

Sizing up the Women  
in  
*Malcolm's Katie* and *The Story of an Affinity*

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"The hand of the heroine of a novel is always *small*," begins an article in the first volume of *The Canadian Garland* (Hamilton) in 1832; "Whatever may be the size of the lady herself, she must be sure to have a tiny hand. This the novelist gives her by prescriptive right, and as a necessary mark of beauty. We suppose they go upon the same principle that the Chinese do in relation to a lady's foot." "For our own part," the article concludes, "we are absolutely tired of seeing the heroine of every novel put off with such shocking little hands. Do, gentlemen authors, get something original; your stock of small hands must be nearly exhausted, by this time."<sup>1</sup> Far from being "exhausted" in 1832, the "stock of small hands" continued to furnish Canadian novelists, both male and female, with a typical feature of their romantic heroines until well into the present century. Moreover, a "tiny hand" was more often than not attached to a stereotypically "tiny" female body in Canadian romances of the pre- and post-Confederation periods, and both can be read, like the compressed feet of Chinese ladies and the compressed waists of corseted Western women, as corporeal signs of the culturally "diminished . . . power" and circumscribed "action[s]"<sup>2</sup> of the "gentler sex," both in fiction and in life. In late nineteenth-century Canadian poetry, there are two especially engaging responses to the stereotype of the small-handed, diminutive heroine: Isabella Valancy Crawford's depiction of Katie Graem in *Malcolm's Katie: A Love Story* (1884) and Archibald Lampman's depiction of Charlotte Ambray in *The Story of an Affinity* (written 1892-1894), the former

apparently an endorsement of the stereotype and the latter an apparent contestation of it.

"Max plac'd a ring in little Katie's hand . . ." This is the first line of *Malcolm's Katie* as it appears in the first of the six autograph fragments of the poem in the Queen's University Archives. In its published form, the line reads "Max plac'd a ring *on* little Katie's hand . . ." (emphasis added),<sup>3</sup> a change that does not merely bring to the ring connotations of a fetter or "gyve" (I, 84)—a word used a little later in the poem with reference to serfs (people who, like "little Katie," are attached to a wealthy man's estate and transferred with it)—but perhaps also implicates Katie in her own circumscription, if it implies that she herself must take the ring placed "on . . . [her] hand" and put it on her finger. That she is not explicitly shown doing this may be a testament to Crawford's poetic economy rather than to her heroine's refusal to accept her role as ringbearer in the wedding of her father's and husband's economic fortunes, for, in spite of her initial independence of mind,<sup>4</sup> "little Katie" accedes quickly to the circumscribed position in patriarchal society that is already implicit in her diminutive name ("little Katie" as opposed to big Katherine) and, indeed, in the poem's possessive title (*Malcolm's Katie: Daddy's girl*). By the end of the first part of the poem, she is fully marginalized: standing with "pray'rful palms close seal'd" (I, 136) like the adoring Miss Kitty of *Gunsmoke* that the "Backdrop" refuses to be in Margaret Atwood's nationalist allegory,<sup>5</sup> she wishes Max and his "axe" success on their pioneering adventure. A willing participant in what is still a sustaining illusion of capitalist society—the illusion that love can neither be bought nor sold, that love's only price is love—"little Katie" stays behind patiently and silently to win her father around to accepting her beloved Max, whose task, of course, is the bigger and more expansive one of creating the homestead that will really (that is, materially) convince Malcolm of his (Max's) suitability as a husband.

In both of her next appearances in the poem, first as an inspiring presence in Max's imagination and then as a listener in her father's monologues, "little Katie" (II, 170) is almost entirely

