

'SHADES OF MEANING': THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HAIR COLOUR IN BRADDON'S *LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET* (1862) AND ROSSETTI'S *LADY LILITH* (1866–68, ALTERED 1872–73)

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Abstract: In a culture obsessed with physiognomy, where the Victorian female body was a canvas of symbols to be read, the portrayal of hair – and particularly hair colour – was a powerful means of characterising women in both literature and art. The 'fair-haired paragon' Lucy Audley in Braddon's novel *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) would thus appear to be the antithesis of the subject of Rossetti's painting *Lady Lilith* (1866-68, altered 1872-73), whose locks are the typically vivid red colour of the Pre-Raphaelite woman. However, the characters of Lady Audley and Lady Lilith are not as simple as their tropes. There are shades of meaning between these apogees and ultimately, the hair colour of both women can be described as 'red-gold'. The fusion of these two seemingly conflicting symbolic shades and the murky area between them brings to the fore questions about the nature of the Victorian woman.



Fig 1: D.G. Rossetti, *Lady Lilith* (1872-73). Bancroft Collection, Delaware Art Museum. Image licensed under CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported.



Fig 2: D.G. Rossetti, *An earlier version of Lady Lilith* (1866-68). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Image licensed under CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported.

The notion that appearance can indicate character, or at least character traits, is by no means a wholly Victorian concept. As John Berger noted in his influential *Ways of Seeing*, 'seeing comes

before words'; our first judgements have always been visually-stimulated.¹ The depth of this stimulation in the Victorian era was however particularly potent. As Galia Ofek points out, Victorian bodily aesthetics were 'an important mode of signification...social, political, cultural and literary'; the body became a symbolic language.² Hair was arguably the most sensational of symbols. It is physical, and therefore 'extremely personal'; it is intimate.³ Yet it is also generally visible and therefore 'public rather than private'.⁴ Moreover, its physicality is malleable, thus rendering it capable of symbolising changes on both the personal and public levels. Hair has always had this potency but at no time more so than within this Victorian culture of the 'reading of bodies'.⁵ Indeed it should be noted that to refer to the Victorian, as Michael Mason contends, is not simply to refer the chronological – to the years 1837-1901 during which Victoria reigned – but is also to convey 'the idea of...restrictiveness'.⁶ The bodies of both sexes were certainly 'restricted' from view, particularly in the case of the female body, which will be examined here. As Ofek has pointed out, '[Victorian] fashion dictates and social mores prohibited bare hands, legs and other parts which were covered for modesty's sake'.⁷ Hair, therefore, was 'almost the only exposed, visible and distinctly feminine body part in a lady's appearance'.⁸ Moreover, Victorian men's hairstyles were becoming 'short and less ornate'.⁹ The hair of the Victorian woman was thereby invested with what Ofek has deemed 'an over-determination of sexual meaning'.¹⁰

Hair's symbolic properties were thereby also over-determined, or saturated, with meaning. Colour is surely the most striking property of hair and can cause one to make what Altick has described as 'quick characterisations' about personalities; the angelic blonde, for instance, or the fiery red-head, are common tropes in Western culture.¹¹ At first glance then, the 'fair-haired paragon' Lucy Audley in Braddon's novel *Lady Audley's Secret* would appear to be the antithesis of the subject of Rossetti's painting *Lady Lilith* (Fig. 1), whose locks are the typically 'shrill' red colour of the Pre-Raphaelite woman.¹² Certainly both Braddon and Rossetti used the connotations of these hair shades to their advantage, as shall be discussed. However it is also apparent that both author and artist questioned these learned assumptions; the characters of Lady Audley and Lady Lilith are not as simple as their tropes. There are shades of meaning between these apogees. It will emerge that the hair colour of both of the women in question varied, and that ultimately the shade of both women's hair can be categorised as a type of 'red-gold'. The fusion of these two seemingly conflicting symbolic shades within one character brings to the fore questions about the nature of the Victorian woman and, as shall be seen, arguably

¹ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London, 1972), p. 1.

² Galia Ofek, 'Sensational Hair', in Kimberly Harrison, and Richard Fantina, *Victorian Sensations: Essays on a Scandalous Genre* (Columbus, 2006), p. 112.

