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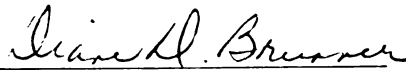
GENDERED CONSTRUCTIONS IN TWENTY-FIVE RECENT YOUNG ADULT  
NOVELS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE CULTURAL CODES OF  
IDENTITY AND POSITION

presented by

Diana Dawson Mitchell

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in English



Major professor

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**GENDERED CONSTRUCTIONS IN TWENTY-FIVE RECENT YOUNG ADULT  
NOVELS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE CULTURAL CODES OF  
IDENTITY AND POSITION**

**by**

**Diana Dawson Mitchell**

**A DISSERTATION**

**Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**Department of English**

**1992**

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## ABSTRACT

### GENDERED CONSTRUCTIONS IN TWENTY-FIVE RECENT YOUNG ADULT NOVELS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE CULTURAL CODES OF IDENTITY AND POSITION

By

Diana Dawson Mitchell

In this study I look at the portrayal of females in 25 recent young adult novels to determine whether the portrayals support or challenge the traditional values embedded in the subordination of women. The novels were chosen from Alleen Nilson's and Ken Donelson's Honor Sampling from the years 1986 to 1990. Research shows that reading can influence the attitudes, behavior, and self image of students, and therefore teachers should be aware that this literature can have an effect on students.

The methodology I use is content analysis. Through content analysis I locate sets of codes in the data (samples of discourse--mostly dialogue--drawn from texts) through which meaning is produced, as described by Arthur Berger. I use the codes of romance, beauty, sexuality (developed by Linda-Christian Smith), expression and relation (which I developed) in the analysis of the novels. I look at the character codes, personality characteristics ascribed to specific genders, which I also developed, to see if the novels show movement from traditionally ascribed personality expectations for females.

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the creation of the cultural codes of feminine identity and position. As I discuss each code, I examine findings from religion, biology, and psychology to locate the beginnings of the attitudes toward females that the codes illustrate.

My findings show that females in these novels are no longer tied to the traditional character codes. However, movement away from the traditional is not as uniform in areas described by the other codes. The codes of romance and beauty seem to be the most strongly challenged in the novels while the codes of sexuality and expression are moderately challenged and the code of relation remains the least challenged of any of the codes.

In my concluding chapter I fully discuss the elements of each code that are challenged and those that are not; detail the specific ways teachers can deal with gender issues; suggest further research studies needed about gender issues in literature; and raise the question of the responsibility of authors in producing gender-fair novels.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Ken Watson for his encouragement and for his suggestion that I do my dissertation in an area I know and love - young adult literature.

I wish to thank Dr. Diane Brunner, my dissertation chair, for pushing me in new directions and helping me see the world in new ways.

I wish to thank Dr. Marilyn Wilson for her constant encouragement and belief in me.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

"Representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth," stated Simone de Beauvoir (qtd. in Code ix). Being submerged in a culture makes it difficult to recognize truths since we all see truth through the tinted glasses of our own culture and our socialization. What seems normal to us is actually based on constructs that someone, at some time, invented or decided upon. Lorraine Code explains it this way:

...institutionalized disciplines that produce knowledge about women, and position women in societies according to the knowledge they produce, are informed by versions of and variations on the methods and objectives that received epistemologies authorize. These disciplines ... have found women inferior in countless ways, have been unable to accord them a place as historical agents, and have presumed to interpret women's experiences for them, in versions often unrecognizable to the women themselves. In the folklore of most western societies women are represented... as incapable of having knowledge of the best and most rational kind."

...mainstream epistemology, in its very neutrality, masks the facts of its derivation from and embeddedness in a specific set of interests: the interests of a privileged group of white men" (ix-x).

What Code and many, many more writers are saying is that we are all value-laden; we all carry around a set of assumptions with us; and we all interpret our world based on our own point of view which we don't always recognize as being value tinged and based on a set of assumptions. It is

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very difficult to extricate ourselves from society's precepts and get a different look at the world. As I read, I came to realize that our understanding about women and how they are defined is usually not recognized as being valued but is often thought to be "objective." Through my research I came to question the distinction between "objective" and "subjective" knowledge in this society. From Michel Foucault and others, I learned that subjectivity and objectivity are social constructs created by someone at some time. Usually in this society, according to Ruth Hubbard and Anne Fausto-Sterling, the scientific is considered to be objective because the individual and the individual's insights and feelings have been removed from the process by setting up "objective criteria." Both Hubbard and Fausto-Sterling strenuously disagree with the assumption that our values and beliefs can be removed from the study of science and thus both believe that the terms "objective" and "scientific study" should be questioned.

Foucault asks:

What types of knowledge do you want to disqualify in the very instant of your demand: 'Is it a science?'...which subjects of experience and knowledge-do you want to 'diminish' when you say, 'I who conduct this discourse am conducting a scientific discourse, and I am a scientist' (Power 85).

Mary Fields Belinsky et al in Women's Ways of Knowing explains that women's experience has often been discounted and not considered a valuable way to come to knowledge.

This study is being conducted in full recognition of the above two points. First, I do realize that I am viewing these books through my own female perspective. Second, I believe that the experience I bring to this study of

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twenty-six years of secondary teaching as well as my extensive reading in young adult literature of over six hundred novels does give me a good sense of how females have been portrayed in novels over the past fifteen years. When I make judgments about whether a character is very active or passive, I weigh these decisions in terms of my past reading and let my experience guide me.

I began very naively, believing that my initial topic idea, "Does Recent Young Adult Fiction Challenge or Support the Traditional Values and Views of Women?" would mostly involve an analysis of recent novels that would probably show females as much more confident and independent people than they were shown to be in the past. But as I started to look at the values expressed in these novels it quickly became apparent that male-female issues dominated the books and most of these issues dealt with the expectations for women based on females in subordinate roles. Thus my quest to explore the issues of power and domination began.

The further I got into this topic, the further my understanding expanded of the underpinnings of our society and of the constructs on which we hang so much of our belief system. The whole issue of power/domination is complex and has tentacles that reach into every area of our lives. To understand why we dwell so much on women's appearance, why we frown on women labeled as aggressive, and why women are seen as the caregivers whose main focus should be on the home, it became obvious to me that I would have to look historically at the influences of religion, biology, and psychology since these areas helped define women as people who belonged in subordinate roles.



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### **Explanation of the Project**

I will discuss twenty-five recent young adult novels in terms of social codes as I weave in pertinent information from the fields of religion, biology, and psychology that show how our ideas about women have developed. I will briefly describe a time in history when women were partners in societies and not subjugated and then show how societies changed and began to value the ability to take life away instead of the ability to create it. The Judeo-Christian view of women and the laws and stories developed to control women will be part of the discussion on male dominance in the code of romance. How the idea evolved that women are blamed for causing the evils in the world will be examined in the code of relation. As the sciences gained authority in the last century when religious authority weakened, biology was used to further define and confirm the place of women as "natural" caregivers. Ruth Hubbard explains:

... women need to understand how scientific descriptions of ourselves as biological and social organisms are generated and used to maintain sexual inequality. Although women have not had a significant part in the making of science, science has had a significant part in the making of women.... Scientists...have had an important share in defining what women's human, and more specifically female, nature is and hence in defining what is normal for us to do and not do, indeed what we can do and be (17).

Along with biology and religion, the field of psychology has also told women what is normal and what is abnormal in their behavior. Jean Baker Miller and other psychologists discuss the issue of domination and subordination and the elements that go into keeping women subordinate. Miller tells us that a dominant group "has the

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greatest influence in determining a culture's overall outlook--its philosophy, morality, social theory, and even its science. The dominant group, thus, legitimizes the unequal relationship and incorporates it into society's guiding concepts"(8). Each code will thus be looked at from a psychological perspective.

I will look closely then at where the traditional values praising roles such as motherhood, and women as helpmate began and why those values were considered desirable by those in dominant roles in society. As I analyze the twenty-five recent young adult novels in my sample I will discuss whether they support or challenge the traditional values that are embedded in the subordination of women. The information gained from this analysis can lead to new awareness and understanding of the way women are actually viewed today. We've been told we've "come a long way." This analysis of some of the best young adult novels (many that are award winning novels) should indicate whether women have come a long way or not and whether these novels accurately represent women.

### **Importance of Young Adult Literature**

Young adult literature in the past has been derisively called "kiddie lit" when the novels were short, the plots linear, and the adult characters shown in an unsympathetic light. In the last fifteen years such writers as Robert Cormier, Madeleine L'Engle, Sue Ellen Bridgers, Cynthia Voigt, Bruce Brooks, and Gary Paulsen have helped to raise the literary quality of young adult novels. Today there is a range of literary merit in young adult books similar to

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The young adult readers who usually read these books on their own do so because these novels speak to them. They are written in language familiar to the reader, they explore issues that young readers can identify with, and in these books people their own age are taken seriously and not talked down to. Additionally no one needs to explain the meaning of the book to them. Thus these young adult novels allow their readers a measure of dignity. Concepts in these novels can be grasped and grappled with, characters can be condemned or appreciated. These books provide students with a way to deal with the issues in their own lives. These novels approach concerns that plague adolescents from the environmental to the personal. Thus these novels are very real to young adults and many assume that the novels represent real life.

Therefore, if the best that young adult literature has to offer provides a distorted view of the female, then many readers might believe this is the way females are. So if these supposedly exemplary novels don't show women challenging and breaking through some of the restrictions imposed on them by the dominant society, then this could be an indicator of several things: females are not moving toward equality in this society; the dominant culture finds it is advantageous to keep women in "their place" through literature which may be perpetuating a "selective tradition" (Williams 115); writers aren't aware of their cultural socialization; and/or books which show girls free from gender definition don't have the instant appeal which will turn quick profits. Linda Christian-Smith says "this

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emphasis on a book's immediate salability may narrow the range of books published, making it difficult for initially unprofitable but important books to be published in the first place" (Romancing 77). If, on the other hand, females are shown in a variety of roles, not gender determined, and illustrate a full range of personality characteristics, not just those traditionally allowed to women, then this might be an important measure that females are beginning to be seen as individuals who are not tied to specific gender definitions.

#### **Novels as Reflections and Shapers of Culture**

Novels, just like television, not only reflect what is going on in society, but also shape the society and function as a form of socialization by making it appear that the institutions and people shown are part of the norm. Judy Chicago, the artist who conceived of and carried out the creation called "The Dinner Party" which consisted of a triangular table set with thirty-nine highly decorated plates and table settings representing thirty-nine important women in history, believes that art has the power to shape beliefs and to affect consciousness. "I thought that if I could convey women's history through art in a way that could change people's ideas, I could make both women's experience and women's art more significant" (Berger 40).

Thus it seems that art and literature have the power to affect our views and in this case, to affect young adults' views of the way women are perceived, and what behaviors are considered appropriate for women. Therefore, if young adult books show powerful females, readers can come away with the



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idea that powerful women are a normal part of our society. Conversely, if women are only shown as passive or submissive, then the message given to the reader is that this is the way that most women are supposed to be. The Italian philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, refers to this direction by moral and intellectual persuasion, not by physical coercion, as hegemony (Green 133). Hegemonic direction quietly pushes women into believing, for example, that they should be willing to give up everything for a husband and children because it is "natural." And that women should be happy to put their spouses through school since his job will be more important than hers. Balking at these concepts of "giving" makes women "selfish" according to the messages almost invisibly embedded into the fabric of our society.

#### **Awareness of Gender Issues**

Additionally this study should uncover many of these "invisible" areas of female subordination that most people are not conscious of. This kind of knowledge can let teachers know that we, too, are part of the problem by failing to examine our own assumptions about gender and not looking at how we also foster and accept the subordination of women. Do we reward only passive behavior in females? Do we always call on males first? Do we allow females to devalue themselves when contributing to a discussion by prefacing it with such qualifiers as "I know this probably isn't important"? Do we react negatively to aggressive female students and consider them pushy? Do we only comment on how "pretty" females look? With this increased

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awareness, teachers may be more open to encouraging students to question the assumptions they make about people, especially as they are reading young adult literature. Students need help learning to define people without using gender as a central factor in that definition.

### **How Reading Affects Students**

Another concern of this study is the way that students are affected by reading this literature. Joel Taxel addresses this issue and shows the subconsciousness of the process:

...stereotypes, particularly with young children, do not register at the conscious level unless they are raised as an issue. Stereotypic attitudes are probably 'imprinted' at an unconscious level through repeated exposure to many books, films, television shows, and of course, parental and peer group attitudes (Cultural 15).

Because children see women portrayed in books doing housework over and over again, they begin to see this as the order of things and are not even aware that they have come to this conclusion.

Louise Rosenblatt deals extensively with the issue of the interaction of the reader and the text and says, "The reader is ... immersed in a creative process that goes on largely below the threshold of awareness. ... (the reader) is not aware of the individual responses or of much of the process of selection and synthesis that goes on as his eyes scan the page" (54). Oftentimes what the reader reacts to and responds to unconsciously in the literature are the culturally imbued gender definitions. The reader sees the texts through the shadings that the culture has imposed.

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view society. Luis Nieves Falcon says, " We must bear in mind that books are an important element of 'the industry of culture' as well as 'normative' elements in cultural transmission" (4).

It can clearly be seen that teachers must be aware of sexism in novels to help students become aware of it and not accept the prevailing view that society seems to hold of females. Too often we as teachers blithely assume that because a book has been called an award winner or an honor book that it is innocent of all stereotyping.

#### **Review of the Literature**

Little work has been done on sexism in literature for young people. The Interracial Books for Children Bulletin which deals with stereotyping of all kinds seems to be the leader in this area. The majority of their work has focused on book reviews of literature for children which sometimes includes adolescent fiction. These reviews evaluate the book and point out sexist or racist concerns. Their bulletin also publishes articles on all aspects of stereotyping in books, often giving guidelines to help readers uncover biased presentations in books. However they rarely have published systematic analyses of gender related presentations in adolescent books. The exception was the issue (12.4-5 1981) that focused on romance novels, the stereotypes in them and the probable affect on the readers.

A study commissioned by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (Unesco) and published in 1986 as the book Down With Stereotypes, has as its goal eliminating sexism from

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children's literature and school textbooks. To help identify sexism in books they tell the readers that three kinds of things need to be done. The first is a quantitative analysis of content, counting how often males and females are featured characters and are shown in illustrations. The second is a qualitative analysis of content looking at characteristics attributed to male and female characters and social references to both. This includes examining such things as marital status, domestic tasks carried out in the home, and activities each sex participates in. The last area of analysis is to look at the sexism inherent in the language (Michel 49). Although this study explains to readers how to proceed in locating sexism, no studies are done on books. It does however give examples of sexist stereotypes in children's literature from around the world.

Another book dealing with gender issues in literature is the Children's Rights Workshop's Sexism in Children's Books. Their examination of literature focuses on picture books and award winning children's books. The studies in this book found that males were almost always the main characters and that boys were involved in activities while girls were shown watching. Adults were shown in traditional roles.

Most of the research on sexism in literature has been done on children's books. Rosemary Stones summarized all the studies done in the last fifteen years and concluded:

The content analysis and critiques of sex role presentation in children's books that have been carried out in different countries have all found that the overwhelming majority of children's books are written about boys, and that females and males are usually presented in a



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stereotypical way, girls being depicted as passive, unadventurous creatures (11).

Three previous dissertations have been done that have some similarities to my proposed study. "A Comparative Analysis and Evaluation of Sex Roles Exemplified in Certain Juvenile Novels about Family Life" done in 1968 at New York University by Muriel Wolly Grubel focused on whether females or males were shown more often to be dominant or subordinate and which sex showed more characteristics of loving or hating. This paper, while also dealing with gender issues, differs from mine in that the author was looking for the existence of only two characteristics and did not deal with the beginnings of the male as dominator in society and the purposes these gender assigned characteristics fulfilled. Another dissertation, "An Analysis of Male and Female Roles in Two Periods of Award Winning Adolescent Literature" written in 1975 at the University of Nebraska by Elizabeth Lueder Karnes counted personality characteristics of the males and females shown in the novels. Again, it differs from my proposed dissertation in that it ascertains that there is a difference in personality characteristics but does not go any farther than that.

Linda Christian-Smith's dissertation done in 1984 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison "Becoming a Woman Through Romance: Adolescent Novels and the Ideology of Femininity " studies romance novels over a forty year period and looks at whether changes have taken place in that time period in the way females are portrayed when involved in romance. She uses content analysis to look at the culture codes of romance, beauty, and sexuality and through this analysis draws her conclusions about changes. She finds

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that the elements of the three codes remain almost unchanged in the forty year period she surveyed. Her dissertation has a close relationship to my study and because it does have some common elements, in the course of discussing five social codes, I will use her three codes of action. Our projects are different in that my study is not restricted to romance novels, does not look at novels as curricula materials in as much depth as she does, and does not look at how the narrative structure of the book broadens the message (since romance novels all have similar structures). My study also differs in that I am using recent young adult novels and I am looking at how religion, science, and psychology have helped define females. In addition, I am looking at female identity and position in relation to subordination/ domination elements which are also located in the family and in the way we relate and the way we express ourselves. The problem I will address in this study--does recent young adult literature challenge or support the traditional values embedded in the subordination of women--comes on the heels of seeing that research has not yet sufficiently attacked this issue.

### **Methodology**

The methodology I use is content analysis. I analyze the data (samples of discourse--mainly dialog--drawn from the texts) by locating sets of codes through which meaning is produced as described by Arthur Asa Berger. He views culture-codes as (1) directives in our culture which we do not recognize (generally) but (2) which have a highly articulated structure and which are very specific (156).

Berger uses the term culture-codes because it "calls our attention to the fact that culture is a 'programmer' and is directive" (156). Culture can be thought of as a collection of codes which shapes people's behavior, to varying degrees and in varying ways, depending on the circumstance. He also points out that the word code means a systematic body of statutes or rules as in the Napoleonic Code and it involves the idea of something secret which can be deciphered if one knows the principle of organization of the code. He uses food to illustrate what he means. He tells us that our culture directs the way we organize the order in which we eat food (soup, salad, entree, dessert), the combinations we believe are acceptable (fish and chips, not fish and carrots) and which foods have status. An important guest would probably be served steak but not hotdogs or stew. Through these examples Berger explains that we all pick up rules and preferences about food (and all other areas of culture) although we are unaware of it.

He believes that to understand people we have to look for these culture codes because "they are the keys to understanding behavior, to seeing beneath the apparent randomness of things and obtaining insights into what motivates people" (157). Berger also describes what I to do in this study. "Content analysis is a very explicit attempt to find codes by searching for hidden patterns that exist in the material being studied" (169).

As I read the twenty-five novels, I looked for such patterns. After much thinking and reconsidering, I decided to use five social codes as well as character codes to analyze these novels. I re-read each book noting and

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marking material that illustrated the different codes. For example, if I read a section that illustrated a boy-girl relationship, I would underline that section, label it "1" for the code of romance and then put this material in my notes. As I began to get ready to write about a specific element of a specific code, I went through my notes on each novel and located the parts that illustrated the code I was working on. Then I marked what element within the code it illustrated. Thus, if in the code of romance, I was working on element four "romance as a transforming experience" I would find material in my notes that showed the presence of the element or that showed evidence that this element was changing. I proceeded in this manner through all five social codes as well as through the codes of character.

This kind of analysis works particularly well in this study because so much of what I analyze seems, at first, invisible. Raymond Williams explains how this invisibility comes about through not being aware of the hegemonic directions we are pushed in. "Hegemony is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of our living; our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world" (110). But he points out that we are not usually conscious of this hegemonic direction because it usually seems to be "the pressures and limits of simple experience and common sense" (110).

An example of hegemonic direction in terms of this study might be our lack of awareness that this society values the economic activities of males more than those of females and assumes it is natural that males work outside of the home.

Instead society sees it as common sense that families move when the adult male changes his place of work or that the female stays home to care for children rather than the male.

### Establishing the Codes

By ferreting out the codes embedded in the concept of femaleness it will become easier to bring the assumptions on which we operate, to the surface. The basis of the codes I'll establish will be social codes which, according to Berger, deal with "relations among men and women and cover such areas as signs of identity and rank, rules for polite behavior and good manners, fashion, and so on. Social codes tell people how to behave, in the broadest sense of the term, in the company of others" (160).

Although Berger identifies the kinds of areas that social codes cover, he does not specifically develop any of the codes used in this study. The codes I use are the codes of romance, beauty and sexuality developed by Linda Christian-Smith and the codes of expression and relation that I developed. I also developed character codes that ascribe personality traits on the basis of gender. I chose these codes after carefully reading and re-reading the twenty-five novels and seeing what areas our definitions of femaleness seemed to cluster around.

The first one focuses on female and male romantic relationships which do occur in several of the novels. I first noticed that some females were shown changing their behavior for males. This led me to look closely at Christian-Smith's code of romance which showed me that elements of her code did describe the underpinnings on which



romance is based. I didn't expect to find this code operational in many of my novels, since our samples were so different, but I found it still defined much of what occurs between males and females and realized that through such relationships females learn more about how they are defined and ranked.

My awareness of the need to use the code of sexuality came about as I noticed the abundance of sexual comments made by males in these novels and the corresponding lack of female sexual comments. Males in these novels also made the lion's share of romantic or sexual overtures. I saw that part of female identity and position was grounded in "sexual codes" and I again turned to Christian-Smith's work when I realized that what she called the code of sexuality was present in many of the novels in my study.

Then I became aware of how frequently females were described in the novels and how much attention was paid to their appearances. This led me to adopt the last of Christian-Smith's codes, the code of beauty. This code was alive and well in the majority of the books in my sample.

With further reading and thinking it became apparent to me that females were often openly criticized in the dialogues novels. It also became very evident that males spoke directly without monitoring or modifying their speech, while females often spoke indirectly and worried about whether or not their words might anger someone. From the repeated commonalities in the speech of the characters I created the code of expression.

Lastly, I noticed how large the home and family loomed in contributing to female identity and position. I looked

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at what males and females did within the family setting as well as how they interacted with each other and what they expected of each other. From these observations I created the code of relation.

Each of these five codes (romance, beauty, sexuality, expression, and relation) contribute significantly to the formation and the make-up of female identity and position. The way they contribute will be discussed fully in the concluding chapter.

### **Residual and Emergent Values**

I describe movement from the traditional values by using Raymond Williams' terms **residual which implies staying with the traditional and emergent which implies a movement away from the traditional**. Williams reminds us that tradition in practice is the "most evident expression of the dominant and hegemonic pressures and limits. What we have to see is not just a tradition but a selective tradition; an intentionally selective version of a shaping past and a pre-shaped present... (115). It is a version of the past which is intended to connect with and ratify the present ... (often) in the interest of the dominance of a specific class" (116).

If this concept is applied to woman's ascribed roles and characteristics it can be seen that they have been selected from a broad range of characteristics and roles that were found by men, the dominant group, to be pleasing. They thus became part of the selective tradition.

Williams explains that the residual in a culture "has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active

in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present" (122). Often a residual cultural element is at some distance from the dominant culture but "some part of it, some version of it... will in most cases have had to be incorporated if the effective dominant culture is to make sense in these areas" (123). An example from my study of a residual element in the culture is the belief that women are to blame if anyone in the family has problems. This element is probably a residue of the blame religions placed on women for the evils in the world but it still functions today because it helps to keep most responsibilities in the home on the female while relieving the male of these home responsibilities. Thus in this study, examples of women being blamed for all problems in the home would be labeled residual but a movement toward the sharing of home responsibilities would be emergent.

Williams defines the emergent as "new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships... that are continually being created" (123). A further example of the emergent in this study might be the practice of men going grocery shopping for the family which traditionally has been a female practice.

Williams further explains that new practice is not an isolated process. New practices usually happen in response to other forces or movements. This can be seen in the case of men taking on more responsibility in the home. This new practice has come about as economics and the desire of women to work outside the home have necessitated the negotiation of who does what in the home.

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### **The Sample**

I decided to use award winning books that are well written since these books, past studies described by Andree Michel have shown, will probably produce the fewest stereotypes and will be the most forward looking and thus the best indicators of change. Researchers found "that the worst sexist images tended to occur in those (books) that were most mediocre by literary standards i.e. in the writing itself and in the overall structure of the book" (qtd. in Michel 22).

In deciding how to choose the books, I came upon Ken Donelson and Alleen Nilson's "Honor Sampling" in their Literature for Today's Young Adults. These are brief lists of best books from the years 1967 to 1987 (1988, 1989 and 1990 appeared in the English Journal) that they have drawn from many sources. In determining their lists of best books, they first looked at the yearly lists from the American Library Association of the 30 to 80 titles it considered the best of the year. They also asked 25 young adult librarians and 25 instructors of young adult literature. Next they looked at the "best book" lists published in the School Library Journal, The New York Times Book Review, English Journal, and Booklist. Books that were named by four of these six sources were put in the "Honor Sampling." They felt that the strength and value of this list is that it draws on the judgment of a widely read group of professionals and young adults. I will use the five most recent years for my analysis. A complete list of titles and authors used is included in the appendix.

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### **Organization of the Study**

This study will be divided into four parts. "Residual Values in the Novels as Shown Through the Codes of Romance, Beauty and Sexuality" will contain an analysis of the novels in terms of these three social codes, focusing on whether the novels challenge or support these residual codes. The next part "Residual Values in the Novels as Shown Through the Codes of Expression and Relation" analyze the novels in the same way for the codes that I developed. "Emergent Values in the Novels" will discuss character codes which seem to have largely moved away from the residual. It will also discuss the novels which seem to contain the most emergent elements. "Conclusions and Implications" will discuss how the five codes of action contribute to the cultural codes of identity and position as well as summarizing which codes have been challenged and which codes have not been questioned. The rest of the chapter will look at implications for teaching to promote a better understanding of dealing with novels like this, how students are affected by reading the literature, and implications for further research.



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## CHAPTER TWO

### RESIDUAL VALUES IN THE NOVELS AS SHOWN THROUGH THE CODES OF ROMANCE, BEAUTY, AND SEXUALITY

All aspects of our conduct in society, according to Berger are governed by codes that although we may be aware of, are not always able to articulate. If we are invited to a formal dinner we usually assume that men must wear suits or tuxedos and women must wear high heels, a dressy dress, and make up. If a man appeared in a turtleneck and sweat pants he would be conspicuous; he would have violated the code governing formal dress. So although we're usually vaguely aware of the limits of some of these codes we usually have not taken the time to spell out precisely for ourselves all the rules of the code.

Violation of codes have different kinds of consequences. In the case of the man in the turtleneck, he may never be invited back because he is unaware of what is expected of him. On the other hand, if the host and hostess value independence in others, they may admire the man for possessing the courage to dress as he pleases. Awareness of codes helps us to be aware of what is expected of us so that we can make choices based on our own values and beliefs.

Social codes are developed in studies like this by reading the texts, thinking about what is stated, and looking for the assumptions that lie beneath what is said or done. Codes can also be developed from things left unsaid. For instance Christian-Smith's code of romance includes the statement that "romance is a heterosexual practice." Although Christian-Smith does

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not state how she arrived at her codes, we can assume here that she saw no examples of homosexual relationships in her sample and so she simply stated as part of her code what the texts implied by this absence.

So her codes seemed to be arrived at through what she found in the sample of novels she studied. Since her study only included romance novels, every novel did have many aspects of romance shown and so she was able to construct her code from the repetition of behavior patterns and speaking patterns in the books. She explains in her study that there were many, many instances of girls feeling that they had achieved the most important goal in life when they were in a romantic relationship. The underlying belief or assumption here is that romance is a transforming experience which gives meaning to a girl's life. So this became another element of her code.

Since attention to appearance and awareness of sexual feelings usually play a part in romantic relationships, these were the other two areas around which she developed codes. Because Christian-Smith's study drew on novels from the 1940's to the 1980's and because her codes were drawn from books that tend to be conservators of traditional values, all of her codes describe traditional or **residual** values. Christian-Smith's 1984 dissertation "Becoming a woman through romance: Adolescent novels and the ideology of femininity" showed the central place that romance held in shaping girls' views on femininity. Even though the books she analyzed were all romances and none of the books in this sample are categorized as romances, many elements of her code of romance are very present in several

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of these books as part of the everyday workings of the teen world.

Since this study examines only award winning books from 1986-1990, this part of my analysis will focus on what Raymond Williams calls **residual** and **emergent** forms that are present in the code of romance. Williams describes **residual** as referring to meanings and practices formed in the past which continue to inform the present (122). **Emergent** forms are current cultural practices that coexist with previous ones.

