boumelha characterises as an "exception … to what is seen as an excessive emphasis on sexuality (most often translated as 'sensuality') in his women" due to a double standard that categorised female sexuality as more risqué because of its then perceived unnaturalness.[255] But it is interesting that the term "fleshier" – of the body – also invokes the shadow of animality. Indeed, one male critic in 1896 found Hardy "unduly coarse," commenting that "'his women and men alike are always somewhat too obviously animal'" (*Hardy and Women*, 2).

But while closeness to the animal world by this time was deemed "coarse," such cultural biases did not deter Hardy, who ensured that the animal nature of his "pure" heroine was explicit.

[254] For instance, Alec's brutal pursuit and rape of Tess speaks for itself while Angel, who believed his love for Tess was based in intellectual sublimity, is in fact presented as a naïve man subject to the same urges as any. The main reason Angel selected Tess "in preference to the other pretty milkmaids when he wished to contemplate contiguous womankind" was not due to a Platonic soul-kinship, but because he felt he had "beheld her before" (136). Had Tess not been at Talbothay, Izz Huet could well have been the milkmaid chosen to relieve his natural desires. And in *Jude The Obscure*, while one reading could argue that Jude was tempted by the fleshy Arabella, he is clearly in thrall to such desires himself, especially when he meets Sue. While she is far less interested in sex than him (249-250), Jude is the one intensely and carnally attracted to her: "For whatever Sue's virtues, talents, or ecclesiastical saturation, it was certain that those items were not at all the cause of his affection for her" (93). And in the end, Jude recognises that it was not Arabella, or even himself, that caused his downfall, but the institution of marriage, and the torments of societal pressure: "'Is it,' he said, 'that the women are to blame; or is it the artificial system of things, under which the normal sex-impulses are turned into devilish domestic gins and springs to noose and hold back those who want to progress?'" (209).

[255] As Boumelha notes, in the mid-nineteenth century, "modesty, decency, chastity" were deemed "*inherent* female characteristics" (*Hardy and Women*, 15).

Her sexuality is often compared with the sticky pollen of plant life or with the vibrancy of animals, as Angel lovingly beholds “the red interior of her mouth as if it had been a snake’s” (Hardy, *Tess*, 187). In fact, she is regularly likened to other animals, whether it is Alec describing her as a "bled calf" (355) or, when “surcharged with emotion” she “winced like a wounded animal” (237); or when Angel’s ardour affects her deeply:

> She soon finished her eating, and having a consciousness that Clare was regarding her, began to trace imaginary patterns on the tablecloth with her forefinger with the constraint of a domestic animal that perceives itself to be watched. (136)

Her fellow feeling towards her cows also demonstrates the liminal position she holds as both human and animal. While she certainly pays more heed to their welfare than the transcendent Angel – who does not care if he upsets them when he “jumped up” to embrace her (166) – she also familiarises herself with her cows intimately. As discussed in the previous chapter, Tess drinks some fresh “milk as temporary refreshment—to the surprise —indeed, slight contempt—of Dairyman Crick” (124). Tess does not consider the milk as anything more than a natural beverage; she does not observe this new way of differentiating human from animal because she does not see herself as all that different to them. Indeed, Tess may sympathise with cows because she too has been bred without her consent. Furthermore, during her breastfeeding scene, it is made clear that Tess must provide milk for her son at the same time as providing for others through her work in the fields (102). In this way, she is like the cow producing milk for humans and her calf; both Tess and the cow receive no break from their labour.

This proximity that Tess has to the natural world at first delighted Angel. She, like the other milkmaids, blends into part of the natural scenery, and savours her space, like the cows they work with: “all the girls drew onward to the spot where the cows were grazing in the farther mead, the bevy advancing with the bold grace of wild animals—the reckless, unchastened motion of women accustomed to unlimited space … It seemed natural enough to him now that Tess was again in sight to choose a mate from unconstrained Nature, and not from the abodes of Art” (191). That Angel the

townsman then conflates nature with chastity and purity is, as Hardy reveals throughout the novel, an unsophisticated oversight; Tess is no less a pure woman merely because the gifts nature has endowed her with have caused her to be targeted by lecherous men. As such, unlike in *Adam Bede*, animality is not a drawback, nor a deficiency of morals; Tess being part animal does not damage her character. She is "pure" because her compassionate and guiltless nature does not liken her to the uncontrollable brute Alec D'Urberville, nor the immature Angel who "exploits Tess as much as Alec does" (Boumelha, *Hardy and Women*, 43). And yet, all are drawn from realistic portraits of human behaviour. Angel in particular is naïve to think that he can idealise the natural world and stand apart from it. No human, Hardy reminds us, can escape the animal within.[256]

