

LADY CHATTERLEY'S GREEN WORLD: A FRYGIAN READING OF *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER*

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There are few books that are perhaps as well-known as D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, a novel that was censored for decades, was at the heart of a court case about censorship, has been adapted to film and television numerous times, and ultimately, is one of literature's best-known novels about sex. In some ways, it is almost difficult to imagine there is anything new to say about *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and yet, the novel continues to arouse readers and demand attention. Each adaptation highlights a new aspect of the text, for instance, while still highlighting some of the canonical moments from the text. This article seeks to consider the role of place in the novel, and more particularly draws on Northrop Frye's notion of the "green world," as much as an actual place as a powerful energy that both renews and gives life. In my reading of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, I frame the green world as a sexual and erotic landscape that is essential to the novel, while also, and importantly, reflecting on D.H. Lawrence's own writings on sexuality, notably his notion of "sex in the head."

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This article draws on the literary theory and criticism of Northrop Frye, who, to my mind, remains Canada's preeminent literary theorist, and his influence, thus far, seems unmatched. Admittedly, Frye belongs to a different generation, often aligned with New Criticism, though Frye himself would rebel against that label. In his diaries from 1950, for instance, on March 14, Frye seems unaware of New Criticism: "Woodhouse has been asked to do a Milton paper at M.L.A. & his opposite his Cleanth Brooks, who apparently belongs to a group called the 'New Critics' who are supposed to ignore historical criticism & concentrate on texture, what texture is" and Frye then explains, "I asked Abrams if being in the Kenyon Review would make me a new critic: I certainly can't claim to be *au courant* in such matters" (8.288-89). But, by the summer of 1950, on June 29, he writes: "evidently I'm now classed as a 'new critic' across the line" (392). Though Frye does not see himself as a New Critic, there are

affinities between New Criticism and Frye, as David Damrosch writes in the preface to *Anatomy of Criticism*:

For Frye as for the New Critics of the 1940s and 1950s, a literary work is to be understood first and foremost as a tensile structure or ordered words. Throughout his book, Frye inveighs against purely “external” or “centrifugal” modes of interpretation that neglect the verbal and generic bases of literary meaning. At the same time, he sharply opposes the New Critics for their neglect of wider literary and social contexts, and he is driven to develop a broader understanding of literature as a cultural system of the highest order. Yet all the while, as Roland Barthes would say fifteen years later, “the pleasure of the text” is grounded for Frye in its language. (ix)

Frye, to be certain, was never a genuine or a real New Critic; he could not ignore the historical context of a given work, and yet he was deeply interested in, as Damrosch writes, the “ordered words” (ix). Indeed, as Damrosch further notes, Frye

144 was no more a pure Jungian than he was a pure New Critic. Though he values archetypes and myths for their ability to communicate across the ages, far beyond any writer’s conscious intention, he rejects the key Jungian conception of a collective unconscious, “an unnecessary hypothesis in literary criticism, so far as I can judge.” (xi)

So, though Frye is certainly not a “pure New Critic,” we can agree that some of this methods were taken from New Criticism, such as an insistence upon the literary text, the order of words, and the realization that words have power and meaning. For Frye, as Frederick P.W. McDowell notes in his review of *Anatomy of Criticism*: “literature has value precisely because it is, in its own right, a dynamic, self-consistent, self-contained vehicle for knowledge that most concerns as spiritually perceptive human beings” (309).

Nonetheless, in the spirit of New Criticism, this article “reject[s] the prevailing tendency to substitute another discipline for the study of literature itself” (Childs 5). For example, I.A. Richards, “one of the first and most influential critics associated with New Criticism, warns in *Practical Criticism* (1929) that readers ought to refrain from the chemist, the moralist, the logician, or the professor” (Childs 5).¹ Frye himself lamented “criticism [that] has to be ‘based on’ something else, carried around in some kind of religious or Marxist or Freudian wheelchair” (27.312). Perhaps I am guilty here of relying on Richards’s “professor,” namely Frye; nonetheless, my interest in reading *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* is as a textual experience, and with a particular focus on a particular facet of the text: the green world. In so doing, I also return to Frye because it seems to me that Frye is worthy of some reconsideration, especially in light of the full publication of his *Collected Works*, which span thirty volumes, plus the apocryphal *Northrop Frye’s Uncollected Prose*.² Indeed, Robert D. Denham, writing when the *Collected Works* project was beginning, prophesied that “the fifteen or so volumes of Frye’s unpublished papers [...] will surely reinforce the estimate that he is one of the genuinely creative spirits of our age” (“Frye Papers” 17). The published and unpublished writings of Frye reveal that he thought about Lawrence over the course of his career, beginning with his days as a student through to his final books,