This study will look at the movement away from the **residual** values that these codes represent. This chapter specifically will look at instances where the novels in my sample affirm the **residual** values while it also notes which **residual** values seem to be ignored or challenged in these novels.

#### **THE CODE OF ROMANCE**

Some aspects of adolescent femininity are organized around the code of romance. Christian-Smith found that feminine discourse over the forty year period of her study did not significantly change: males still dominated in romantic relationships; females still viewed romance as a transforming experience; and romance was about just exchange--a male's status for a female's devotion. This is not true in this study. Part of this difference can be understood by looking at the kind of books used. Romance is not at the heart of the novels in the sample; rather, they deal with serious issues and the romantic relationships are not always central to the story. For instance, the

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protagonist in After the Rain by Norma Fox Mazer is trying to spend as much time as she can with her dying grandfather and her budding relationship with a boy is simply not as important to her. Sweetgrass, in Sweetgrass by Jan Hudson, is trying to save her family from starvation so her relationship with her intended is not her top priority. The characters in the novels in the study are shown involved with such issues as coping with disability, relating to a dying mother, and understanding why a parent would abandon a child. Romance is at the center of only one book in this study: Sex Education by Jenny Davis.

One of the most significant findings of this study is that even though the codes of femininity are moving more and more towards emergent forms, and protagonists are challenging residual definitions of femininity, the cultural belief that males are superior and therefore dominant is only slowly changing.

Many of the texts challenge the idea of romance and the happiness it is supposed to bring. Ellery's mother in Permanent Connections by Sue Ellen Bridgers says:

"I married because of it (being safe). I did everything I was told because of it. But in the long run being safe meant being in prison... I guess I thought for years somebody had to open the door for me... But the truth is, the door was locked from the inside. Nobody could open it but me" (Bridgers 134).

Important too, were the protagonists who balked at practices embedded in the code. Jennie in Crazy Horse Electric Game by Chris Crutcher says to Willie, "You want to go with me?... You know dances, holding hands, stuff like that?" (Crutcher 32).

She doesn't coyly wait for him to ask her. However,



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once a couple is in a romantic relationship, the power balance sometimes shifts with the male in charge and the female monitoring her actions so she won't offend the male or challenge his sense of manliness.

Females in the novels in this study were also aware that as part of the code they were expected to hide their intelligence so they wouldn't threaten males. Protagonists like Rachel in After the Rain reacted to that type of suggestion with disdain. "You mean, act dumb for a boy? Helena, that's depressing. ... Why do they have to feel better by my pretending I'm dumber than they are?" (Mazer 21).

Females were also shown as taking the initiative in relationships and saying what they wanted. Few were shown as orchestrating elaborate strategies to get a male's attention.

Despite actions that challenged the code, there are still very identifiable elements which give the code of romance its structure and meaning.

#### The Dominant Code of Romance

(Developed by Linda Christian-Smith)

1. Romance as heterosexual practice.
2. Romance as feelings and emotions.
3. Romance as managing sexuality while confining it to non-genital forms.
4. Romance as a transforming experience giving meaning and structure to girls' lives.
5. Romance as personal, private experience.
6. Romance as a market relationship predicated upon the idea of the just exchange.
7. Romance as the domination of males and the

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**Romance as heterosexual practice.**

In all the novels but one, romance is considered to be a solely heterosexual practice. Expectations are also in place that signal teens that male and female pairings are the natural order of things.

The only novel that included a homosexual relationship that was even sanctioned, was the fairy-tale-like Weetzie Bat by Francesca Lia Block. The characters in this zany, carefree book seem totally swept away by the glitz and glitter of Los Angeles but are shown as people who know what loving and caring are about. When Dirk meets Duck (soon to be his male lover) it is described as "love at first sight." Throughout the book they are shown as two people deeply in love.

Surprisingly enough even in the book Eva by Peter Dickinson where a young girl has her brain implanted in the body of a chimpanzee following a horrible accident, Eva's parents still have expectations for her future which include a mate. Eva accuses them with these words:

Your idea is.... I'll choose a sexy male (chimp) and you'll find some boy with an IQ of a hundred and eighty who's just walked under a bus, and then Joan will put them together and we'll have a lovely wedding and live happily ever after (81-82).

The belief in the "natural order" of heterosexual pairings is so deeply ingrained in our cultural norms that it is a hard idea to give up even if one's daughter is now a chimpanzee!

None of the characters in the novels are pushed into relationships by parents who worry they aren't normal. Only

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one character, Zoe, in The Silver Kiss by Annette Curtis Klause, was worried about herself because no boys appealed to her. Of course, all of this changed when she met the mysterious Simon.

**Romance as feelings and emotions.**

One of the attractions of a romantic relationship for the girls in these novels was the sense of intimacy gained with the sharing of feelings which the male had usually never shared with another. Since the need for affiliation and closeness is such a major part of female socialization it is no wonder that girls are touched when supposedly hardened males show their tender or vulnerable side. The females see this as a signal of caring and of being valued.

In The Goats by Brock Cole, Laura, to cement her relationship with Howie and to get an acknowledgment of their relationship asks him, "Do you have any secrets?" (Cole 136).

Livvie, in Sex Education, says "For all his friends, there was nobody that really knew David. Not really. Until me. Me he let in" (Davis 27). Later David tells Livvie "I feel really good talking to you. Livvie...It's new for me. Talking like this. (Davis 50). Livvie values the connectedness that this sharing of feelings seems to establish and feels that it means she is accepted by David and cared about.

**Managing sexuality while confining it to non-genital forms.**

Pressures for genital forms of sexuality from the male were hardly present in these books. In the novels where sexual intercourse took place the females were usually eager

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to engage in it. For the most part the females were still seen as good people even though they were sexually active. The residual definition of "the good girl" was challenged in many of these novels.

In Permanent Connections Ellery and Rob have a sexual encounter that seemed right to both of them at the time although Ellery wasn't eager to repeat it because she didn't want Rob to assume too much about her. She explained, "It seemed right at the time" but when Rob wants sex later she says, "What about how I feel and what I want?" and she resists genital sex.

In Weetzie Bat sex is shown to be expected in a relationship and Weetzie lives with her boyfriend, even having a child out of wedlock. In this book no judgments are made about this behavior.

A Kindness by Cynthia Rylant shows a thirty-five year old single mother, pregnant out of wedlock, whose teen son Chad, has trouble coping with this unexpected turn of events. Her pregnancy seems to have a dampening effect on Chad's girlfriend's willingness to be involved in a relationship because she sees the result of genital sex.

Angela and Tycho in The Catalogue of the Universe seem very comfortable with expressing their sexuality genitally and neither seem to suffer from this expression in any way. Thus this code seems to be bending some.

**As a transforming experience giving meaning and structure to girls' lives.**

In the 1960's Erik Erickson, a well-known psychologist, explaining how he views this code, claimed that the female



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"holds her identity in abeyance as she prepares to attract the man by whose name she will be known, by whose status she will be defined, the man who will rescue her from emptiness and loneliness by filling 'the inner space.'" (qtd. in Gilligan, Voice 12). This is what psychologists were telling females so they could see all this as "natural." Males were what were missing from their empty lives. With a male their lives would be complete.

This code has been challenged vigorously as females feel they can shape the kind of lives they want, often without males. Also the often tragic results of the so-called "happily ever after" marriages are apparent. Celine, in Celine by Brock Cole, certainly does not view romance in a very favorable light. One example of romance gone wrong is her oft married mother who according to Celine, "Always has to have some guy around. Unfortunately, she can't tell the difference between a guy and a bug" (211).

Sib in Midnight Hour Encores by Bruce Brooks isn't enthralled with the idea of romance either. "I don't like the idea of having a boyfriend. It's too much like having a dog" (163).

Aunt Macy in Dixie Storms by Barbara Hall explains to her teenage niece how romance doesn't always turn out the way we expect.

Well, they were about as in love as I'd ever seen two people when they got married. Always cooing and sighing and staring into each other's eyes. But the truth of it was, they didn't know how to be friends. Couldn't hardly talk when you left them in a room alone" (Hall 172).

This strong dose of doubt about the place of romance in a girl's life seems to be present in the majority of these novels. Most of the female characters recognize that they

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are responsible for shaping the kind of life they want whether it includes a male or not. Many of the younger teens such as Livvie in Sex Education do see romance as shaping and giving meaning to their lives. But Weetzie is the only other character who believes this wholeheartedly when she says, "I just want My Secret Agent Lover Man" her name for her own prince charming.

Although the idea of romance giving structure and meaning to female lives is questioned and it isn't believed that love is the only answer, the expectation is still there that females will marry even though it might be problematic for them. Margaret Mead points out:

We end up with the contradictory picture of a society that appears to throw its doors wide open to women, but translates her every step towards success as having been damaging to her chances of marriage, and to the men whom she passes on the road (to success)" (315).

#### **As a personal private experience.**

This code appears to remain almost unchanged. Problems in relationships are viewed as ideosyncratic and females have to work them out. In Cat Herself by Mollie Hunter, Cat refuses to marry Charlie and travel with and live with his drunken father who often beats his wife. Cat is the one who has to raise the issue and push for solutions yet she was the one viewed as having the problem for not accepting things as they always were. When Cat explains that she wants "just to be me" and that she belongs to herself, Charlie replies, "I'm not sure if I know what you mean. But I think I do. And if I'm thinking right, Cat-- well, I've been brought up in traveller ways, and so you're asking a lot of me.

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"I'm not asking anything you don't expect for yourself"  
Cat returns (Hunter 227).

Other novels that show romance as this private experience are White Peak Farm, Celine, The Crazy Horse Electric Game and Dixie Storms.

Since romance is viewed as a private experience, the problems that arise are considered individual and not social. Since women (being the subordinates) are the ones who push for change, they are often seen as the problem because of their inability to accept things the way they are. For example, if females demand an equal sharing of responsibilities in the home, males may consider them as troublemakers or as people who want everything their way. Because the female is in the subordinate position, she would like to see more changes, and thus she can be viewed as the disrupter in the relationship. As relationships are deemed "private" others expect the couple to work it out without any assistance from the larger society. Jean Baker Miller explains that females are not creating the conflict, they are exposing the fact that the conflict exists (117). Still females who want change are seen as troublemakers and they get help from almost no one.

**As a market relationship predicated on the idea of just exchange.**

This exchange is gender coded and usually involves companionship, fidelity, and devotion on the part of the female while the male, for his part, simply confers status on the female. This code very clearly shows the male to be the valued one in this society since association with him is

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all that he needs to provide for his part of the exchange. His mere presence is considered enough; affiliating with him is status producing.

In the novels analyzed in this study the acceptance of this code seems to be changing. Many females such as Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe, Celine in Celine, Ellery in Permanent Connections, Sib in Midnight Hour Encores, Chelsea in Princess Ashley by Richard Peck as well as several other protagonists view themselves as "somebody" with or without a boyfriend. They have enough confidence in themselves to feel they can ask for more than status from a male.

However, one novel in which the girl felt grateful for her relationship with a boy was Sex Education. Livvie thinks:

Almost immediately people recognized us as a couple and I was quickly, effortlessly, a somebody by sheer association.  
'She's David Kindler's girl.' The sound of it swept through me, leaving me tingly with pride" (Davis 36).

When this attitude shows up in these novels it is usually among younger girls like ninth grade Livvie. The older teens in these novels did not share Livvie's feelings.

Pressing for genital forms of sexuality is still not seen as part of the fair exchange. Ellery told Rob so in Permanent Connections. But none of the other novels show boys expecting this from girls. Males and the relationships they are shown in are very developed in these books and boys are portrayed as people who have social and emotional needs, not just sexual ones.



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**Romance as the domination of males and the subordination of females.**

Females are viewed as the property of males in this code. Although my sample shows this code is loosening, many females, no matter how confident, outgoing and centered they were, still felt boys had certain property rights. In Crazy Horse Electric Game at a party Jenny asks Willie's permission to dance with another. "Is it really okay if I dance once in a while? I'll stop if you want. It's really no big deal" (Crutcher 56).

In Celine while she is on a date the boy makes all the decisions. "We're splitting.... We're going to another party."

..."I don't want to go" (Cole 117-118).

Celine is ignored and later says, "I let Dermot navigate me into the elevator." Celine does bow to male dominance but feels Dermot is not someone worth going out with and she refuses to see him again.

Jennie in White Peak Farm finds out before it's too late who is expected to give the most and change plans the most in a relationship. She decides to give up her scholarship and not go to college so she can stay in her small town and marry Col. Of course, she believes he would do the same thing for her but she is wrong. When she tells him she's not going to college, he tells her he's been accepted at an agricultural school. "You won't still go, not without me?" she asks.

"Of course I'll go. You wouldn't want me to do anything else, would you? I've got my own future to think of now, Jennie. And you've got yours" (Doherty 92).

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Females as male property are clearly shown in Cat Herself after Charlie has to rescue her from the obscene threats of two boys while she's skinny-dipping in the river. He shouts at her that she's shamed him.

"Because it's me, Charlie Drummond, that you're goin' to marry. Because I'm your man, and it's shame on me that any man should see my woman the way those two saw you" (Hunter 172).

Cat fights back, later telling him: "...I can't be me so long as you think you have that sort of right (to beat her) over me. Because that way, you see, I'd belong to you. I'd belong to you the way a dog belongs, or a horse belongs" (Hunter 227).

The above novel tells of the travelers in the British Isles who are a very traditional people and Cat is able to articulate and fight against the notion of women as property. In our society this code is usually not directly articulated so the fight against it is harder because it is an attitude at the bottom of many beliefs about women but not admitted to. We talk about it in terms of "respecting" men or "not making fools" of them but at the heart of this seems to be the belief that women are property.

Since the male is seen as dominant, part of the code involves not showing in any way that the female is more competent. In Princess Ashley a boy and a girl were considered to be "an obvious match... He was by far the top junior on the varsity tennis team, and she didn't even play, so they wouldn't be competitive" (Peck 124).

But this view was in the minority in these books. The vast majority of the females refused to view themselves as

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the property of males or to feel explanations were owed just because they were dating a boy. In A Kindness Jeannie tells Chad she's got a meeting with Tom and can't see Chad that night. He questions her and she asks, "What, am I supposed to enter this for your approval?" (Rylant 14).

### **Religious Roots of Female Subordination**

But where did all this start? Where did the idea come from that men were superior and women their property?

The beliefs embedded in the code of romance have deep historical roots that can be traced back at least three thousand years. The view that men are superior and women put on this earth only to serve men is at the core of this code.

The research of Marija Gimbatas shows that between 7000 and 3500 B.C.E. early Europeans developed a complex social organization. The societies she studied were not warlike and there was no evidence of heavy fortifications and of thrusting weapons (Eisler 13). Additionally, the archaeological evidence indicates that "male dominance was not the norm and further suggests an egalitarian and clearly non-patriarchal society" (Eisler 15).

Extensive evidence shows that the god of these societies scattered throughout Europe and the Middle East was a woman. This Goddess religion was not far removed from the lives of the people nor imposed on them from above. The people lived their beliefs in the way they treated each other and nature and in the way they enjoyed the gift of the Goddess--their sexuality. The Goddess was credited with having taught people how to procreate and there was much

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Since descent and property rights were determined through the mother's line, little concern was shown for who fathered the children. Thus women had sexual freedom.

The temples in such areas as Crete and Catal Hayuk (Turkey) were places of worship and sexual activity and evidence points to the likelihood that the temples owned and controlled great amounts of land and property. Women associated with the temple were economically autonomous.

The change to a dominator patriarchal society did not happen rapidly nor did it happen without resistance and bloodshed. The invasion by the northern peoples was not a single event but a series of migrations that "took place in waves over a period of at least one thousand and possibly three thousand years" (Stone 63). What is most significant is that the northern invaders viewed themselves as a superior people. This attitude seemed to come from their ability to conquer these more culturally developed early settlers, the people of the Goddess.

At the center of the invaders' system was the placing of higher value on the power that takes, rather than gives life. This glorification of the lethal power of the sword accompanied a way of life in which the organized slaughter of other human beings, along with the destruction and looting of their property and the subjugation and exploitation of the people, appears to have been normal. Over the years, having the ability to take from others by force became the way things were done and wars were fought to establish who had earned the right to conquer and



subjugate. Gradually, the ability to give life was not glorified or viewed as a wondrous thing. Instead people who had the physical strength to kill others were the ones glorified through the building of statues and the deference given them by others.

When the invaders came in, they of course, used force to impose their ideas and show their physical superiority. But that would not be enough in the long run. Since they viewed the male as superior because of his ability to kill, they somehow had to deal with the fact that not only were women equal in the societies they conquered, but were sexually and economically autonomous.

So one of the first things that had to be done to establish male dominance was to change the lines of descent and inheritance. If men were to establish and keep the dominant positions in society, they had to own property, goods, and land and have the power to pass it on through their own blood lines. Thus a vigorous attempt had to be made to control women sexually so that the paternity of children was known. The efforts to do this can be traced through the kinds of laws that were enacted.

The major changes in the laws concerning women also affected their right to engage in economic activities, what they might or might not inherit, what they were allowed to pass on to their children, the attitude toward rape, abortion and infidelity, and the penalty of death--for women --for the loss of virginity before marriage. These laws, since they primarily affected the economic and sexual activities of women, point to the likelihood that they were indeed aimed at the matrilineal descent customs.

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Because these laws are all focused on controlling women it is easy to conclude that women were powerful and acted autonomously at this time or such strong, forceful laws would not be needed to put them in "their place" and keep them there.

In addition to the laws, religion also began to codify dominator patterns and beliefs. The priests who now spread what they said was the divine word--the Word of God that had been magically communicated to them--were backed up by armies, courts of law, and executioners. But their ultimate backup was spiritual. Their most powerful weapons were the "sacred" stories, rituals, and priestly edicts through which they systematically inculcated in people's minds the fear of deities. The final reduction of these myths and laws that have so profoundly affected our Western minds were placed in one book--the Bible (Eisler 85). The myth that has affected women the most and firmly sanctioned a dominator society is the myth of Adam and Eve.

And so what Mary Daly calls the "hoax of the millennia" began with the creation of the story of Adam and Eve which point for point took aim at the Goddess religion while devaluing women.

One of the biggest fabrications in the myth was that woman came from man, man was not born from woman. And woman didn't even come from an important part of the man, she came from his insignificant rib. So woman, the life-giver, was now reduced to being on earth only as the helpmate of man.

For God decreed: "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Yet your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over

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Thus the penitent, submissive position of the female "was firmly established by page three of the nearly one thousand pages of the Judeo-Christian Bible" (Stone 6)

Another way women were shown to be insignificant was through the symbolism of the Trinity. Marilyn French tells us:

The very notion of the Trinity expresses the most complete triumph over and expulsion of women from human culture ever created until our own times. That a male god should be able to open his mouth and speak a word, which became flesh, and his son; that the father and son should, through their mutual love, be able to create a third entity, known as the holy spirit; and that in all of this, the women should function rather as an oven in which the bread is baked, a mere vessel for maturation, comprises an extraordinary myth of creation. What is even more extraordinary is that millions of people have believed it, not as a symbolic truth for a patriarchal age, but as literal truth" (115).

These beliefs that stem from religion and the myths surrounding religion still have an effect on the way women are viewed today. Males in dominant roles are evident in each of the codes looked at in this study. The next code, the code of beauty, is based on the idea that the main purpose of women is to please men.

#### **THE CODE OF BEAUTY**

Romance as a feminine identifying code is furthered and deepened through the code of beauty. The gendered notion that women must pay attention to and always be aware of their appearance in order to get and keep male attention permeates this code. At an even deeper level is the idea that since women are the property of men, they must be visually pleasing to men and give status to men through

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Christian-Smith found that this code was relatively consistent throughout the 40 year period of her study of romance novels. However, in this study, possibly because this sample is different and does not look specifically at romance novels as Christian-Smith's does, a shift seems to be taking place. Females were not consumed with beautifying themselves, were not shown spending time fixing themselves up and several of the protagonists even thumbed their noses at the idea of conforming to the culture's idea of beauty. Novels such as Princess Ashley however, show females worrying about their appearance and novels such as Celine show a female deciding not to worry about the way she looks. Appearance was something the females were aware they were being judged on but most were not shown as taking time consuming measures to be pleasing to others. Females were also consistently described in much more detail than males were. So although many of the novels appear to show movement away from the code of beauty, in fact by paying so much attention to female appearance they send us the message that it is important.

Other significant findings are that more is expected of females in terms of appearance; female dress signifies much more than male attire does; and it is acceptable for females to be successful as long as they submit to society's demands that they look "pretty" and that they show concern for their appearance. A beautifully dressed psychiatrist in Say Goodnight, Gracie seems acceptable while Joan, the female scientist in Eva pays little attention to her appearance and is shown to be a difficult person who displeases others.

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Thus, very specific, identifiable elements can still be found which give the code its meaning.

The Dominant Code of Beauty

(developed by Linda Christian-Smith)

1. The (adolescent) female body as a visually pleasing object.
2. Beauty as a natural state concealing the work of becoming beautiful.
3. Girls recognized and elevated for their beauty.
4. Beauty develops a consciousness of physical presence as a characteristic of femininity.
5. Beautification as developing early relationships to commodities through makeup and clothing.
6. Beauty as the precondition to romance.

**The female body as a visually pleasing object.**

The majority of these novels underscored the importance of female appearance by the frequency with which females were physically described. In a great many cases, when a female character is first introduced, a long description of her accompanies this introduction such as in this passage from After the Rain:

A woman with flaming red hair answers Rachel's ring. She is wearing silver slippers, a purple leotard, and a long purple skirt, slit up one side. Tiny, sparkling silver dots are sprinkled across her cheeks. She is perhaps forty years old and at least six feet tall (Mazer 90).

Descriptions of women's appearances are one way characterization is developed in these novels, while male characters seem to be developed more through dialogue and

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action. This difference in characterization and in emphasis seems to show that how females look and dress is very important.

One way women are considered to be visually pleasing is if they are shorter than the men they accompany and so female height is often considered problematic. Hubbard tells us that overall women and men are about the same height, with many women as tall as or taller than men. The impression that women are shorter than men is enhanced by our "social convention that when women and men pair off, it is considered preferable for the man to be taller than the woman" (121). In Princess Ashley, Chelsea says, "...I thought I was a mile too tall and getting taller" (Peck 4). Sibilance in Midnight Hour Encores feels that at least one of her features is redeeming. "I've always been tall. At least I have thick hair" (Brooks 36).

Female hairstyles as another element of appearance are also governed by gendered expectations. Celine in Celine wears a hairstyle she feels is comfortable and easy, yet others see it as something that can be talked about and judged. While at a friend's house, the mother says to her, "You don't mind me talking about your hair, do you? I wouldn't say a word, but it's so becoming, cut short like that. Like a boys' haircut.... Some people would look ridiculous with a haircut like that, but on you it looks exactly right" (Cole 190). In Sons from Afar by Cynthia Voigt, when Mina gets a new short haircut, her father comments, "But it doesn't look like a women's hair style" (Voigt 54).

To some, hairstyles symbolize female submission to the

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dictates of society. In 1620 the Puritan, William Prynne, was objecting to the "whorishness of short hair." Like "wearing the breeches" in the family, Kelly explains "cropped hair threatened a significant aspect of the godly social order, namely, the power relation of the sexes which it seemed to symbolize." Was not hair woman's "natural veil... the very badge and character of their subjection both to God and Man?" (qtd. in Kelly 89). Female appearance thus generates lots of discussion and comments, revealing that it is indeed important especially since it is often seen to be a sign that women are doing something outside the norm.

Also in Sons from Afar when an independent minded female doctor is introduced, she is described in this way:

Finally, a stumpy woman with short bristly dark hair.. entered the room... She had a rough, square face, with no makeup. Her little eyes were brown and had pounds of flesh underneath them.. He (James) thought she was probably in her forties, from the lines around her eyes and mouth. She wasn't married (Voigt 92).

The connections seem clear. Appearance is important especially if one's goal is to have a man.

Females are expected to look good at all times. In The Goats the female who was chosen to be stripped and left on an island as a practical joke is described as "one of the real dogs" (Cole 8) and so seems to deserve this punishment.

In Izzy Willy-Nilly by Cynthia Voigt, Izzy describes her new friend to her brother. "I mean she's not good-looking; she has fuzzy hair, a big nose and a bad figure, I think. She doesn't dress to show off much of her figure. She is intelligent too" (Voigt 117).

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Later Jack says he can put up with her ... "if she'll wear a decent skirt or something" (Voigt 221).

Rosemary Radford Ruether would understand the source of that comment. She tells us that "women's dress has been continuously designed to enforce passivity, to make woman's body an object to be displayed rather than a means of her own self-actualization" (God-Talk 176). That certainly seems to be the case with Rosamunde. No one in the novel seems content to let Rosamunde dress the way she wants to dress and the way she feels best about herself.

Trying to regulate female dress is nothing new. In the early part of the 17th century, James I ordered the bishop of London to instruct all clergy "to inveigh vehemently against the insolencies of our women, and their wearing of broad rimmed hats, pointed doublets, their hair cut short or shorne" (qtd. in Keller 62).

Nothing seems to be as important for a female, then, as her appearance. The thoroughness and frequency of female descriptions of appearance simply do not show up when males are described. These novels seem to show that much more is expected of females. It might be all right for a male to just be intelligent, but it is clearly not enough for a female. Una Stannard reminds us that "The girls who try to show off her mind instead of her body is penalized" (125). She also tells us that "No one minded Jayne Mansfield's 160 IQ because she kept it hidden well behind her bosom" (125).

Appearance through choice of clothing is also seen to constitute cultural messages according to Roland Barthes. In The Adventures of Charlotte Doyle by Avi, Charlotte wears pants and shirt instead of her long full skirts and high

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button shoes when she takes on the work of the crew. The captain says, "Put these (female clothes) back on... Resume your place and station. All will be restored to its proper balance" (Avi 191).

The clothes represent to the captain Charlotte's defiance and unwillingness to accept the "natural" order of things. This theme appears over and over in the history of trying to control women through dress. The Puritan tracts on woman's fashion put out by the king in the 17th century had nothing to do with Puritan propriety but had everything to do with keeping women in their proscribed places. The ladies of fashion who wore clothes that fully exposed their breasts were not criticized at all. But criticism was leveled at the independent "masculine woman who wanted short hair and easy riding attire" because they seemed to threaten men (Kelly 90).

In Dixie Storms, a young woman who Dutch fears has designs on her brother is judged by the clothes she chooses. "She seemed overdressed for bowling. Nobody went bowling in nice black pants and a pink angora sweater, not to mention a strand of tiny pearls" (Klause 175). Her dress is seen as a symbol of intention.

Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe is judged even more harshly. Tycho's mother says, "I don't think she's altogether fair to you boys, dressing (in short shorts) the way she does" (Mahy 31). So although females should be appealing to men, they should not make males too aware of their bodies.

A few of the females chafe under the expectations of appearance. Rosamunde in Izzy Willy-Nilly says in response

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to a suggestion she get her hair cut, "I get pretty tired of not being left alone to be who I really am. As if that weren't good enough" (Voigt 209).

When Charlotte Doyle rejoins her family after her harrowing sea voyage she suddenly realizes how restricting her former clothes were. "To my surprise I felt so much pinched and confined I found it difficult to breathe" (Avi 199).

But women's clothing was not intended in earlier days to be comfortable. In the 16th and 17th century a woman's "weighty and costly costume came to conceal and constrain her body while it displayed her husbands's noble rank" (Kelly 46).

Family members also show concern for their female children by comments on their appearance. In The Silver Kiss Zoe's mother says, "You have to eat more, sweetheart.

Wear some makeup... You should get your hair cut in one of those new styles" (Klause 28).

Females are also expected to have a pleasing appearance especially if they are successful in their own right. In Say Goodnight Gracie, Aunt Lo is a competent highly respected psychiatrist whose appearance is commented on more frequently than that of the stay-at-home females shown in the book.

When we first hear of Aunt Lo, Jimmy says, "She looks exceptionally entrancing today" (Deaver 6). Later we are told: "She looked beautiful: Her hair was pulled back with a silver barrette, the earrings were diamonds, as was her bracelet, and she wore a tailored silk blouse and a long skirt. I could smell her perfume" (Deaver 64).

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When Aunt Lo's new male love interest is introduced to the family he is called attractive but no description of him is given. This kind of attention to female physical description is explained by Stannard. "Women are told they are made to be looked at and that females achieve success in the world by being looked at" (123).

