reimagining ireland
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Barbara Hughes

BETWEEN LITERATURE AND HISTORY

The Diaries and Memoirs of Mary Leadbeater and Dorothea Herbert

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This book explores the remarkable diaries and memoirs of Mary Leadbeater (1758–1826) and Dorothea Herbert (c.1767–1829), both of whom lived in Ireland. Working on the premise that their identities are literary constructions, the author investigates the cultural and existential impulses that motivate their creation. Leadbeater's diaries span fifty-seven years and include uncensored teenage journals, which are a rarity in Western Europe. Herbert was a member of the minor gentry and her extraordinary memoir, depicting her descent into madness, provides a wealth of cultural and historical information.

The principal advantage of conducting a joint study of the writings of both women lies in the manner in which the work of one writer functions as an implied corrective to the representations of the other. In the present instance, this militates against simplistic assessments of the relationships between gender, class, ethnicity and narrativity in eighteenth-century Europe.

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Between Literature and History

Reimagining Ireland

Volume 13

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Introduction

In his history of English literature, Andrew Sanders argues that canons have an unfortunate tendency to enforce the tradition that hallows them.[1] Traditionally, eighteenth-century literature has been perceived in terms of a limited number of writers such as Swift, Richardson, Goldsmith, and Johnson. Aligning itself with a growing trend in recent anthologies, this book argues for a more catholic approach to the texts deemed worthy of inclusion under the term 'literature.' In particular, it advocates a greater awareness of the value and artistic merit of eighteenth-century life-writing by introducing the diaries and memoirs of Mary Leadbeater and Dorothea Herbert to critical scholarship. Working on the premise that autobiographical identities are literary constructions, it examines the cultural and existential impulses motivating the forms they assume in the analysed texts.

As well as being of interest to literary scholars, the texts contain a wealth of historical information. Accordingly, in addition to analysing the narrative strategies employed in the construction of the writers' identities, this book considers their significance as social historians, and argues that they provide valuable perspectives on eighteenth-century Ireland. The principal advantage of conducting a joint study lies in the manner in which each writer functions as an implied corrective to the representations of the other. In the present instance, this mitigates against simplistic assessments of the relationships between gender, class, ethnicity, and narrativity in eighteenth-century Ireland.

My first subject is Dorothea Herbert, the daughter of a Church of Ireland rector, who was born in Carrick-on-Suir circa 1767. Although her parents were gentry born, they were both younger siblings, and as such, inherited neither the land nor the social position of her grandparents.

1 Andrew Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 3.

Nonetheless, her father enjoyed a good living from his two parishes and the family lived comfortably during his lifetime. Following his death, Herbert's precarious mental health deteriorated, and in 1806, confined to her home, she wrote her autobiography, *Retrospections of an Outcast*, in which she represents herself as a tragic heroine deceived by an unfaithful lover. She died, unmarried, in 1829.

The second of my subjects, Mary Shackleton Leadbeater, was born in 1758 into a Quaker community in Co. Kildare. At the age of eleven she began her first diary, and fifty-seven years later, just weeks before her death in 1826, she completed her last. As well as rearing six children, she managed the local Post Office, and published eleven books ranging from moralistic children's tales to the autobiographical *The Annals of Ballitore*.

Hayden White contends that there are three fundamental forms of historical representation. Firstly, 'annals' that provide a chronological list of incidents but lack 'a social center by which both to locate them with respect to one another and to charge them with ethical or moral significance.' Secondly, the 'chronicle' which is centrally concerned with an individual, region, or conflict. Although it 'aspires to narrativity,' it fails to achieve closure because it terminates in the chronicler's present. The third, and most esteemed, category is 'the history proper,' which imposes a coherent, analytical narrative on a list of chronological events. Ultimately, however, White argues, 'the value attached to narrativity in the representation of real events, arises out of a desire to have real events display the coherence, integrity, fullness, and closure of an image of life that is, and can only be, imaginary.'[2]

In *The Annals of Ballitore* and *Retrospections*, Leadbeater and Herbert adopt positions at the intersection of the chronicle and the 'history proper' to provide unique accounts of themselves and their communities. Freed from many of the restrictions imposed by adherence to the conventions of a sole generic form, this hybrid location provides an ordering principle

2 Hayden White, 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality,' *Narratology: An Introduction*, ed. Susana Onega and José Angel García Landa (London: Longman, 1996) 284.

while allowing considerable textual flexibility. Because, in both cases, the texts are sourced from diaries, the 'present' of the chronicle, which provides the excitement of currently-occurring events, is a position that is constantly available to them. Furthermore, by varying their adherence to the conventions of the chronicle, on the one hand, and the history proper, on the other, Leadbeater and Herbert intersperse narrative units that lack closure (and, in White's terms, mirror experienced reality) with others that provide a satisfying conclusion.

