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ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

VOL. II. TO THE PRESENT

Universidad de Costa Rica
Facultad de Ciencias Sociales
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VOL. I: COLONIZATION TO 1860

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INTRODUCTION

This collection of essays seeks to provide detailed studies of aspects of the history of the United States that traditionally have been left out of the standard textbooks. These eight essays, which fall in the time period from the establishment of English colonies in North America until about the time of the Civil War, are not meant to constitute a balanced view of those two and one-half centuries. Instead specific studies are included that deal with English--Indian relations, indentured servant labor, the family in early America, the role of women in the colonial period, the "American character" in 1800, religious movements on the frontier in the early nineteenth century, the cities on the western frontier, and the perception of the role of women in the forty years prior to the Civil War.

These topics are in many ways typical of the newer trends in the writing of the history of the United States. Each generation of historians seeks to reinterpret the past, based on its own experiences as well on the current state of methodology and theory. The concerns of people in the contemporary United States are reflected in the types of questions that historians address in their research. For example, the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and after and the concurrent Native American movement served to redirect scholarly inquiry towards the history of women and Indians in the American past.

As the writing of history in the United States has matured, many historians have realized that the traditional approach to American history as the narrative of a series of political events strongly influenced by the actions of a few men or a small group of men leaves much to be desired. This approach, it was discovered, reflected only a part of the American reality and provided little in terms of understanding or explaining the long term historical development of the United States. Based often on sources produced by a small intellectual elite, the resulting history reflected the biases and stereotypes of that group and often ignored the majority of people. New approaches to history, new methodologies, and the use of new sources have enabled historians to correct many of the misconceptions of the past and to construct a more representative base for the understanding of the evolution of contemporary America.

The shift has been away from political and intellectual history and towards the study of social and economic structures and their change over time. The importance of flashy political events such as the war for Independence, Thomas Jefferson and the Revolution of 1800, or even the Civil War, are much dininished in importance when viewed within the broader social and economic framework. The newer social and economic history has rejected the narrow range of sources employed by the narrative historians, including travellers' accounts, official government reports, and correspondence and journals of private individuals, and instead has also incorporated sources that are much nearer to the historical reality. Here we might include the actual physical remains of the period under

study, wills, court records, tax records, censuses, and vital statistics in parish and civil registers. In other words, the trend has been to employ a wider range of historical sources and to focus on the basic social and economic aspects of the history of the United States.

Another purpose of this collection of essays is to provide the student with detailed vignettes of U.S. history that may serve as the basis for comparison with the history of Costa Rica or Spanish America. The broad similarities between the English experience and the Iberian experience in the New World should be obvious. Both areas were settled as colonies of European powers, as parts of mercantilistic empires. The role of both English and Spanish colonies in these broad imperial structures was similar; each was to provide valuable raw products to the metropolis and at the same time was to serve as a market for manufactured goods. Each area was populated with Indian civilizations and both Spanish and English constructed new and complete European societies in the New World. Each developing society encountered problems with the utilization of land and the supply of labor and the solutions reveal important similarities as well as differences between the Spanish and the English efforts. Both the English colonies and the Spanish colonies underwent a process of social and economic maturation and development, and eventually experienced a rupture of ties with the mother country, resulting in political independence. Then both the new United States and the newly independent countries of Spanish America initiated the process of constructing new national political and economic structures.

When reading the various essays in this collection, the student should keep the above considerations in mind in order to better understand the history of the United States and its place in the broader world history. Students should also pay attention to the sources and methodologies employed by the authors of these articles. An introduction is provided for each essay, as are several questions for study, which will hopefully aid the student in understanding the key points of these articles.

We would like to express our appreciation to Gayle for the typing of this collection.

PG
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SAVAGE WAR

The expansion of Europeans into the Americas brought the Spanish and English into contact with native civilizations of differing complexities. Although the chronology of contact was different, the ultimate aim of these two European powers was very much the same: The domination of whatever valualble resources the Native Americans controlled. As European colonies expanded, the demands increased. Native societies with well developed systems for providing tribute and labor, such as those of mesoamerica and the Central Andes, submitted and survived, although suffering drastic dislocation and loss of population through epedemic diseases. When native societies refused to submit, as in most of the present day U.S., northwestern Mexico, the pampas of Argentina, or in southern Chile, they were eventually exterminated as the European frontier advanced.

Both the Spanish and the English justified their actions in one way or another. The Spanish had centuries of traditions of conquering heathens who refused to accept the true religion, but nevertheless, their enterprise in the Indies provoked a tremendous debate centered around the critiques of Bartolome de Las Casas. Ironically, his statements and others of a similar vein, were publicized by the English who created the Black Legend to discredit their main rival for empire. English justification took the form of the development of an ideology that held that the English were merely occupying a virgin land, which if not empty, was inhabited at most by heathens and savages who deserved whatever fate befell them at the hands of the Europeans. Francis Jennings, in his essay "Savage War" shows that America was not an empty land and he demonstrates how the colonists tried to attach the label "savage" to the Indian style of warfare in partial justification of their attempts to dispossess the Indians.

Questions for study:

1. Compare the levels of violence within English and Indian societs.:

2. What myths about the English occupation of North America does Jennings destroy?

3. What types of historical sources does Jennings use?

4. Did the treatment of the Indians by the English differ substantially from that of the Spanish?

SAVAGE WAR

Francis Jennings*

Myth contrasts civilized war with savage war by accepting the former as a rational, honorable, and often progressive activity while attributing to the latter the qualities of irrationality, ferocity, and unredeemed retrogression. Savagery implies unchecked and perpetual violence. Because war is defined as organized violence between politically distinct communities, some writers have questioned whether savage conflicts really qualify for the dignity of the name of war. By whatever name, savage conflicts are conceived to be irrational because they supposedly lack point or objective beyond the satisfaction of sadistic appetites that civilization inhibits, and savages are ferocious through the force of these appetites.

These images are byproducts of the master myth of civilization locked in battle with savagery. Civilized war is the kind we fight against them (in this case, Indians), whereas savage war is the atrocious kind that they fight against us. The contrast has been sustained by means of biased definition on the one hand and tendentious description on the other. Savage war has been dismissed as mere "vengeance" or "feud," and writers have made it seem incomparably more horrible than civilized war by dwelling upon the gory details of personal combat, massacre, and torture on the Indian side while focusing attention diversely on the goals and strategy of wars on the European side.

Still another circumstance has contributed to the myth. Indian governments held jurisdiction over relatively small territories, and there were a great many of them. No supreme power existed to suppress conflicts; the tribes settled their differences themselves by negotiation or struggle. With so many possible combinations of interest groups, statistical odds dictated frequent intertribal conflicts. European governments, in comparison, extended over larger territories, and thus the possible number of international wars was statistically a good deal less. Furthermore, European society may have deferred some "organized" warfare, not by abolishing violence, but by internalizing much of it. Nearly all the violence of Indian society expressed itself intertribally in the form of war, but internal violence in the European states required a vast apparatus for its suppression, the means of which were also violent: Londoners could always find sadistic entertainment at Tyburn or the Tower, and the gaolers buried more prisoners than they discharged. There were also means of violent struggle between nation-states other than declared war; Sir Francis Drake sacked Spanish towns in time of peace, and pirates were ever present on all the seas. We tend to glorify these "sea dogs" instead of putting them on the same low level as Indian raiders, but the victims in both cases went through much the same experiences. If we focus entirely on internal order, the Indian village was a peaceful place compared to the European town. If we focus instead on relations between polities, the nation-states were under tighter controls than the tribes.[1] It seems to me that a proper comparison should include both internal and external relations and should examine the total level of violence in each society, its forms and motives, and the methods used to control and direct it. From this perspective aboriginal Indian society appears to have been far less violent than seventeenth-century European society. The wasting wars so prominent among Indians in historic times were a factor of adaptation to European civilization.

Indian tribes were internally more peaceful than European nations partly because of the kin-oriented sanctions pervading Indian villages, as distinct from the greater impersonality of European social relationships, and partly because Indian custom

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*From Francis Jennings, The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1975), pp. 146-70.

defined and punished fewer crimes than European law. If there is merit in the argument that psychological aggressions are the cause of social violence (and, like most psychological explanations, this one permits large flights of fancy) then the aggressive feelings of Indians were vented mostly upon persons outside the protection of kin obligation--that is to say, outside the clan and tribe. The same customary sanctions were notably tolerant of many sorts of behavior that Europeans classed as crime, especially regarding deviant sexual and religious conduct. There was no crime of fornication or "unnatural vice" among Indians, nor was there any heresy as that was defined by European law.[2] All sex relations except rare cases of rape were personal matters outside the jurisdiction of sachem and council, and religious belief was totally personal. Although participation in rituals was expected, the punishment for withdrawal was limited to public obloquy; in extreme cases the offender might be bewitched or poisoned by the tribal powwow, but such acts were clandestine. Indians knew nothing of the whole class of offenses called by European lawyers "crimes without victims." When one considers the floggings, jailings, hangings, torture, and burnings inflicted by European states for the multitude of crimes that did not even exist in Indian society, one becomes painfully aware that an incalculably great proportion of European violence against persons was inflicted by the very agencies whose ostensible function was to reduce violence. In due course "civil society" would seek to tranquilize its communities by emulating savage toleration of human variety, but even today this has still only begun.

Of crimes common to both societies, murder requires special notice. It was conceived of differently by Indian and European and was therefore punished by different processes. In Europe murder was an offense against the state; among Indians it was an offense against the family of the victim. European law demanded the murderer's life as atonement to the state; Indian custom made his life forfeit to his victim's family. In Europe the state apprehended the murderer; among Indians it was the family's obligation to do so. European observers tagged the Indian custom "revenge" and blathered much about the savagery revealed by it. Yet as compared to the state's relentlessness, the tribe provided an institution carefully and precisely designed to stanch the flow of blood. The obligation of blood for blood could be commuted into a payment of valuable goods by the murderer's own kinsfolk to the relatives of his victim.[3] This custom (which had been known centuries earlier in Anglo-Saxon England as wergild) was a widespread stabilizer of Indian societies, forestalling the development of obligatory revenge into exterminating feuds. Although the term feud has been used freely by the condemners of savage society, Marian W. Smith has been unable to find the phenomena properly denoted by it. "True feud," she remarks, "in its threat of continued violence between particular groups, is surprisingly rare in the New World."[4]

Europeans understood the wergild custom and used it themselves in their dealings with Indians, but only unilaterally. Europeans would pay blood money to avert Indian revenge for the killing of an Indian, but Indians were not permitted to buy absolution for the killing of a European. In the latter case the Europeans demanded the person of the accused Indian for trial in a European court.[5] In the event of nonapprehension of the suspected culprit, mass retribution might be visited upon his village or tribe.[6] The savagery of revenge, therefore, was simply a semantic function of its identification with an Indian; European revenge was civilized justice.

When Indians stirred abroad they were safe in their own territory and in those of tribes with whom they were at peace. The hospitality trait so prominent in all the tribes guaranteed to the traveler not only security but also shelter, sustenance, and sometimes sexual entertainment, all free of charge. Europeans traveling

through Indian territory received the same treatment.[7] But travelers in seventeenth-century Europe risked life and property on every highway and in many inns, and they paid for all they got.

The violence and horrors of civil war were rare among Indians, probably because they tolerated secession while England underwent the Puritan Revolution and France the Catholic-Huguenot agonies; to say nothing of dynastic upheavals by the score. Nor were there class wars or riots in Indian society. Nor did aboriginal Indians experience drunken orgies with their attendant tumults until rum and brandy were poured into the villages from Europe. Thereafter, however, drunken rage became a recurring menace everywhere.

When all this has been said, there still remains the problem of conflict between the tribes. The traditional conception of savage war depicts it as so unrelenting and frightful as to be incapable of proper comparison with the purposeful and disciplined process of civilized war. No less an authority than A. L. Kroeber has attributed to the east coast Indians of North America a kind of "warfare that was insane, unending, continuously attritional, from our point of view." It was nightmarish--"so integrated into the whole fabric of Eastern culture, so dominantly emphasized within it, that escape from it was well-nigh impossible. Continuance in the system became self-preservatory. The group that tried to shift its values from war to peace was almost certainly doomed to early extinction."[8] This harsh indictment would carry more weight if its rhetoric were supported by either example or reference. The only example that comes to mind in support of Kroeber is the Lenape mission of the Moravian church in the mid-eighteenth century. The Indians of that mission took their Christianity seriously, became absolute pacifists, and were unresistingly massacred. But there experience does not quite illustrate Kroeber's point, for their killers were not other Indians but backcountry Euramerican thugs, also Christian after a fashion, who were rather less ready to attack the old-fashioned pagan sort of Indian that fought back.[9]

Kroeber's implication of heavy casualties in aboriginal warfare is contradicted by seventeenth-century reports of Europeans with attitudes as diverse as those of Roger Williams and Captain John Underhill. From his observation post among the warring Narragansett and Pequot Indians, Williams saw that their fighting was "farre lesse bloudy and devouring than the cruell Warres of Europe."[10] Underhill was contemptuous of what Williams approved. He sneered at the Indian warriors who called off a battle after inflicting only a few deaths, and he reported complacently the Narragansetts' protest against his English-style war that "slays too many men."[11]

Imagined dogmas about warriors' lethal accomplishments have led sober scholars into impossible contradictions. For instance, Harold E. Driver has remarked, on the one hand, that "the greed, cupidity, deceit, and utter disregard of Indian life on the part of most of the European conquerors surpassed anything of the kind that the Indian cultures had been able to produce on their own in their thousands of years of virtual independence from the Old World." But Driver has also written, in conformity to savagery mythology, that "no young man ever thought of getting married or of being accepted as an adult citizen until he had slain an enemy and brought back a scalp to prove it."[12] The mathematical implications of the latter statement are wonderous. To demonstrate what it would mean in practice, let us imagine a situation in which two villages are perpetually raiding each other as they would be obliged to do in order to qualify their males for manhood and matrimony. Assuming that the age of eighteen is the threshold of manhood, we find that all of the eighteen-year-old men of one village achieve the right to marry by killing off an equal number of males in the other village. The total population of both villages

would thus be reduced annually by the total number of eighteen-year-old men (at least this is so if the eighteen-year-olds from the two villages avoided killing each other). This is the minimum implication of one coup per warrior. If some braves showed more than minimum enthusiasm and skill, the whole process would be speeded up accordingly. Such a process would lead inexorably, year by year. not just to a low level of population, but to total extinction. The thing is impossible, of course, and so is the dogma on which it is predicated. Clearly there were young men in Indian society who got married before they ever killed anyone, and the mathematics imply that a lot of old Indian men also died without having killed. What really made an Indian youth a citizen of the community was an initiation ritual, and the process has been observed and reported thousands of times. William Penn reported that young Delawares were permitted to marry "after having given some Proofs of their Manhood by a good return of Skins" and that almost all of them were wed before they reached nineteen years of age.[13] Among the Delawares, therefore, a man could marry when he could demonstrate the ability to support a family. How many Euramerican parents have drilled that notion into their offspring? That the young Indian could gain prestige and status by killing and scalping is undeniable, and that many youngsters itched for such fame is as plain as the enlistment of European mercenaries for pay and plunder. But universal generalizations should be grounded in some minimum quantity of evidence and common sense.

Suppose it be argued that the disastrous demographic implications just presented are fallacious because warriors might diffuse the population loss by taking scalps from women and children. Deductively such an objection might have merit if not for the inductive evidence available. Contact-era Europeans agreed that, with few exceptions that occurred in the confusion of battle, Indians killed only men.[14] The cultural imperative may have been a survival trait rather than pure sentiment, because one reason for sparing these noncombatants was to assimilate them into the victorious tribe, thus to enlarge and strengthen it.[15] Some tribes were observed to begin war for the specific purpose of augmenting their female population.[16] Whatever the motive the merciful custom was universal in regard to women and children.

Treatment of captured men was more varied. Early southern accounts indicate that all male prisoners were put to death except the chiefs.[17] By the seventeenth century torture of men was practiced fairly extensively, although some doubt exists about how widespread this trait had been at an earlier time. An ameliorating custom decreed the sparing of a large proportion of male captives, however. Again, the custom may have arisen out of the dire pressures of population decline, in this case pinpointed on particular families. Women among the victors, who had lost a husband or kinsman, held unchallengeable individual right to "adopt" a prisoner in his place, and the man so chosen became immediately assimilated into the tribe as well as the family. (In our terminology he was naturalized as well as adopted.[18]) Perhaps the most famous example of the custom is Pocahontas's rescue of John Smith, although Smith rejected assimilation at the first opportunity to escape. Not every European captive followed Smith's example. It was a constant crying scandal that Europeans who were adopted by Indians frequently preferred to remain with their Indian "families" when offered an opportunity to return to their genetic kinsmen.

The adoption custom grew in importance with the intensification of war during the macrocontact era. Of all the Indians, the Iroquois, who are generally agreed to have been the most militaristic and to have suffered the most debilitating casualties, seem to have practiced adoption more than any other tribe. At one time adoptees constituted two-thirds of the Iroquois Oneidas.[20] The Senecas adopted whole villages of Hurons after the breakup of the Huron "nation" under Iroquois attack,[21] and

various Iroquois tribes struggled for possession of Susquehannocks after the latter's dispersal under attack from Maryland and Virginia.[22]

Still another Indian custom served (aboriginally) to reduce the deadliness of war. Indians refrained from the total war that involved systematic destruction of food and property--until its use by Europeans roused the Indians to reprisal.[23] In this respect, as in so many others, the English continued a tradition of long standing from their devastations in Ireland.[24] Burning villages and crops to reduce Irish tribesmen men to subjection under Elizabeth I led naturally enough to using the same tactics against the tribesmen of Virginia.[25] A "relation" of 1629 tells how the Virginia colonists compelled a hostile Indian chief to seek peace, "being forc't to seek it by our continuall incursions upon him and them, by yearly cutting downe, and spoiling their corne."[26] The same practice was used everywhere in North America when Indian guerrilla tactics prevented Europeans from gaining victory by decisive battle.[27] According to Indian logic, such destruction doomed noncombatants as well as warriors to die of famine during a winter without provisions.

These remarks are not intended to suggest that Indians of precontact days were gentle pacifists whom the Europeans seduced to evil warlike ways. On the contrary, all evidence points to a genuinely endemic state of sporadic intertribal violence. Had this been not been present Europeans could not so readily have achieved hegemony by playing off one tribe against another. But the dispersion of violence tells nothing of its intensity. What is especially at issue here is the significance of the data in comparison with the phenomena of war in European society. As the history of feudal Europe well exemplifies, endemic war does not necessarily imply, although it may be associated with, population decline. The fact is unlovely, but growth in human societies is demonstrably compatible with bellicosity, up to a critical level of mortality. We have no difficulty in perceiving this rule at work in say ancient Greece: yet we deny that the rule also applied to Amerindians when we attribute to them a savage kind of war that supposedly was incomparably more continuous, more widespread, more integral to cultural values, and more senseless in the long view than the dedicated vocation of backward but civilized Sparta--or of Athens, for that matter. To show the falsity of these absolute antitheses is a primary objective here. Indians could be and often were as stupid and vicious as Europeans, which is to say that they belonged to the same human species. They were never so much more devoted than Europeans to killing each other that their uniquely violent natures or cultures doomed their societies to perpetual stagnation.

To discover the nature of aboriginal Indian war requires a skeptical and analytical approach not only to European sources but to Indian sources as well. Like old tales in other cultures, Indian "traditions" were of several sorts: some preserved the memory of historical events, and others were invented to amuse or edify. Wendell S. Hadlock has shown how legends diffused rapidly, being adapted to the local setting of different tribes so that "a single occurrence in history has been told in varying ways so as to appear like many incidents."[28] Sometimes one may doubt whether the "single occurrence" ever did happen anywhere.

One genre of such legends, dealing with the "grasshopper war," has been interpreted by chroniclers in its multiple manifestations as literal fact demonstrating the terrible carnage that Indians would wreak over such trivial causes as a children's quarrel about possession of a grasshopper. That grasshopper hopped over a lot of territory. He spilled the same mythical blood by gallons from the Micmacs of Newfoundland to the Shawnees, Lenape, and Tuscaroras of western Pennsylvania. The story seems to have been in the same class as Aesop's fables. Whatever may have been its remote origins, it diffused so widely because of its didactic utility rather than its historical reality. Hadlock associated it with a table of similar stories that

"are not so much an explanation of a war incident as philosophical explanations of tribal fission."[29]

To Frank G. Speck it was fiction, and Speck's interpretation implies bittersweet irony as to how the Indian myth was absorbed and transformed in the European myth of savagery: "In the 'grasshopper war' legend we have an example of the type of Algonkian moral teaching with which the ethnologist has long been familiar. Need the moralist point out that its clarified motive is to portray the consequences of grown-ups taking over the disputes of children, the curse of partisanship in disputes of a trivial nature, the abomination of giving way to emotional impulses? The myth is a great composition for the lesson it carries extolling self-restraint and the virtues of deliberation before taking action that may lead to disastrous outcome."[30]

By the transforming power of the savagery myth, a fable denouncing war's irrationality was converted into evidence of the real existence of widespread irrational bellicosity. The Indian could not even preach against war without convicting himself of obsessive love for it. By the same logic Quakers would be the most militaristic of Euramericans.

Historical sources strongly suggest that aboriginal war among the hunting Indians of the cold north differed markedly from the wars carried on by the agricultural tribes farther south. During most of the year the hunters lived dispersed in family bands that were occupied full-time in making a living. Opportunity to organize concerted tribal wars existed briefly during the summer months when the bands congregated at tribal centers and had some leisure. Wars could then be organized, but they were sporadic, individualistic affairs.[31] A Jesuit observer condemned both the Indians' motives and scale of operations with a succinct phrase--"their war is nothing but a manhunt"--and narrated how a war party of thirty men dwindled to fifteen who returned home satisfied after they had taken the scalps of three unoffending members of a friendly tribe.[32] In Europe such waylaying would have been called brigandage rather than war.

Farming Indians operated on a larger scale and under the direction of tribal purposes and policies. Their more complex culture provided a variety of motives. Sometimes they fought to gain territory, although apparently not in the fashion of European empire building: when Indians fought for territory as such, they wanted to displace its occupants rather than to subject them. Lands thus made available might be occupied by the victors, left empty for use as hunting grounds, or kept as a protective buffer against distant enemies.[33]

Sometimes it seems, agricultural Indians fought to achieve dominance--to make the defeated tribe confess the victor's preeminence. The symbol of such acknowledgement was the payment of tribute. Because the tributary role has been much confused, it needs a moment of special attention. First, tribute should be distinguished from plunder. When the Niantics raided Long Island's Montauks for wampum in 1638, they were after loot.[34] When the Iroquois Five Nations--the Mohawks among them--required wampum from the Lenape of the Delaware Valley in the eighteenth century, they wanted ceremonial recognition of a confederate relationship in which the Iroquois were superior.[35] Several contrasts mark the difference. Loot was seized by a raiding party: tribute was presented by a diplomatic mission. Loot's value increased precisely in accordance with quantity: tribute's value was primarily symbolic, secondarily quantitative. The taking of loot was a one-sided transaction: the presentation of tribute was reciprocated by a counter presentation of wampum to confirm the tributary agreement.

The last difference was especially important, because tribute symbolized subordinate alliance rather than subjection and thus entailed obligation on the part of the superior tribe as well as the tributary. In essence the alliance entitled the tributary to freedom from molestation by its patron and to protection by the patron against attack by a third party. In return the tributary was expected to give ceremonial deference on all occasions, to allow free passage through its territory by members of the patron tribe and to permit or encourage the recruitment of its own young men to join the patron's war parties. This sort of mutual obligation can be identified in the historic period, but it does not appear that all tributary relationships were the same; there seem to have been grades and degrees of obligation,[36] and the word tribute was also applied to payments of wampum or other valuable goods in the nature of a toll. For instance, English officials agreed to pay tribute to the Illinois tribes in 1764 for the privilege of unobstructed passage through the tribes' territory, and the Indians knew perfectly well that the English were not submitting or subjecting themselves by the payment.[37]

It may be said quite positively that a tributary tribe did not necessarily give up title to its lands when it presented tribute. After the defeat of the upper Hudson Mahicans by the Mohawks in 1628, the Mahicans offered tribute as a means of purchasing peace, but they also sold land to the Dutch without Mohawk objection, and after two years of tribute payment they "got drunk and lost the pouch(of wampum)." Mohawk sachem Joseph Brant, who told the story, commented that the Mohawks did not "take it hard" when payment ceased.[38] Four decades later, when the Executive Council of New York considered purchase of land from the "Wickerscreek" (Wecquaesgeek) tribe, the council had to consider whether the Wickerscreeks could deliver good title, "now they are beaten off" by the Mohawks. The Indians replied that the Mohawks would not "have any pretence to their Land, though being at Warre they would destroy their Persons and take away their Beavers and Goods."[39]

The "sales" by dominant tribes like the Pequots and Iroquois of their rights in tributaries' territory were in the nature of quitclaims, without prejudice to the tributaries' retained rights of habitation and enjoyment. The Pequots quit their own claims to the Connecticut Valley and permitted Englishment to settle there, but after the English evicted a tributary chief, the Pequots attacked in reprisal. When the Iroquois were bribed by Pennsylvanians in the eighteenth century to "quit" a claim they had never made to the Delaware Valley, the swindle ruptured their confederacy.[40]

The customary situation was summarized by General Thomas Gage in the course of his systematic correspondence on Indian affairs with Sir William Johnson. Gage's confidential letter also clarifies the English motives that often led to the muddying of the formal records. "It is asserted as a general Principle that the Six Nations having conquered such and such Nations, their Territorys belong to them, and the Six Nations being the Kings Subjects which by treaty they have acknowledged themselves to be, those Lands belong to the King. I believe it is for our Interest to lay down such principles especially when we were squabbling with the French about Territory, and they played us off in the same stile of their Indian Subjects, and the right of those Indians." Gage went on to define the Indian customs as he privately understood them. "I never heard that Indians made War for the sake of Territory like Europeans, but that Revenge, and an eager pursuit of Martial reputation were the Motives which prompted one Nation to make War upon another. If we are to search for truth and examine her to the Bottom, I dont imagine we shall find that any conquered Nation ever formaly ceded their Country to their Conquerors, or that the latter ever required it. I never could learn more, than that Nations have yielded

and acknowledged themselves subjected to others, and some ever have wore Badges of Subjection."[41]

Gage's remark refers to the most frequently mentioned motive for Indian war--behavior that is almost invariably termed revenge. Like most effective propaganda language, the term has a referent in reality, and also like most propaganda, it distorts that referent in the mere naming of it. Our English word implies an act of retaliation intended to inflict suffering upon an enemy and performed in part for the emotional satisfaction that the avenger will achieve from contemplation of that suffering. (Who has not hated the villainous Iago?) Revenge connotes ferocity--personal, unrestrained by charity or mercy or any of the nobler impulses of humanity--in short savagery. The actual phenomenon in Indian society to which this name has been given did not conform to these connotations. As it manifested itself intratribally, we have already noticed revenge as an obligatory retaliation for murder, together with the commutation custom by which the obligation might be discharged in lieu of blood for blood.[42] Intertribal retaliation for wrongs done or fancied (a real and omnipresent occurrence) was also bound up in motives and restraints imposed by custom and social purpose, including commutation by payment between tribes as well as between families. As Marian W. Smith has noted, such retaliations bear "a legalistic tinge. They serve as mechanisms for righting the balance of sanctions in the society, and the reprisal is seen as justified, in view of the fact that it reestablishes the validity of customs which had been violated."[43]

Smith wrote in the formal language of the twentieth-century scholar. A seventeenth-century Lenape Indian phrased the "justified reprisal" idea--which in Europe might readily have been classed as "just war"--in simpler language when he told a Pennsylvanian, "We are minded to live at Peace: If we intend at any time to make War upon you, we will let you know of it, and the Reasons why we make War with you; and if you make us satisfaction for the Injury done us, for which the War is intended, then we will not make War on you. And if you intend at any time to make War on us, we would have you let us know of it, and the Reasons for which you make War on us, and then if we do not make satisfaction for the Injury done unto you, then you make make War on us, otherwise you ought not to do it." To one looking back from the twentieth century this sounds quaintly moralistic. In the era of total "preventive" war, what is one to make of "otherwise you ought not to do it"?[44]

Marian W Smith identifies a "mourning-war" complex of traits correlating to the northern distribution of maize agriculture. By implication she makes it a development of the revenge trait, but her definition is brief and unenlightening: it is "an elaborate socio-religious complex relating individual 'emotion' to social reintegration through group activity and sanctioned homicide."[45] This seems more to describe what happens psychologically to a tribe after it has gone to war than to explain the reasons for its choosing to fight a particular foe at a certain time and place; further, it could as well apply to the nations of World War II as to aboriginal Indians.[46] Pursued to their logical assumptions, such psychological explanations of war, primitive or modern take one ultimately to a neo-Calvinist faith in the innate depratity/bellicosity of man, a position both unwarranted by science and vicious in effect and, ultimately, a self-fulfilling prophecy that stultifies investigation of the empirical sources of war and thus guarantees war's perpetuation. We shall do better to stick with Smith's genuine insight into Indian war as a means of reestablishing the validity of violated customs: it raises questions that can be answered historically.

In sum the motives for aboriginal war appear to have been few, and the casualties slight. Contact with Europeans added new motives and weapons and multiplied casualties. The trade and dominance wars of the macrocontact era were indeed beyond

the sole control of aboriginal cultural and political institutions, because they were bicultural wars, the motives and promptings for which originated in colony and empire as well as in tribe. These wars were truly attrition for Indians--appalingly so--but they were the result of civilization's disruption of aboriginal society rather than the mere outgrowth of precontact Indian culture.

Most discussions of Indian war have probably concerned themselves less with the Indians' motives than with their manner of fighting. Every "frontier" history abounds with tales of grim figures skulking through the woods, striking from ambush, spreading havoc and desolation, and culminating their horrors with scalping, torture, and cannibalism. In many instances the tales are verifiable, and no attempt will be made here to palliate their horrors. But when atrocity is singled out as a quality exclusive to tribesmen (Indians or other), myth is being invoked against evidence--indeed against the sorrowful experience of our own twentieth century and our own "highest" civilization of all time. The Indians of the macrocontact era, and presumably their aboriginal ancestors also, undoubtedly showed plenty of ferocity when aroused; what will be argued here is that the records of European war of the same era display the same quality in ample measure also. There were no Indians in Ireland when Cromwell's armies made it a wilderness, nor were there Indians with Wallenstein and Tilly during the Thirty Years' War in central Europe. If savagery was ferocity, Europeans were at least as savage as Indians.

Many of the aspects of so-called savage war were taught to Indians by European example. As to torture, for example, a systematic examination of the documents of the early contact era, published by Nathaniel Knowles in 1940, found no references to torturing by Indians of the southeast coast region "until almost 200 years after white contact." Knowles added, "It seems even more significant that there are no expressions by the early explorers and colonizers indicating any fear of such treatment. The Europeans were only too willing in most cases to call attention to the barbarity of the Indians and thus justify their need for either salvation or extermination."[47] Among the northeastern Indians, Knowles found that deliberate torture, as distinct from simple brutality (i.e., unplanned and unorganized cruelty), had not been practiced in aboriginal times except by the Iroquois, who associated it with the practice of ritual cannibalism. These usages seem to have been derived from an ancient complex of customs connected with human sacrifice and perhaps tracing back to similar practices in Mexico. Iroquois torture secondarily served as a terrorist device to keep surrounding tribes in line, but its usefulness for this purpose declined as some neighbors adopted the same trait in reprisal, much as the southern Indians had retaliated against such European tortures as burning at the stake.[48] After describing the torture of an Iroquois prisoner by Samuel de Champlain's allies, Marc Lescarbot remarked, "I have not read or heard tell that any other savage tribe behaves thus to its enemies. But someone will reply that these did but repay the Iroquois who by similar deeds have given cause for this tragedy."[49] Lescarbot stated positively that "our sea-coast Indians" did not practice torture, and his modern translator added a note of confirmation.[50] Although some Indians practiced the ritual cannibalism that Europeans had sublimated many centuries earlier into symbolic acts of "communion," other Indians abominated man-eating as much as the Europeans themselves. Algonquian speakers used a contemptuous epithet meaning "man-eaters" to refer to their Iroquois neighbors: it took the forms of Mengwe, Mingo, Maqua, and finally, in English, Mohawk.[51]

Europeans and Indians differed in the publicity given to torture. Europeans burnt heretics and executed criminals in ingeniously agonizing ways, but much European torture was inflicted secretly for the utilitarian purpose of extracting confessions from suspects. Public or private, European torture was performed by

specialists appointed by governmental authority, whereas torture among Indians was a spectacle for popular participation as well as observation. It seems reasonable to infer that comparably painful practices in the two societies were sharply distinguished in European minds by what was conceived as their relative lawfulness. Torture by commission of civil authority was merely execution of the law, often highly approved as a means of preserving order, but torture by a self-governing rabble was savagery. The Encyclopaedia Britannica has noted that the name of torture has been historically used "especially" for those modes of inflicting pain "employed in a legal aspect by the civilized nations of antiquity and of modern Europe."[52] In such a context the remark of seventeenth-century friar Louis Hennepin becomes ironic : "We are surprised at the cruelty of tyrants and hold them in horror: but that of the Iroquois is not less horrible."[53]

Plenty of sadism was evident in both cultures. Indians vented it directly upon the person of their victim, hacking and slashing at his body democratically with their own hands. Even old women would satisfy some horrid lust by thrusting firebrands at his genitals or chewing off the joints of his fingers. Their culture sanctioned what they did in the same way that local and regional cultures in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America sanctioned somewhat similar practices by white supremacists at lynching parties. In the more authoritarian seventeenth century the European populace in general was not allowed to participate except as spectators in the tortures prescribed for condemned persons. When we consider that crowds brought their lunch along to be enjoyed during such entertainments as disemboweling and slow immolation, we may wonder about the significance of the cultural difference. We have no way of knowing how many Europeans were prevented from soaking their own hands in blood only by the state's armed guards. Equally we have no way of knowing how many of the persons in an Indian village were active participants in the grim sport of torture, or how many just looked on. The diverse qualities of character that we recognize as distinguishing one European or Euramerican from another are ignored or denied among Indians. Savages are homogeneously cruel.

In America, Europeans sometimes turned captives over to allied Indians for torture in order to make hostility between two tribes irrevocable. Their own complicity was not felt keenly enough to shame the Europeans into silence; after having thus condemned a victim they would sometimes fastidiously deplore the sadistic appetites of the Indian torturers who were carrying out the Europeans own desires.[54] One French officer, after "prudently" consigning an old Onondaga to the torture in 1696, considered that the victim's taunting defiance "will be found perhaps to flow rather from ferociousness than true valour."[55]

One thing is not in doubt: as befitted its greater progress in technology, Europe had designed a variety of implements for the specific purpose of creating agony, not merely death, in human bodies. Their function was to make pain excruciating--a word that itself commemorates one of the pioneering inventions in that field and recalls its connection with European worship. Indians never achieved the advanced stage of civilization represented by the rack or the Iron Maiden. They simply adapted instruments of everyday utility to the purposes of pain. It may be worth a moment to reflect on the cultural traits imaged in the specialized torture technology of Europe. Something more than sudden emotional impulse will have to be taken into account.

I have the impression that about midway through the seventeenth century the outlook toward torture began to change in opposite directions among the two peoples. It seems to me from general reading that European attitudes toward mutilation of the

human body began to turn negative. The old delight in hacking enemies' corpses in the public square and exposing their heads on pailings went out of fashion--gradually and with conspicuous exceptions such as the displays made of sachem Philip and "squaw sachem" Weetamoo in "King Philip's War."[56] Slowly the use of torture for extracting information from political prisoners came under disapproval and ultimately under official ban. At the same time, torture was increasing among Indians as trade wars multiplied and European conflicts dragged Indian allies along. It is easy to understand why the Europeans, who were apparently trying to overcome their own worst traits, should have found relief and a sense of superior righteousness by rejecting torture and cruelty as things foreign to their own best impulses and therefore to civilization per so. No one dreamed at the time that the increase of torture by Indians could have come as the result of exposure to the uplifting influence of Europe, but the idea seems more credible nowadays after the revelations of German and Russian secret police practices, French policy in Algiers, Mississippi justice, and the ministrations of nice young American boys in Vietnam.

Every day brings revelations of secret tortures committed as deliberate instrumentation of governmental policy. Today's newspapers lead off an article with this paragraph: "Amnesty International, the organization dedicated to assisting political prisoners, has charged that torture as a systematic weapon of control is being used by almost half the world's governments and is spreading rapidly." The civilized world's response to this information is symbolized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. UNESCO withdrew from Amnesty International the offer of its facilities because the torture report implicated more than 60 of UNESCO's 125 member countries.[57] Clearly civilization is not a homogeneous whole, whatever it may otherwise be. Nor was it in the seventeenth century.

Apart from torture, some Europeans have domineered over Indians, when they could, with a reign of terror functioning through indiscriminate cruelty. In early Virginia the curtain was opened briefly on the reality behind self-serving and self-glorifying reports when Englishmen slew twelve Chickahominy Indians without cause and by treachery. Relatives of the victims retaliated against ten colonists and then fled into the woods. The rest of the villagers, abused by both sides, "much feared the English would be revenged on them"--a fear they had unquestionably been taught by the swaggering Virginians. Grand sachem Opechancanough "saved" the village from causeless slaughter, and incidentally revealed the motive behind the English menaces, by ceding the village to the colonists.[58] On a larger scale, after the much-provoked Virginia Indians rebelled in 1622, English writers fumed against the Indian massacre even as English soldiers multiplied their vengeance massacres beyond counting. Virginian Dr. John Pott became "the Poysner of the Savages thear" in some sort of episode so shocking that the earl of Warwick insisted it was "very unfitt" that Pott "should be imployed by the State in any business." But Pott became governor.[59]

Virginia was not exceptional. Puritan New England initiated its own reign of terror with the massacres of the Pequot conquest. David Pieterszoon de Vries has left us an unforgettable picture of how Dutch mercenaries acted, under orders of New Netherland's Governor William Kieft, to terrorize Indians into paying tribute.

> About midnight, I heard a great shrieking, and I ran to the ramparts of the fort, and looked over to Pavonia. Saw nothing but firing, and heard the shrieks of the Indians murdered in their sleep ... When it was day the soldiers returned to the fort, having massacred or

> murdered eighty Indians, and considering they have done a deed of Roman valour, in murdering so many in their sleep; where infants were torn from their mother's breasts, and hacked to pieces in the presence of the parents, and the pieces thrown into the fire and in the water, and other sucklings being bound to small boards and then cut, struck, and pierced, and miserably massacred in a manner to move a heart of stone. Some were thrown into the river, and when the fathers and mothers endeavoured to save them, the soldiers would not let them come on land, but made both parents and children drown--children from five to six years of age, and also some old and decrepit persons. Many fled from this scene, and concealed themselves in the neighbouring sedge, and when it was morning, came out to beg a piece of bread, and to be permitted to warm themselves; but they were murdered in cold blood and tossed into the water. Some came by our lands in the country with their hands, some with their legs cut off, and some holding their entrails in their arms, and others had such horrible cuts and gashes, that worse than they were could never happen.

And the sequel: "As soon as the Indians understood that the Swannekens (Dutch) had so treated them, all the men whom they could surprise on the farm-lands, they killed; but we have never heard that they have ever permitted women or children to be killed."[60]

Indians have often been charged with senseless bloodlust in their fighting, even to the point of treacherously murdering people who had befriended them. The variety of friendship claimed for the victims of such murders should always be investigated in particular detail. The purported friend often turns out to be no more than someone who lived close to the Indians in order to exploit them more efficiently than he could from a distance--his "friendship" is proved by nothing more than his toleration of their persons--or one who warded off other exploiters in order to preserve his own monopoly. For reasons of space and proportion, the subject cannot be fully discussed here, but examples can be cited of real discrimination by Indians in favor of persons that they recognized as friends. David de Vries, himself one such person, was able, after Kieft's massacre, to walk alone, unmenaced and unscathed in the midst of the very Indians whose kinsfolk had been treated so cruelly.[61] The most startling example is to be found in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, where the entire Religious Society of Friends, whose members were settled the length and breadth of the colony, was excepted from the raids of the Seven Years' War. In 1758 the Yearly Meeting held at Burlington for New Jersey and Pennsylvania recorded its "Thankfulness for the peculiar favour extended and continued to our Friends and Brethren in profession, none of whom have as we have yet heard been Slain nor carried into Captivity." In consideration of Indian willingness to reciprocate benevolence, the Yearly Meeting displayed an unusual form of racist thinking: it urged all Friends to show their gratitude practically by freeing their slaves.[62]

Indian war, like European war, changed with time and circumstance. The guerrilla raids of small war parties became more common after the introduction of firearms made massed attack suicidal. Firearms also reduced the value of stockades around villages even as they had destroyed the invulnerability of walled castles in Europe. The most militaristic of Indians, the Iroquois, adapted to fighting with guns by casting aside their encumbering wooden and leather body armor to gain greater mobility. The naked warrior of the savage stereotype became real enough,

but among the Iroquois, at least, he was the product of acculturation rather than an aboriginal prototype.[63]

The influence of European contact on Indian warfare is quite plain. In New England, for instance, until the Pequot conquest, the tribes marched to war en masse, but the Pequots recognized that such tactics would be futile against English firepower. They therefore approached the Narragansetts to propose joint harassment of the English rather than confrontation. They would kill livestock, waylay travelers, and ambush isolated farmers. The Narragansetts rejected this proposal in favor of an English alliance and later fought a battle against the Mohegans with the traditional tactics of a large army; but when they were finally forced into open violence against the English in "King Philip's War," they adopted the Pequots' proposed guerrilla tactics, to New England's great distress. Cultural change in response to the contact situation was not onesided, however. While Pequots and Narragansetts changed traditional tactics to cope with English colonials, the Englishmen were also modifying ancient military wisdom to meet the needs created by Indian guerrilla war. In James Axtell's words, "From these opponents the English gradually learned to fight 'Indian-style,' an ability that once again spelled the difference between their destruction and survival in the New World."[64]

Customs and practices changed from decade to decade, even in regard to the trait of scalping, which, while apparently Indian in origin, did not exist among many Indian tribes in the early seventeenth century. It seems to have been adopted in New England, for example, as a convenient way to collect provincial bounties for heads without having to lug about the awkward impedimenta attached to the scalps.[65]

Both Indians and Englishmen took heads as trophies and put them on show, and the practice of paying bounties for heads was well established among Englishmen. It had been conspicuous in the wars in Ireland in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[66] In the sixteenth century Sir Humphrey Gilbert had terrorized the Irish by ordering that "the heddes of all those (of what sort soever thei were) which were killed in the dale, should be cutte off from their bodies and brought to the place where he incamped at night, and should there bee laied on the ground by eche side of the waie ledyng into his owne tente so that none could come into his tente for any cause but commonly he muste passe through a lane of heddes which he used ad terrorem . . . . (It brought) greate terrour to the people when thei sawe the heddes of their dedde fathers, brothers, children, kinsfolke, and freinds . . . ."[67]

As Europeans taught Indians many of the traits of "savage" war, so also their intrusion into Indian society created new situations to which the Indians responded by cultural change on their own initiative. The attritional warfare of the macrocontact era did indeed justify A. L. Kroeber's indictment of having become so integrated in the culture that escape from it had become impossible, but it was not the aboriginal culture that took such a grim toll. It was instead a culture in which European motives and objectives of war multiplied war's occasions and casualties. Four different kinds of war took place in the macrocontact era: European versus European, Indian versus Indian. In all of them the influence of European political or economic institutions is apparent. Many of the Indian versus Indian combats were really European wars in which the Indians unconsciously played the role of expendable surrogates. The curbs and restraints of aboriginal custom held no power over Europeans, and particular tribes were in various states of dependency or "ambipendency" with regard to particular colonies. Continual European initiatives and pressures for war created a macrocontact system in which tribal bellicosity was indeed self-preservatory for particular groups in particular

circumstances, even though it worked general calamity upon the whole of Indian society.