The Great Code and Words with Power.³ In some ways, then, it is unsurprising to turn to Frye to read *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and yet Frye himself only said a handful of things about the novel. In a 1932 notebook, which includes some rather unfortunate prose about "these books about Lawrence by his bitches" (24) when speaking about female writers, perhaps Anais Nin, who published *D.H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study* (1932),⁴ Frye laments:

I am sorry that *Lady Chatterley* is banned. I don't mind *Ulysses* because that's so much the greatest work of the century that to have it alone banned would be so complete an epitome of the 20th c as to be worth preserving indefinitely, even at extra expense and trouble in procuring the book. But *Lady Chatterley's* being bracketed with *Ulysses* gives it thereby a lustre it does not deserve, and spoils the object lesson. (*Uncollected* 14)

In a 1935 letter to Helen Kemp, who would become his wife, Frye writes:

When D.H. Lawrence started writing, everybody thought he'd be the Messiah of a new, fresh, vigorous kind of loving. Well, he did, until the war got him, or Oedipus, or something; anyway he betrayed his trust and slipped back into all the nineteenth-century drivel with *Lady Chatterley*. (1.460)

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Lady Chatterley's Lover appears in his lecture series, *The Educated Imagination*, in which Frye explains, "If you read the casebook on the trial of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, you may remember how bewildered the critics were when they were asked what the moral effect of the book would be. They weren't putting on an act: they didn't know," which leads Frye to contend that "[n]ovels can only be good or bad in their own categories. There's no such thing as a morally bad novel: its moral effect depends entirely on the moral quality of the reader, and nobody can predict what that will be. And if literature isn't morally bad it isn't morally good either" (21.468). All of this leads Frye to surmise that "one reason why *Lady Chatterley's Lover* dramatized this question so vividly was that it's a rather preachy and self-conscious book: like the Sunday school novels of my childhood, it bores me a little because it tries so hard to do me good" (21.468). In his notebooks while preparing *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance*, likely written during the period of 1972-77, Frye once more speaks of boredom: "*Lady Chatterley's Lover*, a novel that bores me, has a social kick to it which I suspect bothers people more than the sexuality" (9.250). As boring as *Lady Chatterley's Lover* may have been for Frye, the novel appears in his essay "Varieties of Literary Utopias," which gets closest to what I am hoping to do in this article. At the close of the essay, Frye writes that

For [Lawrence] the sexual relation is natural in the sense that it has its closest and most immediate affinities with the physical environment, the world of animals and plants and walks in the country and sunshine and rain. The idyllic sense of the world as helping to protect and insulate true love from the noisy city-world of disembodied consciousness runs through all of Lawrence's work from the early *White Peacock* to the late *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. (27.213)

It is this sense of the "idyllic" and a work apart from the "noisy city-world" that I set

out to study in this article, and to do so, I will draw upon Frye's idea of the "green world." As much as we tend to think of the green world as Frye's, it is important to note that this idea finds its origins in John Keats, who writes of "the green world they live in" in his *Endymion* (1.16). Frye, as it were, lifts this idea from Keats and expands it to a second world, which like the romantic green world, celebrates and luxuriates in the poetics of the natural or what might be called a green sublime.

Another antecedent that is worthy of mention is Wallace Stevens's poem "Description without Place," a poem that Frye called "a long and very difficult poem" (18.203). For Helen Vendler, the poem is "an ode to the adjective" (qtd. in Bloom 239) and for Harold Bloom, it is a poem that "is nobody's particular favorite and is never going to be, since it is apparently Stevens at his most arid" (239). While perhaps not Frye's favourite, it was certainly a poem to which he returned often. In the first canto, readers are introduced to "her green mind made the world around her green. / The queen is an example. [...] This green queen" (559), whose identity has been the subject of some discussion (see Bohm). Leaving aside the identity of the green queen, Frye explains that the poem "says that man does not live directly in the world of nature, like animals and plants—he leaves within his own constructs of the world. These constructs, in their totality, are cultures or civilizations. They are what, as Stevens says, make everything that we see in Spain look Spanish" (18.203). For Frye, what is important here is that "nature knows nothing of up or down, of inside or outside, of beginning or end, of before and not yet. All these notions we impose on nature. It is the poets who keep reducing our experience to these simple and essential things, and they lead us to the engine room of creation, the energy and intensity of the constructing process itself" (18.203-04). As we shall see in this article, it is not just that the world is green, but rather, it is about the "energy and intensity" of the space, a kind of "engine room of creation" for Lady Chatterley.