The inclusive hybrid location, however, while expanding on the narratorial positions available to the writer, is subject to internal friction. This is particularly evident in the tension that exists between the autobiographical purpose, and the historiographical title, of *The Annals of Ballitore*. Significant personal details, which Leadbeater fears might betray an immodest self-interest, are sacrificed in the interests of narrative balance. Where Herbert is concerned, *Retrospections* reflects the conflicts caused by the competing demands of stylistic, ontological, and historical imperatives.

The following study recognises the need to distinguish between the autobiographical 'I' of the diary and of the memoir. The latter introduces and constructs a developmental, historical self, while the diary, less concerned with coherence, is more amenable to contradiction and reversal. Consequently, in this study, diary and memoir are subjected to both independent and comparative analyses. Chapter One considers some of the controversies surrounding autobiographical narratives, including their emplotment and their truth value. Following Richard Kearney, it contends that our awareness of the constructed nature of the autobiographical self does not necessarily oblige us to relinquish all referential claims to reality. On the question of the relationship between gender and genre, the chapter considers previous critical studies of autobiographical texts, and argues in favour of a historicist analysis which accesses representations of the self through contemporaneous discourses, in preference to a study which reads them through preceding gendered exemplars.

Chapter Two focuses on Dorothea Herbert and considers her unique commentary on the mutating social order and widespread agrarian unrest of the late eighteenth century. The chapter is divided into four sections, each of which explores a central concern of the narrative. The first considers

the intricacies of 'polite' behaviour depicted in her text, and the rationale behind her subscription to an urban-rural divide in which the city represents sophisticated artifice while the country is associated with simplicity and innocence. The second section considers how her narrative questions both the methodology and the findings of historians who have compiled statistical information on the late eighteenth-century duel. In so far as they place it within the ambit of an exclusively male code of honour, they fail to take account of women's roles as causal agents in many disputes. Section three explores the shifting categories of masculinity and femininity in her text, and demonstrates how the 'fainting female' fulfils a social function as well as operating as a marker against which a proactive masculinity can define itself. The final section on courtship and marriage describes the lower gentry's contradictory attitude to love matches, before arguing that widowhood is the most desirable position for the wealthy woman.

Chapter Three begins by exploring Herbert's narrative strategies, including her employment of a novelistic plot, and argues that her portrayal of herself as victimised heroine paints John Roe as both hero and villain in her tale. Although some gender critics dispute the wisdom of defining Herbert as insane, this study argues that madness is an integral component of her self-representation and must, therefore, be considered in any comprehensive analysis of her text. Interspersed through *Retrospections* are thirteen drawings that highlight key moments in her story and, consequently, chart the downward spiral of her mental health. These are explored in the penultimate section, before the chapter concludes with an examination of her diaries, and analyses the alternative selves which dispute the docile self-representations in *Retrospections*.

Because Leadbeater's textual legacy is far greater than that of Herbert, a different approach is adopted to the examination of her work. The twin challenges of this book – to analyse the author's constructed self, and to assess the historiographical significance of her narrative – are addressed concurrently in the two chapters devoted to Leadbeater. Chapter Four explores her self-representations by analysing her published and private writings. In the process, it reveals these texts as rich sources of sociological material. Turning its attention to her narrative strategies, the chapter considers how the cult of sensibility, which exercises a considerable influence on

her values, her assumptions, and her prose style, is reflected in the various texts that she authors. Because eighteenth-century literature endeavours to produce, as well as mirror, social relationships, Leadbeater's published works depict idealised familial images. Her private diaries, however, paint a more complex picture. The chapter examines her representations of those relations, and her implicit justification of the qualified affection she bestows on her mother, before exploring her ethnic identity and her representations of her most valued friendships.

