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FROM INTEGRATION TO ALIENATION:
THE MEN IN JANE AUSTEN, CHARLOTTE BRONTË,
AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH NOVEL

presented by

Sharon Bannister

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Interdisciplinary
Program: The College of Arts and Letters

Donald Lammens
Major professor

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THE MEN IN JANE AUSTEN, CHARLOTTE BRONTË,
AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH NOVEL

By

Sharon Bannister

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ABSTRACT

FROM INTEGRATION TO ALIENATION:
THE MEN IN JANE AUSTEN, CHARLOTTE BRONTË,
AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH NOVEL

By

Sharon Bannister

Much research in social history, sociology, and literary criticism exists which examines how men portray or perceive women and how men are socialized or politicized into their views of women. Reversing this research is the problem of this study, which investigates the nineteenth-century English literary and historical scene to show how and why women novelists portrayed men in novels as they did. Then, focus shifts to Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë. No full-length analysis exists of the men in their novels. Also, they created models of male literary characters which served as reference points for the rest of the century.

The study is based on sources which deal with nineteenth-century England, social history, and women. These have been accompanied by critical works on the novel and Austen's and Brontë's novels and letters. What Austen and Brontë wrote about men appears in thirteen categories, such as: men as husbands, men as teachers, men as suitors, men as heroes, etc. The dissertation is arranged as: Introduction;

The Nineteenth-Century Literary and Historical Context; Jane Austen: Integration; Charlotte Brontë: Alienation; Conclusion: From Integration to Alienation.

The Conclusion reminds the reader of the links between history, biography, and writing. The major findings are that more comparisons between Austen's and Brontë's men appear than might be thought. For example, women did not participate in male culture and did not "know" men; neither author probably worked out sexual fantasies in the way men are accused of doing; men were not uniformly teachers to women; and men (except heroes) were portrayed as poor role models. Austen and Brontë differed in how they portrayed men's relationships to society, to women, and personal characters. Brontë created men who were alienated from society as opposed to Austen whose men were integrated into society's institutions.

Both women lived in eras of great changes. How they treated whether women should take part in these changes and the experiences of life affected the type of men created in the novels. Finally, both women accepted a separateness between men and women which is a "lesson" still being studied in contemporary society.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks goes to María Cruz-Lucio, who typed all of the drafts and who takes such pride in a job that she wanted this to look as good as I wanted it to look.

Libraries used in my research included the Bowling Green State University Jerome Library (Bowling Green, Ohio), the Findlay College Shafer Library (Findlay, Ohio), the University of London Library (London, England), The Michigan State University Library (East Lansing, Michigan), and the Steele Memorial Public Library (Elmira, New York). In addition, I used the Brontë Parsonage Museum (Haworth, Yorkshire, England).

My guidance committee also deserves thanks.

Dr. Donald Lammers, the Chairperson, gave me as much as I needed of that special commodity, his time, and consistently supported my efforts. Dr. Robert Anderson, Chairperson of the Interdisciplinary Program, acted as my "ombudsperson" throughout the years at MSU and resolved special problems. Dr. Richard Benvenuto always allowed me and all of his other students to express their opinions fully. Dr. Bo Anderson pushed me intellectually and remained committed to the interdisciplinary nature of my program.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth-century England is an especially rich era for interdisciplinary studies, particularly the combination of history, literature, and sociology. This dissertation uses an interdisciplinary approach to provide the historical, literary, and sociological framework within which to study nineteenth-century women novelists and to focus on Jane Austen's and Charlotte Brontë's images of men in their novels. As creators of standards in novels in the first half of the century, both Austen and Brontë produced models of literary men which influenced subsequent authors and affected society's views of men for the rest of the century.

Literature is intimately connected to historical events, institutions, and the moral precepts of the day. As Roland Barthes comments, "History underlies the fortunes of modes of writing. . . . History . . . confronts the writer with a necessary option between several moral attitudes connected with language; it forces him to signify Literature in terms of possibilities outside his control. . . . It is not granted to the writer to choose his mode of writing from a kind of non-temporal store of literary forms. It is under the pressure of History and Tradition that the possible modes of writing for a given writer are established. . . ."