If what today could be categorised as a rather run-of-the-mill sexualisation of Tess astounded the readers of the time, it is no wonder that the (at times unflattering) portrayal of the human condition as part animal similarly disturbed prevailing notions of Victorian propriety. For instance, Elizabeth Chapman took Hardy to task in her essay 'The Disparagement of Women in Literature' (1897), saying "I do not think it would be very wide of the mark to describe the abstract being masquerading in Mr Hardy's work as woman as a compound three-parts animal and one-part fay" (quoted in Boumelha, *Hardy and Women*, 2). The idea that women in Hardy are abstracted beings rather than material characters is interesting in that one female critic in 1975, Kathleen Rogers, similarly believed that "Tess herself is almost less a personality than a beautiful portion of nature violated by human selfishness and over-intellectualizing. She is the least flawed of Hardy's protagonists, but also the least human" (quoted in Boumelha, *Hardy and Women*, 123). But these comments appear to be a misreading of Tess that is clouded by an inability to understand that strong heroines can have, as Boumelha notes, an "explicitly remarked continuity with the natural world" (123), while demonstrating the full scope of human emotion which is, necessarily, part animal. The thrumming sexuality of the garden, the intoxicating "dream" of first love Tess falls into, "wherein

[256] Similarly, In *Jude The Obscure*, Jude is contemptuous of Arabella's animal traits, but is victim to those same traits (sexual desire, selfishness) himself.

familiar objects appeared as having light and shade and position, but no particular outline" (Hardy, *Tess*, 188) are decidedly human experiences, which in Hardy's vision cannot be separated from what occurs in the natural world.

Take, for instance, Tess's struggles with motherhood. Although Boumelha notes that "the ambivalence of Tess's feeling for her child, and the failure of motherhood in itself to determine the subsequent force of her experience" made *Tess* "so controversial" to Hardy's contemporary readership (119), how Tess treats her child is what one might expect from the traumatic circumstances of his conception. Though there is indeed a vacillation in her feelings towards her son as she "dandled it with a gloomy indifference that was almost dislike; then all of a sudden she fell to violently kissing it some dozens of times" (102), her love for her child is exemplified by her "grief" when "her darling was about to die" (105). Her pained conduct towards the child she names Sorrow is undoubtedly human, as her nurturing instincts conflict with her recollection of the assault that engendered him. Ultimately, I read Tess as a maternally minded figure, and would argue that contemporary attacks upon Tess's maternal feeling do not consider the love and care she takes in helping to raise her younger siblings. This includes placing herself in danger for the benefit of her family by accepting Alec as a lover. As such, Tess, unlike Hetty, is never condemned by the narrator for refusing to show an appropriate level of maternal compassion.

Tess can instead be characterised as a woman bombarded by real events that prompt valid emotions; she is not an abstracted being, nor a child-hating hussy. Thus, while Eliot at times reproduces Victorian morality, Hardy subverts expectations by exonerating sexuality (and its intertwined, bestial cousin animality) that had both been further denigrated by changing cultural attitudes. "Victorian accusations of misogynism" towards Hardy "are perhaps understandable," Morgan argues, "since it was a profanity to many that Hardy's great heroines did not personify moral perfection and the 'conscience of man' – the pedestal-role he constantly abjures" (156). But, judging by Kathleen Rogers's criticism of Hardy's less-than-human Tess in 1975, the belief that certain

women should occupy a place away from the grubby ground of animality continued well into the twentieth century. Arguably, the stigmatisation of female sexuality as less natural than male holds sway in contemporary culture today and can be related to a shift in milkmaid-cow relations that I have been tracing in this thesis.[257]