The subject of Chapter Five is *The Annals of Ballitore* which, it is argued, can be read as a response to George Crabbe's poem 'The Village'. Slowly creating her identity through a series of anecdotes, Leadbeater simultaneously provides a rare record of the poorly-documented Irish villager. The chapter contrasts the frames of reference within which Leadbeater and the British agriculturalist, Arthur Young, perceive the cottiers, and argues that if Young's study was politically motivated, Quaker ideology influenced Leadbeater's more positive portrayal. In the second part of the chapter, her narrative of the turbulent 1790s is cross-compared with that of Wolfe Tone, while her revisionist account of the rebellion itself, and the conflicting loyalties to which it gave rise, is read alongside those of her contemporaries.

CHAPTER ONE

Autobiographical Narratives

> Tho' I am going now to write a journal of my life from this day August 1st 1772 I fear I shall by that only see how unprofitably I spend my time god grant it may be a means to my doing better another year.[1]

So begins the Dublin diary of forty-eight-year-old unmarried Mary Mathew. Twelve months later, having recorded her experiences in the interim, she makes her final entry:

> Fine. Went to Dublin. Dined with Mrs Jones. went to play. Supper with Mrs Brownlaw. This day ends the year of this journal. I think my time past in so trifling a manner tis not worth recording so here I end.[2]

Unable to construct a narrative from her experiences that would validate their significance, Mary Mathew concludes her diary after just one year. Thus, her ambitious project, 'to write a journal of [her] life,' comes to a premature end. Mary Leadbeater and Dorothea Herbert, the subjects of my study, also began diaries in the late eighteenth century. Unlike Mathew, however, they persisted and ultimately constructed integrated autobiographies from their chronological records of daily events.

This study wishes to investigate the nature and significance of their achievements. It argues that their success stems from their ability to place themselves within authenticating narratives which endorse their actions and testify to their worth. Despite the fragmentary form of the daily journal, both women represent themselves as meaningful, coherent agents in the

1 Mary Mathew, *The Diary of Mary Mathew*, ed. Maria Luddy (Thurles: Co. Tipperary Historical Society, 1991) 1.

2 Mathew 46.

worlds they inhabit. The main body of this book will explore the literary strategies employed by them in their representations, and examine the historical import of their accomplishments. Because, however, the central concerns of this study are narratives of the self written by eighteenth-century Irish women, this introductory chapter will begin by exploring some of the debates surrounding narrativity, the ontological status of the written self, the relevance of gender issues, and, finally, give a brief overview of the social, cultural, and political conditions existing in eighteenth-century Ireland.

Emplotting Narratives[3]

All existences might be, as Richard Kearney asserts, 'prenarrative in character,' but they require an agent with the skill to emplot them if they are to realise their potential.[4] Furthermore, as Mary Mathew's failed attempt emphasises, the chosen plot needs to be life-affirming if it is to ensure the narrative's continuance. The diary, with its abbreviated phraseology, can be seen as the prenarrative position of the potential autobiography. Its short notes need to be filled out and emplotted to achieve full narrative status. The number of story-lines available to the prospective autobiographer is determined by the plot-structures existing in her culture. The genre which she chooses will be significant since it will affect, firstly, the set of events that qualify for inclusion; secondly, the emphasis that is applied to each member of that set, and thirdly, the point of view from which the whole is presented. In addition, because the self is the narrative's principal pro-

3 Referring to historiographical practice, Hayden White defines emplotment as 'the encodation of the facts contained in the chronicle as components of specific kinds of plot-structures', Hayden White, 'The Historical Text as Literary Artifact', *The Writing of History*, ed. Robert H. Canary and Henry Kozicki (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978) 46.

4 Richard Kearney, *On Stories* (London: Routledge, 2002) 132.

tagonist, each recounted experience will modify the emerging identity of the writer.

Defining Aristotle's concept of mimesis as the 'creative redescription of the world such that hidden patterns and hitherto unexplored meanings can unfold,'[5] Kearney argues that lives can only be properly understood when they are 'told mimetically through stories.'[6] Understanding occurs when the listener, identifying the patterns, recognises the genre to which the plot belongs. From the material contained in their diaries, Leadbeater and Herbert emplot their experiences and reinscribe them in autobiographies. Their chosen story-lines enable them to encode otherwise enigmatic sets of events in meaningful terms which can be readily understood both by themselves and their readers. The defining motif of *Retrospections* is inspired by contemporary, eighteenth-century novels. Casting herself as a romantic heroine, Herbert represents her experiences in terms of seduction and betrayal. Leadbeater, on the other hand, emplots *The Annals* with themes sourced from the bible. Utilising 'the Good Samaratan' paradigm, for example, she reads Quaker-Catholic relationships in terms that repeatedly confirm the aid and support provided by herself and her community.

