Introduction

> Our reliance on one another, whether on this plane or another, is
> what can never be explained. There have been many empty moments,
> long spaces of silence, both grappling with the same intangible idea.
> Sometimes the compelling creative urge would come on both, and
> we would try to reconcile the two impulses, searching for a form into
> which best to cast them—one releasing it, perhaps as a cloudy sugges-
> tion, to be caught up by the other, and given form and colour, then
> to float away in a flash of certainty, a completed sentence—as two
> dancers will yield to the same impulse, given by the same strain of
> music, and know the joy of shared success.[1]

Edith Œnone Somerville's account of her writing process with Martin
Ross (Violet Florence Martin), written after Ross's death in 1915, uses
metaphors of catch and release and partnered dancing to suggest that
collaboration is an ongoing and continual process that cannot exist
without "our reliance on one another" – the shared participation of
both women. In the first sentence, Somerville goes so far as to refer to
a participation that continues beyond the grave: she believed that Ross
continued to collaborate with her, even after death, via automatic writ-
ing; therefore, she continued to publish all subsequent texts under their
collaborative pseudonym: Somerville and Ross. Writing is also described
as an elusive experience: the "intangible idea" is difficult to explain, but
when "caught up" by the other, it is granted "form." Coming together
in the creative process, the "cloudy suggestion" becomes clearly resolute
through a shared communal experience, demonstrated by this metaphor
of a game of catch, and elaborated in the image of dancers yielding to
"the joy of shared success." Also of importance is the notion of shared
exercise: forms of labor that depend upon the other for its completion.
As Jill R. Ehnenn notes in *Women's Literary Collaboration, Queerness,
and Late-Victorian Culture* (2008), "women represent collaborative labor
as linked [to] a view of partnership-as-self that favors self-in-process
and self-in-connection to others."[2] Female collaboration is therefore a

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reaction against commentaries on masculine collaboration: rhetoric that seeks textual control and preserves division in labor.[3] Ehnenn notes that her study is not as interested in the process of joint writing, but rather in the representations of this labor; thus, she reads descriptions of late nineteenth-century female literary partnerships as performances that work with and against prevailing understandings of authorship and creative labor. However, focusing on this unexplainable and fleeting collaborative process – while daunting and sometimes complicated – reveals important insights into the coming together of individuals in creative cooperation and the reasoning behind such a practice. It is, therefore, this elusive process of coming together that *Collaborative Writing in the Long Nineteenth Century* explores in its wide-ranging studies of collaboration across the long nineteenth century.

In the following pages, I examine the process of collaboration – drawing from manuscript marginalia, notes, journal/diary entries, and correspondence – and the influences of that process on poetry, drama, and fiction. By understanding the collaborative process as a means of identifying with the other at the same time as we identify with ourselves – "thinking of me thinking of you," as coined by Rae Greiner – we can come to a closer understanding of selfhood as a construction of a blend of dialogic voices, embodied not only in the act of collaboration but within the very texts constructed out of that collaboration.[4] Such a model is what I have termed "sympathetic collaboration." Guided by the current trend of literary studies around sympathy, emotion, and affect, this project demonstrates the long reach that eighteenth-century moral philosophy has on later literature and artistic thought by investigating the writing and creative processes to understand the ways in which communal relationships are inscribed within the literary product. In so doing, I suggest that collaboration is necessarily rooted in the ideals of Victorian liberalism: it is derived from a representation of sympathetic identification and emphasizes human sociability. In a broader sense, this book provides a fresh understanding of literary collaboration necessarily informed by the mechanics of the writing process and illustrated in the formal elements of literature, as well as textual or marginal traces within the manuscripts. My project offers a new theory of collaboration, whereby sympathy becomes a model framework for the collaborative process. Nineteenth-century artistic creation is rooted in sympathetic identification. This philosophical approach to life (seen in the lived attempts at community for each of my case studies) has larger implications for literary

history: these sympathetic communities are mutually implicated in formal experimentation and innovation.