There were no innate differences between Indians and Europeans in their capacity for war or their mode of conducting it. Their differences were matters of technology and politics.68 Only a few generations before the invasion of America, Europeans had conducted war according to feudal rules very different from those of the nation-state but startlingly similar in many respects to the practices of Indian war. Admittedly Indian society was not class-stratified like feudal society, and the Indian warrior differed from the feudal knight by being an all-purpose man who turned his hand to peasant occupations between battles. Clearly, also, Indians did not build or besiege castles, or fight with metal weapons and armor. But let not reality disappear behind the knight's armor plate; there was a naked warrior within. From childhood he had received special training in the use of arms, and he spent much time in strenuous sports that would strengthen and condition his body for war. So did the Indian. Both were hunters, and in the hunt both maintained their skill in the use of weapons. Like the Indian the medieval knight hunted for food as well as for sport and training: and, as with the Indian's hunting territories, unauthorized persons were forbidden to hunt in the knight's domain.69

A special purification ritual admitted the European esquire into the status of warrior; so also for the Indian, although in his case the ritual was also an ordeal. Knight and warrior mobilized for war in similar ways: the knight responded, if he felt like it, to the call of a lord to whom he had commended himself as vassal; the warrior responded, if he felt like it, to the invitation of an admired chief. No warrior was conscripted against his will. In neither case was there a bureaucracy to recruit and organize a fighting force; such loyalty as existed was that of man to man and family to family. Naturally enough, such soldiers knew nothing of Prussian discipline. Knights and warriors were free men fighting in wars and battles of their own choosing, unlike the hireling standing armies of the nation-state, who accepted orders with their wages.

One of the most striking parallels between the customs of feudal knights and those of Indian warriors was a code of behavior that in Europe is called chivalry. The sparing of women and children in Indian warfare fits snugly into the doctrines of chivalry avowed by feudal knights (and even practiced by them when the women and children were of their own religion). The practice was abandoned by the more rational or efficient killing machines organized by the nation-states; chivalry belonged to the knights, and the knights belonged to the Middle Ages. Chivalry, in short, was barbarous.

Perhaps an opportunity exists here to use the parallel between America and Europe to learn more about Europe. A customary explanation of chivalry's rise has been that the sweet moan of minnesingers and troubadours softened the hearts and manners of the great hulks on horseback. This lacks persuasion. Indians had a different sort of explanation for their own variety of chivalry: they needed to rebuild their declining populations Feudal Europe was a time of population uncertainty, and the damsels spared by gallant knights were prime breeding stock--a fact sometimes put to test by the knights. In this respect the Indians seem to have been the more chivalrous, for they were observed everywhere to refrain from sexual molestation of female prisoners; they took the women and girls, untouched, back to the captors' villages for assignment to families as wives and daughters.70 The knight, however, though he served the public interest by preserving his prisoners' lives, served himself also by demanding ransom.

Knight and warrior both gave first allegiance to their kin. This reservation of loyalty from the monopoly demanded by the nation-state was the unforgivable sin that has roused nationalists to denounce the special barbarity of feudal Europe and the special savagery of Indian America. That all war is cruel, horrible, and socially insane is easy to demonstrate, but the nationalist dwells upon destiny, glory, crusades, and other such clap-trap to pretend that his own kind of war is different from and better than the horrors perpetrated by savages. This is plainly false. The qualities of ferocity and atrocity are massively visible in the practices of European and American powers all over the world, quite recently in the assaults of the most advanced civilized states upon one another.

Footnotes

1. (J.H.) Kennedy, Jesuit and Savage in New France, (Yale Historical Publications, Miscellany (L. New Haven, Conn., 1950)) 114-15, 130.
2. Fornication and adultery comprised most of colonial New England's court load. Edmund Morgan, "The Puritans and Sex," New England Quarterly, XV (1942), 596.
3. (Daniel) Gookin, "Historical Collections (of the Indians in New England . . ." (1674), in Massachusetts Historical Society, Collections, 1st Sermon, I (Boston, 1792)), 149; Elisabeth Tooker, An Ethnography of the Huron Indians, 1615-1649, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 190 (Washington, D.C., 1964), 28; "Penn to Free Society of Traders, 1683," (Albert Cook) Meyers, ed., Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, (West New Jersey, and Delaware, 1630-1707, Original Narratives of Early American History (New York, 1912)), 236; (George S.) Snyderman, Behind the Tree of Peace: (A Sociological Analysis of Iroquois Warfare, Pennsylvania Archaeologist, XVIII, Nos. 3-4 (1948)), 31; David H. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, 1540-1783, Civilization of the American Indian Series (Norman, Okla., 1967), 26.
4. Marian W Smith, "American Indian Warfare," New York Academy of Sciences, Transactions, 2d Ser., XIII (June 1951), 352.
5. (Bruce G.) Trigger, "Champlain Judged by His Indian Policy: (A Different View of Early Canadian History,") Anthropologica, N.S., XIII (1971), 96-97; A Relation of Maryland (1635), in Clayton Colman Hall, ed. Narratives of Early Maryland, 1633-1684, Original Narratives of Early American History (New York, 1910), 88-90; minutes, Jan. 27, 1672, and Lovelace to Salisbury, Jan. 27, 1672, in Victor Hugo Paltsits, ed., Minutes of the Executive Council of the Province of New York: Administration of Francis Lovelace, 1668-1673 (Albany, N.Y., 1910), I, 156-157, II, 756-57.
6. John Smith, Generall Historie of Virginia, in (Edward) Arber and (A.G.) Bradley, eds., Travels and Works (of Captain John Smith, President of Virginia, and Admiral of New England, 1580-1631, II (Edinburgh, 1910)), 538-39.
7. (Robert) Beverley, (The History and Present State of Virginia (1705), ed Louis B. Wright (Chapel Hill, N.C.? 1947)) 186-89; Corkran, Creek Frontier, 23-25; (Lewis Henry) Morgan, (League of the Ho-De-No-Sau-Nee, Iroquois (Rochester, N.Y., 1851)) 327-29; (Roger) Williams, (A Key into the Language of America; Or, An Help to the Language of the Natives in that part of America, called New England . . . (1643), ed. James Hammond Trumbull, in Narragansett Club, Publications, I (Providence, R.I., 1866)), chap. 11; (John) Heckewelder, (An Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations, Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighbouring States (1818), ed. William C. Reichel, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Memoirs, XII (Philadelphia, 1871)), 148-49.

8. (A.L.) Kroeber, (Cultural and Natural Areas of Native North America, University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, XXXVIII (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1939)), 148.
9. Edmund De Schweinitz, The Life and Times of David Zeisberger (Philadelphia, 1870), chap. 35.
10. Williams, Key, ed. Trumbull. Narragansett Club, Pubs., I, 204.
11. John Underhill, Newes from America; or, A New and Experimentall Discoverie of New England . . . (London, 1638), 26, 42-43.
12. Harold E. Driver, Indians of North America (Chicago, 1961), 370, 384.
13. "Penn to Free Society of Traders, 1683," Myers, ed., Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, 231.
14. (Gabriel) Sagard, (The Long Journey to the Country of the Jurons (1632) ed. George M. Wrong, trans. H. H. Langton, Champlain Society Publications, XXV (Toronto, 1939)), 140; (Adriaen) Van der Donck, A Description of the New Netherlands (2d ed., 1656), trans. Jeremiah Johnson, in New-York Historical Society, Collections, 2d Ser., I (New York, 1841)), 211; John Smith, Map of Virginia in (Philip) Barbour, ed. (The Jamestown Voyages under the First Charter, 1606-1609, Hakluyt Society Publications, 2d Ser., CXXXVI-CXXXVII, II (Cambridge, 1609)), 372; Heckewelder, Account of the Indian Nations, ed. Reichel, in Hist. Soc. Pa., Memoirs, XII, 337-39; David Pietersz, de Vries, Short Historical and Journal notes of several Voyages made in the four parts of the World, namely, Europe, Africa, Asia, and America (1655), trans. Henry C. Murphy, in N.-Y. Hist. Soc., Colls., 2d Ser., III (New York, 1857), 116
15. Snyderman, Behind the Tree of Peace, in Pa. Archaeol., XVIII (1948), 13-15.
16. John Smith, Map of Virginia, in Barbour, ed., Jamestown Voyages, II, 360.
17. Ibid., II; 361; (Marc) Lescarbot, (The History of New France (1618), trans. W. L. Grant, Introduction by H. P. Biogar, Champlain Society Publications, I, (Toronto, 1907-1914)), 88.
18. Morgan, League of the Iroquois, 341-344; Snyderman, Behind the Tree of Peace, in Pa. Archaeol., XVIII (1948), 18; Heckewelder, Account of the Indian Nations, ed. Reichel, in Hist. Soc. Pa., Memoirs, XII 217-18; (Cadwallader) Colden, (The History of the Five Indian Nations Dependent on the Province of New-York in America (Ithaca, N.Y., 1958 (orig. Publ. 1727-1747))), Pt. I, chap. 1, 8; (Woodbury) Bowery, (The Spanish Settlements within the Present Limits of the United States, 1513-1561, I (New York, 1959; orig. Publ. New York, 1901-1905)), 37
19. Philip L. Barbour, (Pocahontas and Her World (Boston, 1970)), 23-25. I thank James Axtell for providing an advance copy of his article "The White Indians of Colonial America," WMQ, 3d Ser., XXXII (1975), 55-88. This is the first objective treatment, to my knowledge, of the European prisoners who refused repatriation.
20. Letters of Jacques Bruyas, Jan. 21, 1668, (in Reuben Gold) Thwaites, ed., (The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791, LI (Cleveland, Ohio, 1896-1901)), 123.
21. Letters of Jacques Fremin, n.d. ("Relation of 1669-1670"), ibid., LIV, 81-83.
22. (Francis) Jennings, ("Glory, Death, and Transfiguration: The Susquehannock Indians in the Seventeenth Century," American Philosophical Society, Proceedings, CXII (1968)), 40.
23. Minutes Aug. 26, 1645, (David) Pulsifer, ed., Acts of (the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England, in Nathaniel B. Shurtleff and David Pulsifer, eds., Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England, I (Boston, 1859)), 44.
24. For the practice of Richard II in the late 14th century, see (J.F.) Lydon, (The Lordship of Ireland in the Middle Ages (Toronto, 1972)), 234.
25. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., s.v. "Ireland (History from the Anglo-Norman Invasion)."

26. Capt. William Perse, "Relation," Aug. 1629, C.O. 1'5, Pt. 1, fol. 69, (Public Record Office).
27. E.g., the French foray against the Mohawks in 1666. (E.B.) O'Callaghan, ed., (The Documentary History of the State of New-York, I (Albany, N.Y., 1849-1851)), 70.
28. Wendell S. Hadlock, "War among the Northeastern Woodland Indians," Am. Anthro., N.S., XLIX (1947), 217-18.
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40. (Francis) Jennings, ("The Delaware Interregnum," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LXXXIX (1965)), 174-98; (Anthony F. C.) Wallace, (The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca (New York, 1970)), 154.
41. Gage to Johnson, Oct. 7, 1772, Sir William Johnson Papers, XII? 994-95.
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the criminal: and this, which elsewhere would appear an injustice, is among them a most efficacious means for preventing the spread of similar disorders." Thwaites, ed. Jesuit Relations, XXXVIII. 273-87, quote at p. 277.

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47. Nathaniel Knowles, "The Torture of Captives by the Indians of Eastern North America," Am. Phil. Soc., Procs., LXXXII (1940), 202. This is a systematic study fundamental to any study of torture in North America. Knowles remarked that Ponce de Leon in 1613 had met a Florida Indian who understood the Spanish language, "thus making it apparent that the atrocious cruelty of the Spanish for some twenty years in the West Indies had become known to the inhabitants of the mainland prior to the discovery of the continent by the whites" (p. 156). Knowles cites the speculation of Lowery that the Floridian's resistance to the Spaniards indicated "they had learned somewhat of the treatment they were to expect at the hands of such conquerors." Lowery, Spanish Settlements, I, 144-45. In 1642 the Canadian Jesuit martyr Father Isaac Jogues wrote, "Never till now had the Indian (torture) scaffold beheld French or other Christian captives." (E. B. O'Callaghan and Berthold Fernow, eds., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York, XIII (Albany, N.Y., 1856-87), 581 (emphasis added).
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49. Lescarbot, History of New France, trans. Grant, III, 13-15.
50. Ibid., III, 20-21.
51. (Allen W.) Trelease, (Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century (Ithaca, N.Y., 1960)), 41. But see a dissenting meaning of "Mohawk" given by Mohawk sachem Joseph Brant who held that it came from the Mahican word munkwas, meaning "fish dryed." Brant may have been a little sensitive on the subject. Boyce, ed., "Glimpse of Iroquois Culture History," Am. Phil. Soc., Procs., CXVII (1973), 291.
52. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., s.v. "torture."
53. Louis Hennepin, A Description of Louisiana (1683), trans. John Gilmary Shea, March of America Facsimile Series, No. 30 (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1966), 311-12.
54. Heckewelder, Account of the Indian Nations, ed. Reichel, in Hist. Soc. Pa., Memoirs, XII, 343-44; (Dictionary of Canadian Biography), I (1966), s.v., "Buade de Frontenac et de Palluau, Louis de." Sir William Johnson followed the same practice but masked it under euphemisms. For example, he told Cadwallader Colden, Mar. 16, 1764, "I was obliged to give them People 5 Prisoners for their good behavior." To General Gage, on the same day, Johnson wrote that the Indians had 'kept' the five prisoners. Sir William Johnson Papers, IV, 365, 368-69 (emphasis added).

COMPOSITION OF THE PLYMOUTH FAMILY

The following essay by John Demos is a chapter from his book A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony (New York, 1970), which is a case study in early American family life. Because the story of average people in the everyday routine of their lives was so commonplace and taken for granted, very little was written about this subject by people in the colonial period in their letters, journals, or diaries. Consequently, social historians such as Demos have been forced to use other types of records in order to come to an understanding of the colonial family in its daily existence. Demos consulted, among other sources, the physical remains of the colony, testaments and inventories, and official records of the colony, including court records and censuses. In the essay presented here, Demos skillfully uses these sources to produce an analysis of the composition and function of the family in Plymouth Colony.

The Plymouth Colony was founded in 1620 on the shores of New England by a group of English pilgrims. The Pilgrims were one of a series of radical seperatist religious groups that first appeared in England in the 1570s, determined to break away from the Church of England, which they considered still too Catholic in nature. Persecuted in England, the Pilgrims first fled to Holland in 1607. Among the Dutch, they were unable to find adequate work and were concerned about the loss of English culture among their children, so they began to look for a location on the margins of the empire where they could establish their own version of the perfect community. Eventually they obtained the backing of a group of English merchants, in exchange for their labor on profitable enterprises over a seven-year period. The pilgrims struggled for years to produce enough profits to pay the debt--through fur trading, fishing, and the sale of lumber, Indian corn, and wampum. By the time they succeeded in 1648, the colony had achieved a measure of stability, both economically and in terms of political institutions.

The basis of the political system was the "freeman", a formal status for which all adult males householders might apply. These men elected (after 1638) representatives to the General Court, which along with the annually elected Governor and his seven Assistants, provided laws and general administration for the colony. More important to the average person were the individual town governments, consisting mainly of the "town meetings" of all resident householders that met at regular intervals to pass ordinances, decide issues, and elect a group of "selectmen" to manage the day-to-day affairs of the corporate body.

Also central to the life of these communities was the church, or "congregation". Membership in the congregations was limited to those persons who had indicated some evidence of conversion or the inner experience of God's grace. But, nonetheless, a considerable part of the adult population eventually became church members. In practice, since the

goal of the civil and ecclesiastical governments was the same--the creation of the perfect community in the wilderness--their functions constantly overlapped. The formal and strict separation of church and state which eventually came to characterize the U.S. was not present in colonial Plymouth.

As the colony prospered to a degree and as markets developed in the growing neighbor colonies and elsewhere, new towns were founded, eventually totaling eleven towns and some eight thousand inhabitants. This process of dispersion, encouraged by the influence of empty land, destroyed the unity of the purpose and ideals of the first settlement. Nonetheless, although the colony never did become very large in terms of population or well off economically (most adult men probably worked at least part of the time in agricultural pursuits), the experience at Plymouth did prove that colonies of Englishmen could survive in North America on the rocky shores of New England. In 1691 the colony was absorbed by its larger and rapidly expanding neighbor, the Massachusettes Bay Colony.

Questions for study:

1. Describe the typical family and household in Plymouth. How does this alter traditional ideas about the American family?

2. What functions did the family play in Plymouth Colony?

3. How does the Plymouth fami' compare with or contrast to the family in colonial Spanish America?

4. What sources does Demos use for his study?

COMPOSITION OF THE PLYMOUTH FAMILY*

Recent studies of colonial family life have sought to clear away some serious misconceptions about the size and membership of the typical household. It used to be thought that the norm was some sort of "extended family"--that is, a large assemblage of persons spanning several generations anda variety of kinship connections, all gathered under one roof. The change to our own "nuclear" pattern, with parents and children living apart from all other relatives, was in this view associated with the coming of the Industrial Revolution. It is now apparent, however, that small and essentially nuclear families were standard from the very beginning of American history, and probably from a still earlier time in the history of Western Europe.[1] The evidence for Plymouth is very much in line with these conclusions.

Our survey of Old Colony architecture surely implies some limits on the size of individual families: it is difficult to picture really large numbers of people managing to live together in such relatively modest houses. Such a situation might be conceivable in a warm climate, where most of life could be carried on outdoors--but certainly not in New England.

The various deeds of gift and inheritance speak much more directly to the same point. They show beyond any possibility of reasonable doubt that one married couple and their own children always formed the core of the family--and often comprised its entire extent. There were, to be sure, some significant variants on this pattern, but probably no more than can be found in our own day. The most crucial single datum confirmed by the deeds is a clear assumption on all sides that married siblings would never belong to the same household. Contracts made between the families of a prospective bride and groom regularly provided for the building (or purchase) of a separate house for the new couple. The arrangements for the wedding of Joseph Buckland and Deborah Allen of Rehoboth apparently were typical: Buckland's father promised to "build the said Joseph a Convenience house for the Comfortable liveing with three score acrees of land ajoyning to it."[2] Many of the wills reveal a similar pattern. A man invariably left his house to some <u>one</u> of his sons--never to more than one. At the same time he sought to provide for the day when his other sons would marry and would need to establish their own separate residences. So, for example, John Washburn of Bridgewater left a special bequest for a younger son "toward his building"[3]--the other children were already living in houses of their own. William Carpenter of Rehoboth, while making his first son (Samual) his chief heir did not forget his second one (Abiah). Samuel and Carpenter's widow were specially directed to "healp . . (Abiah) to build an house; because Samuell hath an house built alreddy."[4] In all of the extant wills there is only one that proposes any kind of joint residence among different married couples, and it clearly recognizes the unusual and temporary nature of such arrangements. Thomas Bliss of Plymouth, who died in 1647, left his "house and home lot" to his son Jonathan, on the condition that he assist a certain son-in-law in building a separate residence and in the meanwhile "let him peacably and quietly live in the house with him untell they shall bee able to set up a house for him."[5]

There is one more piece of evidence to introduce at this point: a rare and extremely valuable census for the town of Bristol, compiled in February, 1689.[6] The arrangement of the census in itself significant. At one side there is a list

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*From John Demos, <u>A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony</u> (New York: Oxford U Press, 1970), pp. 62-81

of names of all the heads of household in the town. Three adjacent columns of figures (no names) are headed "Wife," "Children," and "Servants." In all, 421 persons are included in the census, and they are distributed through 70 families.

These figures suggest a rough average of six persons per family in the Bristol population of 1689. Closer examination shows that households of four, five, and six persons were most common, comprising some 47 per cent of the whole sample; 17 per cent were smaller than this (one to three people each), and 36 per cent were larger.7 These results may seem surprisingly low, in the light of traditional notions about the size of the colonial family, but Bristol was not an unusual community. As I have tried to show elsewhere in greater detail,[8] the families of this town may have been slightly larger than the norm for some other parts of the colony. But if so, the discrepancy was extremely narrow, and for our purposes the Bristol materials should be regarded as typical.

The simple categories of "husband," "wife," "children," and "servants" are probably as accurate and useful as any more modern terms we might contrive for describing the colonial family. In fact, only the last one requires some explication in order to be intellible today: the other three can be directly transposed. These continuities of language obviously say a good deal about the essential similarity of the structure of families then and now. But even so, it will be worthwhile to stop and consider each one of the categories separately. For while basic meanings may have remained the same, we must recognize certain changes through time in the environmental circumstances which surround family life.

Mortality is perhaps the most powerful of these circumstances, and unfortunately there are as yet few sound investigations of its exact dimensions in the colonial period. There are plenty of florid images floating about--images of marriage regularly cut short by death, and whole families of children wiped out by disease--but all this is quite unfounded. Indeed the Plymouth Colony records suggest a standard of life and health that would compare favorably with that of any preindustrial society today. My own work with these materials is not conclusive, but it does at least offer some working hypotheses. Three of them can be briefly stated: (1) A man reaching adulthood (defined for the moment as the age of twenty-one) could expect to live to about seventy. For a woman the average was some seven years less. (2) The lower figure for women does, of course, reflect the hazards inherent in bearing children. Yet this factor can easily be exaggerated. It seems that a bit less than 20 per cent of the deaths among adult women were owing to causes connected with childbirth. Or, to put it another way, something like one birth in thirty resulted in the death of the mother. (3) The rate of mortality among infants and small children was also much lower than we have traditionally supposed. This is a difficult matter to study systematically because some deaths among the very young were not recorded in the usual fashion. However, the evidence that does exist suggests a maximum of 25 per cent mortality for the entire age span between birth and maturity (age twenty-one), and the real figure may well have been substantially less. 9 Of course, in our own day the comparable rate would be close to 1 per cent--so there certainly <u>are</u> real differences here. Still, the point remains that death was not the "usual circumstance" even in these remote and essentially primitive colonial settlements. It was, to be sure, an ever-present possibility, and few people can have gotten very far along in life without losing someone in their immediate circle of friends and relations. But in terms of the overall stability of family life it was not a factor of the first importance.

Death made its greatest impact when it struck at married adults, for the loss of one spouse obviously caused considerable dislocation within an individual family. Yet

the problem was usually of limited duration, for many widows and widowers remarried within a relatively short space of time. Often the interval was less than a year, and in a few cases less than six months. We should not imagine here any lack of love for the departed spouse. It was rather a matter of custom, and indeed of sheer functional necessity. The man who lived out of the marital relation was rather awkwardly placed in terms of the larger community; moreover, he needed a wife's help in trying to maintain an efficient household. The same pressures worked with even greater force in the case of a widowed woman.

So it was that most families, within a given community at a given point in time, exemplified the basic model of husband, wife, and children. The situation in Bristol in 1689 can be precisely determined from the town census. Among the 70 families resident there, only two were headed by a single adult (one widow, and one widower). The remaining 68 were fully "intact," at least at this (adult) level.

It may also be useful to calculate the portion of people who actually lived out this sequence of marriage, bereavement, and remarriage. It was, in fact, considerable, but nothing that even approached a majority of the community as a whole. My investigation of some 700 people who lived to be at least fifty years old has shown the following: Among the men some 60 per cent were married just once; for the women the comparable figure was 75 per cent. Moreover, most of the remainder were people with two marriages; only 6 per cent of the men and 1 per cent of the women were married more than twice.10 Thus the old stereotype of the doughty settler going through a long series of spouses one after the other needs to be quietly set aside.

So much (temporarily) for husbands and wives; let us turn now to the category of children. What was the extent of their membership in the households of the Old Colony? Once again the Briston census offers the most powerful single piece of evidence. It reveals, first of all, that a majority of the total population of the town comprised children: the exact figure was 54 per cent. It also shows that the average number of children per family was slightly more than three, but that sets of one, two, three, four, and five were all common to a more or less equal degree. Above five children the sample tails off quite steeply. One-sixth of the families fall into this group (that is, over five children), and the largest single set is ten.11 These results may seem a bit on the low side at first glance, but they must be viewed in context. It is important to remember that families grew rather slowly, and that the number of children in any particular household was a direct function of the age of the parents. There were certain very firm regularities in the spacing of births in the families of the colonists. The first child usually came along within fifteen months of the date of the marriage ceremony, often within twelve months--and occasionally, alas, within nine. (Of this, more later.)12 Thereafter the normal spacing was about two years, though there was some tendency toward slightly longer intervals as the wife-and-mother grew older.

Note that young couples recently married were bound to contribute to the lower segment of any town sample, such as the one for Bristol. It was only as the parents neared middle age that their households might begin to show a really large number of children. But after middle age the process would reverse itself once again, since some of the older children would be leaving home to set up on their own. Thus there is nothing untoward about finding, simultaneously: (1) an average of three children per family for an entire community at any given point in time; and (2) a much higher average for children born to a particular couple during the whole span of their married lives. In actual fact, an examination of some 100 Old Colony

couples for whom there is good information demonstrates that eight to nine children apiece was pretty standard.13 Here, then, is one traditional belief about colonial family life which survives the test of the evidence--the notion, in short, that families reared extremely large numbers of children, at least by contrast to the norms of our own day.

There is one final point to mention with respect to the membership of children in these seventeenth-century households. Since births were usually spaced at intervals of two years or more, and since the whole period of childbearing for a given couple might encompass as much as twenty years, the children of each family comprised a community of persons of quite different ages and radically different stages of development. For example, the household of a man forty-five years old might well contain a full-grown son about to marry and begin his own farm, and an infant still at the breast, not to mention all of the children in-between. This is, of course much in contrast to the situation that commonly prevails today, when parents not only have many fewer children alltold but also try to have them within a certain limited space of time. (The age at which the average American mother now has her last child is twenty-six.) The modern pattern tends to highlight the distance between the generations, and to make of childhood a quite tangible, or at least visible, condition. But in Plymouth Colony, and indeed in any society where the same sort of family predominates, these differences were considerably blurred. The way to maturity appeared not as a cliff to be mounted in a series of sudden and precarious leaps, but as a gradual ascent the stages of which were quite literally embodied in the many siblings variously situated along the way.

The catagory of "servants" presents the major obstacle to a clear understanding of the membership of colonial families. The term itself was used in a very general and imprecise way, and covered many situations which we must try at least briefly to differentiate. First, and most easily recognized in the light of our own meanings today, there was the hired man or woman. This was a grown person, who contracted to work in some family for a specified period of time (anywhere from several months to several years). Such arrangements show up in the Colony Records under the following format: "Thomas Bunting . . . put himself as a servant to dwell with John Cooke, Junir, . . . during the terme of eight yeares."14 This was, of course, the "indentured servitude" long familiar to historians of the seventeenth century.

In some cases men and women were obliged to become servants as an act of discipline initiated by the community at large. Petty criminals and idlers were often handled in this way. Thus, for example, in 1644 the General Court found James Till guilty of committing a theft and ordered him to serve in the household of Timothy Hatherly for two years; his earnings were to be used to pay off his fine.15 Some years later a certain "Goodwife Thomas, the Welchwoman" was directed to work and live with the family of Robert Baker--he also to have control over the management of her estate and "to see that shee doe not live extravigantly as formerly."16 Obviously in these special cases the wishes of the individuals involved were not considered, but in most other respects the arrangement resembled the standard model of servitude.

Occasionally men would "put" themselves in other households in order to learn a particular craft or skill. Thus in 1667 "Richard Handy, . . . woolcomber, hath covenanted, agreed, and put himselfe an apprentice to and with James Skiffe, Junir, . . . cooper, to live with the said James from the 25th of October next ensueing untill that hee judge in himselfe that hee hath fully attained the skill and craft of a cooper."17 Usually, however, the terms were less formal and specific than this. It must be said that the sum total of adult servants of all kinds, noted in

some way in the Colony Records, was not large. Apparently much the greatest portion of persons in servitude were children, and to this group we must now give particular consideration.

The practice of "putting out" children touched a variety of different circumstances, only some of which can be reconstructed now. In certain instances the learning of a trade was central, and the terms of the contract defined a formal apprenticeship.[18] We know, moreover, that a master would ignore such terms only at his peril. In 1654 Jonathan Briggs, "sometimes servant to William Hailstone, of Taunton, complained agains his said mr that hee hath not pformed his covenants to him in that hee did not learn him the trad of a tayler."[19] The General Court ruled for the plaintiff and directed Hailstone to pay £5 in damages. Conversely, in another Court case a servant formally released his master from an obligation to "learne mee . . . the trade of a cooper," since "it hath bine onely by my neglect the above said ingagement hath not yett bine pformed."[20]

Yet in fact the actual records of this kind of specific training relationship are quite sparse: indeed the word "apprentice" was used as loosely as--and interchangably with--the vague term "servant." Most often the educational aspects of a contract were stated in quite general language. When John Phillips placed his son William in the household of John Bradford "after the manner of an Apprentice," Bradford agreed simply "to teach and instruct the said apprentice, to write and read and give him that education as becometh a master to a servant."[21] Meanwhile Benjamine Savory went through two different "apprenticeships." In the first he was supposed to learn "whatsoever trad (his master) . . . can Doe";[22] in the second he was to be instructed "in learning that is to say to read and write" and also "in husbandry."[23]

Still, we should not take lightly the clauses in these contracts which defined the obligation to teach at least two of the "three R's." For literacy was not widespread in this culture, and the ability to read and write must have been quite highly valued. Moreover, there was little formal schooling anywhere in the Old Colony until the last quarter of the century,[24] and the practice of placing children out may have constituted a functional equivalent for at least some of its young people. Perhaps, then, servants and apprentices were frequently the children of illiterate parents moving into households which maintained a higher standard of education. But unfortunately these are very difficult relationships to prove.

It is easier, though, to analyze the standing of the different families involved, in terms of material wealth. And clearly, in certain cases, servants were leaving relatively poor families and going to wealthier ones. The indenture of Zachariah Eddy, for example made all of this quite explicit. Eddy was only seven years old at the time, but his parents declared that they were obliged to put him out since they had "many children, & by reason of many wants lying upon them, so as they are not able to bring them up as they desire." The boy went into the household of Mr. John Browne of Rehoboth, "one of ye Assistants of this goument." Browne for his part promised to "bring him up in his imploymt of husbandry, or any busines he shall see meete for ye good of theire child."[25] Yet there were also cases in which economic differentials could not have been an important factor. George Soule of Duxbury sent one of his daughters into the family of John Winslow--and <u>both</u> men were relatively well-to-do. Samuel Fuller's unusually complex household contained at the time of his death several servants of one type or another; but meanwhile his own daughter was living with "goodwife Wallen."

Still another factor behind many of these arrangements for putting children out was the death of one or both of the natural parents. In short, this was the way that seventeenth-century communities took care of orphans. Widow Mary Ring who died in 1631 left her young son Andrew to grow up in the family of her son-in-law Stephen

Deane--requiring Deane "to help him forward in the knowledge & feare of God, not to oppresse him by any burthens but to tender him as he will answere to God."26 Usually, when it was the husband who died first, the children were left in the day-to-day care of their mother. But if the widow remarried all of this might have to be changed. Some wills specifically anticipated this possibility: Anthony Besse's, for example, directed that, if his wife married again, "the five biggest (children) . . . bee put forth and theire Cattle with them according to the Descretion of the overseers."27 In a few instances children were dispersed even though the widow lived on and did not remarry. Thus William Savill's will left only one of his three youngest children in the care of his wife; the other two were to be sent elsewhere.28

It must be confessed that when all of these reasons for transferring children from one household to another have been carefully laid out, there still remain some cases covered by none of them. That is, some of the children directly involved came from families that were very much intact, were relatively well-off, and had no lack of educational attainments; moreover, the contractual arrangements made no mention whatsoever of learning a particular trade. The possibility arises, therefore, that some-broader social or personal values may have played into this whole pattern. Edmund Morgan has suggested that parents in this culture "did not trust themselves with their own children . . . (and) were afraid of spoiling them by too great affection"29--hence the impulse to send them away into other homes. Unhappily there is no way to confirm this with hard evidence. But among all the various speculations that might be offered here, Morgan's still seems the best one.

We should also like to know how common this practice was, how many children were directly affected. The impression created by reading dozens of wills and indenture contracts may well be misleading, for the question must really be posed in terms of some proportion of entire communities. Here again there is only one piece of evidence that directly fronts the issue, namely, the Bristol census for 1689. But if this is a representative source, it suggests that the number of children living in households other than those of their natural parents may not have been so great, at least at any single point in time. In the census, the "servants" category comprises some 56 persons or 13 per cent of the total population of the town. More than two-thirds of all the families listed reported no servants at all; and only two showed a really large complement (eight and eleven respectively.) 30 Most important of all, there were four times as many "children" as "servants" reported in the whole census; and we should remember that the latter group must have included at least some adults who had hired themselves out. In short, the great majority of Bristol's young people were apparnetly living in the homes of their own parents in 1689--perhaps as many as 90 per cent of them.

Still, the same pattern should ideally be assessed <u>through</u> time as well, so as to reveal the proportion of children who spent <u>some part</u> of their early years living outside of the parental roof. This measure would serve to modify the picture somewhat and might well take in as many as one-third of all the children. But without a sequence of several census reports there is no way to contrive an exact figure.

Hopefully it is now established that one married couple plus children and (in some cases) servants formed the model household unit in Plymouth Colony. But certain occasional variants on this pattern must be recognized at least briefly.

Most important was the residence in some households of aged grandparents. The community seems to have expected that old people no longer able to fend for themselves would find comfort and care in the families of their grown children. Husbands writing wills were particularly anxious to pin down these arrangements for the widows they would leave behind. William Carpenter of Rehoboth, for example left his house to his son Samuel, with the stipulation that his widow "is to have the Rome I now lodge in and the Chamber over it and to have liberties to Come to the fier to Doe her occations."31 Thomas King's will provided much more detail: not only would his widow have "the East End of my dwelling house . . with a liberty to make some use of the Cellars and and (sic) leantoos" she would also receive "five pounds by the year paid to her and the one half of it in money the other half of it in Corne and other Provision also wood provided for her fire and winter meat and Sumer meat for two Cows."32 Sometimes bequests to the children were made directly contigent on their performance of these filial duties. Josiah Winslow left all his movable properties to his wife, to be distributed at her death "to my Children accordingly as shee shall see cause and they Deserve, in thire Carryage and Care of her in her widdowes estate."33 On other occasions when the dead man had failed to leave any will, his children might voluntarily agree to provide for their mother--witness the settlement of the estate of Thomas Crowell of Yarmouth, whereby his two sons "volluntory freely and willingly Condescended to maintaine our mother Agness Crowel . . . according to our abilities."34

There is also evidence that some men made arrangements of this kind even before their death--"retiring," in effect, on the "social security" provided by a willing child. The Colony Records contain a declaration by Lieut. Samuel Nash of Duxbury, who "being aged and not in a capassety to live and keep house for himselfe, hath therefore put his estate into the hands of William Clarke, of Duxburrow, that thereby hee may have a comfortable livelyhood." Clarke, let it be noted, was married to Nash's daughter.35 But occasionally these agreements were effected by men not formally related to one another. A pair of deeds from Marshfield in 1685 shows William White bestowing a large piece of land on John Branch, his "tenant," in exchange for £50 and a pledge that Branch "shall . . . hereafter Maintaine me the said William White Providing for & allowing unto me Convenient & sutable Meat Drinke apparil washing & lodging both in Sickness & in health dureing the terme of my naturall life."36 Sometimes a will offers a retrospective look at the same pattern. Thus Andrew Ring made a special bequest to a certain one of his sons named William "seeing his son William Ring had for divers yeares past taken care of the family & bin the support of his old age & of his wife late deceased."37

The details of these arrangements often differed, but the outcome was presumably the same in all cases: the membership in some households of one or two older persons in addition to the central married pair. Another kind of variant showed the need in a few instances to find a place for unmarried adults, nearly always women. When a man died, leaving one or more daughters as yet unwed, he usually made special provision for them in his will. Stephen Hopkins, for example, left most of his estate to his son Caleb: but he also stipulated that his four daughters, who ranged in age from about fourteen to twenty-two "shall have free recourse to my house in Plymouth upon any occation there to abide and remayne for such tyme as any of them shall thinke meet and conveyent & they single persons."38 These situations rarely lasted for any great length of time, for most girls were married before they got very far into their twenties. Near the end of the century, however, spinsters became somewhat more common, as demographic trends worked to create a surplus of females in certain of the older towns of the Colony.39 And these spinsters could only have lived in the households of some relative, normally a parent or brother.

A young man, by contrast, was never subject to living arrangements of this type. For when he attained his majority he would normally move out from under the parental roof--either to marry and begin his own family, or else to "be for himself" while remaining single for a while longer.[40] It is important to stress both of these alternatives, since it is not widely recognized that single men could, and sometimes did, live in households of their own. Until 1669[41] Plymouth had no laws comparable to those in the Massachusetts Bay Colony which compelled unmarried persons to live under regular "family government." It does seem that proper form required single men to obtain town permission before starting their own separate homes. Thus, for instance, Plymouth in 1639 allowed John Carew "to be for himself upon the continuance of the good report of his carriage & demeanr . . Edmund Weston is lycenced to live with John Carew, & to be Ptner with him in workeing and planting."[42] Conversely, the authorities might act to break up an establishment of this type which did not conform to accepted standards of decent behavior. A Court Order of 1653 directed that "teag Jones, and Richard Berry, and others with them bee caused to part theire uncivell living together."[43]

Indeed, one senses that a degree of suspicion attached to households composed of unmarried men: but the point remains that for many years no actual statutes opposed the practice. It is clear, finally, that such households did exist and function--with or without the permission of local officials. Their significance is implicit in orders like the following one, issued by a Marshfield town meeting in 1653: "It is agreed upon that all young men who are in the township that are single persons, and are at their own hands, shall be liable to pay all the town's rates as the rest of the inhabitants do, after the value of ten pounds a head for every such person."[44]

Old people, spinsters, single men: here, then, are three social categories which were bound to create some modification of the basic nuclear family unit as previously described. But what can we say of the total importance of these alternative patterns? As usual, it is easy enough to illustrate that each alternative existed, but very hard to know what proportion of households were actually affected. Once again, the Bristol census is our only resource, and in this particular connection its utility is extremely limited. The census shows just one unmarried man living in a house of his own, though it does also record in a very ambiguous way two other persons who may fall into the same category. It provides no evidence whatsoever for the residence of elderly people or spinsters in the homes of relatives. At first sight this seems an astonishingly meager result--so much so, indeed, that one begins immediately to cast about for some explanation in terms of the particular demographic configuration of Bristol at the time. Happily, there <u>are</u> certain facts which come close to meeting these specifications. Bristol was still a relatively new town in 1689, and as I have tried to show elsewhere in some detail, its citizenry was quite youthful overall.[45] Most of the settlers had been in their twenties or early thirties when they first came there, and were just a few years older at the time the census was taken. Elderly people and "old maid" sisters did not, presumably, wish to move to an entirely new community. We know from the wills and land deeds that such people did form a part of <u>some</u> Old Colony households--but mostly, it seems, in the older and more established settlements. In a broad sense, then, the average household may well have been more clearly nuclear in "new towns" than in those which dated from the earlier period.

There is one last category of people to be considered here--a category of "unfortunates" who needed placement in some particular households for their own care and protection. They never formed a large group numerically, but they do

serve to point up rather vividly the wide range of functions which the family in this era was expected to serve. Here, for example, was an obvious way to handle some of the community's poorest citizens, people who simply could not make a living for and by themselves. A complicated set of Court deliberations in 1680-81 revolved around the case of John Harmon, a pauper who had been staying for some time with Robert Ransom of Plymouth. Harmon had lived previously in both Taunton and Plymouth, and there was some doubt as to which town should be responsible for the cost of his care (estimated by Ransom at three shillings per week).46

Harmon was not only poor--he was also "decriped," and it may be that most people in similar situations were suffering from a real physical disability. For, in a broad sense the treatment of serious illness was tied closely to the household setting. Of course in the usual case a sick person would simply remain in his own home under the watchful care of parents, spouse, or children. But occasionally illness came to someone who had no near relatives to look after him. Such a person would have to go to some other household, at least temporarily, and the town would pay for the arrangement.47

Moreover, certain men in the Colony acquired over time a reputation for medical knowledge, and probably took "patients" into their homes with some regularity. In the Marshfield records there is the notation (dated 1646) that "Josias Winslow and John Dingley were appointed by the town to take order that Roger Cooke be forthwith sent to Mr. Chauncey to cure, and for what they shall be at, either sending of him or in his cure, or for his diet and lodging, the town promist to save the said Josias and John Dingley harmless."48 Roger Cooke was presumably a man without a family, and without the means to arrange for his own treatment. So the town stepped in, assumed financial responsibility, and sent Cooke to stay with Charles Chauncey of Scituate (whose talents as a physician were widely recognized).

It is, in sum, the combination of these two institutions--the family working <u>for</u> the town at large--that we must particularly notice. For in an era when there were no hospitals, no poorhouses, indeed no specialized welfare institutions of any kind, the <u>social</u> importance of the family was extremely large.

Footnotes

1. On this point see Peter Laslett and John Harrison, "Clayworth and Cogenhoe," in H. E. Bell and R. L. Ollard, <u>Historical Essays, Presented to David Ogg</u> (London, 1963), 157-84. See also Peter Laslett, <u>The World We Have Lost</u> (New York, 1965), 89 ff.
2. <u>Mayflower Descendant</u>, XVI, 82.
3. <u>Mayflower Descendant</u>, XV, 250.
4. <u>Mayflower Descendant</u>, XIV, 231.
5. <u>Mayflower Descendant</u>, VIII, 85.
6. Unfortunately, little is known about the origin of the census--by whom it was compiled, and for what purpose. It survives thanks to a copy made by George T. Paine of Providence, Rhode Island, and published in the <u>New England Historical and Genealogical Register</u>, XXXIV (1880), 404-5. It has been republished in Richard LeBaron Bowen, <u>Early Rehoboth</u> (Rehoboth, Mass., 1945), I, 75-76.
7. See Appendix, Table VI.
8. See John Demos, "Families in Colonial Bristol, Rhode Island: An Exercise in Historical Demography," <u>William and Mary Quarterly</u>, 3d Ser., XXV (1968), 40-57. A brief description of the early history of Bristol is in order, since a good deal of the "quantitative" data presented hereafter comes from this one

census. The town was taken from the Indians as a result of King Philip's War, and regular settlement began around the year 1680. Most of the settlers came from adjacent Old Colony towns, such as Rehoboth and Swansea. They were a relatively young group and were presumably eager for the opportunities available to them in a new community. Bristol possesses a fine natural harbor, and in the eighteenth century it was to become a seaport of some consequence. However, in these early years it seems to have functioned chiefly as an agricultural town; the land was parceled out with this in mind, and only a few of the first generation of townsmen were active in trade. There are, in sum, three ways in which Bristol may have differed from other Plymouth Colony towns in 1689: the recency of its settlement, the relative youthfulness of its population, and its potentiality for a more commercial orientation. However, none of these factors is likely to have created serious distortions for our purposes; in terms of household size and structure Bristol may be regarded as a representative case. (For one modest exception to this statement, see below) For a more detailed account of the town's history see George L. Howe, Mount Hope: A New England Chronicle (New York, 1959), and George H. Munro, The History of Bristol, R.I. (Providence, 1880).

9 These conclusions are the outcome of considerable work with the vital records of the Old Colony. See Appendix, Tables II and III. For another, slightly more detailed statement, see John Demos, "Notes on Life in Plymouth Colony," William and Mary Quarterly, 3d Ser., XXII (1965), 271.

10. See Appendix, Table V.

11. See Appendix, Table VII.

12. See below, pp. 158-59.

13. See Appendix, Table I.

14 Records of the Colony of New Plymouth, in New England, ed. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff and David Pulsifer (Boston, 1855-61), II, 78. See also, Plymouth Colony Records, I, 8, for a similar, though short-term (seven months') agreement between Richard Church and William Barker. And also, ibid., 92, 100, 103, 104.