Another reason that Hardy was the focus for such criticism is because the social rules surrounding sexual conduct had been tightened. For instance, before the eighteenth century, the sexual nature of the milkmaid in street literature was not necessarily controversial. However, by the nineteenth century, the unmarried milkmaid who falls pregnant is no longer consenting with sexual zeal, demonstrating the way that cultural ideals of female sexuality fluctuated. Similarly, animality became more reserved for those who could never achieve respectability in Victorian England, where before animal appellations were applied more liberally to all women and lower-class people. And, as working-class English women were uplifted from their class position by the perceived universalising virtuousness of motherhood, all women perceived as sexually available became further denigrated, alongside cultural conceptions of female arousal.

Finally, it is interesting that dairymaids were the chosen vehicles for Eliot and Hardy's representation of sensual women, women who, controversially, bear children out of wedlock. Similarly, in the aforementioned ballads, milkmaids were the foci for erotic activity, suggesting that across this period of study, both animality and sexuality have been tied together and evinced through representations of dairymaids. The reason why milkmaids were chosen as ciphers for the voluptuous woman across the early modern period may be because they were deemed to be part of an "unconstrained Nature" (Hardy, *Tess,* 191). Their work with cows, cheek to flank, squeezing udders, perhaps saw them as being in closer proximity to a bestial sexuality. Additionally, "creampot love" was an early modern saying described as "what young fellows pretend to dairy maids, to get

[257] Once again, the caveat "certain women" is necessary as racialised women, and other women outside the perceived bounds of English respectability, would not have been put on a pedestal in the first place.

cream and other good things of them" (Mendelson and Crawford 111), as milkmaids had long been the subject of sexual advances because they were easily able to sneak away for a romantic rendezvous.

But the fact that milkmaids were no longer common sights across England likely led to their idealisation as virgins untouched by the corruption of the city, becoming "epitomes of chastity, modesty and clean, but hard country-living" (Phythian-Adams 99). Indeed, the increasingly mechanical character of relations between men and women in the city, exemplified in married women being told to "lie back and think of England" while their husbands sought sex workers (Boumelha, *Hardy and Women*, 11) perhaps had something to do with the pastoral nostalgia invoked by the milkmaid image.[258] Dairymaids were perceived as untouched by such mechanistic relations found in the towns and cities, which had become intertwined with negative conceptions of lust.[259] Both Eliot and Hardy attempted to exhibit the problems with this way of thinking. By painting a more realistic picture of dairying, they demonstrated the harsh realities a pretty milkmaid may suffer, without casting her as a passive victim, or implying that chastity was a prerequisite of the profession. However, while Eliot suggests that Hetty's position as a child murderer is not necessarily her fault,

[258] For example, the city in the late-nineteenth century was home to anti-vivisection protests, particularly in London, where a common theme was drawn between the operating tables used to dissect dogs, and the straps and stirrups used to restrain women in contemporary pornography. For women, "to protest against vivisection … was to revolt against a world of male sexual authority which they sensed, even if they had not actually experienced it" (Lansbury 99).

[259] A "male fantasy which is repeated endlessly in later Victorian pornography" replete with a "lack of eroticism and its emphasis on cruelty" is the flogging and sodomisation of a woman in a stable who at the end "gratefully" accepts "the domination of man and learn to like, just as Black Beauty must accept the bit without complaining" (Lansbury 103). A mechanical relation was certainly reflected in Victorian pornography, where the woman and the horse are objects, and hindered from moving by devices in a similar way to the cows in the post-eighteenth-century agricultural manuals. But such pornography was "reserved for the rich; the working-class bawdry so familiar in the earlier years of the century had been driven from the streets by Vagrancy Acts and the Vice Society … the twenty-guinea pornographic novel was expensive and difficult to purchase" thus "it cannot be described as a collective conscious" (128-129).

the negative portrayal of Hetty's awareness of her beauty, and her animalistic pursuance of sexual desire, reads somewhat like a punishment for not turning that prettiness to maternal delights.[260]