Throughout his career, from his student essays to *Fearful Symmetry* through his Bible books, Frye was fascinated by the garden as archetype, recalling his interest in imagery. In an interview with *Macleans* magazine marking the publication of *The Great Code*, Frye explained, "I'm really building everything around a highly personal vision, a vision I think I've had since I was a child," and he continues explaining that the vision is "how man once lived in a Garden of Eden, how that world was lost and how we some day may be able to get it back again" (Czarnecki 40). Such an idea, for instance, appears in *The Educated Imagination*, when Frye explains that "this story of the loss and the regaining of identity is, I think, the framework of all literature" (21.455). He continues and notes that "literature not only leads us toward the regaining of identity, but it also separates this state from its opposite, the world we don't like and want to get away from" (21.455).

In Frye's work, the archetype of the garden is found in the green world, which "has analogies, not only with the fertile world of ritual, but to the dream world that we create out of our own desires. This dream world collides with the stumbling and blinded follies of the world of experience" (22.171). Importantly, then, the green world

is separate from the real world. Frye's development of the green world is at its most complete in his writings on Shakespeare. In *A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance*, he notes that "there is a group of comedies, including *The Two Gentleman of Verona*, *As You Like It*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which the action moves from the world of parental tyranny and irrational law into a forest" (28.213). Frye explains that this forest is a green world that "presents a society in contrast to the one outside it" and further that it "is more flexible and tolerate than its counterpart" (28.214). Plainly put:

the forest or green world, then, is a symbol of natural society, the word 'natural' here referring to the original human society which is the proper home of man [...] This natural society is associated with things which in the context of the ordinary world seem unnatural, but which are in fact attributes of nature as a miraculous and reviving power. These associations include dream, magic, and chastity or spiritual energy, as well as fertility and renewed natural energies. (28.215)

In Frygian thought, the green world is an archetype, which is to say a "typical or recurring image" (22.91). Readers of Frye will recall that for him, an archetype is a "symbol that connects one poem with another and thereby helps to unify and integrate the literary experience" (22.91). Importantly, as Frye reminds his reader, "a symbol like the sea or heath cannot remain within Conrad or Hardy: it is bound to expand over many works into an archetypal symbol of literature as a whole" (22.93). In a review of Miriam Waddington's *Green World*, "the third of a series of books on Canadian poetry which began with Irving Layton's *Here and Now* and Patrick Anderson's *A Tent for April*" (12.51), Frye briefly expounds upon his own ideas on the green world; he draws on Marvell to say:

To Marvell in the seventeenth century, the green world was not a private possession to be carefully sheltered from a surrounding evil world, but itself the circumference of the evil world, an eternal permanence that not only antedates the evil world but has the power to destroy it. (12.52)

Accordingly, the green world in Frygian thought, indeed over the course of his thought, is a world that exists separately from the real world, and it becomes a world of other possibilities. And it is unique to the comedies and romances of Shakespeare, for instance:

In *Richard II* the kingdom is symbolized by a garden, and the garden, which is a state of art and a state of nature at the same time, represents the upper human level of nature. The gardener is addressed as "old Adam's likeness." But the garden is not the garden of Eden; it is the garden of that "old" Adam was forced to cultivate after his fall, a garden requiring constant effort and vigilance. (28.259)

As such, this garden is very different from the forest world or green worlds of the comedies and romances, and very different from the green world in which I am interested in this article.

