

**"SELF-REVELATION VIA SELF-ERASURE"  
A THEMATIC STUDY OF MELVILLE'S *PIERRE***

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As generations of critics have recognized, the years between the publication of *Typee* (1846) and *Moby Dick* witnessed the public fashioning of Herman Melville as a prominently recognizable biographical writer: Melville existed simply as the author of *Typee*. Increasingly distressed by this view, Melville expressed in the widely-quoted and famous letter "Dollars damn me" to Hawthorne (June 1851), his most extensive meditation on the problems of publicly-constructed authorial life and prophetic statement of his own dilemma:

...My dear Sir, they begin to patronize. All Fame is patronage. Let me be infamous: there is no patronage in *that* ... I did not think of Fame, a year ago, as I do now. My development has been all within a few years past ... Until I was twenty-five, I had no development at all. From my twenty-fifth year I date my life. Three weeks have scarcely passed, at any time between then and now, that I have not unfolded within myself.<sup>1</sup>

From his early pleasure at awakening to find himself famous, Melville has progressed to a positive repugnance to fame because, as his letters in the intervening years make clear, the cost of public fame has been submission to those who "patronize" him. He complains to Hawthorne that a large part of that patronage has been a static misreading of his life, a reifying of his "reputation" as a "man who lived among the cannibals".<sup>2</sup> Correcting that misreading, Melville insists that he has changed and developed at an amazing degree since his "twenty fifth year". In his November (1851) reverie over Hawthorne's having understood *Moby Dick*, Melville suggests the impossibility of a static identity, of a sustained, coherent biographical figure called "Herman Melville": "This is a long letter, but you are not at all bound to answer it. Possibly, if you do answer it and direct it to Herman Melville, you missend it—for the very fingers that now guide this pen are not precisely the same that just took it up and put it on this paper. Lord, when shall we be done changing?"<sup>3</sup>

When he began writing *Pierre* in the winter of 1851, Melville had become severely sensitive to issues of literary-biographical representation, issues that frame his public-career. He entered the public notice in 1846 as the reputedly authentic autobiographer of *Typee*, and, as Peter J. Bellis has observed, doubts about that work's truthfulness (on the part of its English publisher, John Murray, and a large number of its critics) essentially grounded Melville's literary life in "the problem of identity".<sup>4</sup> Some eleven years later, when Melville began his withdrawal from the public consciousness after the publication of *The Confidence-Man*, he did so as a reputedly authentic biographer, having offered *Israel Potter* as an editorial revision of a Revolutionary War autobiography. Indeed, in the course of his career, Melville achieved the heights of public individuality and fame, before ultimately descending to its depth, a thirty-year absence during which he was "generally supposed to be dead" by fellow authors and readers alike.<sup>5</sup> And as his letters to Hawthorne and others demonstrate, this steep decline in his

public fortunes found an analogue in the equally dramatic change in his response to life. From an early delight in his fame and an insistence on his works as autobiography, Melville moved towards impatience with that fame and an insistence on biographical forgetfulness, proving broadly from *Mardi* onward an almost hostile approach to the devices (portraits, sketches, self-revelation) of self-representation. *Pierre*, written and published during this period in which this changed attitude became complete, embodies Melville's struggle against the ways in which readers and reviewers defined and reified the public authorial self, and particularly that self known as "Herman Melville".

In developing his understanding of life narrative, Melville was responding to two particularly important conventions of the prevalent literary culture: the practice of constructing the author solely in terms of his works, and the related practice of assuming "that all works by one person had real resemblances and could be properly thought of as forming one class", an assumption reviewers often rendered in terms of familial or genealogical "resemblances".<sup>6</sup> I want to suggest that in his public incarnation as "Typee", Melville learned the lesson of self-representation through self-erasure; for that embodiment essentially consisted of the emptying out of "Herman Melville" and the construction of a vision that he repeatedly insisted was his autobiographical self. In an attempt to fill that phantom self—and thus to reveal his literary life as distinctly other than that of "author of *Typee*"—Melville engaged in self-negation of another source, by deliberately breaking apart the genealogical link between the works out of which his public life was read.

Reviewers referred to Melville's novels as forgeries and to Melville himself as "an individual who gave the name of Herman Melville,"<sup>7</sup> and, indeed, this subtraction of Melville from his name became a critical commonplace among critics and reviewers of all nationalities, a biographical obliteration carried out under the banner of pseudonym.

