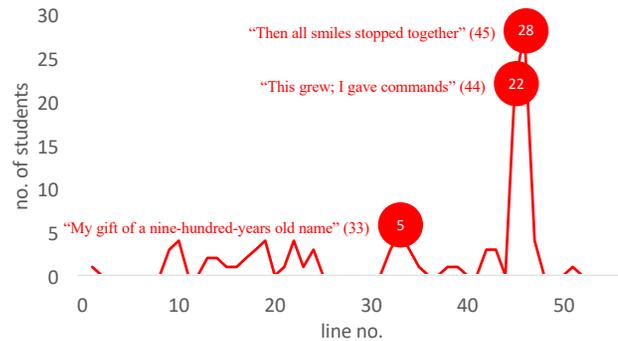


### Attendance Question

In Browning's "My Last Duchess," at what point did the Duke's murderous act become clear to you?



### Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)



- youngest of four siblings in family devoted to art and liberal politics
- her brother was the leading Pre-Raphaelite poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882)
- her first volume of poetry, *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862), displays a wide range of styles and subject matter
- sympathetic to the aims of the Pre-Raphaelite group, but critical of its representation of women (NAEL E634-35)



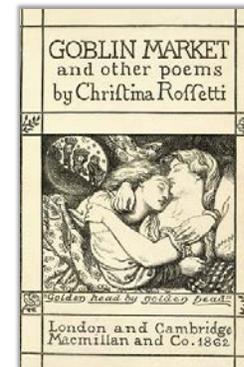
### Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)



Perhaps the nearest approach to a method I can lay claim to was a distinct aim at conciseness; after a while I received a hint from my sister [Maria Francesca Rossetti (1827-1876)] that my love of conciseness tended to make my writing obscure, and I then endeavoured to avoid obscurity as well as diffuseness. In poetics, my elder brother [Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882)] was my acute and most helpful critic.

**Christina Rossetti. Letter to unnamed recipient. 1888.**

### Rossetti, "Goblin Market" (1862)



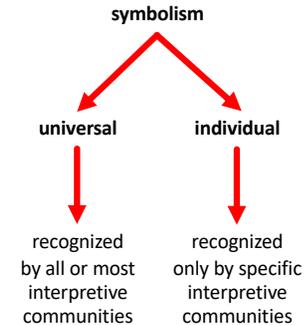
- title poem of Rossetti's first and most famous collection, *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862)
- cover designed by her brother, the Pre-Raphaelite poet and artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti
- contains a broad range of styles: lyric, narrative, fable, ballad, devotional verse, etc.
- deceptively simple "Goblin Market" shows Rossetti's affinity with the aims of the Pre-Raphaelites, with a feminist overlay (NAEL E634)

## Pre-Raphaelites



- a group of young English artists and writers of the Victorian Age
- founded at Oxford in 1848 by Dante Gabriel Rossetti et al.
- rebelled against conventional, formulaic, academic styles of painting modelled on Raphael (1483-1520)
- embraced a freshness and simplicity associated with earlier (mediaeval) artists, a greater fidelity to nature, photorealistic fidelity to detail, use of vivid colours, symbolism (Baldick 290)

## symbolism



- from the Greek *symbolon*, meaning “mark,” “emblem,” “token,” or “sign”
- an object, animate or inanimate, that implicitly represents or “stands in” for something else
- the use of a concrete image to express an abstract concept (Baldick 350-51)

## Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (1862)

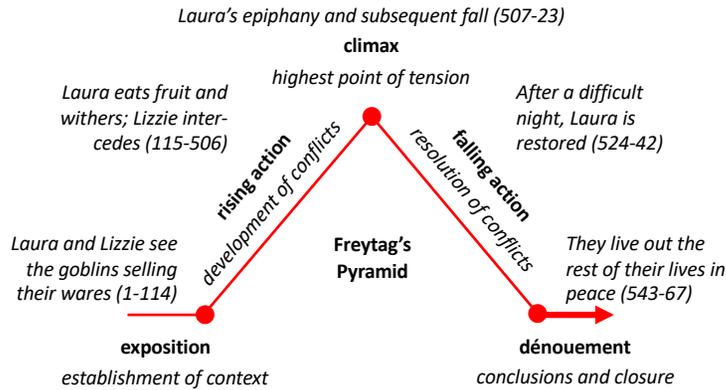
### some interpretations of the poem

- **cautionary tale:** a cautionary tale or exemplum (Cuddon 127) about the perils of materialistic acquisitiveness and capitalistic excess
- **separate spheres:** a critique (80) of the sexually oppressive Victorian idea of separate spheres for men and women
- **psychoanalytic:** a psychological study (296-97) of balance and imbalance between the conscious and unconscious mind
- **queer theory:** a celebration of same-sex desire (301-02) among women
- **allegorical:** a biblical allegory (8) of sin, repentance, and redemption, parallelling the fall of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden
- **moral fable:** a moral fable (133) about the importance of love and devotion between siblings

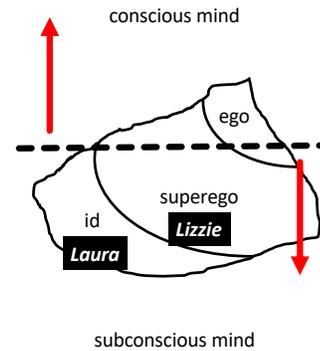
## “separate spheres”

- a Victorian doctrine stating that, because men and women are biologically different, they must play vastly different, rigidly prescribed sexual roles in Victorian society
  - **men**, physically **stronger** than women and guided by **reason**, occupied a **public** sphere of work, politics, commerce, and of making contributions towards the advancement of their society and civilization
  - **women**, physically **weaker** than men and guided by **passion**, occupied a **private** sphere of domesticity, home, family, and of maintaining a peaceful refuge for her husband to return to at the end of the day
- helped support the cause of the British Empire by creating a system of supposed moral rectitude and social stability, though the overall concept was debated vociferously throughout the Victorian Age (NAEL E18-19)

**📖 Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (1862)**

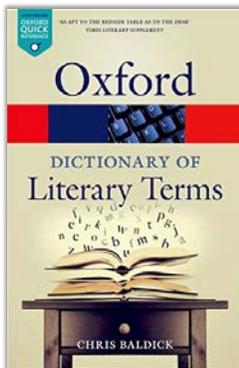


**📖 Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (1862)**



- Freud contended that the human mind was composed of three forces: *id*, *ego*, and *superego*
- Freud also distinguished between *conscious* and *unconscious mind*
- a healthy psyche is one in which the ego has negotiated with the *id* and *superego* without too much conflict between them suppressed into the unconscious
- conflicts suppressed into the subconscious manifest themselves in neurotic human behaviours, fixations, and ideas

**allegory**



- a story or visual image with a second distinct meaning hidden behind its literal or visible meaning
- the principal technique is *personification*, whereby abstract qualities are given human shape
- conceivable as a *metaphor* extended into a structured system
- involves a continuous parallel correspondence between the two meanings (Baldick 8)

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