³ Anthony Synnott, 'Shame and Glory: a Sociology of Hair', *British Journal of Sociology*, 38 (1987), p. 381 .

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 381.

⁵ Tamara S. Wagner, 'Phrenology and Representations of Physical Deviance in Victorian Fiction', *Postgraduate English*, No. 5 (2002), p. 15.

⁶ Michael Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality* (Oxford, 1994), p. 3.

⁷ Galia Ofek, *Representations of Hair in Victorian Literature and Culture* (Farnham, 2009), p. 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹¹ Richard D. Altick, *The Presence of the Present: Topics of the Day in the Victorian Novel* (Columbus, 1991), p. 313.

¹² E. H. Gombrich, 'Style' (first published 1968), in Donald Preziosi (Ed.), *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology* (Oxford, 1998), p. 160. See <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/zoom/s205.img.html> for a high-resolution image.

mirrors the dichotomy seen in the Victorian phenomenon of what became known as the 'New Woman'.¹³

To describe Lady Audley as a 'woman' seems, at least superficially, rather inappropriate. Braddon employs the trope of the golden-haired female as child-like and angelic in the construction of her female protagonist. The brightly-coloured lock of Lady Audley's hair which is discovered in a book by Robert Audley is described as being 'of that glittering hue which is so rarely seen except upon the head of a child'.¹⁴ Indeed this metaphor is taken to an extreme in chapter 7 of volume 1, where Braddon tells the reader that 'the innocence and candor of an infant beamed in Lady Audley's fair face [...] The rosy lips, the delicate nose, the profusion of fair ringlets, all contributed to preserve to her beauty the character of extreme youth and freshness [...] as girlish as if she had just left the nursery'.¹⁵ As the Victorian reader might have expected, her appearance seems largely to mirror her character; 'all her amusements were childish. She hated reading, or study of any kind, and loved society. Rather than be alone, she would...sit chattering...while she counted and admired her treasures'.¹⁶ The expectation of innocence in her character is particularly strong when we consider that her golden hair is taken to angelic extremes by Braddon; it is said to fall 'about her face like the pale golden halo you see round the head of a Madonna in an Italian picture'.¹⁷ Superficially, she thus belongs, as Elizabeth G. Gitter notes, to a 'long literary tradition' of the golden-haired female whose 'shining hair...[is] her aureole'.¹⁸ She is presented as a fairy-tale heroine, much like the characters of Rapunzel or the Goose-girl who were found in the fairy tales anthologised by authors including the Grimm brothers, Andrew Lang and Joseph Jacobs in the nineteenth century.¹⁹ As Gitter points out, the Victorian reader was 'well-read in such fairy tales and steeped in a culture that insisted on the preciousness of hair'; such a reader would inevitably have been influenced by this visual language.²⁰

We must however also consider the other sense in which golden hair would have been read as precious - in its inextricable link to gold as a precious metal. The worth of hair in the Victorian period was akin to money. As Gitter has pointed out, 'the ubiquitous Victorian lock of hair, encased in a locket or ring or framed on the wall, became, through a Midas touch of imagination, something treasured...intrinsically valuable, as precious as gold'.²¹ It was also tangibly valuable in the Victorian market-place, where hair was regularly bought and sold for aesthetic augmentation. Yet the Victorian attitude towards money was, like the prevailing attitude towards women, dichotomous. Both were desirable but, as Ruskin warned in *Munera Pulveris*, to desire them could be to 'take dust for deity'.²² Money was a glittering, lustful attraction but could lead men astray. Women embodied this sense of desirable danger. Desire was, even in this

¹³ The term "New Woman" was defined in the Westminster Review 1865; 'New Woman, as we read of her in recent novels, possesses not only the velvet, but the claws of the tiger. She is no longer the Angel, but the Devil in the House.' "new woman, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, March 2014. Web. 14 March 2014. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/276487>

¹⁴ Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret* (London 2010, first published 1862), Vol. II, Ch. 1, p. 177.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, Ch. 7, p. 60.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, Ch. 7 p. 60.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, Ch. 10, p. 293.