In contrast, Hardy created a milkmaid who was unapologetically human *and* animal, both mother and desiring woman. In doing so, he accomplished his vision of seeing "'the doll of English fiction … demolished,'" rescuing his heroine from the literary scandal of "'incorporeal flawlessness'" (Hardy, quoted in Morgan, 157). Tess's closeness to her cows further demonstrates her compassionate nature as a woman who can correspond with, and feel for, other species who she identifies with on a deep, emotional level. Her link to her favourite cow, Old Pretty, is even strengthened by Angel's referral to Tess as "my pretty" (Hardy, Tess, 189), though the sad aspect of such a link is made clear by how the two have been, or are becoming, objectified; Old Pretty works in an expanding dairy that may soon see her discarded as a defective tool if she, like Winker, refuses to give as much milk as required, while Tess's initial signification to Angel is only as an idealised country milkmaid of balladry. Furthermore, Tess's removal from the dairy, and her sad ending as a townswoman, and then a hanged convict, outlines the way that milkmaids were no longer a normal part of the workforce – just as cows were no longer perceived as fellow workers, but products. Even today, such preconceptions live on. Cows are commonly referred to as if they were inanimate, while milkmaids are similarly unreal; they persist in the cultural imagination as symbols of a bonny and bucolic countryside.[261]

[260] Rebecca Mitchell has argued that readings of Dinah and Hetty as "selfless/selfish" does not grasp the full extent of the novel (54), and while there is more to Hetty's character than naïve calculation, the contempt levelled at Hetty until the end is so palpable that it is hard to believe her character is not a warning against sexual misconduct.

[261] For instance, cows are commonly referred to as 'it,' as can be seen with a recent online British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) article entitled 'Whitland: Escaped cow attack leaves man seriously hurt.' The piece reports how "trains had to be stopped after the cow strayed onto rail lines and eventually had to be put down as it was 'dangerously out of control.'"

Conclusion

> The army of rosy milkmaids has passed away forever, to give place to the cream separator and the, largely, male-and-machinery manipulated butter pat. (Olive Schreiner, *Woman and Labour*, p.51)

> "But in fact, isn't that man's very purpose on earth – to do things, change things, run things, make a better world?"
> "No!"
> "What is his purpose, then?"
> "I don't know. Things don't have purposes, as if the universe were a machine, where every part has a useful function. What's the function of a galaxy? I don't know if our life has a purpose and I don't see that it matters. What does matter is that we're a part. Like a thread in a cloth or a grass-blade in a field. It is and we are. What we do is like wind blowing on the grass." (Ursula Le Guin, The Lathe of Heaven, 1971, p.81)

The value of imaginative literature for historical analysis, first discussed in the methodology, has been demonstrated in the latter half of this thesis, as literary authors, tapping into the popular consciousness, were able to represent the emotional ramifications of agrarian capitalism in ways that the didactic material could not, or would not. Of course, the agricultural revolution impacted the countryside's populations – human and animal, woman and cow – so harshly that not all agricultural authors continued to wholeheartedly support the process. Indeed, as discussed in chapter three, Arthur Young, who "more than any other man … made the case for the second great period of enclosures, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries" (Williams, *Country and the City*, 47), came to lambast its consequences, saying in 1801:

> It may be said that commissioners are sworn to do justice. What is that to the people who suffer? ... It must be generally known that they suffer in their own opinions, and yet enclosures go on by commissioners, who dissipate the poor people's cows wherever they come, as well those kept legally as those which are not ... The poor in these parishes may say, and with truth, Parliament may be tender of property; all I know is, I had a cow, and an act of Parliament has taken it from me. (quoted in Shaw-Taylor, 'Labourers,' 101)

While the regret evinced by Young may be impassioned, his words cannot capture the emotional gravity of a fictitious, but all too real, newly unemployed Tess stroking her favourite cows goodbye.

Not only is Young unable to stir such images with his prose, but he is, in part, the cause of the turmoil: bemoaning the impact of agricultural reforms feels disingenuous in that light. Indeed, Young's dissatisfaction here is not dissimilar to those authors of nineteenth-century dairying manuals – such as John Walker and John Burke – expressing annoyance at the fact that there were fewer women milking by this time. As discussed in chapter one, such authors (often gentleman farmers themselves) aided the displacement of women in dairying through their pen, while the appropriation of female expertise allowed them to sell more of their books.

