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A Tale of Two Mysteries: A Comparative Study of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*

A Thesis in English Literature and French
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor in Arts With Specialized Honors in English Literature and French

May 2025

Abstract:

The texts *Les Mystères de Paris* by Eugene Sue and *The Mysteries of London* by George W.M. Reynolds were massively popular texts in the mid-nineteenth century that engaged with a growing literate population as a result of mass industrialization in France and England. There are several things that made these texts increasingly popular among the masses but the most prominent was the publication format of the texts, which were serialized, overall lowering the price of printed material. *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* share a name, however their content is vastly different, even though the idea for *The Mysteries of London* was appropriated by George W.M. Reynolds to sell copies of his publication. The difference between the two texts can be attributed to the research of Richard Lehan, a cultural historian who writes about the city as a developing entity that "superimposes itself on the text and vice versa" ultimately resulting in a text about the city being reflective of the city itself. Therefore, the is no way that these texts could be about the same thing, but the question remains, what made these texts so popular, and how did their influence shape pop-culture. In this comparative study, I find that the influence of Sue and Reynolds through the impact and popularity of their texts came to define: serialized literature as the popular format, until the book became cheap enough for the masses; the city novel as a theme for novels that have yet to be written; and finally the texts influenced the genre-conglomerate of popular-culture that is meant to entertain and engage with a mass literate population. *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* are hyper-referential texts that engage with their contemporary moment so intensely that they point to the ways that they anticipated popular genres and forms like Baudelaire's *Le Spleen de Paris*, and the birth of the sensation novel in the 1860s.

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Introduction

In preparing this comparative literature thesis between Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris (1842-3)* and George W.M. Reynolds's *The Mysteries of London (1844),* I came to an interesting conclusion based on the relationship between these texts, literary history, and popular culture. The research I have done for this project points to how popular *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* were, so much so that they either launched or sustained the careers of their authors, Eugène Sue and George W.M. Reynolds. A question I had surrounding these texts, on a more superficial level, was simply how similar they were to one another; however, after reading some articles comparing the two texts, I noticed a general acceptance that these two texts were not imitations, translations, or adaptations of one another. This idea was rearticulated in my own research for Chapter Two, "The Relationship between the Text and the City and the City and the Text" based on the work of Richard Lehan in *The City and Literature*. In his book, Lehan, as a literary and cultural historian, states that "Reading the text has become a form of reading the city" (Lehan 8), and using this lens as a foundation for my understanding of these texts, I found that there would be no conceivable way for these texts to resemble one another if the cities they were about were entirely different.

Therefore, in terms of comparison, I found my answer pretty quickly, but the next question that persisted was that of influence. By and large, the most striking thing about the histories of these texts, even if they have fallen from a contemporary collective memory, is their popularity across the industrialized Western world. I'd argue that there is a direct correlation between popularity and influence; so, my findings in chapter three, "The Mysteries of What?: Genre-bending in Popular Fiction" suggest that the vestiges of popularity from *Les Mystères de*

Paris and *The Mysteries of London* developed, or at least influenced the development, of new genres of popular fiction in France and England.

One facet of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* that is shared is their hyper-specificity to their moment in history and literary history. That is to say, these texts are engaged with their time and place above all else, and in order to understand the text, it is then important to understand the contemporary moment that the texts engage with. In my research, I allotted myself around ten years on either side of the publication of each text, which resulted in my research being narrowed down to between 1830 and 1850 in both France and England.

In France, 1830 is an important moment because it represents the return of the monarchy in France after years of the First Republic of France since the French Revolution in 1789. July 1830 is often referred to as the July Monarchy, where Louis-Philippe became king of France. Throughout the 1830s, there were political riots, protests, and overall political and social upheaval due to the malcontents with the Monarchy and their government; there were several assassination attempts on King Louis-Philippe's life. In 1848, France experienced another revolution known as the February Revolution, in which Louis-Philippe was forced to abdicate the throne and flee to England, while Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, known as Napoleon III, became the president of France's Second Republic. Napoleon III was also the nephew of the famous Emperor of France, Napoleon I, whom he idealized very much and whose legacy ultimately inspired Napoleon III's coup d'etat in 1848. The end of the 1840s marked the beginning of Eugene Sue's political career as a socialist in France under a new political regime. Sue was very forthright with his political messaging about social responsibility, he felt the more fortunate had to help those less fortunate– this is a theme that persists throughout *Les Mystères de Paris*, embodied by the main character, Prince Rodolphe. In 1850, Eugène Sue was elected to

the Assemblée Nationale as a socialist leader, a position that he held until 1851 when he openly opposed the coup d'etat led by Napoleon III and his government, culminating in Napoleon III becoming the Emperor of the Second Empire of France, and Sue being exiled to Savoy where he spent the rest of his life.

Other notable moments in the 1830s in France include the creation of the *roman-feuilleton* in 1836 by Emile de Girardin, the editor of La Presse, a French newspaper that still exists today. At the same historical moment, it's important to note that the popular genre that dominated pop culture in theatre, prose, and poetry was romanticism. 1843 marks the official publication of *Les Mystères de Paris*– more specifically, the completion of the narrative since it was published in parts from 1842-3 as a *roman-feuilleton,* in collaboration with *Le Journal des Débats,* thus rendering Eugène Sue a *feuilltoniste.*

In England, the political and social realities were significantly tamer compared to the politically volatile France. That isn't to say that England was without conflict or political radicalism; the 1830s were marked by intense industrialization and the First Great Reform Act in 1832 that expanded suffrage to more men, instead of suffrage only being a right of the aristocracy and upper classes. The Victorian Era officially began in 1837 when Queen Victoria took the throne, denoting that same year Charles Dickens released *The Pickwick Papers*, a massively successful project, and *Oliver Twist,* which became one of the first truly industrial city novels. Similarly to Sue, 1844 marks the publication of *The Mysteries of London* by George W.M. Reynolds as an independent penny paper, which differentiates Reynolds's narrative from Sue's since Reynolds was able to publish his text without newspaper affiliation. As an independent penny paper, *The Mysteries of London* was sold in chapter-by-chapter copies instead of being released as a part of any particular newspaper. Reynolds, like Sue, was also a socially

engaged man; in fact, he was one of the key leaders in the Chartist movement across England. The Chartist movement largely stood for the expansion of voting rights to all men, and was a populist cause that centered around the working man and his needs based on his contributions to society.

These sentiments of populism exist among Reynolds's writings like *The Mysteries of London*, where Reynolds's radical spirit characterizes the wealthy classes as selfish and backhanded cheats; however, his most radical writings were a part of the continuation of *The Mysteries of London* known as *The Mysteries of the Court of London*, where Reynolds goes as far as criticizing Queen Victorian. England experienced the culmination of Chartist protest in 1848 with the Kennington Common Rally, where Chartist leaders and protestors issued their demands to the English Parliament, an event Reynolds was surely in attendance at. Then, in 1850, the first Public Library Act was passed– a result of increased literacy that came as a result of increased industrialization, even if England didn't pass its first education reform until the 1870s. The 1840s in England were a time of intense industrialization, while also being a moment of increasingly tense politics across all of Europe and in the colonies. As seen in the French timeline of revolutions and new political regimes, there was a spirit of rebellion alive and well in the western world; however, this revolutionary movement didn't topple the English monarchy, and in 1851, England hosted the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace as a celebration of British Nationalism and their perseverance through a turbulent moment in European political history.

As men and as writers, Eugène Sue and George W.M. Reynolds didn't share much in common. Eugène Sue was born in 1804 to a Parisian aristocratic family, who had imperial ties to the Empress Josephine de Beauharnais, the wife of Napoleon I, first Emperor of France. Unsurprisingly, Eugène Sue was a wealthy man and had an easy life and transition into his

writing career, which was dominated by two serialized works: *The Mystères de Paris (1842-3)* in the *Journal des Débats* and *Le Juif Errant (1844-5)* published in *Le Constitutionnel*. After his exile to Savoy, Sue fell into relative obscurity because he was no longer able to stay in France. Reynolds, however, came from more humble beginnings than Sue. Born in 1814 in Kent, England, Reynolds's first success came with his appropriation of the massively popular *Pickwick Papers* of Charles Dickens, deeming his own version, *Pickwick Abroad,* in 1839. Reynolds's writing career brought him to Paris, France, and he read *Les Mystères de Paris* by Eugène Sue and got inspired to recreate his own version of the story's premise. Thus, Reynolds wrote *The Mysteries of London* in 1844 to such great success that it essentially made his literary career and secured him an office on Wellington Street next to Charles Dickens and Henry Mayhew. Reynolds became a magazine editor of his own miscellany called *Reynolds Miscellany*, while also publishing a continuation of *The Mysteries of London*, the aforementioned *The Mysteries of the Court of London.*

With the histories of both France and England in mind, *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* are increasingly easy to understand due to their hyper-specificity when it comes to location. In *Les Mystères de Paris,* Sue uses fixed places and place names to render his narrative increasingly realistic, and by extension increasingly interesting; some such references are Notre-Dame de Paris (Chapter I, page37), Plain St. Ouen (Chapter VIII, page 90), Plain St. Dennis (Chapter VIII, page 90), and L'allee des Veuves (Chapter IX, page 96), to name a few. The same can be said for *The Mysteries of London*, where Reynolds mentions specific places that bring along their own social connotations, like Smithfield Marketplace (Chapter I, page 7) and Newgate Prison (Chapter XXVI, page 131). The implications of such a hyper-referential text are those of influence and how the references influence the readers. Most frequently, the readers of

Les Mystères de Paris and *The Mysteries of London* will find themselves picking up on the social references made by Sue and Reynolds by virtue of the readers themselves being city dwellers and familiar with either Paris or London. However, it is possible that Sue and Reynolds's readership wasn't entirely confined to the urban environment, which would mean that the writers had some provincial readers who would be altogether unfamiliar with the iconography of Paris and London, in turn the referentiality of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* would come to construct a mythos of each city in the popular imagination as a city of crime and vice.

This thesis is dedicated to observing how *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* as fixtures of mid-nineteenth-century popular culture came to anticipate and influence the future iterations of popular culture and format in the realms of serialization, city fiction, and genre in popular fiction, through investigating their trailblazing successes in the realm of format, theme, and genre.

In many ways, the massive popularity and dissemination of both these texts came to influence and cement popular formats like that of the *roman-feuilleton* in France, and the penny dreadful, or penny paper, in England. Chapter One, "Form Follows Function: Serialization and Popular Fiction," is dedicated to investigating the conception of serialized fiction as a reaction to the rising cost of books and other printed material in an era where literacy was spreading due to educational reform laws, or as a byproduct of an increasingly industrialized society. While Honore de Balzac may have been the first writer to have been published serially with his *roman-feuilleton La Vielle Fille* in 1836, Sue was by far the most popular and influential *feuilletonist* in France during the innovation of the mass press. In Chapter One, I engage with the works of library historians, literary and cultural historians, as well as essayists and other academics who

have gathered information on literacy and working-class literary interest in mid-nineteenth-century France and England. I investigate why the *roman-feuilleton* came about, and why texts were serialized in the first place, but most primarily, I set out to answer the question, Why are Sue and Reynolds and their texts inextricably linked to the process of serialization. I go about answering this question in a three pronged approach where I attribute the creation of the mass press and serialized literature, and Sue and Reynolds affiliation with them, on three points; the *roman-feuilleton,* and the serialized novel as a forms, the growth of a new literate working class, and the technological innovations that permitted the mass production of printed material in the first place.

Chapter Two, "The Relationship Between the Text and the City and the City and the Text" is dedicated to the idea of city literature, and an entire branch of written prose that is concerned with the increasingly modern city. In Chapter Two, I treat Lehan's ideas of the city " as an evolving construct" (Lehan 3), that superimposes "urban upon literary and vice versa" (Lehan 3) as foundational to my thinking. During my research, I familiarized myself with Raymond Williams and his work in *The Country and The City (1973)* and *The English Novel From Dickens to Lawrence (1973)*; and in doing so I was introduced to the idea that the city as a cultural entity creates more of everything in contrast to the pastoral villages the predated the urban city. What's more is that I was introduced to the concept of "knowable communities", and how Williams states that "All novels are in some sense knowable communities", which made me question my own thinking about the cities. Ultimately, I realized that what the city did to the social scene in relation to Williams's claim about more being "at stake" and "at issue" in the city was that it created an unknowable community, which becomes reiterated in French modernist literature as it manifests itself as *la foule*. By engaging with historical, cultural, and literary

critics, I examine how Sue and Reynolds use the city as a setting, and a character to excite the reader and render the city as a site of intense action and anxiety for the reader. The materiality of each text in its final bound form. *Les Mystères de Paris* is around 1400 pages, and *The Mysteries of London* is around 1800; thus reflecting the vastness, chaos, and disorder of the city through the materiality of the texts themselves. Overall, I treat Chapter Two as an investigation of what about the city as a whole permits such a narrative to be constructed and how the city either fragments or alienates the individual in contrast to a provincial town, and if the experience of the city dweller is reflected in *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*. Further, the conversation around hyper-referentiality of the texts is important not only to the representation of the city in literature, but also to the trend of realism in fiction: how realism heightens the reader's engagement with the text and how these texts have influenced the representation of cities in future iterations of popular culture.

Chapter Three, "The Mysteries of What?: Genre-bending in Popular Fiction," is an investigation into genre and what genre means in the scope of popular culture, but also how *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* function as genre-conglomerates in the realm of popular culture. In this chapter, I consider the works of genre theorists like David Punter in order to notice the presence of the Gothic genre in each text, and what genres like the Gothic represent as an extension of culture. Most foundational to my thinking in this chapter is the research of John Cawelti, who examines formula stories and describes them as "artistic constructions created for the purpose of enjoyment and pleasure" (Cawelti 2). Using Cawelti's thinking, I distanced myself from the texts, and instead of thinking of them as part of any literary canon, I considered them as popular texts intended to entertain a mass audience, rather than to inspire higher thinking or consideration of an artistic truth that would represent the purpose of "high art". In Chapter

Three I also foreground Cawelti's idea of reiterating successful media, an idea that he explores when talking about capitalist tendencies for reproduction of popular media as a way for other producers to take advantage of the popularity of the source text/media. In terms of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London,* I consider the different iterations of "The Mysteries" and how popular fiction brings with it a certain need for genre-multiplicity to entertain a mass audience.

Overall, this thesis stems from a comparative analysis of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* as source and reproduction, ultimately asserting that *The Mysteries of London* is not, and cannot be an copy, a translation, or an adaptation of *Les Mystères de Paris* since the subject matter– that of the city– is entirely different and therefore in no sense can produce the same narrative. In the end I argue that massively popular texts of Sue and Reynolds have come to influence and anticipate popular culture starting in the 1850s and persisting into the present.

Chapter One: Form Follows Function: Serialization and Popular Fiction.

When discussing *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* or even discussing the histories of Eugène Sue and George W.M. Reynolds in any research, no matter how superficial, you will be greeted with the terms serialization or roman-feuilleton. The natural response to seeing these terms attached to Sue and Reynolds is to ask, what is serialization and what is a roman-feuilleton? Put simply, serialization is a process in which parts of a book are released by chapter on a regular basis; most serialized novels are released either weekly, or monthly. The roman-feuilleton is simply the French name given to serialized fiction. Serialization seems a strange way to go about releasing an author's work; why then is serialization attached to the likes of Sue and Reynolds? In this chapter, I hope to not only give a brief history of serialization and its usage in mid-nineteenth century England and France but also to explain why Reynolds and Sue are almost synonymous with serialization and the Roman-feuilleton. Moreover, I hope to investigate how serialization shapes fiction and what the tradition of serialization did to the practice of writing and being a professional writer. On this point, I engage with a contemporary writer of Reynolds and Sue– Wilkie Collins, and his essay on the "Unknown Public", which serves to establish the success of each writer insofar as they were able to secure the support and interest of this "Unknown Public". Finally, I will examine the texts, *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* in order to locate evidence, and influence of serialized fiction and how this mode of dissemination shaped these works, and others like them during this moment in literary history.

Sue and Reynolds are intrinsically linked to serialization and that is because they are some of the first and most successful writers to publish in this form. In this sense, Sue and Reynolds are used as examples by which to define serialization as a publishing practice, using their works as examples of what serialization looked like during the mid-nineteenth century in France and England. Therefore, Sue and Reynolds are not only used to define serialization but the bulk of their work is then defined by serialization itself. That is to say, this chapter is intent on investigating how Sue and Reynolds define serialization, but they are also defined by serialization through their works. Firstly, Sue released *Les Mystères de Paris* in 1842 in weekly installments in the *Journal des Débats* to great success– so much so that he landed himself a deal to write another serialized fiction for the newspaper *Le Constitutionnel* called *Le Juif Errant*. The success of *Les Mystères de Paris* was felt far and wide, and the novel served as inspiration for many– specifically for George W.M. Reynolds, an Englishman who was visiting Paris and read Sue's work. After returning to London, Reynolds decided to take the idea of Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* and apply it to his own city, thus creating *The Mysteries of London,* debuting in 1844 as weekly penny numbers, instead of as a part of a specific newspaper.

The success of each author leads us to some questions regarding why the fiction they produced was so popular. The success of each author can be narrowed down to three main points: the price of their work compared to authors who only released their work in book form; the expanding education reforms of the nineteenth century; and the engagement that the serialized format permits between author and reader.

The cost of books during the nineteenth century was astronomical due to the specialization and expertise it took to create a book. Its cost of production then placed it outside of the purchasing range of many middle and working-class individuals, resulting in books being

viewed as a luxurious commodity. Then, with a more industrialized society literacy was encouraged as a safety measure when operating machinery, so much so that John Feather states, " In such a society, illiteracy was no longer merely a social stigma, it was a fundamental economic disadvantage" (Feather 130). In France, the motivation for literacy was an obligatory one with the implementation of the Guizot law in 1833. With a standardized work schedule in industrial workplaces came increased leisure time, and reading became a favorite pastime of not only the upper class but also of the previously illiterate working class. In my research on serialization, I found the biographies of Eugène Sue, and George W.M. Reynolds to be helpful in understanding their success within the tradition of serialization as a literary tradition. By examining the biographies of the authors, the social view of France and England becomes clearer to the twenty-first-century mind, thus rendering aspects like: the serialization practices of the time, the financial incentives made by the penny press, and the readership and literacy of those consuming serialized fiction more clear. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to identify how serialization as a literary tradition shapes literature and to then analyze the hallmarks of serialized fiction as they reveal themselves in both *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*.

To fully understand the innovation behind the mass press and the subsequent success of serialized novels by big-name authors and unknown authors all the same, it is necessary to observe the history of the modern book as it reveals the economic motives behind serialization and its success. The lifetime of the book, as we know it today, has not always been that of an affordable collection of pages and writing. Books for the most part were considered luxury items as they were sold in three-volume sets, as each book or novel was split into three parts and sold as such. This book format was priced at a guinea and a half, which placed it well outside of the

financial reach of the middle, and working classes as the average salary for a middle-class skilled merchant, lawyer, or doctor in the 1840s was around 100-200 pounds– with a guinea being 21 shillings and a pound 20 shillings (Griest 2). Therefore books remained a commodity only for the rich– unsurprisingly the upper classes were the only class to be literate in Victorian England. The exclusivity and scarcity of books in middle and working-class families made the appearance of cheap serialized literature all the more appealing to working-class families, not only because reading was the most popular pastime, but also because reading– at large– was the pastime of the aristocracy.

In France, books then shifted into what was known in France at the time as a Roman-feuilleton, which was a chapter of a novel that was added to what would now be known as the art and culture section of the newspaper. The newspaper culture in England is vast and difficult to navigate, but it pales in comparison to the newspaper culture of France in the 1830s into the 1840s. As a result of the many political and social revolutions in France during the nineteenth century, social reform was constant. In 1833, with the Guizot Law, a minimum elementary education was required for all; in turn, the literacy rates increased dramatically. With the Guizot Law, a new population of literate individuals emerged. While the law mandated a basic education, it wasn't a superior education and left the newly literate population with an inability to digest the works of popular writers at the time like Balzac, Dumas, Hugo, and Flaubert. Thus, the newly literate gravitated towards the roman-feuilleton as it was considered literature facile, and a lower type of literature that was easily understood and gripping (Adamowicz-Hariasz 161). Education during the nineteenth century was thought to be an inalienable right– especially in France. Stemming from thinkers like Rousseau who argue that a growing and educated mind is necessary for all of society. The reason for such a sentiment towards education was that

Rousseau felt education was the key to revolution. In essence, one would be unaware of their mistreatment and opportunity for revolution if they were unable to understand the benefits of revolution in the first place. This idea of Rousseau's was an inspiration for acts and laws like the Loi Guizot, and this enlightened philosophy eventually spilled over into England, though shrouded under the guise of religious zealotry (James 3).