¹⁸ Elizabeth G. Gitter, 'The Power of Women's Hair in the Victorian Imagination' *PMLA*, Vol 99, No. 5, p. 936.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 943.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 943.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 944.

²² J. Ruskin, *Munera Pulveris* (first published London, 1863). <https://archive.org/details/munerapulveriss01ruskgoog>, p. 204.

Victorian culture of 'restrictiveness', as present as ever.²³ As David Grylls has noted, 'courtship and romance' were 'the staple...of the mainstream Victorian novel.'²⁴ Likewise, the subjects of women and sexuality filled the canvases of the Pre-Raphaelite painters who were so prominent in the Victorian era. And yet these desirable women were simultaneously threatening, as their position in Victorian society shifted. As Stevens has noted, the phenomenon of the 'New Woman' with 'her demands for education and the right to pursue a career rather than marriage, her rejection of the patriarchal family and life of domesticity and her demand for political power' caused concern that the woman would be, as one writer noted in the *Saturday Review*, 'stripped of all that is womanly'.²⁵ The image of golden hair then, which was filled with connotations of sexuality and value, became the ideal visual tool through which artists and authors could express these shifting, dichotomous and uncertain attitudes.

Indeed, it becomes apparent that Lady Audley's golden hair has been a 'shining snare' in enabling her marriage to Michael Audley.²⁶ It is her hair, which defines her appearance and inspires expectations of an angelic character, which allows Lady Audley to achieve her marriage to Sir Michael Audley. Lucy Graham comes 'into the neighbourhood as a governess in the family of a surgeon in the village near Audley Court' and – though 'no one knew anything of her' – achieves for herself a wealthy husband by virtue of that 'head, with its wealth of showering flaxen curls'.²⁷ The intangible value of her hair thus draws in both Michael Audley and his wealth. The notion that the shifting role of the female posed a threat to the social order was a very real fear in a Victorian society preoccupied with hierarchical distinctions. Women such as Lady Audley, who rose through the societal structure by their looks, were especially threatening to what Gitter has termed the 'fabric of peaceful family and social existence' in an age when artifice – in the form of hair-dye and make-up – was increasingly available and increasingly used.²⁸ This threatening aspect to the character of Lady Audley is revealed by Braddon's descriptions of the red shades in her hair. In a very telling description of Lady Audley's portrait, Robert Audley details the way in which 'her fair head' appears to be 'peeping out of the lurid mass of colour as if out of a raging furnace... the red gold gleaming in the yellow hair'.²⁹ Here, the use of the colour red certainly portrays the traditional sense of danger with which it is associated; it is like fire. This is a particularly apt simile when we later discover that Lady Audley is not the innocent, angelic blonde that she first appeared. She is a criminal, who commits arson and, to her knowledge, murder. She is not a virginal girl but has married once before. She is not a child, but has a child. Her Madonna-like appearance was thus deceiving. Both this woman, and her appearance, lie.

Red hair in the Victorian period was inextricably linked with deception. As hair was imbued with the aforementioned 'over-determination of sexual meaning', red hair in particular – with its fiery, attention-grabbing vivacity – suggested what Ofek has termed 'smoldering sexuality'.³⁰ It thus appeared ever frequently in the fashionable, contemporary paintings of the Pre-Raphaelites, whose paintings often fixated on the sexuality of the woman. Lady Audley is in

²³ Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality*, p. 3.

²⁴ David Grylls, 'Smoke Signals: the Sexual Semiotics of Smoking in Victorian Fiction', *English*, 55, 211 (Spring 2006), p. 15.

²⁵ Hugh Stevens, *Henry James and Sexuality* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 27.

Unsigned article, 'Woman and the World', in L.G. Calhoun (ed.), *Modern Women and What Is Said of Them: A reprint of articles in the 'Saturday Review'* (New York, 1868), p. 100.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 943.

²⁷ Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol. 1, Ch. 1, p. 7 and Vol. 1, Ch. 1, p. 9.

²⁸ Gitter, 'The Power of Women's Hair', p. 936.

²⁹ Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol. 1, Ch. 8, p. 80.