circumscribed by the fantasies, words, and material creations of the big strong men in her life. In the backwoods, the long-suffering wives of Max's fellow pioneers have so often heard the "tale of Katie's sunny eyes / and Katie's yellow hair, and household ways" (II, 245-246) that they can almost "see" her "garments flitting through the rooms" of what will one day be "Max's House" (II, 249-253).<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, back in the "great farm house of Malcolm Graem" (III, 1), the actual Katie has risen to the pinnacle of her power: educated in "city schools" and the "city's ways" (III, 29), she now possesses physical and mental qualities that allow her to exercise considerable sway in and around her God-like father's "house," a patriarchal edifice that she can surmount but never transcend for the simple reason that it supports everything that she does: "Katie's gay garden foam'd about the walls, / and broke on the peak'd roof" (III, 29-37).<sup>7</sup> The rhythm of energetic rising and elegiac falling in these lines is repeated somewhat later in the third part of the poem when Katie "bare[s] her little feet" (another attribute of romance heroines, as of Chinese women), and, after dancing "from log to log" on one of her father's booms, almost gets herself killed by a "great log" that, as she touches it, "start[s]" like a phallic "column" and then "plung[es] / Rolling upon the froth and sudden foam" (III, 198-212), taking her down with it.<sup>8</sup> From this, the first of her near-drownings, Malcolm's "chiefest treasure" (III, 216) is rescued by the gold-digging Alfred, the melodramatic but highly articulate villain of the poem who makes no bones about viewing "little Katie" as a means to the end of her father's wealth. Both physically and intellectually, Alfred is an attractive and powerful character—a threat equal to or greater than Malcolm or Max to whatever fragile freedom from patriarchal domination Katie possesses. Indeed, as Katie lies first "upon [Alfred's] hands" (III, 231) and then "in his arms" (III, 234) during her rescue, it is clear that his "great chest," like the "breast" of Max, against which she is seen "close clasp'd" (VI, 168) after he too has saved her from drowning, represents one of the boundaries that keeps her small, dependent, and in need of protection. Significantly, it is only to let Max fulfil *his* heroic destiny by performing the Christ-like act of

rescuing Alfred, that "little Katie" puts herself outside his protective and circumscribing arms in the poem's climactic scene. "Do as you will, my Max. I would not keep / You back with one light-falling finger-tip! / And cast herself from his large arms upon the mosses at his feet . . ." (VI, 136-138). Although Katie may say "my Max," she is, in essence, the one possessed—a "little" daughter who becomes a "little" wife without quite being a "well-formed woman."<sup>9</sup>

In the final part of *Malcolm's Katie*, and in a clear echo of Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost*, Crawford has her hero and heroine depart Malcolm's house "hand in hand" for fields and pastures, new, fresh, and extensive enough for the old man to follow them "with his flocks and herds" (VII, 13-14). An optimistic reading of the conclusion of the poem, with its "woods and plains . . . fairer far / Than Eden's self" (VII, 31-32; the words are Katie's), would be that Max and his bride have achieved a material version of Milton's "paradise within . . . happier far."<sup>10</sup> If so, they have nevertheless failed, despite the implied mutuality of "hand in hand," to achieve a relationship between themselves that surpasses that of Adam and Eve either before the fall or after their re-ascent. Eve may have been, as Max fondly imagines, "only little Katie's height" (VII, 27), but she was not before the entry of Satan into Eden either his plaything ("Max . . . twisted Katie's hair / About his naked arm, bare from his toil" [VII, 16-17])<sup>11</sup> or a fulsome flatterer ("O Adam had not Max's soul,' she said . . ." [VII, 30]). One form that Satan takes in the backwoods Eden that concludes *Malcolm's Katie* is the asymmetry between the sexes: surrounded by three males—her father, her husband, and her baby boy (named for Alfred)—Katie is the channel through which a patriarchal lineage and inheritance passes—a figure whose purity and fertility are crucial to the entire enterprise, and who must be the right size—small—to generate the protective "instincts" and assuage the sexual fears of males. Asked—even compelled—by her culture to be both adorable and adoring, "little Katie" finds herself by turns both on and under a pedestal, both in Max's arms and at his feet, both uppermost in his thoughts and wrapped around his big arm. In his turn, Max

must be big enough to support and dominate Katie and she small enough to reciprocate; their sizes are the inevitable, physical corollaries of their respective social positions and power. The littleness of Katie is thus both a manifestation of romance convention and a reflection of social reality, and it is presented—for this surely is the implication of the discussion as it has developed—in such a way as to make a probing reader of feminist sympathies aware of the limitation and distortion of "natural dimensions,"<sup>12</sup> both mental and physical, that it implies.