Shortly after the implementation of the Guizot Law in 1833, Emile de Girardin created the first roman-feuilleton in his newspaper *La Presse*, where Girardin had published a chapter of Balzac's novel *La Vieille Fille*, which became the blueprint for other writers as a way for them to engage with a new reading public through a more accessible avenue (Adamowicz-Hariasz 160). There wasn't a space for the roman-feuilleton initially; however, the newspaper had different sections as it developed, and in the arts and culture section, there were already critiques, or reviews of theatre, or ballets– so it wasn't out of the question to add literature into this section (Que sais-je 6).

The French press was a powerful tool in society, an institution, newspaper publishers remained engaged with the masses in an attempt to cater to them in order to sell more copies of their newspapers. This alliance between journalists and their audience became a powerful political tool in mid-nineteenth-century France, as newspapers like *Le Constitutionnel* were "the most widely read dailies between 1815 and 1830 when it[the newspaper] battled the Restoration regime. As such, it played a major role in the July 1830 Revolution" (Adamowicz-Hariasz 167). Thus, with the tense political situation within France during the 1830s and 1840s, the French went back and forth between monarchies, republics, back to monarchies, ultimately resulting in a new republic in 1848, dubbed the Second Republic under Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte (Napoleon III), which fostered a radical population. Then add the financial situation of many a common folk

in France, it is no wonder that "The roman-feuilleton came to life as a result of complex socio-political and economic forces and it in turn became a source for profound change in the social and cultural history of France" (Adamowicz-Hariasz 160).

In England, things were not as violent or chaotic as they were in France during the 1830s into the early 1840s but to draw a parallel between the two while France dealt with political uprisings and new administrations, England dealt with the Chartist movement– in which Reynolds was a key figure. This movement was a progressive one advocating for man and women's autonomy over the government; many Chartists were increasingly critical of the government at the time– a characteristic that isn't absent in Reynolds writings. The main push for serialized fiction came with the rise of newspapers or periodicals in the mid-nineteenth century. While the first mass mandatory education act in England didn't arrive until 1870 (James 2), there were other opportunities for people to become literate. The most common reason for adults to become newly literate was due to the influence of John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, which conveyed that education was necessary for an improved state (James 2). This project of literacy as an improved state was taken up by religious entities like the Methodists who established Sunday schools for children, educating between 800,000 and 1,500,000 in 1830 (James 3). Cities also swelled with inhabitants thanks to the Enclosure Acts in 1801 that redistributed feudal land and broke up towns– further encouraging migration to cities (James 1). With industrialization came an increasingly standardized workday– more so than that of agricultural laborers– and with this standardized workday came leisure time. With the increase in leisure time came a need for hobbies and reading was one of the most popular hobbies there is. Author David Vincent writes in his book *Literacy and Popular Culture* that with the standardization of a workday and increased pay there was "more money and more time in which

to spend it" (Vincent 211). However, the working classes were oftentimes excluded from the more innovative commodities like libraries and railway periodical bookstalls, as "they could no more purchase the shilling or two-shilling 'yellow-back' railway fiction of the 1850s than they could afford to use the stations on which they were sold" (Vincent 211). While David Vincent is pulling from the 1850s in England, his point still stands that the working classes were much excluded from spending their free time reading since reading material was too expensive for them to buy– even material as "low" as yellow-back railway fiction. It is this exclusion from having access to reading materials that resulted in such an overwhelming popularity of cheap serial fiction when it was presented to the working class.

On the topic of railway stations, there is an entire ecosystem of railway fiction that permeated into popular culture during the industrial age in mid-nineteenth century England. Richard Altick evaluates the role that railroad expansion played in the development of serialized fiction, or cheap fiction as popular fiction. Altick states, "As journeys [to work] became longer, thanks to the network of lines left by the speculative frenzy of the 1840s, novels were added to the wares for sale." (Altick and Rose 301). However, these books were often hyper-cheap, and salacious fiction that were often translated from French– that was until there was too much uproar concerning the morality of these texts, the response to which was the renting of railway stalls to reputable and respectable publishers.

With increased literacy and a voracious working-class readership, the cheap weekly serialized periodical became the most popular way for the masses to consume fiction– for entertainment purposes. The replacement of the book by the serialized periodical came as a result of many things, but the main points are those of "speed and economy" (Gamerson et al. 147). In terms of speed, that point is self-explanatory in the sense that a chapter of a book is faster to

publish and print than an entire novel. In terms of economy, the price of books had made them a luxury and overall inaccessible to the majority of the literate public. Even with solutions like the circulating libraries, the price of subscription outpriced the limits of working-class readers. Authors were trying to make a living off of writing during this period of the 1830s-1840s, and as a result, writers would charge high prices for their work– especially if they were popular writers like Dickens or Thackeray. Instead of a single household paying for a copy of an expensive popular book, the price was offset by the circulating libraries which would buy a copy and then circulate it among their subscriber base. Thus, an "unhealthy reliance upon the circulating library" (Altick and Rose 295) became the defining characteristic of the book trade during the mid-nineteenth-century. The same phenomenon was occurring in France, documented by the displeasure of celebrated writer Honore de Balzac. In an essay, John R. Barberet investigates the runaway success of the Roman-feuilleton and Balzac's relation to the publication form. That being said, Balzac was discontented with the communal reading practices among his readership, since he would have much rather had each individual buy a copy of his work rather than libraries, or cabinets de lecture rent out his writings (Adamowicz-Hariasz 188). What Balzac was so frustrated by was how the periodic press "fragmented the author's work at the level of production and dispensed these fragments piece by piece into the realm of alienated consumption…" (Adamowicz-Hariasz 188). However, we can observe that what is being done by the readership is the "economical thing" to do– that being spreading the cost of a text over several people, and several months. In his book *Serializing Fiction in the Victorian Press,* Graham Law writes, "Apparently the motivation[for publisher] was simply economic. In this way, publishers could spread the cost of production, and subscribers the cost of purchase, painlessly over the period of consumption…" (Law 3). Here, Law offers reasoning on the

motivation for both publishers and writers to serialize their work, the natural result of making one's work cheaper is that a larger readership can be amassed and engaged with– thus the reasoning for the success of Reyolds and Sue. Therefore, serialized literature became the solution to the inaccessibility of reading material through booksellers and circulating libraries. The natural consequence of serialization was lower prices for reading materials at large, and an increased ability to gain a readership without the confines of reading material being too expensive.

While the press at large and its rise to prominence in the mid-nineteenth century is interesting and important to our understanding of serialized fiction as we know it in *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*; what's more relevant is what is called the penny press "la petite presse". The penny press is what would be the most accessible version of the newspaper or at least the entertainment provided by the newspaper. In France, "la petite presse" was thrown into the spotlight around 1863 with the launch of another of Emile de Girardin's newspapers *Le Petit Journal*, which sought to lower costs of serialized fiction even further by generating lost revenue with advertisements. (Adamowicz-Hariasz 161). Meanwhile, in England, the penny press was a more independent publishing industry that consisted mostly of reprinted material. The significance of the penny press for my purposes is that it was where Reynolds published *The Mysteries of London*. While Sue was attached to *Le Journal des Débats*, Reynolds was essentially an independent author in the world of the penny press.

As I have previously stated, Sue and Reynolds are some of the most successful and popular writers to benefit from serialization as a distribution form. Their popularity begs the question, who was reading them? And why? Reynolds at his peak popularity sold around 40,000 copies a week (Sutherland 41), while Sue outsold Reynolds six times over, garnering 300,000

readers weekly when serialized in the *Journal des Débats* from 1842-1843. It is important to note that these numbers are entirely speculative since the consumption of each copy of these texts was communal. It was common that a single copy of a serialized work of fiction would be read aloud to an audience– or shared among several consumers in coffee houses, or cabinets de lecteur– therefore adding engagement that would otherwise be unavailable to the publishers. The large gap between the popularity of Sue and Reynolds begs the question, why is one being read six times more than the other? This question returns to the point made by Collins in his essay; in essence, the success of the author is a result of who can capture the attention of the working-class, and maintain the readership they already have. I find that this point holds true to the overwhelming engagement that shows itself in the readership figures of Sue and Reynolds. Overall, I find that taking the biographies of each writer into account, Sue is able to be more widely read than Reynolds because of how moderate he is in almost all of his politics and writing. Whereas Reynolds engages more with his readership, but plays more towards the working class– and does so more radically than Sue does. In his radical writings, Reynolds essentially relinquishes the middle and upper-class reader, since his writing is critical of such classes in a way that is absent from Sue's writing. The style of writing from each author is influenced by their literary careers, thus harkening back to the author's biographies.

Sue grew up among the upper class, and had made his way into journalism and writing and then became well known for a lot of his early works receiving praise for his writing style, often being called "the French Cooper" in reference to James Fenimore Cooper of the United States, and this comparison comes through in Sue's writing as he references the "savages" described in Cooper's novel *The Last of the Moheicans* in his first chapter; "... en dehors de la civilisation que les sauvages peuplades si bien peintes par Cooper" (Sue 35). Further, Sue's

writing was very much of its time and reactive to contemporary politics,this resulted in *Les Mystères de Paris* being defined as "Romain mondain, *Les Mystères de Paris* est aussi un roman d'aventures exotiques, ou les apaches de Paris remplacent ceux de l'Amérique, et un roman populiste, mettant en scène les marginaux de Paris, pauvres, petit peuple, ouvrier, bandits, avec leur langage propre (l'argot), leur moeurs et leurs destins." (Que sais-je 7). That is to say that *Les Mystères de Paris* was groundbreaking in its depiction of the working class while telling a story that didn't look down upon them, rather sympathizing with those less fortunate– all the while telling the story in l'argot or the working class's own dialect of French. Sue's standing in society as someone with origins in the upper class, while still writing sympathetically to the working class, made him instantly palatable to a wide audience.

Reynolds's situation is entirely different, as he didn't come from the upper class, as much as he came from the middle class. Reynolds was for all intents and purposes a failed journalist and made most of his money off of parodying the success of Charles Dickens. One of Reynolds's first successes came with his parody of *The Pickwick Papers,* which he named *Pickwick Abroad*. This same practice was applied to *Les Mystères de Paris,* as Reynolds had read the work of Sue while in Paris in the early 1840s and applied the same sentiment to London upon his return. While the titles of each text are similar, the stories are anything but. This difference is representative of the difference in writing styles between the two authors. As was previously mentioned, Sue was a great writer, as seen through his popularity, and was brought up in the upper classes of Paris insofar as he became involved with the Salons of the time. His involvement in upper-class society influenced his writing to appeal to the upper classes in part. However, Reynolds was more a journalist than he was a literary author, and as a result, the language of *The Mysteries of London* tends to be a lot more revolutionary than anything that is

seen in *Les Mystères de Paris.* Reynolds was known to be radical and was in part radicalized by the Chartist movement in which he became a large player. Reynolds's revolutionary style resulted in his popularity among the middle and working classes, but made him unpalatable to the upper classes, as they viewed his radicalism as a threat to their status quo. Reynolds also was known to cater to the readership of the penny dreadful, as a natural delineation from the penny installment to the penny blood, which was sold in "the slums" and typically aimed at a "juvenile market" (Law 23). However, while Reynolds didn't have the readership of the upper classes, he secured the working class and the middle class. Since there was a "bourgeois aversion" to the weekly serial (Law 23), Reynold's collections of *The Mysteries of London* were bound into volumes to be read by a more well-off audience than the likes of his serial consumers, in turn expanding his readership simply through the changing of literary format (Shannon 101).

Thus it has been established that the readership of Sue and Reynolds was similar– but not entirely the same. Sue was read more widely due to his sympathy in depicting the poor and working classes, while still being respected by the upper classes from which he came. Reynolds was widely read due to his radicalism and appeal to the working class, more so than his appeal to the nobility of the time (Maxwell 62). This is all to say that the bulk of Sue and Reynolds's readership came from the emerging working-class readership. In many ways, the serialized fiction style– that of journalism and literary writing– and length were almost made for the working class as they "did not have an excess of time and therefore would read in fits and starts, hence the usefulness of gripping and short stories" (Vincent 214). In this way, reading became the inverse of what it was at its conception– instead of being a way to gather information and diffuse knowledge, reading became a form of entertainment that wasn't wholly educational. Further displacing the power imbalance between social classes who were educated and could

read, and those who could not. Instead of this stark dichotomy of can and cannots; we are faced with what one reads rather than if one can read.

Much can be learned from investigating who was reading Sue and Reynolds, but also where they were reading them and how, as a result, it is necessary to examine the reading practices of the time. In an essay, Maria Adamowicz-Hariasz examines the Roman-feuilleton and its transformation, she mentions the cabinets de lecture –the French equivalent of the English coffee house, in essence, a place for communal reading– which the masses flocked to in an effort to consume the most recent printed media. She states that "the numbers clearly show a steadily growing demand for the written word among the newly literate. For example, and especially in the cities." (Adamowicz-Hariasz 162). Adamowicz-Hariasz continues to cite the "rapid multiplication" of the cabinets de lecture with only 21 in 1819 Paris, 207 in 1843, and 215 in 1844 (Adamowicz-Hariasz 162). The flocking of the masses to public places like the cabinets de lecture encourages the notion that the consumption of periodicals among the patrons of such an establishment was a social one. That is to say that the purchase of one copy of a chapter of *Les Mystères de Paris* wouldn't account for just one reader; instead, multiple individuals would have either read the chapter or have had the chapter read to them.

The same idea goes for England except instead of cabinets de lecteur, England had coffee houses. The masses were attracted to coffee houses because, during the mid-1800s, the price of coffee steadily dropped until a cup of coffee cost a penny. In *Fiction for the Working Man* Louis James cites coffee houses as ideal because "workmen could eat a meal at a coffee house, or bring their own instead of traveling back home for lunch" (James 8). The coffee house then became a meeting place for the radicals and revolutionaries of the 1830s in England as they had been the gathering place for many working-class men. In 1840, London had between 1,600 and 1,800

coffee houses in the city. In these venues, literature was being shared among a large population of working-class men and women.

The hallmark of the Roman-feuilleton and its English iteration as the serialized novel is that of the mixture of literary writing and journalism. Maria Adamowicz-Hariasz describes the change in literary style as the roman-feuilleton became the popular publication mode for writers, stating that serialized novels forced "the *hommes de lettres* to write as fast as journalists and because the product of their work had to attract and sustain the interest of as many consumers as possible", as a result, "A successful roman-feuilleton made frequent use of cliches, it privileged dialogue over description, and it lighted readers through swift action and rapidly and unexpectedly changing events" (Adamowicz-Hariasz 165). Since serialized fiction was being released either weekly, monthly, or bimonthly, there had to be a sort of incentive for the consumer to buy the next chapter at the next release date. Further, it was important for the reader to be gripped by the first several sentences of a serialized novel so they would buy a chapter, and hopefully the rest of the series. As a result, we are left with a reading matter that is one that "draws upon recent murders and other crimes, along with divorce cases and scandals…" (Wynne 5). The usage of such overly dramatic and sometimes improper subject matter for the Roman-feuilleton, like scandals and divorces is what drew in the masses of readers who, for the most part, were coming from the emergent literate working-class reading. Here, we see a literate working-class reader who, as John Sutherland points out is "prepared to put its hand in its pocket to get the fiction it liked" (Sutherland 42). That is to say that at large the production of fiction became a lucrative business model in which catering to the mass populous was the ticket to success. (Sutherland 43). As a result, the ensuing fiction produced was one that was more democratized rather than elitist.

As has been previously mentioned, the working class, up until the mid-1830s and early 1840s, had been excluded from both literacy and print culture. That is to say that, not only could the working class not read, but if they could they wouldn't find much to connect with much of the subject matter that was being discussed in the print media at the time. What I mean by that is the print media was catering to an upper-class reader, and sometimes a middle-class reader. Therefore, the topics would be things like balls and elite social activities that remained mysterious and uninteresting to the working class. However, the production of literature, or fiction for the working class began around 1830, with a growing accessibility to printed material. Newspapers and periodicals were made cheaper with the advancement of printing technology (James xv).

Scholar John Feather writes in his book *A History of British Publishing* that "As the pace of economic change increased, so too did the dependence on print." (Feather 130), denoting that an increasingly industrialized society leans on printed material for so many different reasons: advertising, newspaper printing, books, and other leisure readings. However, for the most part, the printing style of the nineteenth century was "essentially unchanged from the methods which Gutenbuerg had invented 350 years before. Typesetting, printing and binding were all hand-craft processes, as were papermaking and typefounding." (Feather 131). Since there was an apparent lack of innovation in printing at the start of the nineteenth century, it's no wonder that books were seen as luxury commodities, as the fabrication of books was a long and expensive process.

There were three main components to printing that made it expensive: papermaking, the printing press itself, and typesetting. At the end of the eighteenth century and before, paper was made from rags– clean rags at that, and the process was time consuming. The push for a cheaper solution to papermaking came as a result of a lack of material for fabricating paper from clean

rags. This struggle resulted in paper prices skyrocketing, with a sharp decline in profit that came from printing since the costs would often be passed from producer to consumer. However, a solution was reached in 1789 with experiments done by Nicholas-Louis Robert, who "succeeded in building a paper making machine, driven by water power" (Feather 131). Eventually British wholesalers Henry and Sealy Fourdrinier brought Robert's design to England and perfected it creating the first commercial paperaking machine in 1807 (Feather 131). In terms of printing, the process had been unchanged since its conception in the fifteenth century, and remained as such until the early nineteenth century when John Walter who "installed a steam-driven press at *The Times*, the first which had ever been in commercial use." (Feather 133), the primary motive behind most of the innovations in printing including that of the mechanization of the printing press was a result of the public's voracious appetite for up-to-date printed matter such as newspapers. The final innovation that facilitated the speed and success of serialized printed matter was that of typesetting to stereotyping. Typesetting had been an unchanged practice until the end of the nineteenth century when it was replaced by stereotyping, which would allow for a faster and more mechanized creation of printed material (Feather 133). In combination, the innovations in papermaking, printing, and typesetting permitted the public to engage with printed material as fast as publishers and printers would release them. This uptake in a reading public is one of the many factors that permitted the runaway success of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*.

We have spoken about the Roman-feuilleton or the serialized penny paper as being a sort of literature facile, or lower class literature– as it had been deemed by the more powerful and elite classes. However, the stigmatization of serialized cheap fiction by the upper and middle classes fueled the cohesion between literate members of the working class. Louis James writes

that the working classes, "were closely unified by political and class feeling, and poverty meant that the price of literature largely determined the class of the reader, the poor buying the penny part, the middle classes feeling cheap literature had a social stigma." (James xvii). Here, James aligns the specific forms of serialized fiction with the social class that was most likely to identify with or purchase. Middle-class individuals felt cheap literature to be beneath them and preferred instead to read family magazines or miscellanies; while the working class bought the cheapest fiction that was available.

In an essay written by the Victorian writer Wilkie Collins, titled *The Unknown Public*, published in *Household Words* in 1858– which places him around ten years after Sue and Reynolds– the author reveals to his readers– who would be largely middle-class readers– that there is a large consumer of printed media that is unknown to the likes of Collins. This unknown public is the population who reads only the newspaper and the penny papers that are sold alongside it (Collins 209). What Collins proceeds to do is to assert that "the future of English fiction may rest with the Unknown Public" (Collins 216), in an effort to demonstrate the influence that such a large consumer base– of allegedly 3 million– could have upon an author's success. Collins then explains that he bought five penny papers, and found them all to be written by different men, but detailing the same thing, so much so that the same man could have written all five of the papers. To this point Collins asserts that the unknown public "looks to quantity in its reading, rather than to quality" (Collins 211). Collins makes a point about what he finds to be the problem with serialized novels like *Les Mystères de Paris*, *Le Juif Errant*, and *The Count of Monte Cristo* and their apparent failures among the unknown public in England. On this point, Collins makes the case that the referential material in these French fictions is too culturally specific to make sense to the working class that is consuming them in serialized form. Collins

asks that among the unknown public "how many are likely to know, for example, that Mademoiselle means Miss?" (Collins 215). The point that Collins is trying to make throughout this essay is that the unknown public is a large untapped portion of possible readership in England. The patrons of libraries and owners of books in their homes are the minority of readers when it comes down to a numbers game. Therefore, what I find the most interesting and significant about Collins's essay is not his overt mention of Eugène Sue and *Les Mystères de Paris*; rather, it is his exposé of the unknown public as an entity among readers, and how powerful the support of the unknown public could be for one's career. On that point, I find that it is this unknown public in England that has been tapped into not only by Sue, but also by Reynolds, and it's the unknown public that made them so popular. Collins's essay makes it clear that he views the unknown public as a class with an inability to understand "high-brow" literature, which is apparent through Collins's distaste for their chosen reading material. The points that Collins makes hold true in a sociological sense if we apply them to Sue, and more markedly, Reynolds. Each writer was popular by virtue of their entertaining writing; however, the bulk of their popularity–and sales– is a result of their engagement with the unknown public that Collins investigates.