³⁰ Ofek, *Representations of Hair*, p. 3.

fact directly linked with this Pre-Raphaelite auburn-haired woman; Robert Audley asserts that 'the painter must have been a pre-Raphaelite. No one but a pre-Raphaelite would have painted, hair by hair, those feathery masses of ringlets'.³¹ As red hair appeared more frequently in art and literature, so too did it appear in Victorian society and, as Altick put it, 'where nature refused to assist...artifice – unmitigated, womanly deceit – rushed in to supply the lack', in the form of hair-dye.³² This was certainly the way in which a significant proportion of polite Victorian society viewed the use of substances which changed appearance. Manipulating your physicality was a form of deception in a society concerned with physiognomy – 'the study of the features...as being supposedly indicative of character'.³³ This notion of sexuality and trickery, in combination with the natural suggestion of danger suggested by the colour red, conspired to make red-haired women the ideal embodiment of the *femme fatale*. It is thus no coincidence that Lady Audley's apparently golden hair is seen by Robert Audley to be 'flashing like red gold' as the true nature of her character merges.³⁴ Her appearance and character, like the appearance and character of the 'New Woman', shifts.

Likewise, the red hair given to Rossetti's Lady Lilith, which at first glance seems to embody her character, is not as phrenologically definitive as it appears. The character of Lilith, as Allen notes, was 'according to legend...created with Adam from the same handful of dust, and, as his equal, refused to be subordinate to him'.³⁵ Instead, she is said to have consorted with demons and resultantly has 'demon-begot infants who die daily', causing her to 'bewitch' men and to prey on the children of others.³⁶ As Rossetti wrote in the painting's accompanying poem *Body's Beauty* (first published in *Poems* 1870, re-published under the title *Body's Beauty* 1881), 'Of Adam's first wife, Lilith it is told / (The witch he loved before the gift of Eve.) / That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue could deceive'.³⁷ The deceptive nature associated with red-headed women thus seems to fit her character perfectly. Moreover we are told in *Body's Beauty* that she 'draws men to watch the bright web she can weave, Till heart and body and life are in its hold,' suggesting a danger linked to the braiding, or weaving, of her hair.³⁸ This is certainly mirrored in Rossetti's image of Lilith, whose hair demands the attention of the viewer. As Barringer, Rosenfeld and Smith have recently suggested, Rossetti's Lilith offers 'a paradigm of aesthetic pleasure, tactile...and visual'.³⁹ Much of this can be attributed to a 'fleshly and erotic suggestiveness' which is created by the tactile intimations of the combing of her hair and the sheer amount of skin visible to the viewer.⁴⁰ This sensuality, obvious to the modern viewer, would have been glaringly present to the Victorian eye, accustomed to the over-sufficient clothing and tied-back hair of the 'respectable' Victorian woman. Lilith indeed sits as a counterpoint to the ideal Victorian wife and mother, and in this sense she can, like Lady Audley, be viewed as an early embodiment of the 'New Woman' so feared by polite Victorian society. As noted previously, an 1868 volume of *The Saturday Review* (a periodical which Allen notes was 'part of Rossetti's reading'), contained remarks referring to

³¹ Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol. 1, Ch. 8, p. 80.

³² Altick, *The Presence of the Present*, pp. 320-321.

³³ "physiognomy, n.". OED Online. September 2013. Oxford University Press, February 2014. Web. 24 February 2014. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/143159>

³⁴ Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol. 1, Ch. 13, p. 139.

³⁵ Virginia M. Allen, 'One Strangling Golden Hair: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Lady Lilith', *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 66, No. 2 (Jun., 1984) p. 286.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

³⁷ K.A. Psomiades, *Beauty's Body: Femininity and Representation in British Aestheticism* (Palo Alto, 1997), p. 126.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