15. Plymouth Colony Records, II, 69.

16. Plymouth Colony Records, III 197. In 1633 the Court placed Thomas Higgens, "having lived an extravigant life," with John Jenney for a term of eight years. Plymouth Colony Records, I, 21. And five years later Web Adey was presented for "disorderly liveinge in idlenesse & nastynes," set in the stocks, and directed to find himself a master. If he failed to do so, the Court would find him one. The order also made Adey arrange to rent or sell his house and garden in order to buy clothes "fitt for service." Ibid., 87.

17. Plymouth Colony Records, IV, 194.

18. See, for example, the agreement whereby Samuel Jenney was bound to Kenelm Winslow "in the joyners occupacon." Plymouth Colony Records, I, 24.

19. Plymouth Colony Records, III 51.

20. Plymouth Colony Records, VI, 31.

21. This deed, from the Marshfield Town Records, is published in L. S. Richards, History of Marshfield (Plymouth, 1901), I, 28.

22. Mayflower Descendant, V, 91.

23. Mayflower Descendant, XII, 133.

24. See below, pp. 143-44.

25. Plymouth Colony Records, II, 112-13.

26. Mayflower Descendant, I 30-31.

27. Mayflower Descendant, XIV 152.

28. Mayflower Descendant, VII, 41-43.

29 Edmund Morgan, The Puritan Family (New York, 1966), 77.

30 See Appendix, Table VIII.
31. Mayflower Descendant XIV 232.
32. Mayflower Descendant, XXXI 100-101.
33 Mayflower Descendant, XXXIV 34.
34. Mayflower Descendant, XI, 26.
35. Plymouth Colony Records, VI, 125-26. Not all of these "retirement" arrangements necessarily created joint households. In 1661, for example, Francis Sprague of Duxbury deeded his entire farm to his son John--on one condition. John was not to "enter upon the possession of house or land; till after the Decease of his father ffrancis Sprague but shall keep the house tenantable for his father During his fathers life." The son apparently would continue to live in another house of his own--exchanging a regular pattern of helpfulness for the promise of full ownership later on. See Mayflower Descendant, XVI 206.
36. Pilgrim Notes and Queries, V:88.
37 Mayflower Descendant, IV 196.
38 Mayflower Descendant, XIII 14.
39. For a somewhat larger discussion of this point see Demos, "Families in Colonial Bristol, Rhode Island: An Exercise in Historical Demography," 50-51.
40 See for example, certain clauses in the will of John Churchill, Sr., in Mayflower Descendant, XVIII 40-41.
41 In that year the following order was placed on the books: "Whereas great inconvenience hath arisen by single psons in this Collonie being for themselves and not betakeing themselves to live in well govrned families It is enacted by the Court that henceforth noe single pson be suffered to live of himselfe or in any Family but such as the Celectmen of the Towne shall approve of." William Brigham, The Compact with the Charter and Laws of the Colony of New Plymouth (Boston, 1836), 156.
42. Plymouth Colony Records, I, 135-36.
43. Plymouth Colony Records III, 37.
44. Richards, History of Marshfield, I 30.
45. This paragraph represents just a summary of certain matters discussed in more detail in Demos, "Families in Colonial Bristol, Rhode Island: An Exercise in Historical Demography," 44, 49-50.
46. Plymouth Colony Records, VI, 54, 74. It would be wrong, however, to suggest that this was the only or even the major way in which the settlers sought to provide for their poor. The more usual procedure was to encourage a poor man to keep his household together (assuming he had one to begin with), and to give him periodically some form of outside relief. Most towns, for example, seem to have maintained a common stock of cattle, which were farmed out to various poor families. Each family would have the milk from such cattle for its own use and some portion of "the increase" (that is, calves born in the meantime). Occasionally, too, these procedures were supplemented by the direct allocation of money. For examples of all this in the town of Plymouth, see Records of the Town of Plymouth (Plymouth, 1889), I, 3-4, 8-9, 12, 20, 27, 29.
47. Records of the Town of Plymouth, I, 172.
48. Richards, History of Marshfield, I, 27. A Court order of March ?, 1647 recognized Mr. Chauncey as an "approved phisition."

WHITE SERVITUDE

In an age of rather simple technology, the labor demands for the whole process of erecting European civilizations in the New World were absolutely enormous. A key question that must be asked when studying those societies is who provided that labor? In the case of the English colonies in North America, some of that labor was supplied by free immigrants who acquired land and set up small farms or who worked as artisans in the urban centers. In the eighteenth century, African slavery became very important especially in the southern areas, but during the first hundred years of colonization, the labor force was made up primarily of indentured servants--men, women, and children who sold themselves into temporary bondage in return for passage to the New World. In fact, it is estimated that from one-half to three-fourths of the immigrants to the English colonies in the seventeenth century were of this type.

Richard Hofstadter explores various aspects of this white servitude in the following essay.

Questions for study:

1. Account for the availability of the large numbers of Englishmen and other Europeans who were willing to go to the colonies as indentured servants.

2. Contrast the labor situation in the English colonies with that of the Spanish colonies.

3. A constant myth in U.S. history is that most indentured servants went on to become independent yoemen farmers. Comment.

WHITE SERVITUDE*

Richard Hofstadter

The transportation to the English colonies of human labor, a very profitable but also a very perishable form of merchandise, was one of the big businesses of the eighteenth century. Most of this labor was unfree. There was, of course, a sizable corpos of free hired laborers in the colonies, often enjoying wages two or three times those prevalent in the mother country. But never at any time in the colonial period was there a sufficient supply of voluntary labor, paying its own transportation and arriving masterless and free of debt, to meet the insatiable demands of the colonial economy. The solution, found long before the massive influx of black slaves, was a combined force of merchants, ship captains, immigrant brokers, and a variety of hard-boiled recruiting agents who joined in bringing substantial cargoes of whites who voluntarily or involuntarily paid for their passage by undergoing a terminable period of bondage. This quest for labor, touched off early in the seventeenth century by the circulars of the London Company of Virginia, continued by William Penn in the 1680:s and after, and climaxed by the blandishments of various English and continental recruiting agents of the eighteenth century, marked one of the first concerted and sustained advertising campaigns in the history of the modern world.

If we leave out of account the substantial Puritan migration of 1630-40, not less than half, and perhaps considerably more, of all the white immigrants to the colonies were indentured servants, redemptioners, or convicts. Certainly a good many more than half of all persons who went to the colonies south of New England were servants in bondage to planters, farmers, speculators, and proprietors.1 The tobacco economy of Virginia and Maryland was founded upon the labor of gangs of indentured servants, who were substantially replaced by slaves only during the course of the eighteenth century. "The planters' fortunes here," wrote the governor of Maryland in 1755, "consist in the number of their servants (who are purchased at high rates) much as the estates of an English farmer do in the multitude of cattle." Everywhere indentured servants were used, and almost everywhere outside New England they were vital to the economy. The labor of the colonies, said Benjamin Franklin in 1759, "is performed chiefly by indentured servants brought from Great Britain, Ireland, and Germany, because the high price it bears cannot be performed in any other way."2

Indentured servitude had its roots in the widespread poverty and human dislocation of seventeenth-century England. Still a largely backward economy with a great part of its population permanently unemployed, England was moving toward more modern methods in industry and agriculture: yet in the short run some of the improvements greatly added to the unemployed. Drifting men and women gathered in the cities, notably London, where they constituted a large mass of casual workers, lumpenproletarians, and criminals. The mass of the poverty-stricken was so large that Gregory King, the pioneer statistician, estimated in 1696 that more than half the population--cottagers and paupers, laborers and out-servants--were earning less than they spent. They diminished the wealth of the realm, he argued, since their annual expenses exceeded income and had to be made up by the poor rates, which ate up one-half of the revenue of the Crown.3 In the early seventeenth century, this situation made people believe the country was overpopulated and emigration to the colonies was welcomed; but in the latter part of the century, and in the next, the overpopulation theory gave way to the desire to hoard a satisfactory labor surplus. Yet the strong outflow of population did not

* From Richard Hofstadter, America at 1750: A Social Portrait (New York, 1971)

by any means cease. From the large body of poor drifters, many of them diseased, feckless, or given to crime, came a great part of the labor supply of the rich sugar islands and the American mainland. From the London of Pepys and then of Hogarth, as well as from many lesser ports and inland towns, the English poor, lured, seduced, or forced into the emigrant stream, kept coming to America for the better part of two centuries. It is safe to guess that few of them, and indeed few persons from the other sources of emigration, knew very much about what they were doing when they committed themselves to life in America.

Yet the poor were well aware that they lived in a heartless world. One of the horrendous figures in the folklore of lower-class London in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was the "spirit"--the recruiting agent who waylaid, kidnapped, or induced adults to get aboard ship for America. The spirits, who worked for respectable merchants, were known to lure children with sweets, to seize upon the weak or the gin-sodden and take them aboard ship, and to bedazzle the credulous or weak-minded by fabulous promises of an easy life in the New World. Often their victims were taken roughly in hand and, pending departure, held to imprisonment either on shipboard or in low-grade hostels or brothels. To escaped criminals and other fugitives who wanted help in getting out of the country, the spirits could appear as ministering angels. Although efforts were made to regulate or check their activities, and they diminished in importance in the eighteenth century, it remains true that a certain small part of the white colonial population of America was brought by force, and a much larger portion came in response to deceit and misrepresentation on the part of the spirits.

With the beginnings of substantial emigration from the Continent in the eighteenth century the same sort of concerted business of recruitment arose in Holland, the Rhenish provinces of Germany, and Switzerland. In Rotterdam and Amsterdam the lucrative business of gathering and transshipping emigrants was soon concentrated in the hands of a dozen prominent English and Dutch firms. As competition mounted, the shippers began to employ agents to greet the prospective emigrants at the harbor and vie in talking up the comforts of their ships. Hence the recruiting agents known as Neulander--newlanders--emerged. These newlanders, who were paid by the head for the passengers they recruited, soon branched out of the Dutch ports and the surrounding countryside and moved up the Rhine and the Neckar, traveling from one province to another, from town to town and tavern to tavern, all the way to the Swiss cantons, often passing themselves off as rich men returned from the easy and prosperous life of America in order to persuade others to try to repeat their good fortune. These confidence men--"soul sellers" as they were sometimes called--because the continental counterparts of the English spirits, profiteers in the fate of the peasantry and townspeople of the Rhineland. Many of the potential emigrants stirred up by the promises of the newlanders were people of small property who expected, by selling some part of their land or stock or furnishings, to be able to pay in full for their passage to America and to arrive as freemen. What the passage would take out of them in blood and tears, not to speak of cash, was carefully hidden from them. They gathered in patient numbers at Amsterdam and Rotterdam often quite innocent of the reality of what had already become for thousands of Englishmen one of the terrors of the age--the Atlantic crossing.

2

In 1750 Gottlieb Mittelberger, a simple organist and music master in the Duchy of Wurttemberg, was commissioned to bring an organ to a German congregation in New Providence, Pennsylvania, and his journey inspired him to write a memorable account of an Atlantic crossing. From Heilbronn, where he picked up his organ, Mittelberger went the

well-traveled route along the Neckar and the Rhine to Rotterdam, whence he sailed to a stopover at Cowes in England, and then to Philadelphia. About four hundred passengers were crowded onto the ship, mainly German and Swiss redemptioners, men pledged to work off their passage charges. The trip from his home district to Rotterdam took seven weeks, the voyage from Rotterdam to Philadelphia fifteen weeks, the entire journey from May to October.

What moved Mittelberger, no literary man, to write of his experiences was first his indignation against the lies and misrepresentations used by the newlanders to lure his fellow Germans to America, and then the hideous shock of the crossing. The voyage proved excruciating and there is no reason to think it particularly unusual. The long trip down the Rhine, with constant stops at the three dozen customs houses between Heilbronn and Holland, began to consume the limited funds of the travelers, and it was followed by an expensive stop of several weeks in Holland. Then there was the voyage at sea, with the passengers packed like herring and cramped in the standard bedsteads measuring two feet by six. "During the journey," wrote Mittelberger, "the ship is full of pitiful signs of distress--smells, fumes, horrors, vomiting, various kinds of sea sickness, fever, dysentery, headaches, heat, constipation, boils, scurvy, cancer, mouth-rot, and similar afflictions, all of them caused by the age and the highly salted state of the food, especially of the meat as well as by the very bad and filthy water, which brings about the miserable destruction and death of many. Add to all that shortage of food, hunger, thirst, frost, heat, dampness, fear, misery, vexation, and lamentation as well as other troubles. Thus, for example, there are so many lice, especially on the sick people, that they have to be scraped off the bodies. All this misery reached its climax when in addition to everything else one must suffer through two or three days and nights of storm, with everyone convinced that the ship with all aboard is bound to sink. In such misery all the people on board pray and cry pitifully together."[4]

Even those who endured the voyage in good health, Mittelberger reported, fell out of temper and turned on each other with reproaches. They cheated and stole. "But most of all they cry out against the thieves of human beings! Many groan and exclaim: 'Oh! If only I were back at home, even lying in my pig-sty!' Or they call out: 'Ah, dear God, if I only once again had a piece of good bread or a good fresh drop of water.'" It went hardest with women in childbirth and their offspring: "Very few escape with their lives; and mother and child, as soon as they have died, are thrown into the water. On board our ship, on a day on which we had a great storm, a woman about to give birth and unable to deliver under the circumstances, was pushed through one of the portholes into the sea because her corpse was far back in the stern and could not be brought forward to the deck." Children under seven, he thought (though the port records show him wrong here), seldom survived, especially those who had not already had measles and smallpox, and their parents were condemned to watch them die and be tossed overboard. The sick members of families infected the healthy, and in the end all might be lying moribund. He believed disease was so prevalent because warm food was served only three times a week, and of that very little, very bad, very dirty, and supplemented by water that was often "very black, thick with dirt, and full of worms . . . towards the end of the voyage we had to eat the ship's biscuit, which had already been spoiled for a long time, even though no single piece was there more than the size of a thaler that was not full of red worms and spiders' nests."

The first sight of land gave heart to the passengers, who came crawling out of the hatches to get a glimpse of it. But then for many a final disappointment lay in wait: only those who could complete the payment of their fare could disembark. The others were kept on board until they were bought, some of them sickening within sight of land and, as they sickened, losing the chance of being bought on good terms. On landing some families were

broken, when despairing parents indentured their children to masters other than their own.

Not even passengers of means who paid their way, moved more or less freely about ship, occupied cabins or small dormitories, and had superior rations could take an Atlantic crossing lightly. In addition to the hazards of winds too feeble or too violent, of pirates, shipwrecks, or hostile navies, there were under the best of circumstances the dangers of sickness. Travelers in either direction frequently died of smallpox or other diseases on board or soon after arrival. Anglican colonials often complained of the high mortality rate among their young would-be clergymen crossing to England to be ordained. The Dutch Reformed preacher Theodorus Frelinghuysen lost three of his five sons on their way to be ordained in Amsterdam. The evangelist George Whitefield on his first crossing to the colonies in 1738 saw a majority of the soldiers on board afflicted with fever and spent much of his time "for many days and nights, visiting between twenty and thirty sick persons, crawling between decks upon his knees, administering medicines and cordials" and giving comfort. On this voyage the captain's Negro servant died, was wrapped in a hammock and tossed into the sea. In the end all but a handful of the passengers took the fever, including Whitefield, who survived treatment by bleeding and emetics. The ship on which he returned a few months later was afflicted by a "contrary wind", drifted for over a week to the point at which crew and passengers were uncertain where they were, and took so long to arrive at Ireland that water rations, which had been cut to a pint a day, were just about to run out.5

When paying passengers were exposed to such afflictions, how much worse must have been the sufferings of the servants and redemptioners packed into the holds, frequently at a density that violated the laws, and without adequate ventilation. Food provisions were calculated to last fourteen weeks, which was normally sufficient, but the rations deteriorated rapidly, especially in summer. Water turned stale, butter turned rancid, and beef rotted. If Mittelberger's voyage ranked among the worst, Atlantic crossings were frequently at or near the worst, and many more disastrous ventures were recorded.6 With bad luck, provisions could give out. The Love and Unity left Rotterdam for Philadelphia in May 1731 with more than 150 Palatines and a year later landed with 34, after having put in toward the end of Martha's Vineyard for water and food. On the way rations became so low that water, rats, and mice were being sold, and the storage chests of the dead and dying were broken open and plundered by the captain and crew. A ship called the Good Intent--the names of eighteenth century vessels often reek with irony--arrived off the American coast in the winter of 1751 but found herself unable to make port because of the weather; she was able to put in to harbor in the West Indies only after twenty-four weeks at sea. Nearly all of the passengers had died long before. The Sea Flower, which left Belfast with 106 passengers in 1941, was at sea sixteen weeks, and lost 46 passengers from starvation. When help arrived, six of the corpses had been cannibalized.

It is true that given adequate ventilation, a stock of lemon juice and vegetables, and good luck with the winds, decent sanitary arrangements were possible. The philanthropic Georgia Trustees, who were concerned about the health of their colonists, "put on board turnips, carrots, potatoes, and onions, which were given out with the salt meat, and contributed greatly to prevent the scurvy." Out of some fifteen hundred people who had gone to Georgia at the public expense, it was claimed in 1741, not more than six had died in transit. A traveler to Jamaica in 1739 reported that the servants of his ship "had lived so easily and well during the voyage, that they looked healthful, clean and fresh, and for this reason were soon sold," yet he saw another vessel arrive not long afterward with "a multitude of poor starved creatures, that seemed so many skeletons: misery appeared in their looks, and one might read the effects of sea-tyranny by their wild and dejected countenances."7

The situation in which the indentured servant or the redemptioner found himself upon his arrival depended in large measure upon his physical condition. There would be a last-minute effort to clean up and appear presentable, and in some ports the healthy were separated from the sick, once colonial officials adopted quarantine measures. Boston, the most vigilant of the ports, had long kept a pesthouse on an island in the harbor and fined captains who disregarded the regulations. "As Christians and men," the governor of Pennsylvania urged in 1738, "we are obliged to make a charitable provision for the sick stranger, and not by confining him to a ship, inhumanly expose him to fresh miseries when he hopes that his sufferings are soon to be mitigated."8 Pennsylvania then designated Province Island for quarantine and built a pesthouse to harbor sick immigrants. In 1750 and again in 1765 it passed laws to bar overcrowding on ships. Laws passed by Virginia and Maryland in the 1760's provided for the quarantine of convict ships were frowned upon in London, and Virginia's law was disallowed.

Buyers came on shipboard to take their pick of the salably healthy immigrants, beginning a long process of examination and inspection with the muscles and the teeth, and ending with a conversational search for the required qualities of intelligence, civility, and docility. At Philadelphia buyers might be trying to find Germans and eschew the Scotch-Irish, who were reputed to be contumacious and work resistant and disposed to run away. Some buyers were "soul drivers" who bought packs of immigrants and brutally herded them on foot into the interior where they were offered along the way to ready purchasers. On the ships and at the docks there were final scenes of despair and frenzy as servants searched for lost articles of indenture, or lamented the disappearance of baggage, unexpected overcharges, the necessity of accepting indentures longer than their debts fairly required, the separation of families.

The final crisis of arrival was the process we would call acclimatization, in the eighteenth century known as "seasoning." Particularly difficult in the tropical islands, seasoning also took a heavy toll in the Southern colonies of the mainland. People from cities and from the mild English climate found the summer hard going in any colony from Maryland southward, especially on plantations where indentured servants were put to arduous field labor by owners whose goal it was to get a maximum yield of labor in the four or five years contracted for. Fevers, malaria, and dysentery carried many off, especially in their first years of service. Seasoning was thought to be more or less at an end after one year in the new climate, and servants who had been wholly or partly seasoned were at a premium.

During the voyage, thoughtful servants might have recalled, quite a number of persons had battened on their needs--the spirit or the newlander, the toll collectors and the parasites of the seaports, the ship captain or merchant: now there was the master. Any traffic that gave sustenance to so many profiteers might well rest on a rather intense system of exploitation. A merchant who would spend from six to ten pounds to transport and provision an indentured servant might sell him on arrival--the price varied with age, skill, and physical condition--for fifteen to twenty pounds, although the profits also had to cover losses from sickness and death en route. The typical servant had, in effect, sold his total working powers for four or five years or more in return for his passage plus a promise of minimal maintenance. After the initially small capital outlay, the master simply had to support him from day to day as his services were rendered, support which was reckoned to cost about thirteen or fourteen pounds a year. In Maryland, where exploitation was as intense as anywhere, the annual net yield even from unskilled labor, was reckoned at around fifty pounds sterling.9 The chief temptation to the master was to

drive the servant beyond his powers in the effort to get as much as possible out of him during limited years of service. The chief risk was that the servant might die early in service before his purchase price had been redeemed by his work. That he might run away was a secondary risk, though one against which the master had considerable protection. Still, hard as white servitude bore on servants, it was nevertheless not always a happy arrangement for owners, especially for those with little capital and little margin for error: shiftless and disagreeable servants, as well as successful runaways, were common enough to introduce a significant element of risk into this form of labor.

Indentured servants lived under a wide variety of conditions, which appear to have softened somewhat during the eighteenth century. Good or bad luck, the disposition of the master, the length of the term of work, the size of the plantation or farm, the robustness or frailty of the worker--all these had a part in determining the fate of each individual. Servants in households or on small farms might be in the not uncomfortable situation of familiar domestic laborers. Tradesmen who were trying to teach special skills to their workers, or householders who wanted satisfactory domestic service, might be tolerable masters. The most unenviable situation was that of servants on Southern plantations, living alongside--but never with--Negro slaves, both groups doing much the same work, often under the supervision of a relentless overseer. One has to imagine the situation of a member of the English urban pauper class, unaccustomed to rural or to any sustained labor, thrust into a hot climate in which heavy field labor--including, worst of all, the backbreaking task of clearing new land of rocks, trees, and shrubs--was his daily lot. Even as late as 1770 William Eddis, the English surveyor of customs at Annapolis, thought that the Maryland Negroes were better off than "the Europeans, over whom the rigid planter exercises an inflexible severity." The Negroes, Eddis thought, were a lifelong property, so were treated with a certain care, but the whites were "strained to the utmost to perform their allotted labour, and, from a prepossession in many cases too justly founded, they were supposed to be receiving only the just reward which is due to repeated offenses. There are doubtless many exceptions to this observation, yet, generally speaking, they groan beneath a worse than Egyptian bondage." Yet in Virginia, as the blacks arrived in greater numbers, white laborers seemed to have become a privileged stratum, assigned to lighter work and more skilled tasks.10

The status and reputation of Southern indentured laborers were no doubt kept lower than elsewhere because there were a considerable number of transported convicts among them. Colonies to the north were not completely free of convict transportees, but the plantation system regularly put honest unfortunates alongside hardened criminals and lumped them all together as rogues who deserved no better than what was meted out to them. Among the by-products of English social change of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was a very substantial pool of criminal talents. The laws devised to suppress the criminal population were so harsh--scores of crimes were defined as felonies and hanging was a standard punishment for many trivial offences--that England would have been launched upon mass hangings far beyond the point of acceptability had it not been for two devices that let many accused off the penalties prescribed for felons. One was the benefit of clergy--a practice inherited from the Middle Ages and continued until the early nineteenth century--which permitted a convicted felon to "call for the book" and prove his literacy. On the ancient assumption that those who could read were clerics and thus exempt from severe punishments by the secular state, the relatively privileged class of literate felons could be permitted to escape with the conventional branding on the thumb.

A second practice, the predecessor of convict transportation, was to secure royal pardons for ordinary offenders deemed by the judges to be worthy of some indulgence. Until the end of the French wars in 1713 it was customary to send them into the army, but in peacetime England did not know what to do with felons and drifters. In 1717 Parliament passed an act which in effect made royal clemency contingent upon transportation to the colonies for a term of labor: in consequence the large-scale shipping of convicts began which continued to the time of the American Revolution. To America at large, including the island colonies, around thirty thousand felons were transported in the eighteenth century, of whom probably more than two-thirds reached Virginia and Maryland, where they were readily snapped up by the poorer planters.11

The whole procedure, though clearly intended to be a humane and useful alternative to wholesale hangings, was dreadfully feared by convicts, who may have guessed, quite rightly, that whoever bought their services would try to get the most out of them during their seven-year terms (fourteen years in the case of transmuted death penalties) of hard labor. In transit felons probably were fed somewhat better than they were used to, but usually they were kept below deck and in chains during the entire voyage, and on the average perhaps one in six or seven would die on the way. "All the states of horror I ever had an idea of," wrote a visitor to a convict ship, "are much short of what I saw this poor man in: chained to a board in a hole not above sixteen feet long, more than fifty with him; a collar and padlock about his neck, and chained to five of the most dreadful creatures I ever looked on."12 Mortality could run very high: on one ship, the Honour, which arrived in Annapolis in 1720, twenty of the sixty-one convicts had died. Merchants transporting felons on government contracts pleaded for subsidies to cover losses that hit them so hard.

While some planters rushed to the seaports to find convicts for their field labor supply others were disturbed by the effect they expected criminals would have on the character of the population. These hazardous importations caused most anxiety in the colonies that received masses of transported felons. Pennsylvania subjected the importation of convicts to constant statutory harassment after 1722. Virginia at mid-century seemed to have thought herself in the midst of a crime wave. The Virginia Gazette complained in 1751: "When we see our papers fill'd continually with accounts of the most audacious robberies, the most cruel murders, and infinite other villainies perpetrated by convicts transported from Europe, what melancholy, what terrible reflections it must occasion! What will become of our posterity? These are some of thy favours Britain. Thou art called our Mother Country; but what good mother ever sent thieves and villains to accompany her children to corrupt some with their infectious vices and murder the rest? What father ever endeavour'd to spread a plague in his family? . . . In what can Britain show a more sovereign contempt for us than by emptying their jails into our settlements; unless they would likewise empty their jakes (privies) on our tables!"13 The concluding metaphor seems to have come quite naturally to the colonials: Franklin also used it, although he is better remembered for his suggestion that the Americans trade their rattlesnakes for the convicts.14 But all laws rejecting transported convicts were disallowed in England by the Board of Trade and the Privy Council, while subterfuge measures designed to impede or harass the trade were looked at with suspicion.

The system of indenture was an adaptation, with some distinctively harsh features, of the old institution of apprenticeship. In fact, a few native-born colonials, usually to discharge a debt or answer for a crime but sometimes to learn a trade, entered into indentures not altogether unlike those undertaken by immigrants. In law an indenture was a contract in which the servant promised faithful service for a specified period

of time in return for his housing and keep, and, at the end of his term of work, that small sum of things, known as "freedom dues," which his master promised him upon their parting. The typical term was four or five years, although it might run anywhere from one or two years to seven. Longer terms were commonly specified for children, and were calculated to bring them to freedom at or just past the time they reached majority. Most indentures followed a standard pattern: as early as 1636 printed forms were available, needing only a few details to be filled out by the contracting parties. Often an emigrant's original indenture was made out to a merchant or a ship's captain and was sold with its holder to an employer on arrival. Indentures became negotiable instruments in the colonies, servants bound under their terms being used to settle debts, even gambling debts. In theory the contract protected the servant from indefinite exploitation, but in practice it had quite limited powers. It was a document vulnerable to loss, theft, or destruction, and when one considers both the recklessness and inexperience of most indentured servants and the lack of privacy under which they lived, it is little wonder that their contracts often disappeared.

During the eighteenth century, however, circumstances began to alter the prevailing system of indentures and to lessen its severities, particularly when a special class of bonded servants, the redemptioners, became numerous. The redemptioner appeared at the beginning of the century, coming largely from the Continent, often emigrating with a family and with a supply of tools and furnishings. The passengers who traveled with Mittelberger were mostly redemptioners. Indentured servants were simply a part of a ship's cargo, but redemptioners were low-grade, partially paid-up passengers. The redemptioner embarked without an indenture, sometimes having paid part of the money for his own and his family's passage, and arranged with the shipping merchant to complete payment within a short time after landing. Once here, he might try to find relatives or friends to make up his deficit; failure to pay in full meant that he would be sold to the highest bidder to redeem whatever part of his fare was unpaid. The length of his servitude would depend upon the amount to be redeemed. It could be as short as one or two years, although four years seems to have been much more common. Redemptioners would try to go into service as a whole family group. Although redemptioners were often swindled because of their lack of English and were overcharged for interest, insurance, and the transportation of their baggage, it was less profitable to carry them than indentured servants. Still, merchants were eager to fill their ships as full as possible with a ballast of redemptioners.15

All bonded servants, indentured and redemptionist, were chattels of their masters, but the terminability of their contracts and the presence of certain legal rights stood between them and slavery. A servant would be freely bought and sold, except in Pennsylvania and New York where laws required the consent of a court before assigning a servant for a year or more. His labor could be rented out; he could be inherited on the terms laid down in his master's will. Yet he could own property, although he was forbidden to engage in trade. He could also sue and be sued, but he could not vote. It was expected that he would be subject to corporal punishment by his master for various offenses, and whipping was common: but a master risked losing his servant on the order of a court for a merciless or disfiguring beating. The right of a servant to petition the courts against abuse was more than a negligible protection. Penniless servants were, of course, at a disadvantage in courts manned by representations of the master class: in effect they were appealing to the community pride, compassion, or decency of the magistrates, and the sense that there were certain things that ought not to be done to a white Christian. Yet the frequency of complaints by servants makes it clear that the prerogative of appeal was widely used, and the frequency of judgments rendered for servants shows that it was not used in vain. No colony recognized the

validity of agreements between master and servant made during servitude unless both parties appeared before a magistrate and registered their consent. Statutes regulated the terms of servitude in cases in which no papers of indenture existed.

For many thousands of servants their term of indentured servitude was a period of enforced celibacy. Marriage without the consent of the master was illegal, and the crimes of fornication and bastardy figure importantly in the records of bound servitude--not surprisingly, when we realize how many of the servant population were between the ages of eighteen and thirty. The sexuality of redemptioners, since they commonly came in families, was a much less serious problem for them and their masters. Among indentured servants as a whole, however, there were many more men than women. The situation of maidservants was full of both opportunities and hazards. Their services were considerably prized, and a clever or comely woman, as mistress or wife, might escape from the dreariest exactions of servitude. Still, women were also vulnerable to sexual abuse, and the penalties for simply following their own inclinations were high. Masters were unwilling to undergo the loss of time, the expense of rearing a child, or the impairment of health or risk of death in childbirth, and thus were unlikely to give consent to marriage. But the laws contrived to give masters the chance to turn such events to their own account. For fornication and bastardy there were ceremonial whippings usually of twenty-one lashes; more to the point, sentences of from one to two or three years of extra service were exacted, an overgenerous compensation for the loss of perhaps no more than a few weeks of work. From Pennsylvania southward, Richard B. Morris has concluded, the master was often enriched far beyond his actual losses. Where a manservant fathered a child, he could be required to do whatever extra service was necessary to provide for its maintenance. Merely for contracting unsanctioned marriages, servants could be put to a year's extra service. If a maidservant identified her master as the father of her child, he could be punished for adultery, and she removed from him and resold. A keen disrelish for miscegenation provided an additional term of punishment; for bearing a mulatto bastard a woman might get heavy whipping and seven years of extra service. Despite such restraints, there were a substantial number of illegitimate births, mulatto and otherwise.

However, the commonest crime committed by servants, not surprisingly, was running away--not an easy thing to get away with, since in the colonies everyone had to carry a pass, in effect an identity card, and still penalties ranging from fines and personal damages to corporal punishment were imposed upon persons harboring fugitives. Runaways were regularly advertised in the newspapers, rewards were offered, and both sheriffs and the general public were enlisted to secure their return. Returned they often were, and subjected to what were regarded as suitable penalties; captured servants who were unclaimed were resold at public auction. On the whole, and especially in Pennsylvania and colonies to the south, the laws turned the punishment of the recovered runaway into an advantage for the master. The standard penalty in the North, not always rigorously enforced, was extra service of twice the same the master had lost, though whipping was also common. In Pennsylvanie, a five-to-one penalty was fixed and commonly enforced, while in Maryland, the harshest of all the colonies, a ten-to-one penalty was authorized by a law of 1661 and very often enforced to the letter. A habitual runaway, or one who succeeded in getting away for weeks, could win himself a dreary extension of servitude. There was one horrendous case of a maidservant in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, who ran off habitually for short terms, and whose master quietly kept a record, true or false, of her absences. Finally taking her to court, the master rendered an account of 133 accumulated days of absence. Since it was impossible for her to deny her frequent absences, she had no shadow of an answer, and was booked for 1,330 days of extra service.16 Hers was an unusual but not a singular case: there are recorded penalties of 1,530 days, 2,000 days, and even one of 12,130 days, which the master handsomely commuted to

an even five years.17 Virginia assessed double time, or more if "proportionable to the damages" which could be high in tobacco-harvesting time, plus an additional punishment, more commonly inflicted in the seventeenth than the eighteenth century, of corporal punishment. On the eve of the Revolution, Negro slavery had largely replaced indentures in the tidewater plantations but indentures were still important on the accessible and inviting edges of settlement, and there runaways became a critical problem. In South Carolina, where fear of insurrection had been a dominant motive, a law of 1721 had authorized a week's extra service for a day of absence, and for absences that ran as long as a week, a year for a week--a fifty-two-to-one ratio that made Maryland seem relaxed. In 1744 the week-for-a-day ratio was still kept, but the maximum penalty was set at a year's service. Whipping was also routine.

The problem of preventing and punishing runaways was complicated by what was held to be the "pirating" of labor by competing employers--and it became necessary to establish a whole series of penalties for enticing or distracting indentured labor. Plainly, if neighbors could entice bound laborers from their owners for occasional or even permanent service by offering money or promising better treatment, a rudimentary subterranean labor market would begin to replace servitude, and property in servants would become increasingly hazardous. Pirating was not taken lightly in the law, and enticers of labor were subject to personal damage suits as well as to criminal prosecution, with sentences ranging from whipping or sitting in the stocks to fines. The penalties were so heavy in the tobacco colonies that law-abiding planters might even hesitate to feed or shelter a servant who had apparently been deserted by his master. Indeed, innkeepers in these colonies were often fined simply for entertaining or selling liquor to servants. Suits for damages for brief enticements were hardly worth the trouble in the case of servants whose work was valued at a few pence a day. But in New York a skilled cabinetmaker and chair carver indentured in 1761 was lured away by a competitor at frequent intervals, and a few years later his master won a smashing judgment of £ 128.18

Plots hatched by several servants to run away together occurred mostly in the plantation colonies, and the few recorded servant uprisings were entirely limited to those colonies. Virginia had been forced from its very earliest years to take stringent steps against mutinous plots, and severe punishments for such behavior were recorded. Most servant plots occurred in the seventeenth century; a contemplated uprising was nipped in the bud in York County in 1661; apparently led by some left-wing offshoots of the Great Rebellion, servants plotted an insurrection in Gloucester County in 1663, and four leaders were condemned and executed; some discontented servants apparently joined Bacon's Rebellion in the 1670s. In the 1680s the planters became newly apprehensive of discontent among the servants "owing to their great necessities and want of clothes," and it was feared they would rise up and plunder the storehouses and ships; in 1682 there were plant-cutting riots in which servants and laborers, as well as some planters, took part.

By the eighteenth century, either because of the relaxed security of the indenture system or the increasing effectiveness of the authorities, disturbances were infrequent, although in 1707 a gang of runaways planned to seize military stores, burn Annapolis, steal a ship, and set up as pirates, but were stopped. Again in 1721 a band of convict servants conspired unsuccessfully to seize military stores at Annapolis. An insurrection of some consequence did actually break out among white servants under the British regime in East Florida during the summer of 1768, when three hundred Italians and Greeks in that very heterogeneous colony revolted against hard work and stern

treatment, seized the arms and ammunition in the storehouse, and prepared to set sail from a ship at anchor in the river at New Smyrna. They were intercepted by a government vessel and promptly surrendered. Three leaders were convicted of piracy, one of whom was pardoned on condition that he execute his two comrades. Discontent and dissension, reaching into the local elite, were still rife in Florida at the time of the Revolution.19

A serious threat to the interests of masters, one which gives testimony to the onerousness of servitude, was the possibility of military enlistment. In New England, where there were not many servants, military service was obligatory and seems to have posed no major temptation to escape servitude, but in Pennsylvania and the tobacco colonies, where servants were numerous and essential, the competing demand by the army for manpower in the intercolonial war of the 1740s, and, even more, in the French and Indian War of the 1750s, aroused great anxiety among the masters. In the 1740s, more than a third of the Pennsylvania enlistments were from men in the servant class whose masters were compensated at the colony's expense; in Maryland, during the French and Indian War, Governor Horatio Sharpe reported not only that "servants immediately flocked in to enlist, convicts not excepted," but also that recruits among freemen were extremely scarce, and in Virginia George Washington urged that servants be allowed to enlist in the Virginia volunteers lest they seize the alternative and join the regular army.20 The resistance of the Pennsylvania Assembly to enlistments during the 1750s became provocatively stubborn and in Maryland there was armed resistance and rioting against recruitment. Parliament, whose interest it was to increase the army, passed a measure in 1756 authorizing officers to enlist indentured servants regardless of restraining colonial laws or practices. The best that masters could hope for was repeated in Pennsylvania in 1763, or suing the recruiting officer for civil damages. During the Revolution, the Continental Congress and some of the states encouraged the enlistment of servants, but Pennsylvania and Maryland exempted them from military service. When despite this recruiting officers in Pennsylvania continued to enlist servants, a group of Cumberland County masters complained with magnificent gall that apprentices and servants "are the property of their masters and mistresses, and every mode of depriving such masters and mistresses of their property is a violation of the rights of mankind. . . ."21 A good number of servants ran off to the British forces, especially in Virginia, but neither the wars nor the Revolution ended the practice of servitude, which declined but did not die until the nineteenth century.

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Numerous as are the court records of penalties which lengthened service, most servants did not run afoul of the law; their periods of servitude did at last come to an end, entitling them to collect "freedom dues" if they could, and to start in life for themselves. Freedom dues were usually specified by law, but little seems to be known about their payment. Virginia and North Carolina laws of the 1740s required £3 in money, and North Carolina added an adequate suit of clothes. The Crown provided 50 acres of land, free of quitrent for ten years, in South Carolina. A Pennsylvania law of 1700 specified two complete suits of clothes, one of which was to be new, one new ax, one grubbing hoe, and one weeding hoe. Massachusetts long before in the seventeenth century had provided in biblical fashion that servants after seven years' labor should "not be sent away empty," but what this maxim was actually worth to servants is difficult to say. Like the dues of ordinary apprentices, freedom dues may have functioned most importantly as a kind of inducement to servants to carry out in good faith the concluding months and weeks of servitude. Where the labor of a servant was particularly valuable, his master might strengthen that inducement by a cash payment considerably beyond what had been promised.22

What was the economic situation of the servant after completing his servitude? It varied, no doubt, from colony to colony, and with the availability of lands. In the mainland colonies, it appears to have been assumed that an ex-servant was to be equipped for work as a free hired man with enough clothes and tools or money to give him a small start. It was assumed that wages for a freeman were high enough to enable him to earn an adequate competence or to provide himself with a plot of land within a fairly short time. Some ex-servants no doubt went westward and took up new lands. "The inhabitants of our frontiers," wrote Governor Alexander Spotswood of Virginia in 1717, "are composed generally of such as have been transported hither as servants, and being out of their time, settle themselves where land is to be taken up that will produce the necessaries of life with little labour."23 But it is quite likely that Spotswood erred considerably on the side of optimism. For example, in Maryland, where a freed servant in the seventeenth century was entitled to 50 acres of land upon showing his certificate of freedom at the office of the land office secretary, the records show that relatively few became farmers, though many assumed their land rights and sold them for cash. Abbott E. Smith, in one of the most authoritative studies of colonial servitude, estimates that only one out of ten indentured servants (not including redemptioners) became a substantial farmer and another became an artisan or an overseer in reasonably comfortable circumstances. The other eight, he suggests, either died in servitude, returned to England when it was over, or drifted off to become the "poor whites" of the villages and rural areas. There is reason to think that in most places servants who had completed a term of bondage and had a history of local residence met the prevailing parochial, almost tribal qualifications for poor relief, and were accepted as public charges.24 Redemptioners, Smith remarks, did a good deal better, but the scrappy evidence that has thus far been found does not yet allow much precision. Sir Henry Moore, governor of New York, thought them so anxious to own land that they made great sacrifices to do so: "As soon as the time stipulated in their indentures is expired, they immediately quit their masters, and get a small tract of land, in settling which for the first three or four years they lead miserable lives, and in the most abject poverty: but all this is patiently borne and submitted to with the greatest cheerfulness, the satisfaction of being land holders smooths every difficulty, and makes them prefer this manner of living to that comfortable subsistence which they could procure for themselves and their families by working at the trades in which they were brought up."25 An Englishman who traveled in America in the opening years of the nineteenth century noticed "many families, particularly in Pennsylvania, of great respectability both in our society and amongst others, who had themselves come over to this country as redemptioners; or were children of such."26

As for the indentured servants, the dismal estimate that only two out of ten may have reached positions of moderate comfort is an attempt to generalize the whole two centuries of the experience of English servitude, taking the seventeenth century when the system was brutal and opportunities were few with the eighteenth, when it became less severe.27 In the early years more servants returned to England, and mortality was also higher. But it will not do simply to assume that freed servants, especially those from the tobacco fields, were in any mental or physical condition to start vigorous new lives, or that long and ripe years of productivity lay ahead for them. If we consider the whole span of time over which English indentured servitude prevailed, its heavy toll in work and death is the reality that stands out.

The Horatio Alger mythology has long since been torn to bits by students of American social mobility, and it will surprise no one to learn that the chance of emergence from indentured servitude to a position of wealth or renown was statistically negligible. A

few cases to the contrary are treasured by historians, handed down from one to another like heirlooms--but most of them deal with Northern servants who came with education or skills. The two most illustrious colonial names with servitude in their family histories are Benjamin Franklin and the eminent Maryland lawyer Daniel Dulany. Franklin's maternal grandfather, Peter Folger of Nantucket, a man of many trades from teacher and surveyor to town and court clerk and interpreter between whites and Indians, had bought a maidservant for £20 and later married her. Dulany, who came from a substantial Irish family, arrived in 1703 with two older brothers; the brothers melted into the anonymity that usually awaited indentured arrivals, but Daniel was picked up by a lawyer who was pleased to buy a literate servant with some university training to act as his clerk and help with his plantation accounts. The closest thing to a modest, American-scale family dynasty to come out of servitude was that of the New England Sullivans. John Sullivan and Margery Browne both came to Maine as indentured servants in the 1720's. After Sullivan earned his freedom he became a teacher, bought Margery out of servitude, and married her. Their son John became a lawyer, a Revolutionary patriot, one of Washington's leading generals, and governor of New Hampshire. His younger brother James, also a lawyer, became a congressman from Massachusetts and in time governor of the state. In the third generation, John's son, George, became a Federalist congressman and the attorney general of New Hampshire; James's son, William, pursued a successful legal career in Boston, played a prominent role in state politics, and was chosen to be one of the three delegates to take the manifesto of the Hartford Convention to Washington. John Lamb, a leader of the Sons of Liberty and later an officer in the Revolution, was the son of Anthony Lamb who had followed an improbable career: an apprentice instrument maker in London, Anthony became involved with a notorious burglar who ended on the gallows at Tyburn· as a first offender, Lamb was sentenced to be transported, served out an indenture in Virginia, moved to New York, and became a reputable instrument maker and a teacher of mathematics, surveying, and navigation. Charles Thomson, one of six children orphaned by the death of their father on shipboard in 1739, began his American life as an indentured servant and became a teacher in Philadelphia, a merchant, a Revolutionary patriot, and Secretary of the Continental Congress. Matthew Thornton, whose parents came to Maine in the Scotch-Irish emigration of 1718, began life under indenture, became a physician, a patriot leader in New Hampshire, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Matthew Lyon, who won notoriety as a peppery Republican congressman from Vermont and as a victim of the Sedition Act, emigrated from Ireland in 1765 and paid off his passage by three years of indentured service on farms in Connecticut before he bought his own farm in Vermont. And there were others, brands snatched from the burning, triumphs of good fortune or strong character over the probabilities.