Serialization as a publication format is interesting in the sense that the author is writing a novel-length story; however, the readership will only be able to read the story one chapter at a time. As a result, each and every chapter must be action packed and engaging in some way that either captures the reader's attention for the entire chapter, or, sets up the next chapter in a manner so engaging that it builds suspense in the reader– thus guaranteeing the reader buys the next chapter. The author's preference is to do both of these things at the same time, so that each chapter is in-and-of-itself interesting, while still fitting into an overarching narrative. What is

most obvious in the format of both *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* is the length of the chapter. Since each chapter was meant to come out weekly, while also fitting onto two to four pages of the newspaper, they needed to be short. The brevity of each chapter further serves to move the plot of the novel forward at a much higher pace than the traditional unserialized novel. Further, each chapter ends with a cliffhanger or a moment of foreshadowing what's to come next; this addition of a cliffhanger became common practice so that the buyer would be encouraged to come back next week and buy the next chapter. In his book, *Popular French Romanticism,* Joseph Smith Allen examines the line between popular romanticism and the roman-feuilleton, and in doing so he states that according to Reybaud "Each number must end well… Tie it to the next issue by a sort of umbilical cord that calls, that creates the desire, indeed the impatience to read on" (Allen 204). The writings of both Sue and Reynolds are thus shaped by the format in which they publish. One of the most noticeable characteristics of serial publishing, especially in a series as popular as those of Sue and Reynolds, is the complexity of the plot, and how multiple storylines occur at the same time. While both writers are guilty of writing too many plotlines, Reynolds is the most obvious, seeing as in *The Mysteries of London,* "There are too many fragments to the narrative for there ever to be a final resolution. This is, of course, a common conceit in serial fiction, but one which Reynolds exploits particularly well." (Shannon 102).

Both Sue and Reynolds end their chapters quickly with little explanation of what happens next, or where the story could go. In, *Les Mystères de Paris,* chapter four ends with the lines "un incident tragique vint rappeler à ces trois personnages dans quel lieu ils se trouvaient.[1]" (Sue 70). The language used by Sue is laced with negative connotations, however, he doesn't

[1] A tragic event will remind these three characters of the space in which they find themselves. [translation mine]

offer any hints about what comes next. This isn't always the case with Sue as there are some chapters that naturally follow one another; for example, chapters three and four are "L'histoire de la Goualeuse", and "L'histoire du Chourineur", respectively. That is to say that some chapters are organized formulaically and are not as surprising with their ending and subsequent beginnings. However, the same effect is produced– an eagerness to read what comes next. We see this in chapters three and four, where the last line of chapter two sets up the mysterious recollection of the story of La Goualeuse, where Le Chorineur states "Maintenant, a ton tour, la Goualeuse, dit le Chorineur; je garde mon histoire pour la bonne bouche[2]" (Sue 52). Thus leading the reader eagerly into the following chapters.

Reynolds achieves the same effect that Sue does, however, it's through more dramatic means. While Sue leaves a lot to the imagination of the reader, of what could possibly happen next, Reynolds tends to dramatically build the action of a chapter until the end and leave the reader waiting for more. For example, in chapter two, "The Mysteries of the Old House" at the end of the chapter our main character, the handsome stranger, listens to the covert goings on of the criminals in which he's found himself hiding. The final lines are as follows: "Seizing the candle, he was hurrying towards the door, when his comrade rushed after him, crying 'No– I won't be left in the dark! I can't bear it! Damme, if you go, I'll go with you!; The two villains accordingly proceeded together into the next room." (Reynolds 13). What Reynolds does with each of his chapters is the same as what Sue does; that being that both authors explore an issue that is pertinent to the chapter itself, and the narrative at large. Sue and Reynolds play with the intrigue of each chapter and set up the end of the current chapter in such a dramatic way that the reader feels obliged to buy the next chapter in order to experience the resolution of the last

[2] Now, your turn Fleur-de-Marie, said the Chorineur, I am saving my story till last. [translation mine]

chapter. In this way, Reynolds, and Sue entertain the reader immediately from chapter to chapter, while simultaneously keeping the work cohesive and thus linking the chapters together through a common goal of the character that is to be reached by the end of the series, whenever that may be. For Sue, his narrative is kept tight with a central character– Rodolphe– who hunts down dangerous criminals as his penance for past wrongdoings, then moves on to the next criminal once the last one is deposed. On the other hand, Reynolds upholds several different narratives at the same time instead of finishing one and then picking up another. In Reynolds' text we are introduced to the going ons of the city, the countryside, and newgate all at the same time. The result is a messier, and more chaotic story– but one that provides variety to the reader in a way that Sue doesn't with his chronological, unified story.

Overall, when examining *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* in volume form as we come across them today, it's common to realize that the texts are not organized the same way as conventional novels. Upon further investigation, we come across a rich history of serialized fiction during the mid-nineteenth century that was a response to the soaring prices of traditional three-volume books and circulating library subscriptions. Thus, the coincidence of literature being published, and reprinted in newspapers due to a workaround in the Taxes on Knowledge left an opportunity for writers to get their work published in magazines and newspapers. Much of the success that works like *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* enjoyed comes from the expansion of literacy during the mid-nineteenth century, and the author's ability to catch the attention of the newly literate masses– what Wilkie Collins refers to as The Unknown Public. Therefore, understanding the work of Sue and Reynolds is to understand the publication history that the texts have gone through as well as their reception among a mass audience. These texts, like all others, do not exist in a vacuum, instead, they are a

product of their time insofar as they cater to the likes and dislikes of their readers, in turn, resulting in their mass popularity in a way that is unique to these texts in their specific time.

Chapter Two:The Relationship Between the Text and the City and the City and the Text.

More is at issue and more is at stake in the city;...

Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*

Most novels are in some sense knowable communities

Raymond Williams, *The English novel from Dickens to Lawrence*

The two city novels, *Les Mystères de Paris* (1843), and *The Mysteries of London* (1852) emerge from a particular moment in Western European history. During the mid 1800's, the concept of a city was just starting to take shape. The idea of a city was centered around industrialization and capitalism, more so than feudalism or any archaic tradition. The city was everything that the small town wasn't: dangerous, huge, ever-changing. The vastness and ever changing nature of the city comes to create an inversion of what Raymond Williams calls "knowable community". In explaining "knowable communities" Williams asserts that the comfort and familiarity that we feel with a text comes from our ability as readers to identify with a community in the text. Therefore, since the city is huge, and so populated, this idea is reversed and the city becomes an unknowable community. So, how does one capture this essence of a developing city in a novel? For *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London,* this is done in many ways, not only through the materiality of the books themselves– as the first comes in around 1400 pages, and the second closer to 2000– but also through the way the city is represented in all its vastness and complexity therefore constructing a site of possibility from which the next 1400-2000 pages are born.

Before getting into what the text is doing and how, it's imperative to discuss the texts themselves. *Les Mystères de Paris* is a sensationalist novel that was published as weekly

installments in a newspaper– *Le Journal des Débats.* This form of publication came to be known as *les feuilletons* or *les romans-feuilletons,* which means a leaf or a leaf-novel, since these stories took up about a leaf of paper– as the French would say. This novel wasn't conceptualized to be around 1400 pages, instead it was brought about progressively, through weekly chapters that would end on a cliff-hanger so that the reader would be required to buy the next weeks' installment to find out what happens next. It is the vastness and density of the city that permits so many possible storylines that contribute to the novel's length. Raymond Williams writes that "more is at issue and more is at stake in the city", for this reason exactly. Thus, Sue exemplifies this quote since he takes the city of Paris, and hyperbolizes an already vast and unknowable city to engage with his readers and hold their attention. Therefore the ever-growing and ever-changing nature of a city, or an urban space, contains so much and it's this so-muchness that contributes to the intrigue of each text.

Les Mystères de Paris wasn't the first mystery novel; it's not a detective story; and it certainly isn't the invention of the French genre *Les Policiers.* Instead, the mysteries aren't ones that are meant to be solved, rather, the mysteries refer to the unknowable nature of the expansive city in which the novel takes place. Scholar Deborah Epstein-Nord writes that "One of the major paradigms of urban spectatorship and observation in the nineteenth century emerges as a dialectic between alienation and cognition, between the sometimes liberating and sometimes disturbing sense that the crowd is distant, unknown, and unreadable…" (Epstein-Nord 2). Here, she explores a similar "paradigm" to Raymond Williams's concept of knowable community, that being the closeness of a subject to the crowd that is full of strangers. The reversal of this concept of knowable communities comes to inform much of my thinking on doubleness as I investigate later.

Les Mystères de Paris was written by Eugène Sue, who had spent some time in the armed forces of France, and then settled in Paris, where he became a journalist and eventually became an author. Sue was an upper-class gentleman in all senses. He had a privileged upbringing– so much so that his god-mother was the Empress Josephine. When it came to his writing, Sue was very popular and, while exact statistics are hard to come by, *Les Mystères de Paris* has been called the most widely read novel of the 19th century. This acclaim is mostly due to Sue's desire to entertain through literature, rather than attempting to enact massive change through his work– this style of literature became known as sensationalized literature. That isn't to say that Sue's writing isn't political, because it is, as scholar Berry Chevasco writes in his article "Lost in Translation: The Relationship between Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* and G.W.M. Reynolds's *The Mysteries of London*", "*Les Mystères de Paris,* as its title suggests, takes the French capital as its setting and explores the urban underworld of Paris's criminal and poor quarters, exposing the need for social reform" (Chevasco 137). I find that Sue goes about exposing the need for social reforms in quite a covert manner, it's clear that the overarching goal of the literature is to entertain and to sell copies; however, there are moments in Sue's writing that hyperbolize reality. We see this hyperbolizing for dramatic effect–while also inviting critique in the first chapter of Sue's novel; "Le lecteur, prévenu de l'excursion que nous lui proposons d'entreprendre parmi les naturels de cette race infernale qui peuple les prisons, les bagnes, et dont le sang rougit les échafauds… le lecteur voudra peut-être bien nous suivre.[3]" (Sue 37). While these conditions could be accurate in certain cases, overall, they have been accentuated for dramatic effect and a more interesting story.

[3] The reader, thus informed of the nature of the excursion we intend to make among the people of this infernal race, who fill our prisons and galley, and whose blood stains our scaffolds, will perhaps follow us. [translation mine]

The genesis of *The Mysteries of London* has a direct connection to the creation and popularity of *Les Mystères de Paris*. Author Geroge W.M. Reynolds had come to Paris for one reason or another and, during his time there, he came across Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* and was enamored with it. So much so that he decided to lift the idea from Sue and apply the same idea to his own setting, resulting in exploring the labyrinthian streets of London–instead of Paris. Similarly to Sue, Reynolds was published in a newspaper and his gripping stories were sent out to all those who could buy a newspaper– which were many more than were able to buy an entire book. Reynolds became so popular that it was recorded to have sold between 30,000, and 40,000 copies in the beginning, and it only expanded from there (Chevasco 140). Similarly to Sue the length of text that was produced by Reynold was larger than the vast majority of literature preceding it, after *The Mysteries of London* ended the page count came out to around 2000 pages. The success of Reynolds's text was so overwhelming that it paid for the creation of Reynolds's own publishing company. Further, *The Mysteries of London* was so popular that Reynolds continued writing in his winning format, and thus wrote a similar text *The Mysteries of the Court of London*.

As a person Reynolds was quite different from Sue, since he didn't have any royal connections, political connections, or even any real professional connections. Reynolds was altogether known as a failed journalist. He was disliked by esteemed authors such as Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray, therefore coloring Reynolds as a poor journalist and a poor writer. The point of Reynolds's novel was quite different from Sue's– while they both believed in social reform to some extent, Reynolds was more radical not only in his ideas, but also through his language. Chevasco makes a point that "Reynolds's radical sympathies were apparent from the initial stages of *The Mysteries of London*, which openly criticized the social

elite with particularly revolutionary rhetoric" (Chevasco 140). What Reynolds emphasizes in his novel that Sue tends to keep more subdued is the intense disparity between the rich and the working class. Reynolds does this through drawing contrast between setting and character. He will place an upper-class man or woman in a working-class setting and describe the –albeit intensely hyperbolized– abysmal conditions that the working-class live in. Author Richard Lehan writes about the city during this time period stating that the city was "a lonely place where the family is often left behind on the estate, a physically gigantic realm in which space is now manipulated by machines like the new locomotive, an amoral world that turns on money and on mystery and intrigue as personal knowledge gives way to anonymity." (Lehan 43). This new setting– that being the emerging city is held between tradition and modernity. Not only does Lehan paint the city as gigantic, but he characterizes it as "amoral", and world that "turns on money, and on mystery". What Lehan does here is he analyses the city that Reynolds comes to explore, and hyperbolize in his fiction.

To illustrate this juxtaposition between setting and character, and how it exposes the disparity between rich and working class in London we can look at the ending of Reynolds's third chapter, and the subsequent beginning of the fourth. Chapter three ends with a mysterious stranger being held captive under a trapdoor inside a house occupied by thieves who are planning to break into Mr. Markham's mansion. The setting of this chapter is near Smithfield market, and Reynolds begins the chapter titled "The Old House in Smithfield" as such "The night was dark and stormy" (Reynolds 7), this opening perpetuates a Gothic stereotype of opening a foreboding narrative with something akin to "it was a dark and stormy night". Reynolds continues to blend romantic language, with menacing description; he mentions the clouds that had just lost their "golden hue", and now have "became sombre and menacing". As far as the house in Smithfield

is concerned, Reynolds characterizes the house in line with the protagonist– Eliza's– experience, stating, "all the fearful tales of midnight murders which he had ever heard or read, rushed to his memory: then, by a strange but natural freak of the fancy, those appalling deeds of blood and crime were suddenly associated with that incomprehensible but ominous black square upon the floor" (Reynolds 10). What becomes important in this characterization of not only Smithfield but also the mysterious trap door that becomes the quintessence of evil, is that the protagonist, Eliza, is wealthy and therefore her experience of this working-class home, and neighborhood is representative of the wealthier classes and how they come to know the streets of London through stories, and tales.

To contrast the tone, theme, setting, and characters of the third chapter Reynolds opens the fourth chapter in the "northern part of the environs of London" with two brothers who are saying their goodbyes to one another– for these two brother this farewell is the most difficult thing they've done with their live up until this point. The brothers– Richard, and Eugene– speak of the sadness of Eugene leaving the family estate due to his expulsion from it on the part of the boys' father; "Tell me must you depart? Is there no alternative? Can I not intercede with our father? Surely, surely, he will not discard one so young as you, and whom he has loved– must still love– so tenderly?" (Reynolds 17).. In terms of setting we are looking at the difference between Smithfield market, and the northern environs of London. These two places represent a very different part of London– while Smithfield was a neighborhood with a busy market, and a healthy economy based in meatpacking/butchering, northern London was quite another case as it was full of the dwellings of many well-off families. That is to say, that the overlap between the two settings are non-existent, which only adds to the construction and connotations of the urban environment. While Eliza is struggling to escape the subterranean bowels of London after being

thrown through a trapdoor, where "a fetid smell rose from the depths below" (Reynolds 16); simultaneously the likes of Richard and Eugene Markham are saying their goodbyes "on a delicious evening… in the northern part of the environs of London" (Reynolds 17). While Richard and Eugene converse about elite schools like Sandhurst and Eton (Reynolds 19), Eliza is being pushed into the trapdoor that "drowned the scream of agony which burst from his lips" (Reynolds 16). The placement of these contradictions so close to one another only serves to reinforce the gap of "crime and vice", or "wealth and poverty" that Reynolds details in his prologue.

It is difficult to give a plot summary of everything that occurs in each of these texts. One of the shortcomings of progressively writing a novel is that some plot threads are lost or abandoned. Even if some plots are concluded, that doesn't mean that a new one cannot arise. For this reason, I will lay out a relatively bare-bones version of each plot.

In *Les Mystères de Paris* the main character– Prince Rodolphe is hiding his true identity as a prince from Germany, because his wife–who he was forced to marry– is trying to meddle in his life again. Rodolphe and his wife had had a child but Rodolphe had never met her, since his wife had been exiled essentially, and she sent word that the child had died. In fact, that child had grown up on the streets of Paris and endured much suffering and is the character whom we know as Fleur-de-Marie, or La Goualouse– who when we encounter her in the beginning of the novel, is working as a prostitute. Rodolphe comes to know Fleur-de-Marie, as a prostitute, in his wanderings around Paris and tries to protect her from any more harm that can come her way. All the while, Rodolphe's wife is trying to meddle in his personal affairs so that she can essentially remarry him to ensure her own success and inheritance of the money that would go to his family. A lot has been left out in this summary, and many characters have not been named, but the

overarching theme has been established. In terms of the function of the city and its role in the plot as a whole the city is a place which alters the people that live inside of it. That is to say, that the city of Paris in *Les Mystères de Paris* is a catalyst for change. There is a type of person that is created by Paris and they are introduced to us by the likes of murderers and thieves like Le Chourineur, The School Master, and La Borgnesse. Sue, like, Reynolds juxtaposes the characters that we have come to know in the first five chapters of the story, with newcomers that we meet in the sixth– Tom and Sarah.

In chapter six, Sue introduces these two new characters in the hopes of further characterizing the setting of Paris as an urban underworld. It's clear from the beginning that these two– Tom and Sarah do not belong in the Tapis-Franc; "Les deux personnes qui venaient d'entrer le tapis-franc appartenaient à une classe beaucoup plus élevée que celles des habitudes de cette taverne[4]" (Sue 76). What's more is that Sue introduces a trope that is paralleled in *The Mysteries of London*, that being cross-dressing; "Ses longes cheveaux, ses sourcils et ses yeux d'un noir fonce faisaient ressortir la blancheur mate de son visage; a sa demarche, a sa taille, a la delicatesse de ses traits, il était facile de reconnaitre dans ce personnage une femme deguisee en homme[5]." (Sue 76). Sue makes it immediately apparent that Sarah is cross-dressing, Reynolds however, doesn't disclose that Walter is actually Eliza. Since Reynolds keeps Eliza's true nature hidden from the reader for so long, he is able to construct an entire plotline around it. Further, the withholding of character information puts the reader in a circumstance to question Reynolds, and his authority as a narrator. By bringing up the concept of a woman dressing as a man not only is

[4] The two persons who just entered the tapis-franc evidently belonged to a class much more elevated than the usual 'habitues' of this tavern.
[5] His long-black hair and eyelashes, and his brilliant dark eyes, made a striking contrast to the whiteness of his complexion: by the carriage, size and the delicacy of features, it was easy to be perceived that this was a woman in disguise

Sue bringing cross dressing tropes into the view of the masses, but he is further expanding the already so multifaceted urban space. In her book *Walking the Victorian Streets,* Deborah-Epstein Nord mentions cross-dressing as an attempt to conceal one's sex, on which point she states "Sex, unlike rank, admitted no such easy camouflage; and though women like George Sand and Vita Sackville-West did try from time to time to go about in public dressed as men, most women could not with any facility make themselves invisible and ignored" (Epstein-Nord 4). Here, Epstein-Nord makes it apparent that rather than attempting to pass as men, cross-dressing allowed women to blend in and effectively become invisible– or at least that was the hope.

Altogether, Sue characterizes the city of Paris as one that is multiple, and deceitful. He offers a vision of Paris that invites the reader to question the setting– a setting that so many are familiar with, but in fact, may not know at all.

The trope of cross dressing is applicable to *The Mysteries of London* as well. In the text we meet a young man, who is being dressed as a woman, and we are meant to believe that this woman is actually Walter and that he is standing in the place of his sister Eliza. We eventually come to find out that Walter is actually Eliza, who is trying to impersonate her dead brother so that she could inherit his wealth, or the wealth that would come to him. The introduction of Walter is interesting as we first come to know him through a conversation between Mr. Stephens and Walter; " "Yes, my dear sir," answered the lady– or in order that some name may in future characterise her, we will call her Walter, or Mr. Walter Sydney, for that was indeed the appellation by which she was known." (Reynolds 38). Here, just the same as with the French text, the author uncovers the inherent depiction of cross-dressing and uses it in the literature not only just for the intrigue and enjoyment of his readers– but also to expose the doubleness of the city itself. By introducing this knotted storyline with Eliza, who poses as Walter, but dresses as

Eliza, while all the while pretending to be her dead brother to gain his fortune, Reynolds is creating this sense of doubleness in his characters, that then becomes reminiscent of the city itself. And by extension Reynolds provokes the reader– just as Sue does– to question the city and the relationship between appearance, and reality. By including representations of cross-dressing both Sue, and Reynolds aren't attempting to condemn it, rather they are taking a trope and utilizing it for their purposes of creating an interesting story. What results is an urban environment populated by those who are as good as shape-shifters, reinforcing the doubleness that exists in such an environment.