Aunt Lo's appearance is commented on frequently throughout the novel and subtly seems to imply that it is all right to be successful as long as attention is still paid to being attractive, to being a visually pleasing object. Women like Dr. Landros described above in Sons from Afar are considered eccentric because they pay little attention to appearance. That seems to be what makes women like her "odd."

At the root of this element of the code of beauty is the necessity for women to be submissive through their acceptance of the expectation that they be physically attractive for men. If they bow to that demand their success is tolerated.

Beauty as a natural state concealing the work of becoming beautiful.

This part of the code was shown infrequently in these novels. In Princess Ashley, Ashley gave a birthday party where a woman from "Color Me Lovely" showed the girls how to use makeup and gave them free samples. Chelsea comments, "Basically it was to be a hoot because Ashley didn't even wear makeup..." (Peck 77). "After the cosmetics lady had gone...Ashley slipped away to her bathroom. She came back with all the Color Me Lovely makeup scrubbed off her face..."

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So we all gave her a round of applause. We all went and scrubbed our faces, too, which meant we were above that sort of thing" (Peck 78).

The girls shown in the above novel thought that the highest standard of beauty was natural beauty and showed public disdain of cosmetics. However, they still did buy into the idea of the necessity of being beautiful but just hoped that they could achieve it without any help.

Dixie Storms was one of the other novels in this sample that mentions make-up. Dutch's cousin, Norma, tells Dutch "you have the potential to be a knockout. You've got good facial features. All we need to do is bring them out" (Hall 71). But Dutch didn't like what makeup did to her and felt uncomfortable wearing it. In Izzy Willy-Nilly, Izzy says of her mother:

My mother doesn't really look like herself to me without her makeup on. Not that she wears so much, but it makes her eyes look a darker brown and it shades the bones of her face and gives color to her skin (Voigt 3).

Beauty enhancement through make-up does appear from time to time in these novels but many of the teens in these novels, while not denying the importance of beauty, view make-up as too artificial. Many of them don't see make-up as being "me."

**Girls recognized and elevated for their beauty.**

Female beauty is a very desirable quality in our culture and parents and spouses of females seem to take a special pride in their child's or wife's beauty. It seems that if females are beautiful they are viewed as more worthy

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human beings. In Eva, Eva's father "had loved her always and been extremely proud of her good looks" (Dickinson 26).

In Dixie Storms Mr. Peyton tries to get his divorced son to think favorably about a young woman. He says, "She sure is a nice girl. ...She's right pretty, too" (Hall 8). This last statement does seem to imply that this makes her worth greater.

In Midnight Hour Encores upon meeting her daughter for the first time in 16 years, Sibilance's mother says, "Oh honey - you're lovely" (Brooks 208). Somehow this comment does seem to say that whatever else she was (like an award winning cellist) wasn't quite enough, but beauty makes her acceptable as no other attributes do.

Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe knows the power of her beauty. "... at least she could be confident about beauty. She was her own currency and, being desirable, was able to pay her own way in the ferocious world..." (Mahy 3). Angela doesn't personally feel it makes her special or more worthwhile but she knows how powerful her beauty can be and is not afraid to use her looks.

In the historic Sweetgrass by Jan Hudson, Sweetgrass shows her awareness of the place of beauty in her culture when she says to her friend, "You are as beautiful as a great chief's daughter in an old story. Remember all the things men have given to beautiful women" (11).

Thus it can be seen that the message "to be beautiful is to be better" has been received by the females in many of these novels.

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**Beauty develops a consciousness of physical presence as a characteristic of femininity.**

Women are aware and concerned with how they look. Appearance occupies a great part of their consciousness. They wonder if they look good enough or if they are dressed appropriately. According to Stannard women in this culture are told they're the fair sex, but at the same time that their 'beauty' needs "shaping, dyeing, painting, curling, and padding" (122).

Since females know that they are expected to look good all the time, they make self deprecating remarks about their physical appearance, almost as an apology for looking the way they do. In The Silver Kiss Lorraine says to Zoe, "You might be skinny, but your bra's bigger than mine" (Klaue 155). Breast size looms large as an issue of appearance and acceptance for females. Jeannie in A Kindness says while in the company of her boyfriend, his mother, and a family friend, "Oh. I always identify with linguine. No breasts" (Rylant 38).

One female who was shown to be actually pleased and accepting of her body was Riley in A Band of Angels. She realized that some males judged females by their breast size. "She didn't (ever) mind not having the kind of breasts that got asked out on dates" (Thompson 108).

Females were also critical of their faces. In Sex Education Livvie said, "But the part of my face I dislike the most is my mouth. I have fat lips" (Davis 37).

Curiously, the majority of males in these novels focused very little on their own appearances. The only male who is shown to be truly unhappy with the way he looks is

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Tycho in The Catalogue of the Universe. He bemoans the fact that he is so short, but doesn't make public statements about what he perceives his inadequacies to be.

Our culture seems so saturated with messages about the importance of female beauty that even a thirteen-year-old feels the pressure to measure up. Geraldine in And One For All by Theresa Nelson is described as "feeling unbearably young and homely" (82).

One of the females, Celine, who consciously decides to ignore our culture's standards says about herself: "And she's careless about shaving her legs and under her arms." But she's aware of the censure that comes with this act. "No self-respect, my gramma would say, but Celine-Beast doesn't care" (Cole 157). So even though Celine has decided not to conform to one measure of beauty, she is very aware that her actions bring disapproval. Thus, whether females try to fit our culture's idea of beauty or not, their appearance and its impact on others is ever present in their consciousness. Christian-Smith explains that preoccupation over physical appearance is a defining feature of femininity. Indeed psychologists view women as abnormal who don't pay attention to such things as wearing make-up. Phyllis Chesler tells us that clinicians have different standards of mental health for men and women. Women being "more conceited about their appearance" than men is considered part of their idea of mental health for women (68).

So Celine's refusal to give in to pressures from others about her appearance, makes her appear abnormal. One of the many ways women are nudged into accepting society's

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norms is illustrated by Celine's grandma's comment which shames Celine and tries to make her feel guilty for her independent minded actions or for doing something that feels right for her.

**As developing early relationships to commodities through make-up and clothing.**

Although shopping and buying is often seen as the domain of women, a few of these novels do show men as shoppers and purchasers of food. In Memory by Margaret Mahy, the main character Jonny shops, cooks, and cares for an elderly woman. In Midnight Hour Encores it is understood that Sibilance's father who has raised her alone was responsible for all the shopping and cooking.

The majority of these novels do not emphasize or even show relationships to commodities. One novel that does show clothing as a path to beauty is Say Goodnight, Gracie. Morgan says, "She'd (her aunt) gotten me a short-sleeved angora sweater and a pair of wool slacks; also some sexy underwear that was all one piece" (Deaver 57). Clothes are shown as enhancing appearance.

In all these novels, only two instances of clothes shopping are shown. In Permanent Connections Rob is put in the position of accompanying Ellery to spend her birthday money. She buys "a man's jacket two sizes too big and several oversized shirts..." (Bridgers 36). Rob wondered why she was "spending a small fortune in drabness, clothes to get lost in" (Bridgers 37). So one of the times clothes shopping is portrayed in these novels, the female seems to be deliberately trying to find clothes that do not enhance

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**As a precondition for romance.**

Female beauty or attractiveness is assumed to be a prerequisite for male attention and male caring. A female not considered beautiful feels she is in some ways deficient. These attitudes do show up in this sample but often it is the female herself who perceives this deficiency. In Dixie Storms Dutch wishes her own body was different. She sees her cousin in a bathing suit and notices how much attention she gets. Dutch describes what she sees:

She had perfect breasts and a flat stomach. Even though her legs were pale, they curved in all the right spots and were full of muscles, like an athlete's. Aunt Macey said men didn't like women with muscular legs, but obviously she was wrong. Kenny and Ethan both looked like a strong wind could have knocked them over (Hall 44-45).

Females show their understanding of this connection between beauty and romance through comments to each other. In Princess Ashley, Ashley reassures Chelsea by explaining, "I mean you're the type he's attracted to. After all, you're really great looking" (Peck 105).

In Izzy Willy-Nilly, Izzy is acutely aware of how having an amputated leg will affect her chances for romance. She says "... that's what I was, a thing, a messed-up body" (Voigt 52) and " who would want to go out with a cripple?" (Voigt 56).

When Weetzie's father in Weetzie Bat describes falling in love, the attribute he is most aware of in his beloved is her beauty. It was "love at first sight, I swear. The most

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Even grandmothers feel they have to reassure granddaughters that everything will be all right by foreseeing beauty in their future. In White Peak Farm Jeannie says, "when I was fourteen she (Gran) told me that in ten years'time I would be a beautiful woman" (Doherty 4). Thus females are told in many, many ways that their bodies must be appealing and attractive or they will have little chance for love.

Girls are constantly reminded that they are made to be looked at and that their looks "are a commodity to be bartered for in exchange for a man, not only for food, clothing, and shelter, but for love" (Stannard 124).

#### **Origins of this Code Through Religion and Biology**

The beginnings of this notion that females need to be attractive for men seems to have been established through the religious belief that woman was put on this earth to serve man. One way to serve him was to always be beautiful for him and to be an ornament he could be proud of. This idea that the females of our species are more beautiful than males is a socially developed construct.

Stannard explains that the exclusive identification of women with beauty occurred at the same time that men stopped being sex objects. Around the end of the 1830's men gave up "wearing bright colors, silks, laces, earrings, and perfumes and stopped setting his hair. Men no longer showed off their legs; instead they wore loose trousers. They also covered their chests with jackets" (120).

The field of biology also helped further the idea that

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women were ornaments for men by depriving women of any other arena of achievement. Darwin tells us that "The chief distinction in the intellectual powers of the two sexes is shown by man's attaining to a higher eminence, in whatever he takes up, than can woman - whether requiring deep thought, reason, or imagination, or merely the use of the senses and hands...Thus man has ultimately become superior to woman" (qtd. in Hubbard 96).

Stannard also points out that though we smile at the cult of beauty as though it were harmless, it is in fact:

an insanity, for it is posited on a false view of reality. Women are not more beautiful than men. The obligation to be beautiful is an artificial burden, imposed by men on women, that keeps both sexes clinging to childhood, the woman forced to remain a charming, dependent child, the man driven by his unconscious desire to be - like an infant-loved and taken care of simply for his beautiful self (130).

The cultural insistence on beauty and appearance has even more serious effects on what males and females become.

Hubbard says:

If a society puts half its children in dresses and skirts but warns them not to move in ways that reveal their underpants, while putting the other half in jeans and overalls and encouraging them to climb trees and play ball and other active outdoor games; if later during adolescence, the half that has worn trousers is exhorted to 'eat like a growing boy' while the half in skirts is warned to watch their weight and not get fat; if the half in jeans trot around in sneakers or boots, while the half in skirts totters about on spike heels, then these two groups of people will be biologically as well as socially different. Their muscles will be different, as well as their reflexes, posture, arms, legs and feet, hand-eye coordination, spacial perception, and so on (Hubbard 115).

The code of beauty is still in evidence in the novels in this study but seems to be expressed in subtle ways.

Although many of the female protagonists fight against the idea of being beautiful or glamorous for others and balk at the standards of appearance, the underlying message in these novels, carried mainly through the extensive description of females, still lets readers know that female appearance is one of the major ways females are judged and found acceptable or not acceptable in our society.

Even though females are expected to make themselves attractive to men, the code of sexuality explains that females must not then succumb to the advances of the men who find them attractive.

#### THE CODE OF SEXUALITY

Definitions of the sexual are constructed through a code which is beginning to show some signs of change. Residual sexual practices still form the core themes of this code in this sample in that women are not allowed to show any hint of interest in the sexual. Additionally, females are often viewed as the standard bearers of morality and are expected to resist the sexual advances of males because men are not considered responsible for their sexual urges. Women are still judged negatively if they dress in ways that are seen to invite advances.

The most significant change in this code demonstrated by recent young adult literature seems to be a recognition that girls are interested in the sexual and if they are in a loving relationship, they are not judged as harshly for genital relationships.

Michel Foucault describes sexuality as a name that can be given to a:

historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface network in which stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasure, the incitement to discourse... the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power" (History 105).

In other words, far from being the "natural" order of things, the way we view sexuality has been constructed through networks of power and reflects a particular view and a particular viewpoint. The code of sexuality can best be viewed through this lense in order to understand the huge gulf between "appropriate" sexual conduct for males and for females.

Hubbard agrees with Foucault's view. "There is not 'natural' human sexuality. This is not to say that our sexual feelings are 'unnatural' but that whatever feelings and activities our society interprets as sexual are channeled from birth into socially acceptable forms of expression" (130).

As was discussed in the code of romance, when the dominator society was in ascendancy it was important to gain control over woman's sexuality in order to control them and to make sure inheritance was determined through the male's line. Efforts to control females sexually are apparent in the code of sexuality. Hubbard tells us that sex and gender dichotomies lend themselves to setting up norms, hence inventing deviance. "They act as instruments of social control" (138). She also notes that sex differences have been emphasized in this society and believes the reason has to do with power relationships.

**The Dominant Code of Sexuality**  
(developed by Linda Christian-Smith)

1. Heterosexuality as the only legitimate sexual practice.
2. Sexual relationships between females is prohibited.
3. Resistance to genital relationships is encouraged.
4. Females as responding to male sexual overtures but not initiating them.

**Heterosexuality as the only legitimate sexual practice.**

As was noted in the code of romance, only one book even raises the issue of homosexuality. Weetzie Bat is a novel that shows homosexual lovers in a positive light. However, since this topic is not even mentioned in any other novel, the implicit assumption is that heterosexuality is the norm.

**Sexual relations between females is prohibited.**

This topic was not even hinted at in any of the novels in this sample. This omission speaks volumes about what's acceptable and what is not. Authors of an article on lesbianism have pointed out that the label 'lesbian' is an instrument of social control. "Affixing the label lesbian ...is a primary form of divisiveness among women: It is the condition which keeps women within the confines of the feminine role" (qtd. in Daly, Beyond 126).

**Resistance to genital relationships is encouraged.**

The code of sexuality is shown through romance. The females in these novels were, with one exception, in love with the male they wanted to have a genital relationship with. Many of these novels showed the residual forms of



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sexuality especially in their condemnation of females who were involved in genital sex. One of the harshest condemnations comes in Fade by Robert Cormier when Aunt Rosanna is being discussed. "Whenever her name came up, a hush always followed and people in the family averted their eyes from each other" (Cormier 9). Paul's father later says that her problem was "She can't resist anything in pants" (24). The reader finds out later from Rosanna herself that "I left Frenchtown because I was pregnant" (45).

Rosanna was judged on the basis of her sexuality. This is not true for males. Daly reminds us that man is measured by other standards besides sexuality. Prostitution illustrates this double standard. "It is the males demand that creates the supply, yet he suffers no disgrace as a result" (Church 64).

Since Fade is set in the early 1900's the disapproval for female sexual activity was strong. But even in a novel set in the present, there is disapproval. In Say Goodnight Gracie Morgan's mother is shocked when it is suggested that her psychiatrist sister-in-law might be physically involved with her male friend. The others present at this interchange, however, are amused at her reaction.

In Weetzie Bat the only time there is any disapproval of the sexual is when Weetzie's significant other, My Secret Agent Lover Man, refuses to help conceive a baby. Weetzie decides that the gay lovers they live with would make excellent fathers and decides to sleep with both of them so with paternity unknown, they would both be the baby's father. When My Secret Agent Lover Man finds out he tells Weetzie, "And for you to go and sleep with Dirk and Duck

without even telling me is the worst thing you have ever done" (Block 48).

Chip in A Kindness is hurt and shocked when his unmarried mother tells him she is pregnant. He hurls condemnation at her. "You sneak off with who knows what man, you get knocked up..." But his mother refuses to accept his judgment of her and fights back. "And don't think you're going to make me feel like a slut. That's one power I'm not giving to anybody" (Rylant 49). Anne, the mother, is definitely rejecting the residual forms of sexuality.

This movement toward more emergent forms is represented in the comments of the father in A Band of Angels about his daughters. He enjoys telling his golfing friends that he didn't believe in the double standard. "You can't wrap a girl up in cotton wool... The best protection you can give 'em is a little common sense and a whole lot of insurance. Plus a credit card from the phone company and a prescription from the family physician" (Thompson 68). He implies that he would approve of his daughters' sexual activity but he is the only father in this sample who expresses this view.

Among the teens in these novels there is more openness about wanting genital relationships. Angela, in The Catalogue of the Universe initiates sex with Tycho who has been her close friend and confidant. When she very openly lets him know what she would like from him, he just as openly says, "I'll have a go. If you want me to. Don't laugh at me" (Mahy 136).

Livvie in Sex Education is equally as open about her desires. When she's thinking about what her biology teacher

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has told them about sex and love she says, "But what she never did say, never told us at all, was how love wanted sex. Not for proof, but for love itself, for more" (Davis 118). Later David tells her, "I want to make love to you, Livvie." She replies, "I want to, David. I want it too" (Davis 129). Even though these ninth graders have heard of the perils of sexual involvement from adults, they want to make their own decision based on their relationship.

Although it appears the residual code is changing, it must be remembered that romance still appears to be a necessary prerequisite for genital relationships and if romance is there the disapproval may not be as strong.

In Permanent Connections when Ellery is talking to Leanna, Leanna tells her, "Well, we've had it. Sex, I mean. After all, we've been going together since the sixth grade. By the tenth--that's four years--there was nothing left to do. It sorta happened naturally" (Bridgers 151). The girls seem to view it as something that will eventually happen in a relationship. This code then seems to be bending a bit and females are not condemned as strongly for being involved in genital relationships.

**Females as responding to male sexual overtures but not initiating them.**

Jessie Bernard explains that males make the overtures because in "any social relationship--nonsexual as well as sexual--the higher status person is the one who has the privilege of taking the initiative" (146).

Implied in this part of the code is the notion that males are expected to be sexual. Socio-biologists, those

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engaged in the systematic study of the biological basis of all social behavior, have helped support this belief with "studies" that have suggested that "man's natural sexuality sends him in search of many sex partners, making him an unstable mate at best, while woman's biological origins destine her to keep the home fires burning" (Fausto-Sterling 4). At the same time, though, woman is seen to be tempting man. Stone explains that in our society woman is often shown through advertising and art as being evil. "...everywhere woman was tempting man to do wrong. Women were inherently conniving, contriving, and dangerously sexy" (7).

This idea of man's natural sexuality which the female is often seen as bringing out, is present in many of these novels and is seen through the easy sexual comments males make to females. In Say Goodnight, Gracie Jimmy's comments to Morgan are often of a sexual nature but these remarks are never shown to be inappropriate. At one point when Morgan takes over a role in a play for another female and puts on her costume, Jimmy says, "Not bad, Hackett - you fill it out a lot better than Robin does" (Deaver 82). If females ever told a male that he filled out his bathing suit better than another male, then she would be viewed as deviant or unnatural or aggressive. The fact that male comments of a sexual nature are sprinkled so frequently throughout these novels seems to say that it's natural and normal for boys to think about sex all the time.

Dermot in Celine also excuses himself for having intercourse in a closet at a party with a friend of Celine's. He says to Celine, " I kept wondering what you must think about me. Well, men are different than women.

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We have these physical drives, you know, and you can't just bottle them up all the time. It just isn't possible" (Cole 169-170). Celine doesn't buy his line and throws him out of the apartment, but this inability of some males to control themselves seems to be accepted in our society.

Laura, in The Goats sees an example of male sexual expression on the beach. "The girl leaned on the counter, and her boyfriend let his hand slide down over the seat of her swimsuit. She slapped his hand away and then leaned over again" (Cole 41). Again, boys are shown to initiate and girls respond or react.

Male sexual reactions are described and because of the straightforward way they are handled, they are seen to be perfectly acceptable. In Fade, Paul is hugged by his beautiful aunt and says, "I was aware of her breasts crushed against me, and I couldn't breathe and my blood pulsed wildly and my skin itched and my head whirled" (Cormier 10). Nowhere in any of these novels is female arousal described with such gusto!

Females however are shown in several novels as initiators in lovemaking. In Midnight Hour Encores, while Sibilance is at a cello competition in Europe, she meets a boy who takes her breath away. He asks her why she seems to be playing poorly and she tells him, "I think it's because I want you to kiss me. I can't figure it out. I never want ANYONE to kiss me." She presses further. "Will you?" (Brooks 219). When he comes to her room that night they make love. Sibilance is not at all self conscious explaining all of this to the mother she has just met.

Another female who is comfortable in initiating sex

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play is Riley in A Band of Angels. "What she knew, that day... was that she felt like taking off her clothes with Jordan Paradise. Not in order to do anything that could conceivably make her pregnant, but just to do that.... Riley never felt more beautiful or natural" (Thompson 162-163).

These emergent forms are present in this code and there seems to be an admission that females are actually interested in sex and can sometimes initiate physical contact. But the continued absence of female sexual comments shows that the residual forms are still firmly rooted in the attitudes and behavior of our culture.

#### **Religious Roots of this Code**

The very different sexual expectations for males and females can be traced back to post-Goddess societies which codified sexual expectations through law and religion. As was explained in the code of romance, laws were aimed at controlling women sexually.

It should be noted that the anti-sexual attitude of both Jews and Christians was not necessarily the result of a more inherent belief in sexual purity or a lesser sex drive. If that were the case, women would not be the only ones subject to these laws and the attitudes that the laws produced. But it was the woman who was punished for the loss of her virginity before marriage. She could be stoned or burned to death for this offence according to the Israelite laws dating from about 1300 B.C.E. (Stone 56).

The invading Hebrew tribes had to teach everyone to regard the ancient Goddess religion as evil, lustful,

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shameful, disgraceful, and sinful and at the same time teach women to accept the idea that for a woman to sleep with more than one man was evil. They tried to convince women that "deviant" sexual behavior would bring disaster, wrath and shame from the almighty while simultaneously they were telling women that it was acceptable for their husbands to have sexual relationships with any number of women (Stone 182). Premarital virginity and marital fidelity were proclaimed by Levite law as divinely essential for all women. The Bible with the story of the death of Jezebel who was accused of starting a rumor that ended in the death of a man, also conveyed the message (Stone 188).

It must be remembered that the first part of the Bible was sifted and edited by teams of male Hebrew scholars as late as 400 B.C.E. These editorial teams gave sanction "To the religious practices of the time by throwing their origin back into the remote past" (Eisler 86). Therefore, although there are two different stories of how God created human beings found in the Book of Genesis, the second one was the one elaborated on. In the King James Version of the Bible it is first stated that men and women were created simultaneously: "God created man in his image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen I:27). The second version says Eve was created as an afterthought out of Adam's rib. "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him... and while he slept he took one of his ribs'" (Gen II: 18).

The Adam and Eve myth, point for point, attacked the Goddess religion. In the Goddess religion serpents and

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butterflies were symbols of metamorphosis and the regenerative power of the goddess. The serpent also symbolized wisdom and prophetic counsel. Fig trees, also known as the sycamore or mulberry, were closely associated with the Goddess. This tree was known as the Living Body of Hathor (one of the Goddess's names) on Earth. To eat of its fruit was to eat of the flesh and fluid of the Goddess. These small trees appear repeatedly in images of the Goddess, often on rings or seals. The fruit of the trees may have been eaten as a type of communion with the Goddess (Stone 216).

In the Garden of Eden, Eve let a snake talk her into tasting of the forbidden fruit. So now the view of the serpent as a positive symbol is turned around and made into a symbol of almost diabolical mis-counseling.

Eisler says:

Clearly the serpent was too important, too sacred, and too ubiquitous a symbol of power of the Goddess to be ignored. If the old mind was to be refashioned to fit the new system's requirements, the serpent would either have to be appropriated as one of the emblems of the new ruling classes, or alternately, defeated, distorted, discredited (87).

Thus the snake suggested what Eve should do and she did it and she was punished. It is easy to see that one of the targets of this story was the woman who still went to the temple or who regarded the snake as a source of wisdom. Now to listen to the snake/Goddess meant punishment because it meant allegiance to one other than the male god of the Old Testament. Next Eve took a bite out of a fruit called the apple which was knowledge forbidden to her by God. She not only showed her curiosity and defiance of authority but she

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became aware of her own sexuality through this act. It is obvious when Adam and Eve covered themselves with fig leaves that this knowledge was an awareness and consciousness of their own sexuality. In the Garden of Eden this was viewed as bad, and not something God wanted humans to be aware of. All the shame and sinfulness about one's own body and one's own sexuality was a direct attack on the attitude towards sexuality that the Goddess worshipping women had. Sex to them was part of nature, the greatest gift of all because it could result in new life. Women had been revered for their ability to have children. The Garden myth turns this all around and sexuality becomes something degrading which women are to be punished for.

Interestingly enough, the fig leaves which Adam and Eve cover themselves with, are also symbols of the Goddess and seem to be placed in this myth to further discredit the Goddess by using the symbol as a representation of shame.

The final punishment for "knowing" is that Eve is to be condemned to suffer pain in childbirth and to be subject to her husband. This punishment was for challenging and questioning authority and being aware of one's own sexuality. This mighty condemnation to always be subject to one's husband and to desire no other is harsh, swift punishment.

One of the most provocative aspects of this myth is that Adam is not held responsible for his own actions because he was tempted by Eve. It is all her fault that they lost paradise--he just couldn't help himself! So in one fell swoop these inventors of the myth made woman a temptress who was responsible for all the evil in the world

and freed man from any responsibility especially for his sexual conduct.

Even childbirth is now seen as unclean. According to the Synod of Trier (1227) new mothers had to be "reconciled with the Church" (Ranke-Heinemann 25). In this dominator patriarchal society the beauty and joy in childbirth was turned to something dirty. For childbirth couldn't come about without sex and sex was sin because of the base nature of women.

Women were accused of being morally frail, rebellious, and inclined to lead men into sin (French 133). This belief in the base nature of women allowed men to blame them for all things associated with sex. The double standard was supported by the idea of a special guilt attached to the female sex. Thus the wife had to take back her unfaithful husband, but if the wife were unfaithful, she could be rejected and even put to death. Needless to say, the double standard is still very much present in today's society.

Religions have explained how women should be, too. Daly tells us the "Catholic Church is still preaching to women the passive virtues of obedience, submission, and meekness" (Church 54). So as time went on, the long, powerful arm of the Church reached everywhere and with it came the unquestionable "moral" attitudes and the guilt-ridden, subservient role assigned to women (Daly 228).

#### **Roots of this Code from Biology**

As biology became a more recognized science in the last century, it took up the cause of proving woman to be passive by nature and men to be sexually aggressive. The most

pervasive and comprehensive of present day biodeterminist theories is sociobiology which has as its project "the systematic study of the biological bases of all social behavior" (Hubbard 109). Sociobiologists claiming to use objective measures found men to be more sexually active than women. Furthermore the male desire for sexual variety is "natural and universal." The male is also said to be more aroused by visual stimuli than the female (Fausto-Sterling, 196).

Once sociobiologists have identified supposedly universal traits--for example, male aggression and female nurturance--they argue that their very universality is evidence they are adaptive. Adaptive implies that the traits in question are inherited unchanged by successive generations and that individuals who exhibit them leave more descendants than other individuals do.

Prominent among such traits in males, sociobiologists say, "are behaviors that lead them to inseminate as many females as possible, hence promiscuity; among females, behaviors that optimize their ability to spot, and attach themselves to, genetically well-endowed males and to take good care of their offspring, hence fidelity and nurturance" (Hubbard 109).

Hubbard does point out the problem with research on differences is that it is the nature of scientific research that if we are interested in differences, we will go on looking until we find them. And if we do not find any, "we will assume that our instruments were wrong or that we looked in the wrong places or at the wrong things" (128).

"Differences, be they biological or psychological,

become scientifically interesting only when they parallel differences in power," claims Hubbard (129). Sex differences are interesting in sexist societies that value one group more highly than the other.

She strongly cautions her readers to remember that biology is profoundly political. "Biologists have the authority to tell us what is natural and what is human. Biologists have been able to wrap the mantle of science around racism and sexism by inventing significant characteristics to describe and sort different groups of people, and have performed the measurements that make the answers come out the way political prejudices predicted they would" (Hubbard 209).

#### **Roots of this Code in Psychology**

Until quite recently, almost the entire field of psychology acted as another form of social control for women. Male psychologists counseled their women patients to accept society's definition of them and to recognize that the root of their problems was within them. In this way the status quo was preserved and women believed they were being helped by realizing that they were causing their own problems. Feminist psychologists today are questioning this view and believe we have to look at the larger culture and the way women have been psychologically oppressed to understand the roots of women's unhappiness.