(Re)Defining Collaboration

What does it mean to collaborate? The Oxford English Dictionary definition fails to illuminate its meaning: "united labour; co-operation; *esp.* in literary, artistic, or scientific work" ("collaboration, n."). What, precisely, is meant by this method of cooperation? More to the point, would collaborators be any different than editors or other influences? Within the field of both common knowledge and criticism, relatively broad and narrow definitions of collaboration are evident. Many people today would agree on the narrower sense of collaboration as two or more individuals composing or creating something together. Broadening out, however, literary critics have suggested the inclusion of various factors and influences: James P. Bednarz includes "theft" from contemporary rivals or literary precursors; Jewel Spears Brooker includes the "capacity for assimilation" of other's works and proposes the relationship between writer and reader as a form of collaboration, a relationship also considered by Jack Stillinger.[5] Even broader, M. Thomas Inge believes that "[a]nytime another hand enters into an effort, a kind of collaboration occurs."[6] On the other hand, Thomas Hines prefers a simpler but comprehensive definition: "work artists do together to produce a joint creation."[7] It is this definition of collaboration that I, like Marjorie Stone and Judith Thompson in their *Literary Couplings* (2006), adopt for this study. The actual writing practices of creators are included in this relatively broad definition of "work," which takes a variety of written and spoken forms. By understanding collaboration as work – as a verb, rather than a noun – we can access more fully the processes that underlie collaborative efforts. In doing so, we capture not only the "joint creation," or the literary/artistic text, but also the associations and networks that go into artistic creation. In other words, we can capture the process inherent in the coming together of individuals – a coming together that takes place not only on the written page but also in social interactions and correspondences. These compositional practices and processes form the focus of rhetoricians Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford's *Singular Texts/Plural Authors* (1990), where they define collaborative writing as "any of the activities that lead to a completed written document," including "written and spoken brainstorming, outlining, note-taking, organizational planning, drafting, revising and editing."[8] Ede's and Lunsford's focus on the "spoken," implied also in Hines's definition, is of particular

importance to my understanding of nineteenth-century collaboration: a focus on dialogue, a coming together on the written page that is informed by the social, by the community. Moreover, Hines's definition is inclusive of "artists" working upon a "joint creation" and therefore extends beyond literary authors to cross disciplinary boundaries.[9]

Conversation is vital to the collaborative process. In (re)defining collaboration as "work," I argue for its description as a verb – emphasizing action, or an act of being. In doing so, I follow the lead of philosopher Bruno Latour, whose scholarship emphasizes descriptive properties rather than definitions, and a return to original meaning in order to trace "associations between heterogenous elements."[10] In his introduction to *Reassembling the Social* (2005), Latour reconsiders the notion of the social by returning to its original meaning in order to trace a "trail of associations" or "a type of connection between things that are not themselves social."[11] By focusing on descriptive properties, rather than strict definitions, Latour provides an understanding of "social" as something that is not visible, but rather only visible "by the *traces* it leaves (under trials) when a *new* association is being produced between elements."[12] Thus, I take a Latourian approach to collaboration by tracing the ways in which we see collaboration as work in order to underscore the process of coming together through sympathetic identification. Verbs, unlike nouns, cannot be treated as an already known product; collaboration, in this study, is not given as an explanatory mechanism, but as an exploratory and necessarily social interaction. The conversations, associations, and networks that comprise the nineteenth-century collaborative process are traced in the chapters that follow to argue that sympathy enables collaboration.[13]

Fundamentally, studies of collaboration question the privileged conception of a singular and unitary author, despite the efforts of poststructuralist theorists and their attempts to deconstruct authorship. Michel Foucault's "What is an Author?" provides the foundation for considerations of authorship as a modern construct, leading to the belief that texts are not the products of individual creators. Rather, as Foucault argues, the writer's individuality is canceled out of the text because the concept of the "author" is a function of language itself. In declaring the death of the author, borrowed from Roland Barthes' "Death of the Author," Foucault deconstructs the idea of the author as the creator of something original and asserts that the "author" is the product – or function of writing – of the text. In other words, authorship does more than signify a specific, historical individual: authorship encompasses the ideas with which the author is attributed, his/her mode of thinking and methodology, and the

writings – or works – associated with his/her name. As such, authorship serves as a means of identification, accompanying certain texts to the exclusion of others. Such is the problem with scholarship and canon formation, which continue to maintain an image of the author as a solitary figure of creative genius. Ede and Lunsford cleverly refer to the traditional rejection of collaboration in favor of this solitary, individual act of authorial creation as the "purloined letter effect" of the collaborative text: the pervasive denial that something – or some*one* – is "hidden in plain view" in the writing.[14]