Kearney argues that there is a sense in which the autobiographical narrative is richer than the original life, because 'it marks a poetic extrapolation of possible worlds which supplement and refashion our referential relations to the life-world existing prior to the act of recounting.'[7] Leadbeater and Herbert extend the meaning of their experiences by repositioning them in generic narratives. In the process, they enrich both the genre and the lived life as the newly-fashioned, narrative self reconfigures the identity of the writer in a mutually-affecting motion. Using the diaries as a baseline, it is possible to observe the mundane nature of Leadbeater's and Herbert's everyday lives. The autobiographical project on which they both engage, requires that they condense the year's daily jottings into a few pages. They are thus required to select, to highlight, and to causally connect. In the

5 Kearney 12.
6 Kearney 132.
7 Kearney 132.

process, the mundane is discarded and the life that emerges is focused and purposeful. This clarifies the meaning and identity of the writer both for herself and for her reader.

Because, Hayden White argues, historical incidents are not intrinsically meaningful in the sense that literary situations are, the set of events of which a history, and by extension an autobiography, is composed can be interpreted in several ways.[8] To elucidate their meaning, therefore, the historian must encode incidents in the same way that a creative writer plots a narrative. Where White emphasises the essentially literary nature of historiography, however, Kearney is careful to distinguish fictional texts from those that claim to 'refer to things that actually happened.'[9] White's controversial assertion that 'considered as potential elements of a story, historical events are value-neutral' would be disputed by Kearney who fears the implications of the relativist position.[10] Arguing that our awareness of the constructed nature of historical narratives does not require us to relinquish all referential claims to reality, Kearney asserts that storytelling, whether by the historian or the fiction-writer, 'is never [morally] neutral.'[11]

Recounting their previous experiences involves Leadbeater and Herbert in historical retrieval. If White would see their selection of a plot-structure through which to explain the significance of those experiences as arbitrary, Kearney would emphasise that, as moral agents they have a responsibility to themselves and their readers to make an ethical choice. On a fundamental level, the historian's selection of events and the perspective applied to them should endeavour, Kearney argues, 'to tell the past as it truly was.'[12] While recognising the problematic nature of that task, I would argue that both of my subjects, with varying degrees of success, make such an attempt. Leadbeater's sensitivity to misrepresenting the 'truth,' for example, causes her to add the qualifiers 'I think' or 'I believe' to events that she has not personally witnessed. Herbert's attitude to truth and reality

8 White, 'Artifact' 48.
9 Kearney 135.
10 White, 'Artifact' 47.
11 Kearney 155.
12 Kearney 135.

is more complex. The desire to represent herself as a seduced heroine, however, does not extend to misrepresenting people's actual declarations. Asserting that she interpreted John Roe's behaviour as indicating a passionate attachment to her, she admits that 'the words I love never passed his lips.'[13] This suggests that she has her own standard of truth against which she measures her narrative. As will be discussed in Chapter Three, adhering to its criteria causes a rift to emerge between her claim of seduction and the more ambiguous evidence in the text.

Ontological Status of the Written Self

In their consideration of the definitions of 'autobiography' and its relationship to the 'self,' the editors of *Her Own Life: Autobiographical writings by seventeenth-century Englishwomen* – Elspeth Graham, Hilary Hinds, Elaine Hobby and Helen Wilcox – pose two fundamental questions. Firstly, is the self a pre-existing entity which is expressed in the autobiographical text, or is it constructed in the writing? Secondly, what do we understand by the autobiographical 'life' and how does it relate to the writing self? They suggest possible ways of exploring these questions by referring to the work of theorists such as Jacques Lacan, but argue that the autobiographical text cannot be neatly separated from the life it presents because of the manner in which each affects the other.[14] Although most of the writings included in their anthology are formulated as exemplary or rhetorical texts, it would be wrong, they argue, to assume that all constructions of the self within them are, therefore, fictional, because this would be to deny the actuality of the lives lived.[15]