³⁹ Tim Barringer, Jason Rosenfeld and Alison Smith (Eds.), *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-garde* (London, 2012), p. 132.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

the supposed refusal of modern, educated women to 'do their duty to England' in reference to the 'deterioration' of consent to unlimited childbirth.⁴¹ It is seemingly no coincidence that the *femme fatale* characters of both Lady Lilith and Lady Audley fail in their duties as mothers. The red hair of the Pre-Raphaelite woman, described by E.H. Gombrich as 'shrill' and seen by Barringer and Rosenfeld to 'sound a note of dissidence' was the ideal vehicle for this portrayal.⁴² Lady Lilith is not a woman seduced by a man but is the seducer. The way in which she combs out her red hair whilst admiring it in a mirror demonstrates a narcissistic pride in her beauty. She is not attracted to men but to herself, and will use her attractiveness (and specifically her hair) to, as Rossetti notes in *Body's Beauty*, put her 'spell through him' and leave 'his straight neck bent'.⁴³ The trope of the dangerous red-head thus seems to be simply and effectively deployed by Rossetti to personify societal fears.

Yet just as Lady Audley is not the true embodiment of the angelic blonde, neither is Lady Lilith the dangerous red-haired woman she may initially appear to be. Her hair too negotiates the shades between these two colours. Rossetti states blatantly that 'her enchanted hair was the first gold'.⁴⁴ Indeed his first version of the *Lady Lilith* image (Fig. 2, 1866-68) was painted using the fair-haired model Fanny Cornforth and was only changed to a red-haired woman (using the model Alexa Wilding) at the request of the purchaser F. R. Leyland, who considered the blonde-haired Cornforth's features 'too sensual and commonplace'.⁴⁵ (As has been noted, blonde hair could thus clearly also have negative connotations). Tropes were thus not the simple 'quick characterisations' they may first appear to be.⁴⁶ Rossetti's Lilith, despite her characterisation by one contemporary as a 'queen of the demons', was first a golden-haired blonde, with all of the connotations this implied.⁴⁷ It is perhaps impossible to create a golden-haired character and avoid the sense of the angelic golden-haired heroine. Rossetti in fact seems to have deliberately retained a sense of this innocence in the painting, even after changing the colour of his subject's hair, 1873-73. Lilith is 'clad in traditionally virginal white' and there is an 'exploration of white, cream and silver across the composition'.⁴⁸ There is an extent to which this could be an artistic choice linked to the aesthetic preference of the artist and/or the patron. It has certainly been suggested by Barringer and Rosenfeld that this colour palette could be linked to the Aesthetic Movement, which favoured shades of white.⁴⁹ Yet in a society so attuned to the language of appearance, the virginal connotations of these colours, particularly in contrast to the fiery red hair, surely serve a purpose. Oliphant argued in her telling article of 1856 that, 'when a very high effect is intended, red is the hue par-excellence'.⁵⁰ By pairing this bright hue with the contrasting palette of whites, Rossetti draws deliberate attention to the duality of good and evil, sensuality and virginity, deceptiveness and purity within this one woman. This dichotomy is heightened when we consider that *Lady Lilith* and the accompanying poem *Body's Beauty* were paired with Rossetti's slightly earlier red-headed woman *Sibylla Palmifera* (1866-70, also using Wilding as a model) and its accompanying poem *Soul's Beauty* (published 1881), highlighting a further duality –

⁴¹ Allen, 'One Strangling Golden Hair', p. 292.

⁴² Gombrich, 'Style', p. 9.

⁴³ Psomiades, *Beauty's Body*, p. 127.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁴⁵ See <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/08.162.1> for a high-resolution image of Rossetti's *Lady Lilith* (1866-68), using model Fanny Cornforth.

⁴⁶ Altick, *The Presence of the Present*, p. 313.

⁴⁷ W. M. Rossetti, *Rossetti Papers 1862-1870* (London, 1903), p. 483.

