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"Her Splendid Children Will Be Born Here": Anglo-American Relations and Sexual Selection in Transatlantic Fiction, 1870–1914

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“HER SPLENDID CHILDREN WILL BE BORN HERE”:

ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND SEXUAL SELECTION

IN TRANSATLANTIC FICTION, 1870–1914

by

Jennifer Lynn Robertson

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ABSTRACT

"HER SPLENDID CHILDREN WILL BE BORN HERE":

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In recent decades, scholars have sought to examine the discourse of evolutionary theory in the realist novel. This dissertation examines the ways in which the novel form embodied evolutionary theory by examining Anglo-American courtship plots. In chapter 2, I examine Charles Glascock's courtship of Caroline Spalding in Anthony Trollope's *He Knew He Was Right*. During their courtship, Caroline's dominant behaviors subvert traditional hierarchies between nations, classes, and genders. However, the open plot of evolutionary change hints at a revolutionary restructuring of social relations. I argue that Caroline and Glascock's relationship reverts to a more traditional power structure upon their marriage, an ending that resolves social instability.

In chapter 3, I examine the two Anglo-American marriages in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Shuttle*. This text uses the language of evolution, degeneration, and eugenics to interpret two Anglo-American marriages. While critics have demonstrated the importance of rational choice in New Women fiction and eugenic marriage plots around the turn of the century, I argue that Burnett's novel highlights the limitations of knowledge and rational choice in mate selection. Burnett's novel suggests the importance of relying on instinctive female sexual desire for mate selection. While the novel

advocates for a shift to more equitable sexual relations within the marriage, it does so by reverting to traditional class and racial hierarchies to achieve social stability.

For the last two chapters, I examine failed courtships and marriages between Anglo-American lovers. In chapter 4, I study the failed courtship between Paul Montague and the American Mrs. Hurtle in Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*. The text relies on theories of individual sexual development to explain Montague's selection of the civilized British Hetta Carbury over the savage American Mrs. Hurtle. However, Montague's individual evolution fails to account for the larger societal development caused by the entry of Americans into England. Critics have noted the lack of narrative resolution, and I argue that this failure is due in part to the failed Anglo-American romance as the marriage between two British subjects fails to arrest the social and political changes in the novel.

In the final chapter, I examine Isabel Archer's process of mate selection in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady.* James is credited with the creation of the American girl and the popularization of international marriages in fiction, and critics have examined the language of evolutionary psychology in Isabel's choice of mate. I argue that James's novel critiques the closed plots of women's individual development in both science and literature. Instead, the novel creates an open plot in which Isabel can continue to change beyond the novel's end. Overall, these transatlantic texts demonstrate the ways in which evolutionary plots bring bout, complicate, or resist romantic resolutions in literary texts.

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

As historians have documented, there were an unprecedented number of transatlantic marriages between wealthy American heiresses and the impoverished British gentry from 1870–1914.[1] These "dollar princesses" enacted transnational migrations in the hopes of giving titles to their *nouveau riche* families, while the British sought an influx of capital to improve their estates. The rise in the number of such marriages was enabled by such industrial developments as the use of steamships for cross-Atlantic journeys, which cut the time that it took to cross the Atlantic to just 14 days and thereby facilitated networks of transatlantic marriage. The heyday of these Anglo-American marriages followed the 1871 publication of Charles Darwin's seminal work on sexual selection, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex.* This book was published and discussed on both sides of the Atlantic, scientific treatises responding to Darwin were published transnationally, and novels considering the evolutionary ramifications of transatlantic marriages migrated freely between nations.

In this project, I place the writing of authors such as Frances Hodgson Burnett, Henry James, and Anthony Trollope within the transatlantic conversations concerning sexual selection and evolution during the late Victorian and Edwardian period. While critics have explored the literary response to evolutionary theory on both sides of the Atlantic, the transatlantic texts featuring Anglo-American marriages have been largely

[1] For scholarly discussion of historical Anglo-American marriages, see Brandon's *The Dollar Princesses*; Chapter 7 of Burk's *Old World, New World*; Cooper's *Informal Ambassadors*; and Montgomery's *Gilded Prostitution*. For popular studies of these marriages, see Fowler's *In a Gilded Cage,* Kehoe's *The Titled Americans,* and Wallace and MacColl's *To Marry an English Lord*.

overlooked. My project studies how these novels represent transatlantic marriages and how discourses of sexual selection influence those representations. Often drawing on stereotypes about the outspoken and aggressive American woman and the reserved British gentleman, these transatlantic stories imagined new generations of English people who adopted and adapted traits associated with the American plutocrats to survive the competitive international sphere. Further, and perhaps more fundamentally, these transatlantic marriages often led writers to revise gender roles and, while doing so, to reconstruct national identities.

From 1815 to 1914, the British Empire dominated the world. However, shifting power relations both internally and externally generated national anxiety. England utilized the natural resources from its colonies in Australia, the Americas, and Africa to become the "workshop of the world," producing and exporting manufactured goods such as textiles, china, furniture, and books.[2] By the end of the century, technological advances allowed railroads to connect the distant corners of England just as telegraph cables and steamships connected the far reaches of the empire. While railroads and steamships enabled the spread of British peoples and colonies throughout the world, they also permitted a flood of cheap agricultural goods into the nation. The importation of cheap grains and meat from the Americas undermined English agriculture.[3] The switch from an

[2] On the British economy in the nineteenth century, see Court's *British Economic History*, Kenwood and Lougheed's *The Growth of the International Economy*, Matthew et al.'s *British Economic Growth*, McCord and Purdue's *British History*.

[3] On agriculture and the economy in nineteenth century Britain, see Perren's *Agriculture in Depression*, Perry's *British Agriculture*, and Rostow's *British Economy of the Nineteenth Century*.

agricultural to an industrial society led to shifting power relationships between classes: an expansion of the middle classes, an extension of the franchise to the working classes, and a decline in aristocratic power. The end of the nineteenth century saw England fighting colonial wars in India, Afghanistan, and Africa; the U.S. and Germany arose as new colonial powers. In the U.S., western expansion, new technologies, and extensive natural resources led to a surging economy, while a flood of immigration from across Europe provided workers for industry and agriculture. By the turn of the century, a strong economy and strategic geographic placement between East and West positioned America to become a world power. Indeed, by 1898, the U.S.'s place as an international power was secured: Spain signed the Treaty of Paris, ending the Spanish-American war, ceding Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the U.S., which transformed the nation into a colonial power.[4]

While it was not until World War I that British power rapidly declined on the international stage, these changing economic and political dynamics were undermining Britain's elite as early as the 1870s. In fact, the 1870s can be said to be the last decade when Britain's landed gentry possessed their full political and economic power.[5] This decade is also notable for the introduction of the steamship for transatlantic travel. The

[4] See Hannigan's *The New World Power*, Hendrickson's *The Spanish-American War* (especially chapter 7), and Kaufman's *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy* for discussion of America's ascension to world power after the Spanish-American War.

[5] For analyses of British aristocratic decline, see Cannadine's *Aspects of Aristocracy* and *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, Malatesta's "The Landed Aristocracy," Chapter 2 of Reid's *Social Classes and Social Relations*, and Chapter 12 of Tames's *Economy and Society*.

number of journeys between England and the U.S. skyrocketed, leading to a rich exchange of technology, literature, and people. The booming economy in the U.S. created unheard of fortunes, topping even the wealth of the aristocratic super rich of England, formerly positioned as the wealthiest families in the world. Transatlantic marriage became an opportunity for both nations. English landowners whose fortunes faltered from falling land prices and agricultural stagnation required the newly minted fortunes of the American plutocracy.[6] The Americans were charmed by English history, culture, and heritage, and the newly rich Americans legitimized their wealth and social standing by marrying English aristocrats. Americans were swept up with "Anglomania," thrilled to read about these transatlantic marriages and the "dollar princesses" who married into European aristocracy.

These marriages were precipitated by laws of inheritance and wealth on both sides of the Atlantic. The British aristocracy remained the strongest and wealthiest in Europe even after the revolutionary periods of 1764–1789 and 1848, due largely to binding laws of primogeniture, which passed estates and wealth wholesale to the first-born son of the family.[7] While primogeniture concentrated lands and capital in the hands of a few, it also meant that English heiresses were rare, as wealth was passed to sons or male cousins. As agriculture floundered in the 1880s, British nobles and aristocrats needed an influx of capital to keep their family estates intact. By contrast, Americans typically divided their

[6] For an examination of the economic motivations behind Anglo-American marriages, see Brandon's *The Dollar Princesses* and Montgomery's *Gilded Prostitution*.

[7] For an examination of the ways laws of inheritance affected aristocratic power in Europe, see Cannadine's *The Rise and Fall* and Malatesta's "The Landed Aristocracy."

wealth amongst their children. For the struggling British aristocracy, even these women of questionable class origins became desirable marriage partners because their dowries assured the continuation of family position and estates.

One of the first well-publicized Anglo-American marriages was between Jennie Jerome and Lord Randolph Churchill. Jerome and Churchill married for love and produced two children, Jack and the more famous Winston. But not all of these marriages were as happy as the Churchills', as many marriages were born of convenience, not love.[8] For some of the *nouveau riche* families in the U.S., the opportunity to travel to Europe opened a path for their ambition to enter society. These social upstarts, such as the Vanderbilts and Goulds, were barred from New York society by the old-money American families, such as the Astors and Stuyvesants, and sought instead to enter society in the Old World. Alva Vanderbilt, for example, was frustrated by her attempts to gain entrance into the upper crust of New York society and took her daughter, Consuelo, to England. There, Alva encouraged the attentions of the impoverished Duke of Marlborough toward her daughter.[9] This marriage of convenience produced two sons and one unhappily married couple. Due to the new divorce laws, they could end their marriage. Transatlantic divorces, as much as marriages, became a topic for newspaper coverage.

[8] Carnarvon's *Lady Almina and the Real Downton Abbey*, Kehoe's *The Titled Americans*, and Sebba's *The American Jennie* provide biographical accounts of American heiresses who married into the English aristocracy.

[9] Consuelo Vanderbilt Balsan's memoir *The Glitter and The Gold* describes her life as the Duchess of Marlborough.

Sparking public interest in both nations, these transatlantic marriages were discussed in newspapers and journals and represented in literary texts. In this period, scientists were working out the first fully developed theories of human evolution. Following Charles Darwin's publication of *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, scientists debated and published on human evolution. Darwin's theory proposed two main mechanisms by which species evolve: natural selection and sexual selection. Natural selection forwarded the idea that individuals within a species vary by any number of random traits. If one of these variations allowed the individual to live longer, then the mutation would be passed along to offspring. Although he argued that natural selection was the main process by which species evolved, Darwin maintained that sexual selection also contributed to the adaptation of sexually dimorphic species to their environments. Darwin defined sexual selection as "a struggle between the males for possession of the females; the result is not death to the unsuccessful competitor, but few or no offspring" (*Origin* 88). In some species, this struggle was a physical battle between the males for the female, but in other species, it was the female's role to choose the most attractive mate. The best adapted and most attractive individuals would mate more often and leave the most offspring.

While Darwin defined both natural and sexual selection in *Origin,* he did not specifically discuss human evolution in this treatise. In 1871, twelve years after the publication of *Origin*, Darwin published *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex,* which reasoned that humans evolved from "lower" animals through the processes of natural and sexual selection. Further, Darwin also expanded his discussion of sexual selection considerably—in *Origin,* sexual selection is only discussed on a few pages. In

Descent, Darwin went beyond simply describing the mechanism to explaining its function and process in insects, birds, mammals, and humans. In the time between the publication of *Origin* and *Descent*, other scientists had begun investigating the evolutionary role of the sex drive in humans: T. H. Huxley, Sir Francis Galton, and Alfred Russel Wallace, to name a few.

Because the discussion of evolutionary theory took place in the public sphere, not just between men of science, Anglo-American art and culture of the period became saturated with the images and stories of evolution. In particular, literary texts offered a way to explore and to model evolutionary theory, which, because of the long time frames involved, could not be tested like other scientific theories. Groundbreaking works such as George Levine's *Darwin and the Novelists* and Gillian Beer's *Darwin's Plots* argue that realist novelists such as George Eliot and Thomas Hardy incorporated evolutionary plot lines into their writing, "test[ing] the extent to which [evolutionary theory] can provide a determining fiction by which to read the world" (Beer 2). Beer and Levine, along with critic Burt Bender, examine fictional representation of scientific theories, and writers' responses to them. While Levine largely focuses on evolutionary themes in fiction (such as change and history, abundance, ecological and genealogical connections), both Beer and Bender examine more particularly how theories of natural and sexual selection changed fictional plots. Beer and Levine focus on sexual selection in British literature, examining such major authors as Joseph Conrad, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy; for both critics, the shift from natural theology to natural selection necessitated a shift in how authors imagined the processes of change in the world, which thereby affected the plot and structure of the novel.

However, writers later used sexual selection as a tool to resist the seeming lack of direction and purposelessness of natural selection, a resistance that also influenced novel structure. Bender examines this shift in American fiction in his two texts *The Descent of Love* and *Evolution and "the Sex Problem."* While Bender carefully examines the ways in which American novelists used sexual selection to "realistically" portray gendered relationships in fiction, focusing solely on American or British fiction omits the unique discourses of gender, class, and nation negotiated in science and fiction. I will argue that the transatlantic marriages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provide a new storyline that writers such as Burnett, James, Trollope, and others adapted to understand sexual selection and evolution. These writers integrated evolutionary plots into their writing to test, forward, and rewrite evolutionary theory, particularly as it pertains to marriage. And because they themselves were writers who participated in the transatlantic exchange of people, ideas, and texts, they are uniquely poised to offer insight into the discourse surrounding Anglo-American marriages and sexual selection. The novels that I examine all utilize sexual selection to represent human courtship realistically, but also to critique these theories. By focusing on Anglo-American marriages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, my project examines the ways in which evolutionary theory was used to understand relationships between genders and nations via the marriage plot. Thus, my project analyzes how the phenomenon of transatlantic marriage influences the discussion of sexual selection and human evolution in late-nineteenth-century transatlantic texts. By comparing relationships and romance plots, and investigating the tension between conscious and unconscious desires, I examine how these characters choose their mates. Fundamental to the study of sexuality

in the nineteenth century is Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*. Foucault's history critiques the pervasive theory that, in the Western world from the seventeenth through the twentieth century, ideas and conversation concerning sexuality were repressed. Instead, Foucault asserts that discussion of sexuality was abundant and claims that sexuality became increasingly tied to notions of individual identity. The third volume of Foucault's *History* covers the nineteenth century and argues that Victorians sought to examine the "truth" concerning sexuality, while the state-controlled what could be thought or said about sex. Further, Foucault contends that in the Victorian era, an understanding of human psychology was sought through an investigation of sexuality. As Foucault theorizes, the deployment of sexuality contrasts the deployment of alliance. Alliance is the process by which aristocrats could consolidate power by marrying others of their class and had the further effect of demarcating boundaries between races, classes, and nations. Sexuality, on the other hand—often defying regulation and control—broke barriers and shattered boundaries of self, gender, and race. While "self" is determined by sexuality, according to Foucault, the idea of self can be destroyed by choosing partners who were deemed unacceptable due to their race, class, or gender performance. By exploring how sexuality is represented in these transatlantic texts, my project will illuminate how sexuality is related to the boundaries between genders, races, and nations. Although we tend to think of "race" as synonymous with skin color, this term could also be applied to a trait, a family, a lineage, a nation, or an ethnicity. Because of these multiple definitions, literary and scientific texts often negotiated the complex history of these two nations to establish whether they belonged to the same or different races. The anxiety concerning Britain's dominance led to the belief that England needed "new

blood." While the novels occasionally justify Anglo-American by noting similarities between American brides and their British counterparts, the perceived need for new blood allows for individuals to be accepted in society through marriage *because* they challenge gender roles and have questionable class and racial origins.

The study of the courtship plot and marriage in the realist novel is a well-established field, thanks in large part to studies such as Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel.*[10] Watt's criticism emphasized the importance of the courtship plot to the structure of the novel. Watt argues that by extending one moment, the courtship, eighteenth-century novelists corrected the disconnected and episodic nature of proto-novels such as the picaresque. Unlike earlier romances, Watt argues that in *Pamela*, for example, the romantic relationship between Pamela and Mr. B "can realistically be made to involve many of the basic problems of everyday life—conflicts between social classes and their different outlooks, for example, and conflicts between sexual instinct and the moral code" (137–138). Feminist critics such as Nancy Armstrong and Ruth Yeazell build on Watt's criticism by examining how gender roles in courtship novels negotiated larger social concerns with class and national identity. Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fiction*

[10] The courtship plot in realist fiction has been thoroughly studied, largely by feminist scholars investigating the sexual politics of the novel. See Abel's "Foiling the Marriage Plot"; Auerbach's *Woman and the Demon*; Calder's *Women and Marriage in Victorian Fiction*; Dolin's *Mistress of the House*; Green's *The Courtship Novel*; Hinz's "Hierogamy versus Wedlock"; Michie's *The Vulgar Question of Money*; Miller's *The Form of Victorian Fiction*; Poovey's *Uneven Developments*; Psomiades's "The Marriage Plot in Theory"; Shanley's *Feminism, Marriage, and the Law in Victorian England*; Tauchert's *Romancing Jane Austen*; and Weiss's "The Dilemma of Happily Ever After."

argues that eighteenth and nineteenth-century novels written by and for women created a particular type of woman, one who embodied middle-class values but could be available to men in any station. By writing women into a place of political value in the home where they governed the family, Armstrong demonstrates that these authors gave women a power over the domestic sphere that aided the ascendancy of the middle class. J. Hillis Miller points out that in Victorian fiction, the major choices in life—such as marriage—determine our place in society. In the novel, the marriage ending represents that the individual has found his or her place in society. As Boone recognizes, the "marital ideal serves as a metonymy for proper social order" (7). Because the individual serves as a synecdoche for their gender, class, nation, or race, the marriage ending extends individual stasis outward into social stasis. In the traditional marriage plot, the characters symbolize their gender and class. In Anglo-American courtship plots, these symbols further stretch to embody nation, race, and evolution itself. Both the marriage plot and sexual selection develop important relationships between the individual and society, the individual and the species. However, Beer confirms that "the blurring of the distinction between ontogeny—individual development—and phylogeny—species development—in the single term 'evolution' proved to one of the most fruitful disturbances of meaning in the literature of the ensuing hundred years, and is a striking example of the multivalency of evolutionary concepts" (Beer 12). Because of this slippage of meanings between individual evolution and species evolution, novels could be used to work out the meaning of evolutionary theory.

My dissertation expands this field of discussion by focusing on Anglo-American marriages. While Armstrong discusses female characters in British fiction who are

largely of lower class standing than their potential husbands, my work focuses on women whose class standing is questionable, who sometimes lack modesty or decorum, but who are empowered by their economic resources. Although Yeazell's and Armstrong's work both stress the importance of the middle-class feminine virtue of modesty, some of the women in the novels I study lack that trait. Yeazell contends that English novelists focused on courtship practices and the ability to choose a husband wisely to separate the English maiden from the Continental women who were supposedly led into adultery through arranged marriages. American women, I will show, are sometimes similarly distinguished from English women by their lack of propriety, but novelists vary in their response to the boldness of American women. I intend to examine those courtships and marriages where women, because of their Americanness, violate the standards of polite British society. My project explores marriages between individuals of different nationalities and brides who challenge their gender roles. In Anglo-American novels, American female characters challenge ideal femininity because they are evolved to be more aggressive than their British counterparts and because their economic power endows them with the ability to resist cultural norms. As I will show, the authors must negotiate between conservatively stripping these female characters of their independence, or readjusting gender boundaries.

My work will also engage literary criticism that examines the dialogue between literature and scientific theories of evolution, specifically focusing on sexual selection. In her groundbreaking feminist critique of Darwin's theory, Eveleen Richards condemns "Darwin's re/construction of human evolution" as "pervaded by Victorian sexist ideology" because he places women lower on the evolutionary ladder than men (61).

Further, writers and critics have noted that while Darwin argued that female animals selected their mates, he denied women the same power. Darwin contended that due to their larger size and strength, men had gained the power of selection. Rosemary Jann argues that in denying women the power of selection, Darwin was reinforcing Victorian cultural assumptions about gender roles.[11] While Gillian Beer also recognizes Victorian sexual ideology in Darwin's theories, she explores whether Victorian writers could rewrite Darwin's theories in literature to give women the power of choice Darwin denied them. Beer's work, *Darwin's Plots,* traces the response to Darwin's theories by Victorian writers and the effects of his work on Victorian literature and culture. Focusing particularly on responses to Darwin by George Eliot and Thomas Hardy, Beer studies sexual selection and the representation of mothering and inheritance in their fiction. Bender similarly examines how American novelists interpreted scientific theories to examine their consequences for women. Both Beer and Bender demonstrate that many Victorian writers interpreted evolutionary theory as condemning women to natural and permanent subservience to men and lamented the loss of identity women experience as mothers. Indeed, more recently Angelique Richardson has studied eugenics in fiction and demonstrated that even the New Woman writers, who sought to use women's power of selection to argue for "rational reproduction" to affect political change, relied on biological determinism and gender to argue for women's participation in national

[11] More recently, in *Darwin Loves You*, George Levine has admitted that while Darwin's theory may have been constructed out of cultural assumptions about women, these critiques are not enough to say whether the theory is correct.

affairs.[12] However, as I will show, Anglo-American writers were not similarly burdened, as American women in Anglo-American texts challenged both literary and scientific representations of women's role by resisting and rebelling against male domination. These Anglo-American texts demonstrate that while British women may have evolved to be submissive, in the competitive environment of America, women have evolved to be strong, independent, intelligent, and resistant to traditional gender roles.

Expanding on Jann's, Beer's, and Richardson's readings of Darwin texts, my project analyzes the cultural assumptions that inform Darwin's theory. As others have argued, class, racial, and sexual prejudices influence the creation of Darwin's scientific theories. Although Darwin attempted an "objective" theory of human evolution, his theory supports middle-class English values, placing women in a submissive role toward men and creating a hierarchy of races. I submit that these transatlantic marriages challenge such assumptions about women and the relationships between the genders that were written into scientific texts.

The theory of the novel in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century might profitably be used to understand evolutionary theory and literary response to evolutionary theory. While Watt's criticism focused on texts ending in marriage, critics such as Robert Adams, Alan Friedman, and Joseph Allen Boone divide literature into two forms: an open form and a closed form. Adams contends that the difference between open and

[12] Writing against the critical importance placed on desire leading to marriage, Richard Kaye's *The Flirt's Tragedy* contends desire is not meant to be fulfilled but rather deferred. Delaying desire, he argues, acts as resistance to cultural imperatives of marriage.

closed forms can be understood by examining a text's treatment of themes. A closed form resolves its themes, while an open form "deliberately declines to resolve its assertion-patterns in any major way" (Adams 16). Friedman similarly posits both an open and closed form but defines these based on the development of the protagonist's conscience. A "closed novel," Friedman defines, is "a novel in which that underlying ethical form, the stream of conscience, is finally contained" (16). In an open novel, by contrast, "the stream of conscience is finally not contained" (16). What both definitions share is that the novel deals with change, change that can either be resolved or unresolved by novel's conclusion. And it is the emphasis on change that connects the form of the novel to evolutionary theory. As Beer points out, "Because of its preoccupation with time and with change evolutionary theory has inherent affinities with the problems and processes of narrative (5). If we think of the form of the narrative more broadly as transformation, then Darwin's theory of evolution is an open form. Beer argues that "Darwin rejected the idea of a stable or static world" (59), and we can see an example of this rejection in Darwin's description of continuous variability and natural selection, which "leads to divergence of character" (*Origin* 128). Darwin continues, arguing that

> during the modification of the descendants of any one species, and during the incessant struggle of all species to increase in numbers, the more diversified these descendants become, the better will be their chance of succeeding in the battle of life. Thus, the small differences distinguishing varieties of the same species, will steadily tend to increase till they come to equal the greater differences between species of the same genus, or even of distinct genera. (*Origin* 128)

Darwin's evolutionary theory, therefore, resists the artificial closure of narrative by emphasizing the ceaseless nature of evolution. Struggle is "incessant," and rather than moving from chaos to order, evolution shows diversity ever increasing. Figure 1, the only illustration in Darwin's *Origin*, shows this movement as a few progenitor groups at the bottom vary and diverge to become many taxa at the top. As the visual shows, the evolution's open form has no end, only continual change. Evolutionary theory, therefore, describes an open plot, which I will define as a plot that imagines continued transformation—in the characters and, by extension, society and the species—after the text's ending. Open plots emphasize variability, flux, process, motion, and instability.

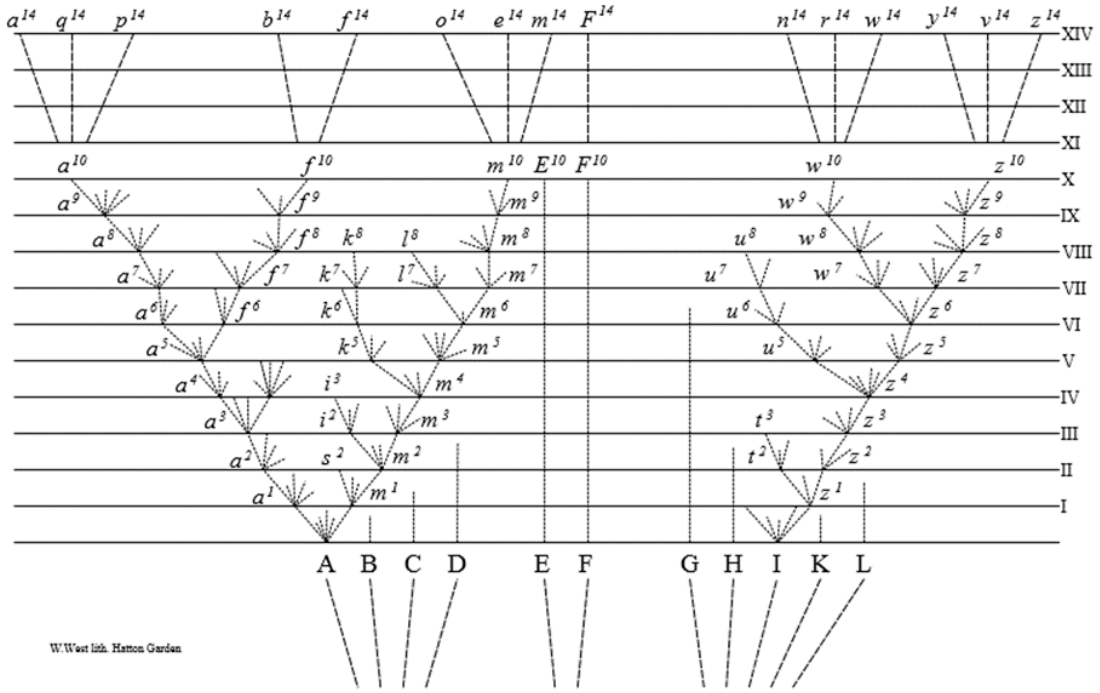

Figure 1. The divergence of taxa.

The only illustration in Darwin's *Origin.* This diagram of divergence illustrates an evolutionary open plot.

In contrast to the open form of evolution, Boone declares the "traditional ordering of a narrative as an inevitable movement from instability to equilibrium," which

"inculcates a vision of coherence or stability underlying social reality and cultural convention alike: the finality of the end becomes the ultimate signifier of this immutable worldview" (78). While Darwin resisted the idea of progress, and therefore the closed form of narrative in evolution, Beer points out that "many of Darwin's readers favored the counter-form of evolutionary myth: that of growth, ascent, and development towards complexity" (Beer 14). That is, many of Darwin's readers sought to rewrite evolutionary theory with a closed form of narrative. I will define the closed narrative form as a narrative ending that provides resolution and stasis, a narrative that "makes it seem that all the past has constantly aspired towards becoming our present" (Beer 14). Closed narratives tended to reaffirm the social status quo, including gender, class, and racial hierarchies. Figure 2 provides a visual of this plot as chimpanzees evolve into humans, therefore suggesting that humans are the end and apex of evolution.

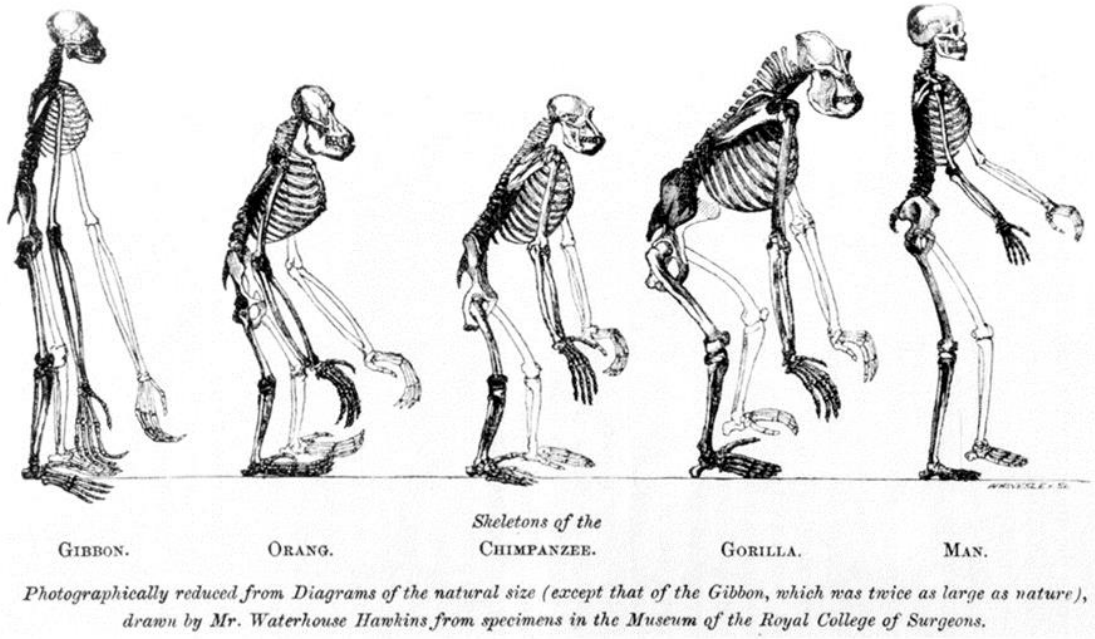

Figure 2. The evolution of humans.

Figure 2. The frontispiece to T. H. Huxley's *Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature* illustrates an evolutionary closed plot.

In literature, the traditional narrative depends on three endings: death, exile, or marriage. For Boone, the open and closed forms depend on the novel's treatment of marriage. Boone defines the closed form as those that end in wedlock, while the open form resists such artificial narrative closure. Boone argues that the closed form moves from chaos to order, and the end of the novel in wedlock signals that stasis has been reached in both the relationship between two people and the society they represent, a stasis that reaffirms the cultural stasis quo (7). Novels such as *Pamela*, therefore, end by uniting two halves into a unified whole. The open-ended form, on the other hand, denies the reader satisfaction at its end, either by showing "marital stalemate" after the traditional marriage ending or an individual's "successful existence outside" the conventional marriage plot (19). While Darwin's theory of natural selection described an open form of continuous change, Darwin's theory of sexual selection easily adopted a closed narrative form in line with traditional literary narratives through the marriage ending. Both sexual selection and the marriage plot depend on the individual's choice of mate/spouse.[13] Darwin's later emphasis on the theory of sexual selection, Beer argues, "meant that a new shaping influence was accorded to ideas and values, the action of the individual and communal will, as opposed to the apparent randomness of natural

[13] In Chapter 6 of *Darwin Loves You*, Levine argues that Darwin's reading of realist novelists such Dickens influenced his theory of sexual selection, and Levine explores Victorian sexual ideology in evolutionary theory.

selection" (172). In ending sexual selection in marriage, Darwin's theory could, therefore, reinforce Western social order.[14]

Focusing on the period between 1869 and 1914, my project thus provides an interdisciplinary examination of novels and short stories that contain Anglo-American courtships and marriages—particularly those written by authors who participated in transatlantic exchange through travel or immigration. Transatlantic marriages have not been broadly studied in literary criticism. Studies such as Paul Woolf's *Special Relationships: Anglo-American Love Affairs, Courtships, and Marriages in Fiction, 1821–1914*, have largely focused on American literary response and have omitted discussion of sexual selection. Woolf's thesis, for example, focuses on the phenomenon of transatlantic marriage in American literature. He argues that these romance plots respond to the changing political dynamics between nations and define ideal versions of national identity. However, because these marriages took place in a transnational context, it is important to study their effect transatlantically. Because of their own transnational migrations, the three authors under scrutiny in my project return repeatedly to transatlantic relationships in their writings.[15] Although Henry James (1843–1916) was

[14] Both Rosemary Jann's "Darwin and the Anthropologists" and Eveleen Richards' "Darwin and the Descent of Woman" critique Darwin's theory of sexual selection for reinforcing Victorian sexual ideology.

[15] While other authors, like Edith Wharton, were also interested in this new transnational marriage market, I selected those texts dealing with Anglo-American marriages. From 1870–1914, Wharton wrote fiction dealing with transatlantic relationships between Americans and Europeans more broadly, and specifically the French. Her final incomplete novel, *The Buccaneers*, features Anglo-American marriages, but was not written until 1938.

born in America and is often categorized as an American author, his wealth enabled him to travel freely throughout Europe and the U.S. He spent the first twenty years of his life alternating between England and the U.S., before settling permanently in England and becoming a British subject. Frances Hodgson Burnett (1849–1924), on the other hand, was born in England but immigrated to the U.S. as a child. Burnett began writing to earn money for her family and grew wealthy from her writings. In the 1880s, she frequently traveled between the two countries, purchasing a house in England from where she wrote one of her most famous stories, *The Secret Garden.* Anthony Trollope's family struggled with money, and his mother Frances Trollope moved to America in the hopes of improving their fortunes. Trollope (1815–1882) remained behind in England. Trollope never lived in the U.S., but he visited four times, publishing a travel book, *North America* (1862), after his second visit. Like many of their contemporaries, these authors took advantage of improved technologies to travel the world.

In chapter 2, I begin by examining how Victorians used theories of natural and sexual selection to explain gendered and national differences. After the publication of Darwin's *Origin,* many scientists attempted to explain how theories of evolution applied to humans. Specifically, scientists and writers explored how these theories could be used to understand differences between the sexes and in national character. In *Origin,* Darwin claimed that "sexual selection gives its aid to ordinary selection by assuring to the most vigorous and best-adapted mates the greatest number of offspring" (127). Males specifically would adapt "special weapons" to win mates; females, on the other hand, remained passive and resisting during the mating process, only selecting the strongest or most beautiful mates. Darwin believed that this development explained why men were

more aggressive and domineering than women. While sexual selection could be used to explain difference between the sexes, both natural selection and sexual selection contributed to national and racial differences. Writers such as Aldous Huxley argued that the U.S.'s wilder environment encouraged competition and therefore allowed for the free action of national selection. More civilized countries like England, on the other hand, dulled the effects of natural selection by preserving the weaker members of the species. Americans, therefore, are stronger, more aggressive, and more competitive than their English counterparts, while the English are more civilized, though also possibly weaker. Evolutionary theory, as it applied to national differences, is an open plot in which human evolution could destabilize accepted national hierarchies, such as English superiority to the U.S.

Marriages between American women and English men present an interesting problem for literature: if Americans, in general, are more aggressive than the English, but men are more aggressive than women, then what happens when an Englishman courts and marries an American woman? Trollope's novel *He Knew He Was Right* (1869) explores this problem in the relationship between the American Caroline Spalding and British Charles Glascock. As I will show, the energetic and aggressive Caroline dominates the more passive Glascock during their courtship. Indeed, Caroline's energy and aggression compensate for Charles's weakness and lethargy, which would lead to improved offspring. However, the traits that make Caroline a good potential mate also threaten an open plot where the marriage ending could overturn traditional power structures of age, gender, class, and nation. It is only when Glascock takes the upper hand with Caroline and subdues her that they can marry. While scholars have recently debated

whether the courting couples in *He Knew He Was Right* represent liberal or conservative views of gender roles in marriage, I argue that the successful completion of Caroline and Charles's courtship plot signals a happy ending, but one that can only occur by reverting to the traditional power structures of the closed plot.

While chapter 2 examines a conservative response to Anglo-American marriage, chapter 3 examines a more progressive response. Trollope's *He Knew He Was Right* implies the regeneration of England through intermarriage with Americans, Burnett's *The Shuttle* (1907) much more explicitly deploys the language of eugenics to argue for the benefits of such marriages. In chapter 3, I explore the discourse of English aristocratic degeneration in both literary and scientific texts. Scientists such as Darwin and Galton argue that the aristocracy as an institution isolates this population from the action of natural selection and therefore produces weaker individuals. However, some New Women novelists argued that allowing men to choose their wives against the natural order caused English degeneration. Angelique Richardson has shown that the eugenic New Woman novelists argued that the degeneracy of England resulted from the social and literary conventions that encouraged men to select mates instead of allowing women to select as nature designed. Richardson points out that degeneration was a masculine plot perpetuated by primogeniture at the expense of natural female mate selection. These eugenic New Woman novels propose that rational female selection, as opposed to male choice through sexual desire, could act to regenerate the English. However, while these eugenic texts were progressive in discussing sex, they relied on conservative views of women's low sexual drive—and therefore more rational selection—to argue for women's

importance to the national future. In so doing, both scientific and eugenic literature rely on closed plots that reaffirm gender hierarchies.