The next step in the reviewers' construction of Melville's authorial self, is that they proclaimed him to be an imaginary, purely fictive personage. It is apparent from a variety of sources that Melville both read and responded to these biographical figuring of him as a fictionalized phantom.<sup>8</sup> Writing to his British publisher in 1847, Melville is clearly impatient with such representations, as well as with Murray's continuing requests for evidence of *Typee* and *Omoo*:

Will you still continue, Mr. Murray, to break the seals from the Land of Shadows—persisting in carrying on this mysterious correspondence with an imposter shade, that under the fanciful appellation of Herman Melville still practices upon your honest credulity? Have a care, I pray, lest while thus parleying with a ghost you fall upon some horrible evil, preadventure sell your soul ere you are aware ... glancing at the closing sentence of your letter, I read there your desire to test corporeality of H-M-by clapping eyes upon him in London.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, it seems to have been Melville's first failed attempt to fill that void—the publication of *Mardi*—that eventually led to Pierre's more serious rebellion against the publicly-formed life. For in *Mardi*'s generally poor reception (both critical and commercial), as well as in the subsequent favourable reception of *Red Burn* and *White Jacket*, Melville was forcefully made aware of the practical power of a static public fame.

As he was writing *Pierre*, Melville was confronted with the fact that his "life" was not his to control, that participating

in public selfhood meant negating what he described to Hawthorne as his "profoundest sense of being".<sup>10</sup> And in his fictional life of Pierre Glendinning—significantly, the novel in which he first turned from first- to third-person narration, or from feigned autobiography to feigned biography—Melville produced a narrative that not only thematized the lessons he had learned about literary biography, but also constituted his rebellious responses to those lessons.<sup>11</sup>

*Pierre's* focus on matters of self-construction and self-representation—what the narrator calls his subject's "life-career"<sup>12</sup>—is evident in the novel's opening pages. Melville situates his muse (Mt. Greylock's "Imperial Purple Majesty [royal born: Porphyrogenitus]"<sup>13</sup>), his narrator (who declares, "the breath in all our lungs is hereditary, and my present breath at this moment, is further descended than the body of the present High priest of the Jews"),<sup>14</sup> and his hero within the context of heredity and birth-right. We first meet Pierre Glendinning "issuing from the embowered and high-gabled old home of his fathers" and surrounded by a physical environment that evokes in its "popular names" "the proudest ... family associations of the historic line of Glendinning."<sup>15</sup> Indeed, as a biographical subject, Pierre finds that his history surrounds him in particularly textual form: "So perfect to Pierre had long seemed the illuminated scroll of his life thus far, that only one hiatus was discoverable by him in that sweetly-writ manuscript. A sister had been omitted from the text."<sup>16</sup> As we discover much later, the text of Pierre's life has been in great demand by "some zealous lovers of the general literature of the age,"<sup>17</sup> who have taught him a number of familiar Melvillean lessons about literary biography.

Like his author, Pierre has made a "magnificent and victorious *debut*" on the publishing scene, with a "delightful love-Sonnet" whose title—"The Tropical-Summer"<sup>18</sup>—is clearly meant to evoke Melville's success with a similar theme in *Typee*.<sup>19</sup> And in becoming the darling of the reviewers, Pierre

discovers the restrictive manner in which they construct authorial reputation:

The high and mighty Campbell clan of editors of all sorts had bestowed upon him those generous commendations, which, with one instantaneous glance, they had immediately perceived was his due ...

[T]here could be no possible doubt, that the primitive verdict pronounced by the editors was irreversible, except in the highly improbable event of the near approach of the Mellennium which might establish a different dynasty of taste and possibly eject the editors.<sup>20</sup>

Having established Pierre's literary life with an "instantaneous" and "irreversible" glance, the editors try to reify youthful subject to publish his "COMPLETE WORKS".<sup>21</sup> Yet despite the potential privilege of thus "extending and solidifying his fame",<sup>22</sup> Pierre rejects the editors' request because of his sense—satirically rendered by Melville<sup>23</sup>—that his literary life is neither static nor fully detemiend.<sup>24</sup> This confidence in the vitality of his literary career leaves Pierre feeling "a pang of regret" for the surely befuddled future readers who await his confusingly inconsistent "life" (rendered, a'La Poe, autographically):