In the field of literary studies, Jack Stillinger, in his pioneering and still unchallenged *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius* (1991), turned attention to the increasing identification of the solitary author as a myth attributed to Romantic ideologies of the inspired creator. In the wake of poststructuralist theories, new models and technologies for editing and textual production, feminist and queer reframings of literary histories, and proliferations of collaborative digital projects, there remains renewed interest in the skepticism concerning the figure of the "solitary genius." Stillinger's exploration of "multiple authorships," figures who had a role in the literary production along with the "nominal author," include "a friend, a spouse, a ghost, an agent, an editor, a translator, a publisher, a censor, a transcriber, a printer."[15] This emphasis on the multiplicity of figures underscores that texts are not the products of individual creators; texts are produced under a number of influences. While Stillinger focuses on interactions with collaborative sources and influences, here, collaboration is an intentional action resulting in a shared creation, rather than that of inspiration. Further, Stillinger does not reflect on the social structures that shape the production of literary texts. Such a reflection arises in Jerome McGann's *The Textual Condition* (1991), which conceives of literary texts as "collaborative events."[16] Rather than an "autonomous and self-reflexive activity," McGann argues that textual production is "a social and institutional event."[17] Writing – art – cannot escape the influences that produce it, and tracing the associations of collaboration makes visible those social interactions or events. McGann's supposition aligns with my attention to the connections between the processes of collaborative writing; the multiple media used and envisioned by the writers; and the finalized products themselves. This approach helps scholarship to better understand the collaborative ideal and its ties to the social, an aspect that has been fundamentally neglected in recent literary discussions of collaboration.[18]

Of the current monographs on literary collaboration, there are none with the broader focus of the long nineteenth century. Approaches to

male literary collaboration proliferated in the late 1980s and 1990s: Wayne Koestenbaum's *Double Talk: The Erotics of Male Literary Collaboration* (1989), a groundbreaking text arguing that the "double signature" of collaboration alters perceptions of authorship; Stillinger, as aforementioned; and Jeffrey Masten's *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (1997), which analyzes the "corporate" authorship of early modern drama. These works emphasize the widespread nature of literary collaboration among men in specific literary periods, shedding light on the myth of the popular perception of solitary authorship as masculine, yet neglect the possibilities of female or familial collaboration.

Feminist criticism has been particularly productive in its research on collaboration, initially producing panels and special issues on the subject of female coauthors. At the Modern Language Association Conference in 1991, the Women's Caucus concentrated on female collaboration. In addition, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* (1994 and 1995) contained a two-part "Forum on Collaborations," and *PMLA* published a series of articles on collaboration under its section of "Theories and Methodologies" (2001). Monographs have also been prevalent. Responding to the dominantly masculine discussion of coauthorship, Bette London's *Writing Double: Women's Literary Partnerships* (1999) examines nineteenth- and twentieth-century women collaborators and warns that the focus on the female writer's "dark double" – from Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar – has marginalized and rendered invisible female collaborations. By focusing on processes like mediumship and automatic writing, London asserts that female collaboration is an important means of alternative writing practice that challenges traditional perspectives on authorship. Holly Laird's *Women Coauthors* (2000) focuses on psychosocial interactions to "read coauthored texts as the realization of relationships."[19] Her dominant concern is on the self-representation of her collaborators, arguing that collaboration itself is thematized and reproduced in writing. Following closely on Laird's publication, Lorraine York's *Rethinking Women's Collaborative Writing: Power, Difference, Property* (2002) focuses on the power dynamics and "ideological polyvalences" of, primarily, contemporary female collaborations. York discusses some nineteenth-century examples of collaboration as predecessors for her focus on twentieth-century female partnerships, but is primarily concerned with the ways in which contemporary collaboration is informed by poststructuralism. Bringing female collaboration into a narrower focus in the *fin de siècle*, Ehnenn's *Women's Literary Collaboration, Queerness, and Late-Victorian Culture* (2008) examines

four pairs of female collaborators. Her study examines how collaboration provides both a sexed and gendered perspective from which to assess the concept of authorship and a specific social and historical perspective of a particular time and place.