(Barthes, 8, 22) In particular: "More than any other literary form, more perhaps than any other type of writing, the novel serves as the model by which society conceives of itself, the discourse in and through which it articulates the world. . . . the basic convention which governs the novel . . . is our expectation that the novel will produce a world." (Culler, 189)

Sociology's functions to analyze society and groups in society have more recently begun to be applied to ". . . the study of the relations between the fictional and the real worlds, in whatever period of time. . . . The sociology of literature has its chief task before it: to make more precise. . . . the connections between fiction and history, literature and life." (Berger, 213)

Thus, history provides the setting; it is the interpretative matrix. In this case, it is the chronological sweep from early nineteenth-century to late nineteenth-century England. In this time period, England waxed and began to wane as the world's predominant industrial, naval, imperial, and parliamentary power. Within this historical context, Austen and Brontë lived and created their characters and images. Thus, their novels provide the formal subject matter; they represent the application of the setting to a particular arena. And, sociology provides the methodology and concepts used to analyze the "connections between fiction and history, literature and life." The methodology will not be technical or statistical, but will be formal and organized.

The content of the dissertation also reflects sociological concerns in that it includes references to class and stratification, the multiple roles of men in society, relations between men and women, and institutions, such as education and the family.¹ Thus, this particular blend of history, literature, and sociology expresses an approach to and a philosophy of research which seeks to synthesize in an orderly framework what are often seen as disparate elements of academic specialization.

In relation to particular content, much research in social history and literary criticism exists which examines how men portray or perceive women and how men are socialized or politicized into their views of women through institutions such as the family, the school, and the church. In addition, many works focus on women's views of themselves and their place in society. In reversing this research, this study focuses on women novelists' images of men in nineteenth-century English novels with concentration on Austen and Brontë.

The nineteenth-century English novel provides fertile ground for the study of the social and economic position of women, the relationships between women and men, and the portrayal of men. Nineteenth-century England witnessed great

¹Social psychology, understood as a field which analyzes the behavior of the individual within society and the relation between the individual and society, is also a concern here. However, I am going to consider it a derivative from sociology, a hybrid of sociology and psychology, with emphasis on sociology. With this consideration in mind, I will continue to refer to sociology only.

changes in politics, economics, and social institutions, crucial movements concerning women such as changes in legal status and the women's suffrage movement, and significant developments in the writing of novels. Women novelists (as well as male novelists) fashioned much of this into the subject matter of their novels.

A huge number of works exists on both nineteenth-century English society as well as on the novel. One estimate indicates that 40,000 novels were written in the Victorian period alone (Showalter, 37). In fact, too much work has already been done to be absorbed adequately by any one researcher. Hence, part of the importance of this topic lies in recasting or looking somewhat differently at a selected number of primary and secondary sources. I will not be concerned with how women wrote; that is, this will not be a critique of writing as an art or a work of literary criticism. I will not be concerned with how women acted as women; that is, I will not be primarily investigating the presence or lack of a women's literary tradition or the presence or lack of women's political and social activity. I will not be too concerned with women's images of themselves and men's images of women except as these relate to how women portrayed men. I will, instead, concentrate on what has already been investigated to a lesser extent and from other points of view as mentioned above. I will focus on what two nineteenth-century women novelists actually wrote about men in some of their novels and letters.

In examining the women novelists, the following questions will be considered:

1. Why have Austen and Brontë been chosen for particular emphasis?
2. What does the term "images" mean, and what types of images of men are going to be examined?
3. In a period of rapid, deep, social, economic, and political change, did women novelists' images of men change from the early nineteenth century to the middle nineteenth century?
4. Internally, that is, within each writer's works, did each author's images of men evolve during her career?
5. Did women's images of men in novels match what they wrote about men in their letters; that is, how were, if they were, women novelists constrained/ hampered/ influenced by literary conventions and the fact that they were female novelists?
6. Can the institutional influences on women as novelists and as females in society be ascertained with any certainty; that is, can the effects of education, the family, and the church be traced from the women's lives in their creative works?
7. What contrasts and comparisons concerning images of men can be made between Austen and Brontë?
8. How did Austen and Brontë present men; that is, what social and economic classes appear and what is the range of male activities and occupations that occurs in

the novels?