Owing to the very youthful and quite unformed character of his handwriting, his signature did not possess that inflexible uniformity which—for mere prudential reasons, if nothing more—should always mark the hand of illustrious men. His heart thrilled with

sympathetic anguish for posterity, which would be certain to stand hopelessly perplexed before so many contradictory signatures of one supereminent name.<sup>25</sup>

Similarly, in response to editors' "very pressing epistolary solicitations for the loan of his portrait in oil, in order to take an engraving therefrom, for a frontispiece to their periodicals", Pierre refuses on the grounds that "his boyish features and whole expression were daily changing. Would he lend his authority to this unprincipled imposture upon Posterity? Honor forbade".<sup>26</sup>

For Pierre, as for Melville, his culture's apparent inability to read "so many contradictory signatures" or to acknowledge changes in the author's portrait leads him to rebel against the genre of literary life narrative, a rebellion that Pierre, like Melville, carries out on two levels. First, essentially quoting from Melville's letters to Duycknick and Hawthorne, Pierre begins to remove himself from the realm of public self-representation, refusing to grant his daguerreotype or "the materials wherewith to frame his biography" to editors who claim them as "public property."<sup>27</sup> Their zealous clamorings for Pierre's life narrative, the narrator tells us dryly, "did certainly touch him in a very tender spot, not previously unknown to the schoolmaster."<sup>28</sup>

In carrying out the first level of his rebellion, then, Pierre clearly adheres to the biographical dictum set out by Melville's narration: "In reserves men build imposing characters; not in revelations."<sup>29</sup> Indeed, that narrator appears eager to scorn generic standards, announcing to an audience, conditioned to expect biographical stability that his history of Pierre "goes forward and goes backward, as occasion calls. Nimble center, circumference elastic you must have."<sup>30</sup> It is precisely such a nullification of revelation and of status that

establishes the central action of the novel: Pierre's determination to embrace his alleged half-sister Isabel, the cause of a rupture in his family's genealogical line. And that attack on the privileges of family history includes the second, and most effective level of both Pierre's and Melville's rejection of the publicly-made self.

In his desire to acknowledge and assist the beautiful, mysterious and "outcast Isabel"<sup>31</sup> who declares herself the bastard child of his father, Pierre must confront two primary obstacles: his father's "public memory" which he wishes to hold "inviolate";<sup>32</sup> and his mother's pride, which will not allow her to "applaud [his] sublime resolve, whose execution should call down the astonishment and the jeers of the world."<sup>33</sup> To spare his family social embarrassment, Pierre decides to claim Isabel as his wife, a scandalous move, both because of Isabel's low social standing and because of Pierre's public engagement to Lucy Tartan.<sup>34</sup> As he considers this plan, Pierre concentrates not on "striving to reverse the decree which had pronounced that Isabel could never perfectly inherit all the privileges of a legitimate child of her father (an idea "both preposterous in itself and cruel in effect to both the living and the dead"),<sup>35</sup> but rather on embracing a version of Isabel's orphanhood for himself.

Thus, in looking at the chair-portrait of his father for the first time after Isabel's revelation and turning it to face the wall, he declares: "Oh, symbol of thy reversed idea in my soul ... thou shalt not hang thus. Rather cast thee utterly out, than conspicuously insult thee so, I will no more have a father."<sup>36</sup> Electing "no more ... father" over a "conspicuously insult[ed]" one, Pierre goes on to imagine his mother's response to Isabel's claims. And once again, the pressure of "world-usages",<sup>37</sup> "the dreary heart-vacancies of the conventional life"<sup>38</sup> leads Pierre to adopt what he imagines as his own genealogical undoing:

My mother!—dearest mother!—God  
hath given me a sister, and unto thee a  
daughter, and covered her with the



world's extremest infamy and scorn, that so I and thou—*thou*, my mother, mightest gloriously own her, and acknowledge her, and,—Nay, nay, groaned Pierre, never, never, could such syllables be one instant tolerated by her ... Then Pierre felt that deep in him lurked a diving un-identifiableness, that owned no earthly kith or kin. Yet was this feeling entirely lonesome and orphan-like. Fain, then, for one moment, would he have recalled the thousand sweet illusions of life; ... so that once more he might not feel himself driven out an infant Ishmael into the desert, with no maternal Haggar to accompany and comfort him.<sup>39</sup>