These studies are significant because they rediscover collaborative writing and emphasize collaboration as a project of recovery and expansion of the literary canon. In addition, these pioneering texts attempt to classify and situate collaborative writing within a variety of contexts: historical, feminist, and queer. At the same time, however, most of these texts participate in and perpetuate a gendered separation, while attempting to provide a "holistic" perspective of collaboration. This is one criticism that Marjorie Stone and Judith Thompson attempt to redress in *Literary Couplings* (2006). Acknowledging that attention is traditionally focused on the "*lives* of literary couples, not their texts," Stone and Thompson attest that work produced collaboratively by partners still remains organized into "separate oeuvres."[20] They seek to eliminate this separation in their study exploring literary couplings ranging from the Renaissance to the present. Stone and Thompson describe "coupling" as "a compositional activity, a publishing strategy and/or interpretive practice, as well as (in many contexts) a sexual or familial connection."[21] Their research remains important because of its breadth of collaborative discussion, its integrated methodology, and its refusal to maintain separations between the varied forms of collaboration.

While maintaining a varied breadth of approximately 100 years (1814–1912), this book is focused on case studies of partnerships from the major movements within the period: Romanticism, Pre-Raphaelitism, Aestheticism, and Modernism. While my exploration cannot be exhaustive, such an approach provides a rich exemplar of the trajectory of sympathetic collaboration in each movement. At its core, this study demonstrates the fluidity of canonical boundaries by tracing the associations of eighteenth-century moral philosophy as an undercurrent of nineteenth-century collaboration which ultimately informs nineteenth-century liberalism. While not focused on collaborative writing, Rae Greiner's *Sympathetic Realism* (2012) addresses sympathy as an integral aspect to the form of nineteenth-century realist fiction; thus, here, I have opted not to focus on the collaborative aspects of nineteenth-century realism, such as the work of George Eliot and George Henry Lewes. At the same time, I incorporate some of the same influences as current research in collaborative studies through my examination of gender and the power dynamics at work within the partnerships that I study: Mary and Percy Bysshe Shelley, Christina and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Katharine Bradley and

Edith Cooper (together known under the pseudonym "Michael Field"); within the aesthetic press movement (William Morris's Kelmscott Press); and between Vernon Lee and her partners, A. Mary F. Robinson and Clementina "Kit" Anstruther-Thomson. In choosing these varied partnerships, I have attempted to balance recovered women writers alongside reconsiderations of more traditional/canonical literary collaborators, while providing a range of relationships (romantic, familial, and business). In this study, therefore, aesthetic, moral, and social judgments are interrelated, providing a cohesive focus for the collaborative partnerships analyzed. Such a focus follows Benjamin Morgan's materialist aesthetics in *The Outward Mind* (2017), exploring a reading of "Victorian aesthetic thought as participating in a tradition of philosophical aesthetics despite the fact that its practitioners often avoided philosophical idioms."[22] More to the point, I have chosen these partnerships for the insight into collaborative traces within their respective archives, and the undercurrent of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sympathetic sociability made visible through such tracing.

Like Stone and Thompson's integrated "heterogeneity of coupled authorship," the approach taken here to collaboration is three-pronged.[23] This book integrates: (1) an archival-based analysis of collaborative writing processes with an exploration of formal experimentation and narrative structure; (2) a biographically and philosophically grounded investigation of partnerships with interdisciplinary and theoretical work on creative production and textuality; and (3) an inclusion of a variety of relationships that have been overlooked in a privileging of the erotics of sexuality, including heterosexual, familial, friendships and business partnerships, and same-sex relationships. Furthermore, by favoring the actual processes of collaboration with its attention to archival-based literary analysis, *Collaborative Writing in the Long Nineteenth Century* questions interpretations of the collaborative product – is collaboration a mode of writing, a question of editing and revising, or a question of influence? – to posit that sympathetic collaboration blurs the boundaries of all three relations. "Sympathetic collaboration" questions how and why cross-disciplinary artists come together in artistic creation and inscribe their relationships upon the works produced. This coming together is rooted in an understanding of sympathetic identification influenced by Adam Smith's theories of sympathy, explored more fully in the first chapter. Thus "sympathetic collaboration" is not only a model of the collaborative writing process but also a framework for the establishment of a moral and liberal community, underscoring the social nature of nineteenth-century literary production.