Women's belief in their own evilness, passed down through religion, is furthered because our culture treats women as objects. Women are there to look nice and to make their men look good. "To be considered as an object can lead

to the deep inner sense that there must be something wrong and bad about oneself"( Miller 59).

Miller explains that the experience of being a sex object is a particularly destructive one. "When one is an object, not a subject, all of one's own physical and sexual impulses and interests are presumed not to exist independently. They are to be brought into existence only by and for others.... Any stirrings of physicality and sexuality in herself would only confirm for a girl or woman her evil state" (60). Thus the work begun centuries ago by the church and the legal establishment to make women believe their sexuality made them evil is now fully imbedded into the belief system and consciousness of women and only now is the premise of this belief being challenged.

The code of sexuality clearly shows the dominance of males in our society and this same dominance becomes apparent as we look closely at the code of expression.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### RESIDUAL VALUES IN THE NOVELS AS SHOWN THROUGH THE CODES OF EXPRESSION AND RELATION

While the last chapter used the codes developed by Linda Christian-Smith, this chapter uses codes that I developed myself. To give the reader an idea of how these codes are uncovered, I will explain the process I used.

After reading the twenty-five novels in this study several times, I did notice that there were unspoken rules governing conversation. I first saw that adult males were much more apt than females to state their opinions or desires directly. In such books as White Peak Farm and Celine and The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle, males spoke without apology even when they were saying harsh things. Implied in their speech was a belief that they had the right to speak this way. Thus this tendency of males to speak directly became the first element of the code of expression.

Next, I noticed in such books as Dixie Storms, The Crazy Horse Electric Game, Sweetgrass, and Eva that females were openly criticized and no one countered these criticisms. I found this to be true in many novels in the sample and so I discerned that it is acceptable to publicly criticize females and this became the second element of the code of expression.

As part of this study I was reading books in the field of psychology and one supposed characteristic of males is that they are rational and rarely express their feelings and emotions. I noticed this in several of the novels and so

this became another element.

I must explain here, that since this study looks at the movement away from traditional values, I decided I must state my elements in such a way that they reflect the residual values in society so that movement away from the codes can be a reflection of emergent values in society. So even though I did notice instances of males sharing their feelings, I stated the element to reflect traditional values.

As I read further, I noticed that females worked hard in such novels as White Peak Farm and Celine so they wouldn't anger men through their speech. To achieve this end, many females spoke indirectly. This became my fourth element.

For the last element, I noticed that the disciplines of psychology and biology described women as very emotional. Even though my readings had shown me that male and female behavior is much more similar than it is different and that socialization, not hormones, could explain the difference in expression of feelings, I did notice that women did share feelings frequently in these novels. Thus my fifth element reflects the traditional view of woman as expressing emotions frequently in conversation. These elements all became parts of the code of expression.

#### CODE OF EXPRESSION

The words we use when we speak to others convey more than one message. Besides the "stuff" of the message, the words we choose also convey how we see ourselves in relation to the person we are speaking to. The pauses, whether we

interrupt or not and whether we qualify what we say are all a part of the message.

In the novel Eva, Eva as a chimpanzee notices this. "Grog hit it off fabulously with Mom. When he had Dad to himself he let Dad do all the talking. At the same time, he gave Dad little signals of deference..." (Dickinson 107).

She becomes aware of the "codes" that govern human behavior only when she has the distance from humans that being in the body of the chimp provides. Eva notices the way her mother diverts the conversation and says, "That was family code, just like a chimp code, only in words" (43).

Because we are so immersed in the codes that govern our expression, it is difficult to extricate ourselves long enough to see what they are signaling. Conversation takes up a significant part of our daily lives and we engage in it and show or receive signs of deference almost without realizing it. Yet when looked at carefully, the codes of expression are very clear. Males are much more direct in their speech than females are. Females have often learned to qualify, to restate, and to be tentative in conversation.

The recent works of Carol Gilligan explain that women's deference is rooted "not only in their social subordination but also in the substance of their moral concern (Voice 16). Because of the way females are socialized they view affiliation and relationships as much more important than males do and fear that speaking directly may result in the loss of a relationship.

One of the most significant findings in this part of the study is that criticism of the female, often just because she was female, seems to be socially sanctioned.



Also when males accuse other males of being a "girl" it is the greatest kind of condemnation. Males are never castigated in these novels just because they are males, nor is anyone ever called a "boy" as a form of condemnation.

Also codes that govern speech seem to be loosening with girls speaking more directly and boys showing their emotions.

The elements which structure and give meaning to this code are still very apparent in the novels used in this study.

#### The Dominant Code of Expression

1. Males speak directly of their desires and opinions.
2. Females can openly be criticized.
3. Emotions and feelings are not part of male conversation.
4. Females speak indirectly and try hard not to offend males.
5. Emotions and feelings are a large part of female conversations.

**Males speak directly of their desires and opinions.**

Dorothy Dinnerstein spells out this part of the code.

A man is entitled to issue blunt orders, contradict people flatly, instruct or command or forbid outright, without apology or circumlocation. A woman must not respond in kind, or, she is unwomanly...she must not reject in principle his right to make it (the comment) nor may she claim the same kind of right for herself (178).

This element of the code is shown in many of the novels. In Permanent Connections, Rob's father, Davis seems used to being in charge. He tells Rob without qualifying any of his thoughts, "We'll go to the house first... We'll

get the car and go on out there... (Bridgers 9). Later he says, "You ought to get the house painted, Pa" (Bridgers 19). He doesn't try to soften his speech by turning his utterances into questions or by adding such phrases as "if it's OK with you" or "have you ever thought about?" which is common in female speech.

The father in White Peak Farm spurned the meal his wife had cooked for him. "The piecrust was burnt, the gravy too thin," he said (Doherty 29). It is obvious from his very direct speech that he thinks his wife should cook for him and she should do it to please him. His words are blunt and hard.

When Pod in Princess Ashley first meets Chelsea at registration in a high school gym, he says, "Hi! Want to get married?" (Peck 20). It can thus be seen that this code is related to and extends the codes of romance and sexuality, in that men are the aggressors or the ones who can come straight out and ask for a date or tell females that they find them attractive.

In The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Charlotte's father directly tells her how she feels. "Charlotte," he insisted, "you are tired and wish to go to your room" (Avi 203). He doesn't mince words, he doesn't allow argument, he is the one in charge.

The divorced Flood in Dixie Storms, shows his teen cousin who has the power. "Listen, girl. You're getting into dangerous territory. Nobody tells me about my wife. Nobody talks to me like that, you got it? It's not beyond me to slap your face" (Hall 108). This intensely strong speech complete with a physical threat is not present in the

dialogue of any female in this sample.

In addition to direct speech, there was present in the conversations with males some examples of more indirect speech. Jimmy says to Morgan in Say Goodnight, Gracie when he learns he may be going away for the summer: "Wisconsin isn't exactly, Mars, you know. Planes, trains and busses go there."

"Are you inviting me to Wisconsin to visit you?"

"Yes, Morgan, that's exactly what I'm doing" (Deaver 99).

Oftentimes it seems the males gauge what kind of reaction they might get before they decide how to phrase their wishes. But even though remarks were sometimes indirect, male speech doesn't seem to include the tentativeness or the qualifiers that female speech does.

#### **Females are openly criticized**

Castigating remarks against females seem to be sprinkled throughout these books. After they are made, no one comments on them or says they are inappropriate. Also in these novels females are criticized just because of their gender. Kelly says that contempt for woman was public and unashamed down through the 18th century when historian Catherine Macaulay wrote that women were ridiculed. Macaulay explains that the "polite and gallant (Fourth Earl of) chesterfield" said that women were "children of a larger growth...A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with them, humors and flatters them... but he neither consults them nor trusts them in serious matters" (qtd. in Kelly 78).

In Dixie Storms the comments of young Bodean are always tolerated. When he first meets his cousin Norma he says to Dutch, "She ain't bad for a girl, is she?" (Hall 39). Boys her own age say to her, "It's too bad some other parts of you aren't as developed as your mouth" (Hall 17). Later they are angry that she wants to play horseshoes and so put her down through their comments.

"Girls can't play horseshoes," Ethan objected.  
 "This one can," Jimmy said. "She doesn't even know she's a girl."  
 "She sure does pack a punch," Daryl agreed. "You sure she ain't a boy in disguise?"  
 "Could be," Jimmy said. "She sure ain't shaped like a woman. She's missing a couple of essentials" (Hall 136).

So to criticize her they try to let her know how unwomanly her conduct is and further insult her by referring to her lack of breast development. No boys in this sample were ever criticized physically and in a taunting way. However males seem to feel that a female's body is fair game for their nasty comments probably because her appearance is not pleasing to them and doesn't conform to their expectations.

Nancy Chodorow explains this male behavior as boys' attempt to construct their sense of masculinity in largely negative terms. "Given that masculinity is so elusive, it becomes important for masculine identity that certain social activities are defined as masculine and superior and that women are believed unable to do many of the things defined as socially important" (182). Miller also says that the "actions and words of the dominant group tend to be destructive of the subordinates" (6).

In White Peak Farm Jeannie's father criticizes a woman based solely on appearance. "I'll tell you what I don't

like about the woman. It's her face.... You look at her next time. She's got a horrible face, that woman" (Doherty 20).

In The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle the captain angrily attacks Charlotte. "Insulted by a sniffling, self-centered, ugly, contemptible girl who deserves a horsewhipping" (Avi 98). Not only does the captain attack her on her appearance but he also seems to imply that her gender is inferior. Even though the captain is known for being mean-spirited, when he berates the crew he calls them ruffians and villains but he never attacks them on their appearance or gender.

Willie's father in The Crazy Horse Electric Game is frustrated that his son isn't recovering quickly from his accident. Intent on helping his son regain his physical and athletic abilities, he insists his son play handball with him. But Willie's coordination isn't what it should be and he plays poorly. In a rage his father shouts at him, "Damn it, you look like a girl out here" (Crutcher 75). It is obvious that the father thinks this is the worst insult he could hurl and through this insult we can see some measure of hatred or disgust for females.

Chodorow explains the male tendency to devalue women and femininity by looking at the ways males and females are raised. The primary relationship for a young girl is with a member of the same sex. A young boy must come to transfer his original identification from his mother to his father. Especially if the father isn't present the boy's sense of gender identity is based on relatively abstract categories (qtd. in Nicholson 74). To become male, then, seems to him

to mean to become everything not female. Female loathing and hatred result and males fear that anything in themselves that seems at all female means they are not real men.

It is no wonder then that negative comments about females become an acceptable part of male conversation.

**Males do not share feelings and emotions.**

This element of the code is most likely embedded in the fear of being viewed as a female. Men are expected to be the rational ones and giving in to feelings has been viewed as a weakness. Keller says "that for all of us - male and female alike - our earliest experiences incline us to associate the affective and cognitive posture of objectification with the masculine, while all the processes that involve blurring of the boundary between subject and object tend to be associated with the feminine" (87).

Eva's father in Eva perfectly illustrates this element of the code. Even though his precious daughter's brain is now in the body of a chimpanzee, he never shows the slightest bit of emotion even in his first conversation with her after the operation. Instead, he talks to her about the medical and scientific aspects of the operation. "As Mom told you, your neuron linkages appear complete.." (Dickerson 26).

However many of the novels show change in this element with males sharing more feelings. In Permanent Connections Rob is shown crying twice. Once as he admits to his Dad "it was all my fault" (Bridgers 234) and another time as his trial is coming closer and he realizes all that his family has done for him.

In After the Rain we are told that Rachel's father "cries easily when hurt by one of his children" (Mazer 8).

Males are also shown as sharing how they're feeling in many of these novels. Johnny in The Crazy Horse Electric Game "wipes his eyes furiously" as he tries to tell Willie how he feels about him. "I'm your friend, man. I wanna stay your friend, but I don't know what to do" (Crutcher 49).

Jeremy in After the Rain admits "I'm being selfish, Rachel" (Mazer 246) and in Say Goodnight Gracie Morgan tells us Jimmy is "more open with his feelings and more sentimental" (Deaver 6).

When men are confronted with death, as in Say Goodnight Gracie and After the Rain, they are also shown crying. Even though women show their feelings more than men in these novels, there is a definite movement away from this residual code.

**Females speak indirectly and try hard not to offend men.**

Females are shown as qualifying what they say and using questions so that they do not ask anything directly. "Would you mind..." is often heard as a preface to a female request.

When Charlotte Doyle finds hard evidence that the men on the ship plan to mutiny she hurries to the captain. "Is it important?" he asks. "I think so, sir," she answers (Avi 79). She doesn't feel she can give an unequivocal yes.

Even Aunt Lo, the psychiatrist in Say Goodnight, Gracie couches her requests in questions. "Betty, would you have someone bring my car around?" (Deaver 117).

Catherine in Celine, shows the female backing down from her original opinion. Catherine, Celine's young step-mother invites a professor and his mother to dinner. She at first speaks her opinion about a painter directly.

"Rothko, I do remember being disappointed..."  
 The professor is staring at her in astonishment.  
 "Rothko!" he barks.  
 "Well," says Catherine, turning pink. "His palette I mean..." (Cole 98).

She furiously backpedals and modifies her stance so she will not anger the professor.

Celine realizes that "conversation with Professor Merkie is fraught with hazards. His opinions litter the conversation like land mines, ready to explode at a touch, little eruptions of contempt" (Cole 98).

Eventually the professor said, "I liked that observation of yours, Catherine" and gives his approval for her willingness to modify her opinion (Cole 99).

Chesler shows what the above conversation was really about. She says "Even if only one man is present the man will question the women, perhaps patiently, perhaps not, but always in order to ultimately control the conversation from a superior position" (110).

Celine, however, refuses to play this game and says:

"Rothko's great." The professor counters.  
 "...as you get a little older and learn something more about art, I'll wager your opinion will change."  
 "No it won't," I say. "Or, if it does, then that will be too bad, because then I'll be wrong" (Cole 100).

Celine realizes this exchange was about power and deference and says, "I know I should shut up, and I would too, if the professor didn't have to have the last word" (Cole 100-101).



Celine refuses to accept the code and so her step-mother, anxious to smooth over everything, changes the subject. "Is everyone finished? Why don't we have some dessert now?" (101). Changing the subject to avoid conflict is a very typical way that females keep the peace and avoid displeasing men.

In the kitchen Catherine lets Celine know that disagreeing with the professor is not appropriate and that she thinks "this adolescent...habit should be curbed" (Cole 103). Thus females who speak directly in opposition to a male are told they are acting "childish." This implies that a "mature" woman knows better than to directly disagree with a male.

In Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory, Chodorow explains this "socialization."

As females get older her peers and the adults around her cease their tolerance of her attempts to engage in male activity or to achieve like men. They fear that any self-assertion will diminish her femininity and her attractiveness. She is supposed to be passive and docile, to become interested in her appearance... to cultivate her abilities to charm men, to mold herself to their wants (43).

Young females are also portrayed as showing their anger directly. In The Goats, Laurie calls Howie "bastard" (Cole 181) and Morgan calls Jimmy both a bastard and a jackass (Deaver 62). Celine also uses strong direct language when she says, "Screw you, Dermot" (Cole 167).

Females are also shown giving criticism to males. In Midnight Hour Encores, Sib says to Milosz, "I'm not playing all that poorly. And you're not playing all that great. I doubt you'd win even if I were out of it" (Brooks 220).

Ellery in Permanent Connections tells Rob when he's

driving a truck unfamiliar to him, "You have to ram the clutch harder" (Bridgers 55).

Sometimes however, the very direct females are shown in an unflattering light. In Permanent Connections, Rob considers his Aunt Rosalie a "bitch" because she is so direct. In White Peak Farm Col's mother, Mrs. Stephens is viewed as a witch because she is so direct and refuses to modify her strong statements. The reader is told "there was a trace of malice in her" (Doherty 86). Later she says to Jeannie, "You're not having him...He's not wasting himself on the likes of you..." and she is described as "witchlike" (Doherty 90). When Jeannie's father in the same book makes the comments on how ugly the woman's face was, no narrative followed that told the reader how to view this remark. Also no names seem to exist to label men as outspoken. Women, of course, who show any aggression are often called as witches or bitches.

Another woman who speaks very directly and is considered odd is Dr. Landros in Sons from Afar. She says, "I don't know, James, men act as if--all of their manhood is in their penis. Everything that makes a man a man. I can't believe men are so foolish" (Voigt 137). However, the only women shown to be this blunt are those who clearly are not interested in "getting a man." They feel freer to criticize men but it seems that the price of this freedom is no involvement in romantic relationships.

Although many female characters are challenging this code, many more realize they are not expected to be oppositional.

In Permanent Connections, Leanna says of her long time

boyfriend:

"Travis and I used to argue a lot more than we do now. I'd just get sick, I mean physically ill, when we had a fight. I decided it wasn't worth it, so I just started giving in. Agreeing with him, you know. He says it does me good....Now I just go along about the little things" (Bridgers 150).

Charlotte Doyle saw in her own home an example of how a female was expected to be. She says, "My mother - whom I never knew to disagree with him - accepted my father's decision" (Avi 2). Later in the novel Charlotte's mother reinforces this when she tells Charlotte, "You mustn't contradict your father" (Avi 203).

The protagonist in White Peak Farm decides her father is unreasonable and tyrannical and tries to exert control over her just for the sake of having the power. Finally she decides to ignore him.

"Where do you think you're off to?"  
 "You know very well where I'm off to. Easter Ball."  
 "Well, you're not to go. There's work to do."  
 "It's done."  
 "And the weather is turning. You're needed here."  
 "I'm going to the ball" (Doherty 75).

Rarely are young women in these novels so direct and forceful.

Equally present in these novels are females being conciliatory or apologetic. In Silver Kiss Zoe feels she hasn't been as friendly as she should be and says to Simon, "I'm sorry. I haven't been too pleasant either" (Klause 57). Even though Zoe's mother is dying she still feels she needs to be pleasant and there for others without demanding too much of others. She decided to call her best friend "to apologize... I'm such a jerk," she says (Klause 90).

Rachel in After the Rain also says, "I didn't mean to

snap at you (Mazer 169) and even feisty Cat, in Cat Herself, doesn't want her relationship to slip away. So in spite of a huge fight with Charlie she says to him, "Let's stick together Charlie. We can work something out - can't we?" (Hunter 247).

Gilligan's book In A Different Voice explains some of this changing of stances. She says, "the secrets of the female adolescent pertain to the silencing of her own voice, a silencing enforced by the wish not to hurt others but also by the fear that, in speaking, her voice will not be heard (51). Since the masculine values prevail, women come to question the normalcy of their feelings and to alter their judgments in deference to the opinion of others (Gilligan 16).

Gilligan also tells us that since intimacy goes along with female identity, as the female comes to know herself she is known through her relationships with others (Voice 12). These relationships are thus important to females since they are defining themselves through them. So females are willing "to change the rules, in order to preserve relationships, men, in abiding by these rules, depict relationships as easily replaced" (Gilligan, Voice 44).

**Emotions and feelings are a large part of female expression.**

As has already been shown, females openly discuss their failings and the things they consider wrong with themselves. Since women focus on connectedness, one way to achieve it is through the sharing of feelings. Men and women seem to learn to relate differently and to stress different things in their relationships. Chodorow says, "Most generally, I

would suggest that a quality of embeddedness in social interaction and personal relationship characterize women's life relative to men's" (qtd. in Gilligan, Mapping 67).

Part of this social interaction for women is sharing emotions. They are frequently shown as criers in these novels who also seem to have an easier time sharing a wide range of emotions. In Eva, her mother shows her excitement at being able to communicate with her daughter. "Oh darling, it's so wonderful to have you back" (Dickinson 6). Yet when she is out of Eva's sight she "started to sob" (10). In this family the mother is the only one shown who expresses feelings.

Even Charlotte Doyle gives in to tears. She feels she's responsible for a death on the ship. " 'I..I am sorry. I didn't realize'... I started to say...Tears were streaming from my eyes. I bowed my head and began to sob" (Avi 100).

Females are also shown sharing feelings of vulnerability. In Izzy Willy-Nilly, Rosamunde asks,

"What is it you're frightened of about school?"

"The people. I really don't want to - face everybody and all that" (Voigt 226).

### **Roots of this Code**

At the heart of this part of the code is the belief that men are rational but women are emotional. Miller explains that men are encouraged from early life to be active and rational; women are trained to be involved with emotions. As part of women's subordinate training she learns to be attuned to nuances of mood, pleasure and

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displeasure of the dominant group (39). In order not to displease the dominant group women learn to speak indirectly and to be coy and manipulative because they cannot ask for what they want directly. Miller says "it is not surprising then that a subordinate group resorts to disguised and indirect ways of acting and reacting" (10).

Another root of this code is the "popular mythology that casts objectivity, reason, and mind as male, and subjective feelings and nature as female. In this division of emotional and intellectual labor, women have been the guarantors and protectors of the personal, the particular, whereas science--the province par excellence of the impersonal, the rational and the general has been the preserve of men" (Keller 7).

Thus this code of expression is also based on the male as the dominant in our society who can speak freely while the female must couch what she has to say. The code of relations reveals the presence of elements that show the male is still dominant in our society.

#### **CODE OF RELATION**

Females learn their place in the world by looking at and being part of relationships. They watch other females and how they act in relation to males. As part of families they see who does what for whom and who is deferred to. They look at how decisions are made and how open members of the family are with each other. They come to intuitively know where the power in this network lies by seeing who is most valued and who is deferred to the most.

In family ideology, Chodorow tells us, fathers are usually important and considered the head of the household. Wives focus energy and concern on their husbands (181). This attitude was reinforced by religious leaders such as Martin Luther who said, "the regiment and dominion belong to the man as the head and master of the house" (qtd. in Stone 226). A girl identifies with and is expected to identify with her mother in order to attain her adult feminine identification and learn her adult gender role. Much of what she learns is located in the family and is learned from the way she sees her mother interact with her father and the other children. Not surprisingly, much of the mother's role is centered around child care and giving support to the others in the family.

This practice of the sexual division of labor with women primarily in the home or the private domain and the male in the public domain can be traced back to the 17th century. Evelyn Fox Keller explains that definitions of MALE and FEMALE were becoming polarized in ways that were well suited to the growing division between work and home required by early industrial capitalism (61). Joan Kelly adds that feminist thinkers in the Marxist tradition have shown how:

the separation of work (production) from leisure (consumption) really exists for men only. The idea of the home as a refuge from the world of work masks the sexual division of labor. It obscures the fact that domestic labor helps 'reproduce' capitalist and patriarchal society. I.e. procreation and the daily work that goes into consumption (housework) and socialization (childrearing) in the private family sustains the working population, trains people to know and keep their place; and provides for their replacement (52).



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At the same time, this unpaid and unacknowledged work of women in the home seems to keep women dependent on men and bound to a subordinate servicing role.

Frederich Engels saw woman's subordination as being linked to the emergence of private property. Before the 17th century familial activities coincided more with public or social ones, much work such as that which demanded skill in craftsmanship was centered in the home. The division between public and private and the work of males and females was not distinct since a communal household was the focal point of both domestic and social life. Kelly explains that as private property develops and surplus increases, the household becomes a private economic unit represented by a man. "The family itself, the sphere of women's activities, is in turn subordinated to a broader social or public order --governed by a state--which tends to be the domain of men" (11).

By looking at the beliefs and assumptions which underlie the conversation and actions of the characters in the novels, I developed the code of relation. One of the most significant findings in the novels is that women, in spite of the fact that they take care of the family's physical and emotional needs, are frequently blamed for most of the problems experienced in families and they readily accept the fact that they are to blame. Another discovery was that although males are shown to be nurturing more in these novels, this willingness to nurture, since it is not expected of them, makes them seem to be extraordinary people. No blame was attached to them in this nurturing role if things went wrong probably because they are not

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expected to be natural nurturers.

Another significant finding is that although household tasks seem to be shared more, there is very little change in who is deferred to or in control--it is still the male. So although some parts of this code are changing and some elements of it are being negotiated, the code is still very much in evidence in the novels in this study.

#### The Dominant Code of Relation

1. Deference is given to the adult male whose activities are highly valued.
2. Females are viewed as primarily caretakers of others and any additional female interests are subordinate.
3. The realm of nurturing and emotional support is left to the female who is blamed for the unhappiness of other family members.
4. Male offspring are highly valued and raised with different expectations than females.
5. Female offspring are seen as needing protection which includes guarding their sexuality.

**Deference is given to the adult male whose activities are highly valued.**

This element of the code is prominent in many of the novels and is often shown through males being waited on by females. In Fade, Paul describes a scene at his grandfather's house as "my grandfather presiding in the rocking chair near the big black stove while my grandmother...flitted here and there and everywhere... pouring coffee, slicing pies, serving suppers and dinners"

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In Permanent Connections Coralee tries to explain her father to Rob. "Papa never could take the littlest amount of neglect. Mama waited on him hand and foot, and now I reckon I do" (Bridgers 117).

Jeannie in White Peak Farm is aware of how much her mother defers to her father. Her mother "pursed her lips and said nothing. She was used to it...She would hear him out, and when he'd spent his anger on her, she would offer him food again" (Doherty 29).

In the historical Sweetgrass, males are shown as clearly being in charge, deciding women's work load as well as if men could have more than one wife. The grandmother says "before men had guns they lived much longer. Men had fewer things to trade for, so women did not have to marry young to tan buffalo hides for trading. In the dog days, most men took only one wife" (Hudson 32).

Elizabeth Dodson Gray explains in With Both Eyes Open that the maleness of God is often used to legitimize not only the patriarchal society but also the image of the patriarchal home in which the man is 'king of the castle.' In this structure the woman is the 'wife' doing her domestic chores of rearing children, washing dishes and getting meals; and the child is being obedient. "The really important issue in the patriarchal family... is control," explains Gray (44).

Females are aware early in their lives that they are not the ones who have control in the family, but must learn the kind of skills pleasing to men. In The Silver Kiss Lorraine says to Zoe as she is cooking for her..."anyhow,

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the way to a man's heart, you know. I'm practicing my skills on you" (Klause 159).

Jonny's dad in Memory makes this clear when he tells Jonny "a man gives half of his food away to get the other half cooked" (Mahy 222). Men's work outside of the home is highly valued and so if their job necessitates a move, it is seen as normal that the whole family is uprooted.

Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo says, "..what is perhaps most striking and surprising is the fact that male, as opposed to female, activities are always recognized as predominantly important, and cultural systems give authority and value to the roles and activities of men" (Rosaldo and Lamphere 19).

This willingness of the family to move is another example of the amount of deference adult males are given. Lorraine tells Zoe in The Silver Kiss "We're moving. Dad got that job in Oregon" (Klause 4). Livvie in Sex Education explains very matter-of-factly that her father works at IBM and "in the last twelve years we've lived in six different cities; we're good at moving. IBM demands it" (Davis 26).

Princess Ashley was the only book where the family moved for the mother's job and the daughter commented that "Her career came first, which doesn't seem right to me. But after she got her job, Dad came out and found his"(Peck 9). It is later revealed that the father is an emotionally scarred veteran from the Vietnam War. Since this is the only novel in the sample that shows a family moving for the female's job, the implication seems to be that only emotionally unstable males move for their wives.

Males are also shown leaving for long periods of time. Eva's father leaves on a lecture tour and assumes his wife



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will take care of Eva's physical and emotional needs while he's gone. In Celine, Celine's father abruptly announced he was going on a summer long lecture tour in Europe and assumed his new young wife and his teen daughter could adjust. In order to realize how gendered this expectation is of being able to leave the family and home for long periods of time, think of how females would be viewed if they did the same thing.

Men often set the emotional tone in the household. In One for All Geraldine notes "the whole house smiled when Daddy smiled, frowned when he frowned" (Nelson 17). Jeannie says in White Peak Farm "My father was in a bad mood that evening: He often was. I sometimes wondered how my mother could stand his temper, his selfishness" (Doherty 29). Some males expected that the household would revolve around them and their needs; everyone else's needs were secondary.

Such a man was described in Celine as she tells of one of her mother's husbands. "He would get real mad and start yelling about how she was on him all the time and she was interfering with his energy levels on purpose because she couldn't stand to see a man succeed" (Cole 210). The mother in White Peak Farm is also blamed when she takes over her husband's work after he has a serious accident. Her husband is being difficult to get along with and a neighbor says, "I think maybe your mother is bringing it on herself if she's making him feel she can do everything without his help. What can he do?" (Doherty 81). This certainly says a lot about what is expected of a woman. Not only should she care for her husband and do the farm work but she is also responsible for making him feel good about himself. Instead

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of being angry, Jeannie's mother later says about her husband, "He's had to fight his pride a few times over the last few years. It's not been easy for him" (Doherty 97). So this wife defers to her husband by showing that the father's feelings are more important and that her self-sacrifice isn't anything special.