Pierre did not choose to reject all "patrimonies" when he declared he had "no paternity, and no past";<sup>40</sup> he had been "repelled by kinship"<sup>41</sup> when he embraced Isabel and resolved to appear married to her, an act, the narrator described "was not only strange and extraordinary in its novelty of mere aspect, but it was wonderful in its unequaled renunciation of himself."<sup>42</sup>

Adopting the persona not simply of the orphan but of the bastard orphan, Pierre puts his plan into motion. Indeed, as his mother's reaction makes clear, Pierre's decision to proclaim himself married to the mysterious Isabel rather than to the ingenuous Lucy evokes precisely this movement from public to private life: "Standing *publicly* plighted to Lucy Tartan", Mrs. Glendinning tells the Reverend Falsgrave, Pierre "has *privately* wedded some other girl" and "thus ruthlessly ... cut off, at one gross sensual dash, the fair succession of an honorable race!"<sup>43</sup> He is banished, becoming "a besotted self-exile from a most prosperous house and bounteous fortune."<sup>44</sup> Falling as he leaves

the Edenic Saddle Meadows, Pierre "seemed jeeringly hurled from beneath his own ancestral roof."<sup>45</sup> As Pierre thus falls "dabbling in the vomit of his bathed identity,"<sup>46</sup> he becomes again an "infant" a "little soul-toddler" whose "whole previous moral being was overturned."<sup>47</sup> And as might be expected of a character who has learned Melville's lessons about life narrative, Pierre considers his undoing of the public self an act of true self-revelation: "From all idols, I tear all veils; henceforth I see the hidden things; and live right out in my own hidden life."<sup>48</sup> For this newly "cast-out," Pierre "stands untrammelledly his ever-present self!—free to do his own self will and present fancy to whatever end!"<sup>49</sup> Calling himself, "the Fool of Truth, the Fool of Virtue, the Fool of Fate,"<sup>50</sup> he ultimately completes his assault on genealogy—and "extinguis[es] his house"—by "slaughtering" his cousin Glen Stanly, "the only unoutlawed human being by the name of Glendinning,"<sup>51</sup> who as we shall see, has attempted to impose an identity on the undone self of Pierre.

In constructing his first "richly aristocratic"<sup>52</sup> protagonist, Melville insists we read Pierre's "perpetuated"<sup>53</sup> family standing within the context of his identity as an American, an identity necessarily at odds with the "fixed"<sup>54</sup> social structure of a monarchical world of Europe. "...In our cities families rise and burst like bubbles in a vat. For indeed the democratic element operates as a subtile acid among us; forever producing new things by corroding the old..."<sup>55</sup> For Pierre's progress from aristocratic wealth to common poverty, and from biographical subject to biographical nonentity, is cast by the narrator as a progressive embrace of his democratic identity: "And believe me you will pronounce a thorough Democrat in time; perhaps a little too Radical altogether to your fancy."<sup>56</sup> As he does throughout *Pierre*, Melville implements specific standards of the genre of life-writing as a means of ruining that genre through particularly American assault on hereditary stagnation.

However, in continuing his critique of pure genealogy and "long pedigrees—pedigrees I mean, wherein is no flaw",<sup>57</sup> the narrator returns to England, where nobles "revel in this endless descendedness" of "glorious parentage and family names."<sup>58</sup> Seeking to deconstruct these "all-honorable and all-eternal" hereditary "dynasties",<sup>59</sup> he suggests that close inspection reveals that either the nothingness of "mere names"<sup>60</sup> or the rupture of bastardy lies at their heart: "Perishable as stubble and fungous as the fungi, those grafted families successively live and die on the eternal soil of a name ... All honor to the names then, and all courtesy to the men; but if St. Albans tells me he is all-honorable and all-eternal, I must still politely refer him to Nell Gwynne."<sup>61</sup> The English actress Nell Gwynne was the mother of the two illegitimate children of Charles II, after whose time, the narrator claims, the "direct genealogies" of the English nobles "seem vain".<sup>62</sup>

In explaining the significance of his long digression on genealogy, the narrator draws an explicit link between that digression and Pierre's "career" as an author. He has been "thus decided in asserting the great genealogies and real-estate dignity of some families in America," he continues:

...because in so doing we poetically establish the richly aristocratic condition of Master Pierre Glendinning, for whom we have before claimed some special family distinction. And to the observant reader the sequel will not fail to show, how important is this circumstance, considered with reference to the singularly developed character and most singular life-career of our hero. Nor will any man dream that the last chapter was merely intended for a foolish bravado, and not with a solid purpose in view.<sup>63</sup>