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Thoreau, brooding over the human condition in the relatively idyllic precincts of Concord and Walden Pond, was convinced that the mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation. His conviction quickens to life again when we contemplate the human costs of what historians sometimes lightly refer to as the American experiment. It is true that thousands came to the colonies in search of freedom or plenty and with a reasonably good chance of finding them, and that the colonies harbored a force of free white workers whose wages and conditions might well have been the envy of their European counterparts. Yet these fortunate men were considerably outnumbered by persons, white or black, who came to America in one kind of servitude or another. It is also true that for some servants, especially those who already had a skill, a little cash, or some intelligence or education or gentility, servitude in America might prove not a great deal worse than an ordinary apprenticeship, despite the special tribulations and hazards it inflicted. But when one

thinks of the great majority of those who came during the long span of time between the first settlements and the disappearance of white servitude in the early nineteenth century--bearing in mind the poverty and the ravaged lives which they left in Europe, the cruel filter of the Atlantic crossing, the high mortality of the crossing and the seasoning, and the many years of arduous toil that lay between the beginning of servitude and the final realization of tolerable comfort--one is deeply impressed by the measure to which the sadness that is natural to life was overwhelmed in the condition of servitude by the stark miseries that seem all too natural to the history of the poor. For a great many the journey across the Atlantic proved in the end to have been only an epitome of their journey through life. And yet there must have seemed to be little at risk because there was so little at stake. They had so often left a scene of turbulance, crime, exploitation, and misery that there could not have been much hope in most of them; and as they lay in their narrow bedsteads listening to the wash of the rank bilge water below them, sometimes racked with fever or lying in their own vomit, few could have expected very much from American life, and those who did were too often disappointed. But with white servants we have only begun to taste the anguish of the early American experience.

Notes

1. Abbott E. Smith, Colonists in Bondage (1947), 3-4; Richard B. Morris, Government and Labor in Colonial America (1946), 315-16.
2. Smith, 27; M. W. Jernegan, Laboring and Dependent Classes in Colonial America (1931), 55; see also K. F. Geiser, Redemptioners and Indentured Servants in ... Pennsylvania (1901), 24-5.
3. Christopher Hill, The Century of Revolution (1961), 206.
4. For the voyage, Mittelberger, Journey to Pennsylvania (edn. 1960), ed. and trans. by Oscar Handlin and John Clive, 10-7.
5. Quoted in Luke Tyerman, The Life of the Rev. George Whitefield (1876), I, 124-5, 144-5.
6. See Geiser, chapter v; F. R. Diffenderfer, German Immigration into Pennsylvania ... (1900), chapter v, esp. 63-7.
7. Smith, 217-8.
8. Diffenderfer, 82.
9. Raphael Semmes, Crime and Punishment in Early Maryland (1938), 80, 278; cf. Samuel McKee Jr, Labor in Colonial New York (1935), 111.
10. William Eddis, Letters from America (1777), 69-70; J. C. Ballagh, White Servitude in the Colony of Virginia (1895), 89-92.
11. See Smith, 116-9; cf. Lawrence H. Gipson, The British Empire before the American Revolution, II (1936), 69-79.
12. Smith, 125.
13. Ibid., 130.
14. Cheesman A. Herrick, White Servitude in Pennsylvania (1926), 131-?.
15. Smith, 41.
16. Ibid., 268-9.
17. Morris, 452.
18. Ibid., 416-29, esp. 421-3.
19. On insurrections, see ibid., 169-81
20. Ibid., 284n, 286; E. I. McCormac, White Servitude in Maryland (1904), 90.

21. Morris, 292; on the enlistment problem generally, see ibid., 278-94; Geiser, 94-101; Smith, 278-84; McCormac, 82-91.
22. McKee, 95-6.
23. Smith, 297.
24. See ibid., 251-2.
25. McKee, 112-3.
26. Geiser, 108-9.
27. See Smith, 288-9, on later conditions.

WOMEN IN COLONIAL AMERICA

A necessary element in the transplanting of European society to the New World was the presence of a significant number of women. The lack of women produced societies that were only partial reproductions of the Old World models, as was the case in Southern Brazil, Paraguay, early New France, or the early Chesapeake region and the colonies of Maryland and Virginia. When the British began settling their American colonies, they brought with them few women. The early settlements in Virginia were speculative ventures in which men intended to turn a quick profit and return home. Colonists farther to the north, and later settlers in this region, did intend to stay. Nevertheless, women remained in short supply. The rigors of frontier life and the dangers of continuous childbirth without proper hygienic or medical care made the female mortality rate extremely high. Although the sex ratio was relatively well balanced in New England, the shortage of women in the South was apparent for a century and a half.

This scarcity of women accounts in great part for the relative independence granted them both in law and custom in the early period. Women could insist on certain rights and privileges as conditions of marriage. Although under British common law a woman lost her legal rights as an individual when she married, the colonies allowed some wives to sign contracts, to own property, and operate businesses in certain cases. This breach of the common law was made not only to secure women in the home, but also because the nascent society was reluctant to follow a course that might reduce some individuals to poverty and thus make them dependent on the community for subsistence. By granting women certain legal rights, usually exercised by them as widows, the society protected itself from what might have become an economic burden.

In the following selection, Carol Ruth Berkin provides a description of the conditions in which women found themselves in the colonies. In viewing this material from a feminist perspective, Berkin provides an analysis of the ideology of oppression that has been at work in society since the beginning of recorded history.

Questions for study:

1. Compare and contrast the position of women in the colonial U.S. and in colonial Spanish America. What options existed for women other than wife and mother?

2. Discuss the concepts of femme sole and femme covert.

3. What was the process of Anglicization?

WOMEN IN COLONIAL AMERICA

Carol Ruth Berkin*

Introduction

As women become more conscious of themselves as individuals and as a distinct group within society, they also become more curious about their collective past. But the written history they encounter tells them all too little. It presents, if not a conspiracy of silence about women, at least a persistent sin of omission Where women do appear in traditional accounts of the past, they emerge as adjuncts of the masculine world being recorded, as supporting players, seen only in their male-related roles as wife, mother, daughter, or mistress History thus related occurs around them rather than with them.

Of necessity, then, women have turned to the writing of their past. Their primary goal is self-knowledge rather than self-glorification. No honest search for a history of women, or a reconstruction of the past as it developed with women, will be an attempt to find matriarchy in a patriarchal world. Little major social policy was shaped by women, and no new search, for example, into our own American past, will stand the pyramids of power and leadership on their heads, revealing women as the dominant force in political, economic, or social decision-making

But self-knowledge is more readily accepted today as a legitimate pursuit of the subordinate as well as the dominant groups in society. There is therefore a history to be written of how and why women came to play a subordinate role in society; of what that role was, its inner dynamics as well as its contribution to the male society; how the role was justified and maintained; and what challenges were made to it.

The Ideology of Subordination

The history of the American colonial woman is not a chronicle of transcedence above circumstance. Her story, though distinguished by its many variations on the theme, conforms to that of most women in the patriarchal societies of Europe. This American woman no less than her English sisters, was part of a social structure that locked her into a subordinate position within her society. Its basic social and economic unit was the family, headed by father and husband. The larger units of community and colony were correspondingly masculine domains

Such a patriarchal system was centuries old when American colonial history began, and in justification or explanation of this patriarchy the colonists and their English brothers had at readiness hallowed assumptions about the "right ordering of things." These assumptions, woven together into a whole, constituted the ideology of women's subordination, which prevailed in Mother Country and New World throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This ideology eliminated the possibility of debate on the "woman question" by pronouncing woman's destiny, her nature, and her proper

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* From Carol Ruth Berkin, Within the Conjurer's Circle: Women in Colonial America (Morristown, N.J., 1974), pp. 1-15.

rights in these terms: "the reason why women have no control in Parliament, why they make no laws, consent to none, abrogate none, is their original sin. . . ." (Calhoun 1945, p. 42)

The American colonial patriarchy took both the reality and the ideology of its social organization from the Mother Country. Thus, the basic organizing unit of the new society, like the old, was the family. And within the family--in the roles of wife, mother, and daughter--a woman fulfilled her obligations to domesticity. Yet, American circumstances revised, reshaped, and often added to the traditional "particulars" of the woman's sphere. Although her subordination remained constant, the actual range of acceptable and even required female activities broadened, and sometimes breached, the boundaries of domestic life. The frontier conditions of seventeenth century America, the scarcity in colonial society of trained and even unskilled labor, and the scarcity of women themselves recast the nature of the "helpmeet's" role. The history of the colonial woman is the history of the shifting and changing particulars of the woman's role, her range of activities expanding and contracting as the men who directed her world built theirs.

The Value of Women: Mother and Homemaker

The English colonial world was, by virtue of numbers alone, a man's world. There were no women in the original Jamestown settlement parties, and, although no other colony followed this Virginia example of exclusivity, the ratio of women to men remained unbalanced for over a century and a half. In 1708 South Carolina's population showed 148 men for every 100 women; in Maryland, men still outnumbered women by 13 per hundred on the eve of the American Revolution. (Degler 1959) Observers of the colonial scene wrote of this scarcity of women as a boon to the female sex. One Maryland gentleman went so far as to declare America a "paradise for women." (Degler 1959, p. 58) The Marylander's judgement bears some scrutiny. America was perhaps a paradise for women seeking matrimony. There was however far less enthusiasm for women as independent settlers. Even in colonies like Massachusetts, where "maiden lots" were granted to single women immigrants leaders discouraged rather than encouraged this means of independent support for adventurous women. (Earle 1962) What American male settlers wanted, and actively sought, were wives.

The men of Jamestown reflect the American eagerness for matrimony. These bachelors actually imported their brides, sight unseen, by the boatload. In that struggling colony, the only true profits made in the year 1619 went to the sea-going entrepreneurs who shipped eligible young girls to Virginia and sold them in marriage at 80 pounds of tobacco a head. (Earle 1962) In other colonies, single men eagerly wooed eligible neighbors. Neither homeliness nor slowness of wit--not even poverty--seemed to decrease a girl's stock in the marriage market. Her very presence in the new world guaranteed her a proposal. (Smith 1970)

The settlers' desire for wives reflected more than the human need for companionship. Most of the expectant bridegrooms were farmers, and to manage a self-sustaining farm unit, a man needed the traditional housewifely skills which could be expected from a woman. To his wife the farmer could allocate the responsibilities of processing what his labor in the field and forest produced. Thus, in Virginia, and in all other agricultural communities of early America, women as wives were necessary to transform the farmers' homes into full-time domestic factories, where raw materials were changed into goods essential for survival.

If, then, America was a "paradise" for the eligible and willing bride, it was also a land of constant and grueling domestic duties for the wife. Her activities required more than time; strength, skill, and an ability for improvisation were needed for her tasks. Cooking utensils were heavy and crude (Demos 1971); household work-space was cramped; and all necessities in a cooking or cleaning process must be produced by the housewife before she could complete the task or assemble the meal. In the course of her day she cooked, pickled, and preserved the food that entered her home. She combed wool, spun it into thread, wove this thread into cloth, and mended the clothing she had earlier made. She made soap, dipped candles, and did the routine housework necessary to keep her home-factory in working order. At the same time, the colonial wife saw to the daily needs of her husband and family.

"Woman's work" in this colonial setting was physical and difficult. But no social judgment labeled physical activity unfeminine. In the farmhouse, femininity emanated from a cheerful acceptance of the helpmeet role and the fulfillment of its many domestic duties, not from a style of behavior within that domestic role. The helpless or idle female was of no more value to the seventeenth century settler than his continued bachelorhood would be; nor would she be valued by the urban poor or the frontiersman of the next century.

As a wife, the woman of colonial America served a second, and even more basic, function. As one historian of the period has put it, the colonial woman's chief obligation seems to have been to populate the country. (Douglas 1966) In more personal terms, she was expected to give the farmer a family. And, because children were valued assistance in the success of the farming venture, large families were desired.

High infant and child mortality made the colonial wife's obligation more difficult to fulfill. Repeated pregnancy was her only antidote to the inadequate medical care which filled colonial cemeteries with small graves. Thus, pregnancy and childbirth were a cycle in which some women spent the major portion of their married life.[1] Their very speech was rich with the vocabulary of birth, and "laying in" was a process regular and repetitious enough for many households to acknowledge its permanence with separate pillows, bed linen, and accessories accumulated for the delivery tasks. (Spruill 1938)

Colonial mothers as well as their children frequently died in childbirth, victims of the perils of home-delivery and of the physical toll of many pregnancies. Surviving children lived in the shadow of sibling death. Mothers, as historian Julia Spruill points out, often lacked both the physical and emotional energy they might wish to bring to the care of these survivors. (1938) Colonial women seemed, however, to accept their circumstances with resignation. Motherhood was believed to be woman's ultimate purpose, and death in childbirth to be the "will of Providence."

Women's Education: Training to be an "Ornament of Zion"

The importance to the settlers of the woman's role--both as wife and as mother--accounts in large part for the pressures, both formal and informal, upon women to marry. Wife-and-mother were lauded as the most desirable identities for women by community leaders, especially by the religious hierarchy. Leading ministers like Massachusetts clergyman Cotton Mather consistently declared the married mother to be the most prized of God's "ornaments of Zion." (Mather 1692) And, single women were urged by their religious leaders to display their virtue by devoting the maiden years to preparation for marriage and

motherhood. Thus the learning of housewifely skills was elevated from a necessity to a virtue, and the unmarried years were defined as without meaning except as a training period for matrimony and maternity.

If positive social status was acquired by a woman through marriage and motherhood, strongly negative status was conferred upon women who refused or failed to marry. Social disapproval increased in intensity over time: single women over the age of twenty might be viewed with a sympathetic admixture of alarm and pity, but this sympathy turned to ridicule with the passing of additional maiden years. New England spinsters of thirty, for example, were openly labeled "thornbacks," a crudely put judgment on their desirability. (Calhoun 1945)

Perhaps what gave the social pressures upon women their true persuasiveness was the legal and economic reality which they reflected. The average colonial woman had limited options. Few, if any, viable alternatives were available to her save marriage. Both legal and customary prohibitions against self-support made spinsterhood an undesirable state, and it was perhaps the contempt for the "thornback's" future which made her critics bold. Most unmarried women could expect to live as permanent dependents in the homes of brothers or sisters. And in these homes they were expected to perform most of the same domestic chores that they would otherwise have performed as mistresses of their own house. If there was no independence from the domestic duties, marriage at least gave a woman a domain over which she could preside.[2]

Whether she ultimately chose marriage or spinsterhood, the colonial woman's childhood was devoted to preparation for marriage. Within her mother's home she learned the womanly skills of cooking, sewing, and cleaning. But her education also focused upon behavior and attitude. She was taught, in short, "womanly virtues" as well as womanly skills. Cotton Mather had catalogued the appropriate virtues for the New England woman: modesty, silence, industriousness, humility, thrift, discretion, and obedience. (1692) But girls in New York and Virginia, not subject to Mather's Puritan influence, had the same virtues held up to them.

Little importance was placed upon academic or formal education for the colonial girl. Few women of early seventeenth century Virginia were even literate. (Spruill 1938) In New England, where a public school system was traditional, women fared better than their southern counterparts, and many were probably taught to read, to write, and to do sums. Ultimately, the family's economic and social status had much to do with a daughter's chance to acquire academic skills. In prosperous families, daughters sometimes received elementary lessons in geography, arithmetic, and even Latin from their brothers' tutors. The rule of formal ignorance had its exceptions, of course, and women like Anne Bradstreet and Anne Hutchinson, both of Massachusetts, were as well educated as their male contemporaries. However, their educations were the gifts of learned fathers; their academic accomplishments were tributes to special familial relationships, not to colonial educational priorities.

The denial of formal education to girls did not rest solely upon its apparent inapplicability to their future life. The truth was that colonial society held women to be naturally unsuited for intellectual training. While many women were allowed and even encouraged in adulthood to master the practical mathematical skills of budget-balancing and bookkeeping for their husbands (Morgan 1966), the feminine brain was said to be too weak to bear the strains of logic or abstract thought. (Calhoun 1945) Nor, it was argued, could women endure <u>sustained</u> thinking. These assumptions of constitutional weakness

were borne out to community leaders' satisfaction in case after case. In Massachusetts, for example, Governor John Winthrop attributed an instance of mental derangement to the woman's excessive reading of books. On the woman's condition Winthrop offered this post mortem:

> If she had attended to her household affairs and such things as belong to women, and not gone out of her way and calling to meddle in such things as are proper for men, she has kept her wits, and might have improved them usefully and honorable in the place that God has set her. (Winthrop 1908, II, 225)

The intellectually presumptuous woman was believed to be a woman who had overstepped natural boundaries, and such women were almost predictably disruptive to society. When, for example, a Puritan woman produced a book on theology, she was immediately discovered to have fallen into heresy. Her own brother publicly rebuked her, declaring "Your printing of a Book, beyond the custom of your sex, doth rankly smell."(Morgan 1966, p. 44)

Perhaps the most striking example of such a presumptuous woman was Anne Hutchinson, who came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636. Anne Hutchinson was in her forties, married, and the mother of fourteen children. But in her own girlhood she had been educated in more than cooking and sewing. Her father gave her the training of a son, and like any educated Puritan, she was keen in the discussion of Calvinist theology. She exhibited in theological debate all that the Puritan community admired: intelligence, quickness of mind, a provocative style, and above all, a relentless logic. Had Anne Hutchinson been a man, she might well have found her way into the ministry. But church leadership was closed to her sex. In fact, a "rule of silence" lay upon women while in the church sanctuary. But Mrs. Hutchinson <u>was</u> a theologian, and to her delight she found in Massachusetts that her interest in theology, if not her interpretive skill, was matched by her Boston neighbors. These Puritans soon flocked to the Hutchinson home to enjoy Anne's "nimble wit and spirit." Her parlor became, as historian Kai Erikson put it, "a kind of theological salon," where the minister's sermon was laid open to discussion--and, increasingly, to criticism. (Erikson 1966, p. 77)

The thrust of Mrs. Hutchinson's criticisms went directly to the heart of ministerial authority. In a society which believed that good works, or moral behavior, was not a guarantee of salvation, Anne Hutchinson challenged the holiness of the local clergy themselves. Although these might indeed be moral men, she conceded, they had not persuaded her that they were among the saved. If they could not, as she feared, definitely be counted among God's "elect", what legitimate authority over the religious life of the community did they enjoy?

Even were the ministers' religious credentials in order, Mrs. Hutchinson was not certain that was true, elected saints of Massachusetts (of which she was certain she was one) needed any earthly church or church authorities at all. What purpose, she asked in her Sunday afternoon discussions, did the earthly church serve for souls in direct communion with God?

The questions Anne Hutchinson raised were basic, but they were not new; Puritan ministers before her had raised them, and, as supporters of the church as an institution, had laid them to an uneasy rest. Nor were they purely theological questions in the Massachusetts of 1636, for here all political policy was legitimated by religious authorities. Thus Mrs. Hutchinson's revival of the debate was embarrassing and dangerous to the colonial government as well. In fact, when the leaders of the colony moved to silence Anne Hutchinson, they charged her not with heresy, but with sedition. Within a year after she

had raised her challenge, she had been tried, found "unfit for our society," and exiled from the colony. (Erikson 1966)

The boldness of an Anne Hutchinson was not common. More typically the women who displayed uncommon talents, intelligence, or commitment to religious or secular causes adopted a defensive posture. When the poetess Anne Bradstreet published her work, she asked for toleration of her foray into masculine endeavors. In "The Prologue" to her first volume of poetry she carefully paid homage to masculine superiority:

> . . . I am obnoxious to each carping tongue,
> Who sayes, my hand a needle better fits,
> A Poets Pen, all scorne, I should thus wrong;
> For such despight they cast on female wits:
> If what I doe prove well, it wo'nt advance,
> They'l say its stolne, or else, it was by chance.
> But sure the antick Greeks were far more milde,
> Else of our Sex, why feigned they those nine,
> And Posey made, Calliope's owne childe,
> So 'mongst the rest, they plac'd the Arts divine:
> But this weake knot they will full soone untye,
> The Greeks did nought, but play the foole and lye.
> Let Greeks be Greeks, and Women what they are,
> Men have precedency, and still excell,
> It is but vaine, unjustly to wage war,
> Men can doe best, and Women know it well:
> Preheminence in each, and all is yours,
> Yet grant some small acknowledgement of ours . . .
> (Bradstreet 1650, p. 4)

Although one of Anne Bradstreet's poems chided Englishmen to remember that a woman named Elizabeth had once ruled them, most of her work was gently lyrical, romantic, and orthodox in point of view.

Little effort was made to reconcile the reality of an Anne Bradstreet or an Anne Hutchinson with the assumptions of female intellectual inadequacies. The educated and intellectually powerful woman remained an anomaly within her culture, and was not exempt from the domestic duties of her sex.

The Choice of a Husband: The Rules and Their Exceptions

Trained as a daughter in the womanly skills, taught the passive womanly virtues, discouraged from intellectual activity, and encouraged to expect her ultimate fulfillment in marriage and motherhood, the average colonial woman led a life of narrow focus. And, although her husband was to be the central figure of her life, she had little formal say in his selection. The adventurous women imported to Jamestown may have enjoyed a free choice amongst eager suitors, but colonial girls from prosperous and proper families often entered marriage made for them rather than by them.

This exclusion of a woman from the choice of her husband was a logical consequence of seventeenth and eighteenth century views of marriage. Marriage not only provided a man his domestic assistant and his emotional companion: as a legal institution, it operated as a vehicle for the redistributing and securing of wealth between two families.

Thus it was, among the prosperous and among those on their way to prosperity, a matter of economics.

No attempt was made to hide this bookkeeping quality of marriage among the monied. Wealth was acknowledged to count for more than beauty in a wife, and men were in no way embarrassed to discuss matrimony as a means of shoring-up their fortunes or of making them. The diaries of a man as distinguished as Judge Samuel Sewall of Massachusetts give frank evidence of the colonial gentleman's shrewdness in marital negotiations. (Sewall 1927)

Premarriage negotiations in such circumstance were largely concerned with the transfer and pledge of wealth, and such negotiations required consent between legal adults; father and prospective son-in-law. Seen in its coldest light, such a marriage was a sophisticated means of barter in which the bride was not so much the currency but its conveyance.

How neatly reality conformed to this model is difficult to measure. Informally, favorite or loved daughters may well have chosen the man with whom their father negotiated. "Understandings" between lovers may have preceded and prompted those exclusively masculine contract discussions. However, formal power was never relinquished by the men, and even among the liberal Puritan societies of New England no proper marriages took place without the father's consent.3

The retention of formal power may have reflected parental desire to check unions undesirable for reasons of class rather than personal character. Even within the Puritan culture, which held love between husband and wife an obligation to God, economic and social compatibility was stressed as a major consideration for a successful marriage. Puritan ministers were careful to preach that an equality of social rank was the most important factor in choosing a mate. In the 1670s, for instance, a Boston minister reminded those attending a wedding that "the happiness of marriage (sic) life consists much in that Persons being equally yoaked draw together in a holy yoak . . . there must be sutable fittness (sic) for this Condition equality in birth, education, and religion." (Morgan 1966, p. 55)

Perhaps then the greatest freedom of choice for women existed among the poor, for in their marriages little of material value was to be transferred or absorbed, and no class barriers were to be overcome.

Legal Absorption in Marriage: The Femme Covert

Whatever the process of acquiring their husbands had been, whatever the bases of marriage, women once married were expected to show complete devotion to their husbands. Held up to them as models were the ideal wives of men's fact and fantasy, women invariably meek and humble, who, like Mrs. R--, was praised because "the hyacinth follows not the sun more willingly than she her husbands's pleasure." (Calhoun 1945, p. 86) Of the truly perfect wife it would not be too much to say, as William Habington did, that she looked upon her husband "as Conjurers upon the Circle, beyond which there is nothing but Death and Hell; and in him shee beleeves Paradice circumscrib'd." (Spruill 1938, p. 164).

This domestic "conjurer's circle" was drawn by law as much as by precept. Husbands escaped such limitations of identity, for the legal and political rights conferred upon them in adulthood provided them identities independent of husband and father. Tradition-

ally these rights were denied a woman, and marriage itself sealed her exclusion from most of them. No rite of passage from child to adult member of the society actually existed for women, although the less sophisticated and more pratmatic legal and political structure of early America did make the colonial wife less the permanent child her English sister was.

In England legal absorption of the woman in marriage was strikingly complete. In 1632, an English legal scholar compared marriage to the merging of a small brook and a major river: "the poor rivulet looseth her name; it is carried and recarried with the new associate; it beareth no sway; it possesseth nothing. . . ." (Spruill 1938, p. 340)

So too a woman was absorbed. Her inheritance, her possessions, even her personal items became his by law. After marriage, she owned no property, nor could she acquire any by purchase. The profits from her labor belonged to her husband.

As with all rules, there were exceptions to this one. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries prosperous men grew anxious to insure that their wealth passed to their blood heirs. These men arranged prenuptial contracts with each daughter's suitor, contracts that set outside the husband's reach a portion of the wealth the daughter brought to the marriage. This land or money was held in trust for her and her children. But this prenuptial contract was a device of the wealthy; ordinary women were left in total dependence upon their husbands. (Morris 1930; Goodsell 1934)

Rich or poor, all women shared in the exclusion from political and general legal rights which indeed circumscribed their life in marriage. A married woman could not sue or be sued She could not make contracts or sign deeds. If she broke the law, her husband was legally responsible. Even the debts she incurred were his, not hers. (Spruill 1938) His responsibility for her entitled him to discipline powers over her, and husbands were within their legal rights when meting out physical punishments to their wives Many relationships were tempered by respect and affection, but the power of the husband made this warmth his initiative alone.

Colonial wives fared better than their English sisters. For in the colonies a general policy on marriage evolved over time which was based, as Professor Richard B. Morris has noted, on the recognized social value of increased population. (1930) This policy gave women some improvement in, and power over, the conditions within their marriages. The treatment of the wife became, increasingly, a public rather than a private matter. The scarcity of women, and their value to the new settlements, won them legal guarantees of some physical protection within marriage. Massachusetts' earliest codification of laws, the 1641 Body of Liberties, insured that "everie marryed woeman shall be free from bodily correction or stripes by her husband, unless it be in his own defence upon her assult. . . ." (Calhoun 1945, p. 93) Southern authorities, too, were careful to limit a man's absolute power over his wife. Although punishment was allowed, no wife could be beaten to the point of permanent injury or death. (Spruill 1938)

Colonial authorities expanded their jurisdiction over other marital abuses as well. Courts ordered cohabitation in marriage, although traditionally desertion had not been subject to judicial ruling. (Morris 1930)

The colonial policy favoring fruitful marriage produced, interestingly, striking changes in divorce law. New England, for example, granted to women as well as to men the right to sue for divorce. The major grounds were incest, bigamy, malicious desertion, "criminal uncleanliness" (sodomy), and male sterility. (Morgan 1966) All these legal "sins" under-

colonial economy was a developing economy, dependent upon the flow of capital. Such a society could not afford to see private inheritance frozen outside the marketplace. A single or widowed woman must be given the legal powers necessary to employ her husband's or father's fortune, not only for her sake and for the sake of her husband's heirs, but for the economic well-being of her community. (Morris 1930) The money held by women was thus infused into the economy. Colonial widows invested in land, in business enterprises, and in commercial ventures such as shipping. (Earle 1962) Ordinarily women did not direct these enterprises but simply helped finance them. There were however, women who managed their own speculative interests, their own businesses, or their own professional enterprises. (Dexter 1924; Earle 1962)

Most women who made their own business fortunes began with a generous and prosperous husband or father. When for instance, New Yorker Peter de Vries died, he left his wife Margaret Hardenbroeck de Vries considerable property. Margaret, employing her powers granted her as femme sole, sold this property and invested her money in shipping. The widow de Vries proved herself more than a judicious investor; she was an innovative businesswoman as well. Recognizing the importance of New York City as an entrepôt, she established the first packet line between Europe and America. To supervise her business, Margaret Hardenbroeck de Vries often made the transatlantic voyage herself, serving as the packet's supercargo.

With her packet line thriving, Margaret de Vries remarried. But in remarriage she was not required to sign away the de Vries-based fortune she had built. A widow could require a prenuptial contract with her new husband which guaranteed her possession of her own wealth. Nor did her new husband, Frederick Philipse, make any effort to put an end to Margaret's business activities. As Margaret Hardenbroeck de Vries Philipse, she continued her operations under a special femme sole status and even assisted her husband in the investment of his own fortune. (Dexter 1924)

The majority of the colonial businesswomen were not so independent as Margaret Philipse. These women entered the business world in search of a livelihood. Most turned to occupations which drew upon their domestic training, turning the chores of marriage into marketable skills. Typical of this sort of enterprise was the transformation of housekeeping into tavern-keeping. A widow with a roomy house began her career as tavernkeeper simply by opening her home to travellers. In her "Plume of Feathers" or her "Blue Anchor" she performed the familiar domestic routine of bed-making, sweeping, and cooking for paying guests, while employing a man to supervise the tavern taproom. (Dexter 1924).

In the eighteenth century widows branched out into coffee houses as well as taverns and inns. Modelled on the English coffeehouses, these were establishments "For the Entertainment of Gentlemen, Benefit of Commerce, and Dispatch of Business"; in short, meeting places and unofficial offices for the merchants, lawyers, and shipping magnates of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, or Charlestown. (Dexter 1924).

Many women simply marketed a particular domestic skill. Colonial newspapers carried advertisements for dressmakers, seamstresses, silkdyers, starchmakers, and laundresses. In the South, wet nurses were for hire. There were amongst these enterprising women specialists like "Mary Morcomb, Mantua Maker from London." (Dexter 1924, p. 42) Some, like Jane Moreland, catered to refined tastes, offering Philadelphia women gourmet treats like "sausages, Black and White Pudding, Tripes, & Cow Heels, likewise pickled Sheeps Tongues . . ." (Dexter 1924, pp. 46-47) Some, like Mary Bannister, catered instead to human gullibility. Mary made her fortune from quack medicines, offering "Drops of Venice Treacle" as cure for 101 ills. And yet others catered to human vanity. Among them, a Mrs. Edwards, who offered for sale

> as admirable Beautifying Wash, for Hands, Face, and Neck, it makes the Skin soft, smooth and plump, it likewise takes away Redness, Freckles, Sun-burning, or Pimples, and cures Postules, Itchings, Ring-Worms, Tetters, Scurf, Morphew, and other like Deformities of the Face and Skin, (Intirely free from any Corroding Qualities) and brings to an exquisite Beauty, with Lip Salve, and Tooth Powder, all sold very Cheap. (Dexter 1924, p. 71)

Many of these colonial businesswomen were in fact new arrivals to the colonies from England, and may well have been spinsters rather than widows. Native spinsters favored school-keeping as a livelihood, although only the common schools, where rudimentary skills were taught, were open to them. New England's famous Latin schools and college preparatory academies remained outside a woman teacher's reach. By the late seventeenth century, boarding schools for girls were the woman teacher's best opportunity. Like tavern-keeping, managing a boarding school enabled a woman to transform familiar domestic duties into profit-making ones. These schools were much publicized. A typical advertisement, appearing in the Boston Gazette on May 24, 1736, announced that "Mrs Sarah Todd has now opened a school to teach young Women Writing, and Cyphering . . . at the same house young Gentlewomen are boarded and all sorts of Needle Work is taught." (Dexter 1924, p. 90)

But not all women were bound by their domestic experiences. Colonial widows tried their hand in the mercantile world as grocers, tobacconists, wine merchants, booksellers, and owners of hardware and dry goods shops. Perhaps more surprising were the occasional women blacksmiths, tinworkers, shoemakers, shipwrights, tanners, butchers, and even gunsmiths. These women rarely started businesses of their own; instead most stepped into their husband's place at his death. They had inherited their unusual profession rather than chosen it.

Despite the wide economic freedoms it granted, femme sole remained a carefully circumscribed status. The femme sole's "stake in society" was not allowed political expression: no political rights flowed, as they did for men, from a woman's ownership of property or accumulation of wealth. She, like her married sisters, lived in a society shaped by the decisions of men.

Most married women had no meaningful frame of reference in which to perceive political discrimination; it was simply one in a host of factors which created and insured her dependency. But the woman dealing in the marketplace was in a position to perceive the relationship between political and economic power. She felt immediately and directly the effects of legislative decision-making upon her enterprises, whether it was a matter of tax rates, land policy, or the location of a new road or wharf. It was only from her that any opposition to the political rules could reasonably be expected to originate But those few women who did challenge their political exclusion did not do so in the name of their entire sex. They acted as individuals, or as the special economic interest groups they were. Yet the response to their demands were sex-based. If they did not ask for political rights as women, they were nevertheless denied them by a reference to their sex.

One of the women to make such a demand for political rights was Margaret Brent, who settled in Maryland with her sisters and brothers in 1638. Margaret, and her sister Mary Brent, both unmarried, purchased Maryland land, sponsored other settlers, and built homes for them. Margaret Brent soon established herself as a leading land speculator,

shrewd businesswoman, and competent lawyer, serving as her brother's attorney before the courts. Her success was not, of course, a rags-to-riches story. She had arrived in the colony with considerable wealth and had enviable connections as a friend (and probably a relative) of the colony's founder, Lord Baltimore. Her accomplishments were, nevertheless, outstanding, and won for her the respect of leading Marylanders like Governor Leonard Calvert. Calvert, in fact, appointed Margaret Brent sole executrix of his vast estate after his death.

Margaret Brent could not have doubted her ability to handle such a responsibility, but in her efforts to manage Calvert's interests she found herself handicapped. Legislative land policy affected the Calvert holdings; but Margaret Brent could not participate in decisions crucial to the Calvert interests. To rectify this situation she went before the colonial assembly on January 21, 1647-48:

> Came Mrs. Margaret Brent and requested to have a vote in the House for herself & voyce allsoe, for that on the last Court 3d January it was ordered that the said Mrs. Brent was to be looked upon & received as his Ldp's attorney. The Governor deny'd that the s'd Mrs. Brent should have any vote in the house. And the s'd Mrs. Brent protested against all proceedings in this present Assembly unlesse she may be present and have vote as afores'd. (Earle 1962, pp. 45-46)

Her protests were in vain. And only a decade after Margaret Brent's unsuccessful challenge a Maryland proclamation ended the right of women to represent a client in a court of law. (Morris 1930)

Women based their demands for political rights upon satisfactory compliance with the traditional qualifications of property or wealth, not upon any appeal to radical notions of universal suffrage. When, for example, the women merchants of New York begged for a redress of grievances in 1733, they phrased their appeal to read:

> We, widows of this city, have had a meeting as our case is something deplorable, we beg you will give it place in your Weekly Journal, that we may be relieved, it is as follows. We are house keepers, pay our taxes, carry on trade and most of us are she merchants, and as we in some measure contribute to the support of the government, we ought to be entitled to some of the sweets of it (Morris 1930, pp. 133-34; Smith 1970, p. 54)

No concessions were made to these women merchants and taxpayers. The principle of political exclusion based on sex outlasted all others, including property and race.

Non-Free Women in the Colonial World: Indentured Servants and Slaves

There were many women under constraints different from those of the colonial housewife or businesswoman. For the white indentured servant, these were the result of a temporary arrangement in law: for the black slave woman, they were permanent realities.

Indentured servants, historian Richard Hofstadter estimates, made up at least half of the white immigration to colonial America. (Hofstadter 1973) These colonists, unable to pay the expense of the transatlantic voyage or the costs of self-support in the new world,

sold their only assett--their labor--for four to seven years in return for travel costs or maintenance. There were many more men who bound themselves out than there were women, but houses and farms throughout the colonies enjoyed the domestic toil of female servants.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of indenture for the woman was the reversal in expectations it laid upon her In a milieu of marriage and fecundity, she was enjoined to celibacy. Her value to her master or mistress lay in her capacity for work, and the disability of pregnancy was interpreted as a breach of her contract. An indentured woman could find her term of servitude legally extended if childbearing interfered with fulfillment of her duties.

For the woman servant whose master had fathered her child, the colonial bastardy laws were a unique form of double jeopardy. The threat of physical punishment by her master hung over her head if she revealed his paternity; yet at the same time, the courts awarded the master added years of her service if she did not speak up. When, in 1692, legislators of colonial Virginia conceded the injustice of the servant woman's situation, she gained little by the reform of the law. The penalty of extended service remained, although her additional two years' work was sold for the benefit of the parish church rather than granted to her guilty master. (Spruill 1938)

Once free of her indentured condition, the white servant woman was subject to the laws and the ideology of the society she had entered.

The unfree black woman, like her male counterpart, was above all else, property. If the laws of marriage or indenture restricted women's legal or political identity, the institution of chattel slavery removed much of the human identity of its victims as well. Many of the social and moral divisions drawn between the behavior and the treatment of the sexes in white society vanished in a system which made of both male and female possessions rather than persons. The slave woman of the South thus enjoyed an ironic emancipation from the ideology of separate spheres: she could be sent to labor in the fields, for example, although the laws governing white servants followed social custom and prohibited the use of women in nondomestic or "masculine" chores. (Jordan 1969)

In the fields, the slave's femininity commanded to special legal or practical distinction in treatment. Her workday, like the male's, was sunup to sundown. Only pregnancy altered the sex-blind requirements upon slave labor.(Lerner 1972)

The realities of sex differences did, however, enter into the bookkeeping of slavery. Women field workers were worth less in the marketplace than men, because their productivity was lower. A woman's value--or price--increased, however, if she was able to perform in the more specialized area of childbearing. Advertisements like the following--"Pat, 'with child'--lame on one side, and a 'fine breeding woman'"--were common in colonial newspapers. (Mullin 1972, pp. 8-9)

Within the slave subculture itself, the traditional roles of male and female, emanating from the family unit organization, could not be fully sustained. Slave women did perform the domestic chores--sewing, mending, preparation of meals, child rearing--but the basic exchange of male support and protection for female obedience and assistance was not possible within slavery. (Lerner 1972) The complete dependence of all slaves upon the plantation master vitiated the social function of marriage and the family unit.

The family, as a social and legal institution, was itself incompatible with the requirements of slavery. For example, the rule of monogamy, central to white marriage, could run counter to the profitability of slave breeding. The sense of obligation of parent to

child, also stressed in the free white society, could act as a hindrance in a system in which profitable allocation of resources often led to the sale of either parent or of child.

The nature of the male-female relationship was ultimately determined by the master. Frequently the resulting arrangements reflected the master's arbitrary selection of certain conventions of white society. In many instances, slave "marriages" were sanctioned and encouraged, and masters often acted as guardians of morality, interfering in the slaves' domestic life with punishments for quarreling, infidelity, or for physical abuse of one another. (Mullin 1972) These slave marriages thus incorporated the moral aspects of the white institution, but they lacked its legal and social function.5

As slaves were dependent upon masters for the shaping of their own sexual relationships, so too were they dependent in the shaping of sexual relationships with white society. Although intermarriage between the races was forbidden by the year 1700 in most southern colonies (Jordan 1969), sexual intercourse was not. Masters who chastised their slaves for marital infedility apparently saw no moral contradiction in demanding submission from black slave women. Widespread, almost institutionalized, miscedenation in the South was noted by colonial figures themselves. "The enjoyment of a negro or mulatto woman is spoken of as quite a common thing," observed Bostonian Josiah Quincy, on a visit to Charlestown, South Carolina. "No reluctance, delicacy, or shame is made about the matter." (Jordan 1969, p. 145) Historian Gerald Mullin points out that slave masters certainly knew their slave women better than they knew their men. Descriptions of female fugitive slaves often revealed intimate anatomical knowledge, citing a large scar "as long as one's Finger above her Breast," or "Milly with Grey eyes and very large Breasts" (Mullin 1972, p. 104)

Often sexuality was the slave woman's only effective weapon in resistance to her enslavement. Fugitive black women, unable to survive alone in the outside world, exchanged sexual freedoms for freedom from slavery. They ran off with white men, or, in the revolutionary era, they fled the plantation to the "shelter" of troop barracks. (Mullin 1972) Even for the freed black woman the dependent sexual relationship with a white man was often her best of limited options in southern society. For her, economic independence was possible only through employment as a seamstress or as a wet nurse. (Lerner 1972)

The few instances on record in which individual achievement and personal growth were encouraged in slave women occur within the domestic slavery of New England. There the thin ranks of black poetesses and authors were filled, and women like Lucy Terry of Deerfield, Massachusetts or Phyllis Wheatley of Boston were given the opportunity to express themselves. Few female slaves received the special attention accorded a Phyllis Wheatley, however; few had a mistress like Mrs. Wheatley who taught a seven-year-old African girl to read and write English and Latin, encouraged her creativity, and treated this slave as a daughter rather than a servant. (Dannett 1964) Thus, few records remain of the individual lives of the colonial black women.

Anglicizing America: New Ideas of Femininity and a Call For Women's Education

As the American colonies matured, a process that historian John Murrin has called "anglicization" took place. This was a movement, sometimes conscious, sometimes not, toward uniformity of law and custom with the Mother Country. The process has been most clearly traced in the colonial legal systems, which had been flexible and adaptable to local circumstances, but grew more rigid and less individualistic as they were brought into

conformity with English law. (Murrin 1966; Morris 1931) But angelicization was also reflected in the urge among the more comfortable classes to imitate their English social superiors. (Smith 1970) New social attitudes and styles from the Mother Country began to shape American upper and middle class life. Often, however, the gap between English realities and American realities made the colonial imitation imperfect.

In seventeenth century England, mores and morals had undergone a revolution and restoration no less drastic than their political counterparts. If the mid-century social style was set by the sombre Puritan regime, the return of royal rule in 1660 heralded an era in which frivolity was raised to an art form. Morality, as conventionally defined, was sacrificed to pleasure, and a cheerful decadence settled upon the English upper class.

A key element of this new lifestyle was the emphasis upon leisure and nonproductive activities among women. Wealthy Englishwomen foreswore any useful activities, thus ending that participation in the management of their fortunes which had been the model for colonial businesswomen like Margaret Philipse and Margaret Brent. Unlike Reverend Cotton Mather's "ornaments"--women who practiced the commendable virtues of thrift and industry--these women became decorative "ornaments," good only for show and pleasures. Their outer appearances reflected the new values, for the exaggerated hairdos, wide hoopskirts, and tightly laced waists all restricted movement for the sake of presenting beauty.

Within a decade a modest campaign to curb these Restoration extravagances had been mounted. Several books, written before the turn of the century, were addressed to this crisis in morality. Their authors begged Englishwomen to return, not to productive activity, but to a role as moral leaders in their society. This appeal was based on the revival of a corollary to the traditional ideology of woman's subordination to man. It was now argued, as it had been earlier by religious leaders as prestigious Cotton Mather, that one privileged result of women's passivity, submissiveness, and ssary habit of obedience was their sex's greater receptivity to piety and to the mora hich flowed from sincere commitment to one's faith. Women who embraced the subm role were thus raised to the exalted position of moral leaders of society.

Because no effort was made to distinguish social conditi from innate capacity, all women were assumed to share the basic affinity for virtu rality. Yet if the capacity were innate, the actual realization of its potentia red to require training. A woman, it seemed, must prepare herself to receive this grace. Virtuous behavior was prescribed as the best preparation for the growth wit woman of true virtue. Thus, the morality tracts of the late seventeenth centur large part, "how-to" books, instructing a woman in how to develop and emp gifts of submission, passivity, obedience, and compassion through the perfection of a certain feminine pattern of thought and feminine style of behavior. The display of virtue was assumed to prompt real virtue to flourish within her, and her virtue, in turn, would encourage imitation by the men around her.