The concept of duplicity, or deceit has been mentioned several times throughout this paper– and rightfully so, as that is the principal characteristic of the city, as represented by the chosen texts. We've already touched on the doubleness of the city that has been perpetuated by concepts such as cross dressing, and juxtaposition of social class. However, the city is full of "mysteries" that are detailed in each of the texts. In this way, through the combination of secret plots, disguises, and lies the readers are presented with an urban environment that becomes altogether unknowable– and it's this unknowability that drives the plot forwards, and that keeps the reader so engaged. The duplicity of the city opens up room for discussion about the daytime city: that being a more stereotypical London, or Paris; and on the other hand, there is the presence of the nightime city, or a city that functions in secret, full of gambling dens and prostitutes. Scholar and author David L. Pike speaks about the function of an "underground" and its role in the creation of bestsellers and an entire genre of literature: "The principal mode in which the underground was first represented in the modern urban imagination was as a "mystery," in particular, as the focal point of the genre of serialized fiction based in London and Paris that flourished during the 1840's and '50s and invented the best seller and the urban thriller

as we know them" (Pike 158). This should all sound quite familiar since the emergence of the urban thriller and sensationalized and serialized fiction started with *Les Mystères de Paris,* and *The Mysteries of London.*

In *The Mysteries of London,* everything is more than it is in *Les Mystères de Paris.* What I mean by this is that there are more characters, more plotlines, worse characters, everything is more in London than it is in Paris. This disparity between the two city texts could be due to the fact that during the mid 1800's London was well into the process of industrialization and the building of the industrialized city had already taken place. However, industrialization wasn't all good, A.N. Wilson writes in her book "London: A history", that "the railway age made and unmade London" (Wilson 100). Wilson goes on to explain that the railway industry was one of London's most crowning achievements, as it connected all major British cities. However, it came at a great cost to the poor, resulting in the destruction of homes so that the railway company could build lines, all because the railway company couldn't afford to buy upper-class properties (Wilson 100). In this way, the development of the railways as London's crowning achievement, coupled with the destruction of many underprivileged homes, is parallel to the grim reality of Haussmannization in Paris that occurred in 1855. Briefly, Haussmannization was the reorganization of Paris, not only to make it more organized but also to make it easier to deal with political unrest, thus– large open boulevards. Haussmanism and the London railway result in great convenience to the upper-classes, but a great cost to the working class. Here we notice that modernization often comes at a cost, Sue and Reynolds are exploring the plight of modernization in Paris and London, through exploration of the city through their characters.

London was already a larger, and more populous city than Paris– the area of Greater London was around 122 square miles in 1851, while Paris was only about 13 square miles at the

same time. Since there is such a disparity in size among the two cities, it is no wonder that there are more convoluted storylines in *The Mysteries of London*, as the city was almost ten times the size of Paris.

The urban environment is a consolidation of population, opportunity, and power; therefore, there are many different social classes that are present in the city. Many of these classes are depicted in both *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*, however, the two classes that are represented most are, the moneyed wealthy class, like Prince Rodolphe, and Richard Markham. On the other hand, the vast majority of the characters in both texts come from less fortunate backgrounds, the representation of social class in these texts brought me to David Harvey's book, *Paris, Capital of Modernity*, in which he mentions the "vicious" sector of the "dangerous classes" which is essentially an underclass in society that consists of those who are so poor they resort to theft, and violent crime (Harvey 229). What's more is that Harvey credits the solidification of the "dangerous classes" to authors of the mid nineteenth century like "Hugo, Sue, and Balzac" (Harvey 229). That is to say that the city in all its excess includes an excess of social class, and one such class that comes to dominate the texts are the "dangerous classes".

Overall, in *The Mysteries of London* there is no unifying plotline that holds all the others together, there's no character that keeps all the others connected to one another. Instead, there are several plotlines that arise and some are forgotten, and others are developed further and take over the main storyline. If we are forced to choose a summary of *The Mysteries of London,* we can say that the text focuses on the interactions between rich and fortunate London city dwellers with the working-class and unfortunate inhabitants of the same city. Through interacting with the working-class Londoners, the upper-class is appalled that such extremes of vice and virtue can exist in the same space. We meet many characters who represent the best and the worst of

London, we meet Richard Markham who is a well-to-do rich London man who gives his money to help out the well-meaning working-class individual who could benefit from his wealth. His brother Eugene however, is an upper-class man who has fallen from his fortune and leans back on white-collar crime and swindles many rich men out of their money, which leads him to be hunted by those who he's done wrong. Finally, we meet the Resurrection man, who got his name from body-snatching and selling the items from the corpses, he's also a well-known murderer and represents the worst type of person in the city.

The comparison between these two texts begs the question; what is the significance of putting these texts side-by-side? What insight does the comparison of these two texts give us? To that I say that the examination of both texts that emerge from a shared idea, tradition, and historical moment include the city in the text not only through it's construction of the city, as a setting, but also of the city as a character– while also keeping in mind the sheer heft of the materiality and convolution of the text itself. That is to say that the text is a city text and the city is implicit in almost every aspect of the text itself. Setting, character, and materiality. Further, I find it interesting that the subject matter of each text is so pertinent to the historical moment of each city that the through-line between the two persists beyond language.

The historical moment that these texts represent is specifically "13 December 1838" (Sue 37) in *Les Mystères de Paris* and "July 1831" (Reynolds 7) – but larger than those specifics, the texts observe, and are a part of a historical moment that being the conception of the city. During the 1830s, cities were growing and became areas of centralized power and job opportunities. However, most of the major advancements in sanitation, individual rights, and politics at large didn't occur until the 1850's at least. To put the historical moment into perspective, the reorganization of Paris, into what it resembles today was known as the Haussmannization of

Paris– didn't occur until 1853 at the earliest when Napoleon III declared Baron George-Eugène Haussman Prefect of the Seine (Jones 300).

When thinking about modernity, one thinks of industrialization, and progress– that is to say, we do not think of art as a characteristic or indicator of modernity. For the most part, the conceptualization of modernity is dominated by industrial progress,because during periods of modernization artists don't normally attempt to depict current, or realist scenarios. More often than not, artists prefer to revert back to classical forms, and subject matter in lieu of depicting urban crime, poverty, and industrial pollution. However, around 1860 in Paris artists and poets like Baudelaire describe and depict their reality in realistic terms focusing on the struggles of living in a developing, and increasingly industrialized city. In writing about modernity, with a special focus on Charles Baudelaire, Marshall Berman writes about the "lesson for Baudelaire" concerning modernism and modernist art. Berman writes that this lesson "is that modern life has a distinctive and authentic beauty, which however, is inseparable from its innate misery and anxiety, from the bills that modern man has to pay." (Berman 141). Here, Berman offers an explanation for what entails modern life; when put in conversation with Berman's arguments as a whole this quote serves to delineate the change between pastoral aspirations and urban ones– that is to say between past and future. I find that the crux of what both texts: *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* get at is a realist– while still sensationalized– artistic vision of life in a developing city, and what is being represented more often than not is the authenticity of "the bills that modern man has to pay"; this sentiment feeds on the hyper-referentiality of both texts that comes to construct the mythos of Paris and London as the dominant cities in the mid nineteenth-century, while still having their faults– just on a larger scale.

In English history the 1840's are known as 'The Hungry Forties', in which a growing population existed in a medieval city that didn't have the bandwidth to sustain such a population. The result of 'The Hungry Forties' were mass death, as well as much political revolt, one such instance would be the Irish potato famine. The French parallel would be 'The Hungry Thirties'. During the 1830's in Paris there were many issues that are reflected in the texts. Most notably there was the cholera epidemic of 1832, which was called "one of the worst in her [Paris] history, its spread helped by the filthy streets." (Horne 218). In *Les Mystères de Paris* we see the effects of the cholera epidemic in Fleur-de-Marie's introduction to the audience. In the second chapter, when Prince Rodolphe is trying to get to know his new friends, he asks about Fleur-de-Marie's family to which she responds "The cholera" (Sue 52). The social connotations of representing Fleur-de-Marie as a good-hearted prostitute who has no family since they all died of cholera, is one that reinforces the squalor and insecurity felt in the city during the 1830's. The city is then constructed as one that is filled with disease and crime– but this then begs the questions; what about the beautiful and luxurious Paris that we all come to expect when thinking and hearing of Paris? To this I find that Allistair Horne makes a great point about this duality of the city in his book *The Seven Ages of Paris,* where he states "Behind the glitter of the Champs-Elysees and the *grands boulevards* marched rows of mean hovels, while a notable district for prostitutes lay between the elegant Avenue de l'Opera and the Rue Richelieu." (Horne 217). Here, the city is shown as a duplicitous setting where everything is not what it seems. The juxtaposition of the working class struggling to make do, with the elegance that is so often associated with Paris is shocking and thought provoking. This construction of Paris as a city full of contradictions is the historical setting that Sue has chosen to represent in his sensationalized

fiction, and by doing so he constructs a city that is filled to the brim with an unknowable community that altogether deterritorialize the reader by contradicting assumptions left and right.

The chronology of urban development between London and Paris doesn't align perfectly. However, much of what was done in Paris, had been done in London first. In this way, Paris was able to learn from the mistakes made by the English, when industrializing and urbanizing London. Richard Lehan details the construction of London into the first major city; he effectively characterizes London through Dickens's depiction of the city in *Great Expectations*, stating "Pip changed his name as a disguise to play out the carnivalesque quality of the city. He becomes a mysterious stranger in a world of deception and pretense…" (Lehan 46). The concept of a "mysterious stranger" is significant to both *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London,* as it is the "mysterious stranger" that causes interest, but also who is successful in the city, and cannot be caught.

Reynolds plays on the appearance-reality question, in which things are not always what they seem– however, he does this with social class, showing that immoral deeds may not be disciplined as such if the perpetrator belongs to a higher class. This moment is captured in *The Mysteries of London* when one of the main characters Richard Markham is arrested for being in a gambling house at the moment a man loses all his money and then commits suicide. After being arrested, Mr. Markham is taken to the police station and is asked a few questions until his name– and subsequent status is uncovered.

When the police inspector hears that Mr. Markham has a butler, he starts to think about making a deal with him, in an effort to respect his social standing. Here, Reynolds writes "'I tell you what he could do, if you like,' observed the inspector, who now began to entertain an idea of Markham's standing in society by the mention of the word *butler:*" (Reynolds 71). Effectively

what Reynolds does not only in this quote, but also in chapters thirteen through fifteen is he presents the justice/criminal system in London as one that keeps social standing in mind. Due to this practice of social preference, the London justice system is obscured and hypocritical as it essentially allows white-collar crime. It's through this experience that Richard Markham comes to break free from his innocent perception of London, and in turn, his eyes are opened so to speak to the corruption and mistreatment that is alive and well in London.

On the topic of the duplicitous nature of the city, and the separation between one world and another, we can take a look at the physical underground space as it appears in each text, and what that does for the reader in terms of representing the city. In *Les Mystères de Paris,* there are several instances of following the characters into the subterranean world; in Paris the first subterranean space that we are introduced to is actually the first setting, the tapis-france, which is rumoured to have subterranean connections to the catacombs. In *The Mysteries of London* we are presented with a similar setting among Smithfield Market; in the first chapter we meet a disguised Eliza who has been taken prisoner by some thieves and she is thrown down a trapdoor that is filled with utter blackness that inspires a deep sense of terror in her– so much that it leads to her losing consciousness. The importance of the physically underground world is expressed by Pike, stating, "This sense of connection is intrinsic to the rhetorical presentation of the mystery as a katabasis, a physical descent to the underworld that transports the reader from one world to another through a threshold that is physically close but leads to what conceptually is a world apart:" (Pike 164). Here, Pike offers that the crossing over from the above ground world to the subterranean, while seemingly close in proximity, represents something entirely different. In this way, we can imagine the construction of the urban environment as the night time or subterranean

version of London or Paris juxtaposed to its daytime worlds, that we as readers are more familiar with.

As far as what the city does in text, we have already established that the duplicity and secrecy of the city perpetuates the unknowability of the setting, and therefore turns the city into an unknowable community– the opposite of most texts. Similarly, in the construction of each city in the text, there is a sense of excess that accompanies the city, not one of beauty and opportunity; instead it's a grandeur of size and proportion. The grandness of the city comes to reinforce the idea of constructing an unknowable community. To ground the crowding and grandness of the growing cities in reality, we can look to David Harvey where he details the crowding of Paris with an increase in houses built from "25,801 in 1817 to 30,770 in 1851, while population rose from 713,966 to 1,053,897"(Harvey 127). The overpopulation of Paris results in slums, and boarding houses that are stuffed with too many people in one room. Overcrowding often leads to criminality, and roguery, which is shown in the text through omniscient narration. For example, in the first chapter of *Les Mystères de Paris,* when describing the setting the narrator states "Le quartier du Palais de justice, très circonscrit, très surveillé, sert pourtant d'asile ou de rendez-vous aux malfaiteurs de Paris. N'est-il étrange, ou plutôt fatal, qu'une irrésistible attraction fasse toujours gravir ces criminels autour du formidable tribunal qui les condamne à la prison, au bagne, à l'échafaud![6]" (Sue 3). Here, Sue juxtaposes Parisian luxury and iconography with thievery and poverty. With the Palais de Justice being juxtaposed with criminality at its doorstep, the reader comes to understand that Paris is separate from its international reputation, thus exposing a grim reality for Paris-dwellers.

[6] The neighborhood or district of the Palais de Justice, very circumscribed and well watered, is, nevertheless, the asylum or resort of the rogues of Paris. Is it not strange, or, rather, is there not a fatality, an irresistible attraction thus drawing these criminals around the formidable tribunal which condemns them to the prison, the galleys, or the scaffold!

Both texts *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* serve to explore a growing metropolis through serialized literature. The practicality of writing a novel through serialization is that there is opportunity for feedback, and the progressive writing of a novel oftentimes results in messy, and convoluted plotlines. I find that both texts are inherently city texts, insofar as they investigate the city to define it as something more than its internationally known connotations; further, the texts expose a duplicitous vision of the city, whether it's nighttime vs. daytime, above ground vs. subterranean, or luxury vs. poverty. The city itself provides a lot of material for the authors to dive into, since the city is a consolidation of everything the town was, there is more of everything in the city, thus permitting a natural hyperbole of life in the big city. It is this vastness and multiplicity that exists in the city that permits a dense, and prolonged narrative of the city to be told. Since there is so much "at issue" in the city, there is so much to explore. Therefore, *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* utilize the city as an environment of excess, and through exploring that excess we come to know the city as it is portrayed in each of the text, not clouded by renown or power. Instead we are presented with an exaggerated, and entertaining vision of living in a city during the mid-nineteenth century, experiencing all the anxieties of modernization and industrialization, all the while being entertained by the depth and density of what the city has to offer to the reader.

Chapter Three: The Mysteries of What?: The Genre Bending Results of Popular Fiction.

At a first glance, the shared title of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* encourages comparison and a search for genre between the two texts. However, just having "The Mysteries of…" is not indicative of a reproduction or relocation of a narrative or narrative form to a different city. These two texts are by no means the only narratives that utilize "The Mysteries" as an provocation and title by referencing all "The Mysteries" that came before; on all accounts, Eugène Sue is credited with the creation of "The Mysteries" as a title in his 1843 roman-feuilleton *Les Mystères de Paris*, which takes inspiration from the foundational Gothic novel by Anne Radcliffe *The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794)*. With the runaway success of Sue's novel– and format– a slew of reproductions of the title and intrigue came into the popular imagination: with titles such as *The Mysteries of London* (1844), by G.W.M. Reynolds, *The Mysteries of New York (1858)*, by Ned Buntline, *Les Mystères de Marseille (1867)*, by Emile Zola; and even *Les Mystères de Londres (1844)* by Paul Feval-pere. The last title became a publishing issue over intellectual ownership and originality between Reynolds, and Feval– each claiming to have written their title before the other. Overall, having the title "The Mysteries of…" doesn't indicate an exact reproduction of the original in another location– as has been clearly established throughout this thesis. But the similarities in title between the two most popular of these titles, *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* beg the question– what style comes to identify these texts, is there a certain style that is to be expected of "The Mysteries" –and in the case of Sue and Reynolds's "Mysteries" – are they similar or different? In my research on genre definition I have found that the only genre that can be attributed to– and shared between Sue and Reynolds's novels is that of popular fiction– or a genre-conglomerate of

sorts. With each novel being so "of its time" (Cruickshank 57), and with that each novel is so engaged with its own setting that the Mysteries of the novel vary vastly.

Therefore, I have decided to go about defining the genres of these texts not as if they were one text– or by any means similar– but rather as their own individual novels. What has come to influence this decision is most notably the literary history, but also political and cultural differences between France and England. The differences in the settings have proven to be sufficient to the point that they influence the text– or the writers– to be reflective, or representative of the author's own city. Therefore, it is safe to say that Reynolds didn't directly copy the work of Sue, aside from the popularity and success Sue garnered from his "Mystères"

I find that Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* isn't a detective novel– even though it has some traces of the detective novel– and I don't claim that *Les Mystères de Paris* is a roman policier. Instead, I find that the overarching themes and tropes that can be ascribed to *Les Mystères de Paris* are that of popular fiction like romance, and detective novels. It is difficult to relate Sue's narrative to any current genre that is so well established since genres change over time, and many popular genres today like mysteries, thrillers, and detective fiction hadn't entirely existed during the mid nineteenth century in France, or England. Therefore, any linkages between *Les Mystères de Paris* and the detective novels of Conan Doyle or Agatha Christie are purely coincidental, since the motivation behind including heuristic and romantic tropes was to sell copies of serial novels.

A principal player in the intrigue of Sue's narrative happens to be the setting on which it focuses– the city of Paris. Interestingly enough, the roman policier is in many ways representative of Paris as its creation by Edgar Allen-Poe in his short story "The Murders of the Rue Morgue" (1841), which introduced many themes and tropes that would become foundational

to the detective novel and roman policier. In the introduction to his novel *Balades Policières dans Paris*, author Marc Lemonier states that "Dès ses débuts, la littérature policière s'installe dans le décor Parisien. Comme si cette ville lui offrait un cadre à la mesure des crimes et des aventures qui allait la nourrir[7]" (Lemonier 9). Here, Lemonier states that much of the intrigue of a detective novel comes from the setting, and since the conception of the detective novel is Parisian, it isn't surprising that Paris is the setting of Sue's mystères, since Paris is said to permit a space for crimes to be committed. This sentiment of Paris proliferating criminals is reflected in Sue's narrative, placed among the opening lines Sue states "Ce début annonce au lecteur qu'il doit assister à de sinistres scènes; s'il y consent, il pénètre dans les régions horribles, inconnues; des types hideux, effrayants, fourmillent dans ces cloaques impurs commes les reptiles dans les marais." ([8]Sue 35). Overall, the work of Lemonier and the work I develop in the former chapter of this work assert that *Les Mystères de Paris* is certainly a type of city literature, more than it is a part of more formal genres like the Gothic.

On a timeline of French literature, Sue can be said to take inspiration from the romantic tradition since his upbringing and formative years as a writer were during the era of popular romanticism in France. Sue does something with his romanticism that is separate from the traditional and some may say uninspired dramatization of everyday feelings that becomes associated with popular French romanticism before its decline around 1840 Instead of the intense dramatics and sentimentality of fictionalized past versions of Paris, or France at large, Sue

[7] Since its beginning, the policier genre cements itself among the Parisian setting. Almost as if this city offered a setting commensurate with the crimes and adventures that would feed into the genre.[translation mine]

[8] Such a beginning lets the reader know that they will be witness to sinister scenes, il the reader consents, they will plunge into spaces horrible, unknown, those of the most hideous types, terrifying, swarming among the impure cesspools similar to those of the reptiles in the Marais. [translation mine]

focuses on uncovering the drama of a realistic Paris slowly, but with logic rather than sentiment alone.

The easiest way to conceive of what Sue is doing in contradiction to the great Romantics that preceded him is to compare Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* to Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris*. The point of contention between these two works is that they are both about Paris– in a sense– but Paris doesn't mean the same thing to each writer; for Sue Paris means Parisians, for Hugo Paris means monuments. This vision of Paris given by Hugo, as one that uses physical space to examine Parisians– both from inside and above is what comes across in *Notre Dame de Paris* which was published in 1831– about ten years before *Les Mystères de Paris*. In Hugo's narrative he focuses on Paris only through the bird's eye view that he takes in Book III, Chapter II "A Bird's Eye View of Paris", where not only does Hugo's authorial voice persist, but his concentration on Paris– at least in this chapter is focused on the physical space that comes to influence his representation of Paris, rather than Sue's focus on characters that permeates and exists throughout his entire narrative. Hugo speaks as among the Parisians, but also as a biased omniscient narrator, stating "We Parisians generally make a mistake as to the ground which we think that we have gained, since Paris has not increased much over one-third since the time of Louis XI. It has certainly lost more in beauty than it has gained in size." (Hugo 7). The rest of the chapter is dedicated to recounting the history of Paris, and its three main parts"... the City, the Town, and the University, each presented to the eye an inextricable skein of eccentrically tangled streets. Nevertheless, at first sight, one recognized the fact that these three fragments formed but one body." (Hugo 9). Therefore, Hugo's romantic interpretation of engaging with Paris is that of a reverence for a previous and unattainable city of the past– the Middle Ages to be precise. Hugo's voice persists throughout his history-lesson in mentioning the lost beauty of the city in

his contemporary time. While *Notre Dame de Paris* is packed with characters, for Hugo the characters– or Parisians are not the ones who make Paris as much as the monuments do.