9. Did Austen and Brontë "know" men; that is, did they present complete representations or portraits of men?
10. What, if any, are the implications or lessons that Austen's and Brontë's works have for contemporary society?

The methodology to be used poses considerable challenges. There are a number of research areas opened up by the subject matter and interdisciplinary nature of the research which have been considered but which have been eliminated or reduced in emphasis in order to focus on a more limited scene. For example, there are exciting possibilities in investigating the roles that institutions such as the family, education, and religion played in socializing women during the nineteenth century and how much of a part institutional didactics played in forming women's views of men as expressed in their writings. Second, lower-class, middle-class, and upper-class women may not have viewed men in the same way due to differences in the upbringing, education, economic standing, social status, and responsibilities of both women and men in the nineteenth-century class structure. Third, it would be valuable to know what cultural comparisons of women's fictional images of men could be made between England and other countries, such as France, during this time. However, these three areas, among others, have been relegated to the periphery of this work.

In addition to the number of research areas possible, there is the challenge of the quantity of works available. As mentioned earlier, one estimate places the number of novels written in the nineteenth century at about 40,000. In researching women novelists, I consulted one list of over 200 prominent literary women born in the nineteenth century (Showalter, 320-50). Add to these the enormous number of primary and secondary works written during and about nineteenth-century England and its novels as well as numerous periodicals published then and now which focus on the era, and the resulting literature is impressive. Thus, resources are available in huge quantities, but they are not of even quality. For example, thousands of the novels have been lost, have gone out of print, or are not relevant to this topic.

A third challenge is that certain women novelists dominated the nineteenth century, such as Jane Austen, the Brontës, and George Eliot. Two problems emerge related to these authors. First, any research dealing with nineteenth-century novels should not exclude these novelists. However, the prominence of these women often obscured lesser-known contemporary female novelists whose life and works were also important for women's fictional images of men. In many instances, even though novelists contemporary with the famed women are no longer read as much, they achieved status as "best-sellers" of the time. In addition, many of these novelists' works showed clearly an awareness of public interests of the time, which included the roles of women,

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relationships between women and men, and the images of men. However, even though many of the lesser-known women novelists will be mentioned in the survey of the nineteenth-century literary scene, no detailed examination of these women occurs. George Eliot will receive treatment in the survey, but for certain reasons, she, too, will not be treated in detail.

A fourth challenge concerns the class bias which is inherent in the research. Most women who wrote were reasonably well-educated, although usually at home. They also came from primarily aristocratic, professional, or middle-class families, and they generally wrote about middle-class and upper-class families. The working class did emerge as an object of concern (for example with George Eliot and Elizabeth Gaskell) as the century progressed. This subject might have emerged because women participated more in society as time went on or because the working classes became a general topic of social and political attention for male and female novelists as well as for politicians. Basically, however, the women writers exhibited rather homogeneous class characteristics which makes it difficult to determine whether women from different classes viewed men differently and how, if at all, these views evolved in the nineteenth century.

With these challenges in mind, the methodology to be used involves the following steps. I have examined a number of standard sources which deal with nineteenth-century England in general, nineteenth-century English social history, and nineteenth-century English women. These have been

accompanied by a number of critical works on the nineteenth-century English novel. This reading reveals that a few women novelists in the century achieved and still maintain enormous status while many more, perhaps hundreds, gained contemporary notice, but they have faded into lesser or no significance. Of course, the major women novelists were Jane Austen, the Brontës, and George Eliot. A curious phenomenon occurred in the period from about 1860 to early in the twentieth century. No female novelist achieved the lasting stature of the above women. A great gulf existed between Eliot and Virginia Woolf. A number of women novelists did earn popularity during this period. They included a group born between 1840 and 1860, such as Olive Schreiner, Florence Dixie, Baroness Orczy, Sarah Grand, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, and Mary Kingsley, and a group born after 1860, including Mary Coleridge, Ethel Voynich, Beatrix Potter, Pearl Craigie, and, finally, Virginia Woolf.