And yet, the decline of female influence is not just a phenomenon found in agricultural texts but can be seen across all areas of female labour, including midwifery, spinning, and brewing. "During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, women suffered a substantial decline in economic power across wide areas of Europe," Wiltenburg states. "Population pressure and economic distress led to increasing restrictions on women's work, and … advancing market organization tended to remove control of production from the household" without allowing women "control over the marketing of their goods or the price of their labour" (10). From this, Wiltenburg extrapolates that the increased number of bawdy ballads in the seventeenth century is another way that women were stripped of power. As outlined in chapters three and four, she believes that this exaggeration of female authority in the sexual arena (before the removal of even this small area of control in the following century) was a means to demean women. However, female sexualisation in ballads was more complex than simple ridicule, as erotic themes were coupled with ballads that still respected women's work. As chapter three demonstrated, it was during the eighteenth century – a time when women's displacement from their traditional occupations was increasing rapidly – when ballads, poems, and agricultural manuals, started to repudiate the importance of female labour in agriculture.

During this period, female experiential knowledge in dairying was fading from agricultural manuals. Before, the didactic material incorporated female knowledge liberally, crediting women for

their work. Samuel Hartlib, in *His Legacy of Husbandry* (1655), professes the ingenuity of the dairywomen whose recipes he has been allowed to publish, arguing that they have "wit, industry, and providence" (179). However, as described in chapter one, texts from roughly the eighteenth-century onwards start to recognise either men, or no one, as the sources of such instruction. While men were encroaching into the dairy at this time, those actively engaging in the industry were unlikely to be generating new methods to make butter and cheese themselves, merely reproducing the work of other dairywomen. What might be occurring, however, is male managers attempting new milking techniques, as seen by William Ellis's advocation of the fetters and the hurdle in his *Country Housewife's Family Companion* (1750). While such a text was ostensibly directed towards women, it is the clueless man (as seen in Martin Parker's 1681-1684 ballad 'The Woman to the Plow') who would have benefited from such new inventions. After all, restraining cows meant that the previous need to gain their trust was now irrelevant, allowing for not just greater employee turnover (both human and bovine) but the hiring of less competent male milkers; milkers whose labour value, by dint of their sex, was deemed to be worth more than that of a woman.

Both the supplanting of women in favour of male labour, and the discounting of female contributions to dairying in post-seventeenth-century agricultural books, is paralleled by the fact that many critics have ignored the peculiarly feminised and animalised representation of the milkmaid in literary fiction, particularly the novel. For instance, Boumelha has noted how Tess has often been singled out by male scholars as a symbol for the "proletarianization of the peasantry" or the "'agricultural community in its moment of ruin'" which has disavowed her "womanhood … except insofar as it provides an appropriate image of passivity and victimization" (*Hardy and Women*, 127). And even critics who do not denigrate Tess's closeness to nature, such as Boumelha and Morgan, have not thoroughly investigated Tess's animal aspects in a positive light. I believe Tess's animality forms an important part of her character; she is closer to the carnality of the natural world but is a stronger heroine for that. For instance, while most of the nineteenth-century imaginative literature analysed in this thesis deems sexual women to be impure (or at least not

worthy of being a protagonist, as with Hetty), Hardy's novel is the exception. The author mocks the educated Victorian reader and ballad-enthusiast through the character of Angel Clare, as both ignore the realities of country life. Such mockery of urban perceptions of rural lovemaking can also be found in Yearsley's 'Clifton Hill' (1785) a century earlier; as discussed in the methodology, the 'milkwoman of Bristol' admonished highly educated pastoral poets for portraying country courtship as refined innocence.

In chapter three, I touched upon how the juxtaposition between George Eliot's *Adam Bede* and Hardy's *Tess* is particularly noticeable when one considers the characters of the virtuous Dinah and the wayward Hetty in the former novel. The would-be preacher is placed on a pedestal, rewarded with the presumed happy outcome of marriage and children, at the expense of her career.[262] The sexual milkmaid is damned with exile, moving, as the novel progresses, from a "subject" to "an object of confession and suffering" (Williams, *Country and the City*, 111). Hardy himself expressed surprise that "'such a woman of the people as George Eliot should have carried on the prejudice to some extent in her treatment of Hetty, whom she would not have us regard as possessing equal rights with Donnithorne'" (quoted in Morgan, 157-158). The fact that Eliot only applied animalistic attributions to Hetty and "rustics," while protagonists Adam Bede and Dinah never receive such appellations, is disquieting.