Males in the families are also shown as decision makers. In White Peak Farm the family has to ask the father if they can invite Kathleen (the daughter who married without permission) to dinner. Power is firmly in his hands. Celine's stepmother also tells her that what her father said before he left for the summer is what Celine has to live by. And in Sons from Afar a boy at school says, "My father thinks he's God, if you ask me. Doesn't everybody's?" (Voigt 147). Daly might answer yes to that question because she explains in her book that since God was male, males believe they are God. Religion has provided the explanation for men being head of the family and deferred to. The simple reason given is that since Christ was represented by a male, then males must be the rightful leaders and must be superior or why else would a deity have chosen the male form? Stone points out that the sex of the deity seems to be determined by the sex of those in power (31).

**Females are viewed primarily as caretakers of others' physical needs and any of her other interests are considered subordinate.**

This code is firmly embedded into the fabric of our society. Women are expected not only to bear children but

to give unselfishly to them. If men give to their children they are seen as people who have gone the extra mile because child care is not expected of them. Study after study has been done to try to prove that women are natural caregivers. To put these studies that try to prove women are "natural" anything, in perspective it must be remembered that "scientific" studies done in the last century "proved" that if women went to college their childbearing ability would be damaged. Women's ovaries and uteruses were believed to require energy and rest to function properly (Hubbard 27). This "scientific" study kept women in the home and out of competition with professionals who had indeed done this study.

Additionally, Chodorow points out that the "most prevalent assumption among nonfeminist theorists is that the structure of parenting is biologically self-explanatory." Women's mothering then is seen as a natural fact. "The assumption is questionable, however, given the extent to which human behavior is not instinctually determined but culturally mediated" (13-14). She also explains that ever since production has moved out of the home, reproduction has become more immediately defining and circumscribing of women's life and activities and of women themselves (13).

As recently as 1972, the Catholic Church reaffirmed its belief that women belonged in the home. Pope Paul VI said, "true women's liberation" lies "in the recognition of that specific thing in the feminine personality--the vocation of a woman to become a mother" (qtd. in Daly, Beyond 3).

Most of the novels in this study did see caregiving as a female function. Eva tells us that if her mom was forced

to choose between family and job "Mom wouldn't have hesitated. With Dad, you couldn't be sure. If he'd had to give up his work he'd have given up half of himself" (Dickinson 28).

In A Kindness, after Chip's dad deserted the family, his mother, an artist, who would have preferred to move back to New York, stayed where she was. "It had been a sacrifice for Anne to stay in the Northwest" (Rylant 6). This kind of sacrifice is expected of women; they are socialized to give and put others' needs ahead of their own. Miller tells us they are taught that their main goal in life is to serve others--first men, and later, children (62). This leads to problems, for it is supposed to be carried out as if women did not have needs of their own. Ginny in Permanent Connections recognized this and, after her divorce, says, "lately I have been trying to take care of myself. That's what women are most afraid of, you know. Being selfish. It's the ultimate sin" (Bridgers 91). Gilligan's findings agree with her. There have been no psychological studies about motherhood from the point of view of the mother. She only exists in studies in relation to the child. "There is, in fact, little study of the mother's self because the maternal role has been seen to be selfless. By this definition, it was only a bad, selfish mother who had a self to be studied (Mapping 228).

In the novels in this study women are occasionally shown giving time to thinking about the appearance of their homes. Rachel's mom in After the Rain says her "mother is a bear about floor washing" (Mazer 1) and Chelsea tells us her mother in Princess Ashley "made the place livable" (Peck

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11). Males are not shown exhibiting concern about how their homes look. It must be pointed out that none of the women in the study were consumed with house cleaning.

Frequently females are pictured making and serving food. Over the centuries, this role has been reinforced through religion. St. Clement, father of the Roman Catholic Church, claimed it was in accord with the Bible that "women's activities be confined to spinning, weaving and cooking" (Stone 226).

In Sons from Afar, the grandmother, is often shown cooking although her grandchildren all have specific household tasks. In Permanent Connections and Dixie Storms cooking and cleaning is only done by females. At one point in Dixie Storms, nine year old Bodean says, "I ain't touching a vegetable. No, sir, that's ladies' work" (Hall 19).

The mother in Izzy, Willy-Nilly is shown as chief grocery shopper and errand runner while in Say Goodnight Gracie both Morgan's mom and Jimmy's mom seem almost to wait around until their children need them. They cook for them, arrange for them to get out of school, and drive them places. They are always available for their children. Kelly explains this part of the female role. "As of now, the housewife is always on call to serve the family's 'needs' for comfort, service, and care. On the one hand, it is her job, so no one is expected to perform these services for her. On the other hand, it is no job at all--so along with no pay, she gets no days off, no vacations, and no retirement" (139).

The role of the female as ministering to other physical



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needs is explained by Miller, who tells us that dominant groups usually define acceptable roles for the subordinate. These roles typically involve providing services that no dominant group wants to perform. Then out of the total range of human possibilities, the activities most highly valued will tend to go to the dominant group; less valued functions are relegated to the subordinates (7). This seems true in this code where deference is given to males partially because their jobs are valued. Conversely, women who remain in the home all day - cooking, scrubbing, cleaning - say they "don't work." Because this work is not valued in our culture it becomes invisible and the people who do it get no reward or recognition.

Hubbard tells us that sociobiologists believe that women's disproportionate contributions to the care of their children and homes are biologically programmed because women have a greater biological investment than men have. She cautions us though, that from "the seemingly innocent asymmetrics between eggs and sperms flow such major social consequences as female fidelity, male promiscuity, women's disproportional contributions to the care of children and the unequal distribution of labor by sex. These kinds of biodeterminists theories are useful to people who have a stake in maintaining present inequality " (110).

Some novels are showing fuller participation in the home by males. Taxi in Midnight Hour Encores has brought up his child alone so he is shown cooking and shopping and taking his child places. He says, "But I was there for twenty-four hours. Babies need you when they need you. For lots of things" (Brooks 157). In Izzy, Willy-Nilly and Sons

from Afar adult males are shown doing the dishes. Also Jonny in Memory is shown cooking, cleaning and taking care of an elderly woman.

In Midnight Hour Encores there is a relatively sympathetic portrayal of a female who gave up her baby to her husband when the baby was only 24 hours old. She says:

...I wasn't ready to be a mother (Brooks 209).  
I was afraid I didn't love you. (She stayed up all night.) I hated it...I didn't want to give you milk from my body; I wanted my body back for myself. Though I went through a lot of guilt - I just think it was a matter of constitution, of personality. I minded, he (her husband) didn't" (Brooks 212-213).

Her actions and attitudes certainly fly in the face of the claim that women are biologically suited for motherhood. Chodorow explains that when we evaluate claims for the instinctual or biological basis for parenting, it turns out that evidence is hard to find (21).

There are also many, many women shown who are professionals, who have other interests in life besides taking care of family members. In Eva one of the most important scientists is Joan, who was in charge of the human brain transfer to the body of a chimpanzee. She is described as "aggressive and contemptuous, making it obvious that she despised journalists... and couldn't accept that they had any business to question the rightness of whatever she'd done" (Dickinson 142). She is shown to be a rather cold person who is only concerned with her job. Interestingly, males who are consumed with their jobs are not described in negative ways.

In the same novel Mimi was a TV director who had had eight husbands. Her son says of her, "You could find

there've been worse mothers, but I haven't met" (Dickinson 103). Eva's mom also is a professional but her job is never described and she is only shown in relation to Eva.

Gilligan tells us that terms used by psychologists to describe "good" mothers convey the impression that mothers, insofar as they are good mothers, respond to their children's needs rather than to their own. In contrast, women, insofar as they are psychologically mature and healthy persons, meet their own needs and separate themselves from the children (Mapping xxxiii).

After the Rain shows Rachel's mom as a secretary. However it seems she is able to get off from work whenever her ailing father needs her. In the same novel the woman doctor who cares for grandpa when he's in the hospital is described as wearing a "long starched white jacket... Her hair is in one thick braid down her back" (Mazer 192). We are given no other information about her but can see she is competent. In A Band of Angels both of Jordan's parents were prominent research scientists before their deaths but we never see how they mix their two-career marriage with childcare.

Celine shows a divorced woman moving up the ranks in banking. One young woman is shown as a teacher, another as a graduate student and another as a therapist. Laura's divorced mom in The Goats is a business woman who has her own secretary; Chip's mother in A Kindness is an artist; and Dr. Ruth Benedicta in Memory is a medical doctor. Sib's mother who didn't raise her is shown as a very well off, successful architectural broker who works on putting big

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financial deals together. Also in Say Goodnight Gracie, Aunt Lo, the psychiatrist, is taken care of by a full time housekeeper. In Sex Education David's mom was a single woman who adopted David and had lots of interests and was now going back to school. Sons from Afar shows two female doctors. One is described in a mannish way and the other is a bitter divorcee. It thus appears that none of the very successful females are actually shown in a marriage relationship. Jordan's parents were mentioned in the prologue and then died. Dr. Ruth Benedicta is only shown for a few moments at a party. So no sense seems to be given of how high level careers for females can be mixed with marriage. The message may be that the two can't be mixed.

Indeed a study in the 1970's by Matina Horner showed that: "Unusual excellence in women was clearly associated for them with the loss of femininity, social rejection, personal or societal destruction, or some combination of both" (162).

Many of the women in the novels were shown in female types of jobs. They ranged from being an Avon woman to being a low level clerical worker. These women are often shown as being there for their families.

It is no wonder females are not shown in high level jobs. First they are the ones who have to put the pressure on for changes in the home to accommodate their new responsibilities. But as Miller tells us, women's direct use of their own powers in their own interests frequently brings a severely negative reaction from the males. Females are taught that "acting for oneself is made to seem like depriving others or hurting them" (120). Indeed, the

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characteristics most highly developed in women "are the very characteristics that are specifically dysfunctional for success in the world as it is" (Miller 124).

Jessie Bernard explains the impossible hurdles in this way. "We tell young women that they are free to embark on careers, and then make it almost impossible for them to succeed in them. We tell them they may have access to all the privileges and prerogatives of professionals, and then punish them if they accept the challenge. More importantly, still, we put an enormous premium on their getting married, but make them pay an unconscionable price for falling in with our expectations. We then blame them no matter what they do..." (48-49).

**The realm of nurturing and emotional support is left to the female who is blamed for unhappiness of other family members.**

Females in our society are viewed as the "natural " nurturers. They have been described as being "more sensitive" and as having a whole host of characteristics desired by the dominant group. However since these characteristics are supposed to be the natural attributes of women and, because they are shown mostly in the private domain, they are not valued. Additionally since women are expected to deal with feelings and emotions, males transfer their conflicts in these areas to women and somehow women are then blamed for the internal conflicts that males experience. Miller explains that women become the "carriers" for society of certain aspects of the total human experience and that "these parts of experience have been



removed from the arena of full and open interchange and relegated increasingly to a realm outside of full awareness" (23). So feelings uncomfortable to experience are placed on the females. These patterns do show up in this study.

Being blamed is nothing new for women. In the Garden of Eden myth, according to Judaic and Christian theology, "women's judgment had led to disaster for the whole human race" (Stone 221). Rosemary Radford Ruether explains why females seem to accept this blame:

"Woman is to be redeemed, according to theological thought, by voluntary submission to her sexual role, the definition of her nature through childbearing, and social subordination to the male. Because women are to accept these roles not only as nature, but as punishment for the primal sin that imposed all troubles on humanity, their guilt is limitless" (Ideology 156).

In the novel Celine one of the jobs shown to be the wife's was to persuade her husband he was competent. Mrs. Barker says to her almost ex-husband, "I'd have to persuade you that they (his paintings) were beautiful. You already thought so, but I had to persuade you anyway. I was very good at that, wasn't I? I always knew exactly what to say" (Cole 94).

Mrs. Barker's experience also illustrates the dominant belief that woman shouldn't make demands and if they do, it is their fault a relationship disintegrates. As she bitterly explains to Celine the end of her marriage in the presence of her estranged husband, she says, "People with whom you've lived a long time...They forget just how wonderful you really are. They start wanting things themselves... This holds you back. You just have to get rid of these people and start all over" (Cole 96). Her

artist husband felt the responsibilities of a wife and child crushed his creativity. He didn't think he should be expected to think of anyone else but himself. He didn't like his wife to make any demands on him and when she did, he left.

In Princess Ashley the belief that if the male is unhappy it must be the female's fault is expressed by the teen Chelsea about her mother. "Besides, whatever had hurt Dad must be her fault" (Peck 18). Women are also shown as taking on that guilt whenever anything goes wrong in the family. In Sex Education, when Livvie is in a psychiatric hospital, she says of her mother, "She feels so guilty, although none of it is her fault" (Davis 3). Even when an adult child changes direction, the mother internalizes these actions, looking to herself for the cause of it. In Memory, Dr. Ruth Benedicta's daughter is shown to be living a rather austere life. At a party someone comments, "Poor Ruth. Bonnie's a bit of a recluse these days and it worries her" (Mahy 21).

Another teen blames his mother in A Kindness. Chip's hate "cripples her and caused her to lose sight of her strength as mother, as adult" (Rylant 47). Chip says to his mother "You brought one kid into the world with a turd for a father" (49), blaming her for choosing a man who didn't stick around.

Blaming females was even built into the Blackfoot culture as described in Sweetgrass. "A Sun Dance Woman is a great woman who has asked a big thing from the Sun. If anything goes wrong, we know the Sun Dance woman is weak and bad, and she has brought bad luck on us all" (Hudson 71).

Another mother is also seen as guilty because she left her husband and their young child with him. "And why didn't she take Bodean with her? ...It seems like a selfish thing to do" (Hall 52).

In The Silver Kiss, Zoe gives words to the feelings many children have about their mothers when she says, "Mom would know what to say" (Klaue 10). Children grow up expecting their mothers to know how they feel. Rarely do they feel the same about their fathers. As Miller points out "women come from a position in which their own nature was defined for them by others" (118) and part of this definition includes the ability to empathize and nurture.

Although men are not expected to naturally be able to take care of others, several novels in this sample do show men nurturing others. In Midnight Hour Encores, Sib's dad Taxi raises Sib alone. She is conscious that he is very involved with her and very attuned to her. At one point she says, "I realize this is one of the few times I've been around when his face isn't either watching me or responding to something I say" (Brooks 126). This is one of the few books that doesn't make a male a hero for raising his child. It is shown to be something he likes to do and something he values. He says to his daughter, "Having you is the best thing that ever happened to me" (Brooks 165). Jonny in Memory is shown dealing with the emotional needs of the old woman he helps out. Weetzie Bat shows Dirk and Duck responding to the emotional needs of the others in their house. In Say Goodnight, Gracie Morgan's dad is shown as much as her mom, helping Morgan cope emotionally after the death of Jimmy. Even though more and more men are shown

providing emotional support to others, none are ever blamed if they don't give that support. Chorodow suggests that "even though we think of families as providing emotional refuge, in the family as it is currently constituted, no one supports and reconstitues women affectively and emotionally" (36).

**Male offspring are valued more and raised with different expectations than girls.**

Charles Darwin defined males as "more courageous, pugnacious and energetic than women, and (he) has more inventive genius." He explains further that "man is the rival of other men; he delights in competition and this leads to ambition, and passes too easily into selfishness. These latter qualities seem to be his natural and unfortunate birthright" (qtd. in Hubbard 96). So males are taught that thinking mainly of themselves is "natural." This code does show that often we excuse males for their behavior.

Because males are expected to have a whole different set of personality characteristics than females, the things they are encouraged to do are very different than what females are expected to do. The expectations for males was bolstered and supported by the scientific community. Hubbard tells us that the 19th century science was replacing the waning power of religion by replacing God's laws with the laws of nature (36). Thus no comments were made in any of these books aimed at regulating the sexuality of males. Science had told us that the expression of male sexuality was "natural." No one said parents had to keep an eye on

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their young sons. This absence of comments about male sexuality, seems to make a strong statement. Since families don't try to regulate the sexuality of males, it implies that male sexuality has no limits and males can do as they please. This is supported by the code of sexuality in which boys acting on sexual impulses is seen as normal.

Comments were made, however, by some fathers who wanted to toughen up their sons. In Memory Jonny's father said to him when he was young, "You'll never be a man until you learn to fight your own battles" (Mahy 100). Jonny also knew his dad "wanted the sort of son who would run away to sea or build a business empire rather than one who fried sausages for old ladies" (Mahy 190). Jonny knew his dad valued boys who were adventurous and who were risk-takers who could take care of themselves. He knew his dad wouldn't approve of him as a caretaker for an old women.

In The Crazy Horse Electric Game Willie knows that his athletic ability is very important to his dad. Willie and his dad "Have spent thousands of hours .. working on Willie's stuff" (Crutcher 15). When a big championship game was coming up Willie's dad gave him advice endlessly and let him know it was an important event for him too. So very different personal characteristics are nurtured in boys. They are taught to be tough, to take care of themselves and to participate in athletics because it's strengthening and it's a man's kind of thing to do. Boys are encouraged to be independent, to take risks, to set their sights high. All of these characteristics are ones that allow boys to eventually become successful in this society since those are the characteristics valued.

More allowances also seem to be made for boys. In Princess Ashley, when Craig gets very drunk Chelsea says, "Maybe it's just something boys - guys - have to go through" (Peck 130). In Sons from Afar a retired elementary teacher says, "Bright children, especially boys, have such a hard time behaving in school" (Voigt 65). When Jeannie in White Peak Farm sees how her father feels about her sister being around boys she says, "It seems to me that things were easier for boys, all the way along" (Doherty 28). Boys are expected to be active and to make mistakes. Since they are not viewed as responsible for moral standards in our society they can get drunk without being condemned. The old attitude of "boys will be boys" still seems to prevail.

Scientists seem to work hard to prove males are superior. In studies done on children the same age, scientists believed the girls to be physically more mature and thus not really age matched with the boys. They reasoned, therefore, that any of the studies that showed boys and girls to perform equally actually provided proof of male superiority (Fausto-Sterling 28).

Children get the message in a variety of ways that boys are valued more. In White Peak Farm the message is very direct. The father says, "You girls are useless to me" (Doherty 54). Jeannie also wonders if her father "really knew, or wanted to know, any of us girls" (Doherty 32). Her mother reinforces the message that females are there to be of service in a family when she says about education, "It's wasted on a woman. I still think that" (Doherty 85).

In Sweetgrass the importance of males is emphasized almost from birth and little boys know they are more

powerful than their sisters. One little boy says, "A sister is supposed to have respect for her brother" (36) and "I am a man; and you cannot force me to do things" (Hudson 62).

Most knowledge in science and psychology of women comes first by making men the standard and then comparing or contrasting woman to this standard. Thus Sigmund Freud thought women deficient because they did not have male genitalia (Sturdivant 90). So another way boys are thought to be more valuable in our society is because they have all the important bodily parts. This attitude was reflected in A Kindness when Chip was changing his baby sister. "The first time he'd unwrapped the Pamper and looked, he was startled, and what immediately popped into his mind was Mr. Potatoe Head. Dusky looked like Mr. Potatoe Head without his nose. Chip thought it was the silliest thing he had ever seen" (Rylant 79-80). Boys are also told in very subtle ways that they are superior. Keller explains that this society has "a belief system that equates objectivity with masculinity and a set of cultural values that simultaneously elevates what is defined as scientific and what is defined as masculine" (Keller 89). Thus because the emotional is not equated with the scientific, but is supposed to be the domain of females, it is not valued in this society. Chip in A Kindness is described as "brighter than his mother. His was a quick and logical mind" (Rylant 4). So the logical and objective seem to be superior and make Chip "brighter." Even the way Chip came to his knowledge i.e. "reading lengthy directions in small print..as his mother stared helplessly at bags of colored



pieces of plastic" is shown to be superior. His mother is described as impractical and she is called intuitive. But coming to knowledge through intuition and experience is shown as not measuring up in this book. Belinsky et al explain that much of woman's knowledge comes from experience and is thus not valued in society (61).

Thus boys are told through what they are expected to do, through the excuses made for them, and through areas that are not of concern to their families, that they are different than girls. They know they are valued more because the expectations placed on them such as to be independent, are the things valued by society at large.

**Females need to be protected and their sexuality guarded.**

Through the kind of concerns adults have about females and through the activities and characteristics that they are commended on, girls early on learn that "their place" is not equal to boys. In Sweetgrass, the main character says, "I wished I were a man. I wished I had power with the Sun or the spirits... But there was nothing I could do" (Hudson 19). Parents over and over in these novels let girls know that they need protecting, telling them indirectly that they are in some way weak. In Say Goodnight, Gracie Morgan's mom tells her when Morgan is going into the city, "I never worry as long as I know Jimmy's with you" (Deaver 38). In Dixie Storms when Dutch is being picked on, her much older brother declares, "Anybody touches this girl's gonna have to answer to me" (Hall 136).

Girls seem to need to be "protected" from boys and from their own sexuality. In White Peak Farm, the

father says about his teen daughter Kathleen, "And if I ever catch her loitering around that campsite (where young men are) I'll turn the dogs on her" (Doherty 27). In Cat Herself, Cat realizes "her father... was so very strict over her being modest about her body" (Hunter 108). One of Maybeth's brothers says to the other one in Sons from Afar, "Keep an eye on her.... She's awfully pretty" (Voigt 214).

Lucile in Celine knows her family's concerns when she says about a party "My mom won't let me go, either. Not with Philip, anyway. I mean, she'd probably let me go with a girl or something" (Cole 34). Even the older brother of Aunt Lo who is a successful psychiatrist asks her in Say Goodnight, Gracie, of her new boyfriend if "his intentions are honorable?" (Deaver 66).

Yet a girl who thinks of her own protection can be considered unusual. In The True Adventures of Charlotte Doyle, Charlotte does carry a knife and the captain says, "I wish to state how UNNATURAL it is for a girl to carry a knife" (Avi 164). The "natural" state for females seems to be wanting and needing and appreciating males' protection.

Of course, this element of this code ties in to the code of sexuality and reinforces it. When adults show concern for their daughter's sexuality, they are implying that they do not expect any sexual activity on the part of females. This part of the code also reinforces passivity and discourages girls from working to become able to protect themselves.

From the above discussion it can be seen that this code of relation, of the five codes, seems to show the least movement. Judith Brown explains how the family supports the

status quo. "It is in the family that children learn so well the dominance-submission games by observation and participation. Each family reflecting the perversities of the larger order and split off from others, is powerless to force change on other institutions, let alone attack or transform its own" (qtd. in Bernard 220).

So although women are shown with broader career choices, most of the women with good jobs are not shown in a relationship with a male. The message that comes through is that females must make a choice - devote yourself to a family OR to a career. This portrayal also seems to imply that women who focus on a career are not sought after as partners by males.

The weight of responsibility placed on women for the emotional well-being of their family shows little change. Blame is still heaped on women for being the cause of family problems. Somehow the female is supposed to be aware of the emotional state of her husband and children and to solve their problems. Women are seen mainly as givers and people whose own concerns must be secondary to everyone else in the family. No one is assigned the job of being the emotional support of the adult female. If she has problems, they are viewed as being of her own making and she must learn to adjust and cope. As was shown earlier in Cat Herself when she was accused of being a "split mechanic" just because she wanted to learn to fish, women are "induced to view themselves and their attempts to know; and act on their own needs or to enlarge their lives beyond the prescribed bounds- as either attacking men or trying to be like them" (Miller 17).

Since there are few expectations of men in household areas, they are lauded for any small contribution they make. Women are not portrayed in these books as special in any way for being unselfish or for doing things for their children. It is simply expected of them. If they fail to meet these expectations, then they are criticized.

Although women are not usually viewed as being responsible for all household tasks and more and more men do sometimes participate, almost no movement was shown as far as who is in control of the family. No female was deferred to in a household nor was the issue raised in any of these novels. The man's job is still viewed as the most important and so this gains him all kinds of concessions from his family. He must be taken care of so he can be fit to bring the money home, child care or errands must not interfere with his job, and families must be willing to move so he can provide for them. It all makes sense as long as males are seen as more important than females. Thus in this code emergent values are not appearing as frequently as they do in other codes. The next chapter will take a more complete look at the emergent novels especially in terms of the codes of character they illustrate.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### EMERGENT VALUES IN THE NOVELS

When children are born, no one hands a list of male and female personality characteristics to the parents and tells them to make sure they raise their children so they'll have these gendered characteristics. Since the desirable characteristics of males and females are constantly before us in our culture, children learn what is expected of them. Television and advertising show that females are much more interested in their appearance than males. Birth announcements decorated with balls and bats for boys and dolls and ducks for girls show that boys are expected to be active while girls are expected to be content to play quietly.

Religion exhorts females to be docile and submissive; biology tells us that males are active, competitive and dominant while females are selfless and nurturing; psychology tells us that females are not as stable and as rational as men.

#### **Character Codes**

These personality differences that society seems to stress will be referred to in this study as character codes. If looked at carefully it can be seen that "subordinates are described in terms of, and encouraged to develop, personal psychological characteristics pleasing to the dominant group: submissiveness, passivity, docility, dependency, lack of initiative, inability to act, to decide, to think" (Miller 7). Thus these character codes are also part of the subordination/domination structures in our society.

As recently as 1979 in an article called "Case Against

Women in Combat" the author George Gilder, an unofficial spokesperson for Ronald Reagan's economic policies, tries to explain how personality characteristics make women unfit for combat. He claims, "Hard evidence is overwhelming that men are more aggressive, competitive, risk taking... (and) more combative than women" (qtd. in Fausto-Sterling 124).

Hubbard also describes studies done in the 1970's in sex difference research that claims males are "innately better equipped to be competitive" while females are "innately better equipped than men at home care and mothering" (27). No one seems to raise the question as to the purpose of the study or who benefits from the study.

Phyllis Chesler tells us that even in the field of psychology:

clinicians are likely to suggest that women differ from healthy males by being: more submissive, less independent, less adventurous, more easily influenced, less aggressive, less competitive, more excitable in minor crises, more easily hurt, more emotional, more conceited about their appearance, less objective, and less interested in math and science (267).

It appears that someone wants females to be different than males; that someone wants to believe that the division of labor and rewards that exist in our society is equitable; that women indeed are "by nature" fit to serve men.

The sociobiologists have gone one step further to prove this. They say that the division between male and female tasks is acceptable because it's always been that way.

Hubbard tells us:

Sociobiologists claim that the differences in social behavior stereotypically said to characterize women and men in Western societies (such as male aggressiveness, competitiveness and dominance and female coyness, nurturance, and submissiveness) are human universals that

have existed in all times and in all cultures (28).

The characteristics for males and females as described in the above excerpts, view male and female traits mostly as opposites. For the purpose of this study males and females who show evidence of the traits ascribed to them can be said to exhibit **residual** characteristics. Those who show evidence of traits opposite to those ascribed to them can be said to exhibit **emergent** characteristics.

This part of the study will look at the oppositional character codes and whether or not gendered expectations are strongly expressed in these novels. One of the most important findings in this section of the study is that almost no females in this sample felt they had to display only **residual** characteristics. In fact, these females simply do not seem to fit the stereotypes of the weak, frail, passive person who can't make a decision without someone else's help.

**ACTIVE/PASSIVE** The idea that women are passive and men are active is so embedded in our culture that it is even in the language we use to describe fertilization. "We say that a sperm fertilizes an egg (active voice) and that the egg is fertilized (passive voice). This grammar does not describe the biological reality, which is that two cells fuse, a process in which both participate actively" (Hubbard 102). The language used scientifically seems then to reflect the prevailing view of gender relations, in which males pursue, and females yield. Although the larger society often views females as passive, that view is not reflected in the novels in this study.

All the main female characters shown in this sample

were active young women. Charlotte Doyle as a member of the crew on the ship Seahawk is shown climbing, swabbing and otherwise keeping up with the crew. Chelsea in Princess Ashley is shown working with her father's dogs and cleaning pens and washing dogs. Other females are athletes. Jenny in The Crazy Horse Electric Game "gets up around six to run or ride her bike" (Crutcher 35). Ellery in Permanent Connections also jogs daily. Riley in A Band of Angels swims, camps and hikes. Cat in Cat Herself roams the countryside, fishes, dances, and almost never sits down. None of the females are portrayed as passive people.