Often, as well, this green world stands in opposition to the world created by the

Industrial Revolution, Urbanization, and the loss of the natural; we may recall that the green world or the natural sublime is “the Romantic movement’s poetic response to the Industrial Revolution” (Gerrard 33). This anxiety about urbanization is found throughout Lawrence’s work, such as, for instance, the opening chapters of *The Rainbow*. The first paragraph lays the foundation for a kind of green world:

The Brangwens had lived for generations on the Marsh Farm, in the meadows where the Erewarsh twisted on sluggishly through alder trees, separating Derbyshire from Nottinghamshire. Two miles away, a church-tower stood on a hill, the houses of the little country town climbing assiduously up to it. Whenever one of the Brangwens in the fields lifted his head from his work, he saw the church-tower in the empty sky. So that as he turned again to the horizontal land, he was aware of something standing above him and beyond him in the distance. (9)

This idyllic, pastoral landscape will be quickly corrupted by the urgency of modernization and urbanization. No longer will one find an “empty sky,” for instance. Later,

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At first the Brangwens were astonished by all this commotion around them. The building of a canal across their land made them strangers in their own place, this raw bank of earth shutting them off disconcerted them. As they worked in the fields, from beyond the now familiar embankment came the rhythmic run of the winding engines, startling at first, but afterwards a narcotic to the brain. Then the shrill whistle of the trains re-echoed through the heart, with fearsome pleasure, announcing the far-off come near and imminent. (14)

The world of the Brangwens is quickly being modernized by the canal and by the trains; the land is being reshaped so much so that they become “strangers in their own place.” Lawrence, it would seem, was certainly concerned about the effects of the Industrial Revolution, even in his modern world, somewhat removed from the earlier generations. This anxiety also hints at this Frygian sense of paradise, wherein “this story of the loss and the regaining of identity is, I think, the framework of all literature” (Frye 21.455).

In *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, however, while undoubtedly the green world is a response to the industrialized world of the Midlands—after all, the novel says much about labour and class—it is also a world of other relational and sexual possibilities. In thinking here about the green world, the goal is not merely to locate a space known as the green world—which would be a rather easy task—but also to show how this green world provides a space for healing and the possibility to return from it. The green world in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* reveals to us that “the realization that the world we desire and create with our imaginations is both better and more real than the world we see” (FS 40). It is through Lady Chatterley’s trips to the green world that she is able to imagine that better world, one freed from the “parental tyranny and irrational law” (28.213) of Wragby. Importantly, as we shall see, this green world is as much a physical place as it is spiritual; that is, it contains a kind of powerful energy that gives life.

The following section argues that in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the green world most closely aligns with Frye's argument that it is "an eternal permanence that not only antedates the evil world but has the power to destroy it" (12.52). In the case of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the "circumference" (12.52) of which Frye speaks, is clearly marked by a gate:

Connie opened the wood-gate, and Clifford puffed slowly through the broad riding that ran up the incline between the clean-whipped thickets of haze. The wood was a remnant of the great forest where Robin Hood hunted. (41)

The green world is marked here as the "great forest where Robin Hood hunted," and the boundary is marked by the "wood-gate." In this scene, we learn that

In the wood, everything was motionless, and the old leaves on the ground keeping the frost on their under-side. A jay called harshly; many little birds fluttered. But there was no game—no pheasants. They had been killed off during the war, and the wood had been left unprotected, till now Clifford had got his game keeper again. (42)

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Clifford, thus, has hired the game keeper to tend to this space, to restore it to its pre-war beauty: "this denuded place always made Clifford curiously angry" (42). Ultimately, Clifford will tell Connie, "I want this wood perfect—untouched. I want *nobody* to trespass in it" (42). Of course, over the novel, Connie will "trespass in it" and nothing will remain "untouched." Clifford is hoping, in a sense, to return this garden space or forest world to its pre-fall state, for it to be a natural wonder, verdant and fertile, a place of "fertility and renewed natural energies" (Frye 28.215).

Later, Lady Chatterley returns to the wood, and we find many of the same markers as we did when she went with Clifford, but something changes:

Constance walked dimly on. From the old wood came an ancient melancholy, somehow soothing to her, better than the harsh insentience of the outer world. She liked the *inwardness* of the remnant of forest, the unspeaking reticence of the old trees. They seemed a very power of silence, and yet, a vital presence. They too were waiting: obstinately, stoically waiting, and given a potency of silence. Perhaps they were only waiting for the end: to be cut down, cleared away—the end of the fires; for them, the end of all things. But perhaps their strong and aristocratic silence, the silence of strong trees, meant something else. (65)

If, when she goes with Clifford, the world seems "denuded," and everything had "been killed off during the war, and the wood had been left unprotected" (42), now it seems that Connie is finding "something else" in the wood. In the forest world we find an "ancient melancholy, somehow soothing to her, better than the harsh insentience of the outer world" (65). That this melancholy is soothing is perhaps unsurprising given how "Connie [...] was aware of a growing restlessness. Out of her disconnection, a restlessness was taking possession of her like a madness" (20). In the early chapters of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, readers watch a heroine "going to pieces in some way" (20).