Chapter 1 continues to define and summarize the three interlinking areas of this study: collaboration, sympathy, and liberalism. This first chapter rehearses theoretical models of eighteenth-century sympathy, focusing primarily on Adam Smith. Such an overview lays the foundation for the latter half of the chapter: understanding "sympathetic collaboration" and its connections to Victorian liberalism, which is defined as a communal fraternity of sympathetic experience that uses art as a means of expression and experimentation.

In order to craft observations of sympathetic collaboration across the nineteenth century, subsequent chapters are framed as individual case studies that detail the collaborative processes between specific individuals in order to attenuate the production of an ideally liberal community, inflected by elements of Smithean sympathy, between the artists and formally constructed within the works produced. Throughout, chapters emphasize the collective nature of nineteenth-century literary production and its reliance upon lived experience as a means of constructing shared expression through formal experimentation. Tracing this process in archival materials verifies the influences of this coming together – the formation of a "unified" voice in a coauthored text – upon the poetry, drama, and fiction explored in each chapter. Demonstrating the extent to which Smithean sympathy influenced the Victorian establishment of a liberal community, my model of collaboration illuminates an innovative argument about the nineteenth century: namely, that sympathetic communities are implicated in formal experimentation. *Collaborative Writing in the Long Nineteenth Century* lends a fresh framework for viewing art and personal expression with an eye toward community building and solidarity. In choosing five collaborators, I have constructed a narrative of sympathetic collaboration that not only establishes a sense of Victorian collaboration, – its focus on individuation as a means of modulating toward a liberal community – but also one that anticipates the networks inherent in recent conceptions of Decadence and Modernism.[24] This monograph participates in Victorian scholarship devoted to understanding the inherently social nature of literary production and seeks to establish a model framework for the coming together of individuals in order to create both social and personal meaningfulness. This approach focuses, therefore, on both the production of art and the production of community in order to illuminate the interconnections between the public, literature, and formal experimentation.

Chapter 2 explores the 1814 collaboration between Mary and Percy Bysshe Shelley and extends scholarly attention to their travel journals, before moving onto *Frankenstein* (1818). Using the couple's shared journal

as a way of marking their convergence and redefinition of themselves from a singular identity to a shared pluralism, the journal's entries witness a shared understanding – a sympathetic concord – between the couple. This understanding is rooted in the period's reassessment and identification of relationships in terms of shared sympathetic understanding and political solidarity and forms the basis of their collaboration. This close examination of the collaborative process indicates a willingness to assimilate and accommodate the other's sentiments and formal constructs and offers an analysis of conversation detected upon the manuscript pages. While the narratives of these entries show the completion of each other's thoughts and a reliance upon readerly circulation, the entries' form also gestures to their defined plural identity through a vocal blending. In a sense, analysis of the couple's life-writing, in combination with its attention to novelistic form, aligns with Ross Wilson's *Shelley and the Apprehension of Life* (2013), which analyzes Percy Bysshe Shelley's beliefs about life and the significance of poetry. Wilson demonstrates that Shelley views poetry as a "living melody," which is offered in contrast to the world in which life does not live.[25] While Wilson characterizes the poetic form as encapsulating the imaginative and humanizing lived experience, this chapter asserts a larger trajectory traced back to the couple's shared experience, initially formulated in their life-writing and prose, and later extends into Shelley's poetic form. Moreover, with its sustained focus on the sympathetic communities developed by the couple and the increased literary production as a result of this lived communal experience, the Shelley collaboration ultimately shapes the narrative form of *Frankenstein*. The novel's layered narrative of sympathetic texts makes possible a view of the collaborative compilation of the novel as a means of social reform: a view of society that relies upon the affective bonds of sympathy with a community of people, whether imaginative or genuine.

Continuing to explore the processes of sympathetic assimilation, Chapter 3 extends attention to Christina and Dante Gabriel Rossetti: a familial collaboration and a maintenance of difference in service to a harmonious whole – art and poetry. Whereas the second chapter draws attention to the assimilation and accommodation that occurs between individuals coming together, this chapter extends the focus of sympathetic collaboration to a broader interpretation of social community that suffuses the Rossetti collaboration and reclaims female agency in the affirmation of Christina's poetic experimental form. While the Pre-Raphaelites are generally known for their integration of art and literature, this chapter analyzes D.G. Rossetti's illustrations alongside a formal analysis of