For this study, an overview of the nineteenth-century historical and literary scene will be given to provide perspective and to show developments. But, attention will then turn to Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë in the first half of the century. This is for three major reasons. First, it is more economical and efficient to compare and contrast two writers than to try to encompass several authors. Second, both Austen and Brontë set standards and created models of novels, and of men in the novels, which persisted and acted as reference points for authors and society for the remainder

of the century. Third, neither Austen nor Brontë was married while each wrote professionally. Although this could not be proven, their images of men would probably have altered once they married. Thus, using just these two authors acts as a "control" on the examination of their images of men. George Eliot, for example, accomplished her major writing after she began her liaison with George Lewes.

Other considerations relating to Austen and Brontë used as selection criteria were that they achieved popularity in their own time, wrote novels intended for adults, and reflected currents of the time. Each of them wrote at least three novels which reflected their development from early to late career, explored in depth women's roles and relationships between men and women, and viewed men in multiple roles. Additionally, although much has been written about these two authors, there has not been any full-length analysis of the men in their novels. This has led to certain generalizations and assumptions about their male characters, which after deeper study, may need to be modified. Finally, besides their novels, their letters and biographies provide further references for studying how their lives related to the images of men in the novels.

From the fictional writings, a variety of portrayals of men appeared. The number of roles men played in the nineteenth-century novel was in itself significant. To organize the study of these roles, I used a systematic method which arranged what Austen and Brontë wrote about men into

the following categories: (1) women's views of relationships with men in general, (2) views of marriage in general, (3) men and occupation; men as employers, (4) men and political power/social status, (5) men and culture: providers of moral norms, carriers of intellectual life, (6) men as suitors or lovers, (7) men as husbands, (8) men as fathers, brothers, uncles, (9) men as friends, (10) men as teachers, (11) men as heroes; ideal men, (12) men as controlled or manipulated by women: dependency, (13) men as active, in the outside world, unrestrained contrasted to women as passive, in the home, restrained. Along with these topic categories, I catalogued (a) when the author made an authorial comment about the image, (b) when a male or female character spoke about the image, and (c) whether the comment or passage indicated a positive or negative attitude towards the image. These categories encompass the variety of social, political, and economic roles which men played in society and the novel and also indicate the way in which the authors artistically chose to create these various images of men. The dominance or the lack of emphasis on certain images should reveal changes in the subject matter of the novels and changes in the images of men. Both subject matter and images of men, in turn, reflected contemporary societal issues.

The methodological approach dictates the organization of the dissertation. Following this introductory chapter (I) on the importance of the research, questions to be examined, methodology and resources, and tentative conclusions will be

a chapter (II) which provides a brief survey of some of the nineteenth-century institutional and literary influences on authors, the impact of literary conventions, the problems of women authors writing as women, and an overview of women novelists' images of men in their works. Chapters III and IV will examine Austen's and Brontë's lives and novels in detail. Internally, Chapters III and IV will proceed chronologically with the women's lives first and then the novels in the order in which they were written. The analysis of the novels will generally follow the order of the thirteen categories listed above. Chapter V will conclude the study of the nineteenth-century literary and historical scene and how Austen and Brontë viewed men in their writings.