I argue that Burnett's novel similarly urges that allowing women to select their mates can regenerate the race, but the novel also highlights the limitations of rationality in the selection process. I argue that *The Shuttle* critiques both masculine courtship plots and the feminine "rational reproduction" narratives. Instead, Burnett's novel suggests that the best way for women to choose mates is by relying on their instinctive sexual desire. Burnett's novel demonstrates that humans will evolve to move fluidly between gender roles. This open plot emphasizes the affinity between individuals of both genders but is only possible due to a closed plot that confirms racial hierarchies and Anglo-Saxon dominance.

In the final two chapters, I turn to examine failed Anglo-American courtship narratives. In chapter 4, I begin by examining the related discourses of the evolution of marriage in human society and the sexual maturation of individual humans. Mid-century Victorian anthropologists, such as John Lubbock, John MacLennan, and Edward Tylor, studied the evolution of marriage customs, arguing that "savage" tribes practice polyamory and capture marriage, and mates are chosen largely for physical attractiveness. More evolved societies, however, are monogamous and choose spouses for mental and spiritual qualities. "Savage" marriages, therefore, are based on sexual desire while "civilized" marriages are founded on romantic love. Later in the century, scientists such as G. Stanley Hall argued that individual sexual maturation could be understood by looking at social evolution of marriage customs and vice versa. While younger individuals are largely attracted based solely on physical appearance, more

mature individuals choose romantic partners for their inner character. These scientific narratives of sexual and ethical development, therefore, are closed plots that end by reaffirming racial hierarchies.

When placed in the context of these scientific narratives, Trollope's novel *The Way We Live Now* can be seen as addressing both individual maturation and racial evolution and employs these closed plots to assert English superiority. The novel describes a love triangle between the main character, Paul Montague, and his two love interests: Mrs. Hurtle, who represents the more "primitive" (aggressive and sexual) environment of the American West, and Hetta Carbury, whose origins in the civilized English environment make her more modest and submissive. As Paul Montague matures, he realizes that he should set aside his sexual attraction for Mrs. Hurtle and instead choose his more civilized lover, Hetta. While Paul's maturation signals adaptation, the adaptations we see in both him and the marriage plot do not compensate for the larger forces of social change Trollope portrays in English society. Because Mrs. Hurtle is not accounted for within the marriage ending, she—and the social changes she represents—remains an open element in the novel's plot. In this novel, the courtship plot fails to reach stasis because it fails to adequately arrest social, and this failure can partially explain the unsatisfactory ending of the novel.

The novelists addressed in this project's first three chapters all highlight the importance of the courtship plot as a focus of their novels. And although all three authors revised or challenged the application of sexual selection to human romances, all deployed the language and ideas of sexual selection to describe these romances. Whether in scientific or literary texts, Victorians read women in the context of sexual selection and

the marriage plot. That is, most narratives about women were closed plots ending in marriage and motherhood. Henry James, however, challenges the primacy of the marriage plot to the novel and to a woman's life. In Chapter 5, I show that James similarly deploys the language and thoughts of sexual selection to describe Isabel's choice of husband in *The Portrait of a Lady*. However, Isabel's choice, rather than concluding the novel, is only the first half of the story. This formal deviation, I argue, has two major effects. Firstly, by placing Isabel's marriage in the middle of the novel instead of the end, the novel critiques how other authors have applied sexual selection to human affairs. The novel acknowledges our choice of mate as a choice of sexual partner but demonstrates that mates are not necessarily the same as spouses. Secondly, by making Isabel's choice of husband only the first half of the novel, James suggests that the courtship plot is not nearly as important as Victorian authors would have us believe.[16] By undermining the importance of sexual selection and the marriage plot, James can create an open plot that resists resolution and with it sexual hierarchy and social stasis. Many read Isabel's return to Rome as a return to Osmond, the marriage plot, and gendered oppression. However, I argue that that the ambiguous ending leaves open the possibility of another choice and another future for Isabel beyond the novel's end. Rather than focusing solely on Isabel's choice of (first) husband as the main signifier of her identity, I argue that the second half of the novel urges us to recognize the importance of all of Isabel's relationships to her narrative. James's Anglo-American fiction points to two

[16] James's critique of the courtship plot is well known; he discusses the relationship between the happy ending and the novel as art in the New York edition preface to *The Portrait of a Lady.*

different ways that early-twentieth-century texts understand the connections between sexual selection and human marriage, one's that impacted the novel form. First, while my dissertation focuses on representations of Anglo-American marriage as a product of natural drives for sex and love, several early-twentieth-century texts complicate this explanation by focusing on these marriages as a product of cultural imperatives. Secondly, *The Portrait of a Lady* points to the open plot as the future of realist novel, one that does not rely on the marriage ending, and therefore seems to more fully embody the indeterminate future for human evolution. Indeed, it is not until the realist novel moves away from the marriage ending that it can fully embody the open form of evolutionary theory.

CHAPTER II – "IN MY OWN HOUSE I AM MASTER": REVERTING TO THE MARRIAGE PLOT IN TROLLOPE'S *HE KNEW HE WAS RIGHT*

"Beyond that pressing of the hand, and that kissing of the lips,—beyond the short-lived pressure of the plumage which is common to birds and men,—what could love do beyond that?"

—Anthony Trollope, *He Knew He Was Right*

In a chapter on women's rights in his travel book *North America,* Anthony Trollope contends that "the best right a woman has is the right to a husband, and that is the right to which I would recommend every young woman here and in the States turn her best attention" (262; ch. 18).[17] For Trollope, issues of women's rights were inextricably linked to America through his friend the American reformer Kate Fielding. He explored gender issues in many of his writings about the U.S., including *He Knew He Was Right* (1869), *The Way We Live Now* (1875), and *The Duke's Children* (1879). As this brief survey reveals, Trollope demonstrates his belief in the strong ties between England and America by including American characters in his novels of English life, and—further—by describing the economic, social, and political relationships between the characters and nations in terms of familial ties: America is the "daughter" of England, and Americans are the English's "cousins over the water" (*North America* 80; ch. 18; *He* 713; ch. 76).[18]

[17] Trollope's also discusses his views on women's rights in "Higher Education of Women."

[18] These references to the familial ties between England and America were commonly used throughout texts in the nineteenth century, but took on new depth during the period of Anglo-American reconciliation. See Burke's *Old World, New World: Great Britain and America from the Beginning*, especially Chapters Five and Six.

While Trollope often displaces women's rights as an American concern, England's women were equally concerned with issues of women's rights to property, custody of their children, and a vote.[19]

Along with these major social changes, He Knew He Was Right fell into the vigorous conversation concerning human evolution that preceded and precipitated Darwin's publication of Descent of Man. As Bert Bender points out in his study of the American literary response to evolutionary theory, the nineteenth-century authors who deployed evolutionary language and plots "invoked the latest and very highest authority in their literary constructions of the nature or 'reality' of courtship" (xii). Little scholarship explores Trollope's work in relation to science in general or evolutionary theory in particular, especially when compared to other mid-to-late nineteenth century authors such as Charles Dickens or George Eliot. This scholarly neglect might seem fitting for an author who, when mentioning natural history in North America, admits to his "ignorance on all such matters" (Trollope, 243; ch. 17). And yet, in the same book, Trollope describes the physiognomy of Americans and wonders at its origins. He states

[19] *He Knew* was written during some of the first legal challenges to coverture. John Stuart Mills wrote *The Subjection of Women* in 1860–1861, but did not publish it until 1869. In 1866, Mills petitioned Parliament to grant women the right to vote. In 1870, Parliament passed the Married Women's Property Act, which sounded the death knell to coverture. For contemporary responses to *Subjection*, see Pyle's *The Subjection of Women*. For critical essays on Mill's *Subjection*, see Morales's *Mill's The Subjection of Women.* For overviews of American women's rights movement, see Sullivan's *Constitutional Context*, Flexner's *Century of Struggle,* and Dubois's *Feminism and Suffrage*. For overviews of the British women's rights movements, see Gleadle's *Borderline Citizens* and Holcombe's *Wives and Property*.

that "the inhabitants of New England […] have the American characteristics of physiognomy in the fullest degree" (186; ch. 14). He goes on to wonder "what circumstances of blood or food, of early habit or subsequent education, have created for the latter-day American his present physiognomy?" (187; ch. 14). Despite his admitted lack of knowledge concerning evolution, Trollope expresses interest in understanding humans scientifically.

The most well-known criticism on Trollope's engagement with evolutionary theory is George Levine's *Darwin and the Novelists: Patterns of Science in Victorian Fiction*. Despite, or even perhaps because of, Trollope's disinterest in science, Levine demonstrates "the absorption and testing of Darwinian ideas and attitudes […] in the imagination of Victorian novelists" (3), including Trollope.[20] That is, even though Trollope lacked an interest in science, evolutionary ideas so permeated the culture that even someone who did not actively pursue scientific studies still absorbed them from the culture at large. One way that Trollope would have gained access to scientific writings was through periodicals. As Sally Shuttleworth and Geoffrey Cantor point out, periodicals offered one of the main ways that scientific discussions entered public knowledge (2). Periodicals published scientific essays alongside fiction, and scientific language seeped into literary texts. Many of Trollope's novels, including *He Knew He Was Right*, *The American Senator*, *The Duke's Children*, and *Dr. Wortle's School*, were

[20] For discussion of Trollope's engagement with evolutionary theory, see Erdmut Lerner's *Adapting to Evolution: The Impact of Scientific Thought on the Works of Gaskell and Trollope*.

themselves published in periodicals alongside essays on evolution.[21] *The Saturday Review* published *Dr. Wortle's School*, for example, alongside reviews of H. A. Mott's *Was Man Created?,* James Chapin's *The Creation and Early Development of Society,* and A. H. Swinton's *Insect Variety; Its Propagation and Distribution,* which examined the evolution of insects.

Though the central story of *He Knew He Was Right* features a reimaging of *Othello* in nineteenth-century London, Trollope's many subplots feature the entanglements of several romantic triangles. The main plot focuses on the marriage of Emily Rowley and Louis Trevelyan. Trevelyan becomes consumed with jealousy over his wife's relationship with Colonel Osbourne, a friend of her father's. Although Emily's feelings are entirely innocent, her refusal to submit to her husband's authority becomes as much, if not more, of an issue in their marital breakup as her sexual fidelity.[22] Alongside the main story, *He Knew He Was Right* features the romantic lives of four pairs of sisters: Emily and Nora Rowley, who are English but live in fictional British colonies; the Americans Caroline and Olivia Spalding; the English Arabella and Camilla French, and Priscilla and Dorothy Stanbury, also English. These subplots explore issues related to marriage in the last third of the century, including the plight of "surplus" women, the

[21] In England, Trollope published *He Knew He Was Right* serially in weekly sixpenny parts, but in America the novel was published in the magazine *Every Saturday. The American Senator* appeared in *Temple Bar, The Duke's Children* in *All the Year Round*, and *Dr. Wortle's School* appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine.*

[22] For discussion of Emily and Louis Trevelyan's marriage, see Simon Gatrell's "Jealousy, Mastery, Love and Madness" and Mary Hamer's "No Fairy-Tale."

imperative for women to marry to secure their livelihood, married women's rights to their property and children, and divorce.[23]

The discussion concerning Caroline Spalding and Charles Glascock's courtship and marriage, I believe, is so conflicted in part because their relationship seems to run the gamut from a female-dominated relationship to a fully patriarchal union.[24] The Glascock-

[23] Despite his rabid antifeminist stance on women's rights, critics have long noted Trollope's sympathy for women in Victorian society. For a discussion of Trollope's stance on women, see Ruth apRobert's "Emily and Nora and Dorothy and Priscilla and Jemima and Carry"; Richard Barickman, Susan MacDonald, and Myra Stark's *Corrupt Relations;* P. D. Edwards' *Anthony Trollope;* Gagnier et al.'s *The Politics of Gender in Anthony Trollope's Novels;* J. Hillis Miller's "Literature and Woman's Right to Choose—Not to Marry"; Wendy Jones's "Feminism, Fiction, and Contract Theory*";* Jean Nardin's *He Knew She Was Right;* Kathy Psomiades "*He Knew He Was Right:* The Sensational Tyranny of the Sexual Contract and the Problem of Liberal Progress"; Rajiva Wijesinha's *The Androgynous Trollope;* and Young Seon Won's "Empowered Women."

[24] We can understand the Spalding-Glascock marriage by placing it within recent criticism focusing on the marriage relations between the couples in the novel's subplots. Critics question whether the romantic subplots are a foil to Trevelyan's dictatorial marriage, or whether they merely represent milder versions of patriarchal marriages. Deborah Denenholz Morse argues that three of the novel's male suitors, Burgess, Stanbury and Glascock, are united in their desire for equal partners and that their marriages represent "liberated unions": "It is in these new Englishmen—and in their intelligent, determined wives—that Trollope constructs a new vision of Englishness in which he sees the possibility of a future in which there will be no mastery—and no slaves" (131). Christopher Herbert argues that while the subplots "seem to proclaim the possibility of far more relaxed and humane sexual relations," "Trevelyan in fact has far deeper affiliations with these moderate, urbane, amiable, well-meaning gentlemen than [Stanbury or Glascock] would ever admit" (465). Trevelyan, Herbert claims, "is aberrant only in being too uncouth, too

Spalding *courtship* poses a more egalitarian division of power within the relationship; however, their *marriage* represents a patriarchal marriage. The courtship between English aristocrat and American heiress begins with a reversal of traditional power structures, one that is more revolutionary and radical than even the relationship between Nora and Hugh. However, this power dynamic changes by the time they are married, and Glascock asserts his power over Caroline. Because the couple represents both their genders and nations, Trollope asserts a conservative view of power through the ending of their courtship plot. *He Knew He Was Right* was published early in the period of this study, and the Glascock-Spalding marriage is a more traditional marriage compared to Anglo-American marriages in later novels. In part, this more traditional marriage is due to Caroline herself, who

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undiplomatic, in his claiming of the male prerogatives they all, as Victorian men, embody and take for granted" (465). What distinguishes Trevelyan's marriage from the others, according to Herbert, is that Emily forces him to assume his patriarchal authority rather than disguise it behind polite requests and diplomacy. Herbert supports his claim by looking to Glascock's statement "In my own house I am master," which echoes Trevelyan's own words (465). Lisa Surridge builds on Herbert's argument, stating that the marriages of Dorothy to Brooke and Nora to Stanbury are modeled after Trevelyan's, "in which apparently egalitarian and companionate relationships are revealed to be underpinned by male power" (167). Unlike the other critics, Elsie Michie divides the marriage subplots. Michie contends that Trollope can "represent social and personal authority as dispersed over a range of positions rather than concentrated in a single place," usually the husband (167). The marriage between Hugh Stanbury and Nora Rowley is a "fully radical marriage" because it is "a union imagined to be without dominance" (177). Their marriage is contrasted with the Glascock-Spalding marriage, a marriage "that is based on the most traditional of principles" in which "the husband is confident both that he has authority and that it will not conflict with his wife's liberty" (177).

resembles English girls as much as the later, more progressive American women like the "wildcat" Mrs. Hurtle. While later texts tend to feature rich American heiresses, Caroline, the daughter of a lawyer, represents the professional middle classes. Additionally, unlike later marriages that point to the fading economic power of the English aristocracy, David Cannadine notes that in the 1860s and 1870s (the time of the novel's publication) the members of the English aristocracy "were still the most wealthy, the most powerful, and the most glamorous people in the country, corporately—and understandably—conscious of themselves as God's elect" (2). There are only the first few rumbles of the failure of aristocratic wealth and power that later made marriage to an American heiress a necessity. Glascock represents the last in a long line of aristocrats whose power, wealth and position are unquestioned.

America's and England's future, and their relative positions are explored through Glascock and Spalding's courtship. Glascock is presented in the novel as aging and, in many respects, weak. In this representation, we can recognize the first cracks in aristocratic power, power that can only be shored up through marriage to an American. Indeed, while the novel invites us to despise the American feminist reformer Wallachia Petrie for being coarse and unfeminine, she clearly articulates one major concern of the novel: "their country, Carry, is a game played out, while we are still breasting the hill with our lungs full of air" (Trollope, *He* 515; ch. 55). Their courtship is a reversal of power where the young, middle-class American women dominate the old British aristocracy. *He Knew He Was Right* describes the American Caroline Spalding according to evolved national characteristics, such as aggression and strength, that differentiates her from other English women. During the courtship, Caroline's evolutionary characteristics

dominate Glascock, inverting traditional power relationships of age, gender, class, and nation. Caroline and Glascock's courtship destabilizes traditional hierarchies and is, therefore, an open plot. Caroline's dominance, however, threatens the stability of the relationship. Caroline wants to break their engagement because she fears that society will attack Glascock for marrying her, and he will not be strong enough to ignore its condemnation. Glascock refuses to allow her to back out, asserting his dominance over both her and society by declaring that "in my own house I am master." By the end of the novel, however, Glascock dominates Caroline in their marriage, and in so doing restores patriarchal, aristocratic, and English dominance. To quell these evolutionary—and indeed revolutionary—power relations, in short, the novel resorts to a conservative courtship plot.

"Not the Less Manifestly a Lady": Caroline Spalding and American Evolution

Charles Glascock meets Caroline and Olivia Spalding, two American sisters and the nieces of the American diplomat to Florence while traveling to Italy to be at the bedside of his dying father. As Glascock reflects on their meeting, he realizes that "he had met a lady very different from those with whom he had hitherto associated,—but not the less manifestly a lady. Caroline Spalding was bright, pleasant, attractive, very easy to talk to, and yet quite able to hold her own" (528; ch. 56). This passage illustrates ambiguity as to how to judge American women like Caroline: as an American woman, the text defines her as different from the British women because she can "hold her own." That is, Caroline can "maintain [her] position against a competitor or an opposing force of any kind" ("Hold"). However, the text is also careful to reiterate that she is a lady—and an attractive one—despite her differences.

Trollope's assessment of Caroline Spalding belonged to a larger conversation in which evolutionists attempted to understand national character through the lens of evolutionary theory. Generally, scientists argued that "savage" environments promoted social competition and selection, while "civilized" societies were removed from these processes. Americans, by blood and by selection, are stronger and more energetic than their European counterparts. In "Hereditary Talent and Character" (1865), Francis Galton argued that Americans "had been bred from the most restless and combative class of Europe," emphasizing the inherited nature of Americans traits as distilled through breeding (325). Just a few years later, in "On Darwinism and National Life" (1869), T. H. Huxley similarly argued for the significance of heredity in understanding American character but also pointed out the importance of the Americans' rugged environment in selecting those traits. For Huxley, as well as for Darwin himself, Americans were more daring, energetic, and courageous because those traits had been naturally selected in the competitive American environment. As Darwin asserted in *Descent*,

> The remarkable success of the English as colonists compared to other European nations, has been ascribed to their 'daring and persistent energy'; a result which is well illustrated by comparing the progress of the Canadians of English and French extraction; but who can say how the English gained their energy? There is apparently much truth in the belief that the wonderful progress of the United States, as well as the character of the people, are the results of natural selection; for the more energetic, restless, and courageous men from all parts of Europe have emigrated during the last ten or twelve generations to that great country, and have there succeeded best. (168)

According to both Huxley and Darwin, the various "races" that colonized America—English, French, German, and Irish, to name a few—competed against each other for resources as a result of the economic environment of capitalism. There, the English "stock" has out-competed other races and natural selection has distilled the traits most useful to those individuals in their struggle—energy, courage and "self-reliance approaching to audacity" (Huxley, "On Darwinism" 184).

For these scientists, there is little recognition that America's hybridity is part of its strength. Trollope, however, acknowledges that "the American owns a more mixed blood than any other race known. The chief stock is English, which is itself so mixed that no man can trace its ramifications. With this are mingled the bloods of Ireland, Holland, France, Sweden, and Germany" (*North America*, 187; ch. 14). Trollope's recognizes the importance of mixed blood to English history and acknowledges that racial hybridity has been beneficial for both the U.S. and England. Although Trollope only recognizes a mixture of Western European nations, he does admit to both the U.S. and England's mixed heritage, rather than disregarding it as the scientists do. According to the scientists, the English stock has been competing against the most daring and aggressive individuals of other races, and through this process, they have shown themselves to be the most adaptable and persistent. Darwin and Huxley largely focused on America as a place where many "races" competed, but the English stock conquered. Like other Americans, Caroline is a product of natural selection and can "hold her own" and successfully compete in her social and physical environment.

The first meeting between Trevelyan, Glascock, and the Spalding sisters might appear minor, but it is not because it sets the stage for the national and gendered conflict

between Trevelyan and Caroline. When Trevelyan and Glascock first meet the Spalding sisters, they are all traveling from France to Italy. While all four are sold tickets for coupé seats, the gentlemen arrive first and claim them. The coach manager tells the sisters they are to sit in the less desirable seats inside the coach. Caroline protests, demanding that she be given the seats they paid for. Here, we see the first signs of Caroline's American character. Rather than meekly accepting the switch, Caroline argues with the manager. As the narrator repeats, American ladies "knew their rights" and "were clearly entitled to their seats" (350; ch. 37). Caroline, with "considerable indignation" demands that "we would have what we paid for" (350; ch. 37). Although this is mild incident, Trollope points out that Caroline's behavior was not that of an English lady, who do not argue with men in public and do not feel "entitled." Caroline's argument with the manager recalls the pushy American women from *North America*, the "anti-feminine atrocities" who feel entitled to any seats on public transportation and "take the place from which you have moved without a word or a bow" (191; ch. 14). Trollope derides these women for lacking the "perception of that return, which chivalry demands from them" (*North America* 191; ch. 14).

Caroline resembles a hypothetical English man Trollope describes in *He Knew* only a page before. Before introducing Caroline and the specific instance of having her seat switched, Trollope describes how "middle-aged Englishmen with their wives [...] threaten loudly, when they suppose themselves to be ill-treated" (349; ch. 37). "[W]hen he finds himself with his unfortunate partner in a roundabout place behind with two priests, a dirty man who looks like a brigand, a sick maid-servant, and three agricultural labourers," the Englishman would make "a little noise round the bureau at St. Michael"

(349; ch. 37). We can note the similarities between the Englishman's reaction and Caroline's in these two passages. The Englishmen become "very angry" and "threaten loudly" when they believe themselves "ill-treated." Caroline also feels cheated and similarly responds with "considerable indignation." Neither Englishmen nor Caroline believe the French official, who tries to convince them that the entire carriage is coupé. Both the English men and Caroline make "a little noise," and she declares "it is a robbery." While Caroline does not seem as angry or as vocal as the Englishmen, there are undeniable similarities in their responses. In drawing this similarity, the novel observes that American ladies take on the power and authority appropriate for "middle-aged Englishmen." While Caroline does not fully cross the line into coarse manly behavior, her actions bear more similarity to the English man than the English woman, as the wives remain silent while their husbands fly into a rage.

Caroline and her sister further demonstrate their American character by speaking plainly, though insultingly, about the English. When the Spalding sisters are cheated of their seats, Trevelyan and Glascock offer to trade places with them and through this exchange, the Englishmen become acquainted with the American women. However, rather than behaving gratefully toward the gentleman, both women speak slightingly of the English. When discussing the coach incident later, both sisters comment on European manners and culture. One of the sisters states "I hate being put anywhere as if I were a sheep. It seems so odd to us, that you here should be all so tame" (353; ch. 37). The sisters point out that Americans are more assertive than their Europeans counterparts. They move and place themselves rather than being herded, and the sisters demonstrate their own lack of tameness by comparing Glascock to a sheep. Both sisters go on to

praise the French, and Olivia extols "their manners, and their ways of life, their climate, the beauty of the cities, and their general management of things" (353; ch. 37). Caroline reinforces her sister's judgment by baldly stating that "they do understand living better than you do" and that "everything is so much brighter with them" (353; ch. 37). The sisters' plain speaking points to a certain manliness of character and a disregard for polite equivocation proper for women. As John Tosh points out, manly men were increasingly identified with "frank straightforwardness" in both action and speech (87). "Manly speech," Tosh argues, is "direct, honest, and succinct" regardless of "social expectation" even if he might appear "brusque or even rude" (87–88). The sisters' direct American speech, therefore, aligns them with masculine virtues.

In his portrayal of Caroline and her sister, Trollope notices the same attributes in Americans as do Darwin and Huxley, but Trollope traces those attributes to different origins. For Trollope, Caroline's character is a result of custom and culture rather than inherent and naturally selected personal traits. Much like the objective tone Trollope adopted in *North America*, the narrator attributes this exchange to differences in national customs: "American women are taught by the habits of their country to think that men should give way to them more absolutely than is in accordance with the practices of life in Europe" (Trollope, *He Knew* 352; ch. 37). By taking on the language and tone of the ethnographer, the narrator can remove judgment from the sisters' behavior and character. Rather than seeing them as flawed people by nature, the narrator states that their behavior is the result of "practice" and "habit"—and can, therefore, be unlearned. While Trevelyan derides the Spalding sisters as "exigent" and "hard" because "they want the weakness that a woman ought to have," both the narrator and Glascock defend the sisters' behavior

(Trollope, *He Knew* 354; ch. 37). The readers are not meant to accept Trevelyan's judgment, as he is insanely jealous and expects an unreasonable amount of submission from his wife. In contrast, the narrator observes that the American woman's belief that a man's seat is her own is "a little altered now" as "European views on this subject are spreading themselves" (Trollope, *He Knew* 352; ch. 37). As Americans begin traveling more, they fall out of bad American habits and begin to adopt the customs of other countries. Most importantly, Glascock—like the narrator himself—similarly attributes the sisters' behavior to cultural differences. Glascock explains to Trevelyan that "we are accustomed to less self-assertion on the part of women than is customary with [Americans]" (354; ch. 37). Glascock reiterates that the sisters' differences lie in differences of custom.

Although Trollope's novel interprets Caroline's behavior as the result of habit rather than in-born traits, nineteenth-century evolutionary theory often blurred this line. Looking back at evolutionary theory in the nineteenth century, it is easy to divide evolutionary theories into two broad categories—Lamarckian "use inheritance" versus Darwinian random change and selection. Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's *Philosophie Zoologique* (1809) and Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Biology* (1866), for example, similarly argued that a creature's behaviors in life—such as a giraffe repeatedly stretching its neck for foliage—led to evolution, as those habitual actions changed the individual, and those adaptations would then be inherited by offspring. Darwin, by contrast, argued that individuals were born with numerous random variations. If a variation gave an individual an edge in preserving its own life and producing more offspring, then that trait would be inherited by its offspring. However, Spencer did

attribute some evolution to random selected variations, and in *Descent* Darwin attributed some amount of evolutionary change to the process of habit. Both broad categories of evolutionary theories, therefore, attributed evolutionary change to social environment and the habits of life. Although Trollope represents Caroline's social behaviors as learned, thereby hinting that they can be unlearned, we might also read these as habits that through repetition lead to evolutionary change, much like Lamarck's giraffe. Indeed, Trollope himself points to a confusion of how American character and body are formed when he asks in *North America* "what circumstances of blood or food, of early habit or subsequent education, have created for the latter-day American his present physiognomy?" (187; ch. 14). If the social environment of America encourages boldness in women, then American women might have evolved those traits over time such that behavior becomes inherent in their genetic makeup. In either case, natural selection has evolved strong, intelligent, and independent women like Caroline so that they can survive the American environment, but they are less ideal according to Victorian gender standards.

Indeed, Darwin himself hypothesizes that education might be used to create women who more closely resemble men. Darwin, when examining the differences between the sexes, argues that males are stronger because they must compete for resources and mates. As the stronger and more intelligent members of the species, men will be able to survive longer and produce more children. In this way, males have been naturally selected and sexually selected for strength and intelligence and have therefore become stronger and more intelligent than women. In reasoning how the perceived gap of

physical strength, boldness, and intelligence between the sexes should be narrowed, Darwin claims that

> In order that woman should reach the same standard as man, she ought, when nearly adult, to be trained to energy and perseverance, and to have her reason and imagination exercised to the highest point; and then she would probably transmit these qualities chiefly to her adult daughters. All women, however, could not be thus raised, unless during many generations those who excelled in the above robust virtues were married, and produced offspring in larger numbers than other women. (Darwin, *Descent* 630)

Rather than the processes of natural and sexual selection, Darwin focuses on the developmental processes of training and exercise in closing the gap between men and women.[25] Darwin doubts that such development of equal powers would be likely in civilized societies as it would require that the educated women marry and produce more children than other women. Trollope, Burnett, and James's novels, however, demonstrate that since American women undergo training that encourages "energy and perseverance," then American women might pose a threat to male dominance.

Indeed, whether through inherited talent, training, or some combination, Caroline demonstrates that her personality and American traits allow her to exercise control over

[25] Charlotte Perkins Gilman was one author who believed in the necessity of training women to improve the species. In *Women and Economics*, Gilman argued that because women relied on men for survival, the "economic environment" adapted women to please men. Once society educated women and encouraged them to earn their own living, women's bodies and intellect would strengthen, which would in turn strengthen the species.

her male companions, particularly Glascock. Looking on a scene where Glascock and the Spaldings stop together during their travels, the narrator comically observes that

> the ladies had learned to regard at any rate Mr. Glascock as their own property, and received his services, graciously indeed, but quite as a matter of course. When he was sent from their peculiar corner of the big, dirty refreshment room to the supper-table to fetch an apple, and then desired to change it because the one which he had brought was spotted, he rather liked it. (359; ch. 37)

Caroline and her sister's American traits lead to a role reversal in which Glascock is waiting on them and seeing to their needs rather than the other way around. The comedy in this scene operates through several power reversals: youth managing an elder, woman commanding man, middle class served by aristocrat, and former colonies controlling the English. Although we can separate the different aspects of reversal, these traits are fused together in the bodies of the individual characters. The English are ruled by the aristocracy, a country of power for hundreds of years, and this power is consolidated through patriarchy and primogeniture. America, on the other hand, is a young republican country that, the novel takes pains to point out, is notable for its gender politics. While Caroline's traits might be understood through their evolutionary nature, here we can see the possible revolutionary potential inherent in these traits. That is, rather than seeing how slow changes in individuals accumulate into societal changes, Glascock and Spalding's relationship represents a fundamental change in power relationships between genders, classes, and nations. While the narrator throughout tries to treat the Glascock-Spalding romance—and Glascock in general—with a touch of comedy, the novel demonstrates that these comedic elements threaten the stability of social order. Indeed, as

we see in the main plot of the text, marriages in which wives disobey their husbands and husbands fail to control their wives lead to social chaos. Friends, family, and outsiders are dragged into the Trevelyans' marriage as each partner seeks to control the other, and both wrestle for control of their child.

However minor, the scene in the railcar demonstrates one of Trollope's primary concerns about American women. While Glascock demonstrates his good breeding by chivalrously attending to the ladies' needs, the American ladies take his kindness almost too far. Trollope had previously observed that while American men have learned how to be chivalrous, some American women have not learned to accept the chivalry of men. In *North America*, Trollope argues that while American women have "acquired a sufficient perception of the privileges which chivalry gives them, but no perception of that return which chivalry demands from them. Women of the class to which I allude are always talking of their rights, but seem to have a most indifferent idea of their duties" (191; ch. 14). Caroline and her sister do not entirely cross the line into behaving badly as they "graciously" accept Glascock's service, but the novel also points out that they treat his kindnesses as "a matter of course." That is, the American women feel entitled to his courtesies. So while sending him to "fetch an apple" might be acceptable behavior on the ladies' part, sending him back because the one he brought was marred is not.

Caroline is American enough—blunt and forceful—that in a moment of comedic mistaken identity, she is confused with Wallachia Petrie, Caroline's friend, and fellow American. When Nora Rowley's parents hear that Glascock has become engaged to the older Spalding sister, they believe he is engaged to Petrie. The humor in the situation stems from the fact that they believe Glascock, an English peer, has engaged himself to

an American poetess and an outspoken advocate for women's rights. Petrie is one of "many such [women] in America" who takes "pride in a certain antagonism to men in general, and who are anxious to shew the world that they can get on very well without male assistance" (717; ch. 77). And who the narrator wishes "is that they will be cured at last by a husband and half-a-dozen children" (717; ch. 77). The comedy is heightened because Petrie terrifies Glascock so much that he had decided he could not marry Caroline because it would bring him into contact with Petrie. Glascock ruminates

> There were certain forms of the American female so dreadful that no wise man would willfully come in contact with them. Miss Petrie's ferocity was distressing to him, but her eloquence and enthusiasm were worse even than her ferocity. The personal incivility of which she had been guilty in calling him a withered grass was distasteful to him, as being opposed to his ideas of the customs of society. (*He Knew* 530; ch. 56)

And while it is funny that the Rowleys confuse these two women, their confusion is not without its basis. Glascock might believe Petrie uncivil and distasteful for calling him "withered grass," but not two pages later Caroline herself disparages Glascock's "gouty toes." While Petrie's comment is more disparaging and Caroline's more teasing, they are both critical of England and its decaying aristocracy.

In numerous texts throughout the period, American women transgress the boundaries of Victorian gender roles.[26] In texts engaging in evolutionary discussion, the

[26] As Kate Flint has pointed out, the "American Girl" in late nineteenth-century fiction resembles the New Woman in her strength of mind and body.

American environment, as a selector and as a culture, evolves women that are believed to be stronger physically and/or mentally from British women. While these characteristics might better enable them to survive in the wilderness, it does not always make them more desirable as mates. In numerous transatlantic stories, the past actions of American women follow them across the Atlantic, casting a shadow on their marital ambitions. In Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*, for example (a text I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 4), Winifred Hurtle has survived the American West, and violent American men, by breaking social codes—defending herself with a gun and divorcing her husband. While her aggression enables her to survive, these same traits ultimately make her unsuitable as Paul Montague's wife. In James's short story "The Siege of London," the bold and aggressive Mrs. Headway can select several mates and then discard them when they are no longer useful to her social ambitions. For both these women, their unknown status is demonstrated in the slippery use of the term "widow," as neither is definitively either divorced or widowed. The "widow" Mrs. Headway must hide her many past marriages to enter British society and marry Sir Arthur Demesne. As I will discuss in Chapter 3, Frances Hodgson Burnett's American heroine Bettina Vanderpoel's inherits business acumen from at least one female progenitor, whose husband married her for her financial sagacity. However, these traits also call into question her racial purity and class standing. In these texts, English fears of racial decline can be soothed with the influx of new American blood through marriages to energetic American women. Simultaneously, however, such marriages arouse fear of bloodlines polluted by half-civilized and low-class American women, calling into question whether an American woman can be considered a lady.

Trollope's novel takes great pains, however, to show that while Caroline is different from her British counterpart she is "not the less manifestly a lady." One way that Caroline demonstrates her "lady"-like qualities is that she behaves with sexual passivity, unlike some other women in the novel who attempt to hunt husbands. The French sisters, for example, demonstrate all the "odious" behaviors of girls who "manifestly expressed desire to catch a fish." The girls use their bodies to appeal to prospective suitors in ways that violate Victorian standards of female modesty; their habits resemble the practices of "savage" women who decorate themselves in order to lure a mate. While Trollope recognizes that people, like birds, feel "the short-lived pressure of the plumage," he condemns women who purposefully try to attract mates. When we are first introduced to the Frenches, the narrator points out that they "had the reputation of hunting unmarried clergymen in couples" (141; ch. 15). Their hunting lures are naked shoulders—upon invited to tea at the Frenches', one woman accepts, claiming that "their naked shoulders don't hurt me [...] I'm not a young man. I don't care what they do to themselves" (333; ch. 35)—and false hair. Darwin believes that human hair is a secondary sexual characteristic and that "long tresses are now and were formerly much admired" (*Descent* 673). Darwin notes that both men and women grow out their hair until it reaches the ground, the Papuan's comb their hair into "'a compact frizzled mop,'" and some people shave their heads (*Descent* 641). When humans lack beautiful features naturally, he observes, they will often artificially ornament ourselves. And indeed, Darwin points out that both savage and civilized women "[deck] their heads with borrowed plumes," and "savages at the present day everywhere deck themselves with plumes, necklaces, armlets, earrings, &c." (*Descent* 640). The more savage the tribe, the

more hideous the ornamentation such that ornamentation crosses the line into "mutilation"—knocked out teeth, piercings and gashes on the face, and inserts that push the lips out beyond the nose (*Descent* 642). The French sisters, like Darwin's savages, seek to enhance their beauty through hideous ornamentation.

While the French sisters believe that they are the height of fashion and take pride in their false hair, the other villagers see them as immodest and forward. Although her suitor, Mr. Gibson, asks her to remove her chignon, Arabella French believed that "it divested her of that dowdiness which she feared above all things, and enabled her to hold her own among other young women, without feeling that she was absolutely destitute of attraction" (449; ch. 47). Further, Arabella sees that "It was natural enough that he shouldn't want her. She knew herself to be a poor, thin, vapid, tawdry creature with nothing to recommend her to any man except a sort of second-rate, provincial town fashion which […] she attributed in a great degree to the thing she carried on her head" (446; ch. 47). In lieu of natural plumage, Arabella uses the chignon to lure her prospective mate, but in practice, it does the exact opposite. Mr. Gibson becomes terrified of "the thing at the back of her head," "an abortion" that "grew bigger and bigger, more shapeless, monstrous, absurd, and abominable" the more he thought about it (443; ch. 47). Rather than attracting a mate, Arabella's "plumage" scares Gibson away.