The opposite can be said for Sue, as he focuses on the contemporary characters as the thing that makes Paris, rather than focusing on a past reverence for Paris to represent the city. It's in this disconnect between Sue and Hugo that is representative of the break from romanticism and idealism that Sue represents, but which also accounts for his success with *Les Mystères de Paris*. Since Sue's narrative is about being entertaining above all else, there is something to be said about a character driven plot, rather than a setting driven one. This idea of establishing characters to move plot is found all throughout Sue's work–especially in the beginning where Sue takes the time to introduce each and every character– even going so far as to give L'Ogresse (Chapter II), La Goualeuse (Chapter III), and Le Chourineur (Chapter IV) their own chapters so that the reader can be acquainted with them, just as Rodolphe is acquainted with them. Potentially the most significant character that we become acquainted with is Fleur-de-Marie, where in her chapter "L'histoire de La Goualeuse" (Chapter III), since it positions her not only as a tool of pathos, but also as a way of introducing the unifying storyline of her connection to Rodolphe as his long lost daughter. Her story starts with Rodolphe asking about her parents, to which she responds "Je ne les connais pas" (Sue 52), recapitulating her familiarity with her parents as "Ni vus, ni connus; née sous un chou, comme on dit aux enfants." (Sue 52). Fleur-de-Marie's narrative also marks the introduction to one of the primary villains of the story "La Borgnesse", also known as "La Chouette". We come to learn about "La Borgnesse" through Fleur-de-Marie's explanation of who raised her, stating, "Je ne sais pas… Du plus loin qu'il m'en souvient, je crois, sept a huit ans, j'étais avec une vieille borgnesse qu'on appelait la Chouette…" (Sue 52). The familiarity readers feel with Sue's characters is a large part of his

success as a feuilletonist, since his characters– who are dynamic– move the plot forwards rather than monuments or buildings, which give space for an idealization of the past, rather than the social reality of the present that is persists in Sue's narrative. That is all to say that Sue's success is a product of his reconstruction of the idealization of Paris that the romantic writers fostered, and ultimately led to their downfall.

In his book *Popular French Romanticism,* author James Smith Allen mentions that during the 1840s, thanks to so much rapid economic and political change, as well as the ever-growing readership in France–especially in Paris– there was a "consistent growth of a new literature intended for a mass audience" (Allen 210-211). This statement is a continuation of a point that Allen makes a page earlier in which he postulates that the contributions of romanticism in popular media helped forge "a large, diverse urban readership to create a new literature aimed at all classes…" (Allen 209). What Allen suggests across these two quotes is that the decline of romanticism as that of popular fiction is in response to the evolving readership; therefore romanticism gives way to a new popular fiction that is intended for a mass audience– one that isn't played to in the romanticism of writers like Hugo, and rather, flourishes from the chaotic narrative presented to them by Sue.

Overall, Sue takes his inspiration from the romantic movement, however, he's not conventionally a romantic writer as made apparent in John Cruickshank's work in *French Literature and its Backgrounds*, when he states, "Eugène Sue was to dispel effectively in *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842-3), the illusion fostered by Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) by 'revealing' to a public who had secretly known it all along, that horror and crime were in the present" (Cruickshank 64). In this way, Sue is working against the romantic conventions of the first half of the nineteenth century; instead of imbuing his literature with dramatic feelings he

utilizes the realm of what's possible to create drama and intrigue in his narrative. The notion that there is a criminal underworld in Paris that is headed by an escaped criminal who essentially 'runs the streets' isn't something that is entirely out of the realm of possibility at this point in time. Sue takes advantage of this fact and creates his first villain of the narrative "Le Maître d'École[9]" Some may say that this gives Sue's work a pessimistic or Gothic sentiment since the subject matter is not overtly positive, however, at the root of the genre argument Sue follows whatever conventions make him popular. Allen states that Sue and his "Mystères " "reflected nothing of the deliberately ordered creations of a new generation that was reputed to have displaced the [Romantic] movement after 1840." (Allen 203). Here, Allen acquiesces that Sue's work is messier than that of the "ordered creations" that dominated popular romanticism; but Sue's disordered chaotic narrative held the attention of the reading public in a way romantic novels could no longer do. Allen mentions that one of the reasons that romanticism fell out of style was "because it was not excessive enough" (Allen 203), that is to say, that Sue follows the sentiment of hyperbole and dramatics from romanticism, but divulges in the neatness of the narrative itself. This idea of chaos permeates throughout Sue's narrative since the entire plot is character driven, and many of Sue's characters are criminals and murderers which results in the backstabbing and underhanded type debauchery that we come to expect from the antagonists of the narrative. Therefore, Hugo– as a representation of French Romanticism– maintains a strong form of control over his representation of Paris, through his authorial voice, and omniscience. Whereas Sue's work in *Les Mystères de Paris* is more chaotic and fragmented since the serialized format in which it was published literally breaks the novel into parts, resulting in many plot threads that may not go anywhere due to the author and readers forgetting about said plot

[9] The School Master

threads as a result of progressive publication– further reflecting urban chaos, and realism in a way that is contradictory to romanticism. Overall, the points that Allen makes in his book about French romanticism hold true in the sense that romantic conventions are popular until the readership is tired of them; and part of the reason for Sue's runaway success with *Les Mystères de Paris* lies in his counterpoint to the overused romantic formula.

Sue's readership was tired of reading about love stories and fantastic representations of life that were overall unattainable; and for this reason the "realism" that Sue evokes with his fiction gives readers a familiarity with the narrative so long as they're familiar with Paris. John Cawelti studies formulaic narrative tropes in his book *Adventures, Mystery, and Romance*, and states that "Certain story archetypes particularly fulfill man's need for enjoyment and escape" (Cawelti 6). The only element of this quote that I would push back upon is that of the idea of an "escape" on the part of the reader– since, if readers wanted an escape from real life, they would read the works of the romantics who were rendering everyday life as increasingly fantastical. Instead, as I've stated before, Sue's readers wanted to read about an experience that was possible in their contemporary time– this focus on realism rather than idealization became the archetype to fulfill man's enjoyment since at the end of the day Sue is writing to entertain.

Sensationalized fictional representations are certainly apparent in Sue's work–especially since he is said to have "greatly admired" the work of Mrs. Radcliff (Murch 60), who authored the first of the "Mysteries" – *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. And like Mrs. Radcliff, Sue "loved to terrify his readers with stories of nightmares, horrible suggestions of the supernatural or descriptions of dreadful tortures" (Murch 60). This appeal to visceral shock and horror is not only sensational, but more classically Gothic– further, the Gothic tendency that Sue appropriates is one that Fred Botting described as the repositioning of the site of terror from the ancestral

castle [Radcliffe] to that of the Old House in the city [Sue, Reynolds] (Botting 3). The visceral terror that Sue inspires is one that rests entirely in reality rather than in the supernatural or cerebral like that of the Gothic, or sensation fiction. In chapter three of *Les Mystères de Paris,* "L'histoire de la Goualeuse[10]", the site of terror and shock lies in the maltreatment of Fleur de Maris at the hands of La Chouette, stating that "Tout d'un coup, la borgnesse va a une planche et y prend une paire de tenailles" which are then disclosed to be a punishment of Fleur de Marie for eating the candy she was meant to sell, so La Chouette "m'a tire cette dent[11]" (Sue 57). This shocking violence that Sue displays becomes characteristic of many romans-policiers in later years, in *Le Roman Policier,* from Que sais-je on the topic of genre defining intrigue it's stated that "La mort n'est rien. L'assassinat n'est rien. Ce qui bouleverse, c'est la sauvagerie du crime parce qu'elle paraît inexplicable[12]." (Boileau-Narcejac 9). Here, Sue shocks his audience with such intense violence between a street thief and a starving child for the purposes of entertaining his readers and building interest behind his narrative, similar to the techniques characteristic of both the Gothic, and sensational fiction genres, since the primary fascination and attraction to Gothic and sensation fiction lies in affect rather than logical response– which is entirely what Sue is up to with scenes like this one.

In Reynolds's text there is plenty of material that transgresses the social boundaries; immediate examples that come to mind include that of Walter Sydney who's situation is presented thusly, "'Yes my dear sir,' answered the lady– or in order that some name may in future characterise her, we will call her Walter, ir Mr. Walter Sydney, for that was indeed the

[10] The backstory of the Singer (Fleur-de-Marie)
[11] All of a sudden the one-eyed woman went over to the tool board in the room and from it she took a pair of pincers… pulled out my tooth [translation mine].
[12] Death is nothing, killing is nothing. What overwhelms the reader, is the savagery of the crime because it seems unexplainable. [translation mine]

appellation by which she was known…" (Reynolds 38). Other examples of the like include the representations of criminals and their narratives, such as the Resurrection Man whom Richard Markham comes to know during his time in Newgate where they converse saying, "'And are you really–' began Richard, with a particle shudder, 'are you really a–' 'A body snatcher?' cried Anthony; 'of course I am– when there's any work to be done: and when there isn't, then I do a little in another line'" (Reynolds 139). Here, the obvious overlapping between Gothic and sensation genres is seen in how the reading material "transgressed social boundaries" – since in Botting's argument the Gothic mirror is said to problematize a vision of contemporary life in an attempt to critique it in some way. In this way, similarly to how Sue anticipates the roman policier, Reynolds anticipates the popularity of the sensation novel before its conception as a result of following the public's interest into affective fiction, rather than cerebral scholarly writings. This relationship between publisher, author, and reader is one that is permitted by the serialized format; since the lag-time between weekly publications allows for feedback to make it to the author, allowing him to alter his story to his audience in an effort to keep them satisfied. Therefore, the genre-shifting that appears in *The Mysteries of London*, is also present in *Les Mystères de Paris*, just in a different cultural context, is no surprise not only because the texts themselves are so expansive that their engagement with multiple types of fiction was unavoidable, but also because the feedback-loop between reader and writer was one that gave space and time for the author to entertain his readers following the genres that were popular as time moved forward.

That is all to say, that the multiplicity of genres present in Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* is representative of the fluidity of popular fiction. The tropes and themes of Gothic, heuristic, romantic, realist, and sensation fiction are all present throughout the novel– which would sound

like a contradiction for a novel to be so many conflicting things at once. However, Sue didn't adhere to a genre, rather, he was in the business of selling entertainment and not high literature.As a result genre didn't dictate what Sue could and couldn't write, instead, his usage of multiple genres is reminiscent of his attempt to re-orient his plot based on reader's reactions– a byproduct of serial publication.

Les Mystères de Paris does certainly have elements of the Gothic within it, much of what Gothic fiction often does is create a parallel world in which anxieties of the real world are explored. The possible in the real world becomes the probable in the Gothic 'closed' world. As I've already stated, part of what Sue does in *Les Mystères de Paris* is a counterpoint to the idealization, and romanticization of the likes of Hugo– this is principally done through the realistic, or probable representation of Paris as opposed to a historicized and idealized Paris. In terms of realism, Sue aims to portray Paris in a way that reflects the social reality of those who live there– including the less fortunate. Sue goes about a realistic depiction of Paris through his language (*l'argot*), as well as his representations of poverty, and crime.

In her book *The Gothic Tradition in Fiction*, Elizabeth MacAndrew makes a point about possibility and probability using Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* as an example. She implies that the setting– especially within the medieval period is used as justification for the "probable" situation since historical accuracy isn't necessarily Wolpole's intention (MacAndrew 120). *Les Mystères de Paris* would be an alteration of this idea that setting is adjusted or manipulated so that the possible can be presented as the probable. The implications of the city as a setting that would permit the intense violence of the narrative becomes central to the interest of the reader, since the reader is made to believe that such a reality is possible. Such instances are multiple in *Les Mystères de Paris* since Sue isn't focused on recounting a historically accurate

report of criminal killings and stealing in Paris– rather, he is concerned with creating an entertaining dramatization of what already exists by hyperbolizing and pushing the boundaries of plausibility and possibility. From Fleur-de-Marie's traumatic childhood (Chapter III), to that of Le Chourineur (Chapter IV), and even the near-drowning of Rodolphe (Chapter XVIII) are all possibilities within a more reckless and unrestricted Gothic parallel to Paris.

What renders Sue's representation of Paris as increasingly real, is the fact that much of his source material comes from real life. While this sounds obvious, when we take into account what we know about Sue, not even as an author but as a person it becomes clear that he would not have experienced much of the discomforts and malcontents that he writes about since he had a privileged upbringing and successful literary career. Instead, what Sue pulled from what Dr. Parent-DuChatelet's journal *Annales d'hygiène publique et de medecine legale* as a source for "limitless information on the lives of prostitutes and watermen." (Cruickshank 62). This grounding information is a powerful tool that Sue uses to blur the lines between his fictional Gothic rendering of Paris and the real-life Paris, capital of France. Another factor that persists throughout the narrative that links Sue's story-telling to that of the real world is his choice to recount the story *en argot*[13], since that would be how the murderers and criminals who drive the plot forward would speak– further grounding the narrative in reality. We witness this *argot* in the first sentence of the narrative, "Un tapis-franc, en argot de vol de meurtre, signifie un estaminet ou un cabaret du plus bas étage[14]" (Sue 35), therefore denoting that the narrative is concerned with the realistic possibilities of Paris, preserving a sense of *vraisemblance*[15].

[13] slang
[14] A tapis-franc in the language of murderers, signifies a small cafe or a cabaret of the lowest kind. [translation mine]
[15] Plausibility, credibility.

Therefore, I find that while *Les Mystères de Paris* may not be the first roman policier it nonetheless anticipates the formulaic nature of future heuristic and detective fiction. Sue engages with so many storylines, and plot-points in his narrative– which is intended for a mass audience that he doesn't confine himself to a specific genre– therefore, the conventions that he takes advantage of are singularly for the purpose of entertaining his audience. As such, popular fiction is seldom monolithic, and this is apparent in *Les Mystères de Paris*, as the multiplicity of tropes, themes, and styles in the narrative serve only to engage the reader. What's interesting is how Sue combines the affect of Gothic fiction with the hyper-referentiality of realism since the two fundamentally counteract one another. This combination is seen during the beginning of the narrative in the *Cite*, notably in the first chapter when Le Chorineur meets Fleur-de-Marie when he enters the *rue aux Feves*– which brings a referential point to Parisian readers– and proceeds to attempt to attack Fleur-de-Marie "A la poursuite de la Goualeuse dans l'allée noire.[16]" (Sue 38); that is until Rodolphe comes to rescue Fleur-de-Marie and best Le Chorineur. Here, we see the mixture of realism as seen by the reference to the *rue aux Feves*, with the affect of the Gothic being both the impending violence of Le Chorineur, and the atmospheric unknown of the "allée noire". This contradiction refers back to Allen since Gothicism derives from romanticism, and Sue was brought up and educated during the reign of popular romanticism; we have established that his success as a writer comes from his writing's counteraction to well-established orderly romanticism. For that reason, I find that Sue merges Gothicism and realism by uniting their shared engagement with their contemporary moment. Sue uses the pessimistic reality and hyperbolizes it within a Gothic parallel of Paris, and through his representations of people, and

[16] Chasing the Singer down the dark alley. [translation mine]

places in Gothic Paris Sue engages with the problematization of his contemporary moment by inspiring fear, and anxiety into his readers.

All of the same genre definitions made to *Les Mystères de Paris* can be said about *The Mysteries of London*, but the caveat can be made that *The Mysteries of London* fits more squarely into the Gothic tradition. Reynolds's text is a part of the urban Gothic cannon in the mid nineteenth-century growing in tandem with the growth and popularity of cities. In their book *The Gothic*, Glennis Byron, and David Punter write about the "domestication" of Gothic literature in the mid nineteenth century beginning with William Harrison Ainsworth's *The Tower of London* (1840). The "domestication" of the Gothic was then taken a step further by the likes of Dickens and Reynolds " by constructing a Gothic England relocated within a contemporary city setting." (Bryon, Punter 28), therefore bringing the Gothic anxieties not only to England at large, but more specifically to London.

A common hallmark of Gothic literature is what Michele Foucoult terms the 'heterotopic mirror' which Davind Punter describes in relation to its utopic counterpart stating, "The utopic mirror of perfected or inverted reflection is intermingled with a heterotopic form. For Foucault, a heterotopia, in contrast to a utopia, is a 'counter-site', an 'effectively enacted utopia' in which the real sites of culture are 'represented, contested, inverted'" (Punter 9). The 'heterotopic' or Gothic mirror also "The Gothic mirror offers a heterogeneous and conflicting reflection of the present" (Punter 8), resulting in a consolidated narrative that is sometimes seen as anachronistic. The Gothic has a direct line to the real world, since the Gothic tradition is inherently reactive to the contemporary world. In *The Companion to the Gothic*, edited by David Punter, Fred Botting writes an introductory essay in which he states, "'Gothic' functions as the mirror of eighteenth-century mores and values: a reconstruction of the past as the inverted, mirror image of the

present, its darkness allows the reason and the truth of the present a brighter reflection." (Punter 5). Here, Botting alludes to what Gothic fiction does with its representations of setting, and how it plays with setting and temporality therefore merging the past onto the present and vice versa– further reflecting the "truth" of society to the reader in an attempt to problematize the subjects of contemporary life.

In Botting's essay on heterotopia he mentions that the Gothic mirror intensely problematizes sites of culture to inspire fear and anxiety in the reader. This idea of problematized culture is shown as a sort of expose in G.W.M. Reynolds's *The Mysteries of London*, when in chapter 13, our main character Richard Markham is brought by his new rich friends to a gambling den in which Markham's friends tell him it's "only an establishment for cards and dice, and other innocent diversions…" (Reynolds 62), the site of culture being the gambling den is then problematized through description when our narrator denotes the pastime of gambling as "the haunts of pleasure and vice…" (Reynolds 62). These haunts are given dramatic life when throughout the chapter a man is gambling intensely and seemingly loses all of his money and storms out of view, to which Richard says that the young man's loss "will be a good lesson for me which I can never forget." (Reynolds 66); however, before the chapter ends the young man kills himself therefore intensifying the connotations associated with gambling in the Victorian contemporary world. Here, we witness the application of the Gothic, heterotopic mirror that problematizes contemporary sites of culture– such as a gambling den– and reflects that to the reader resulting in a sort of dramatic critique of gambling on the part of the upper class.

What permeates throughout the Gothic mirror in popular fiction– since that is what Sue, and Reynolds's texts are– is a world in which anxieties are made possible. Therefore, the repositioning of Gothic terror from that of the country, to one more domestic only ever changes

the setting, and not the subject of the genre. That is to say, that regardless of setting, Gothic literature will always be critical of the present moment in some way, Botting states; "'Gothic' thus resonates as much with anxieties and fears concerning the crises and changes in the present as with any terror of the past." (Punter 3). And this terror is one that Reynolds plays into surrounding the anxieties surrounding cities and their unknowability– this idea of unknowable communities has already been discussed in the prior chapter.

One of the many Gothic elements of *The Mysteries of London* that is done very well, and has become quite representative of Victorian-urban Gothic fiction is the representation of the London streets– or the city streets in general– as a sort of labyrinth. The likes of the labyrinthine hallways, and streets is appropriated into the nineteenth century urban Gothic, from the traditional eighteenth century Gothic wherein the labyrinth was represented in the dark and winding hallways of an unknown foreign castle. In terms of the labyrinthine streets of London, Reynolds is mentioned often in tandem with the likes of Charles Dickens, thus bolstering Reynolds image and impact as a key agent in the history and social impact of Gothic, and popular fiction. In *The Gothic* editors Bryon, and Punter examine the history of the Victorian Gothic and how it is 'of its time', referring to *Oliver Twist* and Dickens's possible social message/critique stating; "When Oliver [Oliver Twist] is dragged into a 'labyrinth of dark narrow courts', he is trapped within a criminal world that is the product of a Victorian social system." (Byron, Punter 29). Here, the emphasis is on how Oliver's experience in London is "the product of a Victorian social system"; to relate this idea back to Sue, we can think of what Sue and Reynolds fiction does in relation to the popular fiction that preceded it. For Sue, that would be romanticism, so to take that idea and apply it to London is interesting insofar as what Reynolds– and Dickens, as seen in the quote– are doing with their representation of London is

entirely opposite from what the romantics were doing with their reverent mythos of past cities, rather than the current state of things.