However, though Eliot's "depictions of working-class men and women are, perhaps unsurprisingly, drawn 'from above'" her success lay in "reclaiming the middle-class (domestic) woman for history – both in revealing her exclusion from the historical record, and in valorizing those 'feminine' qualities and actions usually disregarded" (Kingstone 200). For instance, Mrs Poyser, despite her flaws, demonstrates the strength and courage dairywomen across England likely showed

[262] Though the novel ends with the suggestion that Dinah is merely resigned to this fact, rather than perfectly happy. As Adam relates to Seth that "most o' the women do more harm nor good with their preaching—they've not got Dinah's gift nor her sperrit—and she's seen that, and she thought it right to set th' example o' submitting," Seth's "silence", and the fact that it was "a standing subject of difference rarely alluded to" (Eliot, *Adam Bede*, 481) could be a sign of marital disharmony.

in facing up to those who had the power to appropriate, or put up for sale, their dairy; one can assume there were many Mrs Poysers across England if Twamley's annoyance at their refusal to share with him their recipes is any indication. Her dairy is the last bastion against the changes to come; the fact that "Mr. Crick offers the dairy to Angel Clare as an open classroom of agriculture" while "Angel Clare is interested in learning basic husbandry, not a specialized art" (Carroll 186) reveals how the close-knit female culture of dairying was coming to a close by the end of the nineteenth century.

But none of the residents of Hayslope experience the same kind of similitude with cows that many milkmaids throughout history may have felt, while Eliot's view of motherhood appears to correspond to prevailing Victorian attitudes. For instance, the novel's conventional end sees "the sweet pale face" of Dinah, "scarcely at all altered—only a little fuller, to correspond to her more matronly figure" looking on fondly as her two children "tyrannize" their Uncle Seth at the end of the novel (*Adam Bede*, 479). In contrast, Tess's brush with motherhood recalls far more of the bestial aspects of maternity that had hitherto been denied. As discussed in chapter four, not only is her offspring the product of a non-consensual union, but her "stealthy yet courageous movement" (Hardy, *Tess*, 102) to nurse her child while haymaking recalls her proximity to cows; neither have any choice in the matter but must labour and produce milk simultaneously. Even her child is buried like a dead calf in an unmarked field grave, recalling the notion that motherhood is not a saintly occupation, but can be a grubby and unrewarding animalistic process. This was relatively understood in the seventeenth century, as "gynaecologists laid heavy emphasis on the animal aspects of child-bearing. A pregnant woman was commonly said to be 'breeding'; and one pre-Civil-War clergyman in the pulpit compared women to sows" (Thomas 43). While the last remark is undoubtedly derogatory, prior to the veneration of motherhood child-rearing was still recognised as being an endeavour shared by different species; as such early modern comparisons to animals, as chapter

four demonstrated, were not solely pejorative. But in modern times, it is hard to imagine intimating that maternal figures are in some way animalistic without it being seen in a negative light.[263]

Of course, today women and cows are still metaphorically linked through the continuation of certain adages like "why buy the cow when you can get the milk for free?" in which the word "cow" continues to be slang for a woman. However, the definition of woman-as-cow has diverged slightly; it is no longer as sexualised as it was in the nineteenth century. For instance, in US English, calling a woman a cow would suggest that she is "fat and dull" (DeMello 286). In England, it can also mean lethargic, or heavy (similar, then, to its primary seventeenth-century definition, "lazy or dronish"), though nowadays the term is often used as a more generic form of feminised abuse. Indeed, likening women to animals is millennia-old, and indicates the way in which both are perceived as irrational and tied particularly to the supposed constraints and emotional upheavals of the body (Adams, *Sexual Politics of Meat*, 47-48).[264]