Caroline, by contrast, demonstrates the sexual modesty of a lady: she does not hunt or try to lure a man. Glascock reminisces that he has met his own share of women like the French sisters and had "been angled for as a fish" by both women and their mothers, and he appreciates that Caroline Spalding did not hunt husbands (528; ch. 56). Intriguingly, by examining the novel's interpretation of husband-hunting women, we can

see competing discourses on the nature of sexual women. On the one hand, Trollope's description of the French sisters' borrowed plumage signals that they decorate themselves like "savage" women, and therefore women who hunt husbands are less evolved and less civilized. On the other hand, Glascock attributes husband-hunting to the "old vices of an aristocracy," which would have been sorely added to "young republican sins" if Caroline had showed herself as a husband hunter (531; ch. 56). In this moment, the novel describes attention to appearance and sexual vices as the result of over-civilization, rather than a sign of barbarism. As Ruth Yeazell has pointed out, English novels often contrast the licentious French girl who marries for money with the modest English girl who marries for love (40). These "fictions of modesty" are so prevalent in English fiction that they are written into the science of the period without thought: women are naturally more modest, and therefore more discriminating than their male counterparts (223). By showing that Caroline behaves with sexual modesty, Trollope aligns the American Caroline more closely with modest English ladies than with lustier European women such as the "French" sisters. Therefore, Caroline demonstrates her fitness because she is modest and sexually passive, despite her dominance in other arenas.

One way the text demonstrates Caroline's good breeding is through her speech. In scientific thought, speech had long been considered a trait that separated humans from animals. Further, civilized humans could be separated from barbaric ones by their speech patterns. Darwin observed that primates possessed the ability to use music and song to attract mates; this later developed into speech, such that "the impassioned orator, bard, or musician […] little suspects that he uses the same means by which his half-human ancestors long ago aroused each other's ardent passions, during their courtship and

rivalry" (*Descent* 639). Further noting that women have "sweeter voices then men," Darwin posits that women may have first evolved musical abilities to attract a mate (*Descent* 639).

Trollope appears to engage this issue when describing the voices of the American women. Miss Petrie, the staunch American feminist, despairs that the sisters "debased their voices, and taught themselves the puling British mode of speech" that she hears as "effeminate, vapid, useless, unpersuasive, unmusical,—and English" (713; ch. 76). The comedy here works through the tension between Petrie's interpretation and the narrator's. By having Petrie point out the "problems" with the English mode of speaking, the narrator can reveal the real problems of American speech. Petrie is too manly, too challenging, too colorful in her language—to the point of breaking the codes of civilized conduct—and she and Caroline's uncle are persuasive because they browbeat people into agreeing with them, Glascock included. Petrie's idea of American speech as musical contrasts with that of the narrator's, who comments that the American desire "to express themselves with self-assertion" resulted in a "nasal twang" that the reader can try for himself if he "go into his closet and talk through his nose for awhile with steady attention to the effect which his own voice will have" (716, 527, 713).[27] The narrator wants us to see his truth, which is that English speech is musical and demonstrates high culture and true civilization.

[27] Shirley Letwin similarly points out that despite being descended from a dock worker, the American Isabel Boncassen in Trollope's *The Duke's Children* demonstrates that she is a lady because she lacks a twang (106).

The problem with accepting the narrator's interpretation is that Glascock embodies many of the traits that Petrie uses to describe English speech. Glascock's speech demonstrates his refinement, but he is also portrayed as weak and effeminate. Glascock is a refined English gentleman and represents the highest product of English civilization. But his refinement weakens him as he repeatedly fails to defend against Miss Petrie's and Caroline's verbal sparring, and he resorts to retreating or avoiding these confrontations altogether. Due to his weakness, Glascock fails to persuade Nora to marry him and struggles to successfully complete his courtship of Caroline. Nora instead chooses Hugh Stanbury. While Stanbury may not care about his courtly behavior as much as Glascock, he better demonstrates his manliness because he is younger, pursues a profession, and succeeds at it. And even with Caroline, who does accept his proposal, he struggles to get her to marry him because she grows concerned that he will not be strong enough to face his family and society's objections to his marrying an American woman. Glascock's civilized speech, therefore, reflects larger concerns as to whether civilized gentlemen can also be manly.

In its representations of Caroline Spalding and Charles Glascock, Trollope's novel is participating in a larger conversation concerning evolved national characters, one that was intertwined with the relative statuses of women in these two nations. George Stocking has pointed out that evolutionary frameworks proposed by nineteenth-century anthropologists such as John Lubbock, Edward B. Tylor, and John McLennan worked to describe how Europeans in general, and the English in particular, became the most evolved and civilized race (172–173). However, evolutionists such as Darwin, Huxley, and Galton saw Americans as newly evolved—a view that complicated evolutionary

schemes seeking to confirm British ascendancy. Both scientific and literary texts demonstrate an anxiety that Americans will soon overpower the English, whether it's through economic supremacy in the marketplace or the struggle who wears the pants in transnational courtships. Evolutionary processes, therefore, are an open plot that subvert social hierarchies.

Charles Glascock and England's "Gouty Toes"

The more central plot of sexual selection would perhaps be best demonstrated by Nora's comparison of her two suitors. In her plot line, the penniless Nora must choose between the rich and well-positioned (but old) Glascock and the younger but professional Hugh Stanbury. In a true act of Darwinian selection, Nora carefully weighs their respective attractions—physical, mental, and material—and finally, chooses to follow her heart (and her hormones) to marry Stanbury. Nora's judgments concerning Glascock's merits illuminate the text's ambivalence about Glascock as suitor: he is both a good marriage prospect and problematic one, a gentleman but not manly. During their courtship, the novel appears to endorse the match between Caroline and Glascock because Caroline possesses energy, strength, and competitiveness that Glascock lacks. However, in endorsing their match, the novel struggles to resolve their courtship in marriage.

If Caroline Spalding embodies American evolutionary traits, then Charles Glascock represents the traditional landed classes of England and the evolved English character. Charles Glascock is a good marriage prospect because he "was a good-looking man, just under forty, in Parliament, heir to a peerage, and known to be well off in respect to income" (23; ch. 3). Indeed, Glascock inherits the title Lord Peterborough

during the novel, thereby further demonstrating his suitability as a husband and a mate. As a husband, he can protect and provide for his wife through his inherited wealth and position, but he is also a good mate because he has valuable traits that he can pass on to offspring. Along with his good looks, he is also "good-tempered" and "reasonable" (119; ch. 13).

Both his physical appearance and his clothing demonstrate Glascock's fitness. When reasoning why she preferred Hugh Stanbury to Mr. Glascock, Nora explains that "it was not that he was the handsomer man, for he was by no means handsome, nor was he the bigger man, for Mr. Glascock was six feet tall; nor was he better dressed, for Stanbury was untidy rather than otherwise in his outward person. Nor had he any air of fashion or special grace to recommend him, for he was undoubtedly an awkward-mannered man" (35; ch. 4). Although Nora does not love him, she does recognize Glascock's physical superiority to Stanbury. Glascock is physically bigger and more handsome and therefore might be considered physically the more attractive of the two. Through contrast with Stanbury's awkwardness, we can assume that Glascock is graceful and well-mannered, the epitome of a refined aristocratic gentleman.

Caroline prefers Glascock, with his aristocratic manners and "breeding," to her fellow countrymen. In contrasting Glascock with American men, Caroline reflects

> She could perceive that he had a charm of manner which her countrymen lacked. He had read, perhaps, less than her uncle;—knew, perhaps, less than most of those men with whom she had been wont to associate in her own city life at home;—was not braver, or more virtuous, or more self-denying than they; but there was a softness and an ease in his manner which was palatable to her, and an

> absence of that too visible effort of the intellect which is so apt to mark and mar the conversation of Americans. (525; ch. 56)

Like the other unmarried people in the novel, Caroline's observation, comparing her potential suitors, demonstrates the process of sexual selection in action. Caroline prefers Glascock because of his civilized bearing, the ease, and charm that her fellow Americans lack.

Throughout his lovemaking, he demonstrates his fitness by speaking. Indeed, one of the few times Glascock appears manly is when Nora describes his speech. Nora admits "there was a manliness in his telling her so in the plainest words that pleased her much" (124; ch. 13). As Tosh argues, "manly men" followed the promptings of his inner self," and presented those thoughts and feelings directly and sincerely in speech (88).[28] Even though she was in love with Stanbury, Nora is nearly won over by Glascock's speech:

> There was a clearness of expression in this, and a downright surrender of himself, which so flattered her and so fluttered her that she was almost reduced to the giving of herself up because she could not reply to such an appeal in language less courteous than that of agreement. (124; ch. 13)

[28] Tosh points to a new division in masculinity that identified the polite manners of a gentleman as artifice. Unlike gentlemen, Victorian manly men are prompted by the inner self to speak the plain truth. Letwin has argued, however, that Trollope himself did not subscribe to the belief that "the relation between manners and morals is not that of appearance and reality" (111). Although this view may be true in Trollope's works as a whole, Trollope does seem to point to a dichotomy between the artificial gentlemanly behaviors of Glascock and the more honest and direct (and therefore manlier) behavior of Stanbury.

Nora does not desire him in part because she believes that she cannot lean on him or worship him, but his ability to "surrender" himself appears to be a mark of strength through the ability to show vulnerability. His willingness to bare his feelings nearly wins her over, flattering her pride but also raising her desire such that she is "fluttered" by his speech.

However, while Glascock does demonstrate some qualities of gentlemanliness, these qualities are undermined by his ambiguous manliness. Glascock's problem is that he is too civilized and behaves too chivalrously. Glascock resembles those American gentlemen, "early versions of the Darwinian male," who, Bender observes, were "physically, mentally, and financially strong (and in this way good candidates for selection)," but so civilized that "they were virtually incapable of physical violence or sexual passion" (25). As Nora notes above, she sees Glascock's chivalrous behavior as a "surrender of himself." While chivalry is often associated with manliness, the novel also points to a shifting perception that politeness can be emasculating. Glascock behaves chivalrously toward the Spalding sisters, but the sisters take it too far and turn Glascock into their servant. In this scene at the railway, we can see that Glascock is playing at adopting American gender roles. When Trevelyan comments that he does not like American women because "they are exigeant" and "so hard" that "they want the weakness that a woman ought to have," Glascock replies that this view is due to Trevelyan's "insular prejudice" for English women.

'We are accustomed to less self-assertion on the part of women than is customary with them. We prefer women to rule us by seeming to yield. In the States, as I take it, the women never yield, and the men have to fight their own battles with other tactics.'

'I don't know what their tactics are.'

'They keep their distance. The men live much by themselves, as though they knew they would not have a chance in the presence of their wives and daughters. Nevertheless, they don't manage these things badly. You very rarely hear of an American being separated from his wife.' (354; ch. 37)

Glascock acknowledges a different gender dynamic in America. In England, Glascock states that women dominate men by "seeming to yield," suggesting that through the polite behavior of both men and women, women rule men even though they appear to be the weaker sex. By contrast, in America women and men "fight" each other, and the women are so formidable that the men hide from them. Glascock embraces the novelty of adopting an American man's gender role. Instead of separating himself from bossy American women, Glascock enjoys the opportunity of playacting as the henpecked American man. However, the novel cannot allow this playacting to become a fully realized relationship pattern, for to do so would be to allow England to become like America—a place where the women misbehave and demand their "rights" and men flee their homes to avoid conflict. In America, the ladies become merely women because they fail to accept chivalry from men, and chivalrous behavior taken to an extreme threatens to emasculate American men.

Glascock verges on becoming a man emasculated by his own chivalry.[29] We can also relate Glascock to one of the male character types—the "gentleman who is not a

[29] In *New Men in Trollope's Novels*, Margaret Markwick argues that while Trollope appears to outwardly conform to Victorian ideals of patriarchy, the new men in his novels demonstrate a more complicated

man"—that Hyson Cooper studies in Trollope's novels. Cooper defines the "gentleman who is not a man" as "an aristocrat with little left of noble qualities beyond his title and its attendant privileges, and an old-fashioned refinement of manner. He has a misguided sense of duty, no work ethic, no chivalry,—in other words, no manliness" (127). However, by this definition, Glascock would be the ideal of manliness because he has a sense of duty, works for the good of his country, and behaves chivalrously. However, Glascock is a gentleman who is not a man *because* he behaves chivalrously. As Tosh points out, politeness and its connections to chivalry were increasingly connected to gentlemanly behavior throughout the Victorian period rather than manly behavior. "Manliness and gentlemanliness," Tosh argues, "were sharply distinguished in the early and mid-Victorian period, and that much of this distinction turned on their relation to politeness" (86). Trollope seems to acknowledge this changing aesthetic as he notes the problems with chivalry in the U.S. In *North America*, Trollope praises American men that "in that country material well-being and education are more extended than with us; and that, therefore, men there have learned to be chivalrous who with us have hardly progressed so far" (191; ch. 14). However, Trollope notes "that chivalry had been carried too far" because women expect too much (261; ch. 18). When chivalry is carried too far, ladies become mere "women" and gentlemen become doormats. While earlier definitions of manliness rested on chivalrous behavior associated with the aristocracy, manliness became increasingly identified with work and the middle classes.

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relationship with masculinity. Although Marwick does not discuss Glascock, she does examine Trevelyan and Stanbury.

Through the midcentury and beyond, Tosh argues manliness was characterized by both physical and moral qualities: the "moral qualities" of "decisiveness, courage, and endurance" enabled men to exert his physical virtues "energy, virility, strength—all the attributes which equipped a man to place his physical stamp on the world" (87). As Tosh points out, "Victorian manliness was closely identified with work," and therefore increasingly identified with the middle classes (92). Darwin's definition reflects these attitudes toward work and manliness as he argues that

> We may conclude that the greater size, strength, courage, pugnacity, and energy of man, in comparison with woman, were acquired […] chiefly through the contests of rival males for the possession of females. The greater intellectual vigour and power of invention in man is probably due to natural selection, combined with the inherited effects of habit, for the most able men will have succeeded best in defending and providing for themselves and for their wives and offspring. (*Descent* 674)

Men are stronger, more energetic, antagonistic, and intelligent than women—qualities that allow them to successfully compete—whether it be for mates or resources in the marketplace. Competitiveness, therefore, is not only a key quality for the Darwinian male, one that separates him from the female but was also connected to specifically working and middle-class men who had to earn their livelihood.

As an aristocrat, Glascock has never had to physically overpower or outsmart others to earn his bread. As Tosh points out "manliness had to be earned, by mastering the circumstances of life"; with few challenges in his circumstances, Glascock has had little opportunity to "earn" his manliness (86). Indeed, gentlemen may have been looked

down on as suitors because their fortune might indicate a lack of "energy" or "self-reliance" (93). When Lady Milborough, an elderly friend of Nora's family, reflects on Glascock's many good qualities, they are somewhat undermined by his less-than-manly attributes:

> Mr. Glascock was the heir to a peer, was the heir to a rich peer, was the heir to a very, very old peer. He was in Parliament. The world spoke well of him. He was not, so to say, by any means an old man himself. He was good-tempered, reasonable, easily led, and yet by no means despicable. On all subjects connected with land, he held an opinion that was very much respected and was supposed to be a thoroughly good specimen of an upper-class Englishman. Here was a suitor! (119; ch. 13)

Mr. Glascock's main attractions as a suitor come from his status as the first son of a rich peer on his death bed, as Lady Milborough continually reminds herself through her repetition of "heir" and "peer." But in reminding us that Glascock is an heir, she also reminds us that Glascock's fortune was not earned by "mastering the circumstances" of his life. And of this class, he is a "good specimen": he is well respected and holds beliefs that are in line with his position and wealth. But these good qualities are undermined in part by his weakness. He is "easily led," and defined partly through the negative, "by no means despicable."

In this context, it is perhaps appropriate that despite his gentlemanly qualities, Trollope positions Glascock as the butt of numerous jokes throughout the novel. Glascock is at one point confused with Colonel Osbourne, the aged dandy and would-be lover of Mrs. Trevelyan. Colonel Osbourne is a friend of Mrs. Trevelyan's father. He frequently visits

Mrs. Trevelyan, as he enjoys the company of young, beautiful women. Despite his age (he has a "half century of years" [11, ch. 1], old enough to be Emily's father) and baldness, Colonel Osbourne is a bit of a dandy. He "dressed well, and was clearly determined to make the most he could of what remained to him of the advantages of youth" by careful attention to his clothes and riding nice horses (5; ch. 1). Like Glascock, Colonel Osbourne travels to Nuncombe Putney to visit the Rowley sisters—but at least Osbourne does not see himself as a serious suitor to someone half his age, recognizing that he is too old to "be the hero of such a romance" (187; ch. 20).

When Mrs. Trevelyan and her sister Nora move in with Mrs. Stanbury and her daughter Priscilla, the prying eyes of Nuncombe Putney await the arrival of Colonel Osbourne. Significantly, however, the first gentleman to visit the sisters is Mr. Glascock, who comes to propose to Nora. When the town gossips observe Glascock's visit, they assume that he is Colonel Osbourne, since he roughly fits the description of Mrs. Trevelyan's supposed lover. This mistaken identity is enforced by the fact that Trollope allows his readers to mistake the two men as well. When Glascock travels to Nuncombe Putney, we read first of the villagers who see a "portly, middle-aged man" going to visit the sisters; like the villagers, we might assume that it is Colonel Osbourne. But Colonel Osbourne is only seen as a plausible suitor to the young and lovely Emily Trevelyan by her deranged husband, Louis Trevelyan. To all the credible characters and the narrator, the possibility that the beautiful and honorable Mrs. Trevelyan could be interested in the old dandy is ludicrous. When Glascock is mistaken for Osbourne, we are led to see Glascock's courtship of Nora in a similar light. Despite his wealth and position, Glascock is unfit for Nora in part because of his age. The best mates are those who are strong and

vigorous and therefore young enough to battle. But Glascock's age is, as we have seen, not the only problem; rather, his age—like his chivalry and his lack of competition—undermines his strength, making him appear unmanly.

Glascock's aged and weak character reflects a larger discussion concerning the evolution of the English "race" and the future of England in the nineteenth century. In "On Darwinism and National Life," Huxley looks to England's physical landscape to explain its rise to power as a nation and claims that the "natural conditions favourable to the growth of our commercial and manufacturing energy," such as coastlines, natural harbors, and iron ore near coal deposits, have led to the development of "a special adaptability to commercial pursuits" (183). Their ability to industrialize the nation is a direct reflection of the "natural" superiority and advanced evolutionary state of the English, he argues, just as the agricultural nation of the Irish reflects (in Huxley's view) that peoples' weakness and inferiority. However, Huxley admits that the advent of steam power has negated the advantages of their coasts, and iron and coal are now mined around the world. "Our strength in commerce," Huxley claims, "now rests almost exclusively on the national character which our history has evolved" (183). Huxley implies that the national identity has grown stagnant: the character has "evolved" in the past tense, but is not presently evolving since the environment, which gave the English an evolutionary edge, has ceased to benefit them in the age of steam. Glascock's bald patch and gouty toes embody these fears of national decay.

When Glascock asks Nora to marry him, she recognizes that while he is handsome, kind, and can provide her with wealth and social position, he is not the type of man she had hoped to marry. Nora feels "there was something within her bosom which

made her long for a better thing than this. She had dreamed, if she had not thought, of being able to worship a man; but she could hardly worship Mr. Glascock" (123; ch. 13). She also goes on lament his lack of strength. If she chose to marry him, he could not be "her staff, her prop, her support, her wall of comfort and protection," and instead she would need to "stand a good deal by her own strength, and live without that comfortable leaning" (123; ch. 13). From this passage, we can see that Nora refuses Glascock because she desires a husband who can take on a more traditional male gender role and offer her strength and protection. Caroline is a better choice for Glascock because her American character gives her enough strength that she can support Glascock.

Trollope's novel suggests that no individual can be fully understood as "fit" without looking at his or her mate. That is, human sexual selection is subjective. Darwin saw animals as breeding like with like, strong males with vigorous females. For example, Darwin states that "the strongest and most vigorous men—those who could best defend and hunt for their families […]—would succeed in rearing a greater than average number of offspring than the weaker and poorer members of the same tribes. There can, also, be no doubt that such men would generally be able to select the more attractive women" (*Descent* 663). The novel, on the other hand, shows characters who can only fully bond with humans unlike themselves. Caroline Spalding, when concerned over her future marriage to Mr. Glascock, contends that "in marriage, like should go to like" (762; ch. 81). But if like married like, then English Nora would have married Mr. Glascock, which would have replicated the English social system and contributed to national decay. When comparing what Nora and Caroline Spalding would be like in the role of Lady Peterborough, Nora claims that

> [Caroline] looks like a peeress, and bears her honours grandly, but they will never harden her. I, too, could have been magnificent with fine feathers. Most birds are equal to so much as that. I fancy that I could have looked the part of the fine English lady, and could have patronized clergymen's wives in the country, could have held my own among my peers in London, and could have kept Mrs. Crutch in order; but it would have hardened me, and I should have learned to think that to be a lady of fashion was everything. (909; ch. 96)

It is just because Caroline, with her republican values, does not care for titles that she is a better fit for Glascock than Nora. In marrying Glascock, Nora would have continued the English tradition of marrying for titles and station rather than producing anything new. The spirited Caroline complements the "not impassioned" and somewhat "lethargic" Glascock (759), and for this reason, she is "just the girl that is fit for him" (727). By coupling a comedic courtship with the evolutionary language of natural and sexual selection, *He Knew He Was Right* sets the reader up for major changes in power dynamics, both within the Spalding-Glascock marriage and, by extension, the power relations between genders, classes, and nations.

Into the novel's final chapters, *He Knew He Was Right* appears to set up an open narrative between Caroline Spalding and Charles Glascock, where they will marry but Caroline will take on the dominant role in their relationship and thereby symbolically transform gendered, class, and national power relations. However, the non-traditional power relations between Caroline and Glascock stymie their courtship. Indeed, in a scene that closely precedes the announcement of their engagement, we are left with the impression that their courtship might fail. Although Glascock is prepared to propose, he

is stalled by Caroline's argument that marriages between England and America are unwise. Caroline tells Glascock that "like should pair with like" and that "the idiosyncrasies of you and of us are so radically different, that we cannot be made to amalgamate and sympathise with each other thoroughly" (532; ch. 56). This meeting between the two lovers and their argument supports Caroline's position that "we never meet you without treading on your gouty toes" (532; ch. 56). Glascock admits to Caroline that "I have set my heart fast on marrying an American wife," a general admission that seems to precede a more specific declaration of his intentions (534; ch. 56). But this argument temporarily squashes Glascock's plan for proposing because "the manner in which she had answered" his admission was "of a nature to stop any further speech of the same kind. Had she been gentle with him, then he would certainly have told her that she was the American woman whom he desired to take with him to his home in England" (534; ch. 56). Caroline's American mannerisms lead her to speak her mind, but in this moment, they impede the process of sexual selection. While an American man might have had the forthrightness to challenge Caroline, her aggression fights off the more "civilized"—and passive—Glascock.

This conflict remains unresolved in the novel. While we are told of Glascock's proposal to Caroline, the novel omits the proposal scene, unlike every other proposal that takes place in the novel. This omission seems appropriate since, after all, Glascock has been consistently indecisive as to whether he will marry Caroline. When alone, he decides that he should, but he is unable to screw up his courage enough to ask her. And he is repeatedly fended off (however unintentionally) by the verbal aggressions of Caroline's uncle, of Wallachia Petrie, and of Caroline herself. Perhaps Trollope struggled

to imagine a scene in which the passive Glascock could propose to Caroline like a true Victorian gentleman because the scene would so contradict the multi-leveled power inversions of age, gender, class, and nation represented by their courtship.

"In My Own House I am Master": Reverting to the Marriage Plot

In the last chapter, the novel resolves the national conflict and subversion of gender roles demonstrated in the Glascock-Spalding romance by ultimately resorting to more traditional gender roles within their courtship plot. At first, Caroline tries to take the upper hand and do what she believes is right by breaking her engagement. Having engaged herself to Glascock, Caroline then balks at the thought of the harm she could cause him socially if he decides to marry an American. Caroline believes that it is her duty to protect him from himself, as "he was perhaps too easy,—that he was a man as to whom it was necessary that they who loved him should see that he was not led away by weakness into folly" (757; ch. 81). As she had since she first met him, Caroline takes the initiative to command "easy" and "weak" Glascock and force him to do what she think is best. Caroline's dominance does not just threaten to rearrange traditional power structures but to symbolically break them all together by removing herself from marriage.

In the face of this potential for disruption, the novel quickly reverts to traditional power structures—and traditional social relations—via the marriage plot. When Caroline tries to break their engagement, Glascock takes a stand and refuses. He ignores her objections and asserts—contrary to much of what we have seen in the novel regarding his potential weakness—that "in my own house I am master" (764; ch. 81). Despite the objections Caroline raises, Glascock stands his ground and refuses to release her. In a

reversal of their earlier positions, Glascock subdues Caroline, forcing her to submit to his judgment and will.

> She felt that he was altogether too strong for her,—that she has mistaken his character in supposing that she could be more firm than he. He was so strong that he treated her almost as a child;—and yet she loved him infinitely the better for so treating her. (765; ch. 81)

Although the Glascock-Spalding pair thus contains the seeds of a revolutionary pairing, one in which power relations between the sexes are reversed, Trollope forces his characters through this scene to assume the more traditional gender roles of dominant husband and submissive wife—with the ancillary themes of age subduing youth, aristocracy subjugating the middle class, and England conquering America.

Indeed, the few traits which make Caroline particularly American are lost—or driven beneath the surface—when she marries. Caroline fully submits; in recounting the moment of their engagement to Nora, she recalls that "I promised to be a good girl […] and not to pretend to have an opinion of my own ever again" (767; ch. 81). Caroline continues that Glascock "told me how to behave;—just as you would do a little girl. It's all over now, of course; and if there be a mistake, it is his fault. I feel that all responsibility is gone from myself and that for all the rest of my life I have to do just what he tells me" (767; ch. 81). In Caroline's declaration that "it's all over now," she is not only referring to her rebellion against their engagement, but also the end of her own agency, her desire to act on her own convictions of what she believed to be right. And although "she was happy in her ill success" at breaking their engagement, she also feels "she was somewhat lowered in her own esteem" (766; ch. 81).

As Christopher Herbert has observed, in this shift Glascock comes to bear some resemblance to the tyrannical Trevelyan himself. Caroline's total submission positions Glascock as "patriarchal tyrant" disguised as a "companionate young lover" who "almost unconsciously" take his "broad masculine authority for granted" (Herbert 465–6). Trollope, therefore, resolves the power inversions by reverting to a traditional patriarchal and aristocratic power structure. If we return to Glascock's earlier discussion with Trevelyan on American and British gender roles, when Glascock claimed that "we prefer women to rule us by seeming to yield" (354; ch. 57), we might read Caroline's submission as a manifestation of her simply "seeming to yield." However, that would ignore the fact that Caroline *does* submit to his desire to marry. In addition, Glascock's statement fundamentally misrepresents English gendered power relations. This moment between Trevelyan and Glascock represents a moment of shared understanding. Glascock can jokingly claim that women rule men because he is fully confident in his own power and station. Compared to other men, he may be weak. But even a weak man, Trollope shows, can control a strong woman. Glascock can play the easy-going husband because he is fully aware that in his own house he is master: the dominant husband, aristocrat, and British gentleman.

In the end, then, Trollope solves the problem of Glascock's weakness by showing that while Glascock might be weak compared to American men or Stanbury, he is still stronger than a woman—even an American woman. In his courtship of Caroline, after all, Glascock is no longer competing against another man, but with two women. When Glascock refuses to let Caroline break the engagement, he also physically dominates her: "As he stood with his arm round her, she was powerless to contradict him in anything.

She had so far acknowledged this that she no longer struggled with him, but allowed her hand to remain quietly within his" (765; ch. 81). While Caroline may be a strong woman, she is overpowered by Glascock. Further, she asks him "you must be master, I suppose, whether you are right or wrong" (765; ch. 81). Glascock replies, "Why, yes. When he has won the battle, he claims his captive. Now, the truth is this, I have won the battle, and your friend, Miss Petrie, has lost it" (766; ch. 81). In this speech, Glascock positions Petrie as his competitor for Caroline's hand. In defeating Petrie, Glascock also symbolically defeats Caroline's American desire for women's rights. As Petrie laments, "it was to her a thing very terrible that the chosen one of her heart should prefer the career of an English lord's wife to that of an American citizeness, with all manner of capability for female voting, female speechmaking, female poetizing, and, perhaps, female political action before her" (768; ch. 81). Here, Petrie recognizes in Caroline's submission something that Nancy Armstrong has called the "model of sexual exchange," in which "the female relinquishes political control to the male in order to acquire exclusive authority over domestic life" (41). In sending Petrie back "alone to the land of liberty," Glascock has overpowered Caroline despite her strength and has severed her from her desire for (women's) liberty, which returns to America with Petrie. Glascock's subjugation of Caroline is out of character considering the way he has behaved throughout the novel. In this moment, Trollope's novel reflects Bender's observation that "particularly at a time when women were struggling for the right to vote and partake in higher education, proprietary males in the genteel society seemed unwilling to grant that women might control the evolutionary plot" (22). Trollope, certainly, is unwilling to

allow Caroline to control the plot, and the disjuncture in Glascock's behavior reveals the writer's and the character's denial of women's power.

However, what we see in *He Knew He Was Right* is that, while sexual selection may propel courtship, the novel's closed marriage plot operates against the open form of the evolutionary plotline to preserve social order. In the broader context of Anglo-American marriages, while the evolutionary construction of national identity threatens social order and stability, the literary courtship plots reestablishes and preserves them. Like Stanbury, Trollope asks in this novel "beyond the short-lived pressure of the plumage which is common to birds and men,—what could love do beyond that?" Stanbury's meditation reflects Bender's observation that "the biological and social analysis of sex [emerged] as a heightened sense of disillusionment about the very meaning of love," one that novelists such as William Dean Howells responded to with "repeated efforts to preserve a sense of true love" (16–17). Trollope's novels demonstrate a similar desire to preserve true love against the "pressure of the plumage" or other forces that might encourage marriage for financial reasons. But perhaps the more pressing question here might be what can literary courtship plots do that evolutionary courtship plots cannot? Evolutionary "pressures"—whether from the French sisters' false hair or Caroline's aggressiveness—destabilize the novel and the society it seeks to represent.[30] Love and, more particularly, the closed marriage plot, can preserve order in both the

[30] Another "evolutionary pressure" that threatens to destabilize the novel would be Nora's pressing need to secure food and shelter, a pressure that the French sisters' share. That pressure urges her to marry Glascock even though she prefers Stanbury. However, an unloving relationship would destabilize the marriage and, by extension, society.

novel and society. The theories of national evolution that create the strong and outspoken Caroline also imply that social relationships are in flux. Women are challenging male domination, while the middle class and America challenge aristocratic and English authority. National evolution is an open plot that threatens the stability of gendered, class and national relationships. The courtship plot that unites Caroline and Glascock through marriage, however, resolves these instabilities by reaffirming the status quo.

CHAPTER III - "HER SPLENDID CHILDREN WILL BE BORN HERE": SEXUAL SELECTION AND THE ANGLO-AMERICAN CHILD IN FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT'S *THE SHUTTLE*

Women have found out so much. Perhaps it is because the heroines of novels have informed them. Heroines and heroes always bring in the new fashions in character. I believe it is years since a heroine "burst into a flood of tears." It has been discovered, really, that nothing is to be gained by it. Whatsoever I find at Stornham Court, I shall neither weep nor be helpless. There is the Atlantic cable, you know. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why heroines have changed. When they could not escape from their persecutors except in a stage coach, and could not send telegrams, they were more or less in everyone's hands. It is different now. (75; ch. 6)

—Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Shuttle*

Although most well known today for her works for children, during her life Frances Hodgson Burnett was also a prolific writer and best seller of adult fiction. Burnett's early realist fiction—*That Lass O'Lowries* (1877) and *Through One Administration* (1881)—garnered critical attention, although her later texts were firmly written within the styles of popular fiction.[31] In recent decades, critics have sought to reclaim women's literature like Burnett's that had been previously dismissed as merely popular fiction. As Terry Doughty, Sally Ledger, Lyn Pykett, Angelique Richardson, and Elaine Showalter have shown, New Women writers at the turn of the century

[31] For further discussion of Burnett's evolution as a writer and critical response to her texts, see Phyllis Bixler's biography *Frances Hodgson Burnett.*

experimented with literary form in an attempt to write women's lives, utilized scientific theories in order to argue for expanded roles for women, and revised literary plots in order to improve the lives of women. Burnett's novel *The Shuttle* could be profitably read within the context of these women writers. By placing Burnett's fiction within the context of scientific theory—particularly degeneration theory—and the New Woman Writers, I will show how Burnett's novel rewrites the marriage plot by demonstrating the importance of women's sexual desire and, in so doing, reveals that the ability for men and women to fluidly move between gender roles is necessary for England's future. To craft an increased role for women outside the home, Burnett deploys the rhetoric of eugenics and racial hierarchy; by expanding roles for women, the Anglo-Saxons will remain the dominant race in international affairs.

The preoccupation with degeneration grew out of the mid-century discourse of evolutionary theory. When Darwin published *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, people immediately began to try to apply the theory to human groups. Darwin's use of the term "race" to describe groups of animals in competition connoted that human races were in similar competition and that the fittest races would conquer less fit races. Darwin, Galton, and other scientists saw society as an environment—akin to natural ecosystems—in which individuals competed for resources. Those who successfully competed were able to produce the most wealth and in so doing rise through the social classes. In 1909, the English scientist Sir William C. Dampier and his wife Catherine published the essay "The Extinction of the Upper Classes," which argues that the aristocracy has been established through natural selection. The aristocracy has "risen by virtue of their qualities" and "remained in the front rank of good citizenship, by reason of the same qualities handed

down by inheritance, and showing themselves in one or other of the ever-spreading lines of descent. By reason of their large numbers, such families have permeated all classes and the nation has been recruited from stocks which have proved themselves worthy to be winners in life's race" (347). One line of social evolutionary thought argued that the "lower" classes were those who were less fit to compete, while the middle and "upper" classes were made of those who had proven themselves most competitive.

Degeneration was a biological discourse on social decline that became increasingly common through the second half of the nineteenth century, emerging in response to the political and social upheaval caused by industrialization and urbanization. Although there were numerous theories as to its causes and effects, scientific writers such as Max Nordau and Cesare Lombroso asserted that products of civilization such as technology and the city appeared to cause physical and moral corruption in the individual and society. As Daniel Pick notes, however, "there was no one stable referent to which degeneration applied"; degeneration included a variety of "concerns and objects […] from cretinism to alcoholism to syphilis, from peasantry to urban working class, bourgeoisie to aristocracy, madness to theft, individual to crowd, anarchism to feminism, population decline to population increase" (15). Burnett's novel reflects this general fear of social decline. Bettina, the novel's American heroine, reflects with disgust on "the corrupt weaklings the strong ones dwindled down to" (Burnett, *Shuttle* 147; ch. 16). She goes on that "there had been many such of late years," and she "had seen them in Paris, in Rome, even in New York. Things with thin or over-thick bodies and receding chins and foreheads; things haunting places of amusement and finding inordinate entertainment in strange jokes and horseplay" (147; ch. 16). Unlike the early Britons who conquered new

lands to gain wealth, modern Europeans, Burnett suggests, are plagued by the degeneration of European aristocrats who squander their wealth on amusement and luxuries. *The Shuttle* focuses on degeneration specifically in the English aristocracy, which is more concerned with amusement than the virtues of work or study.

While Darwin mentioned in *Origin* that humans evolved through the same processes as other organisms, he also recognized differences between human and animal selection processes. In his 1872 text *Descent of Man*, Darwin acknowledges that human institutions and emotions could work against the processes of natural selection.[32] Primogeniture, for example, preserved an individual outside the processes of natural selection. Darwin points out that "preservation of the same line of descent, without any selection" leads to weakness in body and mind (161). Because primogeniture isolated the aristocracy from natural selection, Galton denounced the "the peerage as a disastrous institution, owing to its destructive effects on our valuable races" (*Hereditary Genius* 140).

The problems of isolating the peerage from the action of natural selection could then be either exacerbated or ameliorated through the choice of wife and thus through sexual selection. While Darwin believed that primogeniture works against selection, as it preserves the line of the eldest son whether he is better than his brothers, he argues that the lack of selection was offset by rich first sons being able to "select generation after

[32] Although Darwin did explain the importance of higher human emotions such as empathy, many Victorians saw his theory as advocating unregulated competition without morality. Critics such as Gillian Beer, George Levine, and Sally Shuttleworth have explored realist writers' examination and critique of evolutionary theory as it applied to humans based on this lack of morality.

generation the more beautiful and charming women; and these must generally be healthy in body and active in mind" (*Descent* 161). Darwin goes on to assert that "the evil consequences, such as they may be, of the continued preservation of the same line of descent, without any selection, are checked by men of rank always wishing to increase their wealth and power; and this they effect by marrying heiresses" (*Descent* 161). Even if the aristocracy weakened through lack of natural selection, they continually revitalized their gene pool through sexual selection. The woman's good genes could offset potential weakness from her husband. Darwin and Galton caution, however, that choosing to marry an heiress may exacerbate poor genes. Galton argued that by nature of being an heiress, a woman likely had limited fertility (132). Darwin admits that Galton may be right in saying that heiresses may be infertile, so that selecting these women may further speed the demise of aristocratic lines of descent (*Descent* 161). Galton's and Darwin's logic here depends on the British legal and social systems of primogeniture and the limitations they placed on women's ability to own property. An heiress implied few siblings, and in particular no male siblings, to inherit. Thus, an heiress's family fertility appears compromised and she is likely to have limited fertility.