This examination will show that, during the nineteenth century some authors in early nineteenth-century England imagined men and men's roles as necessary, benevolent, and paternal. Women in the novels generally accepted these roles as they generally accepted their own roles in relation to men. In the middle to late nineteenth century, the images of men evolved as more restrictive, burdensome, and tyrannical. Women in the novels began to question the traditional male images. By the late nineteenth century, some began to reject the traditional male images and their own traditional images in relation to men. Internally, however, within Austen's and Brontë's works, they reflected a development which showed less uncritical acceptance of the male roles as the women's careers progressed. Thus, there was not an

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

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Figure 1

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absolute or uniform progression in images of men from the early to the late nineteenth century. In addition, what fictional women thought about men often reflected what they thought about themselves and their roles.

Also, the literary critics examined in this study were more impressionistic than systematic. In many instances, these works selected a variety of nineteenth-century authors, both women and men, without any particularly obvious scheme or goal. For all of the research in the past two decades on women, and how women were portrayed, there is little extensive research on male characters or how men were seen imaginatively. Thus, this study is significant for sociological and literary concerns within an historical context.

Finally, despite the difficulty of directly linking influences on women to what they wrote, the necessity to comply with literary conventions, and the restrictions placed on authors who were female, there was a genuine reflection in these novels and writings of the evolution of society's views of men (and women). The novel, therefore, is a valid source which serves as one indicator of society and its values. What will occur here, then, is the use of the insights and methods of historians and sociologists along with standard techniques of literary analysis to evaluate women's assessments of men in the imagined worlds of the novelists.

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II. THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY LITERARY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A number of historical, institutional, and literary influences confronted English women authors throughout the nineteenth century. For women novelists, these influences blended and affected them in a variety of ways. As women, the force of historical tradition and the operation of societal institutions subordinated them legally, socially, and economically to the men in their lives: employers, fathers, brothers, uncles, or husbands. As authors, they faced traditional and contemporary literary standards which guided male as well as female writers. As female novelists, they experienced a particular combination of familial, educational, and literary guidelines and restrictions which all at once challenged, aided, thwarted, and puzzled them throughout the century. The extent to which these influences can be traced in their writings and particularly in their images of men is debatable. Nonetheless, it is enlightening and necessary to consider the variety of life's experiences which swirled around the women novelists.

Women's status in England changed gradually, if haltingly, throughout the nineteenth century. Major legal concerns of women revolved around their relations to property,

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to their children, and to their husbands. Women grew increasingly concerned over access to education, conditions of work, and voting privileges. The first bill introduced in Parliament to allow married women to own property in their own right passed in 1856. Eventually, the Married Women's Property Act passed in 1870, with subsequent amendments in 1874 and 1882. An Infants' Custody Act of 1839 gave the Court of Chancery power to award mothers custody of children under age seven when husband and wife separated. Previously, fathers and the law considered children their property. The Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 permitted women to divorce their husbands on grounds of cruelty, desertion, bestiality, or rape, and an act of 1878 established that women who separated from their husbands because of assault could claim support. Not until 1923, however, could women obtain a divorce on grounds of their husbands' adultery, although men had been able to divorce their wives on that basis for many years. (Calder, 120, 165, 181, 213-15; Stubbs, 4, 53, 60; Basch, 16-25).

Queens and Bedford Colleges for Women (1848), Cheltenham Ladies College (1853), Girton (1869), and Newnham College (1871) reflected the beginnings of formal higher education for women. A woman attempted to register as a medical student as early as 1856, but no woman won this admission until 1877. The Governesses Benevolent Association, begun in 1843, concentrated on supporting women in what had become a traditional middle-class occupation. One proof of

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women moving out into a wider world came in 1870, when female clerks entered the Post Office for the first time. Although the first organized attempts to gain the franchise began in the 1860's, the local franchise was not granted until 1882, and the national franchise with limitations waited until World War I (Stubbs, 4, 53, 60).

Clearly, women were engaged in a great contest with society. Although many women chose to stay out of this struggle, it proved difficult for all but most isolated women not to be affected by the legal, social, and economic changes applying to them. One of the most interesting legal battles took place on the field of prostitution, an activity which "proper" women should not and need not know anything about, since its activities took place beyond the boundaries of the hallowed home and marriage. However, the long campaign (1864-84) waged against the Contagious Diseases Acts, which allowed the police to detain, arrest, and physically examine women suspected of being prostitutes, resulted in a public awareness of many aspects of the legal, social, and political dominance of men over women.