But, despite the continuation of these older terms that associate women with cows, such adages have lost the familial connotations that they would have had in a world where interactions with such animals were commonplace (Thomas 99). Moreover, the removal of certain metaphors from modern parlance, like "to air the dairy" – to show one's breasts – is telling (Farmer and Henley 247). The loss of this phrase may be because the term "breasts" is now perceived to be thoroughly human, while dairying is divorced from the concept of womanhood. In other words, the term "dairy" is, in most circumstances today, too animal to be associated with human female breasts. Meanwhile,

[263] For instance, the fact that many women in a 1994 qualitative study reported "negatively" that they "felt like a cow" while breastfeeding would support this claim (Leff, Jefferis and Gagne 109), as does the backlash against human breast milk being marketed for adult consumption in 2010: "'Women are not farm animals. Human-breast-milk cheese casts them in that role'" (Gaard, 'Milk Studies,' 602).

[264] Interestingly, I have noticed that among older generations in Scotland, "cow" still means "whore." Indeed, while there is not scope to pursue this claim further, I have found some evidence to suggest that cultural conceptions of cow receptiveness to the bull waned at a similar time to the desexualisation of women in the eighteenth century. There is also the suggestion that the movement towards more male-orientated dairies occurred later in Scotland (Stephens 413), which may have meant that cows and women were linked together as sexual creatures for a far longer time; as women remained the primary milkers, the fact that they may enjoy bestial and carnal pursuits could have been emphasised through their everyday connection to another beast.

because dairying is no longer bound up with female labour, the dairy is no longer a site associated with women. Additionally, because animal milk is now treated as "exclusively the product of human producers acting upon an inert nature" (Nimmo, *Milk*, 53) rather than a cross-species embodied process, it is rarely culturally considered that dairy milk and breast milk are the same substance. As Nimmo relates:

> Prior to 1865 [milk] was palpable, a matter of everyday experience; the milk was part of the cow, a product of its [sic] body, and as such, inseparable from its mode of species life and its fleshy bovine being. The cow, or rather, cows collectively, were very much materially and ontologically present in the milk, and the consumption of milk was a human-bovine encounter in a quite immediate sense. Moreover, the milk itself constantly testified to its "cowness" by its very inconsistency and perishability, and by the everyday visibility of cows in the urban cowsheds which were necessarily physically proximate to the places where the milk was consumed. ('Bovine Mobilities,' 62-63)

But there is another adage, also recorded in the nineteenth century, that demonstrates the way language was evolving to reflect an even greater distance between humans and cows in the modern age (a change that would also cleave milk the product from its bovine origin). In 1867, the "cow with the iron tail" was used to describe a mechanical pump, "the source of the 'cooling medium' for 'regulating' milk" (Farmer and Henley 195). Of course, this metaphor would also fade into history with the advancement of different technology, and the increased separation of cows from the business of selling milk as a cultural commodity. But the nineteenth-century propagation of this adage further supports the conclusions set out in chapter two: alienating linguistic shifts allowed for the viewing of cows as machines after the early modern period. Indeed, in the early-twenty-first century, the term "rape racks" – possible dairy-worker slang for the restraining mechanisms by which cows are inseminated – (Adams, 'Feminized Protein,' 32-33) does not recognise the fact that a cow can be sexually assaulted; the perceived joke is that she cannot be raped, because she is more an object than a person.

Furthermore, the process by which cows came to be seen as inanimate beings, "forced by science to yield to human will" (Nimmo, 'Mechanical Calf,' 87), accelerated after the second world war. As Mary Midgley relates:

> At the Festival of Britain in 1951 there was an exhibit celebrating the British Hen. The walls were lined with egg-cardboard, to rejoice in its victory over paper bags, and the whole thing was a paean of triumph about the splendid new machinery - standard cages and so forth - which had, at last, turned the chicken industry into a fully independent production-line. This was part of the mechanistic euphoria which followed the end of the war - the celebration of the new technologies which were expected to give us a new and entirely error-free future. In that context it was not at all surprising that farm animals quietly stopped being fellow-creatures and mutated into 'agricultural products' – which was, of course, until lately, their official status in the European Union. (21)