Interestingly enough, there is a direct correlation found between Gothic fiction and popular reading material; in Botting's essay he examines the birth of the Gothic genre in the late eighteenth-century and its rebirth in the mid nineteenth century stating that the new Gothic is one of "Sublimity and Imagination that will be appropriated by romantic poets, while Gothic finds itself relegated to the popular and trashy realm of cheap, formulaic fiction" (Punter 12). His point, one that I agree with, is that Gothic fiction with its roots in being critical of contemporary society will be appropriated in popular culture– like fiction. This point on Gothic fiction as being akin to the "trashy realm of cheap, formulaic fiction" is one that feeds into a prior argument of mine about the classification of serialized literature.

Speaking of formulaic fiction, John Cawelti writes extensively about formulaic fiction and how it is relegated into popular culture– more specifically he examines common formulas of fiction like adventures, romance, and mysteries and how they come to influence popular fiction throughout the years. A very interesting point that Cawleti makes which returns to my line of questioning in the introduction is that, "There is an inevitable tendency toward standardization implicit in the economy of modern publishing and film-making, if only because one successful work will inspire a number of imitations by producers hoping to share in the profits." (Cawelti 9). Here, Cawelti points out that there are so many imitations– like those of "The Mysteries" – because the primary motivator for the lack of diversity is marked by economic success. Therefore, the grounding of popular fiction is in financial profit and not in ground-breaking creativity. The replication of tropes, plots, and themes is the formula for popular fiction that Cawelti analyses in his work, and for the purposes of my investigation into *Les Mystères de*

Paris and *The Mysteries of London* I find that the appropriation of the title "The Mysteries" is a systematic approach by Reynolds to intrigue Sue's readership into reading his work as a natural sequel to Sue's. Reynolds also became quite marketable to the middle class Englishman since Reynold's narrative was sold independently and cheaply.

Overall, the categorization efforts when it comes to *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* could continue in perpetuity, since each narrative belongs to the overarching category of popular fiction. The result of a text being a part of the popular fiction of a specific time, is that the resulting fiction is hyper referential and engaged with its contemporary situation– more so than most strictly genre adhering literature. Since *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* are both city texts, as was investigated in the prior chapter, much of the hyper-specificity results from real and specific streets and places in Paris and London. In Sue's rendering of Paris, he engages with the celebrity status of the likes of monuments like Notre Dame de Paris, as well as Faubourg Saint-Germain as the seat of culture, luxury, and excess. Sue's foil to the hustle and bustle of city life is the Bouqueval Village, that Rodolphe and Fleur-de-Marie visit to escape Paris. Sue and Reynolds both offer a similar market-place setting to represent the action among crowds of individuals that comes with living in a city; for Sue this setting is Temple Marketplace –or "Le Temple" (Part IV, Chapter V), and for Reynolds it's The Strand, and Smithfield Market. An interesting effect of hype-referential popular fiction is that it is easily engaged with on the part of city dwellers and those who are familiar with the cities of Paris or London– but for the vast readership that comes from outside the city and are therefore unfamiliar with the intricacies and references of the city the Gothic representation of Paris or London comes to inform this unfamiliar readership. For Parisian readers of Sue, the representation of Le Temple– as a bazar that exists outside of the il de la cite, where the main

plot takes place– which is said to sell "toute marchandise neuve est généralement prohibée[17]" (Sue 450), becomes a reference to the social reality that exists in Paris for the less fortunate. This representation of Le Temple as a setting, but also as a shopping area is in contrast to the idealistic marketplaces and arcades that come to dominate romantic representations of Paris. This socially-realistic shopping area helps construct a gothic double of Paris that informs Sue's readership– both Parisian and Provincial. The English parallel of Le Temple that exists in Reynolds text is Smithfield Market– the foremost livestock market in the city of London, described by Reynolds as "this horrible neighborhood", in which one "was evidently shock at the idea that human beings could dwell in such fetid and unwholesome dens." (Reynolds 9). Here, Reynolds describes Smithfield market in a similar manner to that of Sue, as he constructs a shopping center, and neighborhood that reflects the social reality of the time– even if it is hyperbolized for dramatic effect. The result of popular fiction's influence upon a less-urban readership is that it comes to construct the city in a way that is dictated and fabricated by the authors and creators of popular fiction. Therefore, the stigmatization surrounding crime and poverty in cities like Paris and London during the mid-to-late nineteenth century is bolstered and supported by the drama and intrigue that Sue and Reynolds employ as their principal plot motivators– that being the city, its problems, and the possibilities that like Lemonier suggest are permitted by the city itself (Lemonier 9).

Therefore, to readdress the principal questions of this comparative study between the genre similarities and differences of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*; and the phenomenon that is the employment of "The Mysteries" as title, and what said title suggests– I find that "The Mysteries" as a title is nothing more than an appropriation of a popular title. The

[17] All new merchandise that is generally prohibited. [translation mine]

replication of "The Mysteries" as a title, remarks on the scholarship of Cawelti and his findings surrounding successful pop culture representations feeding into replication in the hopes of piggy-backing off of the success of the originator. I find that in terms of genre at large, *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* are essentially a part of popular fiction, that is to say a mashup of popular tropes, genres, and themes to create a text that would ideally be hyper popular since it includes everything that a reader would want. This genre-conglomerate would then denote a transcendence of genre. There are many different genres and subgenres that can be ascribed to *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*: Gothic, policier, sensation, realist, counter-romantic, and adventure– the list goes on. As readers, we notice the characteristics of genres, and the roots of genres that come to develop later in time in these novels. Genres, as a categorical entity have limits, that is to say that there are many things that a Gothic piece cannot be if it is truly and inexplicably Gothic, which would represent the "Gothic spirit" so to speak. I find that *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* are most simply put– popular fiction, in the sense that the primary "spirit", or motivator of the authors was to make money and appeal to the mass readership, or to garner a mass readership– such as the new popular fiction that Allen remarks on. Instead of being pigeon-holed into writing a "Gothic tale", or a "roman policier", or any other strict genre-fitting format Sue and Reynolds opted for a popular, referential fiction that was easily engaged with and unequivocally 'of its time'.

Conclusion

While Eugène Sue may have published the first of "The Mysteries" in 1843 that doesn't constitute that his "Mysteries" are the blueprint from which all other iterations and appropriations of "The Mysteries" follow. Eugène Sue and George W.M. Reynolds are put in conversation with one another so often due to their popularity and success via their series *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London*, but a comparative study of the two texts in terms of their apparent similarities of format, environment, and genre proves that the two narratives share a name, and that's where the similarities end. So, why read them? Why spend the time reading thousands of pages that haven't secured their place in the literary canon. And in response to that, I say, because they are quite possibly the first iterations of popular culture in the modern age. In my research it was difficult to find a serialised text, or a city text, or a genre-bending text as popular as *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* that came before. So, I suppose that these texts are worth reading because they have set the standard for popular culture directly following them, while also influencing form, theme, and genre throughout pop culture, and literary history.

Serialization as a format came into effect around the time that both Sue, and Reynolds were writing, and while Honore de Balzac may have written the first roman-feuilleton in 1836, it was these Sue and Reynolds who were among the few that were able to take ahold of the possibilities that serialization permitted them– such as progressive writing, piecemeal publishing, increased author-reader relationships, and even better pay as a writer. The field of mid-nineteenth century publishing is one that permits the continuation of studies like this one, as I have only come to scratch the surface in terms of modernizations in publishing and the creation of popular print culture. Linked to studies in print culture are those in library history, and the

place of libraries within a modern publishing industry, some of the questions that I set out to answer in my study of Sue, and Reynolds's popular fiction brought me in contact with research on the relationship between the mid-nineteenth century press and libraries– a relationship that was almost exclusively between the two entities. The likes of Sue, and Reynolds are undoubtedly significant in their contributions to not only the mass press, but also to popular culture at large since the programmed release of new media that they popularized with their texts came to be used by many popular authors after them like Dumas-fils, Wilkie Collins, Emile Gabriau, Thomas Hardy, and Elizabeth Gaskell. What's more is that this release schedule has persisted into the contemporary world and has been applied to television series for years on end, with weekly releases being the most common– a defining characteristic of *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* as serialised texts. Therefore, through the popularity and influence it is evident that both Sue and Reynolds came to define the format of serialised fiction in such a way that it became the popular format for publishers and writers alike until the book was no longer a luxury item, and fell into the hands of the common man.

The urban setting of both *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* is reflected in other popular literature such as Dickens's *Bleak House*, and Baudelaire's *Le Spleen de Paris,* however, Dickens and Baudelaire do not capture the physical materiality of the city and the possibility is represents to the extent that Sue and Reynolds do. While Sue and Reynolds may not reinvent, or popularize the disconnection, or alienation felt inside of an increasingly industrialized and urban society– they both give space, and words to a concept more concrete than Baudelaire, and more multiple than Dickens. The representation of urban space as the site of possibility is one that Sue and Reynolds take advantage of and make their own by adding twists and turns in the novel that remain a part of the realm of possibility due to the increasingly dense

and diversified modern city. The implications of using the city as a characteristic site of struggle becomes adopted by many a famous writer. For Baudelaire, what made art so beautiful was its authenticity, and how it depicted life as it was, "truth is essential, only it shouldn't stifle the desire for beauty" (Berman 140). This sentiment of life's beauty mixed with it's perils comes across in Baudelaire's poetry– notably in his epilogue of "Le Spleen de Paris", where he states "D'ou l'on peut contempler la ville en son ampleur,// Hopital, lupanar, purgatoire, enfer, bagne,[18]" (Baudelaire 1). Baudelaire's thesis of his poetry collection appears at the end of his epilogue stating "Je t'aime, ô capitale infame! Courtisanes// Et bandits, tels souvent vous offrez des plaisirs// Que ne comprennent pas les vulgaires profanes[19]" (Baudelaire 1); here we are presented with the reverence for the difficulty of modern life which links Baudelaire's artistic realism with that of Sue and Reynolds.

What's more is that this epilogue is a first-person reflection of Paris, which renders its artistic sentiment more subjective and emotional. I find that the social, and cultural moment in which these texts function– the mid nineteenth century industrialized city is one that can be researched endlessly. The representation of an increasingly industrialized London, does not perfectly line up with that of Paris which further separates the two novels from one another. Paris as a modern city, in the 1840s is the site of so much fascination not only literary scholars, but for historians as the representations of Paris shown to the reader in *Les Mystères de Paris* is increasingly referential to the mid-nineteenth century reader, as the Paris of the 1840s does not resemble modern paris in terms of geography– being pre-Haussmannization. Nevertheless the usage of the modern industrial city as a setting became popular among most novelists– not only

[18] Where else can we gaze upon the city and her breadth,// Hospital, brothel, hell, slavery," [translation mine]
[19] I love you, O foul city! Courtesans// And thieves, such to whom you offer happiness// That don't understand the common non-believers. [translation mine]

because everybody was living or moving to cities but also because of the possibilities that the city presented creatives. We have seen the city become a character in novels, and we have also come to know that certain cities permit certain activities, or tropes that are absent in others; for example, in chapter three I discusses how Lemonier postulates on the possibility that Paris is the only city in the world that seems to permit and perpetuate the roman-policier.

Sue and Reynolds approached writing their novels differently than the vast majority of writers at that time, and as a result the novels themselves do not feed into the pre-established genre conventions that came to define popular fiction. James Smith Allen describes that the way to be a popular author in France during the 1830s was to follow the conventions of French romanticism, suggesting that genre became the vehicle by which fiction or literature became popular. And Reynolds himself found out that the best way to become a famous writer was to do what Charles Dickens was doing in Victorian England. However, in *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* the conventions of genre do not stick, since the novels themselves were released over several years and as a result the genre conventions in both novels vary based on the needs and interests of the readership. The multiplicity of genres that permeates throughout each novel is representative of the preferred genre of the readership, as a result "The Mysteries" are a conglomerate of popular genres that follow the readership rather than the author. The conversation around popular fiction, and its relationship to its readership offers opportunities to research the multiplicity of genres that appear in popular fiction. With the popularity of "The Mysteries" some of the tropes that each writer used were developed further in later literature and became proper genres in and of themselves. We see this phenomenon with the sensation novel, whose affective alteration to the Gothic permeates throughout *The Mysteries of London*. Around

20-25 years after the publication of *The Mysteries of London* we see writers like Wilkie Collins, and Mary Elizabeth Braddon establish themselves as sensation novelists.

Sensation fiction exists in the work of Reynolds as well, and in researching the broad subjects represented in *The Mysteries of London*, I have comfortably rested upon the assumption that Reynolds utilizes some of the principal characteristics of sensationalized fiction in his work. The bulk of sensationalized fiction can be represented in Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White (1859-60)*, and Mary Elizabeth-Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret (1862)*, in which positions the problems of "lower class" people in the bourgeois setting. Scholar Graham Law, writes about *The Woman and White* and *Lady Audley's Secret* as being representative of sensationalized fiction, and how they "set improper and mysterious events within respectable domestic environments. The outrage was due at least in part to the fact that sensation fiction transgressed accepted social boundaries." (Law 24).

On the French side of the argument, we see the beginnings of the *roman-policier* being developed with *Les Mystères de Paris,* and it's heuristic storytelling, and logical approach to uncovering the mystery of the plot, rather than being driven by the overdramatization of affect that rules Reynolds's text. The first *roman-policier* is developed and written in 1841 by Edgar-Allen Poe, in a short story known as "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and the first french *roman-policier* is written in 1863 by Emile Garbriau– both iterations of the heuristic storytelling model came to influence Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to write his acclaimed short stories about Sherlock Holmes. Here we see the influence of Sue's heuristic storytelling as among the first influences of the development of the *roman-policier*, which became the dominant genre in the 1860s in France, and England.

Reading *Les Mystères de Paris* alongside its most popular replication *The Mysteries of London* in tandem with critics of literature, literary history, and print history it became increasingly clear that each novel follows its own characters, and storylines. While both engage with themes of their respective cities, and the social realities faced by the working class they each do so in such a different and entertaining way that has solidified each of them as successful and engaging novels intended for a mass audience. Further, the influence that each of these authors and texts held during their time was so much that they dominated the pop-culture scene and influenced form, theme, and genre for the foreseeable future. While these texts may have fallen into obscurity, and have failed to secure a place among the celebrated literary canon, they have evidently remained among the most popular texts of the mid-nineteenth century in France and England. Because of their popularity, they influenced how writers write, and how publishers publish, overall encouraging writers and publishers away from the traditional publication format of books and towards a cheaper, and more accessible format of serialized literature– one that became established as the popular form for the foreseeable future. This serialized release schedule is one that still exists today as the most popular format of releasing television shows either through a network or through streaming is on a weekly basis, the same regularity with which Sue and Reynolds would release their work in the mid-nineteenth century.

Sue and Reynolds's depictions of the city as a character, but also as a setting of grim reality influenced other writers and artists to depict the city in a realistic way, rather than an intense romanticized version of reality. This trend towards realism is present in both texts, and came to influence poets like Baudelaire to write increasingly realistic poetry about the grim reality of living in a developing industrialized society, ultimately moving away from the intensely romanticized popular media that dominated the 1830s in France.

Finally, we see that popular fiction is a sort of genre-conglomerate that has a different purpose from the traditional confines of genre. What I mean is that Sue and Reynolds are among the first authors to attempt– and succeed- in engaging with a newly literate mass audience, one who hasn't existed prior to this historical moment of increased literacy. As a result we notice the genre-conglomerate of mass market literature and formula stories that remain popular to this day. Overall, *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* may not be celebrated literature, but their vestiges are felt in the mass media market of popular culture that we observe directly following these texts, and also to this day.

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Appendix A: A Translation of Chapter One: Form Follows Function: Serialization and Popular Fiction to French

Forme et fonction, sérialisation et fiction populaire

Toute discussion des *Mystères de Paris* et des *Mysteries of London* ou même des histoires et biographies d'Eugène Sue et George W.M. Reynolds mentionne invariablement les termes de sérialisation, ou de roman-feuilleton. Il paraît donc important de s'arrêter un moment sur la définition de ces termes. Dit simplement, la sérialisation est un processus par lequel un roman est publié progressivement et régulièrement, chapitre par chapitre: la plupart des romans sérialisés sortent chaque semaine, ou chaque mois. Le roman-feuilleton correspond en français aux romans fictionnels sérialisés en anglais. Pourquoi est-ce que la sérialisation est caractéristique des œuvres de Sue et Reynolds? Dans ce chapitre, il s'agira d'examiner le format littéraire et ses implications au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle en Angleterre et en France, mais aussi d'expliquer pourquoi on ne retient de Sue et Reynolds que cet aspect de leurs œuvres. De plus, il faudra examiner comment la sérialisation donne sa forme à la fiction et comment le récit de la sérialisation a transformé le processus d'écriture et le métier d'un écrivain. Pour ce faire, j'ai commencé par consulter les travaux d'un écrivain qui vient de la même époque que Sue et Reynolds– ceux de Wilkie Collins, et de considérer en particulier son concept de "public inconnu", qui sert à établir le succès de chaque écrivain dans le sens où ils ont réussi grâce à la relation qu'ils entretenaient avec ce "publique inconnu". Finalement, j'examine les textes, *Les Mystères de Paris* et *The Mysteries of London* afin de localiser des exemples de la sérialisation dans les textes et les influences de la fiction sérialisée, et comment cette forme de diffusion à définir la forme populaire des textes comme ceci, et les autres qui les resembles a partir de cette moment dans une histoire littéraire.

Sue et Reynolds sont liés intrinsèquement au phénomène de la sérialisation parce qu'ils sont parmi les premiers et les plus célèbres écrivains qui ont publié dans ce format. Ainsi, Sue et Reynolds servent d'exemples pour représenter la sérialisation au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle en France et en Angleterre. Ce chapitre met donc l'accent d'une part, sur la manière dont Sue et Reynolds en tant qu'écrivains définissent la sérialisation, mais d'autre part comment ils ont été déterminés par leurs travaux. Premièrement, Sue a publié *Les Mystères de Paris* en 1842 chaque semaine dans *Le Journal des Débats* avec beaucoup de succès– tant et si bien qu'il a obtenu un travail pour un autre journal, *Le Constitutionnel*, en écrivant une autre fiction sérialisée connue sous le titre du *Juif Errant*. La réussite des *Mystères de Paris* était étendue, et le roman a servi comme source d'inspiration à beaucoup d'autres écrivains– spécifiquement à George W.M. Reynolds, un Anglais qui avait visité Paris et lu le travail de Sue. Après son retour à Londres, Reynolds a décidé d'utiliser l'idée du roman de Sue, *Les Mystères de Paris* et de la mettre en application dans sa propre ville, ce qui a résulté dans la création des *Mysteries of London*, publié en 1844 comme un "penny paper" hebdomadaire indépendant, ainsi la publication du roman-feuilleton de Reynolds était libre d'une affiliation avec un journal.

Le succès de chaque écrivain nous mène à essayer de comprendre pourquoi cette fiction est devenue si populaire. Ce succès peut être attribué à trois facteurs principaux: le prix de consommation des travaux de Sue et Reynolds en comparaison aux auteurs qui n'écrivent que sous forme de livres; l'agrandissement du lectorat grâce aux lois qui augmentent le taux d'alphabétisation à travers la France; et la relation entre l'écrivain et les lecteurs qui est caractéristique de la forme sérialisée.

Au dix-neuvième siècle, les livres coûtent beaucoup plus cher qu'actuellement à cause des savoirs faires spécialisés, et de l'expertise nécessaire pour créer un livre. Par conséquent, le

coût de fabrication d'un livre a augmenté le prix final du livre, et ce prix était trop élevé, à cette époque, pour un lecteur de la classe moyenne, ou de classe ouvrière. Le livre était donc considéré comme un produit de luxe. De plus, avec une société de plus en plus industrielle, l'alphabétisation était encouragée comme une mesure de sécurité avec l'opération des machines d'industrie, l'alphabétisation était si importante que John Feather a dit "In such a society, illiteracy was no longer merely a social stigma, it was a fundamental economic disadvantage" (Feather 130).[20] En France, la motivation pour l'augmentation de l'alphabétisation était obligatoire avec la mise en œuvre de la loi Guizot en 1833. Le travail dans les métiers industriels donne lieu à davantage de temps pour les loisirs, et la lecture est devenue un des loisirs préféré– pas juste pour les classes bourgeoises, mais aussi pour la classe ouvrière auparavant analphabète. En faisant ma recherche sur la sérialisation, j'ai trouvé que la vie et l'expérience personnelle d'Eugène Sue et George W.M. Reynolds permettent de mieux comprendre leurs succès dans ce phénomène de sérialisation. En effet, la réalité sociale en France et en Angleterre que l'on perçoit à travers ces biographies, nous fait mieux comprendre les aspects comme les conventions de la sérialisation de l'époque, les avantages financiers de la petite presse (que l'on appelle "penny press en anglais"), le lectorat et l'alphabétisation des consommateurs de la fiction sérialisée. Le but principal de ce chapitre est donc d'identifier comment la sérialisation, en tant que tradition littéraire, donne forme à la littérature produite, et puis comment nous voyons les caractéristiques de la fiction sérialisée dans *Les Mystères de Paris* et *The Mysteries of London*.