As Connie tentatively walks into the wood, she stumbles across Mellors's cottage, and so begins the erotic journey through the Green World:

So she went round the side of the house. At the back of the cottage, the land rose rather steeply, so the back yard was sunken and enclosed in a low stone wall. She turned the corner of the house, and stopped. In the little yard two paces beyond her, the man was washing himself, utterly unaware. He was naked to the hips, his velveteen breeches slipping down his slender loins. And his white, slender back was curved over a big bowl of soapy water, in which he ducked his head, shaking his head with a queer, quick little motion, lifting his slender white arms and pressing the soapy water from his ears: quick, subtle as a weasel playing with water, and utterly alone. (66)

Connie gazes upon his naked body. The denuded forest world is now marked by the naked Mellors. Mellors is certainly naked in the most utilitarian way, as he is merely bathing and cleaning himself. Mellors is not nude, but naked, recalling that “nudity happens in art, nakedness happens in your bathroom” (Carr-Gomm 7). This scene, however, becomes epiphanic for Connie:

150 Yet, in some curious way, it was a visionary experience: it had hit her in the middle of her body. She saw the clumsy breeches slipping away over the pure, delicate white loins, the bones showing a little, and the sense of aloneness, of a creature purely alone, overwhelmed her. Perfect, white solitary nudity of a creature that lives alone, and inwardly alone. And beyond that, a certain beauty of a pure creature. Not the stuff of beauty, not even the body of beauty, but a certain lambency, the warm white flame of a single life revealing itself in contours that one might touch.

Connie had received the shock of vision in her womb, and she knew it. (66)

In this Green World, then, Connie experiences a “visionary experience” that will “hit her in the middle of her body”; which is to say, she receives “the shock of vision in her womb, and she knew it” (66). Lawrence makes use of the womb repeatedly throughout *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*; although he has no anxiety using “penis” to speak of the male genitals (a word that is used twenty-two times in the novel), he does not refer to the vagina or vulva, but seemingly prefers “womb,” a word that appears some nineteen times in the novel; the only other exception is the word “cunt,” which appears seven times. This is a curious inversion in Lawrence because the word “phallus” only appears three times. Thus Lawrence seemingly prefers the anatomical terms for the male and the metaphorical or symbolic for the female. But, throughout *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, Lawrence imagines, time and again, that there is something more to women: “women had always known there was something better, something higher. And now they knew it more definitely than ever” (7).

Following this “visionary experience” which affords a “shock of vision in her womb,” Connie returns to Wragby. In one of the novel’s many iconic scenes, readers witness Connie coming to terms with her awakening:

When Connie went up to her bedroom she did what she had not done for a long time: took off all her clothes and looked at herself naked in the huge mirror. She did not know what she was looking for, or at, very definitely. Yet she moved the lamp till it shone on her.

And she thought as she had thought so often: what a frail, easily-hurt, rather pathetic thing a naked human body is: somehow a little unfinished, incomplete! (70)

I suggest that this scene is iconic because it—or a variation on it—appears in many of the adaptations of the novel. Although it may very well be tempting to suggest it appears in the adaptations, particularly the filmic adaptations, because of the visual appeal, I would suggest that much more is happening here. Her body has been described throughout the novel:

Being a soft, ruddy, country-looking girl inclined to freckle, with big blue eyes and curling brown hair and a soft voice, and rather strong, female loins she was considered a little old-fashioned and “womanly.” She was not a little pilchard sort of fish, like a boy, with a boy’s flat breast and little buttocks. She was too feminine to be quite smart. (19)

In this scene, she looks at her naked body “in the huge mirror” and readers learn that she does not quite “know what she was looking for, or at” (70). She has become alienated from her body, almost recalling Frye’s observation that “we are fearfully and wonderfully made, but in terms of what our imaginations suggest we could be, we are a hideous botch” (14.47). The body is described as “pathetic,” “a little unfinished, incomplete”; we might ask, then, what about *her* body is incomplete? Certainly, one answer is that “Connie did want children” (12). Indeed, I think this answer makes good sense, when we read that “her body was going meaningless, going dull and opaque, so much insignificant substance. It made her feel immensely depressed and hopeless” (70). As she continues to look at her alien body, she becomes more and more disenchanting with her body: “the front of her body made her miserable. It was already beginning to slacken with a slack sort of thinness, almost withered, going old before it had ever really lived. She thought of the child she might bear,” all of which leaves her to ponder, “was she fit, anyhow?” (70). She is frustrated, depressed, and miserable because her body has yet to take on a role that she desires—motherhood:

She slipped into her nightdress and went to bed, where she sobbed bitterly. And in her bitterness burned a cold indignation against Clifford and his writings and his talk: against all the men of his sort, who defrauded a woman even out of her own body. Unjust! Unjust! The sense of deep physical injustice burned through her very soul. (71)

From Connie’s vantage, this “deep physical injustice” is because of Clifford, who had “defrauded a woman out of her own body” (71). But, this fraud will be resolved in the green world, at Mellors’s Cottage. At the close of the chapter, Connie resolves for a different future, another possible world: “And Connie felt herself released, in another world. She felt she breathed differently. But still she was afraid, how many of her roots perhaps mortal ones, were tangled with Clifford’s. Yet still, she breathed freer. A new phase was going to begin, in her life” (84). Frye speaks of this desire in *Fearful Symmetry*, writing that “once we begin to think in terms of wish and desire, we find ourselves beating the prison bars” (14.47). This is precisely what Lady Chatterley is doing. She has been to the green world in which she can imagine another possibility, and now she desires it. The green world here, thus, becomes more than just a place; it is, as suggested above, a powerful energy that gives life, quite literally, to both Connie and the child-to-be.

The discussion of a “new phase” is, of course, indicative of what is expected in the Green World, which, we will recall, “has analogies, not only with the fertile world of ritual, but to the dream world that we create out of our own desires” (22.171). Her fertile body becomes alive as Mellors explores her body:

“You lie there!” he said softly: and he shut the door, so that it was dark, quite dark.

With a queer obedience, she lay down on the blanket. Then she felt the soft, groping, helplessly desirous hand touching her body, feeling for her face. The hand stroked her face softly, softly, with infinite soothing and assurance, and at last there was the soft touch of a kiss on her cheek. (116)

What Mellors provides is what Clifford cannot or refuses to provide, an intimacy that is physical rather than mental. This has been the case since the Chatterleys were married: “He had been virgin when he married: and the sex part did not mean much to him. They were so close, he and she, apart from that” (12). But this is what Connie craves and desires:

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For passion alone is awake to it. And when passion is dead, or absent, then the magnificent throb of beauty is incomprehensible and even a little despicable: live, warm beauty of contact, so much deeper than the beauty of vision. She felt the glide of his cheek on her thighs and belly and buttocks, and the close brushing of his moustache and his soft thick hair, and her knees began to quiver. Far down in her she felt a new stirring, a new nakedness emerging. And she was half afraid. Half she wished he would not caress her so. He was encompassing her somehow. Yet she was waiting, waiting. (125)

This scene is the first of many sexual scenes between Mellors and Connie, which is in part why this novel was so controversial. These scenes were not only about sex, but about adultery. However, these judgements are judgements that live beyond the text; as Frye would write: “what the critic is meant to do is lead us from what the poets and prophets meant, or thought they meant, to the inner structure of what they said” (18.168). Even if these judgements are all true in the ordinary world, that of the text or that of the reader, what remains important for is that the “forest society is more flexible and tolerant than its counterpart” (Frye 28.214). These actions are happening within the green world, which is a world apart from Wragby.

In this scene, we also find Connie discovering a “new stirring, a new nakedness emerging” (125), which is part of the epiphanic reality of the green world, recalling that the green world is a visionary space which provides energy. Compared to the earlier scene of her looking in the alien body in the mirror, Connie is realizing her own body once more, and she is still, of course, trepid: “And she was half afraid” (125). This nakedness will continue to be important to the novel, particularly as Connie comes to terms with her “new nakedness.” Connie is, in a sense, to borrow from Frye, finding “new directions from old” (18.307); it is not that nakedness itself is new, but that now it is taking on new meanings. Incidentally, the idea of nakedness is important to the novel itself, with the word “naked” appearing thirty times and “nakedness” appearing ten times, while “nude” and “nudity” appear only once. This is important, because “nakedness represents the raw, nudity the ideal” (Carr-Gomm

7). All of this is possible only because of the green world in which it all unfolds and happens.