As we discover in the remainder of the novel, Pierre's "most singular life-career", mediated by his embrace of a woman he believes to be his bastard sister, moves him from his role as "juvenile author"<sup>64</sup> to the "far different guise"<sup>65</sup> of a writer who plans to "gospelize the world anew."<sup>66</sup> As a biographical subject who is also an author, Pierre goes on, after he has moved to New York with Isabel, to translate this program of biographical negation into literary terms. In fact, Pierre is the only hero of Melville who attempts to earn his living as a writer, a highbrow writer who has determined (at the moment of his acutest financial need) to abandon the kind of literature that has made him a youthful success and write a work dedicated to nothing but truth." Renouncing all his forgone self",<sup>67</sup> he not only "burns in scorn",<sup>68</sup> but also composes an autobiographical novel, that, vampire style, devours its subject. He becomes skeptical of all his former beliefs, and in the book, which is an attack on accepted values and an exercise in nihilism, Pierre gave back "jeer for jeer, and taunting the apes that jibed him ... For the pangs in his heart, he put down hoots on the paper. And every thing else he disguised under so conveniently adjustable drapery of all—stretchable Philosophy."<sup>69</sup> Hence, "emptying"<sup>70</sup> his life into his book, Pierre accomplishes the goal that *Pierre* has been moving towards the undoing of the life story. And he does so in the characteristic terms of Melvillean biography, representing the self by negating it, or "learning how to live, by rehearsing the part of death."<sup>71</sup>

By the novel's end, then, when Lucy came to live (and die) with Pierre and Isabel, his response to those who accuse him of treachery with Lucy is a simple refrain of biographical negation: "I render no accounts: I am what I am."<sup>72</sup> It is Glen Stanly's and Frederic Tartan's insistence on constructing an identity for him, ("Thou, Pierre Glendinning, art a villainous and perjured liar,"<sup>73</sup> they write) that leads Pierre to murder his only remaining kinsman, shooting him with a bullet over which he has jammed a piece of the offensive, naming text. Just before

dying in prison, he proclaims himself, appropriately "neuter now",<sup>74</sup> and cries out "Now, 'tis merely hell in both worlds. Well, be it hell. I will mold a trumpet of the flames, and, with my breath of flame, breathe back my defiance."<sup>75</sup> And in the final sentence of Pierre's life narrative, Isabel declares "All's o'er, and ye know him not!"<sup>76</sup>

*Pierre* introduces itself in the sentimental tradition, revels in hints of incest, and contains an assault on the genealogical continuity of the Melville canon, announcing itself as a bastard child and rupturing the static literary life of the "man who lived among the cannibals."

The success of that textual rebellion can be measured by the critical response to *Pierre*, much of which was couched in terms of illegitimacy, abortion, stillbirth, monstrosity and madness.<sup>77</sup> One of the most telling such reviews, oddly on target despite its best attempts to disparage the novel, appeared in the Duycknick's *Literary World*:

The author of *Pierre; or the Ambiguities* ... is certainly but a *spectre* of the substantial author of *Omoo* and *Typee*, the jovial and hearty narrator of the traveler's tale of incident and adventure. But what *diablerie*, hocus-pocus, or thimble-rigging, "now you see him and now you don't" process, the transformation has been effected, we are not skilled in necromancy to detect ... We would rejoice to meet Mr. Melville again in the hale company of sturdy sailors, men of flesh and blood.<sup>78</sup>

In the Duycknick's reading, at least, Melville has indeed accomplished his biographically grounded unwriting of his biographical subject; *Pierre* has rendered him a mere "spectre",

a self-constructed version of the phantom author produced by contemporary sketches. And in rupturing the genealogy of his public life by "changing his style entirely" according to another reviewer, the Melville of *Pierre* "is to be judged of as a new author."<sup>79</sup>

His age's failure to appreciate him accounts for Melville's sadness and rage by its misunderstanding of his gifts; he deliberately flung in its face an outrageous and nihilistic story.<sup>80</sup> According to Braswell, "[Melville] intended *Pierre* to shock the readers of that day with its plot and theme, to irritate them with its characterization and style, and to bewilder them with its ambiguities."<sup>81</sup>

Grant Watson suggests that *Pierre* "is the story of a conscious soul attempting to draw itself free from the psychic world-material in which most of mankind is unconsciously always wrapped and enfolded, as a foetus in the womb."<sup>82</sup>

*Pierre* is an American; for him equality proves a lie, and freedom, when obtainable, is difficult to distinguish from loneliness. He remains a young American in embryo, a man with no sure sense of values, no tradition, nothing to belong to. He is a detached self, a blank integrer, what Ishmael calls an "Isolato" living on a separate continent of his own.<sup>83</sup> When *Pierre* seeks some consoling way of connecting his solitary self with that immense uniform world around him, he is thrown back for ever upon himself to be confined within the solitude of his own heart, and finally to take refuge in death.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>*The Letters of Herman Melville*, ed. Merrell R. and William H. Gilman, (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1960), pp. 129-130.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 142-143.

<sup>4</sup>Peter J. Bellis, *No Mysteries Out of Ourselves: Identity and Textual Form in the Novels of Herman Melville*, (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>See Jay Leyda, *The Melville Log: A Documentary Life of Herman Melville, 1819-1891*, 2 Vols. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1951), 2: 796.

<sup>6</sup>Nina Baym, *Novels, Readers and Reviewers: Responses to Fiction in Antebellum America*, (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1984), p. 250.

<sup>7</sup>See Leyda, *The Melville Log*, I: p. 220.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, I: p. 250.

<sup>9</sup>*Melville Letters*, 69-70.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 142

<sup>11</sup>See John Steelye, *Melville: The Ironic Diagram*, (Evanston: Northwestern Univ., 1970), pp. 75-6.

<sup>12</sup>Herman Melville, *Pierre; Or the Ambiguities*, ed. Henry A. Murray, (New York, 1949), p. 12.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, Ch. VII, p. 76.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 3, 5.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 254

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>19</sup>Merton M. Sealts, *The Early Lives of Melville: Nineteenth-Century Biographical Sketches and Their Authors*, (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1974), p. 5.

<sup>20</sup>*Pierre*, pp. 245-246.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 250.

<sup>23</sup>Melville is clearly having a bit of fun here at his hero's literary pretensions, but he is just clearly—and far more venomously—satirizing the “Mighty Campbell Clan of editors” and the “always intelligent and extremely discriminating public.” (*Pierre*, p. 245), the readers who have made *Pierre* a self-satisfied “celebrity”.

<sup>24</sup>*Pierre* settles upon “the idea that being at this time not very far advanced in years, the probability was, that his future productions might at least equal, if not surpass, in some small degree, those already given to the world. He resolved to wait for his literary canonization until he should at least have outgrown the sophomorean insinuation of the Law” *Pierre*, p. 250.

<sup>25</sup>*Pierre*, p. 253.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 254.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 255.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>34</sup>As Bellis points out, the very concept of a marriage between half-siblings assaults genealogical sense, because such



a marriage can only be “desexualized” or “incestuous”; “it is in either case a genealogical failure”. (*No Mysteries Out of Ourselves*, p. 76).

<sup>35</sup>*Pierre*, p. 74.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 90. Pierre elaborates upon the surrounding culture’s role in pushing him into orphanhood: “Oh heartless, proud, ice-gilded world, how I hate thee, he thought, that thy tyrannous, insatiate grasp, thus now in my bitterest need—thus doth rob me even of my mother; thus doth make me now doubly an orphan, without a green grave to bedew.”

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 202.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 360.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*

- <sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-9.
- <sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 13.
- <sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 11.
- <sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 9.
- <sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 10.
- <sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 9.
- <sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 10.
- <sup>62</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 12.
- <sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 257.
- <sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 264.
- <sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 273.
- <sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 174.
- <sup>68</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>69</sup>Ibid., pp. 398-399.
- <sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 258.
- <sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 305.
- <sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 325.
- <sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 356.
- <sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 360.
- <sup>75</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 362.
- <sup>77</sup>Higgins and Parker, *Critical Essays*, (Princeton Univ. Press, 1989), p. 43.
- <sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 32.
- <sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>80</sup>"The Satirical Temper of Melville's *Pierre*" by William Braswell, *American Literature*, January, 1936, p. 189.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>"Melville's *Pierre*" by E. L. Grant Watson. *New England Quarterly*, April, 1930, p. 63.

## Definitions

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<sup>83</sup>Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, (New American Library, 1960), p. 166.

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