Pour comprendre l'esprit d'innovation de la petite presse et le succès des romans-feuilletons écrit par des auteurs célèbres tout autant que par des auteurs inconnus, il faut reprendre l'histoire du livre et voir comment cette histoire révèle les avantages financiers de la

[20] Dans un société comme ceci, l'alphabétisation n'était plus seulement une stigmatisation sociale, mais surtout un désavantage économique.[translation mine]

sérialisation et son succès. Le livre, comme nous le comprenons aujourd'hui, n'était pas toujours aussi bon marché qu'actuellement. Les livres pour la plupart étaient considérés comme des objets de luxe parce qu'ils étaient vendus en trois volumes, et chaque livre ou roman était coupé en trois parties et vendus ainsi. Ce format de livre, celle en trois parties, coûtait environ un guinea et demi, ce qui l'a mis hors de portée de la consommation possible des classes moyennes, et des ouvriers qui gagnent un salaire d'environ 100-200 livres en Angleterre– avec un guinea équivalent à 21 shillings, et une livre équivalente à 20 shillings (Griest 20) mais à la portée des marchands, des avocats ou des docteurs dans les années 1840. Donc, les livres sont restés des objets exclusivement pour la classe bourgeoise– et sans surprise, la classe bourgeoise était la seule classe alphabétisée dans l'Angleterre Victorienne. L'exclusivité et le manque des livres parmi les classes moyennes, et ouvrières a donc rendu plus avantageuse la littérature sérialisée qui a attiré des familles d' ouvriers, pas seulement parce que la lecture était un loisir très populaire mais aussi parce que lire était le loisir des aristocrates.

En France, ces livres populaires sont devenus ce que les Français appellent des romans-feuilletons, qui ont pris la forme d'un roman coupé en plusieurs parties, et chaque partie est un chapitre. Ces romans-feuilletons font partie des journaux dans la section des arts et de la culture. La culture des journaux en Angleterre est étendue et difficile à naviguer, mais c'est beaucoup plus simple que celles de la France entre les années 1830 jusqu'aux années 1840. Les révolutions et réformes politiques de la France au dix-neuvième siècle sont accompagnées de réformes sociales incessantes. En 1833, grâce à la loi Guizot, une formation de base obligatoire était créée pour tous les citoyens français à partir de ce moment-là. Ensuite, le taux d'alphabétisation a beaucoup augmenté. Avec la loi Guizot, une nouvelle population alphabétisée est née. Même si la loi a créé une formation obligatoire, cette formation ne permettait quand même pas au nouveau

lectorat de comprendre les travaux des écrivains célèbres de l'époque comme celles de Balzac, Dumas, Hugo, et Flaubert. Ainsi, le nouveau lectorat était attiré par les romans-feuilletons considérés comme une littérature plus abordable, plus facile a comprendre, mais aussi captivante (Adamowicz-Hariasz 161). La formation au dix-neuvième siècle était considérée comme un droit inaliénable– notamment en France. Cette conviction vient des penseurs et des philosophes comme Rousseau qui dit qu'un cerveau éclairé est nécessaire dans une société croissante et éduquée. La justification pour ce sentiment envers l'éducation était basée sur la conviction de Rousseau qui exprime qu' un cerveau éclairé était l'outil avec qu'une révolution ne peut pas gagner. Fondamentalement, si une personne ne peut pas comprendre ses souffrances et maltraitements, elle souffre encore parce qu'elle ne peut pas comprendre les avantages d'une révolution. Cette idée de Rousseau est devenue la base pour les lois comme la loi Guizot, et puis cette philosophie éclairée est amenée en Angleterre, à travers l'aspect du fanatisme religieux (James 3).

Bientôt après l'implémentation de la loi Guizot en 1833, Emile de Girardin a créé le premier roman-feuilleton dans son journal *La Presse*, dans lequel Girardin a publié un chapitre du roman de Balzac *La Vieille Fille*, qui est devenu le plan pour tous les autres écrivains qui voulait devenir engagé avec le nouveau lectorat à travers d'une moyenne plus accessibles que celles des livres (Adamowicz-Hariasz 160). Il n'existait pas d'espace physique dans les journaux pour les romans-feuilletons au début. En revanche, les journaux ont graduellement créé des sections différentes, se sont pour ainsi agrandi, et alors que dans la section des arts et de la culture il existait encore les critiques, ou les revues de la théâtre, ou ballets– il n'était donc pas hors de questions d'ajouter la littérature a cette sections (Queffélec-Dumasy 6).

Le presse en France était un outil social puissant, une institution, et les éditeurs des journaux arrivaient à interagir avec la population en masse en essayant de satisfaire la grande population dans un effort de vendre de plus en plus de copies du journal. Cette alliance entre les journalistes et leurs audiences est devenu un outil politique puissant au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle en France, parce que les journaux comme *Le Constitutionnel* étaient "The most widely read dailies between 1815 and 1830 when it [the newspapers] battled the Restoration regime. As such, it played a major role in the July 1830 Revolution"[21] (Adamowicz-Hariasz 167). Ainsi, avec les tensions politiques en France pendant les années 1830 et 1840, les Français alternent entre les monarchies, puis les républiques, puis sont retournés à la monarchie, et finalement ont terminé avec une nouvelle république en 1848– la seconde république française sous Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte (Napoléon III), qui a nourri une population radicale et révolutionnaire. Si on ajoute à cela la situation financière des citoyens en France à cette époque, ce n'est pas un choc que "The roman-feuilleton came to life as a result of complex socio-political and economic forces and it in turn became a source for profound change in the social and cultural history of France" (Adamowicz-Hariasz 160).

En Angleterre, la situation politique n'était pas aussi chaotique qu'en France pendant les années 1830 jusqu'aux années 1840, mais pour mettre l'accent sur les parallèles entre les deux pays, pendant la France gérait les révolutions politique et les nouveaux administrations, l'Angleterre gérait le mouvement Chartist– un mouvement dans lequel Reynolds était un figure prominent. Ce mouvement était progressif, et préconisait l'autorité des citoyens et citoyennes sur les décisions gouvernementales. Beaucoup de Chartistes étaient de plus en plus critiques du

[21] Les sorties quotidiennes les plus lues entre 1815 et 1830 quand ils [les journaux] luttent contre le régime de la restauration. Ainsi les journaux ont joué un rôle très important dans la révolution de Juillet 1830. [translation mine]

gouvernement à l'époque– une caractéristique qui n'est pas absente dans les travaux de Reynolds. La motivation principale pour la fiction sérialisée est venue avec la croissance de popularité associée avec le journal, et les périodiques en gros au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle. Même si la première loi de formation obligatoire en Angleterre n'existait pas jusqu'en 1870 (James 2), il y avait d' autres opportunités pour les gens de devenir alphabétisés. La motivation pour beaucoup d'adultes de devenir alphabétisées était grâce à l'influence des essais de John Locke's comme *L'Essai sur l'entendement humain,* qui a transmis l'idée que la formation était nécessaire pour un être éclairé (James 2). Ce projet sur l'alphabétisation qui devait faire avancer l'État, a été adopté par les figures religieuses comme les Méthodistes, qui ont établi le catéchisme pour les enfants, ce qui a éduqué entre 800.000 et 1.500.000 personnes en 1830 (James 3). Les villes aussi sont devenues plus denses grâce aux actes de clôture en 1801 qui ont redistribué la terre féodale, qui ont restructuré les petites villes rurales– a son tour en encourageant les personnes provinciales à migrer vers les zones urbaines (James 1). Avec le processus d'industrialisation le programme s'est standardisé– beaucoup plus que les programmes des fermiers– et avec cette standardisation le temps libre est apparu. Avec l'augmentation du temps libre était la besoin des loisirs, et la lecture était un des loisirs les plus populaires. L'auteur David Vincent écrit dans son livre *Literacy and Popular Culture* qu' avec le programme de travail standard, et une augmentation dans les salaires de l'ouvrier il y avait "more money and more time in which to spend it[22]" (Vincent 211). Mais, la classe ouvrière était souvent exclue des des innovations telles que les bibliothèques, et les étalages de bouquiniste dans les gares, parce qu' "They could no more purchase the shilling or two-shilling 'yellow-back' railway fiction in the 1850s than they could afford to use the station on which they were sold" (Vincent 211). Bien

[22] Plus d'argent, et plus de temps libre avec lequel ils peuvent dépenser leur argent. [translation mine]

que David Vincent s'inspire des années 1850 en Angleterre, son argument demeure : les classes populaires étaient largement exclues de la lecture pendant leur temps libre, car les ouvrages étaient trop chers pour elles, même des ouvrages aussi « bas de gamme » que les romans de gare à couverture jaune. C'est cette exclusion qui a entraîné l'immense popularité des romans feuilletons bon marché lorsqu'ils étaient proposés à la classe ouvrière.

Concernant les gares, il existe tout un écosystème de fiction ferroviaire qui a imprégné la culture populaire à l'ère industrielle, au milieu du XIXe siècle en Angleterre. Richard Altick évalue le rôle de l'expansion ferroviaire dans le développement de la fiction feuilleton, ou fiction bon marché en tant que fiction populaire. Altick affirme : « À mesure que les trajets [pour se rendre au travail] s'allongeaient, grâce au réseau de lignes laissé par la frénésie spéculative des années 1840, les romans s'ajoutent à la marchandise en vente. » (Altick et Rose, p. 301). Cependant, ces livres étaient souvent des fictions extrêmement bon marché et salaces, souvent traduites du français – jusqu'à ce que la moralité de ces textes suscite un tollé, auquel on a réagi en louant des loges de gare à des éditeurs réputés et respectables.

Avec l'alphabétisation croissante et un lectorat ouvrier vorace, le périodique hebdomadaire bon marché en feuilleton est devenu le moyen le plus populaire pour le grand public de consommer de la fiction – à des fins de divertissement. Le remplacement du livre par le périodique en feuilleton s'explique par de nombreux facteurs, mais les principaux sont « rapidité et économie » (Gamerson et al. 147). En termes de rapidité, ce point est explicite, car un chapitre de livre est plus rapide à publier et à imprimer qu'un roman entier. En termes d'économie, le prix des livres en avait fait un luxe, globalement inaccessible à la majorité du public lettré. Même avec des solutions comme les bibliothèques de prêt, le prix de l'abonnement dépassait les limites des lecteurs de la classe ouvrière. Les auteurs tentaient de vivre de leur écriture durant cette

période des années 1830-1840, et par conséquent, les écrivains demandaient des prix élevés pour leurs œuvres, surtout s'il s'agissait d'auteurs populaires comme Dickens et Thackeray. Au lieu qu'un seul foyer paie l'exemplaire d'un livre populaire coûteux, le prix était compensé par les bibliothèques de prêt qui achetaient un exemplaire et le diffusaient ensuite parmi leurs abonnés. Ainsi, une « dépendance malsaine à la bibliothèque de prêt » (Altick et Rose, 295) devint la caractéristique principale du commerce du livre au milieu du XIXe siècle. Le même phénomène se produisait en France, comme en témoigne le mécontentement du célèbre écrivain Honoré de Balzac. Dans un essai, John R. Barberet examine le succès fulgurant du Roman-feuilleton et le rapport de Balzac à ce support de publication. Cela dit, Balzac était mécontent des pratiques de lecture collective de son lectorat, préférant de loin que chacun achète un exemplaire de son œuvre plutôt que les bibliothèques ou les cabinets de lecture ne louent ses écrits (Adamowicz-Hariasz, 188). Ce qui frustra Balzac, c'était la façon dont la presse périodique « fragmentaire" l'œuvre de l'auteur au niveau de la production et distribuait ces fragments morceau par morceau dans le domaine de la consommation aliénée… » (Adamowicz-Hariasz, 188). Cependant, on constate que la démarche du lectorat est économique : répartir le coût d'un texte sur plusieurs personnes et sur plusieurs mois. Dans son ouvrage Serializing Fiction in the Victorian Press, Graham Law écrit : « Apparemment, la motivation [des éditeurs] était simplement économique. Ainsi, les éditeurs pouvaient répartir le coût de production, et les abonnés celui d'achat, sans difficulté sur la période de consommation… » (Law 3). Law propose ici un raisonnement sur les motivations des éditeurs et des auteurs à publier leurs œuvres en série. Rendre son travail moins cher permet naturellement de rassembler et de mobiliser un lectorat plus large, d'où le succès de Reynolds et Sue. La littérature en série est donc devenue la solution à l'inaccessibilité des ouvrages de lecture auprès des libraires et des bibliothèques de prêt. La conséquence naturelle de

la publication en série a été une baisse des prix des ouvrages en général et une capacité accrue à attirer un lectorat sans que les limites du prix des ouvrages ne soient trop élevées.

Si la presse en général et son essor au milieu du XIXe siècle sont intéressants et importants pour notre compréhension de la fiction feuilleton telle que nous la connaissons dans Les Mystères de Paris et Les Mystères de Londres, ce qui est plus pertinent est ce que l'on appelle la « petite presse ». La « petite presse » est la version la plus accessible du journal, ou du moins le divertissement qu'il propose. En France, la « petite presse » a été mise en lumière vers 1863 avec le lancement d'un autre journal d'Émile de Girardin, Le Petit Journal, qui cherchait à réduire encore davantage les coûts de la fiction feuilleton en générant des pertes de revenus grâce à la publicité (Adamowicz-Hariasz 161). Parallèlement, en Angleterre, la « penny press » était une industrie éditoriale plus indépendante, principalement constituée de réimpressions. L'importance de la « penny press » pour mon propos réside dans le fait que c'est là que Reynolds a publié Les Mystères de Londres. Tandis que Sue était rattachée au Journal des Débats, Reynolds était essentiellement une auteure indépendante dans le monde de la presse à un sou.

Comme je l'ai déjà mentionné, Sue et Reynolds comptent parmi les auteurs les plus célèbres et les plus populaires à avoir bénéficié de la publication en feuilleton. Leur popularité soulève la question : qui les lisait ? Et pourquoi ? À son apogée, Reynolds vendait environ 40 000 exemplaires par semaine (Sutherland 41), tandis que Sue a vendu six fois plus que Reynolds, rassemblant 300 000 lecteurs chaque semaine lorsqu'elle a été publiée en feuilleton dans le Journal des Débats de 1842 à 1843. Il est important de noter que ces chiffres sont purement spéculatifs, car la consommation de chaque exemplaire de ces textes était collective. Il était courant qu'un seul exemplaire d'une œuvre de fiction en feuilleton soit lu à voix haute à un public – ou partagé entre plusieurs lecteurs dans des cafés ou des cabinets de lecture –, ce qui

augmentait l'intérêt que les éditeurs n'auraient pas pu obtenir autrement. L'écart important entre la popularité de Sue et celle de Reynolds soulève la question suivante : pourquoi l'un est-il six fois plus lu que l'autre ? Cette question rejoint l'argument avancé par Collins dans son essai : en substance, le succès d'un auteur dépend de sa capacité à capter l'attention de la classe ouvrière et à fidéliser son lectorat. Je trouve que ce point est corroboré par l'engagement considérable que révèlent les chiffres de lectorat de Sue et de Reynolds. Globalement, si l'on prend en compte les biographies de chaque auteur, je constate que Sue est plus largement lu que Reynolds en raison de sa modération dans la quasi-totalité de ses positions politiques et de ses écrits. Reynolds, quant à lui, interagit davantage avec son lectorat, mais s'adresse davantage à la classe ouvrière – et ce, de manière plus radicale que Sue. Dans ses écrits radicaux, Reynolds délaisse essentiellement le lecteur des classes moyennes et supérieures, car son écriture est critique envers ces classes, d'une manière absente de celle de Sue. Le style d'écriture de chaque auteur est influencé par sa carrière littéraire, faisant ainsi écho à sa biographie.

Sue a grandi dans la classe supérieure et s'est frayé un chemin dans le journalisme et l'écriture, puis est devenue bien connue pour beaucoup de ses premiers travaux recevant des éloges pour son style d'écriture, étant souvent appelé « le French Cooper » en référence à James Fenimore Cooper des États-Unis, et cette comparaison transparaît dans les écrits de Sue alors qu'il fait référence aux « sauvages » décrits dans le roman de Cooper Le Dernier des Mohicans dans son premier chapitre ; «... en dehors de la civilisation que les sauvages peuplades si bien peintes par Cooper» (Sue 35). De plus, l'écriture de Sue était en grande partie de son époque et réactive à la politique contemporaine, ce qui a conduit à définir Les Mystères de Paris comme « Romain mondain, Les Mystères de Paris est aussi un roman d'aventures exotiques, ou les apaches de Paris remplacent ceux de l'Amérique, et un roman populiste, mettant en scène les

marginaux de Paris, pauvres, petit peuple, ouvrier, bandits, avec leur langage propre (l'argot), leurs moeurs et leurs destins. » (Queffélec-Dumasy 7). Autrement dit, Les Mystères de Paris était révolutionnaire dans sa représentation de la classe ouvrière, tout en racontant une histoire qui ne la méprisait pas, mais qui sympathisait avec les moins fortunés, le tout dans l'argot, le dialecte français de la classe ouvrière. La position sociale de Sue, issu de la haute société, tout en écrivant avec sympathie pour la classe ouvrière, le rendait immédiatement accessible à un large public.

La situation de Reynolds est totalement différente, car il n'était pas issu de la haute société, mais plutôt de la classe moyenne. Reynolds était, à toutes fins utiles, un journaliste raté et a tiré la majeure partie de sa fortune de la parodie du succès de Charles Dickens. L'un de ses premiers succès fut sa parodie des Pickwick Papers, qu'il intitula Pickwick Abroad. Cette même pratique fut appliquée aux Mystères de Paris, Reynolds ayant lu l'œuvre de Sue lors de son séjour à Paris au début des années 1840 et ayant appliqué le même sentiment à Londres à son retour. Si les titres des deux textes sont similaires, les histoires sont tout sauf similaires. Cette différence est représentative de la différence de style d'écriture entre les deux auteurs. Comme mentionné précédemment, Sue était un grand écrivain, comme en témoigne sa popularité, et il fut élevé dans la haute société parisienne, fréquentant les Salons de l'époque. Son implication dans la haute société influença son écriture pour plaire en partie à cette classe. Cependant, Reynolds était davantage journaliste qu'auteur littéraire, et de ce fait, le langage des Mystères de Londres tend à être beaucoup plus révolutionnaire que tout ce que l'on trouve dans les Mystères de Paris. Reynolds était connu pour son radicalisme, en partie radicalisé par le mouvement chartiste, dont il devint un acteur majeur. Le style révolutionnaire de Reynolds lui valut une popularité auprès des classes moyennes et ouvrières, mais le rendit peu attrayant pour les classes supérieures, qui percevaient son radicalisme comme une menace pour leur statu quo. Reynolds était également

connu pour s'adresser au lectorat du penny dreadful, une transition naturelle entre le penny installment et le penny blood, vendu dans les « bidonvilles » et généralement destiné à un « marché juvénile » (Loi 23). Cependant, si Reynolds ne captura pas le lectorat des classes supérieures, il s'attira les faveurs de la classe ouvrière et de la classe moyenne. Face à l'aversion bourgeoise pour le feuilleton hebdomadaire (Loi 23), les recueils des Mystères de Londres de Reynolds furent reliés en volumes pour être lus par un public plus aisé que ses lecteurs de feuilletons, élargissant ainsi son lectorat simplement par le changement de format littéraire (Shannon 101). Il a ainsi été établi que le lectorat de Sue et de Reynolds était similaire, mais pas tout à fait identique. Sue était lu plus largement en raison de sa sympathie pour les classes pauvres et ouvrières, tout en restant respecté par les classes supérieures dont il était issu. Reynolds était largement lu en raison de son radicalisme et de son attrait pour la classe ouvrière, plus que pour la noblesse de l'époque (Maxwell 62). Tout cela pour dire que l'essentiel du lectorat de Sue et Reynolds provenait de la classe ouvrière émergente. À bien des égards, le style de fiction feuilleton – celui du journalisme et de l'écriture littéraire – et sa longueur étaient presque faits pour la classe ouvrière, car elle « manquait de temps et lisait donc par à-coups, d'où l'utilité des nouvelles captivantes et courtes » (Vincent 214). Ainsi, la lecture est devenue l'inverse de ce qu'elle était à sa conception : au lieu d'être un moyen de recueillir des informations et de diffuser des connaissances, la lecture est devenue une forme de divertissement, sans vocation purement éducative. Le déséquilibre de pouvoir entre les classes sociales instruites et sachant lire s'accentue encore davantage. Au lieu de cette dichotomie flagrante entre ce qui peut et ce qui ne peut pas, nous sommes confrontés à ce que l'on lit plutôt qu'à la question de savoir si l'on peut lire.