**SELFLESS/SELFISH** Some of the female characters are shown as selfless, doing things for others instead of themselves. One such character is Weetzie who decides to take in a baby left on her doorstep saying "we have to take care of this baby" (Block 62). Since most of the protagonists are teens they don't yet feel that they can only gain a sense of worth by serving others but some do worry about being selfish. Zoe in The Silver Kiss is grieving for her dying mother but feels she has to be able to put her own feelings aside so she can respond to her friend and her problems. She feels she was a "jerk" for being so concerned with her own problems. Some speak out for themselves. Ellery in Permanent Connections says, "I want to get into a good college. I'm thinking about myself here" (Bridgers 161). An adult female explaining to Sibillance in Midnight Hour Encores why her child does not live with her says "I love my child...But I had to learn to love myself first" (Brooks 153). The females who feel they have to be selfless or who are struggling with this issue are mostly the adults. Sib's



mother doesn't want Sib to think her too selfish for giving her up in Midnight Hour Encores and Rob's mother in A Kindness felt she had to live where her child would be happiest.

RATIONAL/EMOTIONAL      Rational thinking was not often specifically mentioned in these novels. Izzy in Izzy Willy-Nilly did describe her father as realistic and practical. Chip in A Kindness feels he's more intelligent than his mother because he is logical. The change seems to be that more males are shown as emotional. Men in Weetzie Bat, Say Goodnight, Gracie and in And One For All are shown crying at the death of someone close to them. Jimmy in Say Goodnight, Gracie shows his feelings as does Willie in The Crazy Horse Electric Game. Jonny in Memory is shown as both emotional and vulnerable. "You always seemed so unprotected. You were very imaginative. You were sensitive," says a friend to Jonny (Mahy 268). Also Sammy in Sons from Afar challenges a school mate who said, "real men don't cry" (Voigt 140).

Females are shown crying far more than males but more females are shown to be rational in their thinking abilities too. Sib in Midnight Hour Encores knows what she wants out of her trip out West to see her mother, just as she knows how important music is to her and what she has to do musically to meet her goals. Ellery in Permanent Connections can easily explain her goals (one being to get out of the small town her mother had moved her to) and knows she won't let anything like romance get in the way of her plans. In The Goats both Laura and Howie are shown plotting their escape from the island and they do so in a very

logical manner. Females aren't pictured in these novels as overly emotional, inept people who make poor decisions because they are too emotional.

STABLE/UNSTABLE        The majority of females are portrayed as stable people. The exceptions are Olivia in Sex Education who ends up in a psychiatric hospital because she can't cope with the death of her dearest friend, and Morgan in Say Goodnight, Gracie, who is so depressed over the death of her friend Jimmy that she can't get out of bed for weeks at a time. Two other young females are shown to be a bit unstable for other reasons. In The Goats, it is explained that "sometimes when a girl gets her period, she feels depressed" (Cole 38). In And One For All it is said that Geraldine "burst into tears" (115). ... "that night she discovered she had started her first period" (Nelson 116). So female biology is used here to explain female behavior.

Hubbard reminds us that scientists have for years characterized females as overemotional and at the mercy of raging hormones. They "construct our entire being around the functions of our reproductive organs. No one has suggested that men are just walking testicles, but again and again women have been looked on as though they were walking ovaries and wombs" (119-120).

Generally the female protagonists are shown as people who have a strong sense of themselves and who are very stable people. Celine is one such example, as is Ellery in Permanent Connections, Jeannie in White Peak Farm, Sibilance in Midnight Hour Encores, Izzy in Izzy Willy-Nilly, Jennie in The Crazy Horse Electric Game, Sweetgrass in Sweetgrass, Rachel in After the Rain, Dutch in Dixie Storms, Cat in Cat.

Herself, Riley in A Band of Angels and Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe.

**COURAGEOUS/AFRAID** The movement in this character code seems to be that girls are shown as being more courageous and boys are shown as having fears. Jimmy in Say Goodnight, Gracie is "terrified" of a tap dance audition. James in Sons from Afar has many fears. But Charlotte Doyle is shown to be so courageous that she climbs to the top of the main mast. Rachel in After the Rain has another kind of courage--the courage to stay with her difficult grandfather who was dying. A few females are shown to have fears too. One female is shown to be squeamish about blood (Morgan) and another is afraid of heights and her basement (Geraldine).

**RISK TAKER/COMPLIER** Many of the female protagonists are strong people who take risks of all kinds. Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe tells Tycho that he is a bit pompous. Weetzie shows she is a risk taker when she decides to have a baby out of wedlock and to have her gay friends father the baby. Almost everything Celine says or does shows her willingness to take risks. She dresses the way she wants to, paints the way it is important for her to paint, and speaks her mind freely. Jeannie in White Peak Farm takes risks when she challenges her father's iron grip on the family and when she goes to her sister's wedding without asking her family for approval. Sweetgrass is a risk taker when she goes against her tribe's taboos and hunts for food and fishes so her family won't starve. Eva takes big risks, especially when she becomes a participant in the plot to free some of the chimpanzees. Riley takes risks through her whole camping experience. The majority of

these females did not simply go along with others' expectations for them.

**AGGRESSIVE/NON-AGGRESSIVE** Males are still shown to be more aggressive in their speech (see code of expression) but some females are shown to be aggressive and actively doing what they have to do to reach their goals. Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe aggressively tracks down her father and boldly presents herself to him. Sib makes no bones about her abilities especially in competition. "I play the cello. I'm very good" she often says (Brooks 16).

Riley aggressively pursues her relationship with Jordan in A Band of Angels. Both Laura and Howie are shown to be aggressive as they decide to take whatever actions they have to so they won't have to return to camp defeated. In Say Goodnight, Gracie Morgan is shown going after what she wants such as involvement in acting workshops and working as an intern for a theater. In After the Rain, Rachel is aggressive about being with her grandfather. She confronts her parents and insists that being with her grandfather is more important than going to school. She stands her ground and won't back down. In Cat, Herself Cat actively confronts anyone whose views she believes need challenging.

**CHALLENGING/OBEDIENT** Izzy is shown to be very obedient and conforming before her car accident. She says of herself "I did the work I was told to do and I didn't mind school; just a nice person, easy to get along with, fun to hang around... I often tried to make peace in quarrels although I took part in my share of them (Voigt 2). She also tells us that "I concentrated on behaving well because then things would have a better chance of turning out all right" (Voigt

5). Also Izzy won't challenge her date about his ability to drive her home safely. She just goes along, doing what was expected of her. Later she questions where this behavior got her.

Another female who thinks that going along pays off in the long run is Zoe in The Silver Kiss. But while coping with her feelings while her mother lies dying in a hospital she says, "Now I think, there's no payoff, no matter how good you are. No one's going to reward you" (Klause 138).

The majority of the females in these books are more challenging. In Say Goodnight, Gracie, when a male tells Morgan she's out of coffee, she returns "Make some more then" (Deaver 6). In The Crazy Horse Electric Game Jenny throws a stunning shot that wins her team the basketball game as the buzzer sounds. Willie tells her it was a good shot. She challenges his assessment by saying, "Good shot? It was a great shot" (Crutcher 70).

Celie, James' friend in Sons from Afar challenges him after he "helped" someone get through a class. "Don't say it, OK?" he asked.

"No, it's not OK," she told him. She sounded firm, not angry. "You shouldn't have helped Andy. He always tries to slip through things, everybody knows that. I thought you were better than that" (Voigt 188).

Jenny in White Peak Farm is also frequently shown challenging her father's authority and her mother's acceptance of that authority. She tells her sister "He's terrible, Kathleen. He's draining the life out of Mother with his misery. It's not right" (Doherty 80).

COMPETITIVE/NURTURING      Although these do not appear

to be opposite characteristics, they are frequently viewed as opposites in society. Women are generally expected to stay home and be nurturing because this is their biological destiny, while men's biological destiny, according to studies conducted in the 1970's (Hubbard 27) is to be competitive. They are offered here as opposites because they are so frequently seen as mutually exclusive and totally gender based.

Even though biology describes women as the "natural" nurturers, Hubbard cautions us that we need to pay attention to contradictions that exist between this stereotype and the realities in women's lives. "For example, women's reputed 'maternal instinct' needs to be looked at in light of some women's desperate efforts to avoid having children, while society persuades or forces them to have children against their will" (127). To some women being competitive is a threat to their nurturing ability and their desire not to make anyone feel badly about themselves. Horner studied women's willingness to be competitive and found "success anxiety to be present in women only when achievement was directly competitive, that is, when one person's success was at the expense of another's failure" (qtd. in Gilligan, Voice 15).

Some females in this study show no qualms about being competitive. The most competitive characters in these novels are Sibilance in Midnight Hour Encores and Willie in The Crazy Horse Electric Game. Sibilance, who is raised by her father, was a world class cellist. She is extremely competitive as a cello player and seems to enjoy the challenges and new found areas of strength that competition

gives her. She says of herself, "I'm a mean competitor" (Brooks 217).

Willie was a baseball star before his accident. He lived, breathed and ate baseball until he could no longer be a competitor. Willie's friend Jenny is also competitive. Once while they are riding bikes Willie is described as shifting into high "pouring it on, but Jenny's pulling away" (Crutcher 33). She's not going to let him better her, and she gives it all she's got.

Interestingly enough one of the teen characters shown as being a nurturer is Jonny in Memory. His friend Bonny recalls, "When you were little you were always bringing hurt birds home, trying to keep them warm and giving them crumbs. You were always kind" (Mahy 180). Jonny is shown in the novel cooking for and bathing and dressing and cleaning up after Sophie who has Alzheimer's disease. Another nurturing character is Rachel in After the Rain who sees beneath her grandfather's gruff exterior and is able to show her concern for him during his final illness. Rob in Permanent Connections is put in a caretaker role when he is left with his elderly relatives after his uncle breaks his hip. He helps his uncle bathe and get around and picks up groceries for the family.

James and Sammy in Sons from Afar are nurturers of their little sister Maybeth. They work at helping her through school and making her feel good about herself in spite of her learning disability. Celine is also shown caring for the little boy across the hall from her, and helping him deal with the grief he feels at his parents' divorce.

Generally it is the mothers in the novels who do most of the nurturing. Izzy's mom is shown to always be there for her, Rachel's mom wants to take care of everybody, Tycho's mom wants to be super mom and help her kids out in any way she can. She would also like to make everything all right for her teenage daughter who is in a very troubled marriage.

The terminally ill mother in The Silver Kiss still finds the energy to meet her daughter's emotional needs. Eva's mother tries to be available as her daughter makes the adjustment to being in an animal's body. Angela's mother in The Catalogue of the Universe has arranged her life as a single parent around raising her daughter. Both of Morgan's parents in Say Goodnight, Gracie are there for her during her time of grief. The only male shown raising his daughter alone is Taxi in Midnight Hour Encores. He too has arranged his life around raising his daughter.

Gilligan in her studies has found that stereotypical gender expectations "suggest a splitting of work and love that relegates expressive capacities to women while placing instrumental abilities (like decision making) in the masculine domain." (Voice 17). So a gradual shift seems to be taking place in this character code with more males being portrayed as nurturers and more females being portrayed as competitors and as developing instrumental abilities.

LOW NEED TO AFFILIATE/HIGH NEED TO AFFILIATE Gilligan also discusses the need to affiliate in her book In a Different Voice. She explains that "since masculinity is defined through separation while femininity is defined through attachment, male gender identity is threatened by



intimacy while female gender identity is threatened by separation" (8). These novels show some departure from this description.

There are many characters in these novels who have a high need for affiliation. Although some of these are female, some of them are also males. Females are shown many times in these novels to be in close relationships, usually with other females. Zoe and Lorraine in The Silver Kiss share their joys and sorrows and views on boys. When Lorraine finds out her family is moving she is afraid. "I won't have any friends. I'll have to start all over" (Klauser 22). Friends are obviously important to her and help her feel connected to the world.

In The Goats both Laura and Howie are shown as outsiders who have strong desires to be close to someone, to feel included. Surprisingly, they find the kind of companionship and acceptance they want in each other. Laura tells her mother that she and Howie have "got to stay together" (Cole 173). They feel so isolated from the others at camp, that once, through surviving together, they get to know each other, they don't want to lose contact with each other.

James in Sons from Afar desperately wants others to accept him. "He went out for baseball because he really wanted to sing with the chorus. Because only dorks sang in chorus" (Voigt 17). He didn't want anyone to reject him because he was a dork.

Both Jimmy and Morgan in Say Goodnight, Gracie worry that they need the other person too much. Morgan said, "I didn't want him to think I needed him, but I was glad he was

there. He was always there when I needed him" (Deaver 20). Later Jimmy says, "You know something Morgan, you and I are too dependent on each other. We should try to make other friends at school" (Deaver 27). In The Crazy Horse Electric Game Willie was shown as being very close to a small group of males. One of his friends is shown in tears trying to figure out how to stay close to Willie after Willie's accident and his resulting distance from people.

In The Catalogue of the Universe Tycho is the one desperate for the friendship of Angela. He doubts himself and often dislikes what he looks like but he feels accepted when Angela is around. Angela, however, isn't shown as having high needs to affiliate.

Izzy after losing a leg, desperately wants her group of friends back, but they seem to have trouble relating to her or knowing what to say. She misses the closeness she once had. Chelsea in Princess Ashley wants acceptance and friends because she's the new girl at school and feels out of place. She enjoys sharing her feelings and thoughts with others and unexpectedly a male becomes a close friend.

At the opposite end of the scale are protagonists like Jeannie in White Peak Farm. She is content to have her sister as her friend and doesn't actively seek others out even though her sister moves away. At one point a male says to her "Little Miss Independence? You're getting like your mum? Are you too good to ask a man for help?" (Doherty 87). In this novel, set in England, a female seems to be viewed as haughty if she tries to do things herself. If a male tries to get others to help him he would probably be seen as weak!

Another character shown as staying rather aloof from people is Paul in Fade. He doesn't want his ability to fade to be known so he lives apart from all but a few family members.

Neither Ellery nor Rob in Permanent Connections are shown as having a high need to affiliate. They both are working out difficulties in their lives and having close relationships is not a priority to them.

Sibilance in Midnight Hour Encores is shown as having no close friends. She plays in musical groups and enjoys the company of other musicians but her life is so full that she doesn't focus much on relationships. Thus males and females are shown at both ends of the scale of independence in these novels.

**STRONG/WEAK** Although women have traditionally been labeled the "weaker sex" Hubbard tells us that the descriptions of "women's frailty, passivity, and weakness need to be juxtaposed with the reality of women as providers who...tend to work harder and for longer hours than men" (127).

Physical strength is not focused on much in these novels. No females are described as weak and unable to do something because of lack of strength. In White Peak Farm when Jeannie's father is injured, she and her mother are shown doing all the heavy chores around the farm. On one stormy night "with my mother leaning down dangerously and heaving from above and me pushing from below, we managed to pry up the beam that had crashed down....(Doherty 77).

Sweetgrass is shown doing all the traditional woman's work which included all the heavy work in the tribe.

Additionally she is shown searching for firewood and food, hunting, and moving her mother and siblings the winter the whole family gets the smallpox. Chelsea in Princess Ashley works at the kennels with her dad and "scrubbed out pens and hosed down the runs" (Peck 11).

Eva, of course, as a chimpanzee is very strong - yet not expected to be because she is female. A TV announcer said to her:

"Gee, you're strong."  
 "Chimps are."  
 "But you're supposed to be a young woman."  
 "I'm a chimp, too, and I like it."  
 "Sure. Sure" (Dickinson 52-53).

He sounds as if he doesn't believe a female can enjoy being strong.

Table 1 shows scores for the character codes. Scores were compiled by awarding from one to five points for each of the nine character codes just discussed. For example, if the major female character was very active, a score of five was given; active was scored a four; not described either way, a three; passive scored a two; and very passive, a one. The highest number of points that could be accumulated is forty-five, meaning that the female character had fully emergent character traits. If a major female protagonist was not portrayed in a novel, character codes were not scored.

#### **What the Codes Show**

The character codes found in these novels do seem to show movement toward more equitable portrayals of females. Many of the females are shown in these novels to be assertive, bold, and active while some males have been shown



as gentle, compassionate and sensitive. Character traits are not rigidly divided between the "feminine" and the "masculine." Often both sexes are shown exhibiting a wide range of these personality characteristics. In this respect the majority of the character codes shown in these novels are emergent.

A note of caution is urged before we jump to conclusions and overestimate the progress made toward gender-free expectations in personality characteristics. First, no married women were shown as adventurous or active or challenging or competitive. The subtle message here seems to be that these females will outgrow their need for independence and for being risk takers and for challenging. Second, Chodorow tells us that females are expected to outgrow the need to exhibit "masculine" traits:

Partly because of the social subordination of women and cultural devaluation of feminine qualities, girls are allowed and feel themselves free to express masculine preferences and to have much greater freedom than boys. (But) as she gets older, peers and adults around her cease tolerance of this envy of males and self assertion is thought to damage her femininity and attractiveness. She is supposed to begin to be passive and docile, to become interested in her appearance, to cultivate her abilities to charm men, to mold herself to their wants (192).

Thus although the females in these novels are spunky, opinionated, and assertive there seems to be evidence that some of these traits will diminish as the expectations for "feminine" behavior becomes stronger.

The studies that I drew these characteristics from usually viewed females and males as opposites. Much of the work done in biology described by Fausto-Sterling and by Hubbard focused on establishing differences between the

sexes. The setting up of these binary opposites does seem to reflect a specific political position; scientists still seem to expend much of their energy establishing that females are different than males and are therefore suited to the subordinate positions in society.

Psychology, too, has focused on differences. Women in therapy were often encouraged to give up aggressive behavior and to accept the more docile feminine role.

Most recent studies in such things as height and weight show that men and women are much more alike than they are different (Hubbard 121-123). Why then does so much of the work done in science and education and psychology focus on differences? The answer seems to be that researchers want to find differences to confirm previously held views and enable them to view males and females in the same old way.

The novels studied reflected little of this desire to see males and females as opposites. Both genders exhibited a broad range of behavior in each character code. Males were not always seen as tough nor females as always gentle. Thus the novels gave a more realistic view of the range of female and male behavior.

#### **Novels that Embody Emergent Values**

I will now turn to the novels that have emergent character codes and illustrate emergent values in their representation of females as shown through the codes of romance, beauty, sexuality, expression and relation. Many, many of the novels in this study have emergent elements and included non-gendered portrayals of females but usually, because the story was set within the family structure which

is weighted down with residual values, these novels did not qualify as exemplifiers of emergent values.

Table 2 shows how many total elements in each book are emergent, how many are residual, what the character codes totaled, the percentage of emergent elements in the five social codes, and the percentage of character codes that were emergent. Emergent novels will then be discussed in terms of this table.

Midnight Hour Encores by Bruce Brooks is a novel clearly illustrative of emergent values. The whole premise of this book, that a single male can happily and competently raise his daughter without heaping blame on the never-present mother, is code breaking in itself. Eighty-one percent of the elements of the action codes are emergent while eighty-six percent of the character codes are emergent.

The daughter Sibilance is shown as a competent, confident world class cellist who is very much in touch with herself and not damaged by being raised without a mother. The code of romance has some elements present in this novel but other elements are challenged. Relationships are shown to be heterosexual but are not shown to be transforming experiences. Sib gets briefly involved with two boys because they interest her, not because she thinks they'll give her life meaning. In one case, she does decide to have sex with another cellist competitor but this seems partially based on a curiosity about sex. She's not swept away by the supposed glamour of the situation and doesn't expect the male to confer status on her. She feels good about herself and realistically assesses her own strengths. There is no



Table 2

**Emergent Percentages in the Codes and Character Codes**

	Res	Emer	CC	%E Codes	%E C Codes
Doyle	16	2	40	11	88
Weetzie	11	15	27	54	60
Permanent	9	17	35	65	77
Midnight	5	22	39	81	86
Celine	15	12	40	44	88
Goats	13	13	27	50	60
Fade	19	6		24	
Crazy	10	17		63	
Sex	13	14	25	51	55
Gracie	15	11	23	42	51
Eva	12	8	39	40	86
Farm	22	5	40	18	88
Dixie	25	2	30	7	66
Sweetgrass	17	8	38	32	84
Cat	15	11	40	42	88
Kiss	14	11	26	44	57
Catalog	8	19	38	70	84
Memory	5	15		75	
Rain	9	18	30	66	66
All	18	2	22	4	48
Princess	17	10	30	37	66
Kindness	15	12	24	44	53
Band	5	19	33	79	73
Izzy	26	0	27	0	60
Sons	8	11		57	

hint of male dominance in either brief relationship. Additionally male dominance does not seem to appear in the brief marriage of her parents. When her mother decided twenty-four hours after Sib's birth that she wasn't cut out to be a mother, Sib's father simply, and without fanfare, assumed Sib's complete care.

The code of beauty is rarely seen in this novel. Male and female appearance are described equally and no emphasis is put on female appearance. When Sib does meet her mother, however, she finds her mother much more concerned about Sib's appearance and that Sib have the right clothes. Sib's mother does seem to be elated that her daughter is good-looking while she tends to pay little attention to Sib's accomplishments. This seems to be another example of a female being valued and elevated for her appearance, while any accomplishments she has achieved, are overlooked.

The code of sexuality seems to be partially rewritten through the actions of the characters in this book. Sib is shown to be the initiator in her sexual encounter; she has no second thoughts and no regrets.

Sib's and her dad's conversations do not fit into the code of expression. Both are direct in their speech, females are not criticized, and expression of emotions is not shown to be the domain of the female.

The code of relation is also challenged in this novel. Deference is not given to Taxi. In fact, his activities and his job are centered around Sib's life and her schedule. He is shown as the caretaker who feels good about what he does and his ex-wife is shown to feel she simply didn't have what it takes to be a mother. On their travels to see her

mother, Sib and her dad stop off to see an old friend of his. This woman has also given up the care of her child to the child's father, realizing that she had to give to herself before she could give to a child. In this meeting with Gwen, both Taxi and Sib are shown having trouble understanding why anyone would leave their child. However, throughout most of the book they accept things as they are and do not place blame on the female.

Females are also shown as having interests outside of caring for others. Sib's mom is a very successful business person whose income allows her to have the "good" life of a beautiful home, cars, and servants to care for her.

Another element of this code that shows evidence of change is females needing protection. Sib's dad never shows concerns about her safety or her sexuality but has focused instead on raising her as an independent person.

Julian Thompson's A Band of Angels also has strongly emergent values with seventy-nine percent of the elements of the action codes emergent and seventy-three percent emergent character codes. The main character Riley is a very confident person who enjoys adventure. Although romance is in this novel, not many elements of its code are present. Relationships are shown to be heterosexual but they are not the magical transforming experience that the code describes. Riley is a very down-to-earth person who has always felt loved by her family and who views her romantic relationship with Jordan as an add-on to her happiness. It does not make her another person; she's happy with who she is. Neither the male dominant factor nor the market relationship element seem to be present in this novel. Instead of becoming

someone else for the person you love, Riley realized that loving someone gave you the "duty .. to be yourself" (271).

Even though their relationship was based on feelings and emotions, Riley had already shared feelings and emotions with another male in a platonic relationship so she wasn't swept away with the closeness she had with Jordan.

The code of beauty is not emphasized in this novel. Females are often shown as visually pleasing to males but males are shown to be visually pleasing to females too. Riley isn't shown as having a great deal of concern for her appearance. She feels confident and pleased about her body and spends no time discussing clothes or makeup.

Again, the code of sexuality shows all relationships as heterosexual but interest in sex and making overtures is not limited to the males. Also there is an acceptance of genital relationships. The main male character also doesn't fit into this code. Jordan was raised on the run with little contact with society. When he and Riley are talking about the fact that they are both virgins she says to him, "Doesn't it make you feel... I don't know. . retarded, or something, being a boy and all" (267). He responds, "What does being a boy have to do with it?"

The story continues, "Then it occurred to Riley that Jordan Paradise had had possibly the least sexist and most isolated-from-society (did the two go together?) upbringing of any guy she'd ever met" (267). Thus it is brought to the reader's attention that males seem to get views of how they're supposed to be sexually from society, and by not being part of society for so long, Jordan did not have any of those preconceived notions. This might make readers

pause and question the old assumption of how natural sexual thought and actions are for males but not for females.

The next code, the code of expression is rarely seen in this novel since most of the action focuses around five teenagers who interact on an equal basis with each other. Both males and females are shown talking about their feelings in this novel.

The code of relation is not focused on because the story does not take place within a conventional family. Riley's father is referred to only in a couple of flashbacks and we don't hear anything about her mother. A housekeeper takes care of the family's needs and Riley's dad, unlike most other fathers in this sample, takes pride in raising his daughters to "show initiative, take charge" (19). He also does not try to protect them or guard their sexuality.

The code of relation is not apparent in Jordan's upbringing either. Jordan's guardian, Karen, is shown through flashbacks taking care of Jordan but the things she did with him were unconventional and most of their lives together were spent camping out in many places around the country.

Margaret Mahy from New Zealand writes novels that show clearly emergent values. The Catalogue of the Universe seems to be ground-breaking in her depiction of the main characters Angela and her friend Tycho. The female and male characters are allowed to be people who display wide ranges of feelings and are not restricted to the traditional character codes. Seventy percent of the elements of the five action codes are emergent while eighty-four percent of the character codes are emergent.

The code of romance seems to be weakening and a different code emerging in this novel. Although romance is shown to be limited to heterosexual attachments it is also shown to be much more than feelings and emotion. Angela and Tycho have been intimate intellectually and emotionally for the duration of their relationship of many years. They are shown as close friends throughout the novel who end up being lovers near the end. They do begin a sexual relationship but it is shown as just one more step towards closeness. Romance is not shown to be a transforming experience for the female. In fact, Tycho seems the more pleased about it. Because Angela has been raised by her single mother and never knew her father, Angela doesn't view romance as "happily-ever-after." She seems to keep it in perspective, realizing it is just an extension of her already solid friendship with Tycho. Also, she already has plans for her own life and this romance doesn't suddenly give meaning to her life.

Angela and Tycho are not shown acting as if romance is a market relationship or a just exchange. In fact, Angela who is beautiful, intelligent, and independent seems to confer status on the short, brainy, rather odd Tycho through this relationship. Tycho is shown as the one lacking confidence, not Angela. They are both shown to feel they are equals through their social and intellectual interactions. Angela is very careful to make sure Tycho doesn't suddenly view her as his property. The morning after their sexual encounter, Angela urges Tycho to give up his vinyl jacket. He tells her he will if she'll give up wearing shirts people can see through. Angela replies, "The

vinyl jacket is non-negotiable. Anyhow I'm just trying to improve you, but you're just being possessive" (Mahy 140). So their friendship doesn't seem to change drastically once it becomes romantic.

Some elements of the code of beauty are present in this book. Angela is described as beautiful and most men seem to enjoy looking at her. However, in this novel males' appearance seems to be described more frequently than females'. Richard, Tycho's brother, is described as putting on "skin-tight scarlet skivvy, and then, over that, an equally tight blue one full of holes like gaping mouths... (his) jeans were dirty and frayed around all their edges and were patched with triangles and squares of flowery velvet, bright yellow canvas and pink plastic" (21). Richard's clothes are described frequently and Tycho's appearance is the subject of several discussions. Even their mother says to them one morning, "How nice you both look" (29).

Angela is also shown to be taller than Tycho. He views it as a problem; she doesn't. At one point she says to him, "It's good you're so short. My arm fits over your shoulder really well" (142). No one in this novel pays much attention to becoming beautiful. Angela's mother lets her hair go gray and shows little concern for her attire. Angela accepts her good looks, but Tycho often bemoans his less-than-handsome appearance. Angela suggests a new haircut for him. But Angela is desirable to Tycho not only for her looks but also because she is independent, assertive, down-to-earth and a real thinker. Angela is very nonchalant about her clothing and is not portrayed as showing any concern about it. The only person shown in this

novel who is really concerned about his appearance is Richard.

Beauty and appearance are not shown to be necessary as a precondition to romance. Angela and Tycho have known each other since they were children and their emotional and intellectual bonds and acceptance of each other are what draws them together.

The code of sexuality is not very pronounced in the novel either. Angela is shown initiating sexual contact and neither she nor Tycho feel there is any reason to resist a genital relationship. Tycho's teenage sister is also shown leaving her husband of one year for an older man she has found more attractive. Her family accepts these actions philosophically because they know that Africa (the sister) has a mind of her own.