The extent to which the women novelists were aware of, participated in, criticized, or condoned all of these happenings varied considerably from Jane Austen's real and fictional worlds, which existed prior to most of this ferment, to the Brontës' real and fictional worlds of mid-century Yorkshire industrial awakenings.

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Throughout the century, debate often occurred concerning how women should take part in the experiences of life. Generally, men and women agreed that women's strongest bonds were with home and family. In many instances, a woman's bonds to father, brothers, and uncles remained stronger than the tie to her husband. As economic conditions changed, however, women's secure family ties were threatened. Lower-class women had always worked; upper-class women had no economic need to work; middle-class women were not supposed to work (the employment of servants marked persons as middle class). But contemporary observers noted the situation that middle-class women, the group from which great numbers of female novelists came, worked in increasing numbers out of necessity. Harriet Martineau, a popular economic writer in the 1850's and 1860's, remarked that from the 1820's to the 1860's,

. . . the girlhood of the upper middle class has gone through an experience of permanent historical importance . . . When the war was over . . . when the currency was in the most critical condition, and the old poor-law was as a gangrene . . . the lot of increasing numbers of middle-class women became appalling. After the suspense and crash of 1825-6 . . . their fathers or husbands ruined, their brothers . . . destitute. . . women did anything that they could devise to escape the workhouse.

Martineau went on to calculate that over two million English women worked in the 1860's (out of a population of about ten million women in 1861), many thousands of them single (Martineau, "Middle-Class Education in England--Girls", 553-54; B. R. Mitchell, 6).

Middle-class women were not equipped educationally, however, for the challenge of work. Whereas boys expected to play and then to be sent off to study, girls expected to play, learn the domestic arts, and occasionally be sent to boarding schools of often questionable goals and quality. Martineau felt that girls should not neglect household skills, but in what else they studied there was no tradition, as with boys studying Latin and Greek. This course of study did not give boys a practical foundation for work or participation in public life, but it did give them a common experience on which to build male and group identity and long-cherished traditions. In Martineau's opinion, ". . . the way in which girls generally spend their time from seven years old to twenty is so desperately unfavourable to mind and character. . . ." (Martineau, 549, 564-65; see also, Martineau, "Middle-Class Education in England--Boys," 409-26)

The quality of education for girls who did go to boarding school became a major concern (and of course was translated into fictional form in such novels as Jane Eyre). An article of 1845, predating Jane Eyre by two years, attacked the moral atmosphere (what actually happened that was so morally bad is not made clear), the physical conditions (lack of privacy, bad food, health hazards), and the poor instruction (reason and logic, the lack of which were deemed to be the weakest parts of women's minds, were not taught). Basically the conclusion was that ". . . woman, in her lowest and most destitute estate, was made for home." ("Enquiry into

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State of Girls' Fashionable Schools," 710, 704-7, 709)

The majority of women, regardless of class, did not go to school at all but were educated in varying degrees at home. By mid-century, numerous articles appeared on the value of this type of education or lack of it. The English-woman's Journal printed an 1858 article which wove together the concerns that not only were women (in this case, middle-class women) poorly educated, but that the gap between men and women widened as they grew older as a result of the different experiences:

Carefully separated from infancy upwards, subjected to different modes of training, involving different interests and pursuits, the boy returns from school or college, a 'marvel and a mystery' to his sisters, . . . the boy goes forth into the world. . . . where the character forms and strengthens, and, it must be confessed, too often hardens from the very absence of legitimate female sympathy and influence, while the girl dwells at home killing time and her own best self in the perusal of novels. . . . /etc./ The education and conduct of a young woman come unconsciously to be guided with a view /towards marriage as the only alternative/. . . . she is brought to barter soul and body for money and rank. . . . by the consciousness of dependence on marriage for the means of subsistence. . . . ("Female Education in the Middle Classes," 225-26)