Written probably ten to fifteen years later, and possibly partly in response to *Malcolm's Katie: A Love Story*,<sup>13</sup> *The Story of an Affinity* reflects Lampman's growing awareness in the 1890s of the changes being brought about in "the social position of women"<sup>14</sup> by such interrelated developments as the Women's Suffrage Movement and the phenomenon of the New Woman, a figure struggling in life and in literature against imposed limitations on her freedom. Only months before he began *The Story of an Affinity* in the late fall of 1892, Lampman spoke strongly in favour of women's rights and independence. "The sentimentalist of the old school . . . pictures to himself with disgust and dread the 'masculine' woman of the future," he wrote on April 9, 1892. "The rest of us need have no fear . . . Give [women] perfect independence, place them upon an exactly even footing with men in all the activities and responsibilities of life, and the result for good will be attained which is almost beyond the power of the imagination to picture."<sup>15</sup> In Lampman's view, advantages will accrue to both sexes when women are no longer "forced to live" in a "condition of comparative social inferiority": "woman will marry from choice, and the intellectual and moral training derived from her improved condition will enable her to choose rightly"; there will be an "elimination or repression of a great part of the fool and the brute that is in men"; and, above all, "Women, no longer weak and dependent, no longer kept in an emotional atmosphere of frivolity and sentimental irresponsibility, but strong, active, and self-reliant as men . . . will not be at the mercy of men." With "the moral and intellectual emancipation of women" there will not be a decrease in "the grace and beauty

which we think to be [the] chiefest charm" of the female sex; "rather there will be added to these a power, a beneficence, a dignity which are only the exception now."<sup>16</sup> When he wrote this, Lampman had already envisaged the "tall fair women" of his Morrissian utopia, "The Land of Pallas," as reflecting physically in their "goodlier . . . stature"<sup>17</sup> and strength their achievement generations since of independence and equality. Nowhere more than in the "tall," "firm," "massy brow[ed]," and "grandly made" (II, 377, 396-397) Charlotte Ambray of *The Story of an Affinity*,<sup>18</sup> however, does the poet embody his notion of a correspondence between bigness of mind and morals and greatness of "figure" (II, 397) and looks. When a woman is on an "equal footing" with men in Lampman's world, as, by implication, in Crawford's, she does not have "little feet" or "a tiny hand."

Nor does she go by a diminutive name. As has been noted elsewhere, the name "Ambray" contains suggestions of ambrosia, the food of the immortals in Greek mythology, and light ("ray"), associations consistent with Lampman's description of her as a "delicious presence" (II, 442) and his depiction of her as an "inexhaustible source of changing lights" (II, 423) to Richard Stahlberg, the hero *The Story of an Affinity* for whom she acts as a guide in the "conduct" of "merciful work" (II, 417) among the urban poor.<sup>19</sup> Of more interest to the present discussion is the name Charlotte, a female version of Charles, meaning manly, and thus an indication that Charlotte Ambray is one of the "'masculine' women of the future" dreaded by the "sentimentalist of the old school" but welcomed by Lampman as representatives of the "moral and intellectual emancipation of women." Seen initially in an "open door" (an obvious emblem of her unenclosed nature), Charlotte Ambray is a "fair" warrior in both the aesthetic and ethical meanings of the adjective—an attractive moral crusader engaged in "merciful work" in the "grim city's" "haunt[s] of vice and agony" (II, 417-421). Although clearly an exemplary figure participating in the stereotype of the saintly or angelic woman, "the safeguard and the hope / Of human destiny" (II, 369-370),

she is more complex and powerful than most late nineteenth-century figures struck from the same mould:

Her restless beauty and her wilful strength,  
 Self-conscious, bold, and uncontrollably free,  
 Her daring speech, her sudden moods of wrath,  
 Or cold restraint, or boundless tenderness;  
 Her hours of mystical and spiritual calm,  
 When voice and touch and bearing seemed possessed  
 By some white angel of determined love;  
 Her eloquence, now wilder than the winds  
 Angry and martial, and now gently soft,  
 Joy-bearing as a balmy breath of May,  
 Now quivering from the very heart of tears;  
 Her subtle and resistless charm, whereby  
 She roused even in the vilest and the worst  
 The last faint spark of good . . . .

(II, 427-440)

It should be observed that Charlotte Ambray offers Richard Stahlberg not romantic love but "noble friendship," an "intimate knowledge of one genuine soul" that teaches him "more / Than all his contact with life's outer forms" (II, 447-450). Whether she is single or married is not mentioned because it is unimportant; except in merely physical terms (she has to ask the *enormously* "powerful" Richard to carry a "sick man" for her [II, 387]), she is every bit as "strong, active and self-reliant as men" and, no doubt, has exercised and will continue to exercise her own "choice" in the realm of marriage.