These morality tracts were widely read in the colonies, although they spoke to a social problem not really crucial in American culture. American society lagged far behind in the race to decadence, for the colonial rich could not equal the English extravagances. Nevertheless, these books had great impact in America, and their reception was not merely a case of a cure being embraced before the contagion set in.

These books spoke to the colonial audience because their theme was filtered through the American experience. English authors urged a return to virtue as an antidote to decadence.

But the colonists found it possible to read into the author's emphasis on passivity and meekness a call from colonial rough-and-ready female behavior to a more refined, "lady-like" or feminine behavior suitable to a prosperous class. Thus, the colonists approached the books from exactly the opposite direction their authors intended. Not yet decadent, the prosperous Americans heeded a call to gentility. They took for granted many of the virtues the authors espoused and focused their attention upon the style of behavior called for rather than its moral purpose. It was not to the philosophical arguments but to the etiquette of books like The Ladies Calling (1720) that colonists turned their attention; it was not the author's praise of modesty as a supreme virtue which educated American readers, but his explanation of how a quiet voice--"like the imaginery Musick of the Spheres, sweet and Charming; but not to be heard at a distance"--would proclaim that virtue. (The Ladies Calling 1720, pp. 6-7) Passivity, sensitivity, and especially delicacy were components of a style now possible among the colonial well-to-do, a style which would help set them apart from their poorer neighbors. The idle but gracious wife it produced would serve to highlight a colonial husband's own success.

If then the morality tracts served primarily as etiquette books for the new colonial woman, they pointed the way to some radical developments in English thought. The central notion of books like The Ladies Calling was, after all, that women's behavior was a matter of training rather than natural impulse. The elaborate etiquette and moral discipline prescribed for women in these books made no sense unless the authors of such tracts conceded this point. While they were careful to stress that the training was devised only to bring to fruitation certain "natural" tendencies in the female sex, nevertheless their operating assumption was that nurture, not nature determined sex-exclusive behavior.

The implications of this assumption were perhaps only vaguely understood by those who brought it forth. If a good program of training was guaranteed to produce the moral leaders society needed, then the absence of such a program, or a negative program, must account for much of the frivolity and immorality exhibited by this post-Restoration generation of women. Likewise men's productive activities, their superior talents and abilities--these must be explained in some measure by their training or education. In the end, the author of The Ladies Calling thoughtfully concluded: "Men have their parts cultivated and improved by education . . . And truly had Women the same advantage, I dare not say but they would make as good returns of it. . . ." (preface)

If in fact education or training shaped human behavior, and if a woman had been deprived of positive training, what then was her potential if, for example, she were to receive the education reserved for a man? Was the inequality of talent also a result of the inequality of training? If the author of The Ladies Calling had lifted this lid to the Pandora's box of the relationship of the sexes, he quickly slammed it tight again. Only occasionally did someone follow to its logical conclusions the notion that nurture not nature determined the human product. The eighteenth century educator Mary Astell, for example, argued that the sexes were equal in abilities, and only deprivation and repression held women in their subordinate conditions. Yet even Astell refused to let this discovery of equality in human potential interfere with the appropriate destinies of the respective sexes. Woman's ultimate fulfillment remained, biologically as mother, socially as wife. (Benson 1935)

Neither English nor American society was willing to grapple with these questions of first cause in the relationship of the sexes. The notion of inequality as a result of education was lost, overshadowed by the enthusiastic movement to apply its one acceptable implication: Women could be, and ought to be, better educated in order that they might be better helpmeets in marriage. Formal education was espoused for women, with reading,

writing, arithmetic, and theology given in doses not powerful enough to disturb the inequality between the sexes, but sufficient to help women perform their various duties as wife and mother more satisfactorily. Education was advocated for a woman not in the name of her own individual growth but as a means to make her a more agreeable companion to her husband and a better mother to her children.

In the years that followed, education was espoused as a corrective to all feminine vices. Studying was deemed an excellent preventive of mischief. If the idle hands of the rich could no longer be fitly employed in common housework, then idle minds would be employed in learning. In short, as physical work within the domestic sphere diminished, as women withdrew from helpmeet activities outside the home, emphasis upon a feminine style and attitude--both to be learned from books--increased.

The champions of women's education were readily received by the eighteenth century colonists. Among the most popular of the enlightened English reformers was Mrs. Eliza Haywood, whose novels and magazine, the Female Spectator, popularized the idea of the drier treatises on education. Indeed, the most effective teaching device proved to be the novel. American women, like their English sisters, found models of femininity for themselves in the pages of books by Richardson and Mrs. Haywood. Such novelists showed a sensitivity to the potential incompatibility of education and submissive behavior; as if to offset any boldness which education might unleash, they made their heroines submissive creatures, who bent to circumstances as well as to men with womanly resignation. In the end, the heroine's beauty (style) and goodness (attitude), not her skill or intelligence saved her. And, as just reward, she inevitably lived happily ever after. (Benson 1935)

The emphasis in the early eighteenth century was thus on education as a tool for insuring feminine women, women whose attitudes and personal style, rather than any actual usefulness, made them good wives and mothers. Such a context for education threatened no radical alteration in the male-female relationship. Yet there were those who continued to fear that education was a threat to this relationship. It was these conservative thinkers of the second quarter of the eighteenth century who reraised, in order that they might put to rest, the questions of nature and nurture.

The two leading spokesmen of the conservative counterattack were Reverend James Fordyce and Dr. John Gregory. Through their writings both men hoped to firmly reestablish the primacy of physical rather than intellectual endowments in the ordering of the sexual relationship. The crux of their argument was that women were inferior to men, and dependent upon them, because of their physical weakness. This physical inferiority was the determining factor for woman's behavior; as a weak being, her survival in the world depended upon her ability to acquire male protection. A woman must, therefore, of the most basic necessity cultivate behavior which activates the protective impulse in men. Timidity, delicacy, piety, a sweetness of manner and voice--a display of these qualities rather than a quick wit or a well-trained mind, awakened that impulse. A woman could, it was true, become a man's intellectual equal (although Fordyce retains doubts on this score), but in doing so she endangers her existence. "You yourselves," Fordyce coaxed the ladies, "will allow that war, commerce, politics, exercises of strength and dexterity, abstract philosophy, and all the abstruser sciences, are most properly the province of men. . . ." But in case the ladies would not allow this, he added as a warning: "those masculine women that would plead for your sharing any part of this province equally with us do not understand your true interests." (Spruill 1938, p. 221) The educated "masculine woman"--she was, if not unnatural, highly dangerous to the survival of her sex.

What Fordyce and Gregory had developed was a teleological explanation for the traditional sexual relationship. Their opposition to the education of women in other than the feminine arts of pleasing men rested on a conviction that the resulting independent behavior in the educated female would cause the vital male protective instinct to atrophy.

Both authors found a receptive audience among the American well-to-do. But it is not likely that the American interest centered on the Englishmen's shared nightmare vision of a breakdown in the established sexual relationship. American society had survived intact the independent behavior of femme sole businesswomen and pioneer wives. Fordyce and Gregory wrote books that were valued, as The Ladies Calling had been, for their full descriptions of behavior producing "exquisite sensibility and delicacy." It was these descriptions which, if imitated in daily life, would aid in the refining of the colonial lady.

The American Revolution: A Suspension of "Exquisite Delicacy"

Ironically, it was the thrust for national independence which jolted this new pattern of gentility, with its complete withdrawal of women from public life or serious concerns. The participation of women in political protest, a participation which once again expanded the boundaries of the domestic circle, was valuable to radical organizers of the American protest. Not retiring modesty but active zeal became the greatest virtue of the helpmeet in prerevolutionary America.

The exigency of political struggle seemed to suspend the carefully established rules of behavior. Women were called upon to look outside their immediate family circle, to take a stand on public issues, and even to organize appropriate protests themselves. When, in the early 1770s, Philadelphia women and Boston women announced their organization of associations to ban tea, sympathetic colonial newspaper editors praised the women for initiative and courage. No mention of unseemly behavior was made. Yet, conservative Englishmen, finding traditional attitudes in accord with their political positions, ridiculed the women's organizations on exactly those grounds of unnatural, unfeminine behavior. (Benson 1935)

During the war itself, most patriotic women made their sacrifices to national interest along traditional lines. They remained in their homes, knitting socks for the soldiers, weaving linsey-woolsey, rolling bandages. Yet there were women who organized fund drives, and made door-to-door canvassings through the streets of Philadelphia or New York. Clearly these activites outside the home defied the century's conventions of exquisite delicacy and retiring modesty. (Douglas 1966)

For other women the strict division of roles seemed to break down completely, and they took up arms in battle. Some did so as individuals: women like Deborah Samson, who, disguised as a man, enlisted in Washington's army and took her place on the front lines. (Douglas 1966) But most of these women who fought had not come to the war as individuals. They came as faithful wives. They had joined the army's entourage as cooks and nurses, performing their domestic chores in a military setting. When these "Molly Pitchers" took up arms it was to replace a soldier-husband who had been killed or wounded in his wife's presence. This military participation by "Molly Pitchers" was no myth born of postwar reminiscences; the records of the Continental Congress attest to the reality of fighting women. The government granted pensions to women soldiers like Margaret Corbin, "wounded and disabled at the attack on Fort Washington, while she heroically filled the post of her husband." (Ellet 1969, pp. 123-24)

With the war's end, political and military activities by women ceased and women soldiers and community organizers returned to the narrowly defined feminine, or domestic, concerns. It did not appear that the revolutionary credo of individual liberty would alter the status of women in the new nation.

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Notes

1. There is a debate among modern demographers as to the number of children born to the average woman, and the mortality rate for both mothers and children. While earlier historians of this century have estimated the typical surviving family group to include 10 or 12 children (Spruill 1938), John Demos has recently judged this figure inaccurate for areas of New England. His findings for Plymouth colony (Demos 1965) show the average surviving family to be considerably smaller.

2. The privilege of femme sole, discussed later, did ease this dependence for some spinsters. After about 1670 New England spinsters could keep school rather than depend entirely upon the charity of relatives. It is doubtful, however, that many could afford to live alone in independent households. Boarding with relatives continued to lay the burden of household chores upon the schoolteacher. (Dexter 1924)

3. Puritan parents permitted their children considerable freedom of choice in courtship, and the pattern of courtship itself was quite liberal. Customs peculiar to New England, such as "bundling," aided a young woman in making her choice: lying together in a coal-heated bed, the bundling couple indulged in a courtship more intimate than most. Puritan girls undoubtedly knew their new husbands better than other colonial brides, especially since it was customary in New England to permit premarital sex between formally pledged couples (Smith 1970)

4. This substitution quality can be seen more clearly if we trace developments as sectors of the economy mature. For, as the economy matures, femme sole activities contract. ..For example, a slow process of professionalization in many service fields previously open to women worked toward their exclusion. As long as these careers had been of low status, and required no formal education or technical skills, women had dotted their ranks. But the upgrading of vocations like the law, and the accompanying influx of men to the field, made it impossible for women to compete, even if public legislation did not bar them. It was not necessary, in many cases, to declare exclusion based on sex' it was sufficient to set training standards which other sex-based discriminations would make impossible for women to meet. Thus, the Massachusetts Bar Association required a college degree or, in special instances, an extended clerkship with one of its members. Women, barred from the former by law and the latter by custom, were thus eliminated from the profession. (Wroth and Zobel 1965)

5. In the northern colonies, the slave subculture conformed more closely to the white society in which it was more diffusely integrated. Laws and customs regarding marriage were in force for blacks as well as whites and New England slaves were compelled to marry according to the rules of the predominant culture. Wedding bans were publicly read or published, marital fidelity expected, and the marriage recorded in civil records. (Greene 1966)

AMERICA IN 1800

"What, then, is the American, this new man?" The study of American national character began with that question, posed by a French immigrant in 1782. The fascination of Crèvecoeur's query has not diminished; for nearly two centuries Americans have been trying to explain themselves to themselves, and they are still actively engaged in the undertaking.

The following essay which deals with the American character in 1800 is by Henry Adams, a descendent of two U.S. presidents. Adams was the first professional historian to take cognizance of the national character as a legitimate subject for investigation. He contended that the historian should concern himself with the totality of an evolving culture. For a generation of historians who were trained in the German "scientific" school of Leopold von Ranke and concurred with the English historian Edward W. Freeman that history was "past politics" , Adams was breaking new ground, anticipating the extension of interest into the uncharted fields of social, intellectual, and cultural history.

Questions for study:

1. Summarize Adams's view of each of the following characteristics of Americans: attitudes towards privacy; coarseness and brutality; idleness or industriousness.

2. What evidence does Adams give that Americans were basically conservative during this period? Do you agree or disagree?

3. How does the American of 1800 compare with that of 1981? What evidence do you base your conclusions on?

AMERICA IN 1800

Henry Adams*

The growth of character, social and national--the formation of men's minds--more interesting than any territorial or industrial growth, defied the tests of censuses and surveys. No people could be expected, least of all when in infancy, to understand the intricacies of its own character, and rarely has a foreigner been gifted with insight to explain what natives did not comprehend. Only with diffidence could the best-informed Americans venture, in 1800, to generalize on the subject of their own national habits of life and thought. Of all American travellers President Dwight (Timothy Dwight, President of Yale) was the most experienced; yet his four volumes of travels were remarkable for no trait more uniform than their reticence in regard to the United States. Clear and emphatic wherever New England was in discussion, Dwight claimed no knowledge of other regions. Where so good a judge professed ignorance, other observers were likely to mislead; and Frenchmen like Liancourt, Englishmen like Weld, or Germans like Bülow, were almost equally worthless authorities on a subject which none understood. The newspapers of the time were little more trustworthy than the books of travel, and hardly so well written. The literature of a higher kind was chiefly limited to New England, New York, and Pennsylvania. From materials so poor no precision of result could be expected. A few customs, more or less local; a few prejudices, more or less popular; a few traits of thought, suggesting habits of mind--must form the entire material for a study more important than that of politics or economics.

The standard of comfort had much to do with the standard of character; and in the United States, except among the slaves, the laboring class enjoyed an ample supply of the necessaries of life. In this respect, as in some others, they claimed superiority over the laboring class in Europe, and the claim would have been still stronger had they shown more skill in using the abundance that surrounded them. The Duc de Liancourt, among foreigners the best and kindest observer, made this remark on the mode of life he saw in Pennsylvania:

> There is a contrast of cleanliness with its opposite which to a stranger is very remarkable. The people of the country are as astonished that one should object to sleeping two or three in the same bed and in dirty sheets, or to drink from the same dirty glass after half a score of others, as to see one neglect to wash one's hands and face of a morning. Whiskey diluted with water is the ordinary country drink. There is no settler, however poor, whose family does not take coffee or chocolate for breakfast, and always a little salt meat; at dinner, salt meat, or salt fish, and eggs; at supper again salt meat and coffee. This is also the common regime of the taverns.

An amusing, though quite untrustworthy Englishman named Ashe, who invented an American journey in 1806, described the fare of a Kentucky cabin:

> The dinner consisted of a large piece of salt bacon, a dish of hominy, and a tureen of squirrel broth. I dined entirely on the last dish, which I found incomparably good, and the meat equal to the most delicate chicken. The Kentuckian eats nothing but bacon, which indeed is the favorite diet of all the inhabitants of the State, and drank

* From Henry Adams, History of the United States during the First Administration of Thomas Jefferson, vol. I.

> nothing but whiskey, which soon made him more than two-thirds drunk. In this last practice he is also supported by the public habit. In the country, then, where bacon and spirits form the favorite summer repast, it cannot be just to attribute entirely the causes of infirmity to the climate. No people on earth live with less regard to regimen. They eat salt meat three times a day, seldom or never have any vegetables, and drink ardent spirits from morning till night. They have not only an aversion to fresh meat, but a vulgar prejudice that it is unwholesome. The truth is, their stomachs are depraved by burning liquors, and they have no appetite for anything but what is high-flavored and strongly impregnated by salt...

One of the traits to which Liancourt alluded marked more distinctly the stage of social development. By day or by night, privacy was out of the question. Not only must all men travel in the same coach, dine at the same table, at the same time, on the same fare, but even their beds were in common, without distinction of persons. Innkeepers would not understand that a different arrangement was possible. When the English traveller Weld reached Elkton, on the main road from Philadelphia to Baltimore, he asked the landlord what accommodations he had. "Don't trouble yourself about that," was the reply: "I have no less than eleven beds in one room alone." This primitive habit extended over the whole country from Massachusetts to Georgia, and no American seemed to revolt against the tyranny of innkeepers.

"At New York I was lodged with two others, in a back room on the ground floor," wrote, in 1796, (a) Philadelphian. . . "What can be the reason for that vulgar, hoggish custom, common in America, of squeezing three, six, or eight beds into one room"?

Nevertheless, the Americans were on the whole more neat than their critics allowed. "You have not seen the Americans," was (William) Cobbett's reply, in 1819, to such charges; "you have not seen the nice, clean, neat houses of the farmers of Long Island, in New England, in the Quaker counties of Pennsylvania: you have seen nothing but the smoke-dried ultra-montanians." Yet Cobbett drew a sharp contrast between the laborer's neat cottage familiar to him in Surrey and Hampshire, and the "shell of boards" which the American occupied, "all around him as barren as a sea-beach." He added, too, that "the example of neatness was wanting": no one taught it by showing its charm. Felix de Beaujour, otherwise not an enthusiastic American, paid a warm compliment to the country in this single respect, although he seemed to have the cities chiefly in mind:

> American neatness must possess some very attractive quality, since it seduces every traveller; and there is no one of them who, in returning to his own country, does not wish to meet again there that air of ease and neatness which rejoiced his sight during his stay in the United States.

Almost every traveller discussed the question whether the Americans were a temperate people, or whether they drank more than the English. Temperate they certainly were not, when judged by a modern standard. Every one acknowledged that in the South and West drinking was occasionally excessive; but even in Pennsylvania and New England the universal taste for drams proved habits by no means strict. Every grown man took his noon toddy as a matter of course; and although few were seen publicly drunk, many were habitually affected by

liquor. The earliest temperance movement, ten or twelve years later, was said to have had its source in the scandal caused by the occasional intoxication of ministers at their regular meetings. Cobbett thought drinking the national disease; at all hours of the day, he said, young men, "even little boys, at or under twelve years of age, go into stores and tip off their drams." The mere comparison with England proved that the evil was great, for the English and Scotch were among the largest consumers of beer and alcohol on the globe.

In other respects besides sobriety American manners and morals were subjects of much dispute, and if judged by the diatribes of travellers like Thomas Moore and H. W. Bulow, were below the level of Europe. Of all classes of statistics, moral statistics were least apt to be preserved. Even in England, social vices could be gauged only by the records of criminal and divorce courts; in America, police was wanting and a divorce suit almost, if not quite, unknown. Apart from some coarseness, society must have been pure; and the coarseness was mostly an English inheritance. Among New Englanders, Chief-Justice Parsons was the model of judicial, social, and religious propriety: yet Parsons, in 1808, presented to a lady a copy of "Tom Jones," with a letter calling attention to the adventures of Molly Seagrim and the usefulness of describing vice. Among the social sketches in the "Portfolio" were many allusions to the coarseness of Philadelphia society, and the manners common to tea-parties. "I heard from married ladies," said a writer in February, 1803, "whose station as mothers demanded from them a guarded conduct--from young ladies, whose age forbids the audience of such conversation, and who using it modesty must disclaim--indecent allusions, indelicate expressions, and even at times immoral innuendoes. A loud laugh or a coarse exclamation followed each of these, and the young ladies generally went through the form of raising their fans to their faces."

Yet public and private records might be searched long, before they revealed evidence of misconduct such as filled the press and formed one of the commonest topics of conversation in the society of England and France. Almost every American family, however respectable, could show some victim to intemperance among its men, but few were mortified by a public scandal due to its women.

If the absence of positive evidence did not prove American society to be as pure as its simple and primitive condition implied, the same conclusion would be reached by observing the earnestness with which critics collected every charge that could be brought against it and by noting the substance of the whole. Tried by this test, the society of 1800 was often coarse and sometimes brutal, but, except for intemperance, was moral. Indeed, its chief offence, in the eyes of Europeans, was dullness. The amusements of a people were commonly a fair sign of social development, and the Americans were only beginning to amuse themselves. The cities were small and few in number, and the diversions were such as cost little and required but elementary knowledge. In New England, although the theatre had gained a firm foothold in Boston, Puritan feelings still forbade the running of horses. (President Dwight wrote:)

> The principal amusements of the inhabitants...are visiting, dancing, music, conversation, walking, riding, sailing, shooting at a mark, draughts, chess, and unhappily, in some of the larger towns, cards and dramatic exhibitions. A considerable amusement is also furnished in many places by the examination and exhibitions of the superior schools; and a more considerable one by the public exhibitions of colleges. Our countrymen also fish and hunt. Journeys taken for pleasure are very numerous, and are a very favorite object. Boys and

> young men play at foot-ball, cricket, quoits, and at many other sports of an athletic cast, and in the winter are peculiarly fond of skating. Riding in a sleigh, or sledge, is also a favorite diversion in New England.

President Dwight was sincere in his belief that college commencements and sleigh-riding satisfied the wants of his people; he looked upon whist as an unhappy dissipation, and upon the theatre as immoral. He had no occasion to condemn horse-racing, for no race-course was to be found in New England. ..

...The rough-and-tumble fight (described by many writers as the most shocking characteristic of Virginia society) differed from the ordinary prize-fight, or boxing-match, by the absence of rules. Neither kicking, tearing, biting, nor gouging was forbidden by the law of the ring. Brutal as the practice was, it was neither new nor exclusively Virginian. The English travellers who described it as American barbarism might have seen the same sight in Yorkshire at the same date. The rough-and-tumble fight was English in origin, and was brought to Virginia and the Carolinas in early days, whence it spread to the Ohio and Mississippi. The habit attracted general notice because of its brutality in a society that showed few brutal instincts. Friendly foreigners like Liancourt were honestly shocked by it; others showed somewhat too plainly their pleasure at finding a vicious habit which they could consider a natural product of democratic society. Perhaps the description written by Thomas Ashe showed best not only the ferocity of the fight but also the antipathies of the writer, for Ashe had something of the artist in his touch, and he felt no love for Americans. The scene was at Wheeling. A Kentuckian and a Virginian were the combatants.

> Bulk and bone were in favor of the Kentuckian; science and craft in that of the Virginian. The former promised himself victory from his power; the latter from his science. Very few rounds had taken place or fatal blows given, before the Virginian contracted his whole form, drew up his arms to his face, with his hands nearly closed in a concave by the fingers being bent to the full extension of the flexors, and summoning up all his energy for one act of desperation, pitched himself into the bosom of his opponent. Before the effects of this could be ascertained, the sky was rent by the shouts of the multitude; and I could learn that the Virginian had expressed as much beauty and skill in his retraction and bound, as if he had been bred in a menagerie and practised action and attitude among panthers and wolves. The shock received by the Kentuckian, and the want of breath, brought him instantly to the ground. The Virginian never lost his hold. Like those bats of the South who never quit the subject on which they fasten till they taste blood, he kept his knees in his enemy's body; fixing his claws in his hair and his thumbs on his eyes, gave them an instantaneous start from their sockets. The sufferer roared aloud, but uttered no complaint. The citizens again shouted with joy....

Border society was not refined, but among its vices, as its virtues, few were permanent, and little idea could be drawn of the character that would at last emerge. The Mississippi boatman and the squatter on Indian lands were perhaps the most distinctly American types then existing, as far removed from the Old World as though Europe were a dream. Their language and imagination showed

contact with Indians. A traveller on the levee at Natchez, in 1808, overheard a quarrel in a flatboat near by:

> "I am a man: I am a horse: I am a team," cried one voice; "I can whip any man in all Kentucky, by God!" "I am an alligator," cried the other; "half man, half horse; can whip any man on the Mississippi, by God!" "I am a man," shouted the first; "have the best horse, best dog, best gun, and handsomest wife in all Kentucky, by God!" I am a Mississippi snapping-turtle," rejoined the second; "have bear's claws, alligator's teeth, and the devil's tail; can whip any man, by God!"

And on this usual formula of defiance the two fire-eaters began their fight, biting, gouging, and tearing. Foreigners were deeply impressed by barbarism such as this, and orderly emigrants from New England and Pennsylvania avoided contact with Southern drinkers and fighters; but even then they knew that with a new generation such traits must disappear, and that little could be judged of popular character from the habits of frontiersmen. Perhaps such vices deserved more attention when found in the older communities, but even there they were rather survivals of English low-life than products of a new soil, and they were given too much consequence in the tales of foreign travellers.

This was not the only instance where foreigners were struck by what they considered popular traits, which natives rarely noticed. Idle curiosity was commonly represented as universal, especially in the Southern settler who knew no other form of conversation. (Wrote Weld:)

> Frequently have I been stopped by one of them, . . . and without further preface asked where I was from, if I was acquainted with any news, where bound to, and finally my name. "Stop, Mister! why, I guess now you be coming from the new State?" "No, sir." "Why, then, I guess as how you be coming from Kentuck?" "No, sir." "Oh, why, then, pray now where might you be coming from?" "From the low country," "Why, you must have heard all the news, then; pray now, Mister, what might the price of bacon be in those parts?" "Upon my word, my friend, I can't inform you." "Ay, ay; I see, Mister, you be'ent one of us. Pray now, Mister, what might your name be?"

Almost every writer spoke with annoyance of the inquisitorial habits of New England and the impertinence of American curiosity. Complaints so common could hardly have lacked foundation, yet the Americans as a people were never loquacious, but inclined to be somewhat reserved, and they could not recognize the accuracy of the description. President Dwight repeatedly expressed astonishment at the charge, and asserted that in his large experience it had no foundation. Forty years later, Charles Dickens found complaint with Americans for taciturnity. Equally strange to modern experience were the continual complaints in books of travel that loungers and loafers, idlers of every description, infested the taverns, and annoyed respectable travellers both native and foreign. Idling seemed to be considered a popular vice, and was commonly associated with tippling. So completely did the practice disappear in the course of another generation that it could scarcely be recalled as offensive; but in truth less work was done by the average man in 1800 than in aftertimes, for there was actually less work to do. "Good country this for lazy fellows," wrote Wilson from Kentucky: "they plant corn, turn their pigs into the woods, and in the autumn feed upon corn and pork. They lounge about the rest of the year." The roar of the steam-

engine had never been heard in the land, and the carrier's wagon was three weeks between Philadelphia and Pittsburg. What need for haste when days counted for so little? Why not lounge about the tavern when life had no better amusement to offer? Why mind one's own business when one's business would take care of itself?

Yet however idle the American sometimes appeared, and however large the class of tavern loafers may have actually been, the true American was active and industrious. No immigrant came to America for ease or idleness. If an English farmer bought land near New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore, and made the most of his small capital, he found that while he could earn more money than in Surrey or Devonshire, he worked harder and suffered greater discomforts. The climate was trying: fever was common; the crops ran new risks from strange insects, drought, and violent weather; the weeds were annoying; the flies and mosquitoes tormented him and his cattle; laborers were scarce and indifferent; the slow and magisterial ways of England, where everything was made easy, must be exchanged for quick and energetic action; the farmer's own eye must see to every detail, his own hand must hold the plough and the scythe. . . New settlers suffered many of the ills that would have afflicted an army marching and fighting in a country of dense forest and swamp, with one sore misery besides--that whatever trials the men endured, the burden bore most heavily upon the women and children. The chances of being shot or scalped by Indians was hardly worth considering when compared with the certainty of malarial fever, or the strange disease called milk-sickness, or the still more depressing homesickness, or the misery of nervous prostration, which wore out generation after generation of women and children on the frontiers, and left a tragedy in every log cabin. Not for love of ease did men plunge into the wilderness. Few laborers of the Old World endured a harder lot, coarser fare, or anxieties and responsibilities greater than those of the Western emigrant. Not merely because he enjoyed the luxury of salt pork, whiskey, or even coffee three times a day did the American laborer claim superiority over the European. . . .

If any prediction could be risked, an observer might have been warranted in suspecting that the popular character was likely to be conservative, for as yet this trait was most marked, at least in the older societies of New England, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Great as were the material obstacles in the path of the United States, the greatest obstacle of all was in the human mind. Down to the close of the eighteenth century no change had occurred in the world which warranted practical men in assuming that great changes were to come. Afterward, as time passed, and as science developed man's capacity to control nature's forces, old-fashioned conservatism vanished from society, reappearing occasionally, like the stripes on a mule, only to prove its former existence; but during the eighteenth century the progress of America, except in political paths, had been less rapid than ardent reformers wished, and the reaction which followed the French Revolution made it seem even slower than it was. . .

This conservative habit of mind was more harmful in America than in other communities, because Americans needed more than older societies the activity which could alone partly compensate for the relative feebleness of their means compared with the magnitude of their task. Some instances of sluggishness, common to Europe and America, were hardly credible. For more than ten years in England the steam-engines of Watt had been working, in common and successful use, causing a revolution in industry that threatened to drain the world for England's advantage; yet Europe during a generation left England undisturbed to enjoy the

monopoly of steam. France and Germany were England's rivals in commerce and manufactures, but their need was still extreme. Every American knew that if steam could be successfully applied to navigation, it must produce an immediate increase of wealth, besides an ultimate settlement of the most serious material and political difficulties of the Union. Had both the national and State Governments devoted millions of money to this object, and had the citizens wasted, if necessary, every dollar in their slowly filling pockets to attain it, they would have done no more than the occasion warranted, even had they failed; but failure was not to be feared, for they had with their own eyes seen the experiment tried, and they did not dispute its success. For America this question had been settled as early as 1789, when John Fitch--a mechanic, without education or wealth, but with the energy of genius--invented engine and paddles of his own, with so much success that during a whole summer Philadelphians watched his ferry-boat plying daily against the river current. No one denied that his boat was rapidly, steadily, and regularly moved against wind and tide, with as much certainty and convenience as could be expected in a first experiment; yet Fitch's company failed. He could raise no more money; the public refused to use his boat or to help him build a better; they did not want it, would not believe in it, and broke his heart by their contempt. Fitch struggled against failure, and invented another boat moved by a screw. The Eastern public still proving indifferent, he wandered to Kentucky, to try his fortune on the Western waters. Disappointed there, as in Philadelphia and New York, he made a delinerate attempt to end his life by drink· but the process proving too slow, he saved twelve opium pills from the physician's prescription, and was found one morning dead.

Fitch's death took place in an obscure Kentucky inn, three years before Jefferson, the philosopher president, entered the White House. Had Fitch been the only inventor thus neglected, his peculiarities and the defects of his steamboat might account for his failure; but he did not stand alone. At the same moment Philadelphia contained another inventor, Oliver Evans, a man so ingenious as to be often called the American Watt. He, too, invented a locomotive steam-engine which he longed to bring into common use. The great services actually rendered by this extraordinary man were not a tithe of those he would gladly have performed, had he found support and encouragement; but his success was not even so great as that of Fitch, and he stood aside while Livingston and Fulton, by their greater resources and influence, forced the steamboat on a sceptical public.

While the inventors were thus ready, and while State legislatures were offering mischievous monopolies for this invention, which required only some few thousand dollars of ready money, the Philosophical Society of Rotterdam wrote to the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, requesting to know what improvements had been made in the United States in the construction of steam-engines. The subject was referred to Benjamin H. Latrobe, the most eminent engineer in America, and his Report, presented to the Society in May, 1803, published in the Transactions, and transmitted abroad, showed the reasoning on which conservatism rested:

> During the general lassitude of mechanical exertion which succeeded the American Revolution,... the utility of steam-engines appears to have been forgotten· but the subject afterward started into very general notice in a form in which it could not possibly be attended with much success. A sort of mania began to prevail, which indeed has not yet entirely subsided, for impelling boats by steam-engines.... For a short time a passage-boat, rowed by a steam-engine, was established between Bordentown and Philadelphia, but it was soon laid

> aside.... There are indeed general objections to the use of the steam-engine for impelling boats, from which no particular mode of application can be free. These are, first, the weight of the engine and of the fuel; second, the large space it occupies; third, the tendency of its action to rack the vessel and render it leaky; fourth, the expense of maintenance; fifth, the irregularity of its motion and the motion of the water in the boiler and cistern, and of the fuel-vessel in rough water; sixth, the difficulty arising from the liability of the paddles or oars to break if light, and from the weight, if made strong. Nor have I ever heard of an instance, verified by other testimony than that of the inventor, of a speedy and agreeable voyage having been performed in a steamboat of any construction. I am well aware that there are still many very respectable and ingenious men who consider the application of the steam-engine to the purpose of navigation as highly important and as very practicable, especially on the rapid waters of the Mississippi, and who would feel themselves almost offended at the expression of an opposite opinion. And perhaps some of the objections against it may be obviated That founded on the expense and weight of the fuel may not for some years exist in the Mississippi, where there is a redundance of wood on the banks; but the cutting and loading will be almost as great an evil.

Within four years the steamboat was running, and Latrobe was its warmest friend. The dispute was a contest of temperaments, a divergence between minds, rather than a question of science; and a few visionaries such as those to whom Latrobe alluded--men like Chancellor Livingston, Joel Barlow, John Stevens, Samuel L. Mitchill, and Robert Fulton--dragged society forward. What but scepticism could be expected among a people thus asked to adopt the steamboat, when as yet the ordinary atmospheric steam-engine, such as had been in use in Europe for a hundred years, was practically unknown to them, and the engines of Watt were a fable? Latrobe's Report further said that in the spring of 1803, when he wrote, five steam-engines were at work in the United States--one lately set up by the Manhattan Water Company in New York to supply the city with water; another in New York for sawing timber; two in Philadelphia, belonging to the city, for supplying water and running a rolling and slitting mill: and one at Boston employed in some manufacture. All but one of these were probably constructed after 1800, and Latrobe neglected to say whether they belonged to the old Newcomen type, or to Watt's manufacture, or to American invention; but he added that the chief American improvement on the steam-engine had been the construction of a wooden boiler, which developed sufficient power to work the Philadelphia pump at the rate of twelve strokes, of six feet, per minute. Twelve strokes a minute, or one stroke every five seconds, though not a surprising power, might have answered its purpose, had not the wooden boiler, as Latrobe admitted, quickly decomposed, and steam-leaks appeared at every bolt-hole.

If so eminent and so intelligent a man as Latrobe, who had but recently emigrated in the prime of life from England, knew little about Watt, and nothing about Oliver Evans, whose experience would have been well worth communicating to any philosophical society in Europe, the more ignorant and unscientific public could not feel faith in a force of which they knew nothing at all. For nearly two centuries the Americans had struggled on foot or horseback over roads not much better than trails, or had floated down rushing streams in open boats momentarily in danger of sinking or upsetting. They had at length, in the Eastern and

Middle States, reached the point of constructing turnpikes and canals. Into these undertakings they put sums of money relatively large, for the investment seemed safe and the profits certain. Steam as a locomotive power was still a visionary idea, beyond their experience, contrary to European precedent, and exposed to a thousand risks. They regarded it as a delusion.

About three years after Latrobe wrote his Report on the steam-engine, Robert Fulton began to build the boat which settled forever the value of steam as a locomotive power. According to Fulton's well-known account of his own experience, he suffered almost as keenly as Fitch, twenty years before, under the want of popular sympathy. (He said, according to Judge Story's report:)

> When I was building my first steamboat at New York, ..the project was viewed by the public either with indifference or with contempt as a visionary scheme. My friends indeed were civil, but they were shy. They listened with patience to my explanations, but with a settled cast of incredulity upon their countenances. I felt the full force of the lamentation of the poet--
>
> "Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land,
> All fear, none aid you, and few understand."
>
> As I had occasion to pass daily to and from the building-yard while my boat was in progress, I have often loitered unknown near the idle groups of strangers gathering in little circles, and heard various inquiries as to the object of this new vehicle. The language was uniformly that of scorn, or sneer, or ridicule. The loud laugh often rose at my expense; the dry jest; the wise calculation of losses and expenditures; the dull but endless repetition of the Fulton Folly. Never did a single encouraging remark, a bright hope, or a warm wish cross my path.

Possibly Fulton and Fitch, like other inventors, may have exaggerated the public apathy and contempt; but whatever was the precise force of the innovating spirit, conservatism possessed the world by right. Experience forced on men's minds the conviction that what had ever been must ever be. At the close of the eighteenth century nothing had occurred which warranted the belief that even the material difficulties of America could be removed. Radicals as extreme as Thomas Jefferson and Albert Gallatin were contented with avowing no higher aim than that America should reproduce the simpler forms of European republican society without European vices; and even this their opponents thought visionary. The United States had thus far made a single great step in advance of the Old World--they had agreed to try the experiment of embracing half a continent in one republican system; but so little were they disposed to feel confidence in their success, that Jefferson himself did not look on this American idea as vital; he would not stake the future on so new an invention. "Whether we remain in one confederacy," he wrote in 1804, "or form into Atlantic and Mississippi confederations, I believe not very important to the happiness of either part." Even over his liberal mind history cast a spell so strong, that he thought the solitary American experiment of political confederation "not very important" beyond the Alleghenies.

The task of overcoming popular inertia in a democratic society was new, and seemed to offer peculiar difficulties. Without a scientific class to lead the way, and without a wealthy class to provide the eans of experiment, the people of the United States were still required, by the nature of their problems, to

become a speculating and scientific nation. They could do little without changing their old habit of mind, and without learning to love novelty for novelty's sake. Hitherto their timidity in using money had been proportioned to the scantiness of their means. Henceforward they were under every inducement to risk great stakes and frequent losses in order to win occasionally a thousand fold. In the colonial state they had naturally accepted old processes as the best, and European experience as final authority. As an independent people, with half a continent to civilize, they could not afford to waste time in following European examples, but must devise new processes of their own. A world which assumed that what had been must be, could not be scientific; yet in order to make the Americans a successful people, they must be roused to feel the necessity of scientific training. Until they were satisfied that knowledge was money, they would not insist upon high education; nor until they saw with their own eyes stones turned into gold, and vapor into cattle and corn, would they learn the meaning of science.

RELIGION ON THE FRONTIER

From the days of first settlement, religion has been an important force in the life of the United States. The seventeenth century was a period characterized by the Protestant community with a decidely Calvinist flavor, but by the early eighteenth century the religiosity of the colonists had declined and most probably did not attend church. However, from the 1730s through the 1740s there occurred a revival of religious fervor known as the Great Awakening which paralleled movements in England and Europe. Everywhere it was the same; an evangelical movement calling for spontaneous conversion to Christ and a renewal of devotion. The Great Awakening was spread throughout the colonies by George Whitefield, preaching constantly, wherever crowds could be gathered. Almost every Protestant denomination split into two factions. The "old lights" denounced the excessive emotionalism of the revivalists and the "new lights" praised the evangelist's ability to direct lost souls onto the path of righteousness.

Religion again went into a decline in the last part of the eighteenth century, in part due to the rationalism of the enlightenment and the optimistic view of human nature expressed by the philosophers of the French and American revolutions. Many of the U.S. leaders, in fact, withdrew from organized churches and became Deists. Also, the structured and organized churches were not well equipped to operate effectively among the rapidly expanding populations beyond the Allagheney Mountains.

The reaction of the Protestant churches to the need for action was a renewed emphasis upon the tried and proved expedient of revivalist preaching. And the preaching, in turn, was to provoke a great wave of revivals--known as the 'Second Great Awakening--which was to sweep back and forth across the country for almost two generations after 1800. One of the early manifestations was the Kentucky Revival of 1800, described in the following article "Religion on the Frontier" by Bernard A. Weisberger. A distinctive feature of the revival in the West was the camp meeting. The revivals spread throughout the West and then northward to central and western New York and also into the East. In 1802 there was a revival at Yale College, which was important for it not only legitimized the revival for other colleges and the established religions of the East, but it also produced a group of students who became leaders in the revivalist campaign.

Defore it had run its course, the Second Great Awakening had affected all established religions and had spawned numerous small fundamentalist denominations. Among the new sects was the Mormon church, founded in the 1820s in western New York, an area known as the "burned over district", a caldron of progress and poverty, of revivalism and new social movements. The Second Great Awakening also left the U.S. with the tradition of the revivalist preacher which is still very much a part of national life.

Questions for study: 1. What was a revival?; 2. What changes did religion undergo on the frontier?; 3. What was the significance of the camp meeting?

RELIGION ON THE FRONTIER

Bernard A. Weisberger*

The Great Revival in the West, or the Kentucky Revival of 1800, as it was sometimes called, was a landmark in American history. It was not some accidental outburst of religious hysteria that crackled through the clearings. Rather, it was one of many answers to a question on which America's destiny hung during Thomas Jefferson's Presidency. Which way would the West go? It was filling up fast in 1800, and yet it still remained isolated behind the mountain barriers, only thinly linked to the nation by a cranky, awkward, and dangerous transportation "system" of trails and rivers. Could it be held within the bounds of American institutions as they had developed over 175 colonial years? Would its raw energies pull it into some new orbit--say, an independent confederation? Or, if it stayed in the Union, would it send representatives swarming back eastward to crush old patterns under the weight of numbers?

No group asked this question more anxiously than eastern clergymen. For, in 1800, they saw that their particular pattern was being abandoned on the frontier. From Kentucky, Tennessee, the western Carolinas, and Virginia, reports came back of a world that was shaggy, vicious, and churchless. The hard-living men and women of the forest clearings were not raising temples to God. Their morals (to eastern eyes) were parlous. Corn liquor flowed freely; marriages were celebrated long after children had arrived; gun and rope settled far too many legal disputes. The West was crowded with Sabbath-breakers and profane swearers, thieves, murderers, and blasphemers, with neither courts of law nor public opinion to raise a rebuke. The whole region seemed "hair-hung and breeze-shaken" over Hell's vault. And this was a matter of life-or-death seriousness to the churches. It was clear even then that America's future lay beyond the mountains. And if the West grew up Godless, then the entire nation would one day turn from His ways, to its destruction. It was no wonder that pious folk of the seaboard dug into their pocketbooks to scrape up funds for "home missionary" societies aimed at paying the way of parsons traveling westward. Or that church assemblies warned of crises ahead and called for special days of fasting, humiliation, and prayer for the West.

Yet, for a fact, the easterners were wrong. They misjudged their pioneers. Western people wanted and needed the church just as badly as the church needed their support for survival. Religion had a part to play in the hard-driven lives of the frontier settlers. It was more than a mere foundation for morality. It offered the hope of a bright future, shining beyond the dirt-floored, hog-and-hominy present. It offered an emotional outlet for lives ringed with inhibition. It was a social thing, too, furnishing occasions on which to lay aside axe and gun and skillet and gather with neighbors, to sing, to weep, to pray, or simply to talk with others. The West had to have religion--but religion of its own special kind. The West was not "lost" in 1800, but on the verge of being saved. Only it was going to be saved the same way it did everything else: on its own individualistic terms.

The East found this hard to understand. The East had trouble taking stock of such a man as the father of the western revival, James McGready. McGready was an angular, black-eyed Scotch-Irishman, born on the Pennsylvania frontier. He came of a hard-working and pious stock that had filled the western stretches of the Colonies in the sixty years before the Revolution. McGready was true to the spirit

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of his Highland Calvinistic ancestors, who worked, prayed, and fought heartily. He grew to adolescence without becoming a swearer, drinker, or Sabbath-breaker, which made him something of a God-fearing rarity among frontier youth. So his family sent him to a private school conducted by a minister, where he wrestled with Scripture in the morning and did farm chores in the afternoon for his "tuition." In 1788, he was licensed to preach, and came down to western North Carolina's Guilford County, where his family had moved. Thus, McGready was a product of western Presbyterianism.