13 Dorothea Herbert, *Retrospections of Dorothea Herbert*, ed. Louis M, Cullen (Dublin: Town House, 1988) 229.

14 Elspeth Graham et al., eds, *Her Own Life* (London: Routledge, 1989) 16.

15 Graham 18.

Questions about the nature of the self and the extent to which it can be known were hotly debated in the early modern period. In his *Discourse on Method* (1637), René Descartes identified consciousness as the place where such knowledge begins. Fifty years later, John Locke declared that the mind is a *tabula rasa* at birth, and the self evolves with the accumulation of experiences.[16] By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, the individuated self was, according to Michel Foucault, being 'shaped in a new form, and submitted to a set of very specific patterns.' The Cartesian question: Who am I? asked by an ahistorical self, had been reformulated by Immanuel Kant to become: 'What are we?'[17]

Jacques Lacan defines today's self as the 'subject,' immersed in, and subject to, the cultural systems s/he inhabits.[18] Full subjectivity, according to Lacan, is dependent upon the subject's ability to articulate the self. Before this can be achieved, however, the individual needs to agree terms and meanings with the 'other' against, and for, whom s/he is defining herself. The self is, therefore, formulated through existing discourses and, as the editors of *Her Own Life* point out, becomes 'deeply implicated in culture, since it is in the symbolic systems of culture and specifically in language, that meanings are negotiated and made available.'[19] Chapter Four will explore Leadbeater's negotiations with both the local and wider communities, as she trades concessions with them in a bid to redefine the term 'author.' Accepting the designation 'authoress,' she makes compromises on the levels of both subject matter and form, limiting her output to domestic economy manuals and 'improving' tales for cottiers and children, in return for the right to encroach on a traditional male area.

16 John Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. John W. Yolton (London: J. M. Dent, 1993).

17 Michel Foucault, 'The Subject and Power', *The Essential Foucault*, ed. Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose (New York: The New Press, 2003) 132.

18 Jacques Lacan, *The Language of the Self: the Function of Language in Psychoanalysis*, ed. Anthony Wilden (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968).

19 Graham 19.

The realisation that 'identity is narrative in character' Kearney argues, opens it up to reinvention.[20] Three theorists who are particularly concerned with the relationship between the 'I' and its reinventions are Laura Marcus, Patricia Meyer Spacks, and Sheila M. Kearns. Marcus's study begins by recalling both Locke's perception of identity as existence through time, and Hume's disputation of that position.[21] The philosophical debates on the subject that occur in the eighteenth century together with the religious exhortation to self-scrutiny, she argues, have the effect of encouraging narratives that reflect the general concern with the self and its constitution. Using St Augustine's fifth-century text as a prototype, Rousseau examines the paradoxical nature of his own behaviour in his *Confessions* (1782). His writings attempt to justify and give value to his existence by recounting his failures in a narrative that validates the merit of the life in its totality.[22] Herbert's gender denies her access to the Augustinian confessional tradition. In her struggle to authenticate her existence, she appropriates the, arguably, less amenable form of the novelistic romance. Her encounter with John Roe in the summer of 1789 is the event through which all preceding and succeeding experiences are read. As will be shown in Chapter Three, this has implications both for the self that is constructed and for the experiences that are recorded.

The 'I' that appears in the autobiographical text, Marcus argues, is both pre-existent and constructed. By articulating her memories in a continuous narrative, the writer creates an identity. The autobiographer, however, does not merely record events, she retrospectively interprets and positions them within a causal sequence.[23] Such coherent presentations tacitly deny the multiplicity of meanings of which every experience is composed. In the eighteenth century, autobiographical narratives were further complicated by an anxiety about the role of vanity in self-scrutiny and particularly in self-publication. This required writers to promote their texts as 'instructive'

20 Kearney 81.

21 Laura Marcus, *Autobiographical Discourses* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994) 16.

22 Marcus 138ff.

23 Marcus 137.

in order to justify their publication, and placed additional restrictions on the manner in which the self could be presented. Leadbeater's concern about the centrality of herself to *The Annals of Ballitore* is apparent in her preference for the collective pronoun 'we' which prefaces many of her experiences. In her description of the Rebellion of 1798, however, she is forced to depart from this practice. She thus feels obliged to excuse her 'egotism,' citing the fact that she can only affirm the truth of events to which she personally was witness.[24]

The role played by the imagination in fashioning the self is one of the topics explored by Patricia Meyer Spacks. Aligning the eighteenth-century autobiography with the novel, she describes how both affirm the substantiality of personal identity in an age which philosophises about its insubstantiality and instability.[25] Spacks highlights the importance of memory to all autobiographical projects and stresses the significant part played by the imagination in both shaping and linking recollections. The experiences chosen by Herbert for *Retrospections* are necessitated, in part, by the romance genre in which she represents herself. The role of heroine requires that she embody the most valued feminine virtues. Consequently, the events she recalls from her early life assist in constructing a self-portrait that displays the heightened level of sensibility and reticent modesty worthy of her role.