This emphasis on women's orientation to domestic life--whether educated at home or at boarding school--became one of the major themes in nineteenth-century non-fiction and fiction written by both men and women. Opinion tended to conclude that women should be educated to serve men. Although some voices rejected this philosophy (as indicated by the article above), influential works of the middle and late nineteenth century supported this view. For example,

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Sarah Stickney Ellis in the Daughters of England (1842) felt that knowledge acquired by women should encourage the worship of God and make them a better companion to men. John Ruskin's panegyric to woman's subordinate place in the universe, "Of Queen's Gardens" (in Sesame and Lilies) taught that women must not aim at "self-development" but "self-renunciation," along with the ability to help and understand men as they went about their important tasks (in Basch, 5).

Women authors throughout the century found themselves in a particularly difficult position. Caught between the creative desire and often the economic necessity to write and the insistent tug of home orientation, they tried to reconcile professional and domestic roles. In an excellent, thorough study of female writers of the nineteenth century, Elaine Showalter (A Literature of Their Own) traces this conflict between these roles. Many female novelists took their domestic responsibilities seriously and up to about the 1880's, they made sincere attempts to integrate their personal and professional lives. Many of these women lost their mothers at a young age, which often meant that they cared for their fathers for many years, that their fathers supervised their education even more closely, and that the women identified (positively and negatively) with their fathers' roles. Authors who lost their mothers at a young age included George Eliot, the Brontës, Geraldine Jewsbury, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Elizabeth Gaskell, and Eliza Lynn Linton (Showalter, 61, 62-64). In many instances,

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this loss of a mother could be traced into the works in the form of weak, ineffectual mother figures, alienated children, or absent mothers. Equally, however, weak, ineffectual, or absent fathers also appeared.

Many women writers encountered "male hostility, jealousy, and resistance within the family" when they attempted to write (Showalter, 57). In order to deal with resistance, the women adopted a number of tactics which included outward submission within the family while pursuing their interests in secret. Covert pursuit of writing ranged from writing late at night or early in the morning to dealing with publishers without the family's knowledge. The ultimate ploy was the use of a male pseudonym which protected the writer from her family and also from male literary critics. Some women did not keep the profits from their books; Charlotte Yonge gave hers to the church for many years and Elizabeth Gaskell gave hers to her husband, although she traveled and made use of her money freely (Showalter, 57; Masefield, 167, 168). Some critics believe that many literary women expressed anger at this dependent position and diverted their "feminine outrage . . . to non-feminist causes." (Moers, 24) For example, Elizabeth Gaskell concentrated on factory conditions, Harriet Martineau on economic analyses, and Charlotte Yonge on religious causes. Ellen Moers uses women's non-fiction writings such as those of Mrs. Gaskell and Harriet Beecher Stowe to reflect their "rage" at the problems of combining the duties of home, writing, wife and mother

(Moers, 4, 18-26).

Whether angry or not, women writers did face difficult career decisions, especially early in the century. The first generation of women writers (Jane Austen was a notable exception) usually began their careers after age thirty. They had to overcome educational disabilities (nearly all were self-taught), as well as to solve financial difficulties and battle within the family in order to write. Some women, such as Charlotte Brontë, sincerely tried to overcome a wish to write. When women did write, they faced the problem of trying to meet the educational standards of the men and were severely criticized for errors in scholarship. Some women perpetuated the idea of female ignorance by pretending that their knowledge came from men. Autobiographical writings of women indicated the tremendous self-discipline involved in learning and writing by themselves over periods of many years (Showalter, 42-43, 53, 55-56).

These educational disadvantages can be statistically shown in studies done by Richard Altick ("The Sociology of Authorship," Bulletin of New York Public Library, LXVI, 1962) and Raymond Williams (The Long Revolution), 1961). Williams' study shows that of 163 major writers from 1780-1930, over half of the men in each fifty-year period attended Oxford or