Among the many reasons cited for declining birth rates in the aristocracy was the increasing number of marriages between English men and American women. Anglo-American marriage were especially problematic because they combined the concerns about heiresses with fears of poor genetic stock and anxiety over declining birth rates due to birth control. Critics of Anglo-American marriages attributed low fertility rates to the "social class, behavior, and national origins" of the American heiresses (187). Indeed, as Maureen E. Montgomery has shown, accounts in periodicals often blamed American

women for low birth rates in Anglo-American marriages, ascribing them to physical unfitness—either because they were heiresses or because they were American—or to deliberate attempts to control offspring through the "American sin" of birth control (187–195). As Montgomery states, "Transatlantic marriages thus became part of an Edwardian obsession with eugenics and a conservative backlash against the emancipation of women which, in Britain, must also be seen with a tradition of anti-American sentiment" (Montgomery 187–188).

The Shuttle contravenes this view by illustrating how an aristocrat marrying an American woman can revitalize England. The American heiress Bettina claims that Americans "were children put out to nurse and breathe new air in the country, and now we are coming home, vigorous, and full-grown" (197; ch. 19). Although they belong to a shared genetic past, American have enough new genetic material that they can reinvigorate England. By positioning American origins in England, rather than a product of racial hybridity, Burnett evades the implication that Anglo-American marriages led to racial mixing. The decline of the peerage, and by extension the nation, was therefore intimately connected to changing gender norms, female sexual agency, and fears of racial contamination through interbreeding.

Both the realist courtship plot and Darwin's sexual selection depended on male desire. According to Darwin's theory of sexual selection, female animals choose their mates. Even though Darwin granted female animals the ability to select their own mates, he denied that power to women. According to Darwin, "Man is more powerful in body and mind than woman, and in the savage state he keeps her in a far more abject state of bondage than does the male of any other animal; therefore it is not surprising that he

should have gained the power of selection" (Darwin, *Descent* 665). Darwin contends, therefore, that women behave as passive sexual objects who beautify themselves in order to attract male attention, while men judge and select them for their physical appearance. As Cynthia Russett and Erika Lorraine Milam have noted, in denying women sexual agency, Darwin naturalized Victorian gender roles. And even as Darwin's theories gave new credence to male-driven courtship plots in literature, courtship plots in realist fiction, Gillian Beer, and George Levine have argued, influenced Darwin's understanding of human evolution.

Literature played an important role in responding to and revising these male-driven plots. George Eliot, for example, feared that theories of sexual selection would naturalize women's sexual passivity and loss of identity in motherhood. Gillian Beer argues that by placing the power of selection with men and reversing the order of animal selection, Darwin "drew attention to the social constituents in human descent as opposed to other species" (199). Literature could be used to influence social norms and behaviors. When examining Eliot's novel *Daniel Deronda*, therefore, Beer wonders "Can fiction restore to the female the power of selection which, Darwin held, men had taken over? And can the woman writing, [sic] shape new future stories?" (203). As Angelique Richardson has shown, however, by the late nineteenth century New Woman writers such as Mona Caird and Sarah Grand argued that allowing men to choose was an artificial social construct that caused racial degeneration. If "degeneration was a masculine narrative," focused on male desire and selection, then "regeneration, which reversed its plot, was feminine" (Richardson 52). According to Richardson, these writers believed male sexual desire led to national degeneration, which could only by stopped by the

rational selection of mates by women, thereby "replacing male passion with rational female selection. Women could become managers of male passion, and agents of regeneration, and so introduce the idea of direction and progress into human development" (Richardson 49). These eugenic feminist heroines rewrote the masculine courtship plot in several ways. In Menie Muriel Dowie's novel *Gallia* (1895), for example, the heroine chooses to marry a man she does not love because she believes the man she does love will produce inferior children. Sarah Grand's *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) demonstrates the disastrous consequences of male desire, showing how syphilitic husbands infect their innocent wives and produce weak, deformed children; the novel also explores the positive effects of celibacy on the health of the human race. The basis of good selection in these texts is scientific knowledge and rational choices based on that knowledge. By educating women in science and in their civic duties (often through novels), these writers sought to control the future of the race by producing "improved" offspring.

While New Women writers advocated for greater sexual agency for women, the eugenic feminist writers often did so by arguing for essentialist gender roles. Two figures that challenged essentialist notions of gender were the New Woman and the dandy. As critics point out, both characters could symbolize sexual degeneration at the *fin de siècle* because both crossed gender boundaries.[33] The dandy appeared feminine in his overt concern with appearance, while also eschewing marriage and engaging in homosexual

[33] See Ann Ardis's *New Women, New Novels*; Sally Ledger's "The New Woman and the Crisis of Victorianism" and *The New Woman;* and Lyn Pykett's *Engendering Fictions.*

relationships. The New Woman acted manly by smoking, riding bicycles, and demanding a place in public and professional settings. The eugenic feminists argued that by virtue of her innate spirituality and her evolved ability to rationally select a mate, women made better selectors than men.[34] Burnett's heroines embody a range a gendered behavior, from the Victorian womanly ideal "Dearest" Mrs. Errol in *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, to the intelligent businesswoman Bettina in *The Shuttle.* In *The Shuttle,* Burnett reflects these discourses of gender and social degeneration by emphasizing her heroine Bettina's evolved mental abilities, but also critiques gender essentialism by showing that clinging to gender roles—not breaking them—is one sign and cause of degeneration.

The Shuttle (1906), I will argue, critiques and revises both the masculine plot of desire and the feminine rational reproduction plot. Burnett novel traces the courtships and marriages of two American heiresses, Rosalie and Bettina Vanderpoel—a family name that echoes the most famous dollar princess Consuelo Vanderbilt, who married the Duke of Marlborough in 1895. The novel is named after a fictive steamship that travels between America and England; the Shuttle "wove" a "web" between "two worlds" by "twining the cord of sex and home-building and race-founding" through intermarriage (2; ch. 1). In the opening pages of the novel, the degenerate English nobleman Nigel Anstruthers marries Rosalie, the elder sister, to gain control of her money. Rosalie and Nigel's plot shows the disastrous consequences—personal, social, and racial—of

[34] Burnett did not have much luck choosing her own husbands. Her first marriage ended in divorce, which *The Washington Post* attributed to "advanced ideas regarding the duties of a wife and the rights of women" (Gerzina 202). Her second marriage to Stephen Townsend also failed.

unchecked male desire. Nigel marries Rosalie for her money, mentally and physically abuses her, and infects her with syphilis. By consequence, Rosalie falls ill, and they produce only one deformed son, Ughtred. Rather than using his wife's money to rebuild his estate and employ the people in his village, Nigel runs off to the continent to waste it on mistresses and degenerate pastimes. Burnett revises the male courtship plot by placing Rosalie's marriage at the beginning of her plot and then showing the disastrous consequences of her marriage. Nigel and Rosalie's plot critiques the traditional courtship plot by showing how Victorian gender roles oppress women.

The main storyline follows Bettina as she travels to England to reclaim her sister. Bettina finds Rosalie sequestered on a crumbling estate with Ughtred. Using her father's vast wealth, Bettina sets out to rejuvenate her sister and the lands her nephew will inherit by replanting gardens and renovating buildings. The rejuvenation of the estate takes place during the main courtship plot of the novel, as several men court Bettina and she chooses her husband. During this process, Bettina falls in love with the poor but noble aristocrat John Salter, Lord Mount Dunstan. By marrying him, Bettina will regenerate his estate and his family line. Nigel Anstruthers falls prey to his vices and dies in the final pages of the novel.

Burnett draws on the discourse of degeneration to describe the deterioration of England through its aristocracy: the moral and physical degeneration of Nigel Anstruthers' and John Salter's ancestors causes devastation on their lands and people. John Salter's, Lord Mount Dunstan, most recent relatives demonstrate the degeneration of great families through "modern vices, which no sense of dignity and reverence for race and name had restrained" (147; ch. 16). Salter's older brother and father inherited these

weak characters and vices; they were the "bad lot" who had wasted the family fortune on debauchery (147; ch. 16). As the English aristocrat degenerates, he begins to behave like a "savage" (18; ch. 2, 34; ch. 3, 185; ch. 18) and "costermonger" (8; ch. 1, 48; ch. 4). As we can see in both the scientific texts and the novel, the discourse on degeneracy slipped between discussions of class and race. Degeneration implied a descent on the hierarchy of race and class, as civilized Englishmen regress into savages, and aristocrats decline into the working class.

The Shuttle's eugenic language and emphasis on Bettina's mental traits connect the narrative with the rational reproductive plots described by Richardson. However, the novel also highlights the limitations of knowledge and therefore the ability of the mind to select a mate. In so doing, the novel resists the rational reproductive narrative. The marriage plot in *The Shuttle* emphasizes the importance of Bettina's sexual desire in correctly choosing a mate, thereby resisting conservative literary and scientific plots that relied on women's sexual passivity. Instead, the text shows that humans require female sexual desire for the selection process, and it is only through instinctive sexual desire that the true end of all love plots—offspring and the next generation—can be created. Burnett's female desire plot advocates for fluid gender roles and therefore moves toward an open plot that destabilizes sexual hierarchies. However, the open plot is only able to transform gender roles by demonstrating how flexible gender roles enable Anglo-Saxon racial superiority. *The Shuttle* compensates for the gender flexibility with a closed marriage plot that resolves social instability by reaffirming racial hierarchies.

"The Old Cruel Dominance of the Man Over the Woman": Critiquing Male Selection

Burnett's novel shows the disastrous consequences of male selection in Rosalie and Nigel's marriage plot. Nigel may have the power of selection, but he chooses poorly from the standpoint of racial health. Indeed, as an aristocrat, Nigel should have a broader choice of mate than the average man. But instead of the best woman, Nigel chooses Rosalie, who is pretty but weak in both mind and body. While her sister Bettina inherits their father's strength of mind and body, Rosalie inherits their mother's fragile beauty. Her body is delicate with "small hands and small feet and a small waist—a small brain also" (9; ch. 1). Rosalie is a "butterfly girl" who remains childish because her wealth insulates her from struggle and competition. Rosalie's weak genes make her unadaptable, fit only for the protected wealthy environment that she was raised in. Similar to the ways in which inherited aristocratic power allows for degeneration to flourish, separated from the processes of natural selection, so too do the enormous fortunes of America allow for the existence of weak humans who can only survive in the rarified atmosphere of New York high society.

Nigel chooses Rosalie because she is wealthy, easily manipulated, and easily controlled. He observes that she is a "timid girl" who he can control with "his temper and its varied resources" (18; ch. 2). Indeed, Nigel sees that Rosalie's "gentle weakness was of value because it could be bullied, her money was to be counted on because it could be spent on himself and his degenerate vices and on his racked and ruined name and estate" (11; ch. 1). Rather than basing his choice on evolutionary criteria, Nigel travels to the U.S. to choose a wife to replenish his fortunes. Rosalie and Anstruthers's plotline

contrasts the main courtship to demonstrate the problems with male-driven selection. All that matters to Nigel is how much Rosalie is worth—her only "value" lies in her fortune, which Nigel plans to spend on his "degenerate" past times. While Nigel's selection might be written off as a problem with specifically degenerate males selecting, rather than males in general, Burnett clarifies that men are often led astray by their physical desires. Bettina's father Reuben himself selected poorly. Although their marriage does produce the strong and smart Bettina, they also birth the weak and silly Rosalie. Reuben's wife is pretty but silly, and he sees her as "the mate his youth had chosen" (218; ch. 22). Reuben believes that he was misled by his hormones into marrying a beautiful but fragile and unintelligent woman. In general, male selection leads to poor mate choices.

Because of Nigel's poor selection, Nigel and Rosalie are unable to produce healthy children. Critic Lisa Hamilton argues that the New Woman novels teach women that degenerate spouses can negatively affect their health and the health of their children, and Burnett similarly teaches women that marrying a degenerate will affect their ability to procreate. When Bettina first sees Rosalie after several years of marriage, she notes the "washed-out colour of the thin face, the washed-out colour of the thin hair—thin drab hair" (104; ch. 10). While Nigel's abuse is one cause of her physical decline, the fact that she passes on her illness to her son also hints that she may have contracted syphilis from her degenerate husband. Rosalie gives birth to three children: two girls who die before their first birthday and Ughtred, who lives but is described as "deformed." Although Ughtred inherits his mother's sweet nature, his body bears the physical marks of his parents' bad genes. Mentally and emotionally, he does not seem bad, but he bears the signs of his father's degeneration in his hunchback, a "deformity" directly attributed to

Nigel's physical abuse of Rosalie during pregnancy (49–50; ch. 4). Hamilton contends that New Woman writers often described children born to syphilitic couples as small and prematurely old-looking (72); in keeping with this representation, Burnett uses words like "elderly" and a "little old man" (105; ch. 10, 115; ch. 12) to describe Ughtred. Rosalie and Nigel's plot demonstrates Hamilton's claim that degeneracy "signaled a fear about the decline and extinction of the race through syphilis, hereditary illnesses, and sterility" (67). Rampant male desire and male selection leads to fewer children and racial decline. Considering Ughtred's place in society, his physical and character traits forecast a dim future for England's aristocracy.

According to Hamilton, New Woman writers represented "sexual degeneracy as effeminacy" (67). By contrast, through her descriptions of Nigel, Burnett represents an attachment to Victorian gender roles as a key to degeneration. Nigel is an "unscrupulous, sordid brute" and "an unusually fine specimen of the British blackguard" (11; ch. 1), and his physical appearance reflects his degeneration: he is "so ugly," his face is "so heavy," and "his skin so thick and coarse and his expression is evilly ill-tempered"—all physical signs of his dedication to debauchery (28; ch. 3). Much like the New Woman writers, Burnett teaches her readers how to identify degenerate—and possibly syphilitic—men through detailed physical descriptions. But whereas many New Woman writers viewed effeminacy as a sign of degeneration—thereby reinforcing cultural beliefs about women's inferiority (Hamilton 66)—Burnett reveals otherwise. Nigel's brutishness manifests as hyper-masculinity, his heaviness, thickness, and coarseness illustrating that extreme masculinity symbolizes degeneration.

Nigel believes in these traditional roles as he "had been brought up in the Early Victorian days when 'a nice little woman to fetch your slippers for you' figured in certain circles as domestic bliss" (20; ch. 3). Rather than elevating the woman to the position of Angel in the House, Nigel recognizes and embraces how these Victorian gender roles oppress women. Indeed, Nigel demonstrates that the separate spheres ideology turns women into mere animals: "girls were educated to fetch slippers as retrievers were trained to go into the water after sticks, and terriers to bring back balls thrown for them" (20; ch. 3). Nigel equates these traditional gender roles with England. While Reuben leaves Rosalie control of her own fortune, Nigel reasons that in England "women's fortunes, as well as themselves, belonged to their husbands, and a man who was master in his own house could make his wife do as he chose" (12; ch. 2). Although it is unclear exactly when the novel takes place, clearly Nigel links the U.S. with progressive sexual relations, while England remains conservative. He convinces Rosalie that divorcing him would be pointless because "divorce courts in America are for women, but in England, they are for men" (136; ch. 15).

Burnett links degeneracy with Victorian gender roles and with England; renewal, on the other hand, would allow more American, and therefore more equivalent, gender relations to flourish. Indeed, Nigel's desire to assert himself as "master in his own house" echoes the confident claim made by *He Knew He Was Right*'s Charles Glascock that "in my own house I am master." While I would not argue that Burnett's novel specifically responds to Trollope's, by comparing the outcomes of the male-driven marriage plot in both novels, we can see how Burnett critiques that plot. In the main storyline of Trollope's novel, Louis's inability to assert himself as master leads to marital discord.

Caroline and Glascock's foiled plotline demonstrates that men need to confidently assert their own dominance over their wives to bring about marital and social harmony. Burnett exhibits how such marriage plots do not lead to harmony and social stability, as Trollope and other realist writers would have us believe, but rather to oppression of women and societal collapse. After marriage, Nigel forces Rosalie into wifely submission.

> That one man, through mere persistent steadiness in evil temper and domestic tyranny, should have so broken the creatures of his household into abject submission and hopelessness, seemed too incredible. Such a power appeared as remote from civilised existence in London and New York as did that which had inflicted tortures in the dungeons of castles of old. Prisoners in such dungeons could utter no cry which could reach the outside world; the prisoners at Stornham Court, not four hours from Hyde Park Corner, could utter none the world could hear, or comprehend if it heard it. Sheer lack of power to resist bound them hand and foot. (118; ch. 12)

While Nigel sets up the U.S. and England as liberal and conservative, respectively, the narrator appears to believe the main difference to be modern versus archaic, urban versus rural. While modern cities like London and New York protected women, Nigel removes Rosalie from those modern environments to exert "domestic tyranny" over her. Nigel expects Rosalie to give him all her money, to make his home pleasant, and to give him sons. As she acclimates to her life at Stornham, "she began to realise that the son was part of her wifely duty also; that she was expected to provide one, and that he was in some way expected to provide for the estate" (39; ch. 4). Rather than his partner, Rosalie discovers her value as a woman has been reduced to her ability to produce a child. When

Nigel beats her, she tries to stop him by claiming "you don't know how valuable I am [...] perhaps I might have a son" (50; ch. 4). By forcing her to adopt a Victorian gender role, Nigel reduces her from woman to womb.

The novel further condemns male sexual selection when Nigel attempts to "select" Bettina by trying to rape her. In her descriptions of Nigel's savage behavior, Burnett draws on theories of human evolution espoused by Darwin and John McLennan, who argued that primitive "marriages" resulted from capture, kidnap, and rape.[35] Although Bettina is too young for Nigel when he marries her sister, he comes to desire her when she grows up. When he sees Bettina dancing, he feels a "gradually growing excitement" and a "rash desire to force his way through" the crowd and "seize on the girl himself" (331; ch. 33). Nigel propositions her, "making threatening love as if her were a savage chief and she a savage beauty of his tribe. All that concerned him was that he should speak and she should hear—that he should show her he was the stronger of the two" (412; ch. 40). Bettina turns him down, so he later attempts to rape her. Burnett's representation of men's brutal sexuality dovetails with those of other American women authors who, Bender notes, saw "the male as often too primitively passionate to be found acceptable for the new woman" (25). Burnett's novel represents male selection as force, dominance, and rape, something that belongs to humanity's savage past.

Nigel and Rosalie's male-driven courtship plot leads to numerous problems as their family structure breaks down, representing a larger breakdown in social structures. Because Nigel chooses a weak woman, he can coerce her into signing her fortune over to

[35] Darwin *Descent* 661–668 and McLennan's *Primitive Marriage.*

him. Rather than revitalize his estate and invest in his lands, Nigel runs off to Europe with her money and spends it on mistresses, gambling, and alcohol. As his tenants and villagers rely on income from the main house, Nigel's desertion injures not only his family and estate but also the community surrounding his land. Rather than revitalizing England, therefore, Rosalie and Nigel's transatlantic marriage leads to further degeneration. *The Shuttle* acknowledges that while men may have selected mates in the brutal and savage past, the novel insists that continuing to allow them to select will lead to infertility, degeneration, and racial extinction. But if male desire leads to degeneration, then allowing women to select will promote human evolution.

A "Mentality by No Means Ordinary": Bettina's Power of Selection

Many scientific thinkers in the late nineteenth century seized on the possibility of women as selectors to argue for the emancipation of women and their central importance to national prosperity. Angelique Richardson studies the influence of eugenic thought on New Women writers such as Sarah Grand, Mona Caird, and George Edgerton, demonstrating the ways in which these women argued for an increased national role for women through sexual selection and motherhood. These writers argued for women to assume their right place in national life by re-writing the romantic plot to favor "rational reproduction." These women wrote texts in which female characters used evolutionarily-derived mental faculties to actively select the best mates and, in doing so, improve the nation. Bettina herself possesses many of the same characteristics as the rational reproduction heroines. However, Bettina does not use her rational faculties to select a mate; rather, she uses her evolutionarily-derived mental acumen to rebuild her nephew's estate. Burnett, therefore, rewrites the rational reproductive narrative by showing that

Bettina's business abilities are as important to England's revitalization as are her future offspring.

As Burnett's narrator continually reminds us, the key to understanding Bettina's character lies in genealogy, especially the first Reuben Vanderpoel, as the competitive American environment has evolved their family into successful competitors. The Vanderpoels were "of the Americans whose fortunes were a portion of the history of their country" (3; ch. 1). Indeed, their family story exemplifies the American dream. Despite his lowly upbringing and lack of education, the first Reuben Vanderpoel built a fortune. A self-made man, Vanderpoel "in the early days of danger had traded with savages for the pelts of wild animals, [and] was the lauded hero of stories of thrift and enterprise" (3; ch. 1). Reuben's character enabled his rise to wealth. Although a "practical, sordid, uneducated little man," he was also "daring and astute" and an "absolute genius of commerce" (3; ch. 1). The first Vanderpoel married the daughter of a "hard-fisted small tradesman," a woman who "shared his passion for gain" (3; ch. 1). Rather than her physical beauty, Reuben is attracted to her when he witnesses her "taking off her petticoat one bitter winter's day to sell it to a squaw in exchange for an ornament for which she chanced to know another squaw would pay with a skin of value" (4; ch. 1). Burnett's novel signals that the colonial environment brings a variety of races into competition, and those who are the cleverest traders succeed. Burnett emphasizes that the key to success lies in economic competition fostered by capitalism. The Vanderpoel family is seen to out-trade rather than physically conquer individuals who represent other races. In short, it is the Vanderpoels' mental attributes and cunning that make them fit, rather than their physical superiority.

The novel's descriptions of Bettina highlight her fitness in this regard. The narrator claims that Bettina's "astuteness of perception, self-command, and adaptability were her chief resources" (100; ch. 10). Bettina's "adaptability" is a vital evolutionary trait and one that is specifically identified with Americans. When Bettina attends school in France, she writes to her father that "you had better take me away and send me to Germany" as she was so adaptable that "I am gradually becoming a French girl" (61; ch. 5). The novel also marks her fitness for sexual selection: her voice was "musical and full," and she walked with "grace" and "harmony of movement" (60; ch. 5). Sexual selection, Darwin argues, rests on the female animals' ability to see and judge beauty in males—female birds, for example, "admire" the "plumes and splendid colours of their male partners" (*Descent* 115). But whereas Darwin denies women the power of selection that he gives to animals, Burnett restores it. Bettina has this aesthetic sense in spades. Her "astuteness of perception" and "observing mind" enable her to judge the "value of form and colour," whether in Oriental rugs or men (256; ch. 25). In granting Bettina aesthetic ability, Burnett's novel returns to women the power of selection that Darwin had denied them.

The text emphasizes Bettina's ability to choose by showing that, while many men love or desire her, she is the one with the power of "selection" (348; ch. 34). Her main three suitors are John Salter (Lord Mount Dunstan), Lord Westholt, and her brother-in-law Nigel Anstruthers. Throughout the text, *The Shuttle* establishes Bettina's scientific gaze and her ability to accurately assess character. Although Nigel hoodwinks both Rosalie and her father Reuben as to his true nature and character, even as a child Bettina "saw him as he was, an unscrupulous, sordid brute" (11; ch. 1). In contrast, Rosalie

cannot clearly see Nigel's character. Rosalie finds Nigel's "domineering temperament at once imposing and attractive, so long as it was cloaked by the ceremonies of external good breeding" (9; ch. 1). It is not until after they are married that Rosalie sees his true appearance and character, and she becomes "sick with repulsion," "feeling an uncontrollable physical abhorrence of the creature to whom she was chained for life" (28; ch. 3). Bettina innately knows that Nigel is a degenerate, whereas Rosalie requires experience before she can understand his true nature.

While Burnett emphasizes Bettina's ability to rationally select a mate based on observation, both scientists and the eugenic feminists argued that genealogy should be used to select a spouse. Darwin states that "man scans with scrupulous care the character and pedigree of his horses, cattle, and dogs before he matches them; but when he comes to his own marriage, he rarely, or never takes any such care"; if he would look at the genealogy of his future wife, Darwin chides, "he might by selection do something not only for the bodily constitution and from of his offspring, but for their intellectual and moral qualities" (*Descent* 688). According to Richardson, the eugenic feminists narrate the importance of "detailed life histories" rather than physical appearance to evaluate potential mates (ch. 4). But while *The Shuttle* is greatly concerned with the genealogy of its main characters, the text also demonstrates that reading genealogy fails as a method of selection. First, while Bettina is the paragon of natural and sexual selection, her family history is composed of "sordid" tradesmen. Secondly, Reuben Vanderpoel explains that lack of knowledge was part of the problem when Rosalie wanted to marry Nigel. As Vanderpoel points out, if they had known Anstruthers' history, he never would have consented to their marriage. While this moment might indicate that more knowledge is

needed and that rationality can be used to choose a good husband, other examples reveal that rationality is fallible. John Salter, one of Bettina's suitors, also has a bad reputation (founded on the actions of his father and brother, not his own) that might keep him from marrying her even though he is a good choice of mate. While Salter is an aristocrat, the novel must reach hundreds of years into his family tree to find ancestors that prove his worth. His most recent relatives have been degenerates, and his father and brother were cast out of polite society for their unnamed crimes (180; ch. 18). The text's subversion of genealogies as a reliable way of selecting mates, therefore, undermines the tenants of rational reproduction: rational processes cannot adequately judge the value of individuals.

Indeed, if Bettina had followed rational choice, Lord Westholt would have been the best option. Unlike Salter, Westholt's family fortune is intact because his family has not been plagued with degeneration and debauchery as has Salter's. According to pedigree, Lord Westholt would have been a better choice than Salter, as his family has generations of good breeding behind them. As one society matron states, "she felt that the Dunholms were important. There were earldoms *and* earldoms, and that of Dunholm was dignified and of distinction" (201; ch. 20). Indeed, Bettina recognizes the family's good genes in both Westholt and his father, Lord Dunholm.

> Betty thought the young man almost as charming as his father, which was saying much. She had fallen wholly in love with Lord Dunholm-with his handsome, elderly face, his voice, his erect bearing, his fine smile, his attraction of manner, his courteous ease and wit. He was one of the men who stood for the best of all they had been born to represent. Her own father, she felt, stood for the best of all such an American as himself should be. Lord Westholt would in time be what his

father was. He had inherited from him good looks, good feeling, and a sense of humour. (258)

However, Bettina turns down Lord Westholt's proposal of marriage because she liked him but "I do not love him" (390; ch. 38). Love, therefore, is the appropriate criteria for marriage. As I will later show, Bettina chooses Salter because as well as liking him, she also physically desires him, and sexual desire is a necessary component for romantic love.

Bettina's mental abilities demonstrate her business abilities. As the novel states, Bettina is "unusual" and "remarkable" with a "mentality by no means ordinary" (55; ch. 5). The genes from the first Reuben Vanderpoel had been "filtered through two generations of gradual education and refinement of existence" to be "transformed" into Bettina's "keen, clear sight, level-headed perceptiveness and a logical sense of values. As the first Reuben had known by instinct the values of pelts and lands, Bettina knew by instinct the values of qualities, of brains, of hearts, of circumstances, and the incidents which affect them" (56; ch. 5). Bettina inherits business sense: her ancestor was a capable business man because he could judge goods, and in Bettina that quality has developed into the ability to assess people. This talent manifests itself as a managerial ability that makes her unique as a woman. As critics such as Doughty, Ledger, and Richardson have asserted, some New Woman writers—especially the eugenic feminists—tended to reinforce essentialist gender ideologies.[36] While progressive in educating women about

[36] Ledger argues that eugenics offered women "a channel (and a language) through which women could influence public events [...] without challenging the existing separation of male and female spheres of

sex and in arguing for an increased role for women in the nation, they frequently fell back on motherhood as the main way women could contribute to the national health. While Bettina's children will improve the race, Bettina's logical mind and business sense will also play an important role in the nation's future.

When Bettina arrives in England, she sets about rejuvenating it, not by choosing a husband, but by repairing her brother-in-law's estate. When she enters Stornham Village, she observes "broken windows" and "unmended garden palings" that gave the village an "air of dilapidation" (103; ch. 10). The steps to the main house were broken and "lichen-blotched," and the house covered in ivy "left unclipped" to become "rather an endlessly clambering tree than a creeper" (108–109; ch. 11). Unlike Rosalie, who resigned herself to the disrepair, Betty sets out to repair the mansion, as Kedgers the gardener observes:

When [Bettina] walked through the tumbled-down grape-houses, potting-sheds, and conservatories, she saw where glass was broken, where benches had fallen and where roofs sagged and leaked. She inquired about the heating apparatus and asked that she might see it. She asked about the village and its resources, about labourers and their wages. 'As if,' commented Kedgers mentally, 'she was what Sir Nigel is—leastaways what he's ought to be an' ain't.' (130; ch. 14).

In this passage, we see how Bettina's observant mind sees, questions, and evaluates the world around her, rather than using her mind only to select a mate. Burnett

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influence" (70). Similarly, Richardson points out that eugenic feminists "sought political recognition for reproductive labour" based on beliefs of gender essentialism (ch. 1). Doughty contends that New Woman writers could tackle topics like syphilis, but also used the marriage plot to appeal to conservative readers.

illustrates how women can step outside their gender role to find other ways to use their minds. Bettina can step into Sir Nigel's place on the estate, successfully employing and organizing workers. Bettina is more than just a womb and demonstrates that a woman can participate in national life beyond their role as mothers. Women like Bettina should be valued for their own contributions to the nation.

"He Would Have Looked Well in a Coat of Mail": Bettina's Sexual Selection

Through the treatment of Bettina's choice of Salter as a marriage partner, *The Shuttle* advocates for following instinct rather than rational choice. Before Bettina journeys to England, she states that she would never marry an impoverished nobleman because she has no desire to "[take] a bargain from the ducal remnant counter" (67; ch. 6). Rationally, Bettina is not interested in gaining a title or being married for her money. However, her feelings about marrying an impoverished nobleman change when she meets John Salter, because while she has already rationally rejected the possibility of marrying someone in his position, she is overwhelmed by her desire for him. In allowing Bettina the "masculine" trait of sexual desire, Burnett rewrites the closed marriage plot. Rather than marrying a man who will contain Bettina within a traditional Victorian gender role, the novel shows Bettina and Salter moving fluidly between gender roles as the situation demands. Bettina and Salter's open marriage plot signals continual flux beyond the novel's end as the married couple moves between gender spheres.

Unlike the reticent Darwinian female who selects based on observation and rational selection, Burnett's heroine chooses for physical desire. When she looks at Salter, Bettina sees that "his features were strong and clear" and "his limbs were big and long" (143; ch. 15). She fantasizes that "he would have wielded a battle-axe with power

in centuries in which men hewed their way with them. Also, it occurred to her he would have looked well in a coat of mail. He did not look ill in his corduroys and gaiters" (143; ch. 15). Their attraction is not based on intelligence or more human emotions, but rather the physical feeling he excites in her. Although Bettina's desire for Salter's physical body might be read as a desire for healthy children, Burnett's descriptions of the couple signifies that sexual desire was not just rooted in motherhood. In discussing Victorian ideas about sex and desire, Sally Ledger points out that social purity feminists such as Sarah Grand reinforced the common belief that "normal" women only desire sex when they want to become mothers ("Crisis of Victorianism" 32). Bettina, by contrast, seems to desire sex for pleasure. Bettina observes that when she and John are together "we say so little" (325; ch. 32). When they are dancing together, she states, "I have no intelligence where he is concerned—only a strong, stupid feeling, which is not like a feeling of my own. I am no longer Betty Vanderpoel—and I wish to go on dancing with him—on and on—to the last note" (325–326; ch. 32). The text captures Bettina's physical reaction in the breathlessness of the repeated dashes. In this scene, *The Shuttle* associates dancing with courtship and, more specifically, sexual intercourse, an activity that Bettina desires to engage in until "the last note." Bettina's choice of mate is based on her physical desires, the "strong, stupid feeling" that strips her of her human social identity as a conscious self and reduces her to merely animal desires. In this moment, Bettina experiences the woman's loss of identity when compelled by the "genealogical imperative," as Beer writes regarding the works of Eliot and Hardy. Eliot, in particular, found the loss of woman's identity problematic, as it reinforced the need for male control. In contrast, Burnett's novel reveals that Bettina's sexual instinct leads her to the correct

choice of mate, a mate who allows her to fully experience her individuality outside "natural" sexual roles, as I will later discuss.

At first glance, it appears that Bettina and other characters in the novel find Salter attractive because of his primitive masculinity.[37] I will show later, however, that while Salter appears savagely masculine, he willing adopts feminine behavior. Penzance, as a student of history, enjoys seeing his friend Salter because it

> thrilled him to see in the big frame and powerful muscles, in the strong nature and unconquerable spirit, a revival of what had burned and stirred through lives lived in a dim, almost mythical, past. There were legends of men with big bodies, fierce faces, and red hair, who had done big deeds, and conquered in dark and barbarous days, even Fate's self, as it had seemed. None could overthrow them, none could stand before their determination to attain that which they chose to claim. (183; ch. 18)

John Salter reflects several overlapping discourses of masculinity. By placing his large physical body and fighting spirit into the remote past, the text aligns him with Darwinian masculinity—men who used their physical strength to act, who are selected through natural processes, and who chose mates by physically overwhelming them and conquering their rivals. This indomitable physical body also aligns Salter with the ideals of muscular Christianity, the "central, even defining, characteristic" of which, Donald

[37] Salter's connection with the primitive aligns him with the manly men of turn-of-the-century adventure fiction. See Bradley Deane's *Masculinity and the New Imperialism*, Elaine Showalter's *Sexual Anarchy*, and Chapters 8 and 9 of John Tosh's *Manliness and Masculinities.*

Hall claims, was "an association between physical strength, religious certainty, and the ability to shape and control the world around oneself" (7). While the text mentions little about Salter's religious convictions, the novel is greatly concerned with his ability to control the world.

Physically, both Salter and Nigel are throwbacks. However, what sets them apart is their relationship with women. Anstruthers feels hampered by "the limitations of modern days," and wants to exert "the old cruel dominance of the man over the woman," a control "which had seemed the mere natural working of the law among men of his race in centuries past" (435; ch. 43). Male dominance, the text implies, is brutish and savage just like Anstruthers; in the novel, that dominance ultimately leads to Anstruthers' estrangement and death. Salter, on the other hand, seeks equality in his relationship with Bettina, an equal partnership between genders that allows for evolution and a bright future. John Tosh points out that "one of the measures of manliness in common understanding was the degree of mastery exercised over others within or outside the home" (200). However, in *The Shuttle* both Salter and Bettina display the ability to control others. Salter and Bettina meet for the first time when, while sailing from the U.S. to England, their ship collides with another. Both are frustrated at their inability to help: "I want to *do* something!" (89; ch. 8), Bettina states. Unlike other passengers, who are simply panicking, Salter urges that "we two can keep our heads. Those who can do that may help"; he recommends that they divide the ship between them and work to calm the passengers in their section (89; ch. 8). Salter and Bettina are equals in their desire to act rather than react emotionally. When Bettina goes to her part of the ship "to bully the lot of them," it shocks the crowd enough to keep them from stampeding (90; ch. 8). Even the

"men, who had been in danger of losing their heads and becoming as uncontrolled as the women, suddenly realized the fact and pulled themselves together" (90; ch. 8). Although the men are not as "uncontrolled as the women," neither are they behaving calmly or trying to help the situation. This scene divides people into two groups, but not based on gender: the true dividing line is between those who control others and those who must be controlled.

Furthermore, Burnett demonstrates that a true equality between a man and a woman means that they can fluidly move between gender roles when needed. While the ship emergency has them working on the same problem, there are also times when Bettina takes on a more masculine role and Salter a more feminine. When Salter faces a typhoid epidemic among the workers on his estate, he sends them disinfectant and travels to their cottages to comfort them and exhort them to healthy behaviors (420–421; ch. 41). Recognizing the unsanitary conditions in their cottages, he opens his home to them and transforms his house into a hospital where they can be tended. Salter seeks to solve the health crisis by positing what Bettina would do in his shoes. He tells his friend Penzance

> When I think things over, I find that I am asking myself if her thoughts would be like mine. She is a creature of action. Last night, as I lay awake, I said to myself, "She would *do* something. What would she do?" She would not be held back by fear of comment or convention. She would look about her for the utilisable, and she would find it somewhere and use it. I began, to sum up the village resources and found nothing—until my thoughts led me to my own house. There it stood—empty and useless. If it were hers, and she stood in my place, she would make it useful. So I decided. (423; ch. 41)

Victorian gender roles dictate the men are more intelligent and experienced than women and are therefore able to teach their wives. Here, however, Salter recognizes that Bettina is more knowledgeable and more experienced than he, and he can learn by emulating her. Rather than working outside the home, Salter brings his workers into the home to shelter and nurture them.