Upon another return to the wood, readers are presented with yet another exploration of the greenness of the green world:

Connie went to the wood directly after lunch. It was really a lovely day, the first dandelions making suns, the first daisies so white. The hazel-thicket was a lace-work of half-open leaves, and the last dusty perpendicular of the catkins. Yellow celandines now were in crowds, flat open, pressed back in urgency and the yellow glitter of themselves. It was the yellow, the triumphant powerful yellow of early summer. And primroses were broad and full of pale abandon, thick-clustered primroses no longer shy. They lush dark green of hyacinths was a sea, with buds rising like pale corn, while in the riding the forget-me-nots were fluffing up, and columbines were unfolding their ink-purple ruches, and there were bits of blue bird's-egg shell under a bush. Everywhere the bud-knots and the leap of life!

The keeper was not at the hut. Everything was serene, brown chickens running lustily. Connie walked on towards the cottage because she wanted to find him. (165)

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In Lawrence's work, then, the green world, while very much a powerful energy, is also very much a place—nature is resplendent. These flowers are part of a “childlike delight in a paradisaal world” (Frye 14.55) almost as if one is seeing in technicolour for the first time, as is the case when Dorothy finds herself in Oz. Connie is no longer fearful or timid about the green world or about Mellors; she is now actively seeking him out in a world that is vibrant and verdant, a world that is marked by the fertility of spring and summer. We are in the world of love and wonder, which Frye sees as “an imaginative expansion: [love and wonder] establish a permanent unity of subject and object, and they lift us from a world of subject and object to a world of lover and beloved” (14.55). It should not surprise us that this vibrancy is found after a scene in which

Connie went slowly home, realising the depth of the other thing in her. Another self was alive in her, burning molten and soft and sensitive in her womb and bowels. And with this self, she absorbed him, she adored him until her knees were weak as she walked. In her womb and bowels she was flowing and alive now, and vulnerable, and helpless in adoration of him as the most naïve woman. (135)

Connie's body has become, like the green world, fertile. The green world has thus provided “fertility and renewed natural energies” (28.215). As much as she is pregnant, she has also come to appreciate this “new nakedness” (125), which will be central to yet another iconic scene in the novel, which is included in most adaptations. As in the previous mention of adaptations, on the one hand, we could dismiss this scene as included because it involves nakedness, but on the other hand it serves a narrative purpose:

He laughed wryly, and threw off his clothes. It was too much. He jumped out, naked and white, with a little shiver, into the hard, slanting rain. Flossie sprang before him with a frantic little bark. Connie, her hair all wet and sticking to her head, turned her hot face and saw him. Her blue eyes gazed with excitement, out of the clearing and down the path,

the wet boughs whipping her. She ran, and he saw nothing but the round wet head, the wet back leaning forward in flight, the rounded buttocks twinkling; a wonderful covering female nakedness in flight. (221)

This scene is important to my reading of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* because it is at this point that we see a full sense of the transformation of Connie, from a woman timidly looking at her alien body in a mirror in the privacy of her own bedroom, to running freely, naked in the green world. In this scene then, we may find a kind of long-desired ascent:

Ascent may be to the new: when it is, descents is the recovery of the old that was excluded by repression, forgetting, or lack of awareness. It's a harrowing hell or rather limbo: a redemption of the dead, a recalling of the past to present. Similarly the new formulations of myth recapture lost and neglected implications. (Frye 5.12)

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Connie has rediscovered something that had been lost; her sense of joyfulness, freedom, and the "new nakedness" (125) has taken hold. This scene, moreover, of course, returns readers to another garden: the Garden of Eden. Connie and Mellors, like Adam and Eve, "were both naked, and they felt no shame" (Genesis 2:25).

This naked body that she, at one time, could not make sense of has been awoken, she has found and has embraced the "new nakedness" (125). In his book *Sex*, the English writer Alain de Botton asks of outdoor sex:

Why should the idea of sex outside be exciting given how awkward, scratchy, sandy or muddy it can be on a beach, halfway up a hillside or in the shady bushes of a park, compared with the comfort of cotton sheets and a sprung mattress? (31)

This desire for the outdoor, this desire to return to a "new nakedness," is, I think, the desire that Frye speaks of: "the story of loss and the regaining of identity is, I think, the framework of all literature" (21.455). For de Botton, this new nakedness that Lady Chatterley is experiencing is "a chance to turn over in our imagination the luxury and ease of the Garden of Eden, for which each one of us may still deep down hanker" (32). Simply, then, "to make love outdoors is a temporary reversal of the fall" (de Botton 32), and this is what is happening in the green world. Connie and Mellors have, even if only for a moment, reclaimed the prelapsarian world afforded by the green world, in which another world is possible, another variety of the utopian; and we may recall here that for Frye, "the real utopia is a world not to see but to see by" (qtd. in Czarnecki 41).