When the education towards Arnoldian "*sweetness and light*"<sup>20</sup> in which his "noble friendship" with Charlotte Ambray plays a prominent role draws to its successful close, Richard Stahlberg leaves the city and returns home to claim the affection of Margaret Hawthorne, the young woman whose educational accomplishments had years earlier inspired him to "eliminat[e] or repress . . . a great part of the fool and the brute that is in men." Somewhere between a conventional heroine and a New Woman, Margaret Hawthorne combines attributes reminiscent of both Charlotte Ambray and "little Katie" (whom she resembles also in being an only daughter who has lost her mother and lives alone

with her father). "Tall with the noble slenderness of youth" and with the "gray eyes" (I, 241-242) associated by Lampman with wisdom,<sup>21</sup> she has spent "seasons . . . / In schools and cities" (I, 269-270). She also possesses many of the physical characteristics common to the heroines of Victorian romances: "pale" brows, "slender" fingers, "soft-parted lips," "thick-coiled," "tawny and soft-textured" hair, and hands that are "pale" and "white" (I, 234-252). Carrying in one of these hands a "wide-brimmed hat" and in the other "a small book" (I, 236-237), Margaret is a complex figure caught between two worlds, one, like Katie's, restricted and overshadowed by patriarchy, the other, like Charlotte's, open and progressive. "Her father on some learned life at first / Had set his plans for her," explains the narrator, but "then as he grew / Older, had changed, and . . . resolved / To have her henceforth near him . . ." (I, 275-279). Rather "tall" and "slender" than "little" or "tiny," Margaret Hawthorne has nevertheless had to accept a diminished version of her "dream / Of her own future . . . of onward and heroic toil / Of growth and mind-enlargement for herself. / And generous labour for the common good" (I, 284-289). If Margaret is short in stature by comparison with Charlotte Ambray and Richard Stahlberg, it is because she has rebuilt her "old dream" in "lowlier" "shape" and "guise" by resolving to make the best of the restricted "circuit of her house-kept days" by pursuing in the domestic sphere her plans for self-cultivation and "generous labour" (I, 300-310).

Only a short time before Richard's return, and not without a great deal of soul-searching, Margaret has resolved to accept a proposal of marriage from John Vantassel,<sup>22</sup> a decent man who, though she does not reciprocate his love, offers her at least a modest expansion of her compass—"The same long round of plain activities, / Performed upon a larger field" with someone whom she likes, admires, and trusts (III, 195-200). More as a result of the passage of time than of this slightly expansive decision, Margaret has in Richard's absence shed many of the characteristics of the romance heroine: "less slender" and "less pale" than before, "firmlier" of "figure" and "graver of eye," she is "Yet . . . in all more nobly beautiful" (III, 252-256). Possessed



now of "fearless grace," "candid look," "sovereign strength" and a voice made "mellower / With deeper chords and tenderer candences," she has achieved "perfect womanhood / With charm and influence gracious and supreme" (III, 265-266).

When Richard and Margaret first meet again, his actions and her responses initially suggest that their relationship will result in Margaret's restriction and regression. "[T]aking both her hands between his two" he speaks her name, "And Margaret's eyes fell, stricken and abashed, / And her cheeks reddened, but her helpless hands / Remained in Richard's having no power to move" (III, 276-280). What follows is an epiphany of affection in which a Margaret "robbed . . . of control" senses intuitively, emotionally, and passionately (not, note, rationally) that Richard has "gone beyond her, and [stands] now / Her spiritual master, large, and armed with power" (III, 283, 294-295). But this is not to be a master-slave relationship for, as Margaret also recognizes, Richard is both powerful and sensitive, both strong and trustworthy; he is "her spirit's answering type" (III, 306). Precisely for this reason, he quickly moves to permit the replacement of restriction and regression by equality and self-control:

. . . for a moment *like a girl* [Margaret] stood  
 Flushed and tongue-tied, but Richard marking this  
*Released her hands*, and turning to her side  
 Went forward *with her* up the quiet walk;  
 And *both* regaining in a moment's space  
*Command of thought and speech*, their tongues were loosed.  
 (III, 308-313; italics added)

So apparent is the contrast between these lines and their equivalent in *Malcolm's Katie*—the passage in which Katie throws herself at Max's feet to allow "*his soul*" to "Work out its greatness" (VI, 141-142)—that it is tempting to see Lampman's depiction of Richard as a sensitive facilitator of symmetry between himself and Margaret as a deliberate critique of the relationship of Crawford's couple and, as such, an explicit endorsement of a feminist position that is presented only subtly and indirectly in the earlier poem.