The code of expression shows evidence of change too. Angela is shown speaking directly as is her mother Dido, Tycho's mother and his sister. Males are criticized as much as females in Tycho Potter's house. The parents complain about Richard who still lives at home, has no job, and doesn't seem concerned about it. Tycho and Richard complain about their strong willed sister who they fear will move back into the house any day, bringing with her her baby.

Males are shown expressing feelings as much as females. Richard admits he's jealous of his sister and Tycho talks about his insecurities. Angela can talk to Tycho about the feelings she has about not knowing her father. The Potter household simply oozes with feelings - people complain, get angry, and show they care.

The code of relation is very muted in this novel.



Little deference is give to Tycho's father who was injured years back and has never functioned well under stress. He is now a groundsman and can walk to work so his two sons can use the car and don't have to make plans around their father's life. The two mothers shown in the novel are involved in the caretaking function but Angela's mother especially is shown as a person with other interests and concerns. She is a very independent woman who enjoys scything the grass in the middle of a moonlit night and lets it be known that she loves solitude. She works hard and goes to college part time so she can eventually secure a better job.

In Tycho's family, his father is shown to be very emotionally involved with his children and especially with his daughter. Another turnabout in this novel is that Africa is seen as the valued one in this family. Both boys agree that at least their father prefers her to them and both parents are shown hustling about to make things better whenever Africa has a problem.

Mahy's other novel, Memory, shows changes in the action codes with seventy-five percent of the elements emergent. Since it is from the point of view of a nineteen year old male, many elements of the codes are not present. It does not deal with romance except for Jonny's momentary attention to an old friend of his sister.

Relationships are shown to be heterosexual but no romances are presented in this novel. The code of beauty is also not seen. Jonny, the main character, is unconcerned about how he looks most of the time. Bonny, a secondary character, is not described much physically at all. Little

concern is paid to how anyone looks although Jonny tries to help the old woman, Sophie, stay presentable.

The code of sexuality shows up only once in this novel. Jonny decides to try to get Bonny to pay attention to him physically and he tries to give her a kiss but she rebuffs him.

Only a few elements of the code of expression are present. Jonny's father, mostly through flashbacks, is shown to speak directly and even harshly. But the other main characters, both male and female, speak quite directly and no deferential behavior through speech seems apparent. Jonny is shown to be a vulnerable, sensitive kid who shares his feelings with Bonny. He knows that he can't get past the guilt of being there when his sister fell to her death, and he knows he's blocked emotionally. He's shown as a person very in touch with his feelings and a person who expresses these feelings whenever he thinks he can trust a person with them. No other elements of this code are present.

The code of relation is shown only briefly, mainly in flashbacks to his earlier life. It is clear that his father is deferred to in the family. His mother is only mentioned in terms of taking care of the children. However, throughout the novel, Jonny is shown as the caretaker and emotional support of old Sophie, changing this part of the code. A male is shown as having the "instinct" and knowledge and commitment to care for another human being.

Jonny is not shown as being more highly valued in his family because he is a male. His older sister who died seemed to be viewed as a person who had it all together

while Jonny was the follower. Mahy's novels seem to break through these codes, almost reversing the characteristics attributed to males and females. Interestingly her novels seem peopled with real, well-rounded characters, easy to imagine meeting in real life.

Norma Fox Mazer's After the Rain is another novel illustrative of emergent values with both the codes of action and the character codes sixty-six percent emergent. This is one of the few novels in which all of the elements of the code of relation are emergent as are the elements in the code of expression. The family that the protagonist lives in is clearly unusual. The code of romance and sexuality are also somewhat challenged as is the code of beauty. The two main teen characters in Sue Ellen Bridger's Permanent Connections, exhibit several emergent characteristics with sixty-six percent emergent elements in the five action codes and seventy-seven percent of the character codes emergent. Ellery is strong-willed, confident, not afraid to speak her mind, and not concerned about being accepted by others. Her mother, a recent divorcee is shown as a woman who has realized her own strengths as she removed herself from a very unsatisfactory marriage. She is compassionate and supportive, yet she realizes that her own life is important; she doesn't have to build her life around serving others. Rob is shown as a person who grows through the experience of living with his elderly relatives who are supportive when he has to go to court. He is shown as a complex character who shares his worries and uncertainties and is eventually able to show his vulnerability. Romance is not glamorized in this book. The

codes of beauty, romance, and sexuality are questioned in this novel but the code of relation seems firmly in place.

Chris Crutcher's The Crazy Horse Electric Game has sixty-three percent emergent elements in the action codes. The main character, Willie, is shown sharing his feelings and problems. He's very well rounded and doesn't just show the "jock" side of himself. We see his concern about not ruining a friendship with a female and all his self doubts after his accident. Several females are shown in the book and two of them especially are shown to be strong, competent people. Crutcher's book includes characters of many races and classes and doesn't seem to contain stereotypes. The code of relation, however, still only challenges two of the five elements of this code.

Sons from Afar by Cynthia Voigt has emergent elements in fifty-seven percent of the five action codes. The two young boys who search for the father they've never known live with their strong minded, independent grandmother who lives according to what is important to her. James is shown to be weak and insecure some of the time while Sammy is shown as a confident person who's not afraid of his feelings. Two female doctors are also shown. This book very gently prods the reader to cast aside stereotypes of any kind and in this way the emergent values surface.

Although Weetzie Bat by Francesca Block seems to be one of the novels with the most emergent values because of the acceptance of a homosexual relationship, not all the codes in this novel do show emergent values. Fifty-four percent of the values in the action codes are emergent while sixty percent of the character codes are emergent.

The code of romance still has elements in this book. Weetzie felt it would be the high point of her life if she could find her one true love. Both she and Dirk, her best friend who was gay, set out to find the perfect "duck." The dating situations with the male dominant and the female expected to provide sex as part of the "market relationship" are evident when Weetzie goes hunting for the right "duck." Both she and Dirk know that this kind of relationship is not good for her and eventually both find the person they think they were looking for. In spite of finding the mate of their dreams, there is no "happily ever after" in this novel.

The code of beauty is spoofed in this novel since both Dirk and Weetzie dress outrageously and wear hair-dos that attract attention. The code of sexuality is broken by the acceptance of Dirk and Duck's homosexual relationship. Weetzie seems to live by part of this code though, because she is shown responding to, not initiating, overtures towards men. There is an acceptance of genital relationships outside marriage.

The code of expression and female hesitancy to speak directly, shows itself only when Weetzie doesn't argue with her lover about having a baby. Instead she goes ahead with her plans. Both males and females are shown sharing their feelings and emotions.

The code of relation is the code most prominent in this book. Weetzie and Dirk and Duck all seem to defer to My Secret Agent Lover Man, a straight male, who has a job outside of the home. He directs movies and involves the three of them in the movies and he seems to be in charge.

Weetzie does a lot of the caretaking tasks especially when there are two babies to take care of, but Dirk and Duck are shown as nurturing the family and even Secret Agent is shown cooking meals. Females are not portrayed as needing protection and males are not shown to be more valued in a family.

Although the following group of books has only between eleven and forty-four percent emergent elements present in the action codes, I believe they qualify as books exemplifying emergent values because the character codes scores are so high and show that the females in these books are resisting traditional definitions of femaleness.

Charlotte Doyle crossed the ocean in 1832 when females were viewed almost as property. But because Charlotte challenged the way things were, and made decisions about the direction her life would take, this can be seen as a rejection of the roles females had previously been assigned. The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle by Avi is an adventure story with a female heroine - an almost unheard of combination - which in itself shows the emergent nature of this book. This book challenges all the old stereotypes and has Charlotte breaking away from her sheltered past and her upbringing by joining a crew which has attempted to mutiny. We gasp as we wonder if she'll make it to the top of the mast, we shudder during a storm worrying if she'll ever be able to untangle the sails, we groan as she is hanging out over the water, and we cheer when the evil captain and not Charlotte falls overboard. Charlotte is plucky and resourceful and real to us. She is at the heart of the excitement and adventure. She realizes that she has few

choices in life but she decides not to accept her proper position in society and so broadens her choices. Her rebelliousness thrills students. The message of this book is clearly an emergent one. Girls are shown to be strong, resourceful, interesting people who can do much more than they were allowed to do in the 1800's. So Charlotte's personality characteristics illustrate emergent values as does her refusal to defer to male authority in the code of relation.

Brock Cole's Celine has only forty-four percent emergent elements in the action codes but eighty-eight percent in the character codes because this teenager is almost outrageous in her speech, manner and dress. She has a strong sense of herself as an artist, refuses to play boy-girl games, and tries to challenge people's views by the way she dresses and wears her hair. She is an endearing character because of her affection for the little boy across the hall and because she has the confidence to challenge a pompous art professor on his views and refuses to back down or agree with him. This is another character with strongly emergent personality characteristics situated in a family with residual values.

Even though her recently married father chose a wife only a few years older than Celine, he is very clearly in charge. The other couple Celine gets involved with, through their divorce, display many elements in the code of relation. Although the code of relation may be thought of as adhering to residual values, the view we get of divorce very clearly challenges this code. The soon-to-be ex-wife challenges her husband's right to be deferred to and shows

that women in marriages cannot always play the supportive role without getting some of their own needs met. Although the codes of romance and beauty are challenged, there is some adherence to the codes of sexuality and relation.

In the novel Eva by Peter Dickinson only forty percent of the elements of the action codes are emergent but eighty-six percent of the character codes are emergent. Eva is in the body of a chimpanzee and portrayed as a character with a mind of her own, who makes decisions based on what she thinks is right. Her willingness to help a small group of chimps escape the confines of captivity has far-reaching effects. Again, her personality characteristics are emergent but the codes of expression, relation, beauty, and romance are very much a part of this novel.

White Peak Farm by Berlie Doherty shows one of the most traditional families in this whole sample with one of the most dictatorial fathers and thus few emergent elements in the action codes. Yet through the daughter, Jeannie, we begin to see a questioning of the old beliefs the father operates on so eighty-eight percent of the character codes are emergent. Jeannie challenges her father's authority and the absurdity of some of his "laws." She also comes to have confidence in herself, and her abilities, largely through the encouragement of a teacher. So her character traits could be called emergent ones though her situation is definitely grounded in residual values.

A female who is shown going against taboos in her society is Sweetgrass, in Sweetgrass by Jan Hudson. Again her culture is very traditional and only thirty-two percent of the codes of action illustrate emergent values, but the



message seems to be that it is foolish not to train females in the tribe to hunt for food, especially for survival. Sweetgrass challenges traditional ways of thinking and eighty-four percent of her character codes are emergent. Sweetgrass's tribe thinks it is evil to eat fish. Sweetgrass, to save her family from starvation, and give them strength as they fight the smallpox, feeds her ill family fish, saving their lives. Sweetgrass's family is one of the few to survive the epidemic.

Another plucky, interesting female is Cat in Cat, Herself who sees injustice in the way females are treated and speaks out with all her might. She challenges the long-held beliefs that the others cherish and she thinks hard about what being a female means in this itinerant society. Cat's personality characteristics are clearly emergent (eighty-eight percent) but the book is set in a very traditional society where the five action codes are very much in place with only forty-two percent illustrating emergent values.

Many of the novels definitely illustrate emergent values; codes seem to be changing and in some cases new codes seem to be emerging. The concluding chapter will look at these changes as part of the discussion that summarizes the codes that are challenged.

CHAPTER FIVE  
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In her book Children's Literature: An Issues Approach, Masha Rudman concluded her discussion of gender roles in children's literature by suggesting that "slowly but surely books and the media are reflecting society's direction" (qtd. in Taxel, Black Exp. 247). The same can be said for the portrayal of females in this sampling. The majority of these novels studied are moving in the direction of challenging some aspects of the traditional values embedded in the subordination of women.

**Construction of the Cultural Codes of Position and Identity**

This section will discuss how the codes studied construct the cultural codes of position and identity, which parts of the five codes discussed in Chapter Two and Chapter Three are challenged, and which "invisible" areas are not brought into question in most of these books.

The action codes of romance, beauty, sexuality, expression and relation all contribute to female identity in this society. The code of romance stresses the importance of a relationship with a male and seems to tell females that who they are is a result of who they relate to; that they can only expect to find true happiness within romance. The code of beauty tells girls that they are to please others through their appearance, and so their appearance is of the utmost importance. From the code of sexuality girls learn that they should not think of themselves in sexual terms but only as respondents to males' sexual overtures. From the code of expression they learn they must be indirect in their

speech so they won't offend others and that they are expected to be emotional. From the code of relation they find females are expected to find their worth through serving others in a subordinate role.

Thus the other five codes of action construct the cultural code of female identity.

Code of Identity

1. Female identity comes through relationships with males. (from the code of romance)
2. Paying attention to appearance is basic to being a female. (from the code of beauty)
3. To be female is to be a responder, not an initiator. (from the code of sexuality)
4. Females are emotional and manipulative. (from the code of expression)
5. Females are caring, unselfish people who serve others. (from the code of relation)

Additionally, the five codes tell females that they are not worth as much as males and so do not have as high of a position. From the code of romance girls learn that males are more important because males must be deferred to in a romance and males bring status to the female through the romantic involvement. From the code of beauty they learn that males are acceptable as they are but females, because they have nothing else that society values as much, must be attractive and pleasing in appearance.

The code of sexuality informs females that men have sexual freedom and can act on their feelings but females who do the same are considered "bad." This increased freedom for males speaks of their superior worth. The code

of expression makes it clear to females who is more important. Males don't have to worry about offending, and may speak directly, while females must monitor what they say for fear of offending. Last, the code of relation shows females that the male is most valued and important in the family because adult males are deferred to and boys are encouraged to develop personality characteristics that are valued in society and lead to achievement and success outside of the home. From all of these codes of action females are very clearly told that their position is beneath the position of males. Thus the five codes of action construct the cultural code of position too.

#### The Code of Position

1. Association with males brings status and worth to the female. (from the code of romance)
2. Female acceptance is based on appearance. (from the code of beauty)
3. Females are responsible for their own sexual behavior and the behavior of the male attracted to them. (from the code of sexuality)
4. Females do not offend or challenge others through their speech. (from the code of expression)
5. Family life is organized around male, not female, needs. (from the code of relation)

#### **Elements of the Five Codes Challenged in the Novels**

Most of the codes are part of the residual values and beliefs about females in our society. The novels in the sample vigorously challenged only four of the twenty-seven elements of these codes. For the purposes of this study if

an element registered emergent in seventy-five percent of the books in the sample that have that element present in them, then it is described as strongly challenging the residual value. If between fifty percent and seventy-four percent of the books show an element to be emergent, it is described as moderately challenging the residual value. Below fifty percent is not considered a challenge to that element. Table 3 shows how many of the elements of the code of romance are challenged. R1 through R7 correspond to the seven elements of the code of romance. NP indicates that the element is not present in the novel.

Five of the seven elements of the code of romance (R2, R3, R4, R6, and R7) were questioned through these novels. Romance was not shown to be just about feelings and emotions (R2) in fifty percent of the books. Couples like Angela and Tycho in The Catalogue of the Universe had strong intellectual ties that became part of their romantic relationship. Jennie and Willie in The Crazy Horse Electric Game had athletic interests in common. Also in that same book a couple was shown deeply respecting the work each was involved in. After the Rain showed Rachel's parents sharing daily routines and worries. Many novels showed a fuller meaning of romance and what a relationship entails.

Managing sexuality while confining it to non-genital forms (R3) was also an element moderately challenged. At least ten novels had evidence of genital expression in them.

A major challenge (77 percent) to the code was on romance as a transforming experience giving meaning to girls' lives (R4). Examples were frequently given showing that romance was not the answer to leading a fulfilling

Table 3

## Residual and Emergent Elements in the Code of Romance

	<u>R1</u>	<u>R2</u>	<u>R3</u>	<u>R4</u>	<u>R5</u>	<u>R6</u>	<u>R7</u>
Doyle	R	NP	NP	NP	R	NP	R
Weetzie	E	R	E	R	E	E	E
Permanent	R	R	E	E	R	E	E
Midnight	R	E	E	E	R	E	E
Celine	R	E	E	E	R	R	R
Goats	R	R	R	E	R	E	E
Fade	R	NP	R	E	R	E	R
Crazy	R	E	E	E	R	E	E
Sex	R	R	E	R	R	R	E
Gracie	R	E	E	E	R	E	E
Eva	R	NP	NP	E	R	NP	R
Farm	R	R	R	E	R	R	R
Dixie	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Sweetgrass	R	E	R	E	R	E	R
Cat	R	E	R	E	R	R	E
Kiss	R	R	R	E	R	E	E
Catalog	R	E	E	E	R	E	E
Memory	R	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	R
Rain	R	E	R	E	R	E	E
All	R	R	NP	R	NP	NP	R
Princess	R	E	R	E	R	R	E
Kindness	R	R	E	E	R	E	E
Band	R	E	E	E	R	E	E
Izzy	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Sons	R	NP	NP	NP	R	NP	E
<b>RESIDUAL</b>	24	10	10	5	22	7	10
<b>EMERGENT</b>	1	10	10	17	1	13	15
<b>% EMERGENT</b>	.04	.50	.50	.77	.04	.65	.60

life. Adults in The Catalogue of the Universe, Midnight Hour Encores, The Crazy Horse Electric Game, The Goats, Permanent Connections, Sons from Afar, Fade, A Kindness, Sex Education, Celine, Weetzie Bat, Dixie Storms and White Peak Farm were portrayed as having less than positive experiences with romantic relationships. Only one teen saw romance as a transforming experience while the majority of teens, having seen examples of romance gone wrong, didn't view it as leading to a "happily ever after" life. They realized their own interests and abilities were important to develop if they were to have a good, full life.

Celine in Celine, Ellery in Permanent Connections, Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe and females in sixty-five percent of the books, challenged the element of the code which showed romance as a just exchange (R6). They wanted a relationship, not just status from a male.

In addition, females in sixty percent of the novels did not view or react to the male as the dominant one in a relationship (R7) and questioned the view that romance meant females were the property of males. Cat in Cat, Herself vigorously objected to this element of the code as did Celine, Jeannie in A Kindness and Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe.

Thus the code of romance seems to show signs of change especially of the view that romance is all that's needed for a happy, fulfilling life. The females had so many examples before them which showed that romance does not mean everything will be all right in your life, that they simply saw romance as one facet of their lives, not their whole existence. This movement in the code seemed to be

accompanied by females talking about and planning for their futures independent of a relationship. Ellery in Permanent Connections had plans for college, Angela in The Catalogue of the Universe knew what kind of job she wanted, Celine had no doubts that art would be a big part of her future, Sib in Midnight Hour Encores knew she had a future in music. This focus on the future in terms of what the female wanted to do which did not include devoting their lives to serving others, was very prominent in this sampling.

Three of the six elements of the code of beauty (B2, B5, B6) were challenged in this sample of novels. Table 4 shows the extent to which these elements were challenged.

Only twenty-eight percent of the novels challenge the notion of females as visually pleasing objects (B1). Females such as Celine refuse to go along with the traditional standards of beauty. She dresses to please herself and wears her hair the way she is comfortable. Rosamunde in Izzy Willy-Nilly wonders why people are always trying to get her to pay more attention to her appearance. She ignores them and dresses to please herself. Ellery in Permanent Connections also dresses unlike any other female in her school and purchases most of her clothes at second-hand stores. She is not concerned with whether she is visually pleasing to others or not.

Eighty-eight percent of the novels did not show beauty as a natural state concealing the work of becoming beautiful (B2). Only twenty-eight percent of the sample disputed the notion of females being recognized and elevated for their beauty (R3); while only forty percent showed females not always conscious of their physical presence (B4). However,



Table 4

**Residual and Emergent Elements in the Code of Beauty**

	<u>B1</u>	<u>B2</u>	<u>B3</u>	<u>B4</u>	<u>B5</u>	<u>B6</u>
Doyle	R	NP	R	R	NP	E
Weetzie	E	E	R	R	R	R
Permanent	E	E	E	E	E	E
Midnight	E	E	R	E	E	E
Celine	R	E	E	R	E	E
Goats	R	E	R	R	E	E
Fade	R	R	R	E	E	E
Crazy	R	E	R	E	E	E
Sex	R	E	E	R	E	E
Gracie	R	E	E	R	R	E
Eva	E	NP	R	E	E	E
Farm	R	E	R	R	E	R
Dixie	R	R	R	R	R	R
Sweetgrass	R	E	R	R	E	E
Cat	E	E	R	E	E	E
Kiss	R	E	R	R	E	E
Catalog	R	E	R	R	E	E
Memory	E	NP	E	E	E	E
Rain	E	E	E	R	E	E
All	R	NP	R	R	NP	R
Princess	R	R	R	R	R	R
Kindness	R	E	R	E	E	E
Band	R	E	E	E	E	E
Izzy	R	R	R	R	R	R
Sons	R	NP	R	E	E	E
<b>RESIDUAL</b>	18	3	18	15	5	6
<b>EMERGENT</b>	7	22	7	10	20	19
<b>%EMERGENT</b>	28	88	28	40	80	76

eighty percent of the novels did challenge the idea of females developing early relationships to commodities through makeup and clothing (B5). Beauty in seventy-six percent of the novels is not seen as a precondition for romance (B6). Thus it still appears through the elements of the code not challenged, that female beauty is still considered very important in this society.

Two of the four elements of the code of sexuality are moderately challenged in this sample as Table 5 shows. The first two elements that are not challenged portray sexual relationships as heterosexual. There was little talk about resisting genital relationships (S3) in fifty-five percent of the books and many of the female characters assumed that sex was a possibility in romantic relationships. In the teen culture teens were not usually condemned for involving themselves in sexual relationships. Permanent Connections shows one female in a long standing relationship discussing birth control. In Weetzie Bat, casual sex was shown to be troubling but in the Los Angeles culture a sexual relationship seemed to be part of serious relationships. A Band of Angels describes one teenager, Lisa, who got involved in many sexual encounters and then realized how little she thought of herself. Once she felt she mattered, her attitude toward that kind of involvement changed. In Celine, quick sex outside of a relationship was viewed as inappropriate. Two novels that did not show that sexual relationships can be problematic were The Catalogue of the Universe and Midnight Hour Encores; consequences were not talked about.

Table 5

**Residual and Emergent Elements in the Code of Sexuality**

	S1	S2	S3	S4
Doyle	R	R	NP	NP
Weetzie	E	R	E	E
Permanent	R	R	E	E
Midnight	R	R	E	E
Celine	R	R	E	R
Goats	R	R	R	NP
Fade	R	R	R	R
Crazy	R	R	E	E
Sex	R	R	E	E
Gracie	R	R	E	NP
Eva	R	R	NP	NP
Farm	R	R	R	R
Dixie	R	R	R	E
Sweetgrass	R	R	R	NP
Cat	R	R	R	NP
Kiss	R	R	R	R
Catalog	R	R	E	E
Memory	R	R	NP	R
Rain	R	R	R	R
All	R	R	NP	NP
Princess	R	R	R	R
Kindness	R	R	E	R
Band	R	R	E	E
Izzy	R	R	R	NP
Sons	R	R	NP	NP
<b>RESIDUAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>EMERGENT</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>%EMERGENT</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>.55</b>	<b>.50</b>

The dictate that females only respond to male sexual overtures is another element of the sexual code that appears to be moderately bending (S4) since fifty percent of the novels challenge that value. The females who did initiate sexual intimacy did not question their right to do so. It is not an issue they struggled with.

In the code of expression, two of the elements (E3 and E5) as shown in Table 6, are being moderately challenged.

Males still speak directly (E1) in fifty-nine percent of the novels while females are still criticized in sixty percent of the novels; neither element shows much movement. Males, however, were portrayed as showing their emotions (E3) in sixty-eight percent of the books--a significant challenge to this element of the code. Males were shown as vulnerable people with insecurities and problems just like everyone else. Most notable were James in Sons from Afar, Willie in The Crazy Horse Electric Game and Rob in Permanent Connections

Females in seventy-two percent of the books are shown speaking directly (E4). Many females don't try to beat around the bush; they just come out and ask for what they want. One example previously given is Jennie in The Crazy Horse Electric Game who asks Willie if he will go with her. She seems very comfortable asking, and Willie seems relieved that she brought the matter up.

The last challenge to the code of expression takes place with sixty-six percent of the novels showing females as other than emotional (E5).

Table 6

**Residual and Emergent Elements of the Code of Expression**

	<u>E1</u>	<u>E2</u>	<u>E3</u>	<u>E4</u>	<u>E5</u>
Doyle	R	R	R	R	R
Weetzie	R	R	E	E	R
Permanent	R	R	E	E	E
Midnight	E	E	E	E	E
Celine	R	R	R	R	E
Goats	E	E	R	E	R
Fade	R	R	R	R	E
Crazy	E	R	E	E	E
Sex	E	E	E	E	R
Gracie	E	R	E	R	R
Eva	E	R	R	E	E
Farm	R	R	R	E	E
Dixie	R	R	R	R	E
Sweetgrass	R	R	R	E	E
Cat	R	R	E	E	E
Kiss	E	E	E	R	E
Catalog	E	R	E	E	E
Memory	E	E	E	E	E
Rain	E	E	E	R	E
All	R	E	E	R	R
Princess	E	R	E	E	E
Kindness	R	R	E	E	R
Band	E	E	E	E	E
Izzy	R	R	R	R	R
Sons	R	E	E	E	E
<b>RESIDUAL</b>	14	15	8	7	8
<b>EMERGENT</b>	10	10	17	18	16
<b>% EMERGENT</b>	.42	.40	.68	.72	.66

In the code of relation only one of the elements shown in Table 7 is challenged. Males are deferred to (Re1) in fifty-six percent of the novels. Females in half of the novels were no longer shown only as caretakers of others (Re2). They were shown in many professions, as discussed in the code of relation. However, many of the women shown in professions did have the additional job of raising children and taking care of the home.

Another element that is showing only a little movement is the one that describes females as the nurturers and emotional support in a family (Re3). Only twenty-nine percent of the sample shows males giving this kind of support to their children. Taxi in Midnight Hour Encores was the only emotional support for his child and Morgan's father tried to help her cope with her feelings of loss in Say Goodnight, Gracie.

Male children are still shown as highly valued and raised with different expectations (Re4) in sixty percent of the novels; fifty-two percent showed females as needing protection (Re5).

#### **Elements of the Codes not Challenged**

Four of the twenty-seven elements of the codes were strongly challenged; nine were moderately challenged. While many of the novels do have several emergent elements in them there are many of the more subtle or almost "invisible" elements not challenged at all.

In the code of romance the element challenged only once is the notion that romance is a personal, private experience. At first glance, this might appear almost

Table 7

**Residual and Emergent Elements in the Code of Relation**

	<u>Re1</u>	<u>Re2</u>	<u>Re3</u>	<u>Re4</u>	<u>Re5</u>
Doyle	R	R	R	NP	E
Weetzie	R	E	E	NP	E
Permanent	E	E	R	R	E
Midnight	E	E	E	E	E
Celine	R	E	R	E	E
Goats	E	E	E	E	R
Fade	R	R	R	R	R
Crazy	R	E	R	R	E
Sex	E	R	R	E	R
Gracie	R	R	R	R	R
Eva	R	E	R	NP	R
Farm	R	R	R	R	R
Dixie	R	R	R	R	R
Sweetgrass	R	R	R	R	R
Cat	R	R	R	R	R
Kiss	NP	R	R	NP	E
Catalog	E	E	E	E	E
Memory	E	E	E	E	E
Rain	E	E	E	E	E
All	R	R	R	R	R
Princess	E	E	R	R	E
Kindness	E	R	R	R	R
Band	E	NP	NP	NP	E
Izzy	R	R	R	R	R
Sons	E	E	E	E	R
<b>RESIDUAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>EMERGENT</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>‡EMERGENT</b>	<b>.44</b>	<b>.50</b>	<b>.29</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.48</b>

insignificant until one realizes what this means for females. It is assumed that what goes on in a relationship is only between those two people; it is not considered to be anyone else's business. Whatever happens in a relationship must be negotiated between the two people and no one else has the right to interfere. Thus any push for change on the part of the subordinate female is not supported or encouraged any where in our society. The female is alone in negotiating changes in a relationship and pushing for an equitable balance of the work load in the home or encouraging the male to become more intimate by sharing feelings. Problems in a relationship are viewed as being caused by the female because she is generally the one pushing for changes. Seeing a relationship as a private matter has also, until recently, prevented females from getting the protection they need from abusive spouses. Support on couple issues is sparse. No newspaper articles seem to spell out what an inequitable arrangement might look like. No studies have been done showing what effects lack of cooperation in the home have on women. Studies seem only to focus on how stressful jobs can be for females and the assumption is that her job is in addition to her responsibility for the home and children.