Lady Chatterley's Lover, as a novel, would seem to embody Frye's contention that "literature not only leads us toward the regaining of identity, but it also separates us from its opposite, the world we don't like and want to get away from" (21.455). This lost identity is found through the restorative powers of the green world, to which Lady Chatterley makes her pilgrimage. In the green world, Lady Chatterley is able to be restored to what she once was, and her lost identity has been restored. This article, then, has sought to reread *Lady Chatterley's Lover* alongside Northrop Frye, and most especially his notion of the green world. It does, of course, have a larger goal, which is

to continue reading Northrop Frye, who remains one of the most important voices in literary theory and criticism. As David Damrosch writes in his foreword to *Anatomy of Criticism*: “Frye became a household name in Canada. He is likely the only North American literary critic ever to have been featured on a postage stamp” (ix). Perhaps, now more than ever, Frye is well-positioned to be read again, not least because of the publication of the *Collected Works of Northrop Frye*, which account for just about half of his total archive (Denham, *Northrop Frye and Others* 1).

The value of Northrop Frye remains that “he invites us to attend equally to the literal level of individual works and to the largest structures of meaning that organize them, and to come to a better understanding of the critical enterprise and its crucial role in society” (Damrosch ix). With this reading, therefore, I have sought to expand the green world, recalling that for Frye, “whatever value there is in studying literature, cultural or practical, comes from the total body of our reading, the castle of words we’ve built, and keep adding new wings to all the time” (18.470). The green world is an important archetype because it speaks to the ongoing search for a lost identity that we all, in some sense, seek to attain once more.

NOTES

1. For a valuable discussion of Frye’s place in New Criticism, see Frank Lentricchia’s *After the New Criticism*, particularly the opening chapter, “The Place of Northrop Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism*” (1980).
2. If we take one step further away from the apocryphal, we might include two additional books, *Northrop Frye’s Lectures: Student Notes from His Courses, 1947-1955*, edited by Robert D. Denham and *Northrop Frye: Selected Letters, 1934-1991*, edited by Robert D. Denham. I have excluded these because neither is published by the University of Toronto Press, and thus do not form a part of that canon. I do not intend to devalue these works, but in the case of the lecture notes, as much as Denham might seek to position them alongside other examples, he writes: “Student notes do not constitute a widespread category of writing, but there are sufficient examples of published student notes from courses taught by recognized writers to consider such notes as at least a minor academic genre: Examples include Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*; Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures, Cambridge 1930-1933*; Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*; Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought*; Michel Foucault, *Lectures on the Will to Know*; Alfred North Whitehead, *Lectures, 1926-1937*; Theodor Adorno, *Lectures on Negative Dialectics: Fragments of a Lecture Course 1965/1966*; John Maynard Keynes, *Keynes Lectures, 1932-1935: Notes of a Representative Student*; and Harold Innis, *Notes and Papers from Innis Seminar* (Toronto, 1947-48). Just as these texts, which come from student notes, are now part of the canon of the separate writers, so the notes collected in the present volume help to amplify the corpus of Frye’s work” (ix). I admit that I am less hopeful than Denham; these lecture notes are not like the published lectures of Lacan or Foucault. These are very much notes; they are often written with bullet points. These are notes on the lectures and what the students felt was or was not important. As for the letters, these are a very small sample of letters that Frye wrote, but what is missing is the context or reason or the letter. In this volume, communication is one-way, rather than the two-way communication between letter writers.
3. Unless noted, all citations of Northrop Frye are taken from *Collected Works of Northrop Frye*. Quotations are noted by volume and then page number.
4. Other books that appeared in 1932 include *Lorenzo in Taos* by Mabel Dodge Luhan, *Further Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine* by Olive Moore, and *The Strange Pilgrimage* by Catherine Carswell.

None of these authors appears in the index to the *Collected Works of Northrop Frye*, nor do they appear in the *Works Annotated by Northrop Frye* held at the E.J. Pratt Library, Victoria University at the University of Toronto.

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