That was important. In the 1790's, the religious picture in the United States already showed considerable (and characteristic) variety. Episcopalianism was solidly rooted among the landed gentry of the South. The Dutch Reformed Church carried on the heritage established when the flag of Holland flapped over New York. Various shoots of Lutheranism pushed up out of the soil of German settlements. Baptism and Methodism were small but growing faiths. There were little wedges in the pie of church membership labeled "Quaker," "Catholic," and "Jewish." A few bold souls called themselves Deists. A few more were on the way to becoming Unitarians. American worship wore a coat of many colors. But in New England and the mid-Atlantic states, the Presbyterian and Congregational bodies were unquestionably in the forefront. Both were rooted in the preceding century's Puritanism. Both officially believed in "predestination" and "limited election"--God had chosen a few individuals to be saved from general damnation, and the list, made up from the beginning of eternity, was unchangeable. These chosen "saints" were born in sin, but in His own way God would convert them to holiness during their lifetimes. Meanwhile, the laws of God must be interpreted and explained to mankind. In order to do this, the Presbyterians and Congregationalists had raised up colleges to train their ministers, the most famous among them by 1800 being Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. Graduates of these schools thundered of Jehovah's wrath to their congregations in two-hour sermons rich with samples of their learning. During the week they warmed their study chairs ten hours a day, writing black-bound volumes of theology.

Religion of this sort lacked appeal for the Scotch-Irish migrants pushing into the frontier regions. They were Presbyterians in name. But their wild surroundings did something to them. They came to resent authority--whether exercised by excise collectors, land speculators, lawyers, or, finally, ministers. What was more, they wanted a little stronger assurance of salvation than a strict reading of limited election gave them. There was a need, in this fur-capped, bewhiskered Christian world, for more promise in life, and more passion too. Learned lectures might do for townspeople, but not for pioneers.

Among common folk, both East and West, a ferment of resentment against the "aristocratic" notion of election was at work. In the 1740's it had exploded in a revival called the Great Awakening. Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Angelican, and Dutch-Reformed Christians were caught up in a common whirlwind of handclapping, shouting, and hosannaing. A good many new leaders, and a number of unpleasant schisms, had risen out of this storm. And in western Pennsylvania, revival-minded Presbyterians had founded a number of little academies to train their preachers. Derisively dubbed "log colleges" by the learned, they took the name proudly. Their graduates were short on Greek and exegesis but long on zeal. When the Great Awakening sputtered out before the Revolution, these colleges remained, helping to keep the sparks alive. Now, with the new nation established, the fire was ready to blaze again. McGready, himself a log-college graduate was one of the first to blow on it.

McGready got to grips with the powers of darkness in North Carolina without wasting any time. He began to preach against the "formality and deadness" of the local churches. Besides that, he demanded some concrete testimony of good living from his flock, and the particular evidence he asked for was highly exacting. The new preacher insisted that strong drink was a slippery path to Hell. In Guilford County this did not sit well. Frontiersmen saw no harm in lightening a hard life with a dram or two, and they wanted no lectures on the subject from men of the cloth. In point of fact, there was no cloth. Pioneer ministers wore buckskin, and took their turn with the next man at hoeing corn or splitting kindling. McGready got nowhere--at least nowhere in North Carolina. After a futile battle, he left to seek a more promising future in Kentucky--some said by request of the congregation.

In Kentucky, circumstances were riper for him. Despite eastern concern, a new Christian community was taking shape in that rugged, bear-and-savage-haunted wilderness province, where crude living went along with high dreaming. It was a community ready to be stirred into life, and McGready was the man to seize the stick. In Logan County, in the southwestern part of the state--a region well-known for unregenerate doings--he had three small congregations: at Red River, Gasper River, and Muddy River. He began to preach to these congregations, and he did not deal with such recondite matters as the doctrines contained in Matthew, or their applications. Instead he would "so describe Heaven" that his listeners would "see its glories and long to be there." Then he went on to "array hell and its horrors" so that the wicked would "tremble and quake, imagining a lake of fire and brimstone yawning to overwhelm them." With that brimstone smoking away in the background, McGready struck for bedrock. The whole point of Christianity, for him, was in the conversion of sinners to saints assured of eternal bliss. His question of questions was dagger-sharp: "If I were converted, would I feel it and know it?" A McGready parishioner was not going to be allowed to rest in self-satisfaction merely because he attended worship and avoided the grosser forms of indecency.

Under such spurring, results began to show among the faithful. In 1799, during a service at Gasper River, many fell to the ground and lay "powerless, groaning, praying and crying for mercy." Women began to scream. Big, tough men sobbed like hysterical children. What could explain this? Simply the fact that belly-deep fear was taking over. For it is well to remember that in those days conversion was the <u>only</u> token of salvation. No matter how young one was, no matter how blameless a life he had led, until the moment of transformation one was a sinner, bound for torment. If death stepped in before conversion was completed, babes and grandsires alike sank screaming into a lake of burning pitch--a lake that was not metaphorical, not symbolical, but <u>real</u> and eternal. And death on the frontier was always around the corner--in the unexpected arrow, the milk sickness, the carelessly felled tree, the leap of the wounded grizzly. Frontiersmen bottled up their fear. It was the price of sanity and survival. But when a religious service provided an acceptable excuse for breaking down the barriers, it was no wonder that men shivered and wept.

After shaking up the dry bones of the Gasper River settlement, McGready moved on in June of 1800 to Red River. He meant to hold a sacramental service, at the end of which church members would take the Lord's Supper together. What he got was something more uncontrolled. In a meetinghouse of undressed logs McGready shared his pulpit with three other Presbyterian ministers. A Methodist preacher was also present. That was not unusual. Frontier preachers were a small band.

They knew each other well. A service was a social occasion, and therefore a treat, and several ministers often took part in order to draw it out.

The Presbyterian shepherds did their preaching, and what they said has not come down to us, but they must have dragged a harrow through the congregation's feelings. When John McGee, the Methodist, arose, an awesome hush had fallen on the house. McGee faced a problem. The Methodists were relative newcomers to America, officially on the scene only since 1766. They were frowned on by more established groups, mainly because they gave emotion free rein in their worship. It was not unusual at a Methodist meeting for women to faint, men to shout in strange tongues, and the minister himself to windmill his arms and bawl himself red-faced. For the more formal Presbyterians, such conduct was out of bounds. McGee knew this, and wanted to mind his ecclesiastical manners. But he knew a ripe audience when he saw one, too, and after an apparent debate with himself, he made his move. Rising, he shouted that everyone in the house should submit to "the Lord Omnipotent." Then he began to bounce from backless bench to backless bench, pleading, crying, shouting, shaking, and exhorting, "with all possible energy and ecstasy."

That broke the dam. The sinners of Red River had spent a lonely winter with pent-up terrors gnawing at them. McGee's appeal was irresistible. In a moment the floor was "covered with the slain; their screams for mercy pierced the heavens." Cursers, duelers, whiskey-swillers, and cardplayers lay next to little children of ten and eleven, rolling and crying in "agonies of distress" for salvation. It was a remarkable performance for a region "destitute of religion." When it was through, a new harvest of souls had been gathered for the Lord.

Word of the Red River meeting whisked through the territory. When McGready got to Muddy River, his next congregation, new scenes of exitement were enacted. During the meeting, sinners prayed and cried for mercy once again, and some of them, overwhelmed by feelings, bolted from the house and rushed in agony into the woods. Their cries and sobs could be heard ringing through the surrounding trees. And when this meeting had yielded up its quota of saved, the Kentucky Revival was not only a fact, but a well-known one. McGready announced another sacramental meeting for Gasper River, and before long, dozens, perhaps hundreds, of Kentuckians who did not belong to his district were threading the trails on their way to the service. Some came as far as a hundred miles, a hard week's trip in the back country. In wagons, on horseback, and on foot came the leathershirted men, rifles balanced on their shoulders, and their pinched-looking, tired women, all looking for blessed assurance and a washing away of their sins.

At Gasper River, history was made. The cabins of the neighborhood could not hold the influx of visitors, so the newcomers came prepared to camp out. They brought tents--some of them--and cold pork, roasted hens, slabs of corn bread, and perhaps a little whiskey to hold them up through the rigors of a long vigil. The Gasper River meetinghouse was too small for the crowd, so the men got out their educated axes, and in a while the clop-clop of tree-felling formed an overture to the services. Split-log benches were dragged into place outdoors, and the worshipers adjourned to God's first temple. What was taking place was an outdoor religious exercise, meant to last two or three days, among people who camped on the spot. This was the camp meeting. Some claimed that Gasper River sheltered the very first of them. That claim has been challenged in the court of historical inquiry. But whether it stands up or not, the Gasper River meeting was something new in worship. It took its form from its western surroundings. Outsiders were a long time in understanding it, because they saw its crude outside and not its passionate heart.

The outside was raw enough. Once again McGready exhorted, and once again sinners fell prostrate to the ground. Night came on; inside the meetinghouse, candlelight threw grotesque, waving shadows on the walls. Outside, the darkness deepened the sense of mystery and of eternity's nearness. Preachers grew hoarse and exhausted, but insatiable worshipers gathered in knots to pray together, and to relieve their feelings by telling each other of "the sweet wonders which they saw in Christ." Hour followed hour, into dawn. For people who had to rise (and generally retire) with the sun each day of their lives, this alone was enough to make the meeting memorable for the rest of their lives. Lightheaded and hollow-eyed, the "mourners," or unconverted, listened alternately to threats of sulphur and promises of bliss, from Saturday until Monday. On Tuesday, after three throbbing days, they broke it up. Forty-five had professed salvation. Satan had gotten a thorough gouging.

Now the tide of camp-meeting revivalism began to roll northward. One of the visitors at the Logan County meetings was a young Presbyterian clergyman whose life was something a copy of McGready's. Barton Warren Stone too had learned on the frontier to revere God Almighty and to farm well. He too had studied religion in a log college. But more than this, he was one of McGready's own converts, having fallen under the power of the older man's oratory in North Carolina. Stone liked what he observed in Logan County, and he took McGready's preaching methods and the camp-meeting idea back to his own congregations in Bourbon County, well to the north and east. Soon he too had imitators, among them Richard McNemar, who had small Presbyterian charges across the river in Ohio

But it was Stone himself who touched off the monster camp meeting of the region's history. He set a sacramental service for August 6, 1801, at Cane Ridge, not far from the city of Lexington. Some undefinable current of excitement running from cabin to cabin brought out every Kentuckian who could drop his earthly concerns an' move, by horseflesh or shoe leather, toward the campground. Later on, some people estimated that 25,000 were on hand, but that figure is almost too fantastic for belief. In 1800, Kentucky had only a quarter of a million residents, and Lexington, the largest town, numbered under two thousand. But even a crowd of three or four thousand would have overwhelmed anything in the previous experience of the settlers.

Whatever the actual number, there was a sight to dazzle the eyes of the ministers who had come. Technically the meeting was Presbyterian, but Baptist and Methodist parsons had come along, and there was room for them, because no one man could hope to reach such a mob. Preaching stands built of logs were set up outdoors. One man remembered a typical scene--a crowd spilling out of the doors of the one meetinghouse, where two Presbyterian ministers were alternately holding forth, and three other groups scattered within a radius of a hundred yards. One cluster of sinners was gathered at the feet of a Presbyterian preacher, another gave ear to a Methodist exhorter, and lastly, a knot of Negroes was attending on the words of some orator of their own race. All over the campground, individual speakers had gathered little audiences to hear of <u>their</u> experiences. One observer said that there were as many as three hundred of these laymen "testifying."

So Cane Ridge was not really a meeting, but a series of meetings that gathered and broke up without any recognizable order. One Methodist brother who could not find a free preaching-stand ventured up the slanting trunk of a partly fallen tree. He found a flat spot, fifteen feet off the ground, and he spoke from this vantage point while a friend on the ground held up an umbrella on a long

pole to shelter him from the weather. Within a few moments, this clergyman claimed, he had gathered an audience of thousands. Undoubtedly they stayed until lured away by some fresh address from a stump or the tail of a wagon. For the crowds were without form as they collected, listened, shouted "Amen!" and "Hallelujah!" and drifted off to find neighbors or refreshments or more preaching. The din can only be guessed at. The guilty were groaning and sometimes screaming at the top of their lungs, and those who felt that they were saved were clapping their hands, shouting hymns, and generally noising out their exultation. There were always hecklers at the meetings too, and some of them were no doubt shouting irreverent remarks at the faithful. Crying children added their bit, and tethered horses and oxen stamped, bawled, and whinnied to make the dissonance complete. Someone said that the meeting sounded from afar like the roar of Niagra. At night the campfires threw wierd shadow-patterns of trees across the scene, and the whole moving, resounding gathering appeared to be tossing on the waves of some invisible storm. As if to etch the experience into men's memories, there were real rainstorms, and the drenched participants were thrown into fresh waves of screaming as thunder and lightning crashed around them.

All in all, a memorable enough episode. And yet still stranger things happened to put the brand of the Lord's sponsorship on Cane Ridge's mass excitement. Overwhelmed with their sensations, some men and women lay rigid and stiff on the ground for hours in a kind of catalepsy. One "blasphemer" who had come to scoff at the proceedings tumbled from his saddle unconscious and remained so for a day and a half. There was something incredibly compelling in what was going on. One remembered testimony came from a reasonably hardheaded young man named James Finley. Later in life Finley became a Methodist preacher, but in 1801 he was, except for a better-than-average education, a typical frontiersman. He had a small farm, a new wife, and a vigorous love of hunting. He had come to the Cane Ridge meeting out of curiosity, but as he looked on, he was taken with an uncontrollable trembling and feelings of suffocation. He left the campground, found a log tavern, and put away a glass of brandy to steady his nerves. But they were beyond steadying. All the way home he kept breaking out in irrational fits of laughter or tears. Many a spirit, returning from Cane Ridge, must have been moved in the same near-hysterical way.

A holy frenzy seemed to have taken hold of the West. Throughout the frontier communities, the ecstasy of conversion overflowed into the nervous system. At Cane Ridge, and at a hundred subsequent meetings, the worshipers behaved in ways that would be unbelievable if there were not plenty of good testimony to their truth. Some got the "jerks," a spasmodic twitching of the entire body. They were a fearful thing to behold. Some victims hopped from place to place like bouncing balls. Sometimes heads snapped from side to side so rapidly that faces became a blur, and handkerchiefs whipped off women's heads. One preacher saw women taken with the jerks at table, so that teacups went flying from their hands to splash against log walls. Churchmen disagreed about the meaning of these symptoms. Were they signs of conversion? Or demonstrations of the Lord's power, meant to convince doubters? Peter Cartwright, a famous evangelist of a slightly later era, believed the latter. He told of a skeptic at one of his meetings who was taken with the jerks and in a particularly vicious spasm snapped his neck. He died, a witness to the judgment of Omnipotence but gasping out to the last his "cursing and bitterness." Besides the jerks, there were strange seizures in which those at prayer broke into uncontrollable guffaws or intoned weird and wordless melodies or barked like dogs

It was wild and shaggy, and very much a part of life in the clearings. Westerners wanted to feel religion in their bones. In their tough and violent lives intellect-

ual exercises had no place, but howls and leaps were something that men who were "half-horse and half-alligator" understood. It was natural for the frontier to get religion with a mighty roar. Any other way would not have seemed homelike to people who, half in fun and half in sheer defensiveness, loved their brag, bluster, and bluff.

Yet there was something deeper than mere excitement underneath it all. Something fundamental was taking place, some kind of genuine religious revolution, bearing a made-in-America stamp. The East was unhappy with it. For one thing, camp-meeting wildness grated on the nerves of the educated clergy. All of this jigging and howling looked more like the work of Satan than of God. There were ugly rumors too, about unsanctified activities at the meetings. Some candidates for salvation showed up with cigars between their teeth. Despite official condemnation, liquor flowed free and white-hot on the out-skirts of the gatherings. It might be that corn did more than its share in justifying God's ways to man. Then there were stories that would not down which told how, in the shadows around the clearing, excited men and women were carried away in the hysteria and, as the catch phrase had it, "begot more souls than were saved" at the meeting. All these tales might have had some partial truth, yet in themselves they did not prove much about frontier religion. As it happened, a part of every camp-meeting audience apparently consisted of loafers and rowdies who came for the show and who were quite capable of any sin that a Presbyterian college graduate was likely to imagine.

Yet it was not the unscrubbed vigor of the meetings that really bothered conservatives in the Presbyterian Church. Their fundamental problem was in adjusting themselves and their faith to a new kind of democratic urge. Enemies of the revivals did not like the success of emotional preaching. What would happen to learning, and all that learning stood for, if a leather-lunged countryman with a gift for lurid word pictures could be a champion salvationist? And what would happen--what had happened--to the doctrine of election when the revival preacher shouted "Repent!" at overwrought thousands, seeming to say that any Tom, Dick, or Harry who felt moved by the Spirit might be receiving the promise of eternal bliss? Would mob enthusiasm replace God's careful winnowing of the flock to choose His lambs? The whole orderly scheme of life on earth, symbolized by a powerful church, an educated ministry, and a strait and narrow gate of salvation, stood in peril.

Nor were the conservatives wrong. In truth, when the McGreadys and Stones struck at "deadness" and "mechanical worship" in the older churches, they were going beyond theology. They were hitting out at a view of things that gave a plain and unlettered man little chance for a say in spiritual affairs. A church run by skilled theologians was apt to set rules that puzzled simple minds. A church which held that many were called, but few chosen, was aristocratic in a sense. The congregations of the western evangelists did not care for rules, particularly rules that were not immediately plain to anyone. In their view, the Bible alone was straightforward enough. Neither would they stand for anything resembling aristocracy, whatever form it might take. They wanted cheap land and the vote, and they were getting these things. They wanted salvation as well--or at least free and easy access to it--and they were bound to have that too. If longer-established congregations and their leaders back east did not like that notion, the time for a parting of the ways was at hand. In politics, such a parting is known as a revolution; in religion, it is schism. Neither word frightened the western revivalists very much.

The trouble did not take long to develop. In McGready's territory, a new Cumberland Presbytery, or subgroup, was organized in 1801. Before long it was in a battle with the Kentucky Synod, the next highest administrative body in the hierarchy. The specific issue was the licensing of certain "uneducated" candidates for the ministry. The root question was revivalism. The battle finally went up to the General Assembly, for Presbyterians a sort of combined Congress and Supreme Court. In 1809 the offending revivalistic presbytery was dissolved. Promptly, most of its congregations banded themselves into the separate Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Meanwhile, Barton Stone, Richard McNemar and other members of the northern Kentucky wing of camp-meeting Presbyterianism were also in trouble. They founded a splinter group known as the "New Lights," and the Kentucky Synod, as might have been foreseen, lost little time in putting the New Lights out, via heresy proceedings. Next, they formed an independent Springfield Presbytery. But like all radicals, they found it easier to keep going than to apply the brakes. In 1804 the Springfield Presbytery fell apart. Stone and some of his friends joined with others in a new body, shorn of titles and formality, which carried the magnificently simple name of the Christian Church. Later on, Stone went over to the followers of Thomas and Alexander Campbell, who called themselves Disciples of Christ. Richard McNemar, after various spiritual adventures became a Shaker. Thus, ten years after Cane Ridge, the score was depressing for Presbyterians. Revivalism had brought on innumerable arguments, split off whole presbyteries, and sent ministers and congregations flying into the arms of at least four other church groups. That splintering was a stronger indictment than any conservative could have invented to bring against Cane Ridge, or against its western child, the camp meeting.

A dead end appeared to have been reached. But it was only a second-act curtain. In the first act, religion in the West, given up for lost, had been saved by revivalism. In the second, grown strong and rambunctious, it had quarreled with its eastern parents Now the time was at hand for a third-act resolution of the drama. Both sides would have to back down and compromise For the lesson of history was already plain. In religious matters, as in all matters, East and West, metropolis and frontier, were not really warring opposites. Each nourished the other, and each had an impact on the other. Whatever emerged as "American" would carry some of the imprint of both, or it would perish

On the part of the West, the retreat consisted of taming the camp meeting. Oddly enough, it was not the Presbyterians who did that. By 1812 or so, they had drawn back from it, afraid of its explosive qualities. But the Methodists were in an excellent position to make use of revivalism and all its trappings. They had, at that time at least, no educated conservative wing. They welcomed zealous backwood preachers, even if they were grammatically deficient. In fact they worked such men into their organization and sent them, under the name of "circuit-riders," traveling tirelessly on horseback to every lonely settlement that the wilderness spawned. The result was that the Methodists were soon far in the lead in evangelizing the frontier. They did not have to worry about the claims of limited election either. Their formal theology did not recognize it. With a plain-spoken and far-reaching ministry freely offering salvation to all true believers, Methodism needed only some kind of official harvest season to count and bind together the converts. The camp meeting was the perfect answer. By 1811, the Methodists had held four or five hundred of them throughout the country; by 1820, they had held a thousand--by far the majority of all such gatherings in the nation.

But these meetings were not replicas of Cane Ridge. They were combed, washed, and made respectable. Permanent sites were picked, regular dates chosen, and preachers and flocks given ample time to prepare. When meeting time came, the arriving worshipers in their wagons were efficiently taken in charge, told where to park their vehicles and pasture their teams, and given a spot for their tents. Orderly rows of these tents surrounded a preaching area equipped with sturdy benches and preaching stands. The effect was something like that of a formal bivouac just before a general's inspection. Tight scheduling kept the worship moving according to plan--dawn prayers, eight o'clock sermons, eleven o'clock sermons, dinner breaks, afternoon prayers and sermons, meals again, and candlelight services. Years of experience tightened the schedules, and camp-meeting manuals embodied the fruits of practice. Regular hymns replaced the discordant bawling of the primitive era. Things took on a generally homelike look. There were Methodist ladies who did not hesitate to bring their best feather beds to spread in the tents, and meals tended to be planned and ample affairs. Hams, turkeys, gravies, biscuits, preserves, and melons produced contented worshipers and happy memories.

There were new rules to cope with disorderliness as well. Candles, lamps, and torches fixed to trees kept the area well lit and discouraged young converts from amorous ways. Guards patrolled the circumference of the camp, and heroic if sometimes losing battles were fought to keep whiskey out. In such almost decorous surroundings jerks, barks, dances and trances became infrequent and finally nonexistent.

Not that there was a total lack of enthusiasm. Hymns were still yelled and stamped as much as sung. Nor was it out of bounds for the audience to pepper the sermon with ejaculations of "Amen!" and "Glory!" Outsiders were still shocked by some things they saw. But they did not realize how far improvement had gone.

Eastern churchmen had to back down somewhat, too. Gradually, tentatively, they picked up the revival and made it part of their religious life. In small eastern towns it became regularized into an annual season of "ingathering," like the harvest or the election. Yet it could not be contained within neat, white-painted meetinghouses. Under the "sivilized" clothing, the tattered form of Twain's Pap Finn persisted. Certain things were taken for granted after a time. The doctrine of election was bypassed and, in practice, allowed to wither away.

Moreover, a new kind of religious leader, the popular evangelist, took the stage. Men like Charles G. Finney in the 1830's, Dwight L. Moody in the 1870's, and Billy Sunday in the decade just preceding the First World War flashed into national prominence. Their meetings overflowed church buildings and spilled into convention halls, auditoriums, and specially built "tabernacles." As it happened, these men came from lay ranks into preaching. Finney was a lawyer, Moody a shoe salesman, and Sunday a baseball player. They spoke down-to-earth language to their massed listeners, reduced the Bible to basic axioms, and drew their parables from the courtroom, the market, and the barnyard. They made salvation the only goal of their service, and at the meeting's end they beckoned the penitents forward to acknowledge the receipt of grace. In short, they carried on the camp-meeting tradition. By the closing years of the nineteenth century, however, the old campgrounds for the most part were slowly abandoned. Growing

cities swallowed them up, and rapid transportation destroyed the original reason for the prolonged camp-out. But the meetings were not dead. Mass revivalism had moved them indoors and made them a permanent part of American Protestantism.

All of this cost something in religious depth, religious learning, religious dignity. Yet there was not much choice. The American churches lacked the support of an all-powerful state or of age-old traditions. They had to move with the times. That is why their history is so checkered with schismatic movements--symptoms of the struggle to get in step with the parade. Hence, if the West in 1800 could not ignore religion, the rest of the country, in succeeding years, could not ignore the western notion of religion. One student of the camp meeting has said that it flourished "side by side with the militia muster, with the cabin raising and the political barbecue." That was true, and those institutions were already worked deeply into the American grain by 1840. They reflected a spirit of democracy, optimism, and impatience that would sweep us across a continent, sweep us into industrialism, sweep us into a civil war. That spirit demanded some religious expression, some promise of a millennium in which all could share.

The camp meeting was part of that religious expression, part of the whole revival system that channeled American impulses into churchgoing ways. In the home of the brave, piety was organized so that Satan got no breathing spells. Neither, for that matter, did anyone else.

URBAN SOCIETY ON THE FRONTIER

The traditional image of the expansion of the United States beyond the Allegheny Mountains in the early part of the nineteenth century is one of an expanding frontier of rural settlement. The growth, influence and the importance of the rural West are well known. Yet it is not always understood that from almost the very beginning there was also an urban West. In fact, urban settlements were often in the vanguard of the advancing frontier. The settlements (and eventually, cities) of Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Lexington were laid out and growing before the surrounding countryside was under cultivation. Perhaps the merchant, the banker, the lawyer, the teacher, and the craftsman would serve as better symbols of westward expansion than the pathfinder or yoeman farmer.

By 1830 the West had produced an urban and a rural society and each had developed its own institutions, habits, and living patterns. Although most of the people in the West lived in the countryside, by 1830, the cities were growing at a much faster rate. Although most of the wealth was produced in the countryside in the form of crops, timber and other natural products, and livestock, the cities from the start became the centers of economic activity for the whole region. The wealth of the West was to a considerable degree monopolized by the cities, resulting in rapid urban growth, social and economic differentiation, and the development of surprisingly sophisticated social, cultural, and intellectual activities that were modeled on those of the older cities in the East.

Richard C. Wade , in his book The Urban Frontier: Pioneer Life in Early Pittsburgh, Cincanniti, Lexington, Louisville, and St. Louis (Chicago 1959), attempts to tell the story of the urban West in the first decades of the nineteenth century. The following essay, which is a chapter from that book, discusses the development of urban society in the West in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

Questions for study:

1. Describe the societal structure of the western cities.

2. What types of sources does the author use in his study, and do you think the results accurately reflect the nature of urban society in the West?

3. How great were the differences of wealth among the inhabitants of the cities of the West?

4. Discuss social mobility in these western cities.

URBAN SOCIETY *

Richard C. Wade

In the quarter century following the American Revolution the curtain of wilderness was lifted from the Ohio Valley. The outposts of settlement passed beyond Louisville and moved toward the Mississippi, where St. Louis held the frontier for the surging population. The transformation was startling both in extent and speed. In 1810 Henry Marie Brackenridge described Cincinnati as "a beautiful little city in the midst of a highly cultivated country," though but thirteen years before it "was covered with the native forest, excepting the space occupied by a rude encampment." Joseph Charless, the editor of the Missouri Gazette, remembered that on his first trip to the West in 1795 the banks of the Ohio were "a dreary wilderness, the haunt of ruthless savages," yet two decades later he found them "sprinkled with towns" boasting of "spinning and weaving establishments, steam mills, manufactures in various metals, leather, wool, cotton and flax," and "seminaries of learning conducted by excellent teachers." This great conversion moved a Cincinnati bard to lofty couplets:

> Here where so late the appalling sound
> of savage yells, the woods resound
> Now smiling Ceres waves her sheaf
> and cities rise in bold relief.

Travel on Western waters, once a hazardous undertaking, became routine, and scheduled runs connected the major river ports. Nothing emphasized the vast changes as much as the development of transportation facilities. In 1793 a Pittsburgh company began regular service to Cincinnati with boats specially constructed for the trade.

Each carried six artillery pieces, while high walls enclosed the entire vessel, leaving slits for rifle fire against attacking Indians.[1] By 1815 the danger had passed. New steamboats, open on all sides, advertised the scenic attractions of the journey and provided almost luxurious accommodations for passengers. These craft were, in Timothy Flint's phrase, "moving cities," and the guns, once so important in the defense of travelers, now saluted settlements along the way, though larger communities soon outlawed the practice as "disturbing to the peace."[2]

Changing townscapes dramatized the growth of the West. Within a generation forts and trading posts became the commercial centers of the frontier country and the focuses of an increasingly rich social and cultural life. Samuel Brown, whose Western Gazetteer was the immigrant's bible, witnessed this transformation in his adult lifetime. In 1797, when he visited Lexington, he had found fifty houses, "partly frame, and hewn logs, with chimnies on the outside," and town lots selling for $30 cash. Returning less than 20 years later, he exclaimed, "How changed the scene! Everything had assumed a new appearance." The log cabins were gone, and "in their place stood costly brick mansions, well painted and enclosed by the fine yards, bespeaking . . . taste and wealth."[3]

The development was the same elsewhere. Timothy Fint, viewing Cincinnati from Kentucky in 1816, remembered it as "a large and compact town" with "fine buildings rising on the slope of the opposite shore" and "steam manufactories, darting their columns of smoke aloft." "All this moving picture of wealth, populousness, and activity," he reflected, "has been won from the wilderness within

* From Richard C. Wade, The Urban Frontier: Pioneer Life in Early Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Lexington, Louisville and St. Louis (Chicago, 1959), pp. 101-128

In addition, the dominant mercantile temper of frontier centers seemed to militate against rapid cultural development. Merchants, though not necessarily averse to the better things, tended to consider them less important than other matters. In Louisville they had "one single object in view, that of acquiring money," wrote Henry McMurtrie. "Absorbed in the great business of adding dollar to dollar," traders devoted "no time to literature, or the acquirement of those graceful nothings, which, of no value in themselves, still constitute the one great charm of polished society." Nor was Louisville unique in this respect. "This eternal hunger and thirst after money, to the exclusion of almost every other pursuit, is not . . . peculiar to this place," he observed, "but (is) rather a general trait in the character of all newly formed commercial cities." Cincinnati's "Curtius" was no more favorable when he spoke of the "entire contempt among our money making gentry, for everything like the cultivation of Literature and the Arts."[9] These indictments were probably too strong, but undoubtedly the mercantile atmosphere of Western communities retarded the growth of a rounded society.

Despite these handicaps the cities produced a surprisingly rich and diversified life for their citizens, offering opportunities, in many fields, similar to those in Eastern urban centers. In a single generation people drawn from all over the Union and many parts of Europe came together, built homes, contrived a livelihood, erected churches, schools and theaters, organized social clubs and learned societies, even laid the groundwork for universities. "Society is polished and polite," Niles' Register said with some astonishment of Lexington, "and their assemblies are conducted with as much grace and ease as they are anywhere else, and the dresses at the parties are as tasty and elegant. Strange things these in the 'backwoods!'"[10]

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The societies which produced this culture were in many ways sophisticated. Local boosters talked a great deal about egalitarianism in the West, but urban practice belied the theory. Social lines developed very quickly, and although never drawn as tightly as in Eastern cities, they denoted meaningful distinctions. The groupings were basically economic, though professional classes were set apart by their interest and training, and Negroes by their color. No rigid boundaries divided these classes, and movement across them was constant. Yet differences did exist, people felt them, and contemporaries thought them significant. It is suggestive in this regard that the first great literary product of the West, Modern Chivalry, satirized the notion of equality, and its author was one of Pittsburgh's leading citizens.

In fact, social cleavages developed so rapidly in the first decades of the nineteenth century that some groups formalized their position in society. A variety of associations grew up to express the exclusiveness of their members. The St. Cecilia Society, for instance, became a kind of Junior League for Cincinnati's best young ladies, who gathered monthly to gossip and hear piano recitals. Pittsburgh's well-to-do bachelors formed the Quintilian Society in 1815 for the ostensible purpose of promoting literature and science, but letters of its members speak more of the marriage of "Brother Alexander" which "made some noise in P'G" than problems of learning.[11] In addition, by 1815 the wives of leading merchants and professional men had established female benevolent associations in every city to aid the poor through relief and religion, using a vocabulary that smacked of noblesse oblige.[12] Nor was this process confined to the upper strata, for each urban center had its Mechanical Society, which enabled wage earners

to club together and give dignity to their calling. The drive for status, so strong in older communities, appeared very early in the new ones.

The merchants headed this rapidly stratifying social structure. Next in influence stood the lawyers, ministers, doctors, teachers and journalists, who, if they had less income than commercial leaders, often had as much prestige. Beneath them lived most of the people--skilled and unskilled laborers, clerks and shopkeepers--"the respectable workingmen." Lower still in the hierarchy were the transients and rootless--wagoners, rivermen, hangers-on, and ne'er-do-wells--who had no stable connections with the community but whose activities formed an important part of its life. The Negroes, slave and free, occupied the bottom rung of the ladder, performing the most menial tasks and excluded from white society by both custom and law.

The primacy of the merchants reflected their economic prowess. Since most towns sprang originally from exchange posts, their leadership was established early. When Thomas Wilson and his wife went to Pittsburgh in 1804 to establish a branch of the Bank of Pennsylvania, they took no letters of introduction "because they very justly considered that the very committal to their care of perhaps one-half million of money was of itself proof of their high standing in Philadelphia." The directors' wives, however, refused to visit the newcomers who "came here in such a strange way." Tarleton Bates, an older resident, sarcastically watching this jockeying, commented "our ladies are of too high origin, they have too pure blood in their veins, to mix with any but patricians." Fortescue Cuming noticed the same haughtiness a few years later, and explained that "wealth acquired suddenly generally operates on the ignorant, to make them wish to seem as if they had always been in the same situation . . . this accounts for (their) forgetting that some among them could not tell who had been their ancestors in the second generation."[13]

More renowned than Pittsburgh's was Lexington's upper class, whose charm, hospitality, and "conscious superiority" captivated visitors. Thomas Ashe, who deplored the egalitarianism of the older sections of the country, was enthusiastic about this "small party of rich citizens" who tried "to withdraw themselves from the multitude, or to draw a line of distinction between themselves as gens comme il faut and the canaille." An "Early Adventurer" who had come West before many of Lexington's first families, condemned the pretentiousness of these people who claimed "the upper seats" demanding to know "who established their privileged societies and companies, their privileged balls and assemblies from which the mechanick, however respectable by virtue or industry, is excluded?" He then traced the rise of this aristocracy drearily chronicling the end of Arcadia, and summoning farmer and laborer alike to recapture the people's "liberties."[14]

Even in the smaller towns this division appeared. In Louisville "there is a circle, small 'tis true" wrote McMurtrie, "but within whose magic round abounds every pleasure, that wealth, regulated by taste can produce, or urbanity bestow. There, the 'red heel' of Versailles may imagine himself in the emporium of fashion, and whilst leading a beauty through the maze of the dance forget that he is in the wilds of America." Gorham Worth's testimony in Cincinnati was similar. "Talk of the back woods! said I to myself, after dining with Mr. Kilgour . . . I have never seen anything east of the mountains to be compared to the luxuries of that table! the costly dinner service,--the splendid cut glass,--the rich wines...." Thomas Ashe had a like experience in the Queen City, admitting that its leading group "would be respected in the first circles of Europe." In St. Louis successful

American traders joined the old French ruling families to maintain the "proud, aristocratic spirit" and the "propensity of ostentation" of colonial times.[15]

These merchants were firmly entrenched in their communities. Most of them came West with little capital and grew with their cities. While the settlements were young, land was cheap and successful businessmen acquired property rapidly. Others, coming later, gambled on the town's expansion by buying on the outskirts or in the surrounding country. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the best lots had passed into the hands of a select few. This centralizing process took place in every community except St. Louis. Even there merchants like Gratiot, Sarpy, the Chouteaus, Lucas Mullamphy, and O'Fallon accumulated large holdings adjoining the town, but inside a considerable diffusion existed.

The social leadership of the merchants rested on a visible economic pre-eminence, as measured by either property or living standards. City assessment records, whenever available emphasize the wealth of the business community. In Lexington in 1808 over a third of the total valuation of more than a million dollars belonged to sixteen men, all of them merchants or manufacturers. Furthermore, the incomplete returns of the next year show that the traders had substantially increased their position. William Leavy's assessment, for example rose from $25,817 to $46,710 while George Trotter's $61,564 jumped to $100,300. Henry Clay's fortune took a good turn in the same twelve months, growing from $6,000 to $32,180 the latter figure including four houses, three lots, an office, and at least a large share of two hotels.[16]

Cincinnati's records indicate the same trend. In 1805 only 198 people paid a corporate tax in a population of nearly 2,000, and 14 of these--nearly all merchants--accounted for over a third of the total. Thirteen years later, of over 8,000 residents, 39 had assessments of over $10,000, one of which was more than $130,000. A large portion of this property comprised town lots and improvements, and revealed the commercial interests as rentiers as well as traders. John Piatt with thirty-one houses in 1818, was the city's most important landlord while Nicholas Longworth owned fourteen and many others collected rent from better than a half dozen dwellings.[17]

St. Louis's records are equally conclusive. In 1811 the town's total assessments stood at $134,516 $82,774 of which was held by six men. William Clark headed the list with $19,930 and William Christy followed with $16,000, while the next four, Auguste Chouteau John O'Fallon, J. B. C. Lucas, and Henry Von Phul, held property valued at $15,664, $12 450, $10,555, and $8,175, respectively. In short six business leaders and landowners accounted for more than half of the city's assessed valuation.[18]

Living standards demonstrated mercantile primacy even more graphically. Stoddard found the French traders in St. Louis in 1804 living "in a style equal to those in the large port towns," and Christian Schultz estimated the cost of "two or three BIG houses" at "twenty to sixty thousand dollars." Even in Louisville, the roughest frontier city, McMurtrie thought the best houses "would suffer little by being compared with any of the most elegant private edivices of Philadelphia and New York." When Flint visited Cincinnati, he too, was struck by the affluence and comfort of the well-to-do. "The elegance of the houses, the parade of servants, the display of furniture, and more than all, the luxury of their overloaded tables, would compare with the better houses in the Atlantic cities.[19]

Nowhere in the West, however, did the wealthy live in more opulence than in Lexington, where prosperous merchants and members of the bar signalized their success by acquiring country seats. In 1816 Samuel Brown counted "between fifty and sixty villas" in the vicinity. The most famous was Colonel David Meade's Chaumiere du Prarie where "no less than thirty hands" were engaged in "laying out, planting, sowing, harrowing and mowing his lawns and walks." The Colonel always "dressed for dinner" and nearly every evening entertained fifteen or twenty people. Most proprietors supported these estates out of urban income; indeed William Leavy, who knew nearly all of them, said that John Hunt was the "only farmer I have known that made his farm investment produce him a good interest." But rural retreats were not the only evidence of affluence in Lexington. In 1806 Cuming noted thirty-nine two-wheel carriages valued at over $5,000 and over twenty four-wheel ones worth almost $9,000. "This may convey some idea of the taste for shew and expense which pervades this country."[20]

Thus set apart from the rest of the townspeople, merchant families were the center of a lively social whirl. The "season" was studded with balls, parties and "assemblies." Dancing teachers, who met with "more encouragement than professors . . . of literary science," brought the "City Cotillion . . . of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore" to frontier towns. Keen competition among the men kept things humming, but if the pace slackened the traditional observance of leap year authorized feminine aggression. Though most entertainment took place in homes, the better taverns vied for preference. In Lexington, for instance, Postlethwait's was the fashionable hotel, but its rival Bradley's was "perpetually crowded," and in the spring it had parties "each day for several days . . . where upwards of 60 gentlemen attended and more than 40 ladies."[21]

Wives and daughters of wealthy merchants composed the West's only leisure class. Leading a sheltered life, they ordinarily escaped work outside the home before marriage and often afterwards as well. John Wrenshall, a successful merchant and preacher, raised some eyebrows in Pittsburgh society at the beginning of the century by allowing his daughter to clerk in his store. "Many of our wealthy neighbours would throw out indirect hints" about their assisting behind the counter, "as if such employment was unfit for Young Ladies." In the summer months the well-to-do retired to the "uninterrupted harmony and refined social intercourse" of resorts such as Kentucky's Olympian Springs, Ohio's Yellow Springs, or Indiana's Jeffersonville. Though originally established for health purposes these retreats soon existed "to amuse those who seek relaxation from the ordinary pursuits of life."[22]

The masculine side of mercantile life displayed more vigor and less frivolity. The merchants took their business very seriously, rising early, working late, and often traveling extensively. Though willing to join the ladies in the dining room or dance hall, they preferred the political arguments of the coffee house or tavern and the unrestrained language of card games, billiards, and horse-racing. As the town's most wealthy and articulate group, they took the lead in establishing libraries and schools and erecting churches and public buildings. With one eye always cocked on possible profit, traders also invested in local improvements such as turnpikes, bridges, or schemes to cut a canal around the Falls in the Ohio. Though many of the businessmen became familiar figures in New Orleans and Eastern commercial circles, they never lost their close connections with their own communities and could be counted on to preside at town meetings, serve on official committees, or fill a place on the Board of Trustees.

This commanding social and economic position paved the way for political leadership. The merchants very early emerged as the spokesmen for Federalism in the West.[23] Even after the virtual disappearance of the party on the national level, its adherents remained powerful in frontier cities. Indeed, in Pittsburgh it was not until 1810 that the Democratic Republicans won a borough election. Yet two years later John Woods, running for Congress as a "Friend of Peace" in protest against the war with Great Britain, carried both the city and county by almost two to one. Farther West, where the Federalist party never gained a firm foothold, the commercial interests enlisted under different banners, though preaching the same ideas. Later, when the Whigs refashioned Hamiltonian notions, they recruited about 75 per cent of the Western merchants.[24] Until that time, however, the mercantile community influenced nearly all parties and factions, suffering no real challenge to its urban supremacy.

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Closely connected with the merchants, but separated from them by background and training, was the professional class--doctors, lawyers, ministers, teachers, and journalists. These people had no easily identifiable community of interest and seldom acted in concert, yet all held preferred positions in young urban societies. Their status rested on service, and was unconnected with income. Indeed, for most this social importance compensated for poor financial returns, the lawyers alone enjoyed an economic situation commensurate with their public standing. Many were college graduates, some had taken advanced work in Eastern universities and nearly all exhibited a learning and refinement that distinguished them from the rest of the townspeople.

Lawyers found merchants their most lucrative clients, and in the days before publicly financed education, teachers discovered that the well-to-do paid most of the tuition that kept school doors open. Even ministers, often presiding over small congregations depended upon businessmen for substantial donations with which to build churches and pay salaries. Many doctors operated apothecary shops to supplement their income, and thus were merchants themselves. As a group these men shared the social outlook of the commercial interests, though there were always outstanding exceptions. Dr. William Goforth in Cincinnati, for example, became such an enthusiastic Republican that many well-to-do patients deserted him.[25]

The professional man, however, from the earliest days exercised a social influence far greater than their numbers warranted. Strategically located astride the avenues of opinion--the press, the pulpit, and the podium--they had direct and continuous contact with the bulk of the people. In addition, they sat on local governing boards, founded religious and cultural associations, encouraged schools and colleges, and generally embodied the civic conscience of urban centers. Educated, articulate, and energetic, possessing the confidence of the business community as well as the townspeople, they rubbed off the roughest edges of frontier society. Each place had its men of learning, refinement, and taste, whom travelers increasingly sought out, and who softened their hardest judgments on the West.

Of these cultural leaders none was more renowned than Cincinnati's Dr. Daniel Drake, whose talents and versatility entitled him to be called the "Franklin of the West." Though his scientific reputation rested on several treatises on disease in the Mississippi and Ohio valleys and on his Picture of Cincinnati,

Drake was better known to his contemporaries as a civic figure. To visitors and townspeople alike his tall commanding frame, his springy, almost elastic walk, and his infectious amiability seemed as much a part of the town as its hills and court house. He was instrumental in founding the Lyceum, a circulating library, the School of Literature and the Arts, the Lancastrian Seminary, the Western Museum, and numerous clubs for debate and learned discussion. As a trustee of the town he lobbied for better public health and increased precautions against epidemics. His drugstore not only carried the best line of medicines, but also introduced soda water to the city. As a successful merchandiser he shared the viewpoint of the commercial interests and joined them in bringing to Cincinnati a branch of the United States Bank, of which he was later made a director. This listing includes only a small part of his work, for no segment of urban life seemed untouched by his guiding hand.