It is a measure of the importance that Lampman attached to female choice, particularly as regards marriage, that a large proportion of what remains of *The Story of an Affinity* after the momentous meeting of Richard and Margaret is given over to tracing Margaret's response to the dilemma that she now faces on account of having, again like Crawford's Katie, two very different suitors. First in a "broad porch" (III, 342)<sup>23</sup> and then by an "open window" (III, 384)—two locations suggestive of the laying "open" once again of her "old dreamed of path" (III, 361) of "mind-enlargement" and "generous labour"—Margaret wrestles with a female and Lampmanian version of the classical theme of the Choice of Hercules—a choice between "the way of the commonplace, the path of routine" with Vantassel and the "upward . . . paths" of "general rightness, . . . gratified individuality,"<sup>24</sup> and "happiness" offered by Richard. Bound to the former by duty and the latter by love, she refuses each once, becoming, in the process, so "white" (III, 460) and "pale" (III, 495) that her affinities lie less with the living than with the dead.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, past independent thought and action, she verges finally on complete passivity while, unbeknownst to her, Richard and Vantassel are deciding her "destiny" (III, 704) for her in a mixture of violence and rational discussion. Once again, it seems that Margaret is going to be disprized of her freedom, her ability to make the correct choice for herself. But the point should be strongly made that, before Richard returns with the news that Vantassel has released her from her duty to him, she has not only *decided and stated* that she will marry neither of her two suitors, but also resolved either to let her life take another course or—a possibility not excluded by the text or by her condition—to allow her life to be taken by "some impersonal fate" (III, 715). What else is to be made of the "The final sad memorial of her strife, / A letter, soiled and blotted with her tears" that she has left on "her bed / In the dark farm-house" (III, 704-707)? To whom is it addressed? Is it a suicide or merely a farewell note? As undecidable as they are, these questions are not idle, for at stake is the issue of which component of Margaret's character or characterization is uppermost: the independent woman (who

surely would not pine or die for love) or the romance heroine (who might well)?

In the event, the figure who comes to meet Margaret as she stands "gazing into the darkness, full / Of love and limitless regret" (III, 709-710) is not a manifestation of "some impersonal fate," but a solicitous Richard with the news that clears the way to the happy ending of the poem. Yet even in the poem's happy ending, the ambiguity contingent upon the tension in Margaret between independence and dependence remains. In lines that strongly recall her first meeting with Richard after his return, she wordlessly signals her "full surrenderment" (III, 731) to him, and then, still in silence, the two "[take] each other's hands" and pass "Up the cool path between the orchard trees" towards "The endless road [that lies] before them, clear and free" (III, 731-743). Viewed in almost any way (other than mystically, which is not necessarily out of place in this context<sup>26</sup>), surrender and freedom are at odds, and Margaret is thus the fool and the loser in giving herself "utterly" (III, 730) to Richard. But viewed as an element in the narrative moment of the passage, Margaret's "full surrenderment" is at least counterbalanced, if not entirely displaced, by the couple's subsequent and complete mutuality ("*they took each other's hands*") and both are stages on a journey to a perfect freedom and fulfilment that lie outside the poem, perhaps only—as the strong echoes of the conclusion of *Paradise Lost* suggest—in some future paradise regained like "The Land of Pallas." In the meantime, as the very positive tone of the final lines of *The Story of an Affinity* suggest, Margaret and Richard may well have achieved such symmetry and mutuality as is possible in a less than ideal world.

Something is to be gained by way of conclusion in viewing *Malcolm's Katie* and *The Story of an Affinity* both spatially and diachronically. Written respectively in the early 1880s (or late 1870s) and early 1890s in Toronto and Ottawa, the two poems treat of such feminist issues as female education and independence, issues that were undergoing gradual but evident changes at the time, nowhere more quickly and apparently than in the metropolitan centres in which Crawford and Lampman lived

and wrote. Surely, it is no coincidence that both "little Katie" and "tall" Margaret are at the height of their power near the beginning of their respective poems when they are most possessed of the education and the independence that they have gained in the city. Nor is it coincidental that the "grandly made" Charlotte Ambray makes her home in the city, working with its problems and never appearing outside its limits. In "The Land of Pallas" Lampman envisaged an agrarian utopia of "men and women . . . fairer / Than even the mightiest of our meaner race can be,"<sup>27</sup> but in looking to his own society he probably realized, as Crawford must have too, that its rural areas were the home of a social conservatism which, like the "sentimentalist of the old school" in the *Mermaid Inn* column, looked with "disgust and dread" at progressive changes in the status of women.