This "mechanistic euphoria" – what I have described as a mechanical character – would drastically change the lives of all farm animals, while the pursuit of profit-making practices in animal agriculture has continued with gusto. For instance, as Gaard relates, "the cow's milk output has increased from 2,000 pounds/year in 1950 to up to 50,000 pounds of milk in 2004, thanks to bovine growth hormones, putting enormous pressure on the cows' bodies" ('Critical Ecofeminism,' 217). While I believe Bernard Rollin is idealising the early modern period when he argued that it embodied the spirit of "good husbandry" (Rollin, 'Agriculture,' 32), it is true that, compared to today's standards, the centuries before seem to have been a less violent locale for a cow. In modern times, a large herd sizes are common to maximise production; a cow is milked even if she develops mastitis thanks to antibiotics, while her calves are taken from her very soon after birth in most dairies (Gaard, 'Critical Ecofeminism,' 217). Similarly, the fact that cows' "milk production is disturbed by being 'switched from suckling to machine milking'" and must be rectified through hormone injections ('Milk Studies,' 610) is another example of how mechanisation has made life harder for cows.[265] The lives of cows are nastier and shorter now, their individualisation lost amid the growing

[265] There are other examples of how scientific research still obscures the mistreatment of animals. For instance, Gaard has noted how "animal science scholars" have attempted to "use false analogies and flawed logic in their attempts to produce scientific legitimation for the exploitive practices of commercial dairying. But they stand on slippery ground; all their data point to the fact that severing the mother cow-calf relationship …

numbers of cows needed to supply a planet that continues to demand more meat. The sixteenth-century agricultural manuals analysed in chapter two attest to the fact that cows in the past lived longer lives and retained their calves for a longer period of time; later manuals are replete with harsher methods of farming, and restrictive punishments for wayward cows.

Even so, it is not hard to understand that, as "human-animal encounters" were, before the nineteenth century, "fundamentally rooted in proximity and presence rather than distanciation and mediation" (Nimmo, 'Bovine Mobilities,' 62-63), such closeness would likely engender happier relations between women and cows. As Fudge says, "where modern, intensive, industrial farming might allow for the depersonalization of animals because scale is so overwhelming, the same shifts seem more difficult when numbers are much smaller; when all cows might have names" (*Quick Cattle*, 121-122). Thus, closeness to cows would likely have been an overriding factor in facilitating more favourable conditions for them. But, by the late-nineteenth century, cows were becoming less visible, even in rural communities. For instance, in the partly fictionalised village of Lark Rise, milk was a "rare luxury" (Thompson 17) because of the further distance to the farmhouse; interactions with cows were, by this time, limited to chance meetings, rather than a normal and accepted part of village life. As such, it became easier to forget about cows and their conditions of life so long as they continued to remain largely out of sight, and out of mind.

And yet, the Enlightenment, and the new era of science, development and liberalism, did have some benefits for animals. For instance, there were advancements in medicine for both humans and animals, while rights afforded to marginalised humans paved the way for new ideas on animal liberation (Thomas 185). However, in modern times, the Cartesian idea that the cow is merely "a component within a multitudinous productive unit, … 'meat on legs'" is still prevalent in

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is what causes emotional, behavioural, and biological distress." Furthermore, "although animal science scholarship provides ample documentation of the distress this separation produces for both mother cow and calf … the abstractions of the words used to describe this distress shield us from the images of the cows and calves themselves. Bovine resistance to commercial milk production is concealed in these animal science studies" ('Milk Studies,' 610-612).

many circles; all farm animals have been necessarily reduced to “the workings of clocks” and “exorcised … from our moral consideration” (Buller, ‘Mass,’ 160). While such attitudes are changing, it is unclear if such a shift in the cultural zeitgeist can occur without trying to reduce the distance humans have created from other animals. Indeed, while we no longer need to be cheek to flank with cows for our own survival and nourishment, this does not mean that we cannot make connections with cows in other ways. While respecting them as colleagues is an improvement on the current situation, looking to the past and a bucolic ideal of “good husbandry” (Rollin, ‘Agriculture,’ 32) is not the answer. Instead, we could foster a relationship with cows because we wish to connect with them on an emotional level that was present in much of early modern farming, but unable to be fully realised when living hand-to-mouth. Only now do we have the opportunity to care for cows in ways that afford them respect for the vast contributions they have made to our history.

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