On peut glaner beaucoup en regardant non seulement qui lisait Sue et Reynolds, mais aussi où ces auteurs étaient lus, et comment. Par conséquent, il faut examiner les conventions à propos de la consommation des matériaux imprimés. Dans un essai, Maria Adamowicz-Hariasz analyse le roman-feuilleton et sa transformation, elle dit que les cabinet de lecture– l'équivalent français du café en Angleterre, en substance, un lieu pour la consommation des matériaux imprimés en commun– qui a attiré la foule dans un effort de consommer les médias la plus recent. Elle dit que "the numbers clearly show a steadily growing demand for the written word among the newly literate. For example, and especially in the cities[23]" (Adamowicz-Hariasz 162). Elle continue en citant le"rapid multiplication" des cabinets de lecture avec seulement 21 à Paris en 1819, 207 en 1843, et 215 en 1844 (Adamowicz-Hariasz 162). L'attraction de la foule dans les lieux publics comme les cabinets de lecture encourage le concept que la consommation des périodiques était aussi un engagement social. C'est-à- dire que pour chaque copie des *Mystères de Paris* achetée il existait quelques lecteurs qui les consommaient pour eux-mêmes ou qui les lisaient à voix haute pour les autres.

Le même concept existait en Angleterre, mais à la place des cabinets de lecture, l'Angleterre avait des cafés. La foule était attirée par les cafés parce que, au milieu des années 1800, le prix du café a diminué régulièrement jusqu'au moment où une tasse de café coûtait un penny. Dans son livre *Fiction for the Working Man*, Louis James dit que les cafés était le site idéal parce que "workmen could eat a meal at a coffee house, or bring their own instead of traveling back home for lunch[24]" (James 8). Les cafés deviennent un lieu de rencontre pour les révolutionnaires dans les années 1830 en Angleterre parce que les ouvriers connaissaient bien

[23] Les chiffres montrent une augmentation dans la demande du mot imprimé parmi le nouveau lectorat. Par exemple, et notamment dans les grandes villes. [translation mine]
[24] Les ouvriers pourraient manger un repas dans le café, ou amener leurs propre repas au lieu d'en voyagent chez lui pour le déjeuner. [translation mine]

ces lieux. En 1840, Londres avait entre 1.600 et 1.800 cafés dans la ville. Dans ces lieux, la littérature était partagée parmi la grande population des ouvriers.

La caractéristique principale du roman-feuilleton et son équivalent, le roman sérialisé, est un mélange entre l'écriture des auteurs littéraires et des journalistes. Maria Adamowicz-Hariasz décrit le changement dans le style littéraire lorsque le roman-feuilleton est devenu la forme préférée pour les écrivains, en disant que le roman sérialisée forçait "the *hommes de lettres* to write as fast a journalists and because the product of their work had to attract and sustain the interest of as many consumers as possible", et il en a résulté que "A successful roman-feuilleton made frequent use of cliches, it privileged dialogue over description, and it lightened readers through swift action and rapidly and unexpectedly changing events[25]" (Adamowicz-Hariasz 165). Parce que la fiction sérialisée est sortie dans un programme hebdomadaire, mensuel, our bi-mensuel, il fallait créer un incentive pour que le consommateur achète le chapitre suivant à la prochaine date de sortie. En plus, il était important que les lecteurs soient captivés par les premières phrases d'un roman-feuilleton pour qu'ils finissent par acheter toute la série. Le résultat est que nous avons un matériel imprimé qui "draws upon the recent murders and other crimes, along with divorce cases and scandals…[26]" (Wynne 5). L'implication des éléments dramatiques et quelquefois déplacés comme le sujet du roman-feuilleton, comme les scandales et divorces était l'élément attirant pour la foule qui pour la plupart venaient du lectorat ouvrier émergent. Ici, on voit un lecteur ouvrier alphabétisé, qui, selon de John Sutherland est "prepared to put its hand in its pocket to get the fiction it liked[27]" (Sutherland 42). C'est a dire que, en gros,

[25] Un roman-feuilleton populaire utilise les clichés, et il met l'accent sur le dialogue plus que la description, et il a attiré l'attention du lecteur à travers de l'action très vite, et les événements en changeant dans une manière rapide. [translation mine]
[26] Utilisait les meurtres et les autres crimes, avec les divorces et autres scandales. [translation mine]
[27] Prêt à mettre la main dans la poche pour acheter la fiction qui lui plait. [translation mine]

la production de la fiction devenait une entreprise lucrative, et satisfaire la foule était l'outil pour trouver le succès (Sutherland 43). La fiction est donc devenue plus démocratisée que élitiste.

Comme mentionné plus haut, la classe ouvrière, jusqu'au milieu des années 1830 et le début des années 1840, était exclue de l'alphabétisation et la culture liée aux matériaux imprimés. C'est-à- dire que, les ouvriers ne pouvaient pas lire, mais il n'existait pas de textes attirants dans la presse parce que tout était écrit pour l'aristocratie. Ce que je veux dire est que les média satisfaisaient le lecteur bourgeois, quelquefois le lecteur de classe moyenne, mais jamais le lecteur ouvrier. Par conséquent, le sujet des matériaux imprimés sera les revues de culture comme les bals, et les activités des élites qui restent un mystère et attirent les ouvriers. Cependant, la production de la littérature ou la fiction pour les ouvriers a commencé environ en 1830, avec l'accès aux matériaux imprimés. Les journaux et périodiques sont devenus de plus en plus bon marché avec le développement des technologies d'imprimerie (James xv).

L'intellectuel John Feather écrit dans son livre *A History of British Publishing* que "As the pace of economic change increased, so too did the dependence on print[28]" (Feather 130), en montrant qu'une société de plus en plus industrialisée dépend des matériaux imprimés pour plusieurs raisons: la publicité, l'imprimerie des journaux, les livres, et autres moyens de divertissement. Cependant, pour la plupart le style d'imprimerie du dix neuvième siècle restait "essentially unchanged from the methods which Gutenberg had invented 350 years before. Typesetting, printing and binding were all hand-craft processes, as were papermaking and typefounding[29]" (Feather 131). Puisqu' il n'existait pas une propagation d'innovations techniques

[28] À mesure que le rythme des changements économiques s'accélèrent, la dépendance à l'imprimé s'accroissait également. [translation mine]
[29] Les méthodes, essentiellement inchangées par rapport aux méthodes inventées par Gutenberg 350 ans auparavant, étaient toutes artisanales. La composition, l'impression et la reliure, tout comme la fabrication du papier et la fonte des caractères, étaient des procédés artisanaux.[translation mine]

dans le domaine d'imprimerie au début du dix neuvième siècle, ce n'est pas une surprise que les livres soient des objets de luxe, comme la fabrication des livres était un processus très long et très cher.

L'impression comportait trois principaux éléments qui la rendaient coûteuse : la fabrication du papier, la presse elle-même et la composition. À la fin du XVIIIe siècle et avant, le papier était fabriqué à partir de chiffons – des chiffons propres, qui plus est, et le processus était long. La recherche d'une solution moins coûteuse pour la fabrication du papier est venue du manque de matériaux pour la fabrication de papier à partir de chiffons propres. Cette difficulté a entraîné une flambée des prix du papier, avec une forte baisse des bénéfices tirés de l'impression, les coûts étant souvent répercutés du producteur au consommateur. Cependant, une solution a été trouvée en 1789 grâce aux expériences de Nicolas-Louis Robert, qui « a réussi à construire une machine à papier actionnée par la force hydraulique » (Feather 131). Finalement, les grossistes britanniques Henry et Sealy Fourdrinier ont importé le modèle de Robert en Angleterre et l'ont perfectionné, créant la première machine à papier commerciale en 1807 (Feather 131). En matière d'impression, le procédé était resté inchangé depuis sa conception au XVe siècle et le demeura jusqu'au début du XIXe siècle, lorsque John Walter installa une presse à vapeur au Times, la première jamais utilisée commercialement (Feather 133). La principale motivation de la plupart des innovations dans le domaine de l'imprimerie, y compris la mécanisation de l'imprimerie, résultait de l'appétit vorace du public pour des imprimés modernes comme les journaux. La dernière innovation qui facilita la rapidité et le succès des imprimés en série fut la composition stéréotypée. La composition typographique resta inchangée jusqu'à la fin du XIXe siècle, date à laquelle elle fut remplacée par la composition stéréotypée, qui permit une création plus rapide et plus mécanisée des imprimés (Feather 133). Ensemble, les innovations en matière

de fabrication du papier, d'impression et de composition typographique permirent au public de se familiariser avec les imprimés aussi rapidement que les éditeurs et les imprimeurs les publiaient. Cet engouement auprès du public est l'un des nombreux facteurs qui ont permis le succès fulgurant des Mystères de Paris et de Londres.

Nous avons parlé du roman-feuilleton, ou feuilleton à un penny, comme d'une sorte de littérature facile, ou de littérature populaire, comme l'avaient perçue les classes les plus puissantes et les plus élitistes. Cependant, la stigmatisation de la fiction bon marché en feuilleton par les classes supérieures et moyennes a renforcé la cohésion entre les membres lettrés de la classe ouvrière. Louis James écrit que les classes ouvrières « étaient étroitement unies par des sentiments politiques et de classe, et la pauvreté signifiait que le prix de la littérature déterminent largement la classe du lecteur, les pauvres achetant la partie à un penny, les classes moyennes estimant que la littérature bon marché était socialement stigmatisée » (Jacques xvii). Ici, James aligne les formes spécifiques de fiction en feuilleton sur la classe sociale la plus susceptible de s'y identifier ou de l'acheter. Les membres de la classe moyenne considéraient la littérature bon marché comme indigne d'eux et préféraient lire des magazines familiaux ou des recueils de nouvelles ; tandis que la classe ouvrière achetait la fiction la moins chère disponible.

Dans un essai de l'écrivain victorien Wilkie Collins, intitulé The Unknown Public, publié dans Household Words en 1858 – ce qui le place une dizaine d'années après Sue et Reynolds –, l'auteur révèle à ses lecteurs, majoritairement issus de la classe moyenne, qu'il existe un important consommateur de médias imprimés inconnu de Collins. Ce public inconnu est celui qui ne lit que le journal et les journaux à un penny qui sont vendus en parallèle (Collins 209). Collins poursuit en affirmant que « l'avenir de la fiction anglaise pourrait reposer sur le public inconnu » (Collins 216), afin de démontrer l'influence qu'une base de consommateurs aussi

importante – prétendument de trois millions – pouvait avoir sur le succès d'un auteur. Collins explique ensuite qu'il a acheté cinq journaux à un penny et qu'ils ont tous été écrits par des auteurs différents, mais détaillant la même chose, à tel point que le même auteur aurait pu les écrire tous. À ce stade, Collins affirme que le public inconnu « privilégie la quantité à la qualité dans ses lectures » (Collins 211). Collins souligne ce qu'il perçoit comme le problème des romans-feuilletons comme Les Mystères de Paris, Le Juif errant et Le Comte de Monte-Cristo, ainsi que leurs apparents échecs auprès du public inconnu en Angleterre. À ce propos, Collins soutient que le matériel de référence de ces fictions françaises est trop culturellement spécifique pour être pertinent pour la classe ouvrière qui les consomme sous forme de feuilletons. Collins se demande : « Parmi le public inconnu, combien sont susceptibles de savoir, par exemple, que Mademoiselle signifie Mademoiselle ? » (Collins 215). L'idée que Collins tente de faire valoir tout au long de cet essai est que le public inconnu représente une part importante et inexploitée du lectorat potentiel en Angleterre. Les usagers des bibliothèques et les propriétaires de livres chez eux constituent la minorité des lecteurs lorsqu'il s'agit de chiffres. Par conséquent, ce que je trouve le plus intéressant et significatif dans l'essai de Collins n'est pas sa mention explicite d'Eugène Sue et des Mystères de Paris, mais plutôt son analyse du public inconnu en tant qu'entité parmi les lecteurs, et de l'importance que ce public pouvait avoir pour une carrière. À cet égard, je constate que c'est ce public inconnu en Angleterre qui a été exploité non seulement par Sue, mais aussi par Reynolds, et que c'est lui qui a rendu leurs auteurs si populaires. L'essai de Collins montre clairement qu'il considère le public inconnu comme une classe incapable de comprendre la littérature « intellectuelle », ce qui transparaît dans le dégoût de Collins pour les lectures qu'ils ont choisies. Les arguments avancés par Collins sont valables d'un point de vue sociologique si on les applique à Sue, et plus particulièrement à Reynolds. Chaque écrivain était

populaire grâce à ses écrits divertissants ; cependant, l'essentiel de leur popularité – et de leurs ventes – résulte de leur engagement auprès du public inconnu que Collins étudie. Le format de publication en feuilleton est intéressant dans le sens où l'auteur écrit un roman ; cependant, le lecteur ne pourra le lire qu'un chapitre à la fois. Par conséquent, chaque chapitre doit être riche en action et captivant, soit pour captiver le lecteur tout au long du chapitre, soit pour préparer le chapitre suivant de manière à créer un suspense chez le lecteur, garantissant ainsi son adhésion. L'auteur privilégie ces deux aspects simultanément, afin que chaque chapitre soit intrinsèquement intéressant, tout en s'inscrivant dans un récit global. Le point le plus évident dans le format des *Mystères de Paris* et des *Mystères de Londres* est la longueur des chapitres. Étant donné que chaque chapitre devait paraître chaque semaine et tenir sur deux à quatre pages de journal, il se devait d'être court. La brièveté de chaque chapitre permet en outre de faire avancer l'intrigue à un rythme beaucoup plus soutenu que dans un roman traditionnel non sérialisé. De plus, chaque chapitre se termine par un suspense, ou un moment annonçant la suite ; cet ajout est devenu pratique courante pour inciter l'acheteur à revenir la semaine suivante et acheter le chapitre suivant. Dans son ouvrage, Popular French Romanticism, Joseph Smith Allen examine la frontière entre romantisme populaire et roman-feuilleton, et affirme ainsi que, selon Reybaud, « chaque numéro doit bien se terminer… Le relier au numéro suivant par une sorte de cordon ombilical qui appelle, qui suscite le désir, voire l'impatience de lire la suite » (Allen 204). Les écrits de Sue et de Reynolds sont ainsi façonnés par le format dans lequel ils publient. L'une des caractéristiques les plus marquantes de l'édition en feuilleton, surtout dans une série aussi populaire que celles de Sue et Reynolds, est la complexité de l'intrigue et la coexistence de plusieurs intrigues. Si les deux auteurs ont tendance à multiplier les intrigues, Reynolds est la plus évidente, comme dans Le Mystère.

Les deux écrivains Sue et Reynolds finissent leurs chapitres dans une manière très rapide, avec un peu d'explication de ce qui pourrait se passer dans la chapitre suivant. Dans, *Les Mystères de Paris*, chapitre quatre finit avec les lignes "un incident tragique vint rappeler à ces trois personnages dans quel lieu ils se trouvaient." (Sue 70). Le langage utilisé par Sue est mélangé avec les connotations négatives, cependant, il n'offre pas les indices à ce qui se passe prochainement.. Ce n'est pas toujours le cas pour Sue, ils sont quelques chapitres qui suivent l'un à l'autre naturellement; par exemple, les chapitres trois, et quatre sont "L'histoire de la Goualeuse, and "L'histoire du Chourineur, respectivement. C'est à dire que quelques chapitres sont organisés en utilisant un manière conventionnel, comme resulte ils ne sont pas assez choquante avec leur fins et la prochain début du chapitre. Cependant, le même effet est produit– un enthousiasme à la part du lecteur. Nous voyons cette anticipation dans les chapitres trois, et quatre dans les dernières lignes de chapitre deux position l'histoire de La Goualeuse dans une manière très mystérieuse, avec Le Chourineur en disant "Maintenant, a ton tour, la Goualeuse, dit le Chourineur; je garde mon histoire pour la bonne bouche" (Sue 52). Comme résultat en guidant le lecteur aux chapitres suivants d' une manière très enthousiaste.

Reynolds réalise le même effet que Sue, cependant c'est à travers les moyennes plus dramatiques. A la part de Sue, il laisse beaucoup d'informations à l'imagination du lecteur, de ce qui pourrait se passer, Reynolds construit l'action de l'intrigue du chapitre dans une manière très dramatique jusqu'à la fin en laissant le lecteur enthousiaste pour le prochain chapitre. Par exemple, dans chapitre deux, "The Mysteries of the Old House[30]" A la fin du chapitre, notre personnage principal, l'etranger beau, entends la conversation des criminelles dans la Vieille Maison dans laquelle il se cache. Les lignes finales sont: "Seizing the candle, he was hurrying

[30] Les mystères de la Vieille Maison. [translation mine]

towards the door, when his comrade rushed after him, crying 'No– I won't be left in the dark! I can't bear it! Damme, if you go, I'll go with you!; The two villains accordingly proceeded together into the next room.[31]" (Reynolds 13). Le méthode utilisée par Reynolds est la même que Sue; chaque autour explore un intrigue pertinent dans chaque chapitre qui reste pertinent à la narratif en gros. Sue et Reynolds jouent avec l'intrigue de chaque chapitre en positionnant la fin de chaque chapitre dans une manière assez dramatique que le lecteur doit acheter le prochain chapitre pour trouver la résolution. Ainsi, Reynolds et Sue amuse le lecteur immédiatement de chapitre à chapitre, en même temps en écrivant un narratif cohésive en liant les chapitres ensemble à travers d'un but en commun des personnages qui doivent être réalisés par la fin du série, quoi qu'il en soit. Pour Sue, son narratif reste serré avec un personnage central–Rodolphe– qui chasse les criminels dangereux comme sa pénitence pour ses transgressions au passé, après qu' en arrêtant un criminel Rodolphe continue a la prochaine jusqu'au moment que le criminel finale et dépose. À l'autre côté, Reynolds maintient plusieurs narratives au même temps au lieu de finir un et puis en passant à l'autre. Dans le texte de Reynolds, nous sommes introduit aux événements de la ville, la paysage, et la prison de Newgate toute au même temps. La multiplicité des narratives dans le texte de Reynolds lui permet de rendre visite aux sites de terreur des chapitres anciens. Dans chapitre 28, apres Bill tue sa femme par hasard dans un rage folle, il travail avec les autres bandits de se cache des autorites, et son lieu pour se cacher est la Vieille Maison du chapitre ancienne. La résulte est un histoire plus chaotique– mais un qui a plus de variété pour le lecteur dans une manière qui est absente dans le narratif chronologique de Sue.

[31] Saisissant la bougie, il se précipitait vers la porte, lorsque son camarade se précipita à sa poursuite en criant : « Non, je ne veux pas rester dans le noir ! Je ne peux pas le supporter ! Bon sang, si tu pars, j'irai avec toi ! » Les deux scélérats se dirigèrent donc ensemble vers la pièce voisine. [translation mine].

Surtout, en examinant *Les Mystères de Paris* et *The Mysteries of London* dans la forme reliée comme nous les achèterons aujourd'hui, c'est ordinaire que note que les textes ne sont pas organisés de la même façon que les romans traditionnels. Avec plus de recherche, on voit une histoire très riche de la fiction sérialisée au milieu du dix neuvième siècle qui était une réponse à la croissance dans les prix des livres en trois-volumes et les abonnements des bibliothèques en circulation. Ainsi, la coïncidence de la littérature publiée et réimprimée dans les journaux comme réponse aux impôts sur la connaissance, a créé une opportunité pour les écrivains de publier leurs travaux dans les magazines et les journaux. La plupart de succès des travaux comme *Les Mystères de Paris* et *The Mysteries of London* apprécie viens comme résulte de l'agrandissement d'alphabétisation au milieu du dix neuvieme siecle, et l'abilite de l'auteur d'attrapper l'attention du nouveau lecteur alphabetises comme celle de la public inconnu de Wilkie Collins. Par conséquent, en comprenant les travaux de Sue et Reynolds est en tandem avec la compréhension de l'histoire de leurs publications, et la réception des textes parmi un lectorat en masse. Ces textes, comme tous les autres n'existent pas dans un vacuum, c'est à dire qu'ils sont a produit de leur temps dans le sense qu'ils satisfaire les lecteurs, comme resulte, ces textes deviennent très populaire dans une manière qui reste unique à ces textes dans leur temps spécifiques.