Thus because this element of the code of romance is so much a part of our social structure, because females alone lack the power to change this, it is viewed as the way life is, and is not challenged in any of the novels.

The code of beauty has many aspects of it that are not questioned. Although some females pay little attention to their looks, the message in these books still came through



loud and clear that females are expected to be visually pleasing to others. Females are usually described in much more detail than males are, and often characterized through their appearance. Only one male, Richard, in The Catalogue of the Universe, is characterized through what he wears. Usually males are defined through their actions and their dialogue. Much more importance is given to female appearance and what females wear seems to signify much more to others than does male apparel.

Females are also recognized and elevated for their beauty, making it appear that beauty is what gives them worth as human beings. Also success is tolerated in the females in this sample as long as they submit to society's requirement that they look attractive. Chelsea's mom in Princess Ashley has a well paid counseling job and always pays attention to her appearance. Sibilance's mom in Midnight Hour Encores is a successful executive who is fastidious about what she wears. Aunt Lo in Say Goodnight, Gracie is always shown exquisitely dressed.

Consciousness about their appearance is ever present in the minds of most of the females in this sample. Even the ones who choose not to spend time on their appearance are conscious of the way they are probably being viewed. Awareness of appearance seems to be hard for any female to get away from since the reminders to look good surround them in the culture. It is considered acceptable to comment on female appearance. As if to beat others to the punch, females criticize their own appearances and apologize for them. Females in the sample feel bad if they don't have large enough breasts, or the perfect mouth, or a face shaped

just right. The requirements for female appearance are advertised everywhere and females feel apologetic if they don't think they measure up. This seems to be evidence that females feel great pressure about their appearance and it certainly tells us what females are valued for in this society. The code of beauty is very strongly entrenched in the majority of the novels in the sample.

Two of the four elements of the code of sexuality are challenged; the exceptions are the elements that prohibit sexual relationships between the same sexes. No mention was made of lesbian relationships in any of the novels; only one novel acknowledged a male homosexual relationship. These traditional values remain firmly in place.

Although females are shown initiating sexual overtures toward males and are shown to be interested in sex, males still have much more freedom to make sexual comments than females have. Also, no descriptions of female arousal were present in any of the novels although male arousal was referred to. So even though this code is loosening and females are sometimes shown as sexual beings, there are still limits to what is acceptable female sexual behavior. This part of the code will only truly show emergent values when there is no difference in the sexual expectations we have for both males and females.

The code of expression does have many elements that are illustrative of emergent values. The one that still seems strongly residual and speaks volumes about how females are viewed in this society is the expectation that openly criticizing females is acceptable. It is no longer acceptable in a good portion of society to make racist

remarks, yet to say "he throws the ball like a girl"--a blatantly sexist statement--is still seen to be just a descriptive statement by the larger society. Females are criticized on the basis of their gender and also on the basis of the undesirable characteristics attributed to them such as lack of coordination and athletic ability.

Expressions describing a poor or uncontrolled driver as a "woman driver" still abound in society. Although much of the code of expression seems to be changing, the residual nature of this element is evidence that females are not highly valued and that the characteristics attributed to males are valued.

At least one novel challenged each element in the code of relation but the deference given to adult males is shown over and over again as the natural order of things. Only Midnight Hour Encores shows a father who plans his life around the activities of his daughter; he doesn't ask her to defer to him. Shaking up the way things are by questioning the basis of family order is simply not done in these novels. The right of the male to be the dominant force in the household remains unquestioned. More than half of the novels show men expecting to be waited on and served. No spirit of compromise or willingness to negotiate duties seems present.

This hierarchic, patriarchal system that exists in the family parallels the kinds of authority structures that exist in the greater society. Foucault reminds us that power relations do indeed "serve.... because they are capable of being utilized in strategies" and that "relations of power are interwoven with other kinds of relations

(production, kinship, family, sexuality) for which they play at once a conditioning and a conditioned role" (Power 142). Perhaps this explains the hesitancy to look for different models of family living. Children's first exposure to a patriarchal hierarchy occurs in the family and accustoms them to the "naturalness" of such an order that exists in most of our other institutions, such as government and education.

Another element of the code of relation not examined or challenged was the placing of blame on females for not making family members happy. This element is so deeply embedded in our culture that it's hard to even be aware of it. How many of us have said to students, "didn't your mother remember to tell you to bring this" or "can your mother come to parent-teacher conferences?" We also still seem to blame only the female if the child has problems in life. This expectation that females should be able to meet the emotional needs of all family members needs to be more systematically brought to peoples' awareness.

One comment needs to be made about the character codes. Although no girls in the novels in this study are the passive, weak "typical" females, the more emergent personality characteristics are not extended to the married females who were generally shown as placid and compliant.

#### **Novels as Reflections of Current Societal Values**

Researchers who have worked on gender, race and class issues provide some insight into why there aren't more emergent values in the novels studied. Dorothy Broderick who wrote the book Black Images in Children's Literature

says:

It is perhaps mundane to observe that the content of the books is directly related to the society in which books are produced... The situation is circular: the society dictates the content and attitudes within the books and the books serve to perpetuate societal attitudes from one generation to another (177).

Felicity Ann O'Dell tells us that "we can expect a study of children's literature of a particular time and place to reveal much about the values and nature of the society which produced it" (5).

Dr. Luis Nieves Falcon is even more forceful. He says:

Because of the close relationship between economic and social processes, books as a form of cultural transmission reflect the prevailing values of society. In fact, they tend to mirror the values of those groups which exercise control and power" (4).

Thus it seems to be that right now our society is not even aware of the multitude of ways it treats women as subordinate people and so "mirror(s) the values of those groups which exercise control and authority" as Falcon says.

#### **How Gender Content can Affect the Reader**

Just how important is it then to pay attention to the gender content of these novels? Are readers affected by the content of the books they read?

O'Dell believes children are affected since from "earliest times those concerned with education and social control have been aware of the power of fiction" (3).

I believe that novels can show readers possibilities that exist for them. If they see females not shackled by traditional expectations, but being happy and successful in

non-traditional jobs, females may feel that this possibility exists for them; males can see this view is another way for a female to live.

Second, novels that don't tie females to residual personality characteristics and expectations affirm female experience and validate female feelings. If females see a female being outspoken and opinionated and not condemned for it, they see that indeed this is an acceptable way for females to behave. If females in novels challenge their boyfriends on their possessiveness, females can see someone else who feels and reacts the way they do. Males can also view these books as validating divergent behavior for both sexes.

The books themselves don't seem to form concepts of appropriate female behavior but do seem to act to validate or challenge our beliefs about it.

Taxel says that children's literature "constitutes but one of a complex variety of sources which children can draw upon when constructing their own particular conceptions of reality" (Black Exp 255).

Mary Beth Culp's study shows that books can affect students' attitudes and values. She found that books have influenced attitudes and values in the areas of: self-image, sensitivity to others, awareness of moral and ethical issues, and awareness of social problems" (252).

Another study which was reported in Sara Goodman Zimet's Print and Prejudice concluded that, while it would appear that much of the long-term influence of reading depends upon its reinforcement in the home and community, the potential for changing a point of view has been

demonstrated by the immediate effect books do have on children's beliefs.

So it seems that students can be affected by the novels but that they do not simply absorb the views presented in the novels. Taxel says that research conducted by Michael Apple, Henry Giroux and Paul Willis "indicate that there is considerable resistance by students to the dominant ideology of schools. That is, students do not passively accept all that their teachers teach, but are rather active participants in the process of making meaning" (274).

Rosenblatt would agree that students make their own meaning from books.

Oftentimes, though, what the reader reacts to and responds to in the literature are the culturally imbued gender definitions. The reader sees the stories through the shadings that the culture has imposed.

Taxel addresses this issue, as was quoted in Chapter One, when he says: "...stereotypes, particularly with young children, do not register at the conscious level unless they are raised as an issue."

#### **What Teachers Can Do**

Thus it seems the teacher can play an important part here. Our job is to help students evaluate race, class, and gender issues. We need to help them become aware of stereotypes and what they imply about people and how they limit people. If students understand that these prejudices and stereotypes exist in literature, and if teachers model how to discern those prejudices, students will begin to discern these prejudices themselves after the pattern has

been set in the classroom. The first way we can do this is to help students question their own assumptions. Such questions as "why do we expect this of a woman or of a man?" or "would this character change if the author had decided to use a male/female for this part?"

The second thing we can do is question and examine the literature with such questions as:

What personality characteristics of men/women are shown in this story to be desirable/undesirable? Do you agree?

How does the author seem to want you to view men and women? Compare physical descriptions and narrative qualifiers that urge the reader to form a certain opinion of the character etc.

How does the author characterize females in contrast to males? Is the character's speech, their appearance, their actions, or what others say about them primarily used to show what kind of person the character is?

How does the language in the story reinforce gendered expectations? Are females described as "beautiful" and men as "strong?" What does this tell us about what is valued in males and females?

What do you like/dislike about the relationships described? If you could ask one question of a character so you could understand him/her better, what would that question be?

What about the character is paid the most attention to? Does this vary with males and females?

Barbara Stanford suggests other questions:

- a. Who takes the lead in making decisions?
- b. Who calls whom on the telephone?



- c. Who seems to be the most intelligent? the most sensitive? the most "emotional"?
- d. Who protects the other from "danger"?
- e. Who seems to have the most interesting plans for the future?
- f. Who exhibits the most socially undesirable behavior? (67).

Discussing and raising the issues seem to be an integral part of the process necessary to involve students in questioning their own attitudes and perhaps changing them. In discussing the effect of literature on attitudes towards minority groups Zimet notes:

The important role played by follow-up questions was also clearly demonstrated. The discussions appear to provide reinforcement of the ideas expressed in the printed media and thereby strengthen the impact on the perceptions and behaviors of the readers (22).

Once students begin to see that we do have very different expectations of males and females, some will begin to question their own attitudes and think about where these attitudes and beliefs came from. One very interesting discussion we had in my classroom took place while we were reading "The Crucible" by Arthur Miller. Some students condemned Abigail and called her a slut for her affair with John Proctor. I wondered aloud why she was being condemned while no such judgment was made about John Proctor. One female student started thinking about it and said that in our society that kind of behavior was considered normal for men but females were judged harshly for doing the same thing. Someone else brought up the multitude of words we have for promiscuous females such as tramp, whore, flirt. We came up with twenty separate words to describe this

behavior in females. When we looked for words to describe male promiscuity, the only ones we could come up with had positive connotations, such as stud.

Students that day made the connection between the values of our society and what we have words for. They saw that we name only what we pay attention to and view as important. One way the language operated here was as a form of control of females through condemnation. By looking closely at the literature in the language arts classroom, it is possible to make students aware of these issues.

Other activities that can help make students aware of sexism are described by Stanford and Stones. Stanford suggests that students could read novels that show the destructive effects of exaggerated sex-role images on the lives of people. Some of the novels that she offers that show restrictive sex-role images are: Madame Bovary, Far from the Madding Crowd, The Bell Jar, The Cheerleader, Trying Hard to Hear You and Sticks and Stones.

She also explains another idea to get students to think about sex-role stereotyping. The teacher prepares several descriptions of characters excerpted from works of literature and reads the piece to the class, giving options to the class each time a pronoun such as he appears. Instead the teacher would say "he/she." Of course names also have to be paired with one of the opposite sex. After hearing the whole excerpt, the students must decide whether it describes a male or a female and give reasons why. One of the follow-up questions is: "Do you think that the author exaggerated sexual characteristics or are men and women really that different?" (67).

Stones suggests a similar activity. She encourages teachers to substitute a girl's name for a boy's name or visa versa when reading a well known story (25). Discuss the parts that seem hard to accept and then discuss why that might be true.

To make students more sensitive to the language we use to describe males and females, they can keep language logs in which they write down language they hear during the week that is aimed at one gender. They listen to and record bits of conversations. When this is shared in class you can discuss: How do males talk about and describe themselves and other males? What words do females use to talk about or describe males? How do females talk about and describe themselves and other females? What words do males use to describe females?

Students can also listen for what females and males are criticized for, and note if the criticism took place publically or in small groups. Does anyone disagree or dispute the criticism? The use of language logs to sensitize students to the ways we describe females and males might get students to think about what or who is valued the most in our society and make them more aware of the cultural codes of identity and position.

Another area teachers have to be aware of is book selection. Just because books are award winning or considered classics does not mean they are free of gender, class or race issues and stereotypes. If we do not bring up these issues, students will assume that we are accepting what is in the book. A case in point is the novel The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Swartz in Interracial Books

for Children Bulletin showed that texts on literature for adolescents do not even mention the issue of racism or suggest ways to handle the issue in the classroom (6). Students are given a strong message when these issues are ignored. Not only might they believe these attitudes are acceptable, they also might misread the teacher's unwillingness to discuss the issue, and see it as an admission that there is no way to talk about issues that evoke strong feelings. So our refusal to deal with issues might result in student's believing some issues can not be worked out or resolved.

We as teachers have to be aware that sex roles (and race and class stereotypes) will be perpetuated if we don't critically approach them. Students need help grappling with behavior they have never run into before. They have trouble understanding why women stay with an abusive spouse and if we are not willing to help them think about this kind of behavior, they could go away from the story or the discussion believing that if women lack gumption then they deserve what they get.

Recently in my class, my students were appalled when we read the beginning of Ralph Ellison's The Invisible Man. They could not understand how the main character, after being humiliated by the white men at the smoker, could still so desperately want their approval and be so thankful that they gave him a scholarship. Students could think of nothing in their experience to explain this person's behavior. Finally someone was able to compare that situation to how an abused child might feel toward the parent who hurt him or her. Then students could begin to

understand what it would be like for a person to want the approval of someone who has mistreated him or her. They also questioned the motives of the men at the smoker and said they learned as much about these men from their actions as they did about the main character. It was also beyond their experience to understand how humiliating other people could be considered entertainment and their opinion of these men was very, very low.

Ignoring these issues is a disservice to our students; they need to be able to talk about why men and woman of all races, religions, and classes behave as they do and why they are portrayed as they are. We need to give them a chance to wonder aloud and speculate aloud.

To do this we need to begin to change the hierarchic, patriarchal structure of the classroom so that students are no longer the passive learners and teachers are no longer the fount of all knowledge. We need to teach students to value their own opinion and their own ability to think.

Changes start in small ways and by removing ourselves as the giver of all knowledge, students can learn to see that knowledge can come from them and that they are makers of their own meanings. This kind of teaching does not reward the passive learner but does encourage active involvement.

This model of Paulo Friere's departs from paternalism in many ways, says Beverly-Lynne Aronowitz:

Teaching is not directed by an authority to individuals who work privately, then produce evidence of learning separately from others. Rather, a community of peers interacts through dialogue to establish the content and procedure for learning" (75).

She urges us to become feminist educators (male and

female alike) who "depend upon collaborative, interactive or cooperative learning, who attempt open rather than closed questioning strategies and who depend on dialogue rather than lecture and who, overall, are concerned with empowering students to be independent thinkers.." (76).

Another thing teachers can do is to become aware of their own sexist attitudes and behavior and how it affects students. Do we only compliment boys on their good thinking skills? Do we only compliment girls on their appearance? Do we call on a disproportionate number of boys and rarely call on girls? Do we let put-downs of females go past without commenting on their inappropriateness? Do we ever ask girls to carry things for us or we do feel that it is only appropriate for boys to do such things? Do we encourage only girls who get done with their work early to do little secretarial tasks for us or do we also ask boys to do the same things? Do we ask girls to help with bulletin boards or do we just ask the most artistic person? Do we comment on and discourage the use of qualifiers that many girls use to preface their remarks such as, "This probably isn't important..." When students work in groups do we always assume boys will be the leaders? Do we discipline girls more for talking out in class and think of it as normal behavior for boys? Do we make shame inducing comments such as "how could a pretty girl like you act so poorly?" Do we single females out by telling them they are "young ladies now?" Is there a comparable comment aimed at males? Do we encourage cooperative skills more in girls than in boys? When we ask about something in the home, do we just include mothers in our comments?

All of these suggestions can help us develop more gender-fair classrooms. Stones reiterates why this is important. "Countering sexism is part of the struggle to extend choices and opportunities for everyone and to move towards a more just and humane society" (7).

### **Implications for Research**

This study has raised many questions and brought to my attention several areas that it might be fruitful to do research in.

1. A quantitative analysis of narrative in young adult novels is needed to compare how often females and males are described. This kind of research could tell us how much attention is focused on female appearance and what we look for and value in females.
2. A study of how females and males are characterized in literature needs to be done. Stories need to be looked at in terms of whether the character is revealed through: actions and behavior; what they say about themselves and others; what others say about them; how they look. Hidden areas of sexism might be revealed through this kind of study.
3. An analysis that could also provide fruitful results would be one comparing how often the author tells the reader what to think about the male and female characters through direct comments or the use of qualifiers. An example would be "she said with malice." Is there any difference in the number of times the author tells the reader what to

think of the females and the males? What kinds of things does the author seem to be saying about the character through these comments? What authors tell us to think about males and females would clearly illuminate male and female positions in our society.

4. An analysis is also needed comparing the kinds of behavior females and males are disapproved of or criticized for. For example in the novel Eva a female scientist who is very devoted to her job is portrayed very negatively while no criticism is given of Eva's dad who is also very devoted to his job. This research might uncover the differences in expectations we have for males and females.
5. Further research is needed in the areas covered by the code of expression. Who controls topics in conversation and what kind of questions males and females ask are two such areas that need to be looked at in more depth.
6. Another issue that surfaced in this study is whether male or female authors write the most gender-free texts. In this study, sixteen books were written by females and nine of them showed predominantly emergent values while seven showed predominantly residual values. Thus forty-five percent of the books in this sample, written by females, showed mainly residual values. Males wrote nine books in the sample and only two or twenty-two percent were predominantly residual. It is hard to know if figures mean anything



without further research.

7. Classroom research is needed that focuses on ways to make students aware of sex, race and class issues without discussions getting humdrum and predictable. If students thought they were only going to talk about stories in one way, they would soon lose interest. The research could focus on a wide variety of ways to get students involved in the issues and see which strategies get the best student response.
8. Classroom research also needs to be done to see how aware students are of racism and sexism in the literature they read. The same group of stories could be read by a large sample of students all over the country and responded to by the students. This would then give teachers a good starting point in knowing how to tackle the issues of racism and sexism and how much understanding and sensitivity their students already have.

#### **What Responsibility Do Authors Have?**

Thus teachers and researchers are an important part of the process of promoting gender-free classrooms. But what does all this mean for authors of young adult books? By trying to make books non-sexist, are we putting a burden on the authors? Isn't it their job just to write the best story they can?

Jean Carey Bond answers those questions very forcefully, explaining the position of the Council on Interracial Books for Children:

Our position is that to put a person down because he or she has an opinion one doesn't approve of is one thing; but to put someone down, overtly or subtly, because he or she is a certain color or a certain sex or a certain age is another thing entirely. The latter constitutes an assault on a person's very condition of being - a condition which is involuntary and irrevocable. Children who are Black cannot turn white because someone has told them Black is inferior, nor can a girl change her sex or people their ages. Therefore, we say that the "right" of an author to depict characters in children's books in a racist, sexist or ageist manner is superceded by the birthright of all children to encounter images of themselves in children's books that are unbiased and non-stereotypical (3).

Stones tells us that "there is no evidence to suggest...that criticism on social grounds (such as sexism) is more damaging to writers' and illustrators' confidence than criticism on traditional and aesthetic grounds (24).

British writer Robert Leeson shares his experiences writing children's books with national pressure to produce them free of the old assumptions about class, colour, and sex. He explains that most writers who drew on their own past for their stories, feared that the new guidelines would cause them to lose their most spontaneous work. He describes a time that he was trying to get started on a new book. He wanted it to be about an apprentice in Elizabethan times who ends up on a slave ship, and sets the slaves free and returns home with Drake. But while reading the memoirs of Drake's nephew, he found that Drake's allies were the Cimaroons, escaped slaves who lived as guerillas in the rain forest.

"Then I realized that was the intractable element in my story. It was the slaves or rather my own prejudiced view of them as people to be pitied and set free. As people who claimed their own freedom, they stood out suddenly in my mind as real characters. Instead of them being simply factors in the story of my hero, he became a factor in their story. But the new element was



not invented, it was no abstraction. It was simply a part of reality, of history, that I had hitherto ignored and might have gone on doing so but for the imperative to look again at what I had previously accepted (56).

Thus Leeson feels that writers must look around them and really see and realize that there is a wealth of characters to draw from and include in their stories. He feels that writing stories that show all sexes and races in non-stereotypical roles requires writers to also look at their own prejudices and deeply held beliefs.

He shares my belief that attention to these issues can only disappear when they are no longer issues. "For I believe that only when we have a body of literature which truly reflects its whole readership, in realist and escapist terms, can we say we are not concerned with class (or race or gender) any more, but only with people" (Leeson 55).

## **APPENDIX A**

## APPENDIX A

## Young Adult Novels Used in the Study

- Avi. The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle. New York: Orchard Books, 1990.
- Block, Francesca Lia. Weetzie Bat. New York: Harper & Row, 1990.
- Bridgers, Sue Ellen. Permanent Connections. New York: Harper & Row, 1987.
- Brooks, Bruce. Midnight Hour Encores. New York: Harper & Row, 1986.
- Cole, Brock. Celine. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1989.
- . The Goats. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1987.
- Cormier, Robert. Fade. New York: Delacorte, 1988.
- Crutcher, Chris. The Crazy Horse Electric Game. New York: Greenwillow, 1987.
- Davis, Jenny. Sex Education. New York: Orchard Books, 1988.
- Deaver, Julie Reace. Say Goodnight, Gracie. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.
- Dickinson, Peter. Eva. New York: Delacorte, 1989.
- Doherty, Berlie. White Peak Farm. New York: Orchard Books, 1990.
- Hall, Barbara. Dixie Storms. New York: Bantam, 1990.
- Hudson, Jan. Sweetgrass. New York: Philomel, 1989.
- Hunter, Mollie. Cat, Herself. New York: Harper & Row, 1986.
- Klause, Annette Curtis. The Silver Kiss. New York: Delacorte, 1990.
- Mahy, Margaret. The Catalogue of the Universe. New York: Macmillan, 1986.

- . Memory. New York: Macmillan, 1988.
- Mazer, Norma Fox. After the Rain. New York: Avon Books, 1987.
- Nelson, Theresa. And One For All. New York: Orchard Books, 1989.
- Peck, Richard. Princess Ashley. New York: Delacorte, 1987.
- Rylant, Cynthia. A Kindness. New York: Orchard Books, 1988.
- Thompson, Julian. A Band of Angels. New York: Scholastic, 1986.
- Voigt, Cynthia. Izzy, Willy-Nilly. New York: Atheneum, 1986.
- . Sons from Afar. New York: Atheneum, 1987.

## APPENDIX B



## APPENDIX B

## Annotations of the Novels Used in this Study

Avi. The True Adventures of Charlotte Doyle.

A mystery-adventure that involves 13-year-old Charlotte as the only passenger on a transatlantic voyage in 1832. Her traditional notions of authority and goodness are shaken when the crew mutinies and Charlotte has to choose sides. The cruel captain makes the choice easy for her but he seethes with rage over her impertinence and since she has become a member of the crew he finds a way to accuse her of murder.

Block, Francesca Lia. Weetzie Bat.

This zany fairy tale-like story is set in the glitz of Los Angeles where Weetzie Bat is fascinated with the movies and with people. Although she and her housemates love the plastic and the glitter, they are shown as people who know what caring is all about.

Bridgers, Sue Ellen. Permanent Connections.

Forced to spend a semester in his father's small hometown up in the mountains, seventeen-year-old Rob finds his feelings of alienation and self-hatred diminishing as he forges relationships with relatives and friends.

Brooks, Bruce. Midnight Hour Encores.

A sixteen-year-old cellist and musical prodigy travels cross country with her father, a product of the 1960's, to meet her mother, who left her shortly after her birth.

Cole, Brock. Celine.

Celine is a teen artist living with her 22-year-old stepmother while her father is out of the country. Her

difficulties with this living arrangement, her relationship with the little boy across the hall, and her disinterest in most people her age bring out many sides of Celine.

Cole, Brock. The Goats.

The boy and girl are stripped and marooned on a small island for the night because the kids at camp labeled them the 'goats.' But the goats escape and decide not to go back to camp. On the run, they gradually discover how strong they are and how much they can depend on one another.

Cormier, Robert. Fade.

A mysterious power has come into Paul's life when he discovers in the summer of 1938 that he can fade. This gift causes him more pain than happiness as he learns to cope with his strange fate.

Crutcher, Chris. The Crazy Horse Electric Game.

A high school athlete, frustrated at being handicapped after an accident, runs away from home and is helped back to mental and physical health by a black benefactor and the people in a special school where he enrolls.

Davis, Jenny. Sex Education.

As a project for an unusually open class in sex education, Livvie and her boyfriend learn to care for a pregnant young neighbor, and as they become deeply involved with her and with each other, they learn about love and caring and eventually pain and courage.

Deaver, Julie Reace. Say Goodnight, Gracie.

Jimmy and Morgan are best friends and do everything together until the day Jimmy is killed in an automobile accident. Then Morgan has to learn to live without him and his support.

Dickinson, Peter. Eva.

A futuristic story of a girl who after a serious auto accident wakes up to find her brain in the body of a chimp. Ethical and moral issues emerge as Eva realizes she still has the instincts and understandings of the chimpanzee who was destroyed so she could have her body.

Doherty, Berlie. White Peak Farm.

Jeannie unfolds the triumphs and the tragedies of her close-knit family as they face violent changes on their isolated Derbyshire farm. The tensions of living in her family and issues she has to face herself make this book seem very real.

Hall, Barbara. Dixie Storms.

Dutch is only thirteen but she already has the adult responsibility of taking care of the house and her brother's child. When her city cousin visits their farm for the summer, the tensions within the family seem to burst loose, and they finally talk about and deal with the abandonment of her brother's wife.

Hudson, Jan. Sweetgrass.

Sweetgrass learns about courage and strength the year her tribe is struck with smallpox and she becomes her family's sole provider.

Hunter, Mollie. Cat, Herself.

Growing up in a family of wandering tinkers in Scotland, Cat McPhie fights for the right to be her own person and live the kind of life she wants.

Klause, Annette Curtis. The Silver Kiss.

Zoe is coping with the imminent loss of her mother when a vampire comes into her life in the form of a gorgeous

teenage male and helps Zoe understand the cycle of life and death.

Mahy, Margaret. The Catalogue of the Universe.

Angela and her mother have lived happily alone but Angela feels she's missing something and wants to meet her father. Her best friend and confidant goes with her to her father's office where Angela is shattered by her father's response. What at first seems like the end of her life opens into a new chapter as she lets her friend Tycho help her get through the experience.

Mahy, Margaret. Memory.

On the fifth anniversary of his older sister's death, nineteen-year-old Jonny Dart, troubled by feelings of guilt and an imperfect memory of the event, goes in search of the only other witness to the fatal accident. This search leads to a chance meeting with a senile old woman and through helping her and finding the other witness Jonny is able to free himself from the past.

Mazer, Norma Fox. After the Rain.

Rachel finds new dimensions and new strengths in herself when she lets herself become very involved with her dying grandfather.

Nelson, Theresa. And One For All.

Geraldine tries to come to terms with her brother's death in Vietnam as she forges a reconciliation with her brother's best friend who is a pacifist and a war protester.

Peck, Richard. Princess Ashley.

Chelsea, a sophomore, is new to town and puts the very popular Ashley on a pedestal and tries to be like her in every way she can. Even though her mother warns her, and

she sees warning signs herself she wants to believe Ashley likes her. When Ashley's out-of-control boyfriend plans an end of the year party in the abandoned house on Chelsea's property, Chelsea tells her parents nothing of the party plans and then things get very much out of control.

Rylant, Cynthia. A Kindness.

Rob must come to terms with his single mother's pregnancy and learn that he cannot control the lives of everyone around him.

Thompson, Julian. A Band of Angels.

Riley and her two male friends set out on a camping trip together unaware that the FBI is tracking them and has plans to kill them.

Voigt, Cynthia. Izzy, Willy-Nilly.

A car accident causes fifteen-year-old Izzy to lose a leg. Then she must start building a new life without the support of her old group of friends who feels uncomfortable around her.

Voigt, Cynthia. Sons from Afar.

Six years after coming to live with their grandmother, James and Sammy Tillerman go in search of their long-lost father.

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