The precarious position of the self is of concern to Sheila M. Kearns, who sees post-structuralist notions of the unstable referent as particularly significant to the study of autobiography. 'In general terms' she explains, 'poststructuralist theories of language and their challenge to traditional notions of reference undermine the most basic, defining element of autobiographical writing, the stability of its referent and the general notion

24 Mary Leadbeater, *The Leadbeater Papers comprising The Annals of Ballitore and Correspondence*, 2 vols (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862) (London: Routledge, 1998) 73.

25 Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Imagining a Self* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976) 30.

of the recoverability through language of the author's past.'[26] Traditional methods of analysing autobiographical writings distinguish between the 'writing I' and the 'written I,' and see them as existing in a stable relationship, whereas post-structuralist theories assume no such distinction. The self is not a pre-existing entity which the autobiographer tries to recapture and represent on the printed page. Rather it is a construct which is produced by, and cannot be separated from, the self who is writing. The autobiographer, she argues 'is involved in a continual process of signification, the generation of narratives which at the same time constitute the generation of a history and the interpretation of that history.' Ultimately, she contends, 'identity *is* reading.'[27]

Kearns sees current autobiographical concerns as mirroring those encountered by the Romantic autobiographers, who faced similar challenges to their selfhood and its representation. Eighteenth-century 'print culture,' with its explosion of new readers and its 'radically altered conception of "authorship" and authority,' heightened the autobiographer's anxiety about the reception and interpretation of her work.[28] Consequently, she made conscious efforts to direct the meanings generated by her text and to repress deviant interpretations. The significance of addressees and the manner in which they impact on autobiographical texts are issues which I consider in relation to both Leadbeater and Herbert. In Chapter Three, I analyse the unstable addressee of Herbert's *Retrospections*, while in Chapter Four I identify the readers of Leadbeater's diary and explore how they affect the represented self.

All three theorists – Marcus, Spacks, and Kearns – highlight the manner in which memories are interpreted and causally connected by autobiographers to accord with discretionary structures. While Kearns concludes that, consequently, identity is an arbitrary interpretation, Marcus would agree with Kearney's argument that we can acknowledge narrative

26 Sheila M. Kearns, *Wordsworth and Romantic Autobiography* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1995) 13.

27 Kearns 20.

28 Kearns 18.

as 'a world-*making* as well as a world-*disclosing* process' without 'succumbing to linguistic relativism.'[29] In this study I argue that Leadbeater's and Herbert's experiences are mediated through narratives in which meaning is assigned by the chosen plot. Although other storylines would encode them with alternative meanings, this does not invalidate the legitimacy of their choice. At an irreducible level, the experiences belong to the writers, and represent, in however metaphorical a fashion, the joy and pain they endured as living subjects.

Gender and Genre

In critical studies of autobiographical works, male subjects have, traditionally, greatly outnumbered female. The canonical texts that are posited as definitive examples, and against which all others are, to some extent, measured, are those by Augustine and Rousseau. John Sturrock's study, for example, focuses on Augustine, Descartes, Rousseau, and Goethe. Similarly, James Olney's *Metaphors of Self*, using Augustine's text as a point of comparison, is primarily concerned with analysing the works of Montaigne, Jung, Darwin, Newman, and T. S. Eliot. Critical analyses that do not defer to Augustine often find it necessary to justify that position. In her study of Romantic autobiography, Sheila Kearns acknowledges his *Confessions* as the 'dominant (founding) model of autobiographical discourse,' but argues against its usefulness in an analysis of Wordsworth's *Prelude*, primarily because of the very different discursive conditions that existed in the nineteenth century. She does not, however, question the legitimacy of the exercise *per se*.

In a study of *Memory and Narrative*, James Olney makes the point that each era and culture demands different strategies and techniques from its

29 Kearney 145.