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**“I’m Just a Girl”: Madness, Male Domination, and Female
Imprisonment in Jane Eyre, “The Yellow Wallpaper”,
Wide Sargasso Sea, and Faces in the Water**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in English
at Massey University**

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Errata

page number: line number

- 1: 16 citation should read (Smith-Rosenburg, Disorderly Conduct 197)
- 4: 6 insert citation (Bordo 75)
- 4: 8 "Wood" should read "Douglas Wood"
- 5 footnote should be deleted
- 14: 12 citation for Smith-Rosenburg should read (Disorderly Conduct 655)
- 22:23 Should read: A monster or madwoman was not allowed an identity of her own:
she functioned merely as a symbol.
- 23: 3 Should read: Fearing its discovery, the patriarchy guards the secret lest other
women be encouraged also to show their anger and rebellion.
- 28: 11 "Fetterly" should be "Fetterley".
- 47: 15 "Child" should be "childhood".
- 51 the footnote should be on the previous page.
- 52: 13 citation for Smith-Rosenburg should read (Disorderly Conduct 656)
- 75: 3 citation should read (Smith-Rosenburg, Disorderly Conduct 675)
- 82: 17 citation for Smith-Rosenburg should read (Disorderly Conduct 677)
- 83: 17 Should read: If, she implies, the time were taken to actually assess the patients,
problems could be solved instead of the patients tortured.

ABSTRACT

Female madness is not always caused by the domination of women. In the texts Jane Eyre, “The Yellow Wallpaper”, Wide Sargasso Sea, and Faces in the Water, however, male domination, and female imprisonment do have a relationship to madness. Medical discourse rose to a position of great power in the nineteenth century, as science and reason really began to take over. Suddenly there was a scientific and biological theory behind female inferiority, greatly influencing doctors’ perspective of their female patients, and contributing to the enforcement of traditionally female roles. Whilst madness is a real and greatly misunderstood illness, these four texts illustrate that the internalisation and socialisation of medical discourse locked women into roles that, it was believed, they were not capable of escaping.

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