To conservative and sentimental readers in Victorian Canada, the silence, subservience, and self-effacement of Crawford's "little Katie" would doubtless have seemed as acceptable as the outspokenness, independence, and self-confidence of Lampman's Charlotte Ambray would have been unacceptable. And, no doubt, for realistic and progressive readers these judgements would have been reversed. Yet, as has been seen, *Malcolm's Katie* is far from being the straight-forward endorsement of a sentimental stereotype and the *status quo* that it first appears, and *The Story of an Affinity*, when it focuses on Margaret rather than Charlotte, much less the vigorous contestation of female inequality and restriction than it originally seemed. Crawford's poem, after all, leads an attentive reader to question very deeply the patriarchal culture that defines and delimits "little Katie's" options, and, by the same token, Lampman's poem, for all its emphasis on Charlotte Ambray and Margaret Hawthorne, is still centrally a man's poem about the education of a man, with the help and inspiration of various women, to power, self-control, and, it must be said, financial independence,<sup>28</sup> a happy situation not achieved by Margaret. The conclusion seems inevitable: from a feminist perspective, Lampman's heart was largely in the right place on matters of female education and independence, but Crawford is more radically, albeit subtly, subversive in her treatment of the

status and condition of women in a male-dominated society. Magnanimity without a radical challenge to viricentrism, conventionality with a covert attack on female circumscription—even the most basic facts of the lives of two poets—Lampman's sinecure in the Post Office in Ottawa,<sup>29</sup> Crawford's struggle in the literary world of Toronto<sup>30</sup>—suggests that their attitudes could scarcely have been other than they were. He who pays the piper may not be able to call all the tunes but—to adapt another proverb—poets are like dogs at least in this: male or female, comfortable or disadvantaged, they seldom bite hard the hand that feeds them, preferring, instead, the bark that barely gives offence (*The Story of an Affinity*) and the gnaw at the slippers that may not be noticed until later (*Malcolm's Katie*).

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *The Canadian Garland* (Hamilton), I (1832-33): 6. "A Heroine's Hand" appears under "Selections" and is, therefore, probably reprinted from a foreign source, very likely from one of the Garland's major quarries, the *New York Constellation*.

<sup>2</sup> "Tight Lacing," *The Peoples Magazine* (Montreal), I (June 15, 1836): 45.

<sup>3</sup> All quotations from *Malcolm's Katie* are from Isabella Valancy Crawford, *Malcolm's Katie: A Love Story*, ed. D.M.R. Bentley (London: Canadian Poetry Press, 1987) and are designated by part and line number in the body of the text. The first line of Fragment 1 of *Malcolm's Katie* is also taken from this edition, p. 77. For alternative but not incompatible interpretations of the opening line of Crawford's poem, see Robert Alan Burns, "Crawford and Gounod: Ambiguity and Irony in *Malcolm's Katie*," *Canadian Poetry* 15 (Fall/Winter, 1984): 8 and Mary Joy Macdonald, "Inglorious Battles: People and Power in Crawford's *Malcolm Katie*," *Canadian Poetry* 23 (Fall/Winter, 1988): 34.

<sup>4</sup> See "Introduction," *Malcolm's Katie*, xix-xx.

<sup>5</sup> "Backdrop addresses cowboy," *The Animals in That Country* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968): 50-51.

<sup>6</sup> Macdonald, p. 35 likens the apparition of Katie here to "a bird in a dark cage," an image of entrapment that she also discerns in the

depiction of Crawford's heroine in the "trellis'd porch" (VII, 4) of Max's house at the end of the poem.

<sup>7</sup> See Macdonald, pp. 33-34 for a somewhat more positive reading of the passage.

<sup>8</sup> In conventional thinking about rape, the victim is, of course, frequently accused of causing what befalls her. On this logic, Katie is partly to blame for her near-death at the log-boom: she should not have been on the boom, let alone behaving in the way she did. Needless to say, such thinking puts severe limitations on female behaviour. See also Macdonald, pp. 37-38.