In Lexington, John Bradford, the editor of the Kentucky Gazette, fondly called "Old Wisdom" played a comparable role. Having come to the Blue Grass in 1786 with the second press west of the mountains, he exercised a molding influence on town life for four decades. Not only did he serve longer than any other man on the city's Board of Trustees, but there were few committees which did not think his participation essential for success. Town meetings invariably called him to the chair, and the state legislature recognized him as a spokesman for the metropolis. His reputation as a booster made him secretary of Lexington's Emmigration Society, and his intense interest in education led him more than once to the chairmanship of Transylvania University's trustees. Though essentially conservative, he planted some youthful wild oats in the Democratic Society of Kentucky in the nineties and remained an ardent Jeffersonian. His closest friends were merchants, manufacturers, and lawyers, whom he joined in promoting many enterprises, including the Kentucky Insurance Company and an Episcopalian society known as "the gentleman's church." Bradford was Lexington's candidate for the title of "The Benjamin Franklin of the West" and his credentials at least rivaled those of his neighbor and friend, Dr. Drake.[26]

Though members of all professions participated extensively in town life, none were more active than the lawyers, whose success in their calling depended not only on their achievements in the courtroom but on the cultivating of prospective clients. This requirement led them to serve in many capacities in civic affairs. Fortescue Cuming, no friend of the llegal fraternity, noted that "throughout the whole country" they "fill all the respectable offices in the government as well as the legislature." Indeed, nearly all the leading spokesmen of the West on the national scene--like Clay or Benton--were urban lawyers who started as prominent city figures. Though most attorneys shared the prevailing commercial values of their towns, some could always be found on every side of each issue. Unlike members of other professions, they were never in short supply, and their prominence often bred hostility. Critics charged that they wore "a certain air of superiority" and arrogated "to themselves the title or epithet of esquire, which the uninformed mass of people allow them"[27] No matter how accurate the complaints, most lawyers brought to the cities education and tastes considerably more developed than those of their fellow townspeople.

If the West seemed to teem with legal talent, no one complained of an excess of doctors. Actually, however, from the very earliest days of settlement the ratio of practitioners to population in the towns was relatively high. For instance, in 1810 Cincinnati, with just over 2,500 people, boasted eight doctors, while a few years earlier Cuming found four in Pittsburgh--"all of considerable practice, experience and reputation"--and five in Lexington. In St. Louis eight physicians

advertised in the Missouri Gazette between 1809 and 1815, and most of them stayed permanently in that place, while McMurtrie counted twenty-two in Louisville in 1819, when the population barely exceeded 4,000.[28] Their training varied greatly, both in extent and quality. Though the University of Pennsylvania's medical school in Philadelphia supplied the new country with most of its leading doctors many of the earlier ones learned their trade in the office of local practitioners or with the army. As their numbers increased, they banded together in associations to discuss scientific problems and establish professional standards.[29] Like other men of this class, physicians preferred a life of broad social contacts to narrow technical interests, and most participated in many phases of urban development.

Probably the most influential segment of the professional group were the ministers. Being preachers of the gospel and among the best educated citizens, they enjoyed a unique status. Most were earnest and dedicated men, highly respected by the community, who gave immense time and energy to civic improvement. They not only served on public boards and committees but also guided their congregations along useful paths. Since salaries were low, many supplemented their income by other employment. A few became merchants but most opened schools, taught in academies, or, later, occupied chairs in the colleges. Though their contacts were wide and church membership was socially mixed, the ministers' most natural and intimate connections were with the articulate sections of society and the prominent people who were lay leaders of their religious organizations.

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Wage earners--craftsmen, mechanics, clerks, and small shopkeepers--constituted the bulk of urban society in the West as well as in the East. Differences existed among these elements, especially between skilled and unskilled labor, yet they shared similar economic conditions and social status. Until the postwar depression, the demand for workers far exceeded the supply; hence this group generally enjoyed good pay and full employment. Even the unskilled commanded consideration--at least north of the Ohio where slaves could not compete for jobs. Shortages often became so acute that employers recruited men in the East, promising increased wages and better opportunities in the new country. Early marriages kept women off the labor market and made even domestics a scarce and prized item. Thomas Carter's enthusiastic letter from Cincinnati in 1813 to his brother in New England summed up the prospects held out by young cities. "This town . . . is a fine place for mechanics; carpenters and masons can . . . make five to ten dollars per day: bricklaying is $3.50 a thousand. . . . Mechanics here can make their fortune in four or five years."[30]

Though jobs abounded in frontier communities, good housing did not. Nowhere did building keep pace with the expanding population, and congested living quarters characterized almost every city. Drake estimated that on the average ten people lived in each dwelling in Cincinnati in 1815, a number which "greatly transcends the limits which health and comfort would prescribe." In St. Louis Brackenridge reported that "every house is crowded, rents are high and it is exceedingly difficult to procure a tenement on any terms."[31] In addition, the immigrants constantly increased the pressure on these limited facilities, keeping rents and building costs up.

Urgent need for new housing led to jerry-construction, many dwellings never being painted and some even lacking decent toilet facilities. Yet in time the permanent residents found adequate shelter, and many wage earners moved into

brick homes. However it was not until bad times that any mobility developed. Probably most workers ultimately owned their own homes though a large number continued to rent. The little gardens and "large spaces" between the buildings, which characterized most towns in the early days of the century, disappeared at an alarming rate, though this tendency was especially resisted in St. Louis.[32] Housing for working people was generally better in Western cities than in the East, but by 1815 flimsy construction and inadequate maintenance had created dangerous areas.

Wage earners could have afforded better homes if some had been available, for they shared generously in the prosperity of the period. Few observers failed to comment on their success. In 1810 Zadock Cramer watched Pittsburgh's "ingenious and active workmen" go home "of a morning, loaded with turkies, fowls, fat beef, fresh butter, &c, &c.," which was "clear" evidence that "they not only live, but live <u>well</u>." A few years later Thomas Hulme noticed the "decency and affluence of the trades-people and mechanics at Lexington, many of whom drive about in their own carriages."[33] These generally high standards obscured some important fluctuations in employment, but until the end of the war these cities provided as much opportunity for workers as any place in the country.

High compensation and good working conditions stemmed fundamentally from a chronic labor shortage, but some wage-earners, refusing to rely upon this, established unions to maintain their position. Only a few crafts were affected, but these proved strong enough to set pay rates and occasionally to call effective strikes. Each town saw some activity, the shoemakers, weavers, tailors cord-wainers, and carpenters being the most successful. These associations carried on a two-front war: against employers and against unskilled workers. It is significant that the first walkout came after the "hiring gentlemen" attempted to better the situation of the apprentices. Organization gave these trades control over the admission of new men, and created the unity required to fight employers. However, unionized labor represented only a small portion of even the skilled workers. Out of 97 classes of master craftsmen in Pittsburgh in 1807, only a handful were organized.[34]

Though the largest element in Western towns, wage earners were not a static class. Immigration constantly swelled their numbers, while some workingmen rose to a higher status and others dropped to a lower one. In a loosely structured society, boundaries between groups were never rigid, and many crossed them easily. Anthony Doyle, who came to St. Louis from Ireland, noticed this two-way traffic among his compatriots. "Some Irish men . . . are 20 years here in rags and not worth a dollar," but, he added "on the other hand them that are men of conduct . . . are rich and respectable." Movement upward is always easier to trace than failure and broken hope, but success was common in these cities and clearly constituted the dominant tendency. Doyle himself came to St. Louis without means· in a few years he asserted that "I have 1/2 of a grocery store. . . . I have $700 more sunk in a limestone quarry," and he hoped to make $1,000 that year on the sale of furs in New York, if it "please God." "Industrious journeymen," observed John Melish, "very soon became masters," and most of the successful glassmen in Pittsburgh began as craftsmen in the shop.[35]

Most working people managed to feed, clothe and shelter their families, but some did not. By 1815 the number of charitable societies and complaints about the rising poor tax afforded clear evidence of the growing relief problem in Western communities.[36] "In all manufacturing towns," "H" wrote philosophically

to the Pittsburgh Gazette, "there are a great proportion of persons who can barely support their families in health" and who in sickness become "a burden to the city." But considering the local situation intolerable, he asked the corporation to aid "these unfortunate persons . . . scattered about the dirty alleys . . . compelled to breathe unwholesome air, badly lodged, (and) coarsely dieted." In Cincinnati in 1815 the Benevolent Society admitted that it was overwhelmed, and urged the erection of a poor house. As early as 1806 the Kentucky Musical Society sponsored concerts to raise additional money for the care of the destitute "good people" of Lexington. Hence, even before the coming of hard times in 1819, all frontier cities had to struggle with the question of the increasing number of the needy.37

The wage earners, being permanent residents, eagerly drove roots into their communities, joining churches sometimes sending children to school, and taking an increasing part in city life. By contrast, the group of transients--wagoners boatmen, adventurers, and ne'er-do-wells--who lived at least part of the time in the towns, developed few stable contacts. Rough, boisterous, often drunk, usually fighting and swearing, without families or relations, sometimes preying on strangers, they seemed to have been barbarized by the wilderness of the new country. When in town they patronized cheap hotels and flop houses along the water front, gambled and caroused in grog shops, tippling houses and brothels and ran up the crime rate. Ironically, these men were the first contacts most travelers made with the West, a fact which sustained the dark reputation of the frontier.

Folklore, legend, and Morgan Neville's short tale about Mike Fink have been kind to the boatmen, throwing a charitable veil over their life and transforming a collection of questionable toughs into amphibious Robin Hoods.38 But the boatmen more accurately described themselves as half-alligator, half-horse, and tipped with snapping turtle. Though extremely skillful on the water and absolutely essential to the West's economy, they comprised a disturbing element in urban society. They hit town with distressing regularity, spending all their earnings in a few days, carousing about, often engaging the residents in pitched battle, and then shipping out again. In 1820 the Western Navigation and Bible Tract Society estimated that there were 20,000 rivermen on the Ohio most of whom were "thoughtless, profilgate and degenerate, whose influence, wherever they go, and wherever they stop, has a most deleterious effect on all with whom they associate." The association's analysis was more realistic than its remedy, which involved distributing the Bible and religious tracts such as "The Happy Waterman" and "The Drunkard's Looking Glass" among the boat hands.39

Though wagoners were an unstable component of urban societies in the West, they were never as numerous or explosive as the river crews. Travel by land brought them nightly to taverns and hotels, sparing them the long periods of isolation which characterized the life of keelmen and bargers. Yet they too were drifters with no settled contacts and few attachments. Occasionally some tired of the road and, capitalizing on their mercantile experience, opened shops and disappeared into the routine of community living.40 But more often they continued to exist chaotically, drinking their earnings, harassing inkeepers, widening the vocabularies of respectable travelers, and enlivening the night life of the towns.

No matter what their impact on the settled life of the West, the wagoners and boatmen played a critical role in the trade of the new area. Not this much could be said, however, for another transient class, which the mayor of St. Louis described as composed of "the adventurous, reckless and disolute (sic)." They came "in pursuit of pleasure and . . . almost everything but what is lawful and honorable." Each town had this kind of floating population. At first it

was fed from the outside but the early development of gangs--some teen-aged--suggests that cities bred as well as attracted the rootless. "In so new a spot," a Cincinnati editor wisely observed, "whose citizens are made up of all nations, and colors, and tongues it can scarcely be supposed that the very cream of human nature should be accumulated,--or at best, that some unseemly dregs should not have come in to defile the mixture."41

This low life centered in the grog shops, tippling houses, and brothels located on streets and alleys near the waterfront. Here criminals and other transients mingled with local riffraff and some respectable people, enjoying heavy drinking, lots of gambling, and a little time with scarlet women. Much of this was just straight-forward dissipation where falling men received a good nudge; but increasingly these districts became reservoirs of vice and lawlessness which flowed over onto the rest of the town, producing night revels, brutal assaults, burglary, and property destruction. More ominously, however, these amusement areas became the centers of partially organized crime which operated throughout the city, often making contact with the better classes.

No community escaped. In 1805, for example, Cincinnati authorities uncovered a ring of horse theives which included "many persons who have always been esteemed as worthy," and three months later they broke up a band of counterfeiters operating through the central-valley region. In 1814 arson racketeers terrorized Pittsburghers with letters demanding protection money to avoid having their property burned. A wave of burglaries baffled St. Louis police for some months in 1812 until they found "many light fingered gentlemen" were working together in various parts of the city.42 More significant still was the celebrated case of Cincinnati's Charles Vattier, whose associate, the mulatto Charles Britton, became a house servant of the Receiver of Public Monies in order to steal $47,000. Their trial disclosed that Vattier owned a gambling empire, including grog shops, bawdy houses, and taverns. His social and financial prestige was so great that he had no trouble in raising $20,000 bail and retaining the legal services of Nicholas Longworth. After his conviction, more than a dozen leading citizens successfully petitioned the Governor to suspend part of the sentence, and while in jail he received very genteel treatment.43

These instances reveal but a small part of the ugly layer of vice, crime, and lawlessness which existed in early urban society. No class had a monopoly on delinquency, but the great bulk of it sprang from the aimless and uncertain life of floaters. Many localities increased police forces to restrain them, while moral and religious associations sought more fundamental reform. Churches, Sunday schools, and charitable organizations tried to reach them and failed. In some places concern verged on panic. At the end of the war, leading Pittsburghers felt that "irregularity and vice" had developed so rapidly as to threaten the very foundations of society. Calling on the citizens to act to preserve order, they asked for support of their Moral Society, declaring, "We make no innovations--we embark on no novel experiment--we set up no new standards of morals--we encroach on no man's liberty--we lord it over no man's conscience--we stand on the defensive merely."44 But neither public nor private measures could get to the heart of the problem, and as towns grew and prospered, so did their dangerous classes.

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Lowest in the social hierarchy of the urban West were the Negroes, slave and free, who constituted a menial class. In Southern cities they performed nearly

all the unskilled labor, and in Northern towns like Pittsburgh and Cincinnati they fared hardly better. Though excluded from any real participation in town life they nevertheless exercised an immense but subtle influence on these societies. Since blacks did so much of the heavy toil, many whites shied away from manual labor; this gave a special status to employment requiring skill or, better still, no physical effort at all. In Southern cities the existence of slavery tended to sharpen distinctions throughout the whole social structure. To a lesser degree this was true in the North as well. "The evils of slave-holding are not confined to the parts of the country where involuntary labour exists," observed Timothy Flint, "but the neighborhood is infected. Certain kinds of labour are despised as being the work of slaves."[45] In Southern towns slaveowning became a convenient symbol of status, and retirement to a country estate surrounded by blacks was the crowning achievement.

Until the 1820's the Negro urban population in the West lived south of the Ohio, Northern cities having few colored residents. The 1810 census counted only 185 free blacks in Pittsburgh and less than 100 in Cincinnati. Though the number grew in both places, it never constituted more than two per cent of all townspeople.[46] On the other hand, Negroes in Lexington and Louisville comprised nearly a third of the entire population, and their numerical growth in the first decades of the century matched that of the whites. In Louisville the number of blacks jumped from 77 in 1800 to almost 500 in 1810; in Lexington, from 462 to 1,594.[47] No official figures are available for St. Louis before 1810, but in that year Brackenridge estimated "four hundred people of color" in a city of about 1,400.[48] In these localities the overwhelming majority of blacks were slaves, less than one per cent being free except in St. Louis, where it was somewhat higher.

Though some urban whites held more than a dozen Negroes, slave ownership was more widely diffused in the cities than on the countryside. In 1810 about half the heads of families in Fayette County possessed slaves, whereas in Lexington the figure was nearly 75 per cent. Some townsmen had extensive holdings. John Bard, for example, owned 71 blacks, Richard Higgins listed 55, and the Barr brothers accounted for 62 between them, while thirty-one others held more than 10. But generally the urban colored population was split up into small units, with a few Negroes living behind the master's house in a cabin facing an alley lined with the shacks of other slaves.[49] The plantation system had no counterpart in town, and even large owners did not have the space to isolate their blacks from the rest of the neighborhood.

Most slaves in urban Kentucky worked as domestics and general handymen. "Almost all the labor is performed by slaves," James McBride noted in Lexington; "they are the only waiters, and very few of the white people can wait upon themselves in the smallest matter." In the Falls City they served as porters in the transshipment business and toiled on the dock and landings, loading and unloading river cargoes. In both towns, too, they built most of the streets, bridges, and canals, and put them in repair in the spring. As these places turned increasingly to manufacturing, factories utilized Negroes in unskilled chores or in jobs where simple techniques were easily learned. Melish found "a number of black fellows busily employed" in "several ropewalks," and McBride visited one concern which "employed forty or fifty negro boys." Success in using Negroes in hemp works led to a general confidence that they could be adapted to many industrial lines. In 1810, when Richard Steele and his brother planned to build an iron mill, they chose Louisville as the site because of "the advantage we will have in working with slaves."[50]

Except for a few factories and large hotels, there was no way to utilize great numbers of Negroes in the city. Hence, large slaveholders hired out their blacks to people who needed additional labor. Most of these contracts ran for a year, though some covered a specific job or continued for an irregular length of time. Soon this system became formalized and the wages and terms were standardized.51 In fact, many large owners on the countryside found the practice so profitable that they sent their Negroes to town for work in the ropewalks, mills and factories.

Urban conditions and the hiring-out custom put severe strains on the structure of slavery, whose basic institutions were formed in a rural setting. Control of the Negroes, never easy even on isolated plantations proved more difficult in the city where blacks lived as neighbors and often worked together far from the owner's view. In many cases the hired-out slave became virtually free, bringing home his monthly pay but developing the habits of a wage earner. Sometimes this independence increased to such an extent that blacks hired themselves out, making their own bargains with employers and paying the master on a monthly basis. In such instances bondage was nominal, and the relationship was much like that of a landlord and tenant. Contemporaries themselves recognized that the city environment weakened the structure of slavery and threatened to dissolve the web of restraints on which the institution rested.52

As a result townspeople showed continual concern. From the first days of local government citizens urged their officials to tighten the controls over slaves. In 1800 the Lexington watch, which had been on a part-time schedule, was extended to cover Saturday night and Sunday to disperse the "large assemblages of negroes" which had "become troublesome." In that same year "numerous complaints" reached the city's trustees about slaves "being permitted to hire themselves, and keep houses that disturb the peace and quiet of society." Two years later, a petition noticed that the blacks in the South "are strongly bent on insurrection" and demanded rigid enforcement of the town codes.53 Though Kentucky laws forbade slaves to hire themselves out, the problem became so serious that both Louisville and Lexington passed ordinances toughening the state provisions and requiring the police to enforce them "with the utmost vigor,"54 Clearly urban conditions disturbed the historic relationship of slaves to the master and the community, and town records reveal the frantic effort of local governments to find appropriate means to sustain the system.

South of the Ohio, white society both shunned and feared the few free Negroes who many thought would create unrest among the slaves. The Northern attitude toward colored people was still untested, but in cities like Pittsburgh and Cincinnati the response was a mixture of sympathy and reserve. This ambivalence was no where better illustrated than in the constitution adopted by Ohio in 1883. Here the Negro was given his freedom both from slavery and indenture, but he was also consigned to a clearly inferior status. He could not vote, hold office, or serve in the militia. In the convention the Cincinnati delegates, taking a liberal view on these matters, supported nine to one a motion to extend suffrage to colored citizens, and heavily opposed a move to strip them of all their civil rights. Generally, however, free blacks occupied the lowest rung of the social ladder. "Disciplined to laborious occupations," they were increasingly cut off from other citizens, living apart and finding each year more barriers to their participation in religious, educational, and civic affairs.55

Within a generation Western cities developed stratified societies, whose lines, though never as well defined as in the older sections of the country, represented distinctions which contemporaries thought important. Since urban communities were still young and their social structures still loose, movement up and down the hierarchy took place constantly. But this mobility did not diminish the strong drive for status that characterized townspeople. Having come from places where differences mattered, city dwellers early tried to recreate as much as possible the familiar social landscape they had known. To visitors this seemed quite extraordinary. Fortescue Cuming commented that it was a "matter of ridicule and amusement to a person of the least philosophy."[56] Yet to Western urbanites, anxious to establish roots in fresh soil, these distinctions were meaningful, and as the towns grew, the boundaries sharpened.

Footnotes

1. H. M. Brackenridge, Recollections of Persons and Places in the West (2nd edn., Philadelphia, 1868), 185; Missouri Gazette, July 13, 1816; Liberty Hall (Cincinnati) June 11, 1815.
2. Cincinnati, Ordinances, March 9, 1825.
3. Brown, Western Gazetteer, 91.
4. Flint, Recollections, 37-8; Brackenridge, Recollections, 61.
5. Melish, Travels, II, 184; G. Worth "Recollections of Cincinnati," Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Quarterly Publications, XI (1916), 27.
6. Flint, Recollections, 63, 48; Mercury (Pittsburgh), November 25, 1813.
7. Drake, "Notices," 30.
8. Mercury (Pittsburgh), November 25, 1813.
9. McMurtrie, Sketches of Louisville, 119, 125; Liberty Hall (Cincinnati), February 26, 1816.
10. Niles' Register, June 11, 1814.
11. Liberty Hall (Cincinnati) April 29, 1816; A B. Bolles to S. Bolles, October 12, 1820, Samuel Bolles Letters, Wilson Collection (University of Kentucky Library, Lexington)
12. Liberty Hall (Cincinnati), October 16, 1815. The first report of the Female Society of Cincinnati for Charitable Purposes is signed by seven women, all wives of prominent merchants or ministers.
13. E. M. Davis, "The Letters of Tarleton Bates 1795-1805," Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, XII (1929), 48; Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour," Thwaites, ed., Western Travels, IV, 86.
14. J. McBride, "Journey to Lexington, Kentucky, 1810," Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Quarterly Publications, V (1910), 25; Ashe, Travels, 193; Kentucky Reporter, July 29, 1809.
15. McMurtrie, Sketches of Louisville, 119; Worth, "Recollections," 38; Ashe, Travels, 203; Marshall Bates, I, 239, 241.
16. Town of Lexington, Tax Assessment Book, 1808, 1809.
17. Town of Cincinnati, Duplicate of Corporation Tax for the Year 1805, Torrence Collection.
18. I Lionberger, "Glimpses of the Past: St. Louis Real Estate--In Review," Missouri Historical Review, IV (1937), 125.
19. A. Stoddard to Mrs. Benham, June 16, 1804, MS, Stoddard Papers (Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis); Schultz, Travels, II 40; McMurtrie, Sketches of Louisville, 117; Flint, Recollections, 52.

20. Leavy, "Memoir," Kentucky Hist. Soc. Register, XLI (1943), 251: 260· Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour," Thwaites, ed., Western Travels, IV, 187-88.
21. Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour," ibid., 189; Western Spy (Cincinnati) November 19, 1799· December 19, 1804; R. Bradley to W. Lytle, May 17, 1804, MS, William Lytle Collection (H.P.S.O., Cincinnati).
22. John Wrenshall (1761-1821) MS Journal (Pittsburgh Conference Methodist Historical Collection, Western Pennsylvania Historical Society Library, Pittsburgh)? IV, 114 V, 2· Kentucky Gazette, April 2 September 10, September 17, 1805; August 25, 1806.
23. "At this period, with very few exceptions," Henry Marie Brackenridge recalled, "the professional men, persons of wealth and education, and those in public offices were on the Federal side." Recollections, 70.
24. Pittsburgh Gazette, March 23, 1810· October 23, 1812; L. Atherton, Pioneer Merchants in Mid-America (Columbia, Missouri, 1939), 24.
25. D. D. Shira, "Sidelights on Two Famous Pioneer Physicians," Ohio State Medical Journal, XXIV (1938), 911.
26. Bernard Mayo, Henry Clay, Spokesman of the New West (Boston, 1937), 121. This term was applied to many leading civic figures in new cities and generally denoted a versatility in public affairs that was unconnected with any specific accomplishments of Franklin.
27. Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour," in Thwaites, ed., Western Travels, IV, 87.
28. Stubbs, Ohio Almanac, 1810, unfolioed; Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour," in Thwaites, ed., Western Travels, IV, 87, 187; Missouri Gazette, January 11, October 19, December 21, 1809, April 26, 1810 December 28, 1811, July 25, 1812, October 21, 1814; McMurtrie, Sketches of Louisville, 133.
29. Lexington, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh all had associations before 1815, usually as part of a state system. In 1803 Kentucky adopted the practice of such older states as Maryland, nNew York, New Jersey, and Delaware in forming the Kentucky Medical Society. Kentucky Gazette, August 16, 1803. Ohio's arrangement was the most detailed and effective: see J. Forman, "The Beginnings of the Licensing of Physicians in Ohio," Ohio State Medical Journal, XXXII (1936), 5-6.
30. Cabot, "The Carters in Early Ohio," 350.
31. Drake, Statistical View, 170: Missouri Gazette, March 21, 1811.
32. Pittsburgh, Borough Papers, September ?, 1803: Drake, Statistical View, 134; Melish, Travels, II, 128· Michaux, "Travels," in Thwaites, ed., Western Travels, III, 156.
33. Cramer, Cramer's Almanack, 1810, 52; T. Hulme, "A Journal Made During a Tour in the Western Countries of America," in Thwaites, ed., Western Travels, X 66.
34. Pittsburgh Gazette, December 21, 1804; Zadock Cramer The Navigator, Containing Directions for Navigating the Monongahela, Allegheny, Ohio and Mississippi Rivers ((Pittsburgh), 1808).
35. A(nthony) Doyle to A(ndrew) Doyle, May 31, 1819, Missouri History Papers, (Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis); Melish, Travels, II, 188.
36. As early as 1800 "Philanthropy" in Cincinnati complained of high poor taxes, Western Spy (Cincinnati), October 23, 1800. For a similar argument see Commonwealth (Pittsburgh), December 16, 1811; Pittsburgh Gazette, May 14, 1813.
37. Pittsburgh Gazette, December 8, 1818; Liberty Hall (Cincinnati), November 21, 1815; Kentucky Gazette, July 8, 806.
38. M. Neville, "The Last of the Boatmen," 107-122.
39. For a good treatment of the boatmen, see Baldwin, The Keelboat Age, 85-116; Liberty Hall (Cincinnati), May 17, 1820.
40. Cramer noticed that sometimes a boatman, too, left the water. "He sets himself down in some town or village as a wholesale merchant, druggist, or apothecary, practicing physician, or lawyer or something else that renders him

respectable in the eyes of his neighbors" and assiduously conceals his origins. Cramer, Navigator, 1814, 33.

41. St. Louis, Minutes, January 14, 1829; Liberty Hall (Cincinnati), April 1, 1816.
42. Western Spy (Cincinnati), January 30 1805; April 17, 1805; Pittsburgh Gazette, April 15, 1814; Missouri Gazette, February 22, 1812.
43. For a discussion of this fascinating case, see "Two Gentlemen of Law Knowledge," The Trial of Charles Vattier (Cincinnati, 1807). See also Liberty Hall (Cincinnati), March 24 April 28, July 14, August 3, November 3, 1807.
44. This was the program of the Pittsburgh Moral Society, which had been organized as early as 1799. Pittsburgh Gazette, August 20, 1816.
45. James Flint, Letters from America (Edinburgh, 1822), 218.
46. United States Census, 1810, 44, 62.
47. United States Census, 1800, 29 AP; United States Census, 1810 71a, 72a. In 1816 a local census in Lexington numbered 1,845 slaves in a total population of 5,448. Lexington Trustees Book, June 6, 1816.
48. H. M. Brackenridge, Views of Louisiana (Pittsburgh, 1814), 222.
49. United States Census 1810: MS Lexington Public Library, Lexington: Leavy, "Memoir," Kentucky Hist. Soc. Register, XLI (1943), 323.
50. McBride, "Journey to Lexington," 25; Melish, Travels, II, 186: McBride, 24; R. Steele to W. Lytle, December 15, 1810, MS, William Lytle Collection (Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Cincinnati).
51. Kentucky Gazette, November 20, 1804; January 3, 1809, January 8, 1811, November 22, 1813.
52. There is abundant evidence that slavery in cities produced a different kind of Negro from that of the country plantation. As early as the 18th century a visitor to South Carolina described country slaves as "contented, sober, modest, humble, civil and obliging," contrasting them to the Charleston slave who was "rude, unmannerly, insolent, and shameless." Quoted in C. Bridenbaugh, Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South (Baton Rouge, 1953), 63.
53. Lexington, Trustees Book, July 7, 1800; July 25, 1800; June 22, 1802.
54. Louisville, Trustees Book, March 9, 1809. Lexington's new ordinance included to lashes for slaves "loitering in the streets, corners . . . off the owner or hirers premises" or for "strolling about the Town."
55. Drake, Statistical View, 172; R. C. Wade, "The Negro in Cincinnati, 1800-1830," The Journal of Negro History, XXXIX (1954), 43-57.
56. Cuming, "Sketches of a Tour," in Thwaites, ed., Western Travels, IV 87.

THE CULT OF TRUE WOMANHOOD

The years in the nineteenth century prior to the Civil War were a period of reform in American life. Hardly any major aspect of life escaped the scrutiny of some group determined to change it. There were campaigns to abolish slavery, for better care of the insane, for educational improvements, and for temperance. Religion was heavily affected by various reform movements and resulted in the decline of orthodox Calvinism and the emergence of new sects. Women were involved in all of these movements, and realized soon that they too were among the disadvantaged in U.S. society. The result was a womenrs rights movement led by figures such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Frances Wright and the Grimké sisters.

The involvement of women in these activities outside the home was the result of changes that had been taking place in American life that were, in part, produced by growing disparities of wealth associated with industrialization and urbanization. On the farm, the sexual division of labor was fairly clear; men farmed and women tended children and took care of household tasks. In the cities, however, the poorer women often had to assume the additional responsibilities of taking a factory job. Consequently, many of the urban working poor women had two full-time jobs; as factory operative and as housewife.

For the growing ranks of middle-class women, however, the Industrial Revolution brought an increase in leisure time. These women did not have to work outside the home, and the multiplication of labor-saving household devices, coupled with the availability of household servants as the result of recent immigration, freed them considerably for new interests and activities. It was this newly leisured class of women that produced most of the members of the ante-bellum women's rights movement.
leaders of this campa
In the following study, Barbara Welter, describes the ideal of "True Womanhood" that was exhalted in the popular literature of the day--partly as a reaction against the rising ambitions of many middle-class women.

Questions for study:

1. What were the four cardinal virtues of true womanhood?

2. What was the function of the woman in nineteenth-century America as expressed in these women's magazines?

3. What was the role of female education?

4. Compare and contrast the middle class attitudes towards women as described by Welter with those of contemporary Latin America.

THE CULT OF TRUE WOMANHOOD: 1820-1860[1]

Barbara Welter

The nineteenth-century American man was a busy builder of bridges and railroads, at work long hours in a materialistic society. The religious veines of his forebearers were neglected in practice if not in intent, and he occasionally felt some guilt that he had turned this new land, this temple of the chosen people, into one vast countinghouse. But he could salve his experience by reflecting that he had left behind a hostage, not only to fortune, but to all the values which he held so dear and treated so lightly. Woman, in the cult of True Womanhood[1] presented by the women's magazines, gift annuals and religious literature of the nineteenth century, was the hostage in the home.[2] In a society where values changed frequently, where fortunes rose and fell with frightening rapidity, where social and economic mobility provided instability as well as hope, one thing at least remained the same--a true woman was a true woman, wherever she was found. If anyone, male or female, dared to tamper with the complex of virtues which made up True Womanhood, he was damned immediately as an enemy of God, of civilization, and of the Republic. It was a fearful obligation, a solemn responsibility, which the nineteenth-century American woman had--to uphold the pillars of the temple with her frail white hand.

The attributes of True Womanhood, by which a woman judged herself and was judged by her husband, her neighbors and society, could be divided into four cardinal virtues--piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity. Put them all together and they spelled mother, daughter, sister, wife--woman. Without them, no matter whether there was fame, achievement or wealth, all was ashes. With them she was promised happiness and power.

Religion or piety was the core of woman's virtue, the source of her strength. Young men looking for a mate were cautioned to search first for piety, for if that were there, all else would follow.[3] Religion belonged to woman by divine right, a gift of God and nature. This "peculiar susceptibility" to religion was given her for a reason: "the vestal flame of piety, lighted up by Heaven in the breast of woman" would throw its beams into the naughty world of men.[4] So far would its candle power reach that the "Universe might be Enlightened, Improved, and Harmonized by WOMAN!!"[5] She would be another, better Eve, working in cooperation with the Redeemer, bringing the world back "from its revolt and sin."[6] The world would be reclaimed for God through her suffering, for "God increased the cares and sorrows of woman, that she might be sooner constrained to accept the terms of salvation."[7] A popular poem by Mrs. Frances Osgood, "The Triumph of the Spiritual over the Sensual," expressed just this sentiment, woman's purifying passionless love bringing an erring man back to Christ.[8]

Dr. Charles Meigs, explaining to a graduating class of medical students why women were naturally religious, said that "hers is a pious mind. Her confiding nature leads her more readily than men to accept the proffered grace of the Gospel"[9] Caleb Atwater, Esq., writing in The Ladies' Repository, saw the hand of the Lord in female piety: "Religion is exactly what a woman needs, for it gives her that dignity that best suits her dependence."[10] And Mrs. John Sandford, who had no very high opinion of her sex, agreed thoroughly: "Religion is just what woman needs. Without it she is ever restless or unhappy. . . ."[11] Mrs. Sandford and the others did not speak only of that restlessness of the human heart, which St. Augustine notes, that can only find its peace in God. They spoke rather of religion as a kind of tranquilizer for the many undefined longings which swept even the most pious young girl, and about which it was better to pray than to think.

One reason religion was valued was that it did not take a woman away from her "proper sphere," her home. Unlike participation in other societies or movements, church work would not make her less domestic or submissive, less a True Woman. In religious vineyards, said the Young Ladies' Literary and Missionary Report, "you may labor without the apprehension of detracting from the charms of feminine delicacy." Mrs. S. L. Dagg, writing from her chapter of the Society in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, was equally reassuring: "As no sensible woman will suffer her intellectual pursuits to clash with her domestic duties" she should concentrate on religious work "which promotes these very duties."[12]

The women's seminaries aimed at aiding women to be religious, as well as accomplished. Mr. Holyoke's catalogue promised to make female education "a handmaid to the Gospel and an efficient auxiliary in the great task of renovating the world."[13] The Young Ladies' Seminary at Bordentown, New Jersey, declared its most important function to be "the forming of a sound and virtuous character."[14] In Keene, New Hampshire, the Seminary tried to instill a "consistent and useful character" in its students, to enable them in this life to be "a good friend, wife and mother," but more important, to qualify them for "the enjoyment of Celestial Happiness in the life to come."[15] And Joseph M'D. Mathews, Principal of Oakland Female Seminary in Hillsborough, Ohio, believed that "Female education should be preeminently religious."[16]

If religion was so vital to a woman, irreligion was almost too awful to contemplate. Women were warned not to let their literary or intellectual pursuits take them away from God. Sarah Josepha Hale spoke darkly of those who, like Margaret Fuller, threw away the "One True Book" for others, open to error. Mrs. Hale used the unfortunate Miss Fuller as fateful proof that "the greater the intellectual force, the greater and more fatal the errors into which women fall who wander from the Rock of Salvation, Christ the Saviour. . ."[17]

One gentleman, writing on "Female Irreligion," reminded his readers that "man may make himself a brute, and does so very often, but can woman brutify herself to his level--the lowest level of human nature--without exerting special wonder?" Fanny Wright, because she was godless "was no woman, mother though she be." A few years ago, he recalls, such women would have been whipped. In any case, "woman never looks lovelier than in her reverence for religion" and, conversely, "female irreligion is the most revolting feature in human character."[18]

Purity was as essential as piety to a young woman, its absence as unnatural and unfeminine. Without it she was, in fact, no woman at all, but a member of some lower order. A "fallen woman" was a "fallen angel," unworthy of the celestial company of her sex. To contemplate the loss of purity brought tears; to be guilty of such a crime, in the women's magazines at least, brought madness or death. Even the language of the flowers had bitter words for it: a dried white rose symbolized "Death Preferable to Loss of Innocence."[19] The marriage night was the single great event of a woman's life, when she bestowed her greatest treasure upon her husband, and from that time on was completely dependent upon him, an empty vessel,[20] without legal or emotional existence of her own.[21]

Therefore all True Women were urged, in the strongest possible terms, to maintain their virtue, although men, being by nature more sensual than they, would try to assault it. Thomas Branagan admitted in The Excellency of the Female Character Vindicated that his sex would sin and sin again, they could not help it, but woman, stronger and purer must not give in and let man "take liberties incompatible with her delicacy." "If you do," Branagan addressed his gentle reader, "you will be left in silent sadness to bewail your credulity, imbecility, duplicity, and premature prostitution."[22]

Mrs. Eliza Farrar, in The Young Lady's Friend, gave practical logistics to avoid trouble: "Sit not with another in a place that is too narrow; read not out of the same book; let not your eagerness to see anything induce you to place your head too close to another person's."[23]

If such good advice was ignored the consequences were terrible and inexorable. In Girlhood and Womanhood: or, Sketches of My Schoolmates, by Mrs. A. J. Graves (a kind of mid-nineteenth-century The Group), the bad ends of a boarding school class of girls are scrupulously recorded. The worst end of all is reserved for "Amelia Dorrington: The Lost One." Amelia died in the almshouse "the wretched victim of depravity and intemperance" and all because her mother had let her be "high-spirited not prudent." These girlish high spirits had been misinterpreted by a young man, with disastrous results. Amelia's "thoughtless levity" was "followed by a total loss of virtuous principle" and Mrs. Graves editorializes that "the coldest reserve is more admirable in a woman a man wishes to make his wife, than the least approach to undue familiarity."[24]

A popular and often reprinted story by Fanny Forester told the sad tale of "Lucy Dutton". Lucy "with the seal of innocence upon her heart, and a rose-leaf on her cheek" came out of her vine-covered cottage and ran into a city slicker. "And Lucy was beautiful and trusting, and thoughtless: and he was gay, selfish and profligate. Needs the story to be told? . . . Nay, censor, Lucy was a child--consider how young, how very untaught--oh! Her innocence was no match for the sophistry of a gay, city youth! Spring came and shame was stamped upon the cottage at the foot of the hill." The baby died; Lucy went mad at the funeral and finally died herself. "Poor, poor Lucy Dutton! The grave is a blessed couch and pillow to the wretched. Rest thee there, poor Lucy!"[25] The frequency with which derangement follows loss of virtue suggests the exquisite sensibility of woman, and the possibility that, in the women's magazines at least, her intellect was geared to her hymen, not her brain.

If, however, a woman managed to withstand man's assults on her virtue, she demonstrated her superiority and her power over him. Eliza Farnham, trying to prove this female superiority, concluded smugly that "the purity of women is the everlasting barrier against which the tides of man's sensual nature surge."[26]

A story in The Lady's Amaranth illustrates this dominance. It is set, improbably, in Sicily, where two lovers, Bianca and Tebaldo, have been separated because her family insisted she marry a rich old man. By some strange circumstance the two are in a shipwreck and cast on a desert island, the only survivors. Even here, however, the rigid standards of True Womanhood prevail. Tebaldo unfortunately forgets himself slightly, so that Bianca must warn him: "We may not indeed gratify our fondness by caresses, but it is still something to bestow our kindest language, and looks and prayers, and all lawful and honest attentions on each other." Something, perhaps, but not enough, and Bianca must further remonstrate: "It is true that another man is my husband, but you are my guardian angel." When even that does not work she says in a voice of sweet reason, passive and proper to the end, that she wishes he wouldn't but "still, if you insist, I will become what you wish; but I beseech you to consider, ere that decision, that debasement which I must suffer in your esteem." This appeal to his own double standards holds the beast in him at bay. They are rescued, discover that the old husband is dead, and after "mourning a decent season" Bianca finally gives in, legally.[27]

Men could be counted on to be grateful when women thus saved them from themselves. William Alcott, guiding young men in their relations with the opposite sex, told them that "nothing is better calculated to preserve a young man from contamination of low pleasures and pursuits than frequent intercourse with the more refined and

virtuous of the other sex." And he added, one assumes in equal innocence, that youths should "observe and learn to admire, that purity and ignorance of evil which is the characteristic of well-educated young ladies, and which, when we are near them, raises us above those sordid and sensual considerations which hold such sway over men in their intercourse with each other."28

The Rev. Jonathan F. Stearns was also impressed by female chastity in the face of male passion, and warned woman never to compromise the source of her power: "Let her lay aside delicacy, and her influence over our sex is gone."29

Women themselves accepted, with pride but suitable modesty, this priceless virtue. The Ladies' Wreath, in "Woman the Creature of God and the Manufacturer of Society," saw purity as her greatest gift and chief means of discharging her duty to save the world: "Purity is the Highest beauty--the true pole-star which is to guide humanity aright in its long, varied, and perilous voyage."30

Sometimes, however, a woman did not see the dangers to her treasure. In that case, they must be pointed out to her, usually by a male. In the nineteenth century any form of social change was tantamount to an attack on woman's virtue, if only it was correctly understood. For example, dress reform seemed innocuous enough and the bloomers worm by the lady of that name and her followers were certainly modest attire. Such was the reasoning only of the ignorant. In another issue of The Ladies' Wreath a young lady is represented in dialogue with her "Professor." The girl expresses admiration for the bloomer costume--it gives freedom of motion, is healthful and attractive. The "Professor" sets her straight. Trousers, he explains, are "only one of the many manifestations of that wild spirit of socialism and agrarian radicalism which is at present so rife in our land." The young lady recants immediately: "If this dress has any connexion with Fourierism or socialism, or fanaticism in any shape whatever, I have no disposition to wear it at all . . . no true woman would so far compromise her delicacy as to espouse, however unwittingly, such a cause."31

America could boast that her daughters were particularly innocent. In a poem on "The American Girl" the author wrote proudly:

> Her eye of light is the diamond bright,
> Her innocence the pearl,
> And these are ever the bridal gems
> That are worn by the American Girl.32

Lydia Maria Child, giving advice to mothers, aimed at preserving that spirit of innocence. She regretted that "want of confidence between mothers and daughters on delicate subjects" and suggested a woman tell her daughter a few facts when she reached the age of twelve to "set her mind at rest." Then Mrs. Child confidently hoped that a young lady's "instinctive modesty" would "prevent her from dwelling on the information until she was called upon to use it."33 In the same vein, a book of advice to the newly married was titled Whisper to a Bride 34 As far as intimate information was concerned, there was no need to whisper, since the book contained none at all.

A masculine summary of this virtue was expressed in a poem, "Female Charms":

I would have her as pure as the snow on the mount--
As true as the smile that to infamy's given--
As pure as the wave of the crystalline fount,
Yet as warm in the heart as the sunlight of heaven.
With a mind cultivated, not boastingly wise,
I could gaze on such beauty, with exquisite bliss;
With her heart on her lips and her soul in her eyes--
What more could I wish in dear woman than this.35

Man might, in fact, ask no more than this in woman, but she was beginning to ask more of herself, and in the asking was threatening the third powerful and necessary virtue, submission. Purity, considered as a moral imperative, set up a dilemma which was hard to resolve. Woman must preserve her virtue until marriage and marriage was necessary for her happiness. Yet marriage was, literally, an end to innocence. She was told not to question this dilemma, but simply to accept it.

Submission was perhaps the most feminine virtue expected of women. Men were supposed to be religious, although they rarely had time for it, and supposed to be pure, although it came awfully hard to them, but men were the movers, the doers, the actors. Women were the passive, submissive responders. The order of dialogue was, of course, fixed in Heaven. Man was "woman's superior by God's appointment, if not in intellectual dowry, at least by official decree." Therefore, as Charles Elliott argued in The Ladies' Repository, she should submit to him "for the sake of good order at least."36 In The Ladies' Companion a young wife was quoted approvingly as saying that she did not think woman should "feel and act for herself" because "when next to God, her husband is not the tribunal to which her heart and intellect appeals--the golden bowl of affection is broken."37 Women were warned that if they tampered with this quality they tampered with the order of the Universe.