In addition to opening his home, Salter tends to the bodily needs of his tenants in a manner more typical of a lady of the manor. Under the doctor's direction, Salter nurses the worst of the patients. The workers later recall him "working for them as the nurses did, and sitting by some of them through awful hours, sometimes holding burning or slackening and chilling hands" (431; ch. 42). When Patton, one of Salter's tenants, believes he is dying and asks to see Salter, Salter tells him tells him that "'I shall sit here and take care of you all day—all night, if necessary. The doctor and nurse will tell me what to do. Your hand is warmer already. Shut your eyes'" (431; ch. 42). Salter stays with Patton until he begins to recover; during that time, "no one but [Salter] had touched the patient" (431; ch. 42). Patton "begged his lordship to hold his hand, and was uneasy when he laid it down" (431; ch. 42). His neighbors judge him to be a "new order of Mount Dunstan" not just because he lacks the degenerative characteristics of his relatives, but also because he promotes the welfare of his tenants. Further, he actively promotes their health by adopting the behaviors of the lady of the manor to nurse and nurture his sick tenants. While we might expect a man to manage the doctors and nurses, Salter instead chooses to subordinate himself to the directions of the doctor and to nurse the patients like a woman. While his body may physically resemble the masculine ideal of the period, Salter demonstrates his ability to embrace feminine behaviors. Unlike

Nigel, who seeks to dominate those physically weaker than himself, Salter comforts and nurtures the weak.

Bettina, on the other hand, adopts a more masculine position by providing economic support and consulting with medical experts. Separated from the emergency and kept away from Salter's estate to prevent the spread of illness, Bettina is unable to take on the more domestic woman's role. Instead, she provides money for food, clothing, and doctors. Bettina also travels to London to consult with a doctor, showing her own mental and scientific acumen as she appeared as "intelligently intent" as "an ardent and serious young medical student" (427; ch. 42). The doctor is so impressed by Bettina that he wishes that she could adopt a profession, lamenting "what a surgical nurse she would have made!" (427; ch. 42). While the text does limit her by gender by observing that she would make a good nurse rather than a doctor, the text progressively places her in male dominated fields—the scientific realm of the medical student, the more masculine surgical nursing role—rather than more feminine nursing roles. Overall, England's regeneration can only happen by redefining gender roles. To reinvigorate England and return its land and people to health, men such as Salter must adopt more "feminine" behaviors like nursing, while women take on more "masculine" roles such as interacting with medical experts, exercising financial control, and organizing workers.

Burnett does not propose that men and women should reverse gender roles, but rather recommends that individuals should move between these roles as necessity dictates. When his workers fall ill, it is more expedient for Salter to stay in the home to nurse his tenants while Bettina manages the health-care workers and expenses from afar. However, in the final pages of the novel, we also see that Bettina and John can adopt

traditional gender roles when necessary. When Nigel finds Bettina alone and injured after a fall from her horse, he threatens to rape her. She warns him "take care not touch me. If you do—I have my whip here—I shall lash you across your mouth!" (480; ch. 48). She recognizes, however, that she cannot defend herself in part because as a female not only is she weaker than he but also because she is injured. Salter finds them before Nigel can rape her, and Salter is then able to whip Nigel as Betty had threatened, leaving Nigel a "writhing, huddled worm" (495; ch. 48). This scene confirms that although men and women can mentally and emotionally act as equals, the man's physical strength can still be used to protect the physically weaker woman. Overall, *The Shuttle*'s marriage ending traces an open plot. Whereas traditional closed endings would reinforce the patriarchy, Burnett's novel demonstrates an affinity between Salter and Bettina in their desire to act, which signifies the characters' gendered behavior will remain in flux beyond the novel's end.

"Her Splendid Children Will Be Born Here": The Anglo-Saxon Marriage Plot

While *The Shuttle* plots Bettina's choice of mate, the final pages are especially concerned with the consequences of her choice—her children. As Bert Bender has pointed out in his study of Darwinian themes in American literature, "the general problem for novelists was how to construct courtship plots that would produce the human race to come,' […] but with an eye toward evolutionary progress. This required courtship plots in which authors imagined new men and women, arranged for them to be selected, and then sent these promising couples on into the evolutionary future" (13). In the case of *The Shuttle*, Burnett's narrative requires Bettina and Salter's offspring to fulfill a specific evolutionary destiny, aided by the child's transnational racial characteristics and the

material wealth of America. In contemplating the future of his family and wealth, Reuben Vanderpoel IV considers that "the power of [his wealth] counted for great things, not in America alone, but throughout the world. As international intimacies increased, the influence of such houses might end in aiding in the making of history" (386; ch. 38). While the "international intimacies" reflects the "special relationship" between England and America, there is also the imperial implication that with the united power of America and England, transatlantic children will cement Anglo-Saxon dominance around the world.[38] Thus, while Burnett's novel advocates progressive and flexible sexual relations, the marriage plot compensates for this liberality through a closed plot of racial conservatism. Allowing women equality, Burnett maintains, will promote Anglo-Saxon global dominance.

The Shuttle reflects English fears of national degeneration and conquest by foreign powers. Between 1870 and 1914, soldier-hero and invasion literature that embodied these fears flooded the market.[39] In this literature, fictional invasions were often perpetrated by France and Germany. *The Shuttle*, however, points to Americans as the invaders who "don't come and fight with us and get possession of us by force. They come and buy us" (79; ch. 7). In *The Shuttle,* the English fear that Americans will conquer England by purchasing "our land and our homes, and our landowners for that

[38] For discussion of Anglo-American rapprochement and Anglo-Saxonism at the turn of the century, see Anderson's *Race and Rapprochement,* Horsman's *Race and Manifest Destiny*, and Chapters 2 and 3 of Zwerdling's *Improvised Europeans.*

[39] For further elaboration on British invasion literature, see Clarke's *Voices Prophesying War,* pages 117–127, and Chapter 3 of Miller's *America and the British Imaginary.*

matter—when they don't buy them, they send their women to marry them, confound it!" (79; ch. 7). The novel treats English fears humorously, as the "American invasion" is a conquest by husband-hunting American girls (256; ch. 25). On the one hand, this joke is funny because, per the beliefs of the period, women could not conquer men and Americans could not defeat the English. Yet, the joke also points to English unease concerning changing roles for women, national stability, and racial mixing. Proper Victorian women are not invaders, but American women were more mobile—economically, socially, and geographically—than their English counterparts. America's booming industrial economy did pose a threat to English superiority, while Americans marrying English people insinuates racial mixing and a dilution of English bloodlines.

However, Burnett observes that invasions have been vital to England's history. Although Salter dislikes Americans for invading England, he "resented" them in the same way that he "resented" that "an Englishman was a German—a savage who, five hundred years after the birth of Christ, had swooped upon Early Briton from his Engleland and Jutland, and ravaging with fire and sword, had conquered and made the land his possession" (198; ch. 18). The novel recognizes that the modern English are a result of several successive invasions from Germany, Normandy, and now America. Indeed, *The Shuttle* situates the origin of Salter's traits in his Saxon ancestor, Red Godwyn. Red Godwyn ruled land in England before the Norman invasion and "defied the interloper with such splendid arrogance and superhuman lack of fear that he had won in the end, strangely enough, the admiration and friendship of the royal savage himself, who saw in his, a kindred savagery" (183; ch. 18). Despite their "savagery," Salter admires these men for their pride and strength. In Salter's family history, the text idealizes the founding and

expansion of England, creating a narrative that rationalizes colonial expansion with a "civilizing" mission and the belief in Anglo-Saxon dominance.

While the text reflects concern for the American invasion, then, it soothes this anxiety by demonstrating that Americans and the English are part of the same Anglo-Saxon race. Part of Salter's concern with the "American invasion" is that American "blood was mingling itself with that of England's noblest and oldest of name" (198; ch. 19). Salter's fear represents broader concerns with America's racial inheritance. When Bettina first goes to school in France, the girls question whether Bettina's black hair had been inherited from a Native American ancestor. Enraged, Bettina replies that "No, there were no red Indians in New York. There had been no red Indians in her family. She had neither grandmothers nor aunts who were squaws if they meant that" (58; ch. 5). Here, Bettina denies any "taint" of non-white blood, erasing Native Americans not just from Bettina's lineage but from New York altogether. Burnett's text traces Bettina's family back to her first relatives in America from their origins in England and the Netherlands to prove her racial purity. Bettina's Dutch name "Vanderpoel" marks her European origins and also informs us that she is a Knickerbocker and therefore a part of old New York society.[40] The emphasis on Bettina's larger "Nordic" origins shows the text participating in the "Anglo-Saxon panic" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. During this period, descendants of America's earlier settlers grew to fear the changing racial

[40] For a scholarly account of New York society, see Kathleen Burk's *Old World, New World* (532). For a popular account of the Knickerbocker's, New York society, and transatlantic marriages see Gail MacColl and Carol McD. Wallace's *To Marry an English Lord.*

composition of America's immigrants. While early American settlers came from the Anglo-Saxon countries of western and northern Europe, American immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century increasingly arrived from eastern and southern Europe. Burnett attempts to alleviate those racial concerns by mythologizing American genealogy from English origins, rather than admitting the U.S.'s racial hybridity.[41]

The Shuttle also clearly reflects the desire for reconciliation between England and America, a fantasy entangled with Anglo-Saxon racial identity around the turn of the century. The book stresses the connection between America and England through a familial analogy. When Rosalie comments that she always thought that the two countries hated each other, Bettina replies that "they did once—but how could it last between those of the same blood—of the same tongue?" (196; ch. 19). Sprinkled liberally throughout the novel, this familial metaphor implies that the Americans are a people of English descent who have been reinvigorated by breeding with other Western European nations and being exposed to new conditions. This type of breeding—combining Darwinian fitness and mixing with the right races—is good for the nation. Americans may be new, but they are not wholly different or Other.

Further, the novel pacifies racial unease through the rhetoric of artificial and sexual selection. As critics have shown, Darwin's theory caused anxiety as it lacked the idea of direction and improvement. Darwin later compensated for this lack by emphasizing the element of choice and control in his discussion of sexual and artificial selection. The novel describes Bettina as a result of artificial and sexual selection rather

[41] See Chapter 2 of Alex Zwerdling's *Improvised Europeans.*

than a product of uncontrolled racial mixing. Lord Dunholm, the father of Bettina's suitor Lord Westholt, identifies Bettina as a "new type," part of the "later generation" of Americans who have recently evolved (256; ch. 25). Seeing Bettina, he wonders

> These amazing, oddly practical people had evolved [this American new type]—planned it, perhaps, bought—figuratively speaking—the architects and material to design and build it—bought them in whatever country they found them, England, France, Italy, Germany—pocketing them coolly and carrying them back home to develop, complete, and send forth into the world when their invention was a perfected thing. (256; ch. 25)

Here, Dunholm imagines that Americans have evolved themselves through careful selection, both sexual and artificial. In terms of transatlantic marriages, rich Americans can travel and have the money to purchase the best mates, as American heiresses "bought" English aristocratic husbands. But the building metaphor also suggests artificial selection in the sense that humans are consciously choosing genetic material, as they would when breeding chickens or pigeons, selecting the best specimens and allowing them to breed and develop into an "invention" that benefits humans, but in Bettina's case the "invention" is the human itself. Burnett's text relies on the metaphor of an "invention" to again align American's ability of sexual selection with their genius in commerce and technological advancement through skyscrapers that symbolized their abilities. Americans have constructed their country—as a society and a race—by bringing together genetic "material" from Europe and giving it an environment in which that material can evolve and "develop" before re-emerging to conquer the world. The countries that Lord Dunholm mentions are western European nations; notably, his list

omits Eastern Europeans, Jewish people, and Asians who would be seen as polluting the English bloodline.

Thus, while Burnett advocates for gender equality, she does so by creating a racial hierarchy. As Laura Chrisman argues, "for many nineteenth-century English women writers, it was precisely through collusion with, and not in opposition to, hierarchical notions of ethnic and cultural difference, that feminist identity was articulated" (45). Bettina's father tells her that "you ought to have been a man, Betty," but she disagrees (112; ch. 12). "You say that," she says, "because you see that I am inclined to do things, to change them, if they need changing. Well, one is either born like that, or one is not. Sometimes I think that perhaps the people who must *act* are of a distinct race. A kind of vigorous restlessness drives them [...] But there has always been as much for women to do as for men" (113; ch. 12). Bettina's father voices the Victorian belief that humans should be divided into two groups: men who are active and women who are passive. Bettina contradicts him, arguing that there are "people who must act," but that there are both men and women who belong to this group. As I noted previously when discussing Bettina's and Salter's gender fluidity, Bettina divides humans into two "races" based on the criteria of those who act and those who do not. To make gender a less significant difference, Burnett must turn to other divisions—such as racial divisions. As Carroll Smith-Rosenberg has pointed out, "for the marginal or powerless to challenge the dominant discourse, they must frame their challenge in a language meaningful within the hegemonical discourse" (264). For Burnett to advocate for women's equality with men, she must do so by drawing on the hierarchy of race. Bettina states that the "race" that acts

is driven by a "vigorous restlessness," which implies a feeling of manifest destiny and colonial expansion as the Anglo-Saxon race spreads around the globe.

By marrying two people from the "distinct race" of achievers, Burnett demonstrates how Bettina's future offspring will lead the nations and the race into the future. When he sees her at a ball, an unnamed Prince of England states that "a girl like that would bring a great deal to a man and to the country he belonged to. A great race might be founded on such superbness of physique and health and beauty" (325; ch. 32). Bettina's genetic inheritance is valuable not only to her future mate but to the nation. The use of the term "race" and its multiple meanings of family, house, ethnicity, and nation imply the larger ramifications of her individual mate choice. In the final pages of the novel, Penzance comments that "her splendid children will be born here, and among them will be those who lead the van and make history" (511; ch. 50). While Bettina's children will be leaders of their nation, "lead the van" is another way of saying "vanguard," or "the troops moving at the head of an army," implying the military force associated with colonization and expansion of their transatlantic empire ("Vanguard"). In the final lines, the narrator reminds us how easily people can travel now that the steamship "The Shuttle" transverses the Atlantic and "weaves" together the two nations through the connections of individual people (512; ch. 50). The same ease of transport will also allow Bettina and Salter's offspring not only to travel between nations but to easily colonize the world. Much like the marriage plot, "The Shuttle" becomes both a symbol of affinity between people (Americans and the English, women, and men) and a symbol of "progress" and "development," where progress means an increased ability to "civilize" the world. The marriage plot in *The Shuttle,* therefore, is simultaneously an open plot that

posits movement through a range of gendered behavior beyond the novel's end and a closed plot that resolves social instability and fears of degeneration by reaffirming racial hierarchies.

CHAPTER IV – "INTO ALIGNMENT WITH THE LAWS OF LOVE": SEXUAL AND ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT IN *THE WAY WE LIVE NOW*

"The young lady with her two lovers is weak and vapid. I almost doubt whether it be not impossible to have two absolutely distinct parts in a novel, and to imbue them both with interest."

—Anthony Trollope, An Autobiography, on *The Way We Live Now*

In 1872, Anthony Trollope returned to England after almost eighteen months in Australia. Upon his return, horrified at the changes he saw in England, Trollope began writing *The Way We Live Now* as a satire of moral decline, "instigated by what [he] conceived to be the commercial profligacy of the age" (Trollope, *Autobiography* 306). Trollope's *The Way We Live Now* is perhaps one of his most xenophobic novels.[42] Its major storylines center around the entry of racially, morally, and sexually questionable characters into London society and ends happily when these characters are driven out of it. Augustus Melmotte, a stereotypical Jewish character of unknown origins, enters society through his massive (ill-gotten) wealth. Hoping to solidify his social standing, Melmotte attempts to marry his daughter to various penniless noblemen. Melmotte wins a place in Parliament, but shortly thereafter he commits suicide when his frauds are made public. His daughter and wife leave London after his death and journey to America, a land that, in the novel's estimation, is better suited for them racially and morally. In

[42] For further discussion of Trollope's xenophobia, see Diana Archibald's *Domesticity, Imperialism, and Emigration in the Victorian Novel*; A. Abbott Ikeler's "That Peculiar Book"; Chapter 4 of John Halperin's *Studies in Fiction and History from Austen to Le Carre;* and Patrick Parrinder's "At Home and Abroad in Victorian and Edwardian Fiction."

another plotline, the wealthy American widow, Mrs. Hurtle, travels to London to persuade Paul Montague into marriage. Paul Montague proposed to Mrs. Hurtle while traveling in America, but when he returned to England her lack of origins and the rumors of her violence lead him to break off their engagement. Paul chooses instead to marry the protected and innocent daughter of English civilization Hetta Carbury, and Mrs. Hurtle returns to America.

In *He Knew He Was Right* (1869), Hugh Stanbury asks himself whether human romantic love is simply the animal desire to procreate or if there is something more: "beyond that pressing of the hand, and that kissing of the lips,—beyond the short-lived pressure of the plumage which is common to birds and men,—what could love do beyond that?" (Trollope, *He Knew* 237; ch. 25). In raising this question, Stanbury voices one of the main questions posed by those who were reading, absorbing, and debating the work of Charles Darwin: if the human sexual drive is also present in animals, then what, if anything, differentiates animals from humans? Is romantic love a purely human emotion or merely a polite way of discussing sexual drives? And how did marriage evolve? Although Trollope poses these questions in *He Knew He Was Right*, *The Way We Live Now*, written almost six years later, is equally concerned with this question. Like the other novels in this study, Trollope's novel explores sexuality and romantic love through the lens of an Anglo-American courtship. Paul Montague must choose between two women: the American widow Mrs. Winifred Hurtle and the British maiden Hetta Carbury. Mrs. Hurtle is a familiar character from literature, the sexually experienced and aggressive widow who echoes such figures as Chaucer's Wife of Bath. By characterizing Mrs. Hurtle as a sexually aggressive widow, Trollope condemns Mrs. Hurtle's primitive

morality through her sexuality. In so doing, Trollope reverses the earlier uniting of complementary opposites in *He Knew He Was Right,* urging that in marriage like should go to like.

In *He Knew He Was Right*, Nora weighed the benefits and drawbacks between her two suitors before deciding on Hugh. That is, sexual selection was dramatized in her thoughts as she observed and judged her two suitors through rational processes. In *The Way We Live Now*, however, there is never a doubt as to who Paul or Hetta wants to marry. Their preferred choice is clear, but what is not clear are the ethical and practical ramifications of that choice. In Hetta's case, she must decide whether to follow her heart and marry Paul despite his uncertain financial situation or to marry her cousin Roger to achieve financial stability for her family. Paul must decide whether he should marry the woman he loves, Hetta, or if he is ethically obligated to marry Mrs. Hurtle because he proposed to her.

Evolutionary language saturates these love triangles. The characters are described in terms of coloring, plumage, and adaptability. Rather than pointing to a true sexual selection plot, however, this language shows Trollope working out the ramifications of evolutionary theory through his characters in the face of the societal change he witnessed upon returning from Australia. In his *Autobiography*, Trollope considers "that men have become less cruel, less violent, less brutal, there can be no doubt, but have they also become less honest? If so, can a world retrograding from day to day in honesty, be considered in a state of progress?" (307). Trollope's concern about the changes in society, whether women's rights in *He Knew He Was Right* or the dishonesty of businessmen in *The Way We Live Now*, often leads the author to resist the smooth

uniformitarian working of a Darwinian plot. Levine argues that Trollope's novels embrace an "ideal realist form"; Trollope "self-consciously abjures surprises, coincidences, melodramatic disruptions of continuous narrative surface" (179). While Trollope's novels mostly proceed by the smooth workings of uniformitarian principles in which small actions accumulate to larger consequences, resisting the surprises and disruptions of catastrophism. Yet, both *He Knew* and *The Way We Live Now* do have jagged moments that disrupt the narrative flow. In *He Knew,* we saw how the changes in social order dramatized by the Glascock-Spalding courtship were resisted by an unexpected reversal of power in their relationship. Glascock and Spalding's romantic reversal is a small moment in a minor plot in a large novel. In *The Way We Live Now,* however, the social problems are major enough that they run throughout the novel, creating a large divide at the novel's end between the smooth working of nature and the controlling hand of the marriage plot.

For Trollope, the crux of the problem lies in the tension between change and ethical behavior. According to Darwinian theory, adaptation is necessary to preserve the individual and the species. However, Trollope interprets adaptability as moral flexibility. Trollope places characters on a spectrum with Melmotte, Fisker, and Mrs. Hurtle at one end as the most adaptable (but least moral) and therefore most capable of thriving in the changing international environment. On the other end is Roger, who is the most moral but also the most rigid and inflexible; his line goes extinct because of his inability to adapt to circumstances. Through Paul and Hetta's courtship plot, Trollope tries to find a balance between adaptability, which allows characters to adjust to the changing world and compete in the new international marketplace, and morality. Both Hetta and Paul are

adaptable but must develop moral strength through the course of the novel. The successful end of the courtship plot points to them successfully reconciling adaptability and ethics.

The tension between adaptability and ethical behavior represents the tension between open and closed plots in the novel. As I discussed in Chapter 1, an open plot emphasizes flux throughout the narrative, transformation that continues past the novel's end. A closed plot, in contrast, demonstrates progress toward resolution at the novel's end that reaffirms social and cultural hierarchies. On the one hand, the open plot of adaptation points to an affinity between animal and human behavior, whether sexual or ethical. The novel is anxious about these open plots because they destabilize hierarchies of gender, race, and nation. The non-English characters in the novel—Melmotte, Fisker, and Mrs. Hurtle—represent open elements of the plot, figures who undermine the social status quo through dog-eat-dog competition and a "might is right" morality that Victorians associated with natural selection. The open elements in the plot subvert hierarchies and destabilize the closed plots that attempt to restore social order. These interrelated closed plots of racial and sexual development represent a comforting progress of ethical and sexual development that reaffirm gender and racial hierarchies via the marriage plot. The love triangles between Mrs. Hurtle, Hetta, and Paul, and between Paul, Roger, and Hetta, show Trollope's attempt to reconcile social and evolutionary change with traditional English beliefs and values. As I will show, the theories of human marriage and sexuality demonstrate a competition between closed plot theories of sexual and racial development and open plot theories that subverted such hierarchies by highlighting the similarity between human and animal sexual behaviors. Trollope uses these closed evolutionary

plots to position Mrs. Hurtle as a bad choice of wife. However, because she is left out of the novel's closed marriage plot, Mrs. Hurtle ultimately represents open elements—gender and national changes—that are left unaccounted for. Trollope attempts to compensate for the changing social environment by expanding gender roles within the courtship plot, but ultimately the marriage ending fails to arrest social change.

"The History of Civilisation is the History of Advance in Monogamy": Evolution's Closed Plots

Darwin's *Descent of Man* relied on the works of Victorian anthropologists for its argument concerning the origin of human marriage. His footnotes are littered with references to such works as John McLennan's *Primitive Marriage* (1865), John Lubbock's *Origin of Civilization* (1870), and Edward Burnett Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871). These texts, like Darwin's *Descent*, looked to "primitive" civilizations still existing to trace the evolution of modern marriage customs, seeking an understanding of Western social structure by examining their evolution alongside the physical and mental evolution of humans. Most of these theories posed the companionate and monogamous Victorian marriage ideal as the height of civilization and evolutionary progress. That is, most theories relied on a hierarchy of marriage customs from savage, sexual, and non-monogamous unions to civilized, monogamous, and companionate marriages. Later scientists such as G. Stanley Hall relied on these hierarchies to describe the sexual maturation of individuals from youthful promiscuity to mature monogamy. Darwin's theory, in contrast, emphasized the affinity between animal and human selection and, in so doing, undermined boundaries separating primitive and civilized cultures.

In *Primitive Marriage*, John McLennan creates a hierarchy of societies based on their marriage practices. Marriage evolved, according to McLennan, as humans transformed the way they traced kinship. The most "savage" tribes traced kinship through women only, suggesting that "savage" women have sex with multiple men and therefore could not be sure who fathered their children. Tribal customs changed as men sought brides outside their community, capturing them from warring tribes. As this form of marriage increased, tribes changed kinship patterns to lineage through males only. Many "civilized" marriage ceremonies contain vestiges of the more savage "capture marriage" practices. The custom of carrying the bride across the threshold, McLennan argues, echoes the more savage practice when the bride would not willingly enter her husband's home. As tribes evolve, the practice of wife capture becomes merely the form in marriage ceremonies.

> No argument is needed to show that when women are systematically captured as in the above-cited cases, they are captured with a view to the raising of children—in fact, with a view to their performing the part of wives. The fulness [sic] of the idea of a wife, according to our conceptions, is not, we need scarcely say, to be looked for amongst such savages. That idea can nowhere be fully realised till the circumstances of a people enable men and women to enjoy, or at least to look forward with confidence, to a permanent consortship. (McLennan 27)

The earliest marriages, then, were contracted for the raising of children and taking care of household duties that would aid the welfare of the family. "Savage" marriages, McLennan implies, are both temporary and based on physical needs as men kidnap the most beautiful of women. "Primitive" marriages were temporary unions that allowed a

couple to produce and raise a child, and because of this, the marriages did not need to last beyond the first few years of the child's life. As marriages evolve to become permanently monogamous, men and women can "enjoy" the full benefits of a civilized marriage: love and companionship. The most "civilized" marriage relied on two people who married for love and companionship and who produced children only once an emotional bond was achieved.

Lubbock similarly traces the evolution of marriage from originating in communal marriage, to capture marriage, and finally to private marriages between two people. Lubbock contends that emotional bonding also evolves with these changing marriage practices. Evolving marriage customs leads to a change in how mates are chosen, for "when love depends not on similarity of tastes pursuits or opinions, but entirely on external attractions, we cannot wonder that every man who is able to do so, provides himself with a succession of favorites" (Lubbock 99). Like McLennan, Lubbock argues that civilized marriages are based on spiritual and emotional needs, not merely physical needs. Lubbock is, therefore, able to reinforce the separation of "primitive" humans from modern civilized Europeans by separating physical from spiritual desire. "Primitive" humans are bestial because they choose mates based solely on physical appearances and therefore change mates whenever they find someone more attractive. "Civilized" humans, on the other hand, select mates based on their mental and emotional attributes, choosing for love rather than desire.

While earlier anthropologists such as Lubbock, McLennan, and Tylor traced courtship practices through species evolution, later scientists such as English physician Havelock Ellis and American psychologist G. Stanley Hall studied the development of

sexual desires in the individual. Pre-Freudian theories of sexual maturation were largely founded on the German Darwinian Ernest Haeckel's work, which argues that individual development (ontogeny), from conception to adulthood, replicated the evolution of the species (phylogeny). Hall similarly contends that "young people [...] in their development [...] afford the ontogenetic parallel to these phyletic stages, each [...] confirming and illustrating the other" (101). In these studies, however, the scientists equated species evolution with racial evolution. Hall contends that "the boy of ten or eleven is tolerably well adjusted to the environment of savage life," and remarks "in how many of his ways he resembles the savage and how each furnishes the key for understanding both the good and bad points in the other's character" (1: 44). Historian Cynthia Russett points out that equating individual maturation with species evolution unified diverse biological disciplines and also provided a framework for the social sciences of child study, psychology and anthropology (51). Beyond the obvious problem of circular reasoning, equating race development with individual development reaffirms racist notions that non-Europeans were children who needed to be colonized, supervised, and controlled by Europeans.

Just as the anthropologists tried to argue that human mate selection evolved from base physical desires to higher spiritual needs, so too do the works of Ellis and Hall trace individual sexual development through these stages. Immature individuals experience animal sexuality, but as they mature they develop the higher emotions of romantic love. Hall argues that adolescence is the period of individual growth during which "higher and more completely human traits" manifest and "the new life of love awakens" (xiii). Romantic love then is a distinctly human emotion that only develops later in the

evolutionary process. Hall, like the Victorian anthropologists, uses the Western privileging of mental over physical experiences to highlight the transition of sexual needs to romantic love through adolescence:

> the race at one time, or nearly every ethnic stock at some time early in its development, let itself go until it found that, as Hegel describes in his Phenomenology, pleasure has its limits in pain and must be compensated. Then came a period of humiliation and conviction of unworthiness or sin, in which man undertook to convert himself, but although he groveled and many despaired, the elect pressed on, yearning for the reincarnation of love in its primitive, high, holy, and wholesome sense in their midst. Perhaps in this abjectness there was pious longing upward for a purer love to supervene from above. (2: 101–102)

Just as human progenitors transitioned from base pleasure seekers to pilgrims, promiscuous to monogamists, so too do young people mature through these sexual stages. As Hall describes, individual humans replicate the transition from pleasurable body sensations to a need for spiritual fulfillment, just as humans evolving from the lower animals passed through these evolutionary stages. Again, Hall conflates species evolution with racial evolution as he refers specifically to the development of "the race" and "ethic stock." Further, Hall connects sexual maturation to ethical development in his discussion of adolescence. "Ethics as a science, and morals as a life," Hall claims, "have as their chief purpose to bring man into alignment with the laws of love" (2: 132). While children may selfishly focus on their own needs, as we mature we become better able to love others, and our ability to love extends to our romantic partner, our children, and beyond to our community and nation. As our ability to love grows, we are better able to act for

others' benefit. Rather than focusing on continual evolutionary transformation, these theories of sexual and ethical development rely on existing racial hierarchies to show a developmental progress from savage promiscuity to civilized monogamy.

Cultural and legal changes challenged beliefs of English monogamy and therefore its claim to civilization and superiority. Laws such as the Custody of Infants Act (1839), the Matrimonial Causes Act (1857), and the Married Women's Property Acts (1870 and 1882) undermined the belief in the permanent nature of marriage in England and therefore eroded the boundary between savage and civilized marriages. If an English woman could divorce and remarry, then what separated the "civilized" English from "savage" promiscuous tribes? While divorce law reform points to the growing similarity between the less civilized races and the English, British naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace seeks to break down this similarity by relying on a hierarchy, from licentious brutes to civilized monogamists. In his essay *Human Selection* (1890), Wallace argues against the liberalization of divorce laws as antithetical to human evolution. Quoting a source he identifies as "Miss Chapman," since "her statement of the case expresses my own views," Wallace urges that

> *Instinct* is strongly on the side of indissoluble marriage. In proportion as men leave brutedom behind and enter into the fulness of their human heritage, they will cease to tolerate the idea of two or more living partners. *History* shows conclusively that where divorce has been easy, licentiousness, disorder, and often complete anarchy have prevailed. The history of civilisation is the history of advance in monogamy. (332)

Animals and savages only seek temporary unions, and societies that encourage divorce promote "anarchy" because "civilized" humans evolve toward perfect monogamy. Making divorce more widely available in England, therefore, links the characteristics and behaviors of "savage" and "civilized" humans that undermined widely held racial hierarchies. These anthropological texts by Wallace, Tylor, and MacLennan, however, emphasized the progress and development of emotions from the "savage" races that conclude in the creation of the fully human "civilized" European. In the face of legal and cultural changes in the nineteenth century, these closed plots of evolutionary development sought to reaffirm English superiority.

While Darwin drew on these hierarchical narratives of sexual development in *Descent*, Darwin's theories also complicated progressive theories of marriage by blurring the line between animal and humans, savage and civilized, in part by arguing that both animals and humans used mental processes to select their mate. Darwin argues that animals can select their mates by observing their appearance and then making an aesthetic comparison and choice. Darwin argues that just as humans can selectively breed birds with particular coloring, so too can female birds observe and select the mates that are the most aesthetically pleasing.

> No doubt this implies powers of discrimination and taste on the part of the female which will at first appear extremely improbable; but by the facts to be adduced here after, I hope to show that the females actually have these powers.
>
> (Darwin, *Descent* 246)

Darwin's analogy here reinforces the evolutionary connection between the "lower" animals and humans by insisting that humans and animals have the same aesthetic sense.

Darwin anticipates his reader's objections by stating that the natural relation between human and animals "at first [appears] extremely improbable," as it denies the Christian belief in a special creation for humans.

By resolving that animals had enough aesthetic sense and mental capacity to make a choice of mates, Darwin pushed human marriage and courtship customs back into their evolutionary past. He even explains that the term "marriage" can describe non-permanent unions between animals that result in offspring:

> Throughout the following discussion I use the term [marriage] in the same sense as when naturalists speak of animals as monogamous, meaning thereby that the male is accepted by or chooses a single female and lives with her either during the breeding season or for the whole year, keeping possession of her by the law of might; or, as where they speak of a polygamous species, meaning that the male lives with several females. This kind of marriage is all that concerns us here, as it suffices for the work of sexual selection. (Darwin, *Descent* 656)

By Christian standards, a marriage is a holy, spiritual union between one man and one woman. In contrast, Darwin implied that marriage was little more than a sexual union. Rather than a "marriage" that drew people closer to God, marriage in some evolutionary texts was little more than a temporary convenience to slake sexual desire and procreate. In this sense then, "marriage" can apply to a broad variety of matches, including polygamy, polyandry, and monogamous but temporary unions. While Lubbock, Tylor, McLellan, Hall, and Wallace argued for closed theories of marriage development that moved from savage to civilized, from promiscuity to monogamy, Darwin's theory of sexual selection is an open plot in which an individual could choose one partner after

another. By highlighting the affinity between human and animal behavior, Darwin's theory destabilizes the assumed progress from animal to human, savage to civilized.

After Darwin, scientists divided between those who advanced a closed plot of sexual hierarchy and those who argued for an open plot that recognized an affinity between animal and human behavior. As Erika Lorraine Milam outlines, evolutionists continued to probe courtship behavior, but largely divided into two camps based on how they saw the relationship between human and animal behavior. One thread, as I have already shown, argued that "lower" animals such as birds would not have the mental ability to observe differences in potential mates and then weigh these differences to make an aesthetic decision as to which they preferred. In essence, scientists were concerned that pushing human marriage customs into the evolutionary past violated the boundary between animal and human behavior and therefore undercut the uniqueness of the human mind. This thread saw "animal courtship as a physiological process akin to each act of human 'love-making'" (Milam 29). These scientists responded to fears of animal behavior in humans, and distinctly human behavior originating in animals, by separating the animals from humans using the Cartesian division of physical and mental. In essence, these scientists created two closed plots, one for animal development and one for human in order to more completely separate humans from animals.[43]

The other thread of evolutionary theory, advanced by scientists such as Darwin's protégé George Romanes and the British ornithologist Edmund Selous, followed Darwin

[43] My argument here is inspired by Jeanne Fahnestock's discussion of antithesis, gradatio, and incrementum in *Rhetorical Figures in Science.*

in pushing human marriage choice into the evolutionary past, anchoring it in animal courtship behaviors. Indeed, Romanes's *Darwin and After Darwin* does more to subvert a narrative of aesthetic development through the evolutionary ladder than even Darwin's *Selection in Relation to Sex.* The form of *Selection* at least hinted at a progress, as it was organized from the sexual behavior "lower" to "higher" animals, starting with insects and moving through fishes, birds, mammals, and ending in humans. Romanes, however, states that while only higher animals with sufficient intellectual capacity have an aesthetic sense, it is not possible to trace the development of that sense through the evolutionary ladder. Romanes points out that many birds and some mammals display an aesthetic sense, but that does not "necessarily imply that there is any constant relation between such a sense and high levels of intelligence in other respects. In point of fact, such is certainly not the case, because the best evidence that we have of an aesthetic sense in animals is derived from birds, and not from mammals" (380). Romanes states that there is no progression of aesthetic sense, and emphasizes its non-linear nature by drawing connections not between mammals and humans, those organisms closest on the evolutionary ladder, but between humans, birds, and spiders. Romanes gives several examples of bird species that display a love of color, "consummate artists" that decorate their homes with whatever beautiful objects—shells, feathers, and glass—they can find (381). Romanes uses spiders as an example in part because these courtship behaviors "[occur] so low down in the zoological scale," and yet clearly demonstrate "the process of courtship consists in such an elaborate performance of dancings, struttings, and attitudinizing that it is scarcely possible to doubt their object is to incite the opposite sex" (390, 387). Romanes's use of anthropomorphism in his description of animal behavior

here highlights the kinship he perceives between humans and animals. While intellectual development might point to a hierarchy on the evolutionary scale, Romanes confounds such closed plots in his argument for an aesthetic sense by highlighting the affinity between species via his anthropomorphic descriptions of spider and bird behaviors.

Through the late nineteenth century, therefore, Darwinian open plot narratives of individual, racial, and species evolution emphasized the similarities between humans and animal behavior, raising anxieties in those Victorians who believed themselves to be a product of divine creation. Closed narratives, in contrast, emphasized the differences between animals and humans and traced a development of sexual characteristics and behaviors from the "lower" animals to "civilized" Europeans. Trollope draws on these closed theories in his description of environments and characters in *The Way We Live Now*. Indeed, the American West we glimpse in *The Way We Live Now* can accurately be described as a place of "licentiousness, disorder, and often complete anarchy," as men drunkenly attack women and women take the law into their own hands by defending themselves at gunpoint. However, with the entry of Americans into English society and an English society that appears to adopt uncivilized behaviors (including savage violence, unethical business practices, and impermanent marriages), the novel questions what differences there are between Americans and the English in the way we they live now.

Mrs. Hurtle "Might Never Have Had a Husband,—Might at this Moment have Two or Three": Threats to the Marriage Plot

Paul and Mrs. Hurtle meet as they are traveling from the U.S. to Europe, and they become engaged during the trip. While Paul returns to England, Mrs. Hurtle travels on to the continent to conduct business. When he returns to England, Paul begins to regret their

hasty engagement as he realizes how little he knows about her and writes a letter to her to break their engagement. The problems both Paul and the novel have with her are related to her Americanness—her adaptability and her ability to successfully compete and physically survive the Wild West. These same traits also imply that she blurs boundaries between genders and between savagery and civilization. Mrs. Hurtle represents change—evolutionary change and, consequently, changing gender roles. Because Mrs. Hurtle challenges boundaries, and because her character threatens the social stability of the traditional marriage endings, the novel exiles her from the marriage plot and from England. However, because the novel does not integrate Mrs. Hurtle into the marriage plot, the narrative fails to account for the larger social changes she represents.

Mrs. Hurtle's attractions define her as a good mate according to Darwinian principles of selection: she is beautiful, intelligent, and charming. The narrator reminisces at length that the present fashion is for women to be "constructed" by "hairdressers and milliners" with "padding and false hair" (240; ch. 26). In contrast, Mrs. Hurtle is "very lovely, with a kind of beauty which we seldom see now": her beauty is natural and arises from her "colour" (241; ch. 26). Mrs. Hurtle "was very dark,—a dark brunette,—with large round blue eyes," and "her cheeks and lips and neck were full and the blood would come and go giving a varying expression to her face with almost every word she spoke" (240; vol. 1, ch. 26). The novel sets up this description of Mrs. Hurtle's natural beauty to critique the artificial way that women dress now.[44] The alignment of Mrs. Hurtle with

[44] For further discussion of how late-nineteenth century authors use the American girl figure to critique English society, see Kate Flint's "The American Girl and the New Woman."

nature and the emphasis on her coloring imply that Mrs. Hurtle's coloring is, like the peacock's plumage, created through the processes of sexual selection to attract a mate.

In Darwinian terms, Paul is attracted to Mrs. Hurtle's "plumage," traits that make her sexually desirable, which manifests in their physical affection throughout the novel. Despite Paul's claim he does not want to marry Mrs. Hurtle anymore, almost every time they meet in London they embrace and kiss (262; vol. 1, ch. 28, 398; vol. 1, ch. 43, 446; vol. 2, ch. 97). However, these descriptions of Mrs. Hurtle also imply several problems with choosing her as a mate. Her cheeks and lips are "full," and "her nose also was full," her mouth was "large," "her chin was full," and "her bust was full and beautifully shaped" (241; vol. 1, ch. 26). Mrs. Hurtle may be beautiful, but her closeness to nature and the repetition of "full" hints at an earthy sexuality considered inappropriate for a "civilized" Victorian woman. Indeed, her colorful but dark complexion, her fullness, and her age ("perhaps almost as near thirty-five as thirty" [241; vol. 1, ch. 26]) combine to suggest that much like a piece of very ripe fruit, Mrs. Hurtle walks the fine line between attraction and repulsion.

Mrs. Hurtle's beauty, while an evolutionary good that increases her chances of mating, does not necessarily reflect her inner nature. In fact, Paul realizes when he returns to England that her cleverness and changeability have enabled her to manipulate him, using her charms to force him into overlooking her mysterious and violent past. As Paul remembers, "such had been the woman's cleverness, such her charm, so great her power of adaptation, that he had passed weeks in her daily company, with still progressing intimacy and affection, without feeling that anything had been missing" (243; vol. 1, ch. 26). The repeated use of the term "charm," while echoing Darwin's use of the

term in the sense of "song or singing of a bird" ("Charm," n.2), also reflects the definition "to act upon with […] magic so as to influence, control, subdue, [or] bind" ("Charm," v.1). "Magic" implies falseness and illusion, a power that works against reality. This second definition indicates that Mrs. Hurtle's attractions are only skin deep and are ultimately not powerful enough to lure Paul away from his true love, Hetta. While Mrs. Hurtle may be beautiful and sexually attractive, her Darwinian charms are only superficial. Trollope demonstrates that, initially, Paul's youth and inexperience leads him to confuse sexual desire with the desire to marry. As Hugh Stanbury also concluded in *He Knew He Was Right*, true marriage requires something beyond the "pressure of the plumage." Choosing Mrs. Hurtle would mean choosing a mate largely for physical reasons. While Darwin often focused on sexual selection of physical attributes, Trollope illustrates here that choosing for physical attributes makes us little better than animals. While Hetta may not be as beautiful or flashy as Mrs. Hurtle, choosing her means looking beyond the plumage to a higher human emotional connection. Paul meets Mrs. Hurtle while traveling from the West, and he is perfectly content to allow his feelings to overwhelm him. It is only when he returns to "civilized" England—and his mentor Roger Carbury's guidance—that he begins to rely on a rational assessment of her pedigree to make his decision.

Indeed, as Paul discovers, Mrs. Hurtle relies on a primitive morality that Trollope derides as being little better than the "might is right" principle. Unlike Paul or the other ethical characters in the novel, Mrs. Hurtle idolizes Melmotte's power and wealth. She tells Paul that "commerce is not noble unless it rises to great heights. To lie in plenty by sticking to your counter from nine in the morning to nine at night is not a fine life" (246;

vol. 1, ch. 26). Here, Mrs. Hurtle degrades those with a middle-class work ethic, favoring instead the principles of the plutocracy. When Paul cautions her that Melmotte "has feet of clay," she brushes his concern aside.

> Ah,—you mean that he is bold in breaking those precepts of yours about coveting worldly wealth. All men and women break that commandment, but they do so in a stealthy fashion, half drawing back the grasping hand, praying to be delivered from temptation while they filch only a little, pretending to despise the only thing that is dear to them in the world. Here is a man who boldly says that he recognises no such law; that wealth is power, and that power is good, and that the more a man has of wealth the greater and the stronger and the nobler he can be. (246; vol. 1, ch. 26)

The novel condemns Hurtle's primitive morality, which Trollope interprets as the strong trampling the weak at any costs without thought of human emotions such as sympathy.[45] Mrs. Hurtle cares only about survival and the creation of wealth. In her jaded view, money is "the only thing that is dear" to most people, and she admires Melmotte because he openly admits it. Everyone wants money, but most people feel too guilty for violating Christian ethics to openly and boldly pursue it. While Mrs. Hurtle may regret breaking the commandment against murder, here she sees those people who feel guilty for coveting others' wealth as weak. In her mind, it is only the people who seek to

[45] For discussion of morality in Trollope's fiction, see Ruth apRoberts's *The Moral Trollope,* J. D. Coates's "Moral Patterns in *The Way We Live Now,*" Jane Nardin's *Trollope and Victorian Moral Philosophy,* Margaret Eldred's *Trollope's Moral Structure in His Novels of Marriage*, and Martin Price's *Forms of Life: Character and Moral Imagination in the Novel.*

accumulate wealth, whether legally or illegally, who can remove themselves from the struggle for existence and therefore act nobly. Critic George Levine argues that Trollope's novels demonstrate that "the world is changing from its true-blue traditions so that moral actions becomes secondary to flexibility and adaptiveness" (197). While *The Way We Live Now* recognizes the need for "flexibility and adaptiveness," it also condemns characters who embrace adaptiveness over moral action.

Mrs. Hurtle pushes Paul to accept her values. When Paul begins to ask uncomfortable questions about the railroad project, Melmotte offers him a job in Mexico to get him out of the way. When Paul tells Mrs. Hurtle, she encourages him to go because, as she says, "I want you to have ambition" (392; vol. 1, ch. 42). Even if Melmotte is only trying to get Paul out of the way, she argues that he can make his own opportunities in Mexico and become a great man. Indeed, she encourages him to act with confidence like Fisker or Melmotte: "make people there believe that you are in earnest, and there will be no difficulty about the money" (392; vol. 1, ch. 42). Note that she does not encourage him to act honestly, but merely to make others "believe" that he is "in earnest." Mrs. Hurtle does not seem to be encouraging him to build the railroad, but rather to make money through speculation like Fisker and Melmotte. In short, she fails to behave like a good Victorian woman. Ideally, a woman should use her greater spirituality and purity to renew her husband's morality when he returns home from the contaminated public sphere. Instead, Mrs. Hurtle encourages Paul to desire power and money and sends him out into the world to achieve them in any way possible.

Unlike the Anglo-American marriage in the earlier novel, *He Knew He Was Right*, *The Way We Live Now* decides most definitely that, in the case of Paul's

engagement, like should go to like. After finally accepting the end of their engagement, Mrs. Hurtle reflects that ultimately their natures were too different for them to make a suitable match:

> She and this young Englishman were not fit to be mated. He was to her thinking a tame, sleek household animal, whereas she knew herself to be wild,—fitter for the woods than for polished cities. It had been one of the faults of her life that she had allowed herself to be bound by tenderness of feeling to this soft over-civilised man. (379; vol. 2, ch. 90)

But it is important to note that when Trollope matches like with like, he is looking at likeness in terms of racial/national attributes—she is a savage and "wild," while he is "soft" and "civilized." By contrast, Paul and Hetta are racially alike, as they are both fit for "polished cities." If examined in terms of gender attributes, Paul and Mrs. Hurtle are too much alike. Paul has ambition and wants to be an important businessman. Similarly, Mrs. Hurtle states "I wish I was a man that I might be concerned with a really great thing" like the proposed railroad, as she "[hates] little peddling things" (391; vol. 1, ch. 42). As a woman, however, she is barred from participating in any business schemes, confined instead to the "peddling things" of domestic life.

The novel insinuates that the real problem with matching Mrs. Hurtle with Paul is that she is more manly than the "soft over-civilised" Paul. In America's Darwinian environment, Mrs. Hurtle must use violence to escape death, and she feels compelled to use whatever "charms" she has in order to win a mate. Her ability to survive and be naturally selected, Trollope implies repeatedly, turns her into a violent and temperamental person. Mrs. Hurtle tells Paul that she can protect herself in a land that

was not civilized enough to protect its own women, and it is mostly from the threat of men—rather than non-human predators—that she must protect herself. She admits that she once armed herself and barred her bedroom from her drunken husband, a story substantiated by the judicial decision to grant her a divorce from him "on the score of cruelty and drunkenness" (445; vol. 1, ch. 47). Further, she protected herself from another drunken man's rape attempt in Oregon by shooting and killing him. Trollope describes these incidents in, particularly Darwinian terms. Mrs. Hurtle, the narrator explains, "had endured violence, and had been violent. She had schemed against and had schemed. She had fitted herself to the life which had befallen her" (449; vol. 1, ch. 47). The parallel constructions in this passage replicate the way Mrs. Hurtle has adapted to the environment, her traits matching the demands of her surroundings. Because Mrs. Hurtle was born into an "uncivilized" environment, she had "fitted" herself to that environment by using her physical strength and intelligence to survive, even though these traits make her unladylike and uncivilized.[46] Mrs. Hurtle is the "wild cat," who Paul fears "even while she was lavishing her caresses upon him, that she might too probably turn and rend him" (242; vol. 1, ch. 26). Mrs. Hurtle's wild environment is not the beautiful manifestation of God, but rather Tennyson's "nature, red in tooth and claw" (41). While Trollope's characterization of Mrs. Hurtle's violent nature and its connection to her

[46] While not condoning the use of violence by women, Trollope's treatment of Mrs. Hurtle's violence is not without sympathy. Although later condemned as unfit to be Paul's wife because of her violent actions, she speaks eloquently in her own defense. For further discussion of Trollope's ambivalent treatment of Mrs. Hurtle, see Chapter 4 of Margaret Markwick's *Trollope and Women*.

environment would not be a shock to those familiar with social Darwinism, her character is at odds with the way other American women were characterized.

The novel describes Mrs. Hurtle as the product of nature, but it is a particular interpretation of Darwinian nature filled with violence, struggle, and death. The child of this type of nature is degraded because she has had to protect herself from becoming the prey of other animals, especially humans. While many American girls in nineteenth-century fiction are seen as more natural and closer to nature than their British counterparts, they are also usually seen as more innocent because of this close connection to nature. In Sherwood's *The Transplanted Rose* (1882), for example, Rose is raised in the American West as "a wild one" (19; ch. 3), "a handsome savage—a real Pocahontas" (16; ch. 2), and a "frank daughter of nature" (4; ch. 1) who must be taught to fear people when she moves to New York, so she can be protected from others (especially men). Her aunt laments the task as she grapples with "how to put suspicion into this pure mind" (21; ch. 3). Because Rose was born in nature and raised away from the corrupting influence of society, she is innocent. Sherwood's conception of nature, however, is nature as a manifestation of God. Since she is in nature, Rose is closer to God. Humans are debased, and therefore children who are raised in society are more likely to be corrupt; however, Rose's wildness and goodness enable her to reinvigorate and straighten a corrupt society. Even Bettina from *The Shuttle* is described as good and innocent because she is born and partially raised away from the corruption of modern European society. Her traits have been selected through struggle and competition, but her family's accumulated wealth has insulated her from this struggle, and her life in America has protected her from degeneration. Henry James's American girls are often similarly innocent, raised away

from the corruption of Europe. Despite, and perhaps because of, this innocence, their frank and forward behavior is often mistaken for coquetry or sexual experience. The most famous example of this misapprehension is Daisy Miller, who confounds the jaded Europeanized Frederick Winterbourne with her natural frankness.

The Way We Live Now, in contrast, interprets Mrs. Hurtle's closeness to nature as degradation, which manifests as manliness—she is capable in business and sexually aggressive. The novel begins with Mrs. Hurtle and Paul in similar situations: both have money that is under other people's control, and both seek to regain their capital. Paul travels to California to reclaim the money he invested in his uncle's ranch, which had been invested against his wishes into a partnership with Hamilton Fisker. Similarly, Mrs. Hurtle travels to Europe to reclaim property that her husband had "fraudulently sold" (253; vol. 1, ch. 27). In a letter to Paul, Mrs. Hurtle points out that "we both had some property, but neither of us could enjoy it. Since that, I have made my way through difficulties. From what I have heard at San Francisco I suppose that you have done the same" (252; vol. 1, ch. 27). Although they are in similar situations, and Mrs. Hurtle assumes that Paul has successfully reclaimed his capital as she has done, this assumption is not entirely true. Instead, Paul's uncle transferred control of Paul's capital to Fisker, and Fisker, in turn, passed it to Melmotte to be speculated in the "Great South Central Pacific and Mexican Railway," the primary fraudulent business venture in the novel. While Mrs. Hurtle reclaimed her capital, Paul cannot and is forced to sit through false board meetings as an unwilling participant in Fisker's and Melmotte's great fraud. It is only at the end of the novel, after seeking advice from Roger and a lawyer, that Paul can finally reclaim his capital. As critic Tamara Wagner succinctly puts it, the "[Wild West]

is really the country for bold and businesslike women" (209), and Mrs. Hurtle is able to take her business acumen developed there and successfully utilize it in the international marketplace.

Mrs. Hurtle's frank sexuality also connotes manliness. She loves Paul and demonstrates her love physically by embracing him and kissing almost every time they meet, and she uses her beauty and charm to manipulate. At several points, she seeks to move Paul out of England to a more primitive environment. When Paul tells her that the board wants to send him to Mexico to oversee the railway, she is delighted, as I mentioned earlier, because it would demonstrate the ambition she wants for him. Additionally, traveling to Mexico would mean a return to an uncivilized environment, where their relationship began and where she could ensnare him with her charms. When she fails to persuade him and he continues to try to break their engagement, she pleads ill-health and plays upon his sympathy to manipulate him into taking her to the sea (395; vol. 1, ch. 42). While this claim does allow her to delay their broken engagement, it also repeats her attempt to get him to relocate to a seemingly less civilized environment so that she can regain her sexual control over him. Traveling to the sea symbolizes a return to a primordial and primitive sexuality in humanity. As Gillian Beer reminds us, "evolutionary theory implied a new myth of the past: instead of the garden at the beginning, there was the sea and the swamp" (118). Her effort to return Paul to the sea thus symbolize her need to return him to a state of primitive desire, a place she would have the most power over Paul. If returning to England turned him away from her to Hetta, then returning to the sea might change his course again. While she succeeds in

getting Paul there, their untimely meeting with Roger on the beach forestalls any headway she might have made.

Mrs. Hurtle's sexual agency challenges Victorian conceptions of female modesty. Luring, charming, and chasing men might be acceptable behavior for Darwin's plumed birds, but Trollope's novel condemns such bold sexual behavior as inappropriate for civilized Victorian ladies. While Trollope might deploy Darwinian language to add verité to his courtship plots, he ultimately censures Darwinian sexuality in humans, especially women. Mrs. Hurtle confesses to Hetta that

> I am almost ashamed to tell you my own part of the story, and yet I know not why I should be ashamed. I followed him here to England—because I loved him. I came after him as perhaps a woman should not do because I was true of heart. He had told me that he did not want me;—but I wanted to be wanted, and I hoped that I might lure him back to his troth. (388; vol. 2, ch. 91)

One of Mrs. Hurtle's major mistakes, according to the novel, is that she chases after a man. Women who chase after men in Trollope's novels (like Camilla French in *He Knew He Was Right*) are often punished by remaining single.

Mrs. Hurtle's willingness to break gender norms points to larger problems with successfully integrating her into the marriage plot. When Paul returns to California, he begins to research her history to find out if she is suitable to be his wife. Although when they are first introduced she is presented as a widow, rumors in San Francisco speculate that Mr. Fisker may have never existed at all or that he was still alive, both of which insinuate Mrs. Hurtle's sexual misconduct. Mrs. Hurtle later tells Paul that she herself does not know whether her husband is alive or not, but then seeks to pacify Paul by

claiming that she is divorced (444; vol. 1, ch. 47). As Paul considers, "Mrs. Hurtle was an adventuress;—might never have had a husband,—might at this moment have two or three" (256; vol. 2, ch. 77). The ideal Victorian woman is chosen by a man, only has sex with her husband, and remains married to him for her life. Paul's anxiety stems from the fact that Mrs. Hurtle not only chooses him (not he her) but also that her sexual agency breaks gender norms. She may have chosen to have sex outside of marriage and merely claimed the title of Mrs., or she may be willing to divorce him and choose again.[47] Mrs.

[47] While American girl characters like Daisy Miller may reflect the innocence of American girls, Mrs. Hurtle belongs to another set of American women who knowingly break norms of sexual passivity. Cutting across time and genre, these American women are similar in that they often conceal their sexual histories. Mrs. Headway in James's "Siege of London" (1882), for example, seeks entrance to London society by marrying the baronet Sir Arthur Demesne, but must hide her sexual and marital history to be considered fit for him. Although Mrs. Headway and Mrs. Hurtle both appear to consciously conceal their sexual history to achieve their marital goals, not all the American women in these plots do so to manipulate others. In each case, the problems of courtship for these American women center around bigamy, whether intentional or unintentional.

Two other examples are Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor" (1892) and Trollope's *Dr. Wortle's School* (1881). In Doyle's short story, Sherlock must locate the American bride of Lord St. Simon, Miss Hatty Doran, who disappeared during their wedding breakfast. Sherlock discovers Hatty at a hotel with her first husband, Frank Moulton. Frank and Hatty married in secret in America, but she thought him dead after an Apache raid on his mining camp. She agrees to marry Lord St. Simon, but her first husband returns to claim her, arriving on the day of her marriage. In this Sherlock tale, Hatty Doran does not seek to manipulate or lie and behaves honorably to both men. Similarly innocent is the American Mrs. Peacocke in Trollope's *Dr. Wortle's School*, who marries the English school teacher Mr. Peacocke after her first abusive husband dies. The Peacockes later discover that her first husband is still

Hurtle's willingness to break gender norms threatens social stability, and this instability is represented by the threat of bigamy. Jeanne Fahnestock traces the origin of bigamy as a convention in fiction during the 1860s to the "confused state of the marriage laws" and anxiety concerning divorce law reform ("Bigamy" 48). I would add that Anglo-American fiction provides an interesting special case for these bigamous plots. Mrs. Hurtle asserts that "I was divorced from him according to the law of the State of Kansas" (445; vol. 2, ch. 97), but Stephen Wall observes "it is not clear whether what is good enough for Kansas is acceptable elsewhere" (55). Considering the treatment of divorced American woman in fiction, the answer is probably not. At various points in the text, Mrs. Hurtle represents herself as divorced or widowed, but by the end of the novel, Mr. Hurtle has returned from the dead and is denying that they are divorced. Bigamy in Anglo-American courtship fiction signifies three related issues with Anglo-American marriages: first, seen within the context of the evolutionary discourse on marriage, the impermanence of American marriages suggests a less-evolved people. Secondly, American women's desire for more than one man points to broader sexual, class, and racial anxieties, as women with sexual agency were often associated with working class or non-white women. Thirdly, we can recognize anxiety concerning progressive American marriage and divorce laws, which is reflected in Hetta's belief that American women "can get themselves divorced just when they like" (245; vol. 2, ch. 76). While a traditional closed marriage plot in literature creates stability in the relationship between individuals and therefore society, bigamy challenges the stability of the happy ending and therefore

alive, but they continue to live as man and wife despite the nullification of their marriage.

points to an open plot with the relationships between people still in flux as the novel ends.

Whether from polyamorous unions or from the possibility of divorce, non-monogamous relationships threaten the stability of the marriage ending. The courtship plot, after all, represents that the world of the family (and by extension the nation) has reached stasis. However, if a first husband could appear at any time to reclaim his wife (as Mr. Hurtle does by the end of the novel), we cannot feel sure and satisfied with the happy ending. On top of that, the (sexual) agency of these American women insinuates that they will not be satisfied with remaining within the Victorian home, but rather will always be seeking adventure outside their home, their station, and their country. These divorced American women disrupt the steady flow of English society, throwing characters and romantic plotlines into turmoil; expelling American women from England provides relief from the threat they pose.

Trollope's novel critiques gendered and national change by showing how Mrs. Hurtle disrupts and destabilizes English society. In her relationship with Paul, Mrs. Hurtle, the more daring and strong willed, dominates. By extension, their relationship would mean that women can dominate men, and America can dominate England. Further, her refusal to accept gender norms enables her to break away from and divorce her first husband. On multiple levels, a marriage between Mrs. Hurtle and Paul would destabilize the marriage ending. The marriage plot achieves stasis by creating a permanent relation between a man and a woman. This permanent union between individuals represents static relations between genders, classes, nations, and races. Because Mrs. Hurtle has married and divorced before, she may do so again, a possibility that threatens the stability of their

marriage plot. The novel uses the language patterns of sexual and racial development to show that Mrs. Hurtle is not a good choice for Paul because she is less civilized than Hetta. However, the main problem is that choosing Mrs. Hurtle would be an open plot that would allow social changes that Trollope derides. Paul and Hetta's marriage, however, is a closed plot that is meant to arrest social change in England.

Mrs. Hurtle's return to America in the final pages of the novel follows the exile of a villain common to comedic plots, but it also signals an uncertain future for her. While Trollope punishes her for her foolish attempt to lure Paul into marriage, her return to America also signals a return to an environment that she was successful in previously and in which she may be again. While her first marriage may have turned out badly, she did succeed in finding a mate and hints to Paul that she may marry again (446; vol. 2, ch. 97). Indeed, her final conversation with Paul indicates that despite her failure in England, she may seek a mate in America. She asks if she can keep a miniature of him, which becomes a symbol of her constancy in loving him. "Nothing on earth shall ever part me from it. Should I ever marry another man,—as I may do,—he must take me and this together. While I live it shall be next my heart" (446; vol. 2, ch. 97). While in part this declaration may be a parting shot to make Paul feel jealous and guilty, it also again speaks to Mrs. Hurtle's power of adapting to circumstances. Whereas Roger's thwarted love (as I will later show) leaves him without a genetic future, Mrs. Hurtle willingly adapts despite the emotional pain she feels so that her genes will survive.

Mrs. Hurtle represents change—evolutionary change, changing gender roles, and America's changing role in world affairs about which the novel is at best ambivalent and at worst openly critical. For these reasons, Mrs. Hurtle is exiled from England at the end

of the novel. The novel seeks to restore order by exiling Mrs. Hurtle to America and concluding with Paul and Hetta's marriage. However, exile is more ambiguous than ending in either death or marriage. If Mrs. Hurtle died, we might conclude that the changes she represents are similarly at an end. If Mrs. Hurtle and Paul married, we could assume that the changes she represents had been successfully accounted for, defeated by the status quo much as Caroline is at the end of *He Knew He Was Right.* But because Mrs. Hurtle is exiled, the changes she represents are merely delayed, not destroyed. After all, she is only as far away from England as the nearest steamship. Mrs. Hurtle represents open elements that the marriage ending cannot account for and therefore pose a continuing threat to existing social structures beyond the novel's ending.

"Real Virtue Requires Enemies": Paul's Ethical Development

Although Trollope condemns Mrs. Hurtle by showing that her adaptability leads her to violate moral and social codes, he nonetheless allows that some adaptability is necessary for survival. Trollope poses two potential matches for Hetta: her cousin Roger Carbury or Paul Montague. Hetta's mother pushes her to accept Roger to secure their family's financial future; however, Hetta is not attracted to him and only loves him as a cousin. The novel points to Roger's inflexibility as his greatest fault: inflexibility means not adapting to the environment, which leads to extinction. Romantic notions of love promote constancy as a virtue, but in Darwinian thought, such constancy is a failing as it reduces reproductive opportunities.[48] Roger demonstrates this problem when he refuses

[48] In *The Gentleman in Trollope,* Shirley Robin Letwin discusses constancy in love as a key feature of Trollope's gentlemen.

to marry anyone if Hetta will not have him. As he tells Hetta at the beginning of the novel, "I love you so well that I have already taken you for better or for worse. I cannot change. My nature is too stubborn for such changes" (72; vol. 1, ch. 8). He repeats this sentiment at the end of the novel when he finally accepts Hetta's choice of mate. Roger's inflexibility is a fatal Darwinian flaw. He is unwilling to find a mate after Hetta's rejection, and because of this stubbornness, his line will die with him. Roger might be more moral than Paul, but his inability to adapt indicates that he represents the past rather than the future of England. By the end of the novel, he chooses Hetta and her future son to inherit his property because he has no heir.

Roger's inflexibility reflects larger problems with his family line in the dynamic environment of modern England. The Carbury family had long held and lived on the same land in Suffolk. While in previous generations this estate had allowed the squire to "live plenteously and hospitably," Roger "lived on his own land among his own people, as all the Carburys before him had done, and was poor" (48; vol. 1, ch. 6). The problem is not just that times have changed, but that the Carbury family has not changed with them. During the period when the novel takes place, Trollope specifies that while in the past estates supported themselves, they now require an income from outside to sustain them:

> If a moderate estate in land be left to a man now, there arises the question whether he is not damaged unless an income also be left to him wherewith to keep up the estate. Land is a luxury, and of all luxuries is the most costly. Now the Carburys never had anything but land. Suffolk has not been made rich and great by coal or iron. No great town had sprung up on the confines of the Carbury property. No eldest son had gone into trade or risen high in a profession so as to add to the

> Carbury wealth. No great heiress has been married. There had been no ruin,—no misfortune. But in the days of which we write the Squire of Carbury Hall had become a poor man simply through the wealth of others. (Trollope, *The Way* 1:49)

Suffolk has only agriculture, without the ore deposits or urban centers—technology and trade—that are enriching other parts of England in the 1870s. Further, the Carburys are not changing with the times: no men are adapting to the shifting economic climate by pursuing business interests outside the estate, nor have the family reinvigorated their blood or refilled their coffers by marrying an heiress. Without these adaptations, Roger's branch of the Carbury line fails to successfully compete in the modern marketplace and is going extinct.

This passage points to a larger problem with the courtship plot, as we will see in more detail later. In the past, English men and women could marry and their ability to successfully manage their estates symbolized the smooth running of England. By the 1870s, however, the agricultural estate was more representative of economic stagnancy than stability as the nation required industry and technology to compete in a global economic environment.[49] The changing nature of business requires someone adaptable, a capitalist willing to seek financial opportunity off the estate. Land is now a "luxury," and one that must be paid for with an income. In this way, we might see the English estate as the new expanded domestic space, as it is no longer a place of profitable production. The

[49] For a more complete discussion of the economic impact of industrialization on the landed gentry, see David Cannadine's *The Rise and Fall of the British Aristocracy.*

world outside the English estate—London, or the world more broadly—is the new expanded space to produce capital. In the current environment of the novel, then, Paul is the better choice of mate: he seeks out opportunities off the estate and outside England.

Trollope's novel positions Paul Montague to become the future of England because he demonstrates Darwinian adaptability. While Roger lives on his estate much as his ancestors have done for generations before him, Paul is willing to grow, change, and take risks. Paul is a fighter, and he is adventurous—willing to step outside traditional roles to seek a new life for himself and struggle against others to keep that life. When he is kicked out of Oxford, he travels to California to go into business with his uncle on a farm. Paul lives and works there for several years before returning to England. Further, he can live in different environments with people of various dispositions, classes, and nationalities. Paul is born in England, believed to be the height of civilization, imperial power, and technological development, and raised by Roger, who embodies England's civilized virtues and the gentlemanly ideal of the landed squirearchy. But Paul also successfully travels to, lives in, and works in the American West, an environment considered to be "savage" and lawless. Paul can also adapt to the vibrant city of London, fitting in amongst ne'er-do-well aristocrats of the Beargarden or shady *noveau riche* businessmen like Fisker and Melmotte. Paul is not limited by his nature to a particular environment but can choose where he wants to live and work and with whom. He is also emotionally adaptable and can form relationships with women as different as the "wildcat" Mrs. Hurtle and the protected genteel lady of civilized society, Hetta Carbury.

While Paul's adaptability might be seen as an evolutionary good, the novel expresses ambivalence about adaptability as a trait because it could undermine English

values and society. Mrs. Hurtle, as I showed, was too adaptable, which led her to violate moral and social codes—she is driven to achieve success at any cost in business, in love, and in the struggle for existence. But if English people like Paul tolerate the Fiskers and the Melmottes, then they are accepting not only immorality but also the contamination of the English middle and upper classes by people of questionable class and racial backgrounds. London high society accepts Melmotte because of his wealth, and penniless aristocrats fight for his daughter's hand in marriage because they are more concerned with her monetary inheritance than her genetic inheritance. Despite Melmotte's own protestations, the novel's descriptions of him heavily imply that Melmotte is Jewish.[50] Marie herself is illegitimate and does not know who her mother was (106; vol. 1, ch. 11). Marie's and Melmotte's entrance into high society upsets class and racial hierarchies, and it is only by expelling these upstarts that the novel can restore English society and morality. Roger is the least adaptable character in the novel, but the novel appreciates Roger's moral strength and his unwillingness to socialize with Melmotte. Characters like Fisker and Melmotte are the most adaptable characters: they able to thrive in a variety of environments (both Europe and America) and collaborate with people of different class and racial backgrounds. But their Darwinian flexibility extends to moral flexibility, a

[50] For discussion of Melmotte's race and place within the novel, see Murray Baumgarten's "Seeing Double: Jews in the Fiction of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope, and George Eliot"; Derek Cohen's "Constructing the Contradiction: Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*"; Paul Delany's "Land, Money, and the Jews in the Later Trollope"; Bertha Hertz's "Trollope's Racial Bias against Disraeli"; Iva Jones's "Patterns of Estrangement in Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*"; and Edgar Rosenberg's *From Shylock to Svengali: Jewish Stereotypes in English Fiction*.

willingness to bend and even break morals, codes, and laws. If morality means inflexibility and therefore extinction, and adaptability means a lack of morality, then the future of England lies in finding a balance between these two traits. For Trollope, Paul might demonstrate this balance: he is adaptable *and* can mature to become ethical, although he does not achieve either full success or maturity by the end of the novel.

Paul Montague's plotline in the novel follows his development as he faces various moral problems centering on his romantic entanglements or his business ventures.[51] Of course, these two are not entirely separate as Paul depends on his business acumen to provide for a wife. Paul resembles other Trollopian protagonists such as Lord Silverbridge from *The Duke's Children*: he is good and charming but also young, inexperienced, and weak-willed. As scholars such as Mark King have noted, Paul is one of Trollope's hobbledehoys, males "of *somewhat* gentrified background" who are "generally pure of heart but handicapped by an innate ineptitude and a crushing lack of resources" (9).[52] Paul's plotline, therefore, traces his sexual and ethical development.

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[51] For discussion of morality and economics in Trollope's fiction, see J. Jeffrey Franklin's "Anthony Trollope Meets Pierre Bourdieu," Harold James's "The Literary Financier," Denise Lovett's "The Socially-Embedded Market and the Future of English Capitalism in Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*," Tara McGann's "Literary Realism in the Wake of Business Cycle Theory," Karen Odden's "Puffed Papers and Broken Promises," and John Smith's "Anthony Trollope and the Man from Wall Street."

[52] Several masculinity studies of Trollope's work have been published in recent years. See Elizabeth Bleicher's "Lessons from the Gutter," Andrew Dowling's *Manliness and the Male Novelist in Victorian Literature*, Shirley Robin Letwin's *The Gentleman in Trollope*, and Margaret Marwick's *New Men in Trollope's Novels.*

Before the start of the novel, Paul invested money in his uncle's farm in California. However, when he tries to reclaim his capital, he discovers that his uncle invested his money with Hamilton Fisker. Fisker reinvests Paul's money against his will, first into a mill and then into a new railroad, the Great Southern Central Pacific, and Mexican Railway. Paul recognizes that his money will likely be used fraudulently, but is seduced by the promise of power, reputation, and easy money. When Fisker comes to England to pitch his scheme to Paul and Melmotte, Paul recognizes that

> The object of Fisker, Montague, and Montague was not to make a railway to Vera Cruz, but to float a company. Paul thought that Mr. Fisker seemed to be indifferent whether the railway should ever be constructed or not. It was clearly his idea that fortunes were to be made out of the concern before a spadeful of earth had been moved. If brilliantly printed programmes might avail anything, with gorgeous maps, and beautiful little pictures of trains running into tunnels beneath snowy mountains and coming out of them on the margin of sunlit lakes, Mr. Fisker had certainly done much. (78; vol. 1, ch. 9)

From the introduction of the scheme, Paul is notably concerned with both the practicality and ethics of it. Paul recognizes that Fisker wants to make money from the sale of stock, not from the construction of a railroad. Instead of producing a business plan, schedule, or any of the nuts and bolts of building a railway, Fisker shows Paul only the glossy pages that are used to sell stock. In the beginning, Paul is excited even though he knows the venture is a fraud: he wants to be important and have his name attached to a large business venture. Although Paul can see problems with Fisker's proposal, he is neither

willing nor able to take a stand against Fisker and Melmotte's unethical business practices.

Just as he is seduced by the appearance of an important business venture, Paul also finds himself incapable of resisting Fisker's charm and charisma:

> Personally, he had disliked Fisker,—and perhaps not the less so because when in California he had never found himself able to resist the man's good humour, audacity, and cleverness combined. He had found himself talked into agreeing with any project which Mr. Fisker might have in hand. It was altogether against the grain with him, and yet by his own consent, that the flour-mill had been opened at Fiskerville. He trembled for his money and never wished to see Fisker again; but still, when Fisker came to England, he was proud to remember that Fisker was his partner, and he obeyed the order and went down to Liverpool. (77; vol. 1, ch. 9)

Paul's inexperience and weakness means that he is easily dissuaded from following what he knows is true and right. Although he despises Fisker, he is seduced by Fisker's charms and is quickly contented with the appearance of being an important businessman, even though he knows that the appearance belies reality. Much like Mrs. Hurtle, Fisker is charming and attractive, but he lacks moral compass. Indeed, Paul's financial struggle parallels his romantic problems—in both cases, he is seduced by appearances into bad decisions. Although he comes to recognize the proper course, he lacks the strength to carry it out. Paul first engages himself to marry Mrs. Hurtle, then attempts to break the engagement, but cannot act with enough determination to fully sever their romance even though he loves Hetta. Paul knows that Melmotte and Fisker are behaving immorally, but

he lacks the fortitude to stand against them. Paul's flexibility and lack of ethical strength, therefore, hinders his ability to do what he knows is right.

However, another of Paul's Darwinian traits—his fighting spirit—tempers his adaptability. While Trollope is ambiguous about Mrs. Hurtle's use of violence, Paul's willingness to fight heralds his moral development. As the psychologist G. Stanley Hall contends, combativeness is necessary to moral development:

> To be angry aright is a good part of moral education, and non-resistance under all provocations is unmanly, craven, and cowardly. An able-bodied young man, who can not fight physically, can hardly have a high and true sense of honor and is generally a milk-sop, a lady-boy, or a sneak. He lacks virility, his masculinity does not ring true, his honesty can not be sound to the core. Hence, instead of eradicating this instinct, one of the great problems of a physical and moral pedagogy is rightly to temper and direct it. (1: 217)

According to Hall, a true man must be willing to fight for what is right. Paul is removed from Oxford for fighting, and as the narrator declares, "he had a talent for rows" (55; vol. 1, ch. 6). Tongue in cheek, the narrator declares that Paul traveled to California after leaving Oxford because "[h]e had perhaps an idea,—based on very insufficient grounds,—that rows are popular in California" (55; vol. 1, ch. 6). While rows may not be "popular," the ability to struggle and fight is a necessary skill in the Darwinian environment of the American West, as Mrs. Hurtle's survival implies. Paul's fighting spirit, while showing his ability to struggle, also hints at his effort to mature and become a manly Englishman, willing to fight for what is morally right. Trollope's plot for Paul echoes Hall's statement that "real virtue requires enemies" (1: 217). Although he fights in

school, the immature Paul is unwilling to resist Fisker, Melmotte, or Mrs. Hurtle; eventually, however, he develops the strength to stand against their corrupting influence.

While the novel points to Paul's maturation by showing him successfully overcoming his business and relationship problems and achieving a happy ending, the novel calls into question whether Paul will now be able to reassert the status quo in England. Paul extricates himself from Melmotte's company, but he does not go public with the fraud as he once threatened to do (346; vol. 1, ch. 37). And as Mark King points out, Paul faces another ethical decision when Hetta rejects him. A gentleman would either "develop the fortitude to learn from this romantic reversal or stoically accept his fate" (King 158), but instead, he begs for help from Mrs. Hurtle and Roger Carbury, the two people whom he betrayed. Thus, even at the end of the novel, when he has supposedly reached manhood, Paul is "unmasked as a passive and cowardly individual" (King 158). Perhaps in Paul, we can see what Levine notices in other Trollopian "heroes": "within the conventions of realism, close scrutiny entails the revelation of flaws, and disenchantment" (202). Although Paul makes a mature decision in his choice of wife, by the end of the novel we question whether he has truly developed the fortitude to combat the larger moral degeneration England faces. In the end, Paul appears to be a weak man-child who is incapable of resisting the larger societal changes that Trollope finds so problematic. Paul has not defeated either Fisker or Melmotte, but instead merely withdrawn his money from their railroad speculation. Rather than subduing Mrs. Hurtle through marriage or divorce, he withdraws from their engagement. Withdrawal—whether it be from a fraudulent business venture or from an unsuitable engagement—does not signal success.

Due to Paul's lack of success, the novel leaves the future of England in doubt. Trollope attempts to resolve the many social changes through the traditional marriage ending, a closed plot that signals the restoration of order in society. Paul is an example of the unheroic realist "hero" that Levine defines in his discussion of *The Claverings.* Levine delineates that Trollope "gives the 'hero' his rewards without making him heroic or deserving" (203). And as Trollope himself points out, Paul "is not a hero. But men are seldom heroes. He is as good as our brothers and sons and friends" (*Letters* 631). While the American parvenus and most of the Jewish characters have been expelled from England by the end of the novel, their removal appears to be only temporary. And if Paul cannot successfully defeat Fisker and Melmotte, what luck will the "brothers and sons" of England have with truly shady businessmen? Additionally, King points out that the outsiders are not England's central problem: the true villains are the English aristocrats such as Lord Nidderdale, Miles Grendall, and Dolly Longestaffe who have become corrupt themselves and consequently allow Melmotte to enter society (160). The young aristocrats spend most of their time at their club drinking and gambling and are, as Robert Polhemus describes them, "the most odious spawn of nineteenth-century parasites existing outside of Miss Havisham's wedding cake in *Great Expectations*" (193). While Trollope can banish the outsiders from England, there is still corruption festering in the heart of England's "upper" classes that the novel fails to reconcile. There is little possibility that unheroic Paul—or his happy ending—will restore order to society.

"You Will Have to Be Squire of Carbury": Evolving the Marriage Plot

Trollope considers Mrs. Hurtle a poor choice for Paul because she is too primitive and masculine—in other words, too American. The novel points to Hetta as a better

choice because she more closely embodies the Victorian ideal of femininity: she is pretty, moral, and self-effacing. Unlike Mrs. Hurtle, who travels independently around the world, Hetta is domestic and "[spends] most of her time at home with her mother" (20; vol. 1, ch. 2). Although her brother Sir Felix has been partially ruined by their mother's spoiling, the narrator explains how Lady Carbury's neglect of Hetta has turned her into a good and self-sacrificing woman.

> She also was very lovely, being like her brother; but somewhat less dark and with features less absolutely regular. But she had in her expression which seems to imply that consideration of self is subordinated to consider for others. This sweetness was altogether lacking to her brother. And her face was a true index of her character. (20; vol. 1, ch. 2)

In contrast to many of the other characters in the novel who are driven by selfish desires, Hetta cares more for other people than herself. Hetta embodies the ideal of Victorian womanhood, and by marrying Paul she can successfully complete the marriage plot and reaffirm English morality and social structures.

At the beginning of the novel, however, Hetta is too submissive and easily swayed by others' opinions. Instead of following what she knows to be right, she bows to others' authority. Rather than protecting Hetta's innocence, Hetta's mother Lady Carbury takes her into corrupt society. There, Hetta meets and mingles with such figures as the Melmottes, who pollute English society. When Roger discovers that Hetta has been to a ball at the Melmottes, he chastises her for mingling with corrupt individuals. She responds by pointing out that her mother "will take care that I am not taken where I ought not to be taken," and that "everybody goes there" (70; vol. 1, ch. 8). Hetta does not

believe she has the right to argue against the authority of her mother and society at large, both of which accept the Melmottes. Roger responds that she is better than—more "pure" and moral—than her mother or society and should, therefore, set a better standard. Roger points Hetta toward her traditional role as the pure woman, to resist the corruption of society, its greed, and degraded values. Hetta reminds him, however, that "we belong to a newer and worse sort of world," and therefore indicates that her own role as a woman has changed (71; vol. 1, ch. 8). As she cannot completely remove herself from social and moral corruption, Hetta must develop the ability to resist it.

Hetta's plot traces her maturation as she learns to resist authority if it disagrees with her own morality. Both Roger and Lady Carbury pressure Hetta to marry Roger, although for different reasons. Roger loves Hetta and wants to marry her for her own sake. Her mother, on the other hand, wants Hetta to marry Roger to secure her financial future. Hetta knows she does not love Roger as a husband, but questions herself: "could it be right that she should marry one man when she loved another? Could it be right that she should marry at all, for the sake of doing good to her family?" (15; vol. 2, ch. 51). Hetta knows she loves Paul not Roger and that marrying only for money would be wrong. Her ability to resist their pressure and, later, to defy her family by marrying Paul shows her growth as a moral individual.

But if her resistance to a marriage of convenience was the only problem, then Hetta's plot would be little different from many other Victorian heroines who resist their family's pressure to secure their future through marriage and whose plots end with them secure inside their homes. Trollope's novel imagines an expanded role for Hetta, one in the "newer and worse sort of world" where she must confront more complicated ethical

problems. First, Hetta must clean up after her brother's botched elopement with Marie Melmotte. After Marie fails to elope with Sir Felix, Marie confronts Hetta at a party to ask if Sir Felix plans to continue their engagement. Sir Felix, however, is too big a coward to tell Marie directly that he does not want to marry her, and Hetta feels obliged to tell Marie in his stead. To deliver the news, Hetta asks her mother's permission to call on Marie. Hetta shows her independence by turning down her mother's request that she take a chaperone and then facing down Melmotte. Despite Melmotte's scorn that Hetta might be attempting to aid Sir Felix's and Marie's engagement, Hetta resists his attempts to turn her away because Hetta "thought [she] could do some good" (165; vol. 2, ch. 68). Despite Melmotte's insistence that she leave, Hetta acts on what she believes to be right. The novel, therefore, hints that in this new corrupted world, women must travel outside to do good in the world.

Hetta's morality propels her to further independent action when she discovers Paul's relationship with Mrs. Hurtle. When Hetta hears that Paul has been keeping company with and proposed marriage first to Mrs. Hurtle, she breaks off their engagement and encourages him to keep his original promise. However, Paul asks that Hetta speak to Mrs. Hurtle so that she may absolve him of wrong doing. As a sign of her increasing independence, Hetta does not ask her mother's permission to call on Mrs. Hurtle. The narrator hints at this increasing independence as Hetta "trusted herself all alone to the mysteries of the Marylebone underground railway" (385; vol. 2, ch. 91). The journey itself represents Hetta's increasing agency. Hetta loves Paul, but cannot marry him if she believes he has wronged either herself or Mrs. Hurtle, and she is willing to seek out Mrs. Hurtle to find out the truth.

Indeed, Hetta bears a perhaps surprising resemblance to the "wildcat" Mrs. Hurtle, both mentally and physically. Whereas Hetta expected to find a rough woman to match the savage environment of the American West, what she sees instead is a woman uncannily like herself. When Hetta meets her, she is surprised by Mrs. Hurtle's appearance:

> She had thought the woman would be coarse and big, with fine eyes and bright colour. As it was they were both of the same complexion, both dark, with hair nearly black, with eyes of the same colour. Hetta thought of all that at the moment,—but acknowledged to herself that she had no pretension to beauty such as that which this woman owned. (387; vol. 2, ch. 91)

Critic Erdmut Lerner intriguingly notes that "Mrs. Hurtle is conceived of as not only an American but a variation on English womanhood," and therefore a variation of Hetta herself (160). While I agree that both women are variations of English womanhood, I think it is helpful to think of both as descendants of a common ancestor, rather than Mrs. Hurtle a variation of Hetta. In terms of both appearance and character, Hetta might more accurately be described as a faded version of Mrs. Hurtle, a version that lacks the extreme adaptations to the highly competitive American environment. The women have similar features, but Mrs. Hurtle's beauty and coloring is more dramatic. Both women are willing to travel independently, but while Mrs. Hurtle chases Paul transnationally, the narrator mockingly points out that Hetta's journey was only across town (385; vol. 2, ch. 91). Both undergo a break from Paul, but whereas Mrs. Hurtle threatens that "you will find me with a horsewhip in my hand. I will whip you till I have not a breath in my body," in a similar situation Hetta is merely described as "stern," and "without a tear and without

any sign of tenderness" (4; vol. 2, ch. 1, 245; vol. 2, ch. 76). Mrs. Hurtle's independence and violence may better fit her for survival in America, but they also make her more masculine. Hetta, in contrast, has some minor independence and strength, but she is still softly feminine. Hetta is evolved enough to be able to independently navigate the modern urban environment—both physically and morally—but not so transformed as to appear masculine.

In her selflessness and morality, therefore, Hetta represents the Victorian ideal of femininity. But in her independence, agency, and willingness to leave her home to do what is right, Hetta represents an evolved, more independent version of the ideal domestic woman. Because she exemplifies an evolved version of Victorian womanhood, Trollope positions her to take on an expanded role at the end of the novel. In the end, it is to Hetta and her children that Roger chooses to bequeath his property. Roger represents traditional English values and is the most moral character in the novel; Roger adopts Hetta because she is the character who is closest to "inheriting" these traits. This is not an easy choice for Roger, since he recognizes that "in her favour he must throw aside that law of primogeniture which to him was so sacred that he had been hitherto minded to make Sir Felix his heir in spite of the absolute unfitness of the wretched young man" (404; vol. 2, ch. 93). While Sir Felix is Roger's closest male relative and therefore the traditional heir to Roger's estate, he is unfit for this inheritance because of his selfishness and lack of morality. Since Hetta demonstrates the true English virtues of kindness and unselfishness, she is, despite being a woman, the heir of both Roger's estate—she is the new Squire of Carbury—and his morality.

Next, to the rapid evolutionary changes of America, England represents a slower evolutionary pace. Hetta and Paul embody the slow change that will allow England to progress without Roger's stagnancy or the chaos of Mrs. Hurtle's rapid changes. In a more traditional courtship plot, the wife would be given dominance over the home while the husband's domain would be the estate or the professional world. This union would suggest that the peace of the estate extends to England itself, and this extension would be possible through the husband's career, his movement in the professional world and government. However, in the new world of the 1870s, when England must travel beyond her borders to achieve economic stability, the man's sphere is extended to include the world. In *The Way We Live Now*, therefore, Paul must be able to successfully operate outside England in the global financial markets. Hetta's role, too, is now extended. Whereas previously she would be contained within the home, Hetta's domestic role now encompasses the estate that Roger has bequeathed her. Rather than usurping Paul's place, however, Hetta's inheritance leaves Paul free to work in the global marketplace.

Trollope's novel hints at an expanded role for Hetta, her evolved traits are not sufficient to adequately deal with the changes in England or the role Roger assigns to her. Although Hetta traveled outside the home to deal with moral problems, she simply traveled to other domestic spaces to deal with other women and their problems, reinforcing the status quo belief that woman have control of the home, family, and courtship. As the true Squire of Carbury, Hetta would be called on to deal with both men and women in the management of the estate and to make a variety of business decisions. Although Roger asks that she come to the estate to be the Squire of Carbury, he never offers to teach her estate management. "Let this be your home," Roger tells her, "so that

you should learn really to care about and love the place" (472; vol. 2, ch. 100). But loving the estate is not enough to make sure his tenants are fed or the estate prosperous.

Despite Trollope's attempt to place Hetta and Paul at the center of the narrative, numerous scholars have noted that the dynamic Mrs. Hurtle steals our sympathy in a way that the "pale," "boring," and "passive" English romance fails to do (Polhemus 196). Polhemus derides the "happy ending" for Hetta and Paul because it reads as if Trollope "turned it out as an afterthought for the simpering Mudie's crowd" (198).[53] And I would add that, even when seen as an evolutionary marriage, their union fails to reconcile the forces of change that Trollope observes at large in England and the world. Levine notes that change is one of the major Darwinian themes manifested in fiction. In novels by Eliot and Thackery, Levine asserts, "closure is perceived as artificial and inadequate because it implies an end to history and is incapable of resolving the problems raised by the narrative" (17). Trollope and his critics have long noted the inadequacy of the marriage ending to resolve narrative conflict in *The Way We Live Now*, but I would not go so far as to say that the "conventional comic marriages" are "explicitly treated" in the novel "as mere conveniences that allow books to end" (Levine 17). Trollope's novel places too much weight and moral judgment on the love relations between Hetta, Mrs. Hurtle, and Paul for him to see it as a mere literary convenience. In choosing Hetta as his heir, Roger is enacting his own form of selection. Since Roger's attempt to marry Hetta

[53] Mudie's was a popular and powerful lending library. Guinevere Griest argues that Mudie's impacted both the form and content of Victorian fiction, as the circulating library demanded three-volume novels suitable for middle-class families.

fails, choosing her as his heir allows him to regain control over the future of his family and estate. The marriage with which Trollope chooses to end the novel similarly allows him an illusion of control over change, but it is an attempt which ultimately fails. Neither Hetta nor Paul is strong enough to permanently remove those people who might taint England. The power of adaptation in the novel lies with the Americans, Mrs. Hurtle and Fisker. While the novel temporarily staves off this change by exiling these characters, the novel's artificial selection of Hetta and Paul compete against the power of natural selection. Even though the novel's end tries to bring resolution, it ultimately fails. In the final pages of the novel, our interest follows Mrs. Hurtle, Fisker, and Marie Melmotte to America where their stories continue. Although the narrator states that "the writer of the present chronicle may so far look forward,—carrying his reader with him,—as to declare Marie Melmotte did become Mrs. Fisker very soon after her arrival at San Francisco" (457; ch. 98). We wonder what marriage looks like between the scandalous Marie Melmotte and the American shyster Fisker. We wonder what will happen when the "wildcat" Mrs. Hurtle reunites with her resurrected husband. Our curiosity pushes us to imagine an open plot in America where the stories of Marie, Fisker, and Mrs. Hurtle continue beyond the final pages of the novel.

CHAPTER V – "THE INFINITE VISTA OF A MULTIPLIED LIFE": THE END OF COURTSHIP IN HENRY JAMES'S *THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY*

In the courtship novels under scrutiny in this project, we have seen few sustained challenges to the importance of sexual selection to the love plot. Despite the differences in their plots—who is doing the selecting and what the criteria for selection might be—neither Trollope nor Burnett question the importance of love plots to the novel or, through the texts' mimetic representation of human life, to humans. In Descent, Darwin hints at the entanglement of evolutionary love plots and the courtship novel by referencing Schoepenhauer : "The final aim of all love intrigues, be they comic or tragic, is really of more importance than all other ends in human life. What it all turns upon is nothing less than the composition of the next generation. It is not the weal or woe of any one individual, but that of the whole human race to come, which is here at stake" (653). Here, Darwin understands human nature through the lens of literature; the passage argues for the primacy of the courtship plot to human existence, both individually and as a species. Human love is understood as being either "comic or tragic," interpretable through literary forms. The realist novel, in turn, reaffirms the importance of romantic love to human lives by relying on courtship for its form and structure.

While Darwin and realist authors such as Trollope emphasized the centrality of the love plot to human life and the realist novel, Henry James questioned its importance. In "The Art of Fiction," James mocks those critics who require that a good novel "depends on a 'happy ending,' on a distribution at the last of prizes, pensions, husbands, wives, babies, millions" (382). Literature as art, James defines, would have a "hostility to a happy ending," and "might even in some cases render any ending at all impossible"

("Art" 382). In his own life, James recognized that distributing husbands and babies to women—especially to gifted women—did not necessarily bring happiness. James's cousin Mary "Minny" Temple was a bright, vivacious, and intelligent woman who died at the age of 24. Although James mourned her death, he also recognized its "dramatic fitness," as only someone who felt "some irresistible mission to reconcile her to a world to which she was essentially hostile" could have wished her a longer life (*Henry James* 77). James saw Minny's "future as a sadly insoluble problem," recognizing "that life—poor narrow life—contained no place for her" (77). James found comfort that "she has gone where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage! no illusions and disillusions" (78). Gorra points out that Minny would have had "trouble reconciling herself to the social world around her," and to marriage in particular (Gorra 29). As many biographers and critics have pointed out, Isabel Archer resembles James's cousin Minny Temple in her honesty, intelligence, and independence. While Minny dies before facing the "difficulties she would have faced in any future life" (Gorra 29), Isabel lives to face the recognition that women in Victorian society had no place and no purpose outside marriage and to experience both the "illusions and disillusions" of marriage.

The Portrait of a Lady, I will argue, presents a challenge to the primacy of courtship plots and how sexual selection has been integrated with them. The first half of the novel appears to follow familiar plot lines: an American girl travels to England, the handsome aristocrat Lord Warburton, along with several other men, courts her, and she must choose a mate from among her three suitors, each of whom represents different nationalities. In most courtship and sexual selection plots, Isabel's choice would signal the end of the narrative, just as Paul Montague and Hetta Carbury's engagement

concluded *The Way We Live Now*. In *Portrait*, however, Isabel's choice of husband is only half the story. The second half of the novel describes the consequences of her poor choice: her unhappy marriage. This formal deviation, I will argue, decouples the sexual selection plot from the courtship plot and thereby subverts the importance of the courtship plot in *Portrait*. That is, Isabel's choice of husband does not necessarily signal her choice of mate. By placing her marriage in the middle of the novel, James undermines the gender hierarchies inherent to the courtship plot. Indeed, as I will demonstrate, Osmond dominates Isabel only as long as she allows it, which denies Osmond's superior strength just because he is a man. Further, unlike the sexual selection plot, in which one mate chooses the other, neither Osmond nor Isabel can ultimately be said to "choose" the other. Rather, Madame Merle chooses Isabel to marry Osmond in order to benefit her daughter Pansy, and in so doing, she changes our focus from sexual selection to natural selection as a driving element of the novel. While sexual selection and the courtship plot focus on one main relationship, natural selection stresses the importance of all the many relationships we form with other species that create an environment to which we must adapt. The text, therefore, subverts both the courtship plot and sexual selection. The novel similarly turns from the heterosexual marriage as our sole relationship; the second half of the novel refocuses our attention on all the other relationships that contribute to Isabel's plot line: her relationships with Ralph, Pansy, Mrs. Touchett, Madame Merle, and even what we could describe as her relationship with herself. By the end of the novel, the courtship plot is only one among many competing plot lines. By marginalizing the courtship plot, *Portrait* encourages Isabel, and the novel's readers, to recognize that marriage is only one of the many relationships we form.

James's radical revision of form asks us to recognize how both the courtship novel and the theory of sexual selection have artificially inflated the importance of "love intrigues," and encourages us instead to recognize the importance of all Isabel's many relationships framed in the terms of natural selection. In so doing, James's novel crafts a truly open plot for Isabel that retains the possibility for change after marriage and the novel's end. By undermining the sexual hierarchy of the courtship ending, the novel rejects the possibility of any long-term national supremacy.

"She is the Sex Sacrificed to Reproductive Necessities": Women's Development in Science and Literature

When her uncle Daniel Touchett hears of Isabel coming to England to visit, he professes "she hasn't come here to look for a husband, I hope" (James, *Portrait* 25; ch. 2). By making this claim, Touchett hints at how nineteenth-century readers might interpret Isabel's presence in the novel. Readers might assume that Isabel is one of the many young American women who traveled to Europe to find a titled husband. More broadly, Daniel reads Isabel in the context of courtship plots, both scientific and literary, that describe women's development ending in marriage. It is important to distinguish between open plots that focus on process and transformation and closed plots that emphasize development and growth. "Process" is defined as "a continuation or series of events," and "transformation" as "the action of changing in form, shape or appearance; metamorphosis" ("Process," "Transformation"). Both definitions highlight the importance of change and flux, without reference to an end. In contrast, both development and growth assume an end toward which the plot progresses. "Growth" is "increase," becoming more and better than a previous state ("Growth"). Development

similarly implies hierarchy "bringing something to a fuller or more advanced condition," and an end in "maturation" ("Development"). Development ends, therefore, when an organism reaches maturity. Isabel comes to England because she wants to live an open plot in which she participates in life processes, seeking experiences that will transform her. As I will show, in both science and literature, the only plot available to women was a closed development plot that ended in marriage, which Isabel quickly discovers.

In *Descent of Man,* Darwin's theory accounted for the physical differences between men and women as a result of the processes of sexual selection. Men have evolved to be stronger and more daring because they must compete for mates. Women, on the other hand, did not compete for mates and therefore lacked strength and intelligence.[54] George Romanes argued that men desired women who were most unlike themselves. Since men tended toward strength and intelligence, they often chose weaker and softer women. Similarly, American feminist writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman, who was from roughly the same period and was also interested in scientific explanations of sexual difference, believed that men preferred weak women, and for that reason, women were physically and mentally weaker than men. In her landmark treatise *Women and Economics*, published in 1898, Gilman goes on to argue that sexual differences are exaggerated in humans because men support women. Men, therefore, have become the environment to which women adapt. "Sex distinction," Gilman concludes, "is with [woman] not only a means of attracting a mate, as with all creatures but a means of

[54] Both Cynthia Russett's *Sexual Science* and Erika Milam's *Looking for a Few Good Men* provide insightful overviews of sexual difference in Victorian science.

getting her livelihood" (*Women and Economics* 19; ch. 2). As Gilman shows, scientific questions about physical differences between the sexes led to questions about society's influence on sexual traits.

Although men are physically stronger than women, scientists and scholars debated whether physical differences necessarily determined that men had the right to dominate and control women in society. John Stuart Mill, the English philosopher, and political scientist, was one of the first political proponents of women's suffrage in England. Both Gilman and Mill argue that sexual equality will improve human society. Mill goes on to say that since our civilized society no longer used "might is right" as a legal justification, men should not be allowed to subjugate women in life or law either. Indeed, Mill contends that considering the legal holds placed on women's ability to own their own person and their own property, women were still little better than the slaves of their husbands in the eyes of the law. British psychiatrist Henry Maudsley responds to Mill argument by claiming that "there is a right in might—the right of the strong to be strong" (212). While Maudsley does allow that women have been enslaved by men, he justifies this oppression by saying that "if she has been a slave she has been a slave content with her bondage" (210). Although there were liberal challenges from outside scientific circles, Victorian scientists tended to be more conservative and naturalized Victorian sexual ideology.

While scientists observed the physical differences between the sexes, they debated as to whether these physical differences also signaled mental differences. Mill argues that while physical differences in brain size may exist, these physical differences do not necessarily correlate to differences in intelligence. In contrast, Maudsley argues

that sexual selection evolves particular mental characteristics as much as physical: "The comb of a cock, the antlers of a stag, the mane of a lion, the beard of a man, are growths in relation to the reproductive organs which correlate mental differences of sex as marked almost as these physical differences" (202). Indeed, scientists proposed that one reason why women reached maturity faster and were less mentally and physically evolved than men was due to the energy requirements of reproduction. According to British sociologist Herbert Spencer, there is "a somewhat earlier arrest of individual evolution in women than in men, necessitated by the reservation of vital power to meet the cost of reproduction" (32). Because energy is preserved for reproduction, women's mental powers are less developed than men especially in "those two faculties, intellectual and emotional, which are the latest products of human evolution—the power of abstract reasoning and that most abstract of the emotions, the sentiment of justice—the sentiment which regulates conduct irrespective of personal attachments and the likes or dislikes felt for individuals" (32). Scientific descriptions of sexual difference, therefore, were closed plots that contained evolutionary change by focusing on the end of woman's development. The plot of women's maturation ended just short of men's abilities.

These scientific arguments concerning sexual differences had a profound impact on the argument for women's education. According to both scientists and doctors, if society attempts to direct women's energy to education, they will harm women's ability to reproduce. Indeed, Maudsley looks to America as an example of this effect, as they have been more progressive than England in developing the "mixed system" of co-educational schools. Maudsley argues that while women can "run the intellectual race which is set before them," successfully complete their studies, and compete against men

(205), they do so "at a cost to their strength and health which entails life-long suffering, and even incapacitates them for the adequate performance of the natural function of their sex" (Maudsley 205).[55] Because women's energy is devoted to reproduction and cannot sustain the requirements of education, men are therefore left to carry and develop culture. British science writer Grant Allen argues that women are "the sex sacrificed to reproductive necessities," but men "are the race" as they "till the ground, and procure food, and defend the community, and build houses, and construct and work railways, and sail the seas, and mine the coal and iron, and, in short, carry on by far the greater part of the manifold activities of which civilized human life essentially consists" (258, 259–260). Evolutionary thinkers in the Victorian period largely argued that women could not evolve to be the equals of men because women were naturally and sexually evolved to be dependent on men as a wife and mother.

As I have shown, the only plots available to women were closed development plots ending in marriage. While Isabel recognizes the limitations of marriage, at the beginning she has not yet realized she has few choices outside matrimony. Isabel, unlike the Dollar Princesses, did not travel to England to find a husband; she states "I'm not sure I wish to marry anyone," because it would prohibit a "free exploration of life" (99; ch. 12, 101; ch. 12). Isabel's American suitor Caspar Goodwood questions whether the kind of freedom she desires is possible for unmarried women because an unmarried woman is

[55] Maudsley quotes from American physician S. Weir Mitchell, who might be familiar to fans of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper." Gilman herself wrote of her experience with Mitchell's rest cure in "Why I Wrote the Yellow Wallpaper."

"hampered at every step" (143; ch. 16). Isabel points out, however, that as an American woman of means she belongs "to the independent class" and "can do what I choose" (143; ch. 16). Isabel recognizes that choosing a husband is likely to be the last choice she will make, as afterward she will be subject to his control. Isabel experiences the common human desire to participate in life in order to learn, but Goodwood points out that society prohibits women from engaging in the life processes that lead to learning.

Isabel, like many middle-class women of her time, had been largely educated with books and isolated from practical experience. Thanks to the devil-may-care upbringing of her father, who took her and her sisters to Europe several times, Isabel has had some experience of the world. But she had only "a few months' view of the subject proposed: a course which had whetted our heroine's curiosity without enabling her to satisfy it" (40; ch. 4). Isabel seeks out experience to satisfy her curiosity about life. When her aunt asks her to travel to England, she jumps at the chance. Isabel also seeks out knowledge from those more experienced than herself, such as her uncle Daniel. When she talks with her uncle, she interrogates him "about England, about the British constitution, the English character, the state of politics, the manners and customs of the royal family, the peculiarities of the aristocracy, the way of living and thinking of his neighbours; and in begging to be enlightened on these points she usually enquired whether they corresponded with the descriptions in the books" (58; ch. 6). Her uncle is "puzzled" by these questions, stating that "I've always ascertained for myself—got my information in the natural form" (58; ch. 6). While finding out for himself might be the "natural form" for men, women are isolated from this method of learning by societies' strictures. Indeed, Isabel's learning as a woman more closely aligns with Ralph's, who is limited in his

practical experience by his frail constitution. Her uncle claims he does not "know much about the books," but that Ralph would be able to answer those questions (58; ch. 6). Indeed, what Isabel seems to be missing is the practical application of experience to test her theoretical knowledge of life. While I would argue that James understands Isabel's limitations as an effect of her youth and inexperience, Bender asserts that James sees them as part of her womanly "nature." Bender contends that Isabel's "problem is the overactive imagination, which, again and again, makes it impossible for her to attend to her reading and, ultimately, to perceive and adjust to her reality as a woman, *as James construes it"* (138; italics in original). While Isabel does need to adjust to her reality as a woman, it is the social reality of women, not her biological reality, that proves problematic. It is not nature but society that denies women opportunities to test their knowledge, whether in a career, society, or politics. Isabel does not want to "resign [herself] to being frivolous and hollow" with "no vocation, no beneficent aptitude of any sort," but rather desires to "find some happy work" (55; ch. 6). Because she is young and inexperienced, Isabel has not fully realized that society allows women no life and no work outside matrimony.

As Isabel explores the world, she begins to recognize that there are few plots that women can follow.[56] Ralph hints at this dearth when he says that "most women did with

[56] Rachel DuPlessis defines bildung in the novel form as the quest for development and maturation, and she argues that in the nineteenth century novel "bildung and romance could not coexist and be integrate for the heroine at the resolution" (3). She claims that the woman's quest for self and development was "repressed, whether by marriage or by death" (3–4). For treatment of *Portrait* as a bildungsroman, see Berkson's "Why Does She Marry Osmond?", Gauss's "Henry James and the Tradition of 'Wilhelm Meister,'" Lamm's "A

themselves nothing at all; they waited, in attitudes more or less gracefully passive, for a man to come that way and furnish them with a destiny" (64; vol. 1, ch. 7). Most women's stories ended when they married, and indeed they barely have a story at all because their entire lives depend on that one period of courtship ending in marriage. Isabel acknowledges that society has begun to recognize a few alternative plots for women. Henrietta Stackpole, for example, is single and earns her living as a journalist. Henrietta is "proof" for Isabel "that a woman might suffice to herself and be happy" (55; vol. 1, ch. 6).[57] While Henrietta demonstrates a new possible plot for women, Isabel questions what this new plot means for women "who had not a journalistic talent." Were they left with "no vocation, no beneficent aptitude" (55; vol. 1, ch. 6)?

Isabel longs for work to contribute to and participate in society outside the narrow marriage plot. But no one in the novel can imagine or articulate how. Ralph observes that Isabel "gave one an impression of having intentions of her own," and Warburton tells her "you strike me as having mysterious purposes—vast designs" (77; vol. 1, ch. 9). But what these "designs" or "intentions" are remain a mystery to even Isabel, as she speaks of it vaguely as finding "some work" (77; ch. 9). When her inheritance frees her to travel the world independently, without the necessity of marrying for financial stability, she

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Future for Isabel Archer," Jottkandt's "Portrait of an Act," Lee's "*The Portrait of a Lady* as Bildungsroman," and Sicker's *Love and the Quest for Identity in the Fiction of Henry James*.

[57] Critics argue for several real-life inspirations for Henrietta Stackpole. Eckel's *Atlantic Citizens* cites Margaret Fuller as James's inspiration, while Scharnorst argues for American journalist Kate Field. Chapter 4 of Lutes's *Front-Page Girls* places Stackpole within the context of nineteenth century women journalists and argues that she bears resemblance to James himself.

seemingly abandons her quest to return to Rome and marry Osmond. Indeed, it is worth noting that the periods Isabel spends traveling are largely glossed over: the narrator reports that Isabel "spent three months in Greece, in Turkey, in Egypt" and that her travels were "sufficiently replete with incident" (274, 270; ch. 31). As Annette Niemtzow has argued, Isabel marries because she recognizes that women have little choice outside her choice of husband: Isabel looks for an occupation and only finds marriage (386).

In only a "year or two," she comes to recognize that as a single woman she is only capable of "observing" life, not participating in it. Indeed, Madame Merle had warned her of this passive condition, explaining that "a woman [...] has no natural place anywhere; wherever she finds herself she has to remain on the surface and, more or less, to crawl" (171; ch. 19). The narrator asks, "what had become of all her ardours, her aspirations, her theories, her high estimate of her independence and her incipient conviction that she should never marry? These things had been absorbed in a more primitive need," a need to find connection, to work, and be needed (297; ch. 35). Marrying, Isabel comes to recognize, is the only way a woman can participate in the processes of life as she tells Ralph, "I've seen that [...] one must choose a corner and cultivate that" (288; ch. 34). Coming to recognize that society only allows women one narrative, Isabel chooses to marry rather than continue to live without purpose or design.

"He Might Have Ridden on a Plunging Steed": Sexual Selection in *The Portrait of a Lady*

In a portentous scene, Isabel tells her aunt, "I always want to know the things one shouldn't do." "So as to do them?" Mrs. Touchett asks. "So as to choose," Isabel replies

(67; ch. 8). In this scene, Isabel establishes her desire to make her own judgments.[58] As I have already shown, Isabel's life choices are limited to her choice of husband. The first half of *The Portrait of a Lady* functions much like other Darwinian romances in which the heroine evaluates and selects a mate from among her suitors, Caspar Goodwood, Lord Warburton, and Gilbert Osmond, each of whom possesses traits that might make him a good Darwinian mate.[59] Isabel chooses Osmond because, of these three suitors, he appears to have achieved what she desires for himself—he appears to be self-made, living outside the hierarchies of class and nation, and therefore in an open plot.[60] But although

[58] This statement also aligns Isabel with other Jamesian American heroines, such as Daisy Miller, who do not mind flouting convention.

[59] Some readers might see Ralph as a fourth suitor for Isabel, but he removes himself from competition with her other suitors for both moral and eugenic reasons. When Ralph's father asks him why he does not want to marry Isabel, Ralph tells him he has several strong convictions against such a proposal: "One is that people, on the whole, had better not marry their cousins. Another is that people in an advanced stage of pulmonary disorder had better not marry at all" (159; ch. 18). While the second might be read as Ralph's desire not to marry only to widow his wife, when read after the first sentence both lines suggest that Ralph withdraws from marriage for eugenic reasons. Eugenically, it would not be a good idea for cousins to marry because they would be inbreeding. And in the second sentence, Ralph seems to be taking himself voluntarily out of the gene pool, because people with pulmonary disorder should not risk passing on the disease to their offspring.

[60] There are a variety of interpretations as to why Isabel chooses Osmond. Berkson argues that the choice is a result of innocence combined with American idealism, Brody and Krook argue that Isabel hopes to develop wisdom under Osmond's tutelage, while White argues that Osmond charms her because he appears sensitive and delicate unlike the more domineering Goodwood and Warburton (67). Bender, in contrast, argues that Isabel does not choose Osmond, he chooses her because "Isabel's inherent psychological

these three suitors appear to Isabel to offer different paths, they are, I will demonstrate, functionally the same. In choosing to marry, Isabel becomes part of a closed plot that effectively ends her development.

The first of Isabel's suitors is Goodwood, who the text describes as the stereotypical American businessman. Goodwood is the son of a cotton mill owner and excels at "managing men": "he liked to organise, to contend, to administer; he could make people work his will, believe in him, march before him and justify him" (106; ch. 13). The series of verbs underscores his energy and activity, highlighting that his fortune is made through the exercise of his Darwinian traits—traits that allow him to successfully dominate other men. Goodwood's Darwinian traits excite Isabel's imagination; she fantasizes that "he might have ridden, on a plunging steed, the whirlwind of a great war—a war like the Civil strife that had over darkened her conscious childhood and his ripening youth" (107; ch. 13). Isabel's imagination transforms Goodwood's ability to effectively exploit and dominate his relationships with others into the ability to conquer in battle. Darwin draws similar connections to man's bellicose nature, his desire to dominate, and sexual selection by describing male combat as "the law of battle" (*Descent* 627). Man's animal instincts (to battle for mates or resources) has been transformed into man's competition in business. Isabel's imagination reverses this process, transforming economic competition into physical combat and then sexualizing them with words like "ridden," "plunging," and "ripening."

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weaknesses such as her unstable imagination, her awe of power, and in general her mental inferiority" had allowed her to be "outwitted and captured by Osmond" (150).

While Goodwood's strength and vigor attract Isabel, she also judges him as too manly: "his jaw was too square and set and his figure too straight and stiff: these things suggested a want of easy consonance with the deeper rhythms of life" (106; ch. 13). As critic Bert Bender points out, Goodwood's "straight and stiff" figure is phallic (*Descent,* 146). While Goodwood's strong jaw indicates manliness, it also signals un-evolved, animalistic qualities. Darwin argues that as proto-humans used tools more and their teeth less, their jaws would have shrunk; more civilized humans, therefore, have smaller and softer jaws (Darwin, *Descent* 628). "Naturally plated and steeled, armed essentially for aggression," Goodwood will always be struggling and fighting, whether in business or for his mate (137; ch. 16). While Goodwood might win a Darwinian struggle for existence, Isabel is repulsed by many of these same qualities. Isabel's criticism of Goodwood stems from the fact that he is too much the Darwinian hero: too uncivilized, too strong, and too manly. Isabel concedes that "he was of supremely strong, clean make," but criticizes a lack of refinement: "he showed his appetites and designs too simply and artlessly; when one was alone with him he talked too much about the same subject, and when other people were present he talked too little about anything" (107; ch. 13). Isabel's complaint stems from Goodwood's less than civilized behavior. Unlike Madame Merle or Gilbert Osmond, who have studied and developed the civilized art of conversation, Goodwood offers little in the way of meaningful talk. When they are alone, we can easily imagine that the one subject upon which Goodwood talked "too much" was his desire to marry Isabel.

Ultimately, then, while Goodwood seems to possess many positive Darwinian traits, he is unsuccessful in his courtship of Isabel because he is too primitive, too much

the Darwinian male. In less complex organisms, according to Darwin, the male's secondary sexual characteristics are highly developed "sensory or locomotive organs," which allow him to find the female, and "prehensile organs," which allow him to "hold her" (Darwin, *Descent* 243). Further, Darwin argues that one of the reasons why men have gained the power of selection among humans is that they are much stronger than women and can oppress them. Darwin argues that "Man is more powerful in body and mind than woman, and in the savage state he keeps her in a far more abject state of bondage, than does the male of any other animal; therefore it is not surprising that he should have gained the power of selection" (Darwin, *Descent* 665). Goodwood's overbearing actions in courtship—seeking to push his choice on Isabel by following her across the Atlantic to press his suit—bodes ill for their marriage. Indeed, Isabel observes that Goodwood "seemed to deprive her of the sense of freedom. There was a disagreeably strong push, a kind of hardness of presence, in his way of rising before her" (104; ch. 13). In short, Isabel recognizes in Goodwood a Darwinian man who seeks first to grasp and then to hold his mate—a man who would not allow her the freedom she desires, who would keep her in a "state of bondage." In light of this interpretation, it is significant that Goodwood and Isabel are both American. While authors such as Trollope and Burnett identified the U.S. as a place offering larger freedoms for women through societal progress, laws protecting married women's' property, and more liberal divorce laws, James's text suggests that in being a country identified with Darwinian competition, the women will be affected and entrapped by Darwinian gender roles. The U.S.'s free market economic competition develops Americans' animal instincts to fight for resources, and

James's novel extends this competition to show that man's animal instincts are also developed to fight for and hold a mate.

While Lord Warburton demonstrates traits identified with a good Darwinian mate, he also appears more civilized than Goodwood. The narrator describes him as a "remarkably well-made man of five-and-thirty" with "a noticeably handsome face" (19; ch. 1). Warburton also makes style choices that points to sexual characteristics: he is "booted and spurred" with "the rich adornment of a chestnut beard" (19; ch. 1). Despite his name, Warburton is not an unrefined and aggressive Darwinian male, like Goodwood, but rather a more refined product of civilization. He has a "happy temperament fertilised by a high civilisation," which marks him as "fortunate," "brilliant," and "exceptional" (19; ch. 1). Bender points out the novel's use of hands as the secondary sexual characteristic by which men grasp a mate (*Descent of Love* 143). Unlike Goodwood, who is always reaching out to grasp Isabel with his hands, Warburton is often described clasping his hands behind him, suggesting that he can restrain his aggressive passions as Goodwood perhaps cannot. Significantly, Warburton is "a representative of the British race" (247; ch. 27). As in other texts, the novel represents England as the more civilized and America as the more savagely Darwinian environment. As Bender rightly points out, Isabel's choice of mate lies between "Warburton's highly cultured wealth and social power or Goodwood's wealth and somewhat more natural (as his name implies) New World virility" (*Descent of Love* 146). As representatives of national character, therefore, Goodwood and Warburton embody these differences in environment: America's savage environment has evolved Goodwood's savage ability to compete, while England's more civilized environment produces the more elegant and refined Warburton.

While the narrator and Isabel scientifically classify Warburton, Isabel also sees him as a literary figure. When Isabel first arrives at Gardencourt, she tells Ralph, "Oh, I'd hoped there would be a lord; it's just like a novel!" (27; ch. 2), and she sees Warburton "as a hero of romance" (66; ch. 7). Readers familiar with late nineteenth-century fiction will recognize the romantic plot line signaled by the introduction of Lord Warburton in *Portrait*: Isabel and Warburton, after numerous plot twists, finally marry in the end, as do the Anglo-American couples in *He Knew He Was Right* and *The Shuttle.* When Isabel "reads" Warburton, she reads him through the twin lenses of science and literature. With his good looks, great wealth, and high social position, Warburton is both the romantic hero and the successful Darwinian male. As a reader of fiction and reader of people, Isabel herself knows this plot line—and seeks to evade it.

Warburton may be a Darwinian hero of romance, but Isabel does not want to be the heroine of either romantic or evolutionary plots. Isabel states emphatically that there is "no choice in the question" because by marrying him she would lose the "free exploration of life" of which she had dreamed (101; ch.12). Because Warburton is a "personage" and "a territorial, a political, a social magnate," marrying him would mean she would be "drawn into the system in which he rather invidiously lived and moved" (95; ch. 12). Instead, Isabel desires "a system and an orbit of her own" (95; ch. 12). Much as she rejects marriage with Goodwood because of the limited role that marriage to him would allow, Isabel recognizes that Warburton similarly embodies the closed plots of female development and declines his proposal in order to continue participating in the processes of life and in her own transformation. Isabel's conscious processes of mate selection become a meta-discourse on her place in the novel. She denies Warburton and

in so doing rejects the courtship plot that would transform her into a mere satellite of Warburton. Rather, Isabel seeks a new plot line of her own. By subverting the courtship plot, Isabel attempts to subvert both literary and scientific imperatives that drive her toward a marriage in which she will be ascribed a pre-determined destiny. Isabel seeks a plot that will enable her to create her own identity, and she recognizes that she must be independent of human ties—especially marriage—in order to do so.

Isabel also comes to recognize, however, that marriage is the only choice open to women and therefore chooses a husband who seems most likely to enable her to change and transform. Isabel chooses Osmond, therefore, because she believes him to be engaged in the process of self-transformation, rather than a product of either scientific or literary plots. Osmond appears self-created, having removed all signs of origin in nature or nation.[61] Ralph describes Osmond as "a vague, unexplained American" because Ralph does not know "his antecedents, his family, his origin" (214; ch. 23). Unlike Goodwood or Warburton, whose bodies show their origins and their connections to their social environment, Osmond appears to have no origin in any environment. Rather, Osmond has transformed himself. Beards, for example, might be a "natural" feature held over from more animalistic ancestors. Osmond's beard, however, is "cut" with a mustache whose "ends had a romantic upward flourish" indicating a "gentleman who studied style" (197; ch. 22). Osmond's natural beard has been tamed and controlled through art and style. Indeed, the narrator likens Osmond to a "fine gold coin," whose material has been

[61] Burt Bender goes so far as to say that with his physical and mental attractions, Osmond appears to have been specially created, a product of natural theology rather than natural selection (*Descent* 148).

removed from its natural matrix and shaped by human hands (197; ch. 22). Osmond appeals to Isabel because he appears to have accomplished what she longs to achieve—forming his own character and therefore cutting himself off the shaping powers of nature and the social environment. America's laissez-faire capitalism, symbol of the Darwinian processes of natural selection, produces the virile businessman Goodwood. England's centuries of civilization produce the handsome and powerful MP, Warburton. These men are easily classified according to their traits, which are a product of their environment. Isabel observes that "her mind contained no class offering a natural place to Mr. Osmond—he was a specimen apart" (224; ch. 24). Without those determining relationships, Isabel's taxonomy has no "natural place" and "no class" for Osmond; he appears "a specimen apart."

Osmond's image as a man solely created by his own choice and will is, of course, a deception. As Bender points out, Osmond "is a member of the species of men who have evolved through natural and sexual selection" (149). Of Isabel's three suitors, Osmond is the most evolved and civilized, as his interest in art and style demonstrate. Isabel might not be able to read him, but considering he lives in Italy as a man of art and artifice, Osmond represents the older European cultures he has chosen to embrace. Isabel comes to recognize that Osmond's "ideal was a conception of high prosperity and propriety, of the aristocratic life," and that "he thought of himself—as the first gentlemen in Europe" (360). While Osmond presents himself as wholly self-created and separate from others, he creates that image to manipulate people. Isabel later discovers that, at the core, money and social position are all Osmond cares about. Osmond's concern for wealth and status, therefore, means that he is functionally indistinguishable from either Goodwood or

Warburton. Although at first glance these suitors appear vastly different—an American, an Englishman, and a European—no matter whom she chooses, in choosing to marry Isabel's plot becomes decided. While her three suitors outwardly appear different, all three pose the same problem for Isabel. In choosing to marry, Isabel chooses a development plot that ends in marriage.

"She Wished to Be Satisfied": Sexual Selection After Marriage

Both courtship novels and sexual selection would have us read Isabel as wholly defined—and therefore limited—by one primary relationship, her marriage. By extension, Isabel's choice of husband would also signal her choice of nationality. However, James positions the determining act of the courtship plot—marriage—in the middle of the novel. By placing Isabel's marriage in the middle of the novel, James can undermine the stability and stasis of the marriage ending. This formal deviation has the added effect of subverting social hierarchies—both gendered and national—inherent in the conservative courtship plot. James's novel calls into question the naturalized gender hierarchies of the traditional courtship ending by showing that Isabel obeys Osmond because she chooses to, not because he is naturally more dominant. When she reasserts her character, she can make new choices. James's novel, therefore, opens the marriage plot by separating sexual selection from the courtship plot, showing that Isabel has choices after marriage.

In conservative marriage plots, the ending in marriage stands for a reaffirmation of gender hierarchy. In *He Knew He Was Right*, for example, Caroline's assertive nature threatened the stability of the marriage bond, and by extension gendered relations in society. The novel sought to soothe social anxiety about the future of gendered relations

by reasserting men's dominance. The novel approved of Glascock's dominance of Caroline because it signaled stability in the home and by extension social stability between classes, genders, and nations. Darwin's theory of sexual selection naturalized male dominance, arguing that because men had to compete for resources and mates, they naturally developed more intelligence and strength. At first, the marriage between Osmond and Isabel appears to reflect such conservative views of gendered relations, as Osmond clearly dominates Isabel. But in the traditional marriage plot—as in *He Knew He Was Right*—womanly submission creates a happy ending. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, however, the novel points out how unnatural Isabel's submission is, and how miserable it makes both in the marriage. Although she attempts it, Isabel also recognizes the unnaturalness and impossibility of fully submitting to Osmond. Her marriage, she recognizes, is the "house of darkness, the house of dumbness, the house of suffocation" (360; ch. 42), in which "she seemed shut up with an odour of mould and decay" (361; ch. 42). We might contrast Isabel and Osmond's marriage with Caroline and Glascock's. While James develops pity for Isabel's situation, Trollope's readers are meant to rejoice when Caroline admits that "I promised to be a good girl [...] and not to pretend to have any opinion of my own ever again"; this submission allows the novel to resolve in a happy ending, even if Caroline is silenced in the process (Trollope, *He Knew* 767; ch. 81). Although *He Knew He Was Right* might end with Caroline and Glascock happily in their honeymoon, if Trollope looked past the happy ending into later years in their marriage, Caroline might similarly smell "an odour of mould and decay," locked up as she is with Glascock's "gouty toes."

Unlike Trollope's novel, which reaffirms female submission as right and natural, Osmond oppresses Isabel not because he is naturally stronger than her, but because she allows it. Bender argues that James "emphasizes Isabel's inherent psychological weaknesses such as her unstable imagination, her awe of power, and in general her mental inferiority in being outwitted and captured by Osmond" (*Descent of Love*, 150). I would assert, however, that being outwitted by Osmond points not to the "mental inferiority" of her sex, but rather to her youthful inexperience. Several years into their marriage, Isabel can recognize the mistakes she made in their courtship. When Isabel first meets Osmond, she remains uncharacteristically quiet and passive, taking "little part in the talk" and expecting Merle to later "scold her for having been so stupid" (212, 213; ch. 23). Later, Isabel realizes that "she had effaced herself when he first knew her; she had made herself small, pretending there was less of her than there really was" (357; ch. 42). As Osmond tries to change and mold her through their marriage, Isabel continues to make "herself small" and pretend there is "less of her," hoping to preserve their marriage. Isabel will not tolerate Osmond's oppression forever, as she sees "the rapid approach of the day when she should have to take back something she had solemnly bestown" (386; ch. 45). The thought that she might someday leave Osmond appears so "odious and monstrous" that "she tried to shut her eyes to it meanwhile" (386; ch. 45). In the cameo, we see of their marriage, Isabel chafes at her bonds. For example, Osmond wants Isabel to overlook his desire for Warburton and Pansy to marry for money and position, but "Isabel was not accommodating, would not glide" (352; ch. 41). In refusing to "glide," Isabel's focus of attention "operate[s] as an humiliation" highlighting Osmond's avarice and forcing him to see himself as he truly is, rather than the image he wants to present to

the world. Osmond lays out rules to control Isabel's interaction with Pansy, which Isabel "obeyed to the letter" in order to "reduce them to the absurd" and again highlight Osmond's inadequacies (369; ch. 43). These moments affirm that Osmond's domination is only temporary, lasting only until Isabel chooses to end it. Isabel, after all, is the more "noble" spirit, as Countess Gemini observes: "if Isabel should draw herself up she would be the taller spirit of the two," she states (376; ch. 44). Although we see Isabel containing herself, the novel points to a future beyond the novel's end when Isabel will change her relationship with Osmond and assert her natural superiority. By placing Isabel's marriage in the middle of the novel, therefore, James's novel subverts the gender hierarchies that the conservative courtship plot seeks to reinforce. In doing so, the novel critiques the artificial construction that would affirm Osmond's superiority to Isabel merely for being a man.

By placing Isabel's marriage in the middle of the novel, *Portrait* can demonstrate both that the marriage plot is an artificial literary construct, and that marriage is a cultural construct that the realist novel has wrongly conflated with sexual selection. While mid-Victorian sexual prudery insisted that marriage and sexual selection were the same, by the latter nineteenth-century literary texts began to acknowledge that both men and women were sexually active outside marriage. Even after she is married, Warburton still tries to court Isabel, although it is partly confused for him with a desire to court and marry her step-daughter Pansy. In chapter 43, Isabel accompanies Pansy to a ball, where Pansy can flirt and dance with her prospective suitors. As we saw in *The Shuttle*, scenes with dancing and balls resemble Darwinian courtship displays. But Pansy is not the only one who participates in such displays: the ball also dramatizes Warburton and Isabel's

post-marital courtship. The Darwinian language used to describe the ball highlights the sexuality of Pansy's dancing as well as Isabel's behavior. Pansy and her partners' vigorous dancing repeatedly rips Pansy's dress. The narrator notes that "there were too many gentlemen in uniform; they wore those dreadful spurs, which were fatal to the dresses of little maids" (368; ch. 43). As Bender has observed, the men's "spurs" represent male secondary sexual characteristics (*Descent* 144). In this case, the males' sexual aggression rips Pansy's clothes off piece by piece. While Pansy dances with suitors on the ballroom floor, Isabel and Warburton are undergoing their own courtship dance. Warburton tempts Isabel to dance with him, but she refuses. Isabel feels Warburton's presence as sexually threatening, and she seeks to fend off his advances: "it might be in her to flash out and bid him keep his distance" (368; ch. 43). Accepting her rebuff, Warburton decries dancing as "a barbarous amusement" and resorts to the more civilized courtship ritual of conversation, persuading Isabel to find a quiet corner so they can talk. Isabel assents, deciding to "let him carry out his idea; she wished to be satisfied" (370; ch. 43). Although unwilling to engage physically with Warburton, Isabel accepts his companionship. By flirting with him, Isabel indulges in the possibility that Warburton may be able to satisfy her desires outside marriage, even if she is unwilling to indulge those desires. Isabel "was not a daughter of the Puritans, but for all that, she believed in such a thing as chastity and even as decency" (362; ch. 42). Here, the novel acknowledges that Isabel has choices, even if she currently finds those choices dishonest and distasteful and is unwilling to step outside marriage to take a lover.

Most significant about this Darwinian courtship scene is that it occurs *after* Isabel's marriage. Warburton's courtship of Pansy merely conceals his true desire to be

with Isabel. Rather than integrating marriage with sexual selection, Warburton's courtship of Pansy conceals his sexual selection of Isabel. If Warburton desired Pansy, he would want to dance with her. However, it is Isabel that Warburton pursues. Pansy, however, offers two attractions for Warburton. First, Pansy is physically close to Isabel and therefore might offer Warburton greater access to Isabel. Secondly, Pansy is the closest facsimile to Isabel herself, as Pansy is like her daughter and theoretically trained in Isabel's image. Warburton tells Isabel that he believes she must have influenced Pansy, explaining that "you've talked to her, advised her, helped her to develop" (368; ch. 43). Isabel assents, piquantly replying that if Pansy "isn't the rose she has lived near it" (368; ch. 43). Without the nearness and possible likeness to herself, Isabel has a hard time seeing what attractions Pansy could have for him. Unlike Isabel's desire for "unlimited expansion," Pansy is "very limited" and therefore would better suit someone like the collector Edward Rosier, who loves delicate art (344; ch. 40). Warburton seems unaware or unwilling to acknowledge that he might be using Pansy to be close to Isabel even after Ralph's insinuation. Ralph asks Warburton "I hope you're sure that among Miss Osmond's merits her being—a—so near her stepmother isn't a leading one?" Warburton replies, "Good heavens, Touchett! [...] for what do you take me?" (336; ch. 39). When pressured by Isabel to propose to Pansy, however, Warburton beats a hasty retreat to England.

After Isabel's marriage, Warburton appears to offer one avenue for selection after marriage—an extramarital affair. Goodwood and America, on the other hand, offer a second avenue—divorce. Isabel tells Henrietta that it is not easy to leave one's husband, but Henrietta reminds her that "nothing is more common in our Western cities, and it's to

them, after all, that we must look in the future" (418; ch. 48). Henrietta points out that while divorce might not be easy in Europe, America (and especially the American West) had much more liberal divorce laws. When Isabel leaves Osmond to attend Ralph on his deathbed, Goodwood sees her journey as an opportunity to press his suit. Goodwood tells Isabel, "You took the great step in coming away; the next is nothing; it's the natural one" (488; ch. 55). According to this trajectory, Isabel took the first step by leaving Osmond; the next will be to divorce him. This path is traced geographically as Isabel moves from Italy, where she lives with Osmond, to England, where she tends to Ralph; the path would be completed if she then traveled westward to America and sought a divorce.

By including the possibility of divorce and remarriage, the novel, therefore, undermines the courtship plot's attempt to create stasis through marriage, while also denying the literary representation of sexual selection as marriage. James's novel appears to critique the literary representation of sexual selection by showing that the choice of mate is not analogous to the choice of marriage partner, as has been assumed in many romantic narratives dealing with sexual selection. In Burnett's *The Shuttle,* for example, Bettina's choice of mate is the same as her choice of husband. Similarly, in *He Knew He Was Right*, Trollope's dramatization of Nora Rowley's choice of husband is discussed in the terms of sexual selection. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, however, the novel shows that the choice of husband or wife is not the end of sexual selection. Even though she is married, for example, Madame Merle later chooses to mate and reproduce with Osmond.[62] Children from these marriages are either never conceived or die in early

[62] It is perhaps worth noting that many of the marriages in *Portrait* are sterile: Madame Merle's, Countess

childhood. Isabel's selection of mate, therefore, continually occurs throughout the novel, long after her choice of husband has been made. In comic plots that equate mate selection with marriage, the end of the plot occurs when that selection has been made. By ending the novel at the point of marriage, such texts suggest that the plot has reached stasis. In *Portrait,* however, Isabel's continued choosing highlights the instability inherent in the novel's marriage ending.

While sexual selection does offer opportunity for choice beyond marriage, the novel also points to its limitations for offering Isabel more choices. In the novel's final chapter, Goodwood seeks out Isabel at Gardencourt to persuade her to leave Osmond. Overcome with desire, Goodwood grabs Isabel and kisses her. Goodwood's kiss offers a moment of hope, but ultimately Goodwood symbolizes a false choice. The scene takes place at dusk, but Goodwood's "kiss was like lighting a flash that spread, and spread again, and stayed" (489; ch. 55). Goodwood releases her back into the darkness, and the flash of light ends. While in this moment Isabel recognizes Goodwood's devotion to her, turning to Goodwood would be just another misery for Isabel. After all, despite the image of freedom, Goodwood would be just as confining as Osmond. As I showed earlier, Goodwood is a Darwinian male who seeks to catch and hold his mate. Critic Melissa Ganz rightly points out, "by presenting Caspar as the only alternative to Osmond, the novel significantly diminishes the appeal of Isabel's contemplated flight" (170). Isabel

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Gemini's, Osmond's first marriage, and Isabel's marriage to Osmond. Gorra points out that the death of Isabel's child does two things—it shows that Isabel and Osmond have consummated their marriage, but also gives Isabel the liberty to make a free choice at the end of the novel to either return or leave Osmond without having to consider the welfare of her child (223).

rejects Goodwood's demand to "be mine as I'm yours," and we can see her similarly moving to reject Osmond's hold on her. By collapsing any minor differences between Osmond and Goodwood, we see that, as Davida Pines states, "Goodwood, Warburton, and Osmond are functionally indistinguishable" (23). Choosing a man would all lead to a closed plot that traps Isabel in the hierarchy of gender and nation. When marrying Osmond, Isabel has already attempted the kind of partnership Goodwood offers. In marrying Osmond, Isabel hoped that "she was not only taking, she was giving," but Osmond denies accepting anything from her except her money (297; ch. 35). Isabel recognizes, however, that marrying any of her suitors would ultimately end her development by subsuming her plot into larger masculine and national narratives. While offering Isabel choices after marriage points to an open plot, the novel recognizes that choosing between men is still only one choice. The novel, therefore, points to the limitations of sexual selection as a plot to carry out Isabel's continued transformation. The novel turns from the dead end of sexual selection to the open plot of natural selection to create an open plot for Isabel.

"The Infinite Vista of a Multiplied Life"

Whereas the conservative marriage ending symbolizes stability and a bright future, James's novel critiques ending by demonstrating that marriage constricts women as her identity is swallowed into her husband's, and their individual romance absorbed into a larger narrative of nation. In marriage, Isabel finds "the infinite vista of a multiplied life to be a dark, narrow alley with a dead wall at the end" (356; ch. 42). Isabel's marriage dramatizes the constrictions of marriage for women, while also showing the true result of the marriage plot. Although Isabel "had not known where to

turn" after her discovery of Merle and Osmond's deception, after her encounter with Goodwood, Isabel "knew now" that "there was a very straight path" (490; ch. 55). Most critics agree on what that path is: Isabel returns to Rome and her marriage. A return to Osmond, however, does not necessarily signal the stasis many critics see in this ending.[63] Because the second half of the novel undermines the courtship plot, the text encourages us to re-examine all Isabel's relations—with her family, her friends, and herself—as alternatives to the main signifying relationship with her husband. By marginalizing the courtship plot, the text directs our attention to the multiplicity of plots that have either gone unnoticed or have been misread as subplots of the courtship narrative. This web of relationships resembles Darwin's description of the way animals adapt to their environment through natural selection. By turning from sexual selection to natural selection, therefore, the novel can create an open plot for Isabel. This open plot points to the instability of both gendered and national relations. While the marriage ending points to a reassertion of gendered and national hierarchies, Isabel's open plot highlights the impermanence of any national superiority.

From the beginning of the novel, the text has played with romantic interpretations of Isabel's life. As I pointed out earlier, when she first comes to England, Daniel

[63] Critics largely agree that Isabel returns to Osmond, although they differ as to her reasons. Berkson contends that Isabel returns to Rome as a mark of her initiation into adulthood; Brody argues that Isabel returns because she holds her marriage vows as sacred; Niemtzow, White, and Habegger believe that she renounces the possibility of divorce; Stein contends that Isabel realizes that marriage does not always bring happiness; and MacComb more optimistically states that "personal liberty cannot be gained by disengagement from struggle, nor can equality in marriage be won by divorce" (130).

Touchett complains "she hasn't come here to look for a husband, I hope; so many young ladies are doing that, as if there were no good ones at home" (25; ch. 1). Familiarity with the marriage plot in general, and Anglo-American romances in particular, might have compelled us to read these initial scenes as the beginnings of a courtship novel; but by the middle of the novel, when it becomes clear that marriage is not the end of the plot, we are compelled to look back and re-evaluate earlier scenes in order to understand the novel. The final chapters reveal to Isabel the multiplicity of plots unfolding behind the scenes. By reading the novel as a courtship novel, we misread these subplots and "minor" relationships as merely propelling the larger romantic drama. Once the courtship plot has been subverted, however, Isabel can re-evaluate the importance of these relationships. Isabel's most important relationships are not the narrow strands of romantic ties, but the complicated webs of family relationships that connect Isabel to Pansy, Serena Merle, and Gilbert Osmond on the one hand, and Ralph, Mrs. Touchett, and Daniel Touchett on the other. Much like Turgenieff, whom James quotes in the preface to the New York edition of *Portrait*, the novel seeks not a romantic storyline, but "to show my people, to exhibit their relations with each other" (5). It is not enough for the heroine to be tied to the hero, like Cleopatra to Antony, but she must also matter to "a hundred other persons, made of much stouter stuff, and each involved moreover in a hundred relations which matter to *them* concomitantly with that one" (10; preface). The heroine, therefore, must be tied in a web of relations that expands outward, not solely to her romantic hero.

In the end, Isabel finally recognizes the relationships around her, relationships that are complicated, both beautiful and ugly. Her awareness of these relationships resembles Darwin's entangled bank analogy in the final pages of *Origin*:

> It is interesting to contemplate an entangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. [...] Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely the production of the higher animals, directly follow. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved. (Darwin, *Origin* 489–490)

In these final lines of *Origin*, Darwin points out the ways in which species exist in a tangled web of relationships with other species, simultaneously both predator and prey. Darwin emphasizes the affinity between all species that are "dependent on each other," even as their forms diverge to become "so different from each other." As I discuss earlier in the chapter, "transformation" and "process" point to an open plot, while "growth" and "development" indicate a closed plot. Darwin further marks evolution not as growth that develops final products, but rather as a process of transformation in which "endless forms" continue to evolve. Unlike the nineteenth-century novels featuring idealized romantic relationships between husband and wife, in *Portrait* James portrays heterosexual marriage as a "narrow alley" that entraps women in a closed plot. However,

Isabel can find "the infinite vista of a multiplied life" by looking outward to her relationships outside marriage.

The second half of *Portrait* undermines both the closed marriage plot and the closed sexual selection plot by emphasizing the importance of Isabel's non-romantic relationships. Isabel chose to marry because she wanted to transform herself, only to discover that marriage ends change for women. In the second half of the novel, Isabel witnesses that despite the cultural importance placed on marriage, a culture that sees "the final aim of all love intrigues" as "of more importance than all other ends in human life," her life has been shaped by a multitude of different relationships. Through a series of scenes, Isabel becomes aware that the relationship between Merle and Osmond has not always been one of mere friendship. Isabel witnesses Serena Merle standing over Osmond as he sits in a chair, reversing the normal positions of host and visitor. Their familiarity hints at their previous relationship. As Isabel comes to realize the nature of their relationship, confusion overwhelms her. She asks Madame Merle "Who are you—what are you? What have you to do with my husband?" Madame Merle brushes asides these comments, but when Isabel asks her "What have you to do with me?", Merle replies "Everything!" (430; ch. 39). In these moments, Isabel is trying to understand her relationship with her husband, her relationship with Merle, and of course the relationship between Merle and Osmond. The desire for understanding these connections is figured in the epistrophe, the dash, and the anaphora. The anaphora heightens the emotional effect of the scene as Isabel tries to re-evaluate the relationships between the three of them and to understand the role of Merle in her life. The contrast in the epistrophe hints at Isabel's fundamental misunderstanding of Merle's nature and therefore her role in Isabel's life.

Although both sexual selection and the marriage plot reinforce the primacy of heterosexual marriage as the determining relationship in a woman's life, Madame Merle subverts that narrative by claiming her own central role in Isabel's life.

The novel reveals that the sexual selection plot is not the primary narrative, but rather a natural selection plot with Merle manipulating Isabel and Osmond in order to provide for her child Pansy. Bender argues that it is Osmond who ultimately chooses Isabel by attracting Isabel with the beauty of his mind (Bender, *Descent* 149). However, if we look back at Isabel and Osmond's courtship, we see that it is Madame Merle who works to draw Osmond and Isabel together and thereby ensnare Isabel's fortune for her own use. The courtship, such as it is, begins before Osmond and Isabel even meet. When Merle and Isabel travel to Italy, Merle seeks out Osmond to encourage him to meet Isabel. Osmond is not inclined to meet her—or at least he does not want the appearance of desiring to meet her—but Merle tempts him: "If I could only induce you to make an effort" then he might "profit" by it (206; ch. 22). Osmond recognizes that Merle has the power to manipulate Isabel and asks Merle what she plans on doing with her. Merle replies that what she wants to do is "put her in your way" (207; ch. 22). Merle hopes that, between her knowledge of Isabel's character and Osmond's desire for wealth and beautiful objects, she can manipulate them into a marriage that will benefit her daughter Pansy. It is Merle, therefore, who sets into motion Isabel's marriage to Osmond. Separately, neither Isabel nor Osmond would have had enough energy or interest to meet; Merle's subtle manipulations lead to their match. In the second half of the novel, Isabel recognizes that neither she nor Osmond were fully responsible for their marriage, but rather that "Madame Merle had married her" (430; ch. 49). Merle's machinations push us

to read Isabel's life in the context of natural selection rather than sexual selection since Osmond is not the one to pursue Isabel. Rather, Merle seeks to create the match in order to provide for Pansy. Merle preys on Isabel, feeding her to Osmond to protect her own offspring.

In the final chapters, Isabel recognizes her failure to accurately read and classify Madame Merle. Just as Isabel has tried to understand people scientifically by type throughout, here Isabel tries to connect the traits Merle reveals with Isabel's understanding of types of people by asking "who" and "what" Merle is. Although previously Isabel has admired Merle for her ability to create herself through her expertise in controlling and regulating her own behavior, here Isabel fully comes to understand what it means that Merle is "too perfectly the social animal that man and woman are supposed to have been intended to be" (167; ch. 19). Isabel recognized from the beginning that Merle "existed only in her relations, direct or indirect, with her fellow mortals" (167; ch. 19). According to the scientific literature of the time, the social nature of humans was believed to be a good thing as it led to positive emotions such as love and sympathy. However, Isabel recognizes in this scene that being too much the social animal can create parasites such as Merle who cultivate and manipulate the emotions of others for their own gain.

By the end of the novel, Isabel seeks to embrace all her relationships, both good and bad. Before he dies, Ralph reminds Isabel that "if you've been hated you've also been loved. Ah but, Isabel—adored!" (479; ch. 54). Isabel claims this relationship by naming Ralph "my brother!" (479; ch. 54). Ralph is not the only relationship she claims, as she tells Countess Gemini that Pansy "has become mine" and claims her as "my child"

(454; ch. 51, 462; ch. 52).[64] What we can gather, then, is that outside of her marriage, Isabel exists within a complicated web of relationship in which she is both loved and hated. In some of those relationships, such as her friendship with Madame Merle, Isabel becomes merely prey. In her relationships with Ralph and Pansy, however, Isabel both takes and gives love.

Intriguingly, the relationships Isabel forms are with individuals who cannot be easily categorized by nationality. Most of her relations are with Americans, but they do not behave like Americans or live in the U.S. The Touchetts are born in the U.S., but they live in England. Madame Merle and Osmond are the most European in manners, so much so that they raise their daughter in a convent, but both were born in America. Isabel herself changes throughout the novel, appearing at times to be thoroughly American and later more European; ultimately, she cannot be easily classified according to nationality because her outer appearance belies her inner reality. These shifts in nationality throughout the novel suggest that individuals' relationships to larger social structures, such as nations, are as complicated as our web of individual relations, and these relations remain in flux throughout a person's life.

In adopting the near-adult Pansy, rather than having a child of her own, Isabel avoids the most problematic aspects of motherhood. Realists novels who explored Darwinian theory in fiction recognized that motherhood could cause a loss of identity as a

[64] Critic Dana Luciano argues that the "proliferation" of "queer kinships" and filial relationships formed between Isabel and Ralph and Isabel and Pansy overshadow the "linear heterosexual narrative of the family, meant to reproduce and transmit itself, its norms, its bloodlines, and its property over time" (214).

woman's life was given over to taking care of her children. Indeed, Beer recognizes that for Eliot "to *have* a mother may be a good thing," but "to *be* a mother may not" (211). Beer notes that both George Eliot and Thomas Hardy "emphasise [sic] the discordance between a woman's individuality and her progenerative role" (199). In mothering Pansy, Isabel can experience the ties of kinship without the loss of self-experienced by women who raise their own children. In killing off Isabel's child in infancy, James avoids the more difficult question of whether a mother can be an individual.

Despite the misery she experiences, the novel hints that these miseries will evolve a "most beautiful and most wonderful" future for Isabel beyond the end of the novel. During her journey to Ralph's bedside, Isabel has ample opportunity to reflect on the sad state of her marriage. Regardless of recent misery, Isabel has hope for the future and the conviction "that life would be her business for a long time to come," an idea which is "enlivening" and "inspiring" and "proof she should some day be happy again" (466; ch. 53). Isabel's ending resembles Gwendolen's final scenes in George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda.* In *Daniel Deronda*, Beer asserts, Gwendolen "has come through plot and out of plot into the indeterminacy of that which succeeds the text" (204), a place where Gwendolen is both "alone and unknown," asserting "'I shall live. I mean to live'" (204). Beer argues that "instead of any movement towards fulfillment, there is the satisfied estrangement of the reader" who is left in a state of speculating as to what the future will bring Gwendolen. These positive glimpses of Isabel's future similarly leave the reader in imagining Isabel's future. Although this moment of hope is quickly shuttered by "the grey curtain of her indifference," the repetition of these brief moments of light that break through the present darkness imply that Isabel's future holds hope despite her present

difficulties (466, ch. 53). Similarly, while Ralph's death darkens her present, the funeral offers another moment of hope: "There were tears in Isabel's eyes, but they were not tears that blinded. She looked through them at the beauty of the day, the splendour of nature, the sweetness of the Old English churchyard, the bowed heads of good friends" (480; ch. 55). In this scene, Isabel can look past the pain of the present moment to the love and beauty of the world. The novel, therefore, hints at continued transformation. While the novel's events appear tragic, change is possible after the novel's end.

By demonstrating the ways in which the many characters are "dependent on each other in so complex a manner," the novel undermines the closed form of both the sexual selection and marriage plots. In his notebooks, James points out that "the obvious criticism, of course, will be that it is not finished—that I have not seen the heroine to the end of her situation—that I have left her *en l'air* [...] It is complete in itself—and the rest may be taken up or not, later" (*Notebooks* 15). James gives Henrietta Stackpole the final lines of dialogue, what he calls a "characteristic characterization of Isabel" (*Notebooks* 16). Henrietta tells Goodwood "Just you wait!", hinting that Isabel will one day make a different decision (*Portrait* 490; ch. 55). We are left, therefore, poised in that moment without resolution as the novel ends, and Henrietta only reinforces this impermanent conclusion by asking us to wait for Isabel.[65] The novel's unresolved end, therefore, accomplishes a truly open plot by leaving us with a heroine who moves beyond the end of the novel, continuing in a process of transformation.

[65] In the words of Melissa Ganz, Isabel "leaves us forever in the moment of running away, poised on the brink of a decision" (170).

We can conclude, therefore, that early in the period from 1870–1914, Anglo-American texts tend toward closed marriage plots. Part of this trend is due to social confidence and a belief in progress, both of which the conservative marriage plot embodies. Trollope's work is a hold-over from the mid Victorian period, clinging to traditional views of English society. As I have shown, the marriage plot was largely a closed form that sought to resolve plot complications—and, by extension, social problems—through the marriage ending. Trollope's novels reflect mid-Victorian resistance to the idea of humans' animal nature and optimistically reassert our higher human qualities. As Bender points out, "In the 1870s and early 1880s, for example, writers tended to take shelter in the idea of 'civilization,' from which privileged point of view one could contemplate 'barbarians,' 'savages,' and, less frequently, the 'lower' animals" (*Evolution* 1). The closed marriage plot could easily integrate theories of evolution that emphasized hierarchy, development, and progress, including Spencer's neo-Lamarkian theories of use inheritance, Wallace's emphasis on the supernatural origin of humans, and Hall's theory of individual maturation.

Until the realist novel moved away from the marriage plot, it could not embody the open plot of Darwin's theory of natural selection. Darwin's secondary theory of sexual selection existed in a grey area between the open form of natural selection and the closed form of the marriage plot. While the theory of natural selection resisted resolution, emphasizing flux and process, the marriage plot reasserted the social status quo. Sexual selection does suggest the possibility of an open plot by operating on the foundations of variability and diversity within a species and the process of species transformation through sexual choice. However, sexual selection also reintroduced the ideas of direction,

control, and progress to human evolution that were missing from natural selection. Further, when Victorians writers and scientists applied sexual selection to humans, the openness of sexual choice conflicted with cultural ideals of monogamy embodied in the courtship plot.

Henry James's Anglo-American courtship texts, therefore, point to broad but related changes in Anglo-American courtship texts: a movement toward dramatizing humans' conflicting motivations for marriage, which leads toward open plots that undermine the stability of marriage relations. As Bender states, "by the 1890s, Howells and James—but especially younger novelists such as Harold Frederic, Kate Chopin, Frank Norris, and Edith Wharton—were beginning to present much darker stories of sexual love" (*Evolution* 2). These later novelists, according to Bender, explore sexual desire, control, and the physical competition for mates. I would add that Anglo-American texts similarly take a darker turn. Later Anglo-American novels explore the interaction between internal motivators for marriage (such as sex and love) and the external cultural forces (such as the desire for wealth and prestige). These larger changes are apparent in novels like Gertrude Franklin Horn Atherton's *His Fortunate Grace* (1897), *American Wives and English Husbands* (1898), and James's *The Wings of the Dove* (1902). Much like James's *Portrait*, these novels do not end in marriage, and the plots remain open as characters fail to form stable relationships in marriage or in society.

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