⁴⁸ Barringer, Rosenfeld and Smith (Eds.), *Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 132.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁵⁰ Margaret Oliphant 'Novels' (first published in *Blackwoods*, 1867), in Andrew Maunder (Ed.) *Varieties of Women's Sensation Fiction, 1855-1890* Vol 1, p. 183.

between spiritual love and lust.⁵¹ These characteristics allude to the dichotomous Victorian attitude towards the burgeoning concept of the 'New Woman' and arguably contribute to her creation; she was after all, as Ofek notes, 'a semiotic and social phenomenon that blurred the borderlines between reality and fiction'.⁵² The status of the Victorian 'New Woman' as a blurring of notions in art and literature with the reality of the women of the day – the relationship reciprocal – indeed appears to be recognised by Rossetti. Not only does Lady Lilith, like Lady Audley, embody the contrasting tropes of the golden-haired paragon and the red-headed siren but her surroundings too echo this dichotomy. The trees, for example, can only be seen in a mirror behind Lilith's red hair, which further obscures them from view. The image reflected at the viewer is thus a distorted reality, and not the whole picture. The 'New Woman' was a distortion of reality seen in word and image – she was a construct, who could not be quantified as easily as she was portrayed.

Indeed, it can be concluded that the portrayal of both Braddon's Lady Audley and Rossetti's Lady Lilith are ambiguous and that this ambiguity manifests itself in the portrayal of their hair, a potent symbol which the Victorian reader would have been attuned to. Though the character of Lady Lilith has been described as the 'queen of the demons', it is far from clear that Rossetti demonised her.⁵³ Her vivid red hair, though associated with danger and 'smoldering sexuality' was also the same hair colour seen in the painting's companion piece *Sibylla Palmifera*, which depicts a woman consumed by spiritual love.⁵⁴ Moreover, Lilith was originally painted with golden hair and remains associated with the innocence of this fair appearance through the shades of white and silver which surround her now-red hair. Likewise, Lady Audley demonstrates much of the vulnerability and innocence linked to blonde hair. Even when her crimes have been admitted, we are still encouraged to feel a sense of pity towards her, which Braddon links to the nature of her hair; 'it had served her so little after all, that gloriously glittering hair, that beautiful nimbus of yellow light'. We see her not as justly punished but as a 'naughty child' who is, as Braddon titles her chapter, 'buried alive'.⁵⁵ Alongside this however, as Beller notes, Lady Audley's 'ruthless self-interest made her a target for Victorian fears about the loss of femininity in the modern woman'; it is arguably this side to her character which prompts the flashes of 'red gold' we see in her Pre-Raphaelite portrait, a style of painting which itself was linked to the 'overturning [of] current orthodoxies'.⁵⁶ In this sense, both women embody the qualities of the emerging Victorian 'New Woman' construct. It is surely no coincidence that both of the women in question are 'ladies'. It was these women in the higher echelons of society who became the subject of Victorian questions about femininity. The 'New Woman' however, posed more questioned than she answered. She was, like Lady Audley and Lady Lilith, dichotomous. The portrayal of such women in Victorian culture thus resulted in the simultaneous adoption and rejection of phrenological ideas and aesthetic tropes. Both Braddon and Rossetti clearly adopted the language of appearance, and particularly the language of hair, to a large extent in the portrayal of these two female characters. Yet in rejecting absolute tropes in terms of hair colour, they arguably also rejected, as Ofek has put it, the 'absolute hierarchical distinctions' between nature and artifice, 'high' and 'low' literature, ethereal and evil femininity, female victims and female

⁵¹ See <http://www.rossettichive.org/img/s193.llag.jpg> for an image of Rossetti's *Sibylla Palmifera* (1866-70).

⁵² Ofek, 'Sensational Hair', p. 112.

⁵³ W. M. Rossetti, *Rossetti Papers*, p. 483.

⁵⁴ Ofek, *Representations of Hair*, p. 3.

⁵⁵ Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol. 3, Ch. 6, p. 156.

⁵⁶ Anne-Marie Beller, *Mary Elizabeth Braddon: A Companion to the Mystery Fiction* (Jefferson, 2012), p. 122.

Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol. 1, Ch. 8, p. 80.

Barringer, Rosenfeld and Smith (Eds.), *Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 9.

victimisers, female readers and female heroines.⁵⁷ As Berger has put it since, 'the relationship between what we see and what we know is never settled'.⁵⁸ The portrayal of women in both Victorian literature and Victorian art was not as simple as black and white, or indeed gold or red. In a world of scientific categorisation and phrenological study, the Victorian woman - and her position in the home and in society – embodied shades of meaning.

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⁵⁷Ofek, 'Sensational Hair', p. 113.

⁵⁸ Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, p. 1.

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