The Young Lady's Book summarized the necessity of the passive virtues in its readers' lives: "It is, however, certain, that in whatever situation of life a woman is placed from her cradle to her grave, a spirit of obedience and submission, pliability of temper, and humility of mind, are required from her."38

Woman understood her position if she was the right kind of woman, a true woman. "She feels herself weak and timid. She needs a protector," declared George Burnap, in his lectures on The Sphere and Duties of Woman. "She is in a measure dependent. She asks for wisdom, constancy, firmness, perseverance, and she is willing to repay it all by the surrender of the full treasure of her affections. Woman despises in man every thing like herself except a tender heart. It is enough, that she is effeminate and weak, she does not want another like herself."39 Or put even more strongly by Mrs. Sandford: "A really sensible woman feels her dependence. She does what she can, but she is conscious of inferiority, and therefore grateful for support."40

Mrs. Sigourney, however, assured young ladies that although they were separate, they were equal. This difference of the sexes did not imply inferiority, for it was part of that same order of Nature established by Him "who bids the oak brave the fury of the tempest, and the alpine flower lean its cheek on the bosom of external snows."41 Dr. Meigs had a different analogy to make the same point, contrasting the anatomy of the Apollo of the Belvedere (illustrating the male principle) with the Venus de Medici (illustrating the female principle). "Woman," said the physician, with a kind of clinical gallantry, "has a head almost too small for intellect but just big enough for love."42

This love itself was to be passive and responsive. "Love, in the heart of a woman," wrote Mrs Farrar, "should partake largely of the nature of gratitude. She should love, because she is already loved by one deserving her regard."[43]

Woman was to work in silence, unseen, like Wordsworth's Lucy. Yet, "working like nature, in secret" her love goes forth to the world "to regulate its pulsation, and send forth from its heart, in pure and temperate flow, the life-giving current."[44] She was to work only for pure affection, without thought of money or ambition. A poem, "Woman and Fame," by Felicia Hemans, widely quoted in many of the gift books, concludes with a spirited renunciation of the gift of fame:

> Away! to me, a woman, bring
> Sweet flowers from affection's spring.[45]

"True feminine genius," said Grace Greenwood (Sara Jane Clarke), "is ever timid, doubtful, and clingingly dependent; a perpetual childhood." And she advised literary ladies in an essay on "The Intellectual Woman"--"Don't trample on the flowers while longing for the stars."[46] A wife who submerged her own talents to work for her husband was extolled as an example of a true woman. In Women of Worth: A Book for Girls, Mrs. Ann Flaxman, an artist of promise herself, was praised because she "devoted herself to sustain her husband's genius and aid him in his arduous career."[47]

Caroline Gilman's advice to the bride aimed at establishing this proper order from the beginning of a marriage: "Oh, young and lovely bride, watch well the first moments when your will conflicts with his to whom God and society have given the control. Reverence his wishes even when you do not his opinions."[48]

Mrs. Gilman's perfect wife in Recollections of a Southern Matron realizes that "the three golden threads with which domestic happiness is woven" are "to repress a harsh answer, to confess a fault, and to stop (right or wrong) in the midst of self-defense, in gentle submission." Women could do this, hard though it was, because in her heart she knew she was right and so could afford to be forgiving, even a trifle condescending. "Men are not unreasonable," averred Mrs. Gilman. "There difficulties lie in not understanding the moral and physical nature of our sex They often wound through ignorance, and are surprised at having offended." Wives were advised to do their best to reform men, but if they couldn't to give up gracefully. "If any habit of his annoyed me, I spoke of it once or twice, calmly, then bore it quietly."[49]

A wife should occupy herself "only with domestic affairs--wait till your husband confides to you those of a high importance--and do not give your advice until he asks for it," advised The Lady's Token. At all times she should behave in a manner becoming a woman, who had "no arms other than gentleness." Thus "if he is abusive, never retort."[50] A Young Lady's Guide to the Harmonious Development of a Christian Character suggested that females should "become as little children" and "avoid a controversial spirit."[51] The Mother's Assistant and Young Lady's Friend listed "Always Conciliate" as its first commandment in "Rules for Conjugal and Domestic Happiness." Small wonder that these same rules ended with the succinct maxim" "Do not expect too much."[52]

As mother, as well as wife, woman was required to submit to fortune. In Letters to Mothers Mrs. Sigourney sighed: "To bear the evils and sorrows which may be appointed us, with a patient mind, should be the continual effort of our sex. . . . It seems, indeed, to be expected of us: since the passive and enduring virtues are more immediately within our province." Of these trials "the hardest was to bear the loss of children with submission" but the indomitable Mrs. Sigourney found strength

to murmur to the bereaved mother: "The Lord loveth a cheerful give."53 The Ladies Parlor Companion agreed thoroughly in "A Submissive Mother," in which a mother who had already buried two children and was nursing a dying baby saw her sole remaining child "probably scalded to death. Handing over the infant to die in the arms of a friend, she bowed in sweet submission to the double stroke." But the child "through the goodness of God survived, and the mother learned to say 'Thy will be done'"54

Woman then, in all her roles, accepted submission as her lot. It was a lot she had not chosen or deserved. As Godey's said, "The lesson of submission is forced upon woman." Without comment or criticism the writer affirms that "to suffer and to be silent under suffering seems the great command she has to obey."55 George Burnap referred to a woman's life as "a series of suppressed emotions."56 She was, as Emerson said, "more vulnerable, more infirm, more mortal than man."57 The death of a beautiful woman, cherished in fiction, represented woman as the innocent victim, suffering without sin, too pure and good for this world but too weak and passive to resist its evil forces.58 The best refuge for such a delicate creature was the warmth and safety of her home.

The true woman's place was unquestionably by her own fireside-as daughter, sister, but most of all as wife and mother. Therefore domesticity was among the virtues most prized by the women's magazines. "As society is constituted," wrote Mrs. S. E. Farley, in the "Domestic and Social Claims on Woman," "the true dignity and beauty of the female character seem to consist in a right understanding and faithful and cheerful performance of social and family duties."59 Sacred Scripture reenforced wocial pressure: "St. Paul knew what was best for women when he advised them to be domestic," said Mrs. Sandford. "There is composure at home; there is something sedative in the duties which hone involves. It affords security not only from the world, but from delusions and errors of every kind."60

From her home woman performed her great task ofbringing men back to God. The Young Ladies' Class Book was sure that "the domestic fireside is the great guardian of society against the excesses of human passions."61 The Lady at Home expressed its convictions in its very title and concluded that "even if we cannot reform the world in a moment, we can begin the work by reforming ourselves and our households--it is woman's mission. Let her not look away from our own little family circle for the means of producing moral and social reforms, but begin at home."62

Home was supposed to be a cheerful place, so that brothers, husbands and sons would not go elsewhere in search of a good time. Woman was expected to dispense comfort and cheer. In writing the biography of Margaret Mercer (every inch a true woman) her biographer (male) notes: "She never forgot that it is the peculiar province of woman to minister to the comfort, and promote the happiness, first, of those most nearly allied to her, and then to those, who by the Providence of God are placed in a state of dependence upon her."63 Many other essays in the women's journals showed woman as comforter: "Woman, Man's Best Friend," "Woman, the Greatest Social Benefit," "Woman, a Being to Come Home To," "The Wife: Source of Comfort and the Spring of Joy."64

One of the most important functions of woman as comforter was her role as nurse. Her own health was probably, although regrettably, delicate.65 Many homes had "little sufferers," those pale children who wasted away to saintly deaths. And there were enough other illnesses of youth and age, major and minor, to give the nineteenth-century American woman nursing experience. The sickroom called for the

exercise of her higher qualities of patience, mercy and gentleness as well as for her housewifely arts. She could thus fulfill her dual feminine function--beauty and usefulness.

The cookbooks of the period offer formulas for gout cordials, ointment for sore nipples, hiccough and cough remedies, opening pills and refreshing drinks for fever, along with recipes for pound cake, jumbles, stewed calf's head and currant wine.[66] The Ladies' New Book of Cookery believed that "food prepared by the kind hand of a wife, mother, sister, friend" tasted better and had a "restorative power which money cannot purchase."[67]

A chapter of The Young Lady's Friend was devoted to woman's privilege as "ministering spirit at the couch of the sick." Mrs. Farrar advised a soft voice, gentle and clean hands, and a cheerful smile. She also cautioned against an excess of female delicacy. That was all right for a young lady in the parlor, but not for bedside manners. Leeches, for example, were to be regarded as "a curious piece of mechanism . . . their ornamental stripes should recommend them even to the eye, and their valuable services to our feelings." And she went on calmly to discuss their use. Nor were women to shrink from medical terminology, since "if you cultivate right views of the wonderful structure of the body, you will be as willing to speak to a physician of the bowels as the brains of your patient."[68]

Nursing the sick, particularly sick males, not only made a woman feel useful and accomplished, but increased her influence. In a piece of heavy-handed humor in Godey's a man confessed that some women were only happy when their husbands were ailing that they might have the joy of nursing him to recovery, "thus gratifying their medical vanity and their love of power by making him more dependent upon them"[69] In a similar vein a husband sometimes suspected his wife "almost wishes me dead--for the pleasure of being utterly inconsolable."[70]

In the home women were not only the highest adornment of civilization, but they were supposed to keep busy at morally uplifting tasks. Fortunately most of housework, if looked at in true womanly fashion, could be regarded as uplifting. Mrs. Sigourney extolled its virtues: "The science of housekeeping affords exercise for the judgment and energy, ready recollection, and patient self-possession, that are the characteristics of a superior mind."[71] According to Mrs. Farrar, making beds was good exercise, the repetitiveness of routine tasks inculcated patience and perseverance, and proper management of the home was a surprising complex art: "There is more to be learned about pouring out tea and coffee, than most young ladies are willing to believe."[72] Godey's went so far as to suggest coyly, in "Learning vs. Housewifery," that the two were complementary, not opposed: chemistry could be utilized in cooking, geometry in dividing cloth, and phrenology in discovering talent in children.[73]

Women were to master every variety of needlework, for, as Mrs. Sigourney pointed out, "Needle-work, in all its forms of use, elegance, and ornament, has ever been the appropriate occupation of woman."[74] Embroidery improved taste; knitting promoted serenity and economy.[75] Other forms of artsy-craftsy activity for her leisure moments included painting on glass or velvet, Poonah work, tussy-mussy frames for her own needlepoint or water colors, stands for hyacinths, hair bracelets or baskets of feathers.[76]

She was expected to have a special affinity for flowers. To the editors of The Lady's Token, "A Woman never appears more truly in here sphere, than when she divides her time between her domestic avocations and the culture of flowers."77 She could write letters, an activity particularly feminine since it had to do with the outpouring of the heart.78 or practice her drawingroom skills of singing and playing an instrument. She might even read.

Here she faced a bewildering array of advice The female was dangerously addicted to novels, according to the literature of the period She should avoid them, since they interfered with "serious piety." If she simply couldn't help herself and read them anyway, she should choose edifying ones from lists of morally acceptable authors. She should study history since it "showed the depravity of the human heart and the evil nature of sin". On the whole, "religious biography was best."79

The women's magazines themselves could be read without any loss of concern for the home Godey's promised the husband that he would find his wife "no less assiduous for his reception, or less sincere in welcoming his return" as a result of reading their magazine.80 The Lily of the Valley won its right to be admitted to the boudoir by confessing that it was "like its namesake numble and unostentatious, but it is yet pure, and we trust free from moral imperfections."81

No matter what later authorities claimed, the nineteenth century knew that girls could be ruined by a book The seduction stories regard "exciting and dangerous books" as contributory causes of disaster. The man without honorable intentions always provides the innocent maiden with such books as a prelude to his assult on her virtue.82 Books which attacked or seemed to attack woman's accepted place in society were regarded as equally dangerous. A reviewer of Harriet Martineau's Society in America wanted it kept out of the hands of American women. They were so susceptible to persuasion, with their "gentle yielding natures" that they might listen to "the bold ravings of the hard-featured of their own sex." The frightening result: "Such reading will unsettle them for their true station and pursuits, and they will throw the world back again into confusion."83

The debate over women's education posed the question of whether a "finished" education detracted from the practice of housewifely arts. Again it proved to be a case of semantics, for a true woman's education was never "finished" until she was instructed in the gentle science of homemaking.84 Helen Irving, writing on "Literary Women," made it very clear that if women invoked the muse, it was as a genie of the household lamp. "If the necessities of her position require these duties at her hands, she will perform them nonetheless cheerfully, that she knows herself capable of higher things." The literary woman must conform to the same standards as any other woman: "That her home shall be made a loving place of rest and joy and comfort for those who are dear to her, will be the first wish of every true woman's heart "85 Mrs. Ann Stephens told women who wrote to make sure they did not sacrifice one domestic duty. "As for genius, make it a domestic plant. Let its roots strike deep in your house . "86

The fear of "blue stockings" (the eighteenth-century male's term of derision for educated or literary women) need not persist for nineteenth-century American men. The magazines presented spurious dialogues in which bachelors were convinced of their fallacy in fearing educated wives One such dialogue took place between a young man and his female cousin. Ernest deprecates learned ladies ("A Woman is far more lovable than a philosopher") but Alice refutes him with the beautiful example of their Aunt Barbara, who "although she has perpetrated the heinous crime of writing some half dozen folios" is still a model of "the spirit of feminine gentleness."

His memory prodded, Ernest concedes that, by George, there was a woman: "When I last had a cold she not only made me a bottle of cough syrup, but when I complained of nothing new to read, set to work and wrote some twenty stanzas on consumption."87

The magazines were filled with domestic tragedies in which spoiled young girls learned that when there was a hungry man to feed French and china painting were not helpful. According to these stories many a marriage is jeopardized because the wife has not learned to keep house. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote a sprightly piece of personal experience for Godey's ridiculing her own bad housekeeping as a bride. She used the same theme in a story, "The Only Daughter," in which the pampered beauty learns the facts of domestic life from a rather difficult source, her mother-in-law. Mrs. Hamilton tells Caroline in the sweetest way possible to shape up in the kitchen, reserving her rebuke for her son: "You are her husband--her guide--her protector--now see what you can do," she admonishes him. "Give her credit for every effort: treat her faults with tenderness; encourage and praise whenever you can, and depend upon it, you will see another woman in her." He is properly masterful, she properly domestic, and in a few months Caroline is making lumpless gravy and keeping up with the darning. Domestic tranquility has been restored and the young wife moralizes: "Bring up a girl to feel that she has a responsible part to bear in promoting the happiness of the family, and you make a reflecting being of her at once, and remove that lightness and frivolity of character which makes her shrink from graver studies."88 These stories end with the heroine drying her hands on her apron and vowing that her daughter will be properly educated, in piecrust as well as Poonah work.

The female seminaries were quick to defend themselves against any suspicion of interfering with the role which nature's God had assigned to women. They hoped to enlarge and deepen that role, but not to change its setting. At the Young Ladies' Seminary and Collegiate Institute in Monroe City, Michigan, the catalogue admitted few of its graduates would be likely "to fill the learned professions." Still, they were called to "other scenes of usefulness and honor." The average woman is to be "the presiding genius of love" in the home, where she is to "give a correct and elevated literary taste to her children, and to assume that influential station that she ought to possess as the companion of an educated man."89

At Miss Pierce's famous school in Litchfield, the students were taught that they had "attained the perfection of their characters when they could combine their elegant accomplishments with a turn for solid domestic virtues."90 Mt. Holyoke paid pious tribute to domestic skills: "Let a young lady despise this branch of the duties of woman and she despises the appointments of her existence." God, nature and the Bible "enjoin these duties on the sex, and she cannot violate them with impunity." Thus warned, the young lady would have to seek knowledge of these duties elsewhere, since it was not in the curriculum at Mt. Holyoke. "We would not take this privilege from the mother."91

One reason for knowing her way around a kitchen was that America was "a land of precarious fortunes," as Lydia Maria Child pointed out in her book The Frugal Housewife: Dedicated to Those Who are Not Ashamed of Economy. Mrs. Child's chapter "How to Endure Poverty" prescribed a combination of piety and knowledge--the kind of knowledge found in a true woman's education, "a thorough religious useful education."92 The woman who had servants today might tomorrow, because of a depression or panic, be forced to do her own work. If that happened she knew how to act, for she was to be the same cheerful consoler of her husband in their cottage as in their mansion.

An essay by Washington Irving, much quoted in the gift annuals, discussed the value of a wife in case of business reverses: "I have observed that a married man falling

misfortune is more apt to achieve his situation in the world than a single one . . . it is beautifully ordained by Providence that woman, who is the ornament of man in his happier hours, should be his stay and solace when smitten with sudden calamity."93

A story titled simply but eloquently "The Wife" dealt with the quiet heroism of Ellen Graham during her husband's plunge from fortune to poverty. Ned Graham said of her: "Words are too poor to tell you what I owe to that noble woman. In our darkest seasons of adversity, she has been an angel of consolation--utterly forgetful of self and anxious only to comfort and sustain me." Of course she had a little help from "faithful Dinah who absolutely refused to leave her beloved mistress," but even so Ellen did no more than would be expected of any true women.94

Most of this advice was directed to woman as wife. Marriage was the proper state for the exercise of the domestic virtues. "True Love and a Happy Home," an essay in The Young Ladies' Oasis, might have been carved on every girl's hope chest.95 But although marriage was best, it was not absolutely necessary. The women's magazines tried to remove the stigma from being an "Old Maid." They advised no marriage at all rather than an unhappy one contracted out of selfish motives.96 Their stories showed maiden ladies as unselfish ministers to the sick, teachers of the young, or moral preceptors with their pens, beloved of the entire village. Usually the life of single blessedness resulted from the premature death of a fiance, or was chosen through fidelity to some high mission. For example, in "Two Sisters," Mary devotes herself to Ellen and her abandoned children, giving up her own chance for marriage. "Her devotion to her sister's happiness has met its reward in the consciousness of having fulfilled a sacred duty."97 Very rarely, a "woman of genius" was absolved from the necessity of marriage, being so extraordinary that she did not need the security or status of being a wife.98 Most often, however, if girls proved "difficult," marriage and a family were regarded as a cure.99 The "sedative quality" of a home could be counted on to subdue even the most restless spirits.

George Burnap saw marriage as "that sphere for which woman was originally intended, and to which she is so exactly fitted to adorn and bless, as the wife, the mistress of a home, the solace, and aid, and the counsellor of that ONE, for whose sake alone the world is of any consequence to her."100 Samuel Miller preached a sermon on women:

> How interesting and important are the duties devolved on females as wives. . . the counsellor and friend of the husband; who makes it her daily daily study to lighten his cares, to soothe his sorrows, and to augment his joys· who, like a guardian angle, watches over his interests, warns him against dangers, comforts him under trials: and by her pious, assiduous, and attractive deportment, constantly endeavors to render him more virtuous, more useful, more honourable, and more happy.101

A woman's whole interest should be focused on her husband, paying him "those numberless attentions to which the French give the title of petits soins and which the woman who loves knows so well how to pay . . . she should consider nothing as trivial which could win a smile of approbation from him."102

Marriage was seen not only in terms of service but as an increase in authority for women. Burnap concluded that marriage improves the female character "not only because it puts her under the best possible tuition, that of the affections, and affords scope to her active energies, but because it gives her higher aims, and a more dignified position."103 The Lady's Amaranth saw it as a balance of power: "The man bears rule over his wife's person and conduct. She bears rule over his inclinations:

he governs by law; she by persuasion. . . . The empire of the woman is an empire of softness . . . her commands are caresses, her menaces are tears."104

Woman should marry, but not for money. She should choose only the high road of true love and not truckle to the values of a materialistic society. A story, "Marrying for Money" (subtlety was not the strong point of the ladies' magazines), depicts Gertrude, the heroine, ruing the day she made her crass choice: "It is a terrible thing to live without love. . . . A woman who dares marry for aught but the purest affection, calls down the just judgments of heaven upon her head."105

The corollary to marriage, with or without true love was motherhood, which added another dimension to her usefulness and prestige. It also anchored her even more firmly to the home. "My Friend," wrote Mrs. Sigourney, "if in becoming a mother, you have reached the climax of your happiness, you have also taken a higher place in the scale of being . . . you have gained an increase of power."106 The Rev. J. N. Danforth pleaded in The Ladies' Casket, "Oh, mother, acquit thyself well in thy humble sphere, for thou mayest affect the world."107 A true woman naturally loved her children; to suggest otherwise was monstrous.108

America depended upon her mothers to raise up a whole generation of Christian statesmen who could say "all that I am I owe to my angel mother."109 The mothers must do the inculcating of virtue since the fathers, alas, were too busy chasing the dollar. Or as The Ladies' Companion put it more effusively, the father "weary with the heat and burden of life's summer day, or trampling with unwilling foot the decaying springtime. . . . The acquisition of wealth, the advancement of his children in worldly honor--these are his self-imposed tasks." It was his wife who formed "the infant mind as yet untainted by contact with evil . . . like wax beneath the plastic hand of the mother."110

The Ladies' Wreath offered a fifty-dollar prize to the woman who submitted the most convincing essay on "How May an American Woman Best Show Her Patriotism." The winner was Miss Elizabeth Wetherell, who provided herself with a husband in her answer. The wife in the essay of course asked her husband's opinion. He tried a few jokes first--"Call her eldest son George Washington," "Don't speak French, speak American"--but then got down to telling her in sober prize-winning truth what women could do for their country. Voting was no asset, since that would result only in "a vast increase of confusion and expense without in the smallest degree affecting the result." Besides, continued this oracle, "Looking down at their child," if "we were to go a step further and let the children vote, their first act would be to vote their [illegible] mothers at home." There is no comment on this devastating male logic and he continues: "Most women would follow the lead of their fathers and husbands," and the few who would "fly off on a tangent from the circle of home influence would cancel each other out."

The wife responds dutifully: "I see all that. I never understood so well before." Encouraged by her quick womanly perception, the master of the house resolves the question--an American woman best shows her patriotism by staying at home, where she brings her influence to bear "upon the right side for the country's weal." That woman will instinctively choose the side of right he has no doubt. Besides her "natural refinement and closeness to God" she has the "blessed advantage of a quiet life," while man is exposed to conflict and evil. She stays home with "her Bible and a well-balanced mind", and raises her sons to be good Americans. The judges rejoiced in this conclusion and paid the prize money cheerfully, remarking "they deemed it cheap at the price."111

If any woman asked for greater scope for her gifts the magazines were sharply critical. Such women were tampering with society, undermining civilization. Mary Wollstonecraft, Frances Wright and Harriet Martineau were condemned in the strongest possible language--they were read out of the sex. "They are only semi-women, mental hermaphrodites." The Rev. Harrington knew the women of America could not possibly approve of such perversions and went to some wives and mothers to ask if they did want a "wider sphere of interest" as these nonwomen claimed. The answer was reassuring. "'NO!' they cried simultaneously. 'Let the men take care of politics, we will take care of the children!'" Again female discontent resulted only from a lack of understanding: women were not subservient, they were rather "chosen vessels." Looked at in this light the conclusion was inescapable: "Noble, sublime is the task of the American mother."112

"Women's Rights" meant one thing to reformers, but quite another to the True Woman. She knew her rights,

> The right to love whom others scorn,
> The right to comfort and to mourn,
> The right to shed new joy on earth,
> The right to feel the soul's high worth,
> . . . . . .
> Such women's rights, and God will bless
> And crown their champions with success 113

The American woman had her choice--she could define her rights in the way of the women's magazines and insure them by the practice of the requisite virtues, or she could go outside the home seeking other rewards than love. It was a decision on which, she was told, everything in her world depended. "Yours it is to determine," the Rev. Mr. Stearns solemnly warned from the pulpit, "whether the beautiful order of society . . . shall continue as it has been" or whether "society shall break up and become a chaos of disjointed and unsightly elements."114 If she chose to listen to other voices than those of her proper mentors, sought other rooms than those of her home, she lost both her happiness andher power--"that almost magic power, which, in her proper sphere, she now wields over the destinies of the world."115

But even while the women's magazines and related literature encouraged this ideal of the perfect woman, forces were at work in the nineteenth century which impelled woman herself to change, to play a more creative role in society. The movements for social reform, westward migration, missionary activity, utopian communities, industrialism, the Civil War--all called forth responses from women which differed from those she was trained to believe were hers by nature and divine decree: The very perfection of True Womanhood, moreover, carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction. For if woman was so very little less than the angels, she should surely take a more active part in running the world, especially since men were making such a hash of things.

Real women often felt they did not live up to the ideal of True Womanhood: some of them blamed themselves, some challenged the standard, some tried to keep the virtues and enlarge the scope of womanhood.116 Somehow through this mixture of challenge and acceptance, of change and continuity, the True Woman evolved into the New Woman--a transformation as startling in its way as the abolition of slavery or the coming of the machine age. And yet the stereotype, the "mystique" if you will, of what woman was and ought to be persisted, bringing guilt and confusion in the midst of opportunity.

The women's magazines and related literature had feared this very dislocation of values and blurring of roles. By careful manipulation and interpretation they sought to convince woman that she had the best of both worlds--power and virtue--and that a stable order of society depended upon her maintaining her traditional place in it. To that end she was identified with everything that was beautiful and holy.

"Who Can Find a Valiant Woman?" was asked frequently from the pulpit and the editorial pages. There was only one place to look for her--at home. Clearly and confidently these authorities proclaimed the True Woman of the nineteenth century to be the Valiant Woman of the Bible, in whom the heart of her husband rejoiced and whose price was above rubies.

Footnotes

1. "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," by Barbara Welter, From American Quarterly, XVII (Summer 1966), 151-74.

2. The conclusions reached in this article are based on a survey of almost all of the women's magazines published for more than three years during the period 1820-60 and a sampling of those published for less than three years; all the gift books cited in Ralph Thompson, American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825-1865 (New York, 1936) deposited in the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, the New-York Historical Society, Columbia University Special Collections, Library of the City College of the University of New York, Pennsylvania Historical Society, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston Public Library, Fruitlands Museum Library, the Smithsonian Institution and the Wisconsin Historical Society; hundreds of religious tracts and sermons in the American Unitarian Society and the Galatea Collection of the Boston Public Library; and the large collection of nineteenth-century cookbooks in the New York Public Library and the Academy of Medicine of New York. Corroborative evidence not cited in this article was found in women's diaries, memoirs, autobiographies and personal papers, as well as in all the novels by women which sold over 75,000 copies during this period, as cited in Frank Luther Mott, Golden Multitudes: The Story of Best Sellers in the United States (New York, 1947), and H. R. Brown, The Sentimental Novel in America, 1789-1860 (Durham, N.C., 1940). This latter information also indicated the effect of the cult of True Womanhood on those most directly concerned.
3. As in "The Bachelor's Dream," in The Lady's Gift: Souvenir for All Seasons (Nashua N.H., 1849), p. 37.
4. The Young Ladies' Class Book: A Selection of Lessons for Reading in Prose and Verse, ed. Ebenezer Bailey, Principal of Young Ladies' High School, Boston (Boston, 1831) p. 168.
5. A Lady of Philadelphia, The World Enlightened, Improved and Harmonized by WOMAN!! A lecture, delived in the City of New York, before the Young Ladies' Society for Mutual Improvement, on the following question, proposed by the society, with the offer of $100 for the best lecture that should be read before them on the subject proposed:--What is the power and influence of woman in moulding the manners, morals and habits of civil society? (Philadelphia, 1840), p. 1.
6. The Young Lady's Book: A Manual of Elegant Recreations, Exercises, and Pursuits (Boston, 1830), p. 29.
7. Woman as She Was, Is, and Should Be (New York), XVII (1842), 67
8. "The Truimph of the Spiritual over the Sensual: An Allegory," in Ladies' Companion: A Monthly Magazine Embracing Every Department of Literature, Embellished with Original Engravings and Music (New York), XVII (1842), 67.

9. Lecture on Some of the Distinctive Characteristics of the Female, delivered before the class of the Jefferson Medical College, Jan. 1847 (Philadelphia, 1847) p. 13.
10. "Female Education," Ladies' Repository and Gatherings of the West: A Monthly Periodical Devoted to Literature and Religion, I (Cincinnati), 12.
11. Woman, in Her Social and Domestic Character (Boston, 1842) pp. 41-42.
12. Second Annual Report of the Young Ladies' Literary and Missionary Association of the Philadelphia Collegiate Institution (Philadelphia, 1840), pp. 20, 26.
13. Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary: Female Education. Tendencies of the Principles Embraced, and the System Adopted in the Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary (Boston, 1839) p. 3.
14. Prospectus of the Young Ladies' Seminary at Bordentown, New Jersey (Bordentown, 1836) p. 7.
15. Catalogue of the Young Ladies' Seminary in Keene, New Hampshire (n.p., 1832), p. 20.
16. "Report to the College of Teachers, Cincinnati, October, 1840: in Ladies' Repository I (1841), 50.
17. Woman's Records: Or Sketches of All Distinguished Women from "The Beginning" Till A.D. 1850 (New York, 1853) pp. 665-669.
18. "Female Irreligion," Ladies' Companion, XIII (May-Oct. 1840) 111.
19. The Lady's Book of Flowers and Poetry, ed. Lucy Hooper (New York, 1842) has a "Floral Dictionary" giving the symbolic meaning of floral tributes.
20. See, for example, Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance (Boston, 1852) p. 71, in which Zenobia says: "How can she be happy, after discovering that fate has assigned her but one single event, which she must contrive to make the substance of her whole life? A man has his choice of innumerable events."
21. Mary R. Beard, Woman as Force in History (New York, 1946) makes this point at some length. According to common law, a woman has no legal existence once she was married and therefore could not manage property, sue in court, etc. In the 1840's and 1850's laws were passed in several states to remedy this condition.
22. Excellency of the Female Character Vindicated: Being an Investigation Relative to the Cause and Effects on the Encroachments of Men upon the Rights of Women, and the Too Frequent Degradation and Consequent Misfortunes of the Fair Sex (New York, 1807) pp. 277 278.
23. By A Lady (Eliza Ware Rotch Farrar), The Young Lady's Friend (Boston, 1837), p. 293.
24. Girlhood and Womanhood: or, Sketches of My Schoolmates (Boston, 1844) p. 140.
25. Emily Chubbuck, Alderbook (2nd. ed.: Boston, 1847), II, 121, 127.
26. Woman and Her Era (New York 1864) p. 95.
27. "The Two Lovers of Sicily," The Lady's Amaranth: A Journal of Tales, Essays, Excerpts--Historical and Biographical Sketches, Poetry and Literature in General (Philadelphia), II (Jan. 1839) 17.
28. The Young Man's Guide (Boston, 1833) pp. 229,231.
29. Female Influence: and the True Christian Mode of Its Exercise; a Discourse Delivered in the First Presbyterian Church in Newburyport, July 30, 1837 (Newburyport, 1837), p. 18.
30. W. Tolles, "Woman the Creature of God and the Manufacture of Society," Ladies' Wreath (New York), III (1852), 205.
31. Prof. William M. Heim, "The Bloomer Dress," Ladies' Wreath, III (1852), 247.
32. The Young Lady's Offering: or Gems of Prose and Poetry (Boston, 1853), p. 283. The American girl, whose innocence was often connected with ignorance, was the spiritual ancestress of the Henry James Heroine. Daisy Miller, like Lucy Dutton, saw innocence lead to tragedy.
33. The Mother's Book (Boston, 1831), pp. 151, 152.
34. Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, Whisper to a Bride (Hartford, 1851), in which Mrs. Sigourney's approach is summed up in this quotation: "Home! Blessed bride, thou art about to enter this sanctuary, and to become a priestess at its alter!" p. 44.

35. S. R. R. "Female Charms," Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book (Philadelphia) XXXIII (1846) 52.
36. Charles Elliott, "Arguing with Females," Ladies' Repository, I (1941), 25.
37. Ladies' Companion, VIII (Jan. 1838), 147.
38. The Young Lady's Book (New York, 1830) American edition, p. 28. (This is a different book than the one of the same title and date of publication cited in note 6.)
39. Sphere and Duties of Woman (5th ed.; Baltimore, 1854), p. 47.
40. Woman, p. 15.
41. Letters to Young Ladies (Hartford, 1835), p. 179.
42. Lecture, p. 17
43. The Young Lady's Friend p. 313
44. Maria J. McIntosh, Woman in America: Her Work and Her Reward (New York, 1850), p. 25.
45. Poems and a Memoir of the Life of Mrs. Felicia Hemans (London, 1860) p. 16.
46. Letter "To an Unrecognized Poetess, June, 1846: (Sara Jane Clarke), Greenwood Leaves, (2nd ed.: Boston, 1850), p. 311.
47. "The Sculptor's Assistant: Ann Flaxman," in Women of Worth: A Book for Girls (New York, 1860) p. 263.
48. Mrs. Clarissa Packard (Mrs. Caroline Howard Gilman), Recollections of a Housekeeper (New York, 1834), p. 122.
49. Recollections of a Southern Matron (New York, 1838), pp. 256, 257.
50. The Lady's Token: or Gift of Friendship, ed. Colesworth Pinckney (Nashua, N.H., 1848), p. 119.
51. Harvey Newcomb, Young Lady's Guide to the Harmonious Development of Christian Character (Boston, 1846), p. 10.
52. "Rules for Conjugal and Domestic Happiness," Mother's Assistant and Young Lady's Friend (Boston, III (April 1843) 115.
53. Letters to Mothers (Hartford, 1838,) p. 199. In the diaries and letters of women who lived during this period the death of a child seemed consistently to be the hardest thing for them to bear and to occasion more anguish and rebellion, as well as eventual submission, than any other event in their lives.
54. "A Submissive Mother," The Ladies' Parlor Companion: A Collection of Scattered Fragments and Literary Gems (New York, 1852), p. 358.
55. "Woman," Godey's Lady's Book, II (Aug. 1831), 110.
56. Sphere and Duties of Woman, p. 172.
57. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Woman," Complete Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson (New York, 1875), p. 1180.
58. As in Donald Fraser, The Mental Flower Garden (New York, 1857). Perhaps the most famous exponent of this theory is Edgar Allan Poe, who affirms in "The Philosophy of Composition" that "the death of a beautiful woman is unquestionably the most poetical topic in the world. . . ."
59. "Domestic and Social Claims on Woman," Mother's Magazine, VI (1846) 21.
60. Woman, p. 173.
61. The Young Ladies' Class Book, p. 166,
62. T. S. Arthur, The Lady at Home: or, Leaves from the Every-Day Book of an American Woman (Philadelphia, 1847), pp. 177,178.
63. Caspar Morris, Margaret Mercer (Boston, 1840), quoted in Woman's Record, p. 425.
64. These particular titles come from: The Young Ladies' Oasis: or Gems of Prose and Poetry, ed. N. L. Ferguson (Lowell, 1851), pp. 14, 16; The Genteel School Reader (Philadelphia, 1849) p. 271· and Magnolia, I (1842),4. A popular poem in book form, published in England, expressed very fully this concept of woman as comforter: Coventry Patmore, The Angel in the Home (Boston, 1856 and 1857). Patmore expressed his devotion to True Womanhood in such lines as:

The gentle wife, who decks his board
And makes his day to have no night,
Whose wishes wait upon her Lord,
Who finds her own in his delight. (p. 94)

65. The women's magazines carried on a crusade against tight lacing and regretted, rather than encouraged, the prevalent ill health of the American woman. See, for example, An American Mother, Hints and Sketches (New York, 1839) pp. 28 ff., for an essay on the need for a healthy mind in a healthy body in order to better be a good example for children.
66. The best single collection of nineteenth-century cookbooks is in the Academy of Medicine in New York Library, although some of the most interesting cures were in handwritten cookbooks found among the papers of women who lived during the period.
67. Sarah Josepha Hale, The Ladies' New Book of Cookery: A Practical System for Private Families in Town and Country (5th ed.; New York, 1852), p. 409. Similar evidence on the important of nursing skills to every female is found in such books of advice as William A. Alcott, The Young Housekeeper (Boston, 1838), in which, along with a plea for apples and cold baths Alcott says, "Every female should be trained to the angelic art of managing properly the sick," p. 47.
68. The Young Lady's Friend, pp. 75-77, 79.
69. "A Tender Wife," Godey's II (July 1831), 28.
70. "MY WIFE! A Whisper." Godey's, II (Oct. 1831), 231.
71. Letters to Young Ladies, p. 27. The greatest exponent of the mental and moral joys of housekeeping was the Lady's Annual Register and Housewife's Memorandum Book (Boston, 1838), which gave practical advice on ironing, hair curling, budgeting and marketing, and turning cuffs--all activities which contributed to the "beauty of usefulness" and "joy of accomplishment" which a woman desired (1,23).
72. The Young Lady's Friend, p. 230.
73. "Learning vs. Housewifery," Godey's, X (Aug. 1839), 95.
74. Letters to Young Ladies, p. 25. W. Thayer, Life at the Fireside (Boston, 1857), has an idyllic picture of the woman of the house mending her children's garments, the grandmother knitting and the little girl taking her first stiches, all in the light of the domestic hearth.
75. "The Mirror's Advice," Young Maiden's Mirror (Boston, 1858), p. 263.
76. Mrs. L. Maria Child, The Girl's Own Book (New York, 1833).
77. The Lady's Token, p. 44.
78. T. S. Arthur, Advice to Young Ladies (Boston, 1850), p. 45.
79. R. C. Waterston, Thoughts on Moral and Spiritual Culture (Boston, 1842) p. 101. Newcomb's Young Lady's Guide also advised religious biography as the best reading for women (p. 111).
80. Godey's, I (1828), 1. (Repeated often in Godey's editorials).
81. The Lily of the Valley, n.v. (1851) p. 2.
82. For example, "The Fatalist," Godey's, IV (Jan. 1834), 10, in which Somers Dudley has Catherine reading these dangerous books until life becomes "a bewildered dream . . . . O passion, what a shocking perverter of reason thou art!"
83. Review of Society in America (New York, 1837) in American Quarterly Review (Philadelphia), XXII (Sept. 1837), 38.
84. "A Finished Education," Ladies' Museum (Providence)? I (1825), 42.
85. Helen Irving, "Literary Women," Ladies' Wreath, III (1850), 93.
86. "Women of Genius," Ladies' Companion, XI (1839) 89.
87. "Intellect vs. Affection in Woman," Godey's XVI (1846) 86.
88. "The Only Daughter," Godey's X (Mar. 1839), 122.
89. The Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Pupils of the Young Ladies' Seminary and Collegiate Institute (Monroe City, 1855), pp. 18, 19.
90. Chronicles of a Pioneer School from 1792 to 1833: Being the History of Miss Sarah Pierce and Her Litchfield School, Compiled by Emily Noyes Vanderpoel; ed. Elizabeth C Barney Buel (Cambridge, 1903), p. 74.

91. Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary, p. 13.
92. The Frugal Housewife (New York, 1838) p. 111.
93. "Female Influence," in The Ladies' Pearl and Literary Gleaner: A Collection of Tales, Sketches, Essays, Anecdotes, and Historical Incidents (Lowell), I (1841), 10.
94. Mrs. S. T. Martyn, "The Wife," Ladies' Wreath, II (1848-49), 171.
95. The Young Ladies' Oasis, p. 26.
96. "On Marriage," Ladies' Repository, I (1841), 133: "Old Maids," Ladies' Literary Cabinet (Newburyport), II (1822) (microfilm), 141; "Matrimony," Godey's, II (Sept. 1831), 174; and "Married or Single," Peterson's Magazine (Philadelphia), IX (1859), 36, all express the belief that while marriage is desirable for a woman it is not essential. This attempt to reclaim the status of the unmarried woman is an example of the kind of mild crusade which the women's magazines sometimes carried on. Other examples were their strictures against an overly genteel education and against the affectation and aggravation of ill health. In this sense the magazines were truely conservative, for they did not oppose all change but only that which did violence to some cherished tradition. The reforms they advocated would, if put into effect make woman even more the perfect female, and enhance the ideal of True Womanhood.
97. Girlhood and Womanhood, p. 100. Mrs. Graves tells the stories in the book in the person of an "Old Maid" and her conclusions are that "single life has its happiness too," for the single woman "can enjoy all the pleasures of maternity without its pains and trials" (p. 140). In another one of her books, Woman in America (New York, 1843), Mrs. Graves speaks out even more strongly in favor of "single blessedness" rather than "a loveless or unhappy marriage" (p. 130).
98. A very unusual story is Lela Linwood, "A Chapter in the History of a Free Heart," Ladies' Wreath, III (1853), 349. The heroine, Grace Arland, is "sublime" and dwells "in perfect light while we others struggle yet with the shadows." She refuses marriage and her friends regret this but are told her heart "is rejoicing in its freedom." The story ends with the plaintive refrain:

But is it not a happy thing,
All fetterless and free,
Like any wild bird, on the wing,
To carol merrily?

But even in this tale the unusual, almost unearthly rarity of Grace's genius is stressed; she is not offered as an example to more mortal beings.
99. Horace Greeley even went so far as to apply this remedy to the "dissatisfactions" of Margaret Fuller. In his autobiography, Recollections of a Busy Life (New York, 1868), he asys that "noble and great as she was, a good husband and two or three bouncing babies would have emancipated her from a deal of cant and nonsense" (p.178).
100. Sphere and Duties of Woman, p. 64.
101. A Sermon: Preached March 13, 1808, for the Benefit of the Society Instituted in the City of New-York, for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children (New York, 1808) pp. 13,14.
102. Lady's Magazine and Museum: A Family Journal (London), IV (Jan. 1831), 6. This magazine is included partly because its editorials proclaimed it "of interest to the English-speaking lady at home and abroad: and partly because it shows that the preoccupation with True Womanhood was by no means confined to the United States.
103. Sphere and Duties of Woman, p. 102.
104. "Matrimony," Lady's Amaranth, II (Dec. 1839), 271.
105. Elizabeth Doten, "Marrying for Money," The Lily of the Valley, n.v. (1857) p.112.
106. Letters to Mothers, p. 9.
107. "Maternal Relation," Ladies' Casket (New York, 1850), p. 85. The importance of the mother's role was emphasized abroad as well as in America. Godey's recommended the book by the French author Aimeé-Martin on the education of mothers to "be read five times," in the original if possible (XIII, Dec. 1842, 201). In this book the

highest ideals of True Womanhood are upheld. For example: "Jeunes filles, jeunes épouses, tendres meres, c'est dans votre ame bien plus que dans les lois du législateur que reposent aujourd'hui l'avenir de l'Europe et les destinées du genre humain," L. Aimée-Martin, De l'Education des meres de famille ou de la civilisation du genre humain par les femmes (Bruxelles, 1857), II, 527.

108. Maternal Association of the Amity Baptist Church: Annual Report (New York, 1847), p. 2: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, is and must ever be a sacred commandment to the Christian woman."

109. For example, Daniel Webster, "The Influence of Woman," in The Young Ladies' Reader (Philadelphia, 1851), p. 310.

110. Mrs. Emma C. Embury, "Female Education," Ladies' Companion, VIII (Jan. 1838), 18. Mrs. Embury stressed the fact that the American woman was not the "mere plaything of passion" but was in strict training to be "the mother of statesmen."

111. "How May an American Woman Best Show Her Patriotism?" Ladies' Wreath, III (1851), 313. Elizabeth Wetherell was the pen name of Susan Warner, author of The Wide Wide World and Queechy.

112. Henry F. Harrington. "Female Education," Ladies' Companion, IX (1838), 293, and "Influence of Woman--Past and Present," Ladies' Companion, XIII (1840), 245.

113. Mrs. E. Little, "What Are the Rights of Women?" Ladies' Wreath, II (1848-49), 133.

114. Female Influence, p. 18.

115. Ibid., p. 23.

116. Even the women reformers were prone to use domestic images, i.e., "sweep Uncle Sam's kitchen clean" and "tidy up our country's house."

117. The "Animus and Anima" of Jung amounts almost toa catalogue of the nineteenth-century masculine and female traits, and the female hysterics whom Freud saw had much of the same training as the nineteenth-century American woman. Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique (New York, 1963) challenges the whole concept of True Womanhood as it hampers the "fulfillment" of the twentieth-century woman.