<sup>9</sup> "Tight Lacing" 45.

<sup>10</sup> *Paradise Lost*, IX, 587, quoted from John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (Indianapolis: Odyssey, 1962).

<sup>11</sup> For some very astute observations on this image, including the comment that "Katie must realise that she cannot move without occasioning her own pain," see Macdonald, p. 44.

<sup>12</sup> "Tight Lacing" 45.

<sup>13</sup> For discussion of the likely times of composition of the two poems see "Introduction," *Malcolm's Katie*, xiii and "Introduction," Archibald Lampman, *The Story of an Affinity*, ed. D.M.R. Bentley (London: Canadian Poetry Press, 1986) xii-xiii. For Lampman's familiarity with Crawford's work at the time of writing *The Story of an Affinity*, see p. xxix n. 22 and "Large Stature and Larger Soul: Notes on the Herculean Hero and Narrative in Canadian Literature," *Journal of Canadian Poetry* 2 (1987): 11.

<sup>14</sup> *At the Mermaid Inn: Wilfred Campbell, Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott in the Globe 1892-3*, ed. Barrie Davies, Literature of Canada: Poetry and Prose in Reprint (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979) 47. See also 138 and 313-314.

<sup>15</sup> *Mermaid Inn* 47.

<sup>16</sup> *Mermaid Inn* 48.

<sup>17</sup> *The Poems of Archibald Lampman (including at the Long Sault)*, intro. Margaret Coulby Whitridge, Literature of Canada: Poetry and Prose in Reprint (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974) 202, 205.

<sup>18</sup> All quotations from *The Story of an Affinity* are from the Canadian Poetry Press edition of the poem and are designated by part and line number in the body of the text.

<sup>19</sup> See "Introduction," *The Story of an Affinity* xix-xxii for a discussion of Richard's Arnoldian education along the "lines of conduct, of intellect and knowledge, of beauty, of social life and manners" (this last

through the three women of II, 581-648) towards a "harmonious perfection" of "sweetness and light."

<sup>20</sup> *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism*, in *The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R.H. Super (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965), V, 99 (and see note 19 above).

<sup>21</sup> See *The Poems* 43 (supplementary).

<sup>22</sup> A name reminiscent of the Van Tassel of Sleepy Hollow in Washington Irving's *Sketch Book* (1820).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. the "trellis'd porch" in *Malcolm's Katie*, VII, 4 as discussed by Macdonald (see note 6, above). It is probably not too far-fetched to see equivalences between Katie's "trellis'd porch" and "Tight Lacing" and Margaret's "broad porch" (or "open window") and less constricting female fashions in clothing.

<sup>24</sup> "Happiness," *Archibald Lampman: Selected Prose*, ed. Barrie Davies (Ottawa: Tecumseh, 1975) 105. See also "Introduction," *The Story of an Affinity*, xxiii.

<sup>25</sup> See "Explanatory Notes," III, 502 and 709 in the Canadian Poetry Press edition for echoes of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's "The Blessed Damozel."

<sup>26</sup> In the Christian faith in which Lampman was brought up, the service of God is perfect freedom, a paradox far from unrelated to the notion that, for women particularly, the route to happiness lies through a surrender of freedom. A spiritual dimension to Margaret's silence, stasis, and "surrenderment" is also suggested by her spectral and Beatrice-like appearance to Richard (for whom she is certainly a guide): "He saw the form, the beautiful pale face, / Set like a shadowy statue in the dusk / Of spiritual enchantment" (III, 722-724). Perhaps Lampman intended to generate such suggestions of hierarchy between the sexes in order to make more noticeable the re-establishment of symmetry and mutuality at III, 737?

<sup>27</sup> *The Poems* 205.

<sup>28</sup> See *The Story of an Affinity*, I, 654-658, where Richard becomes "a teacher, first in lowlier sort, / And then . . . / A lecturer in a famous college hall."

<sup>29</sup> For some provocative comments on Lampman's "disaffection of a social system which he nevertheless laboured to maintain" and the significance of his position in the Post Office, see James Steele, "Lampman's Achievement," *The Lampman Symposium*, ed. Lorraine McMullen, *Reappraisals: Canadian Writers* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1976) 125-128.

<sup>30</sup> See "Introduction," *Malcolm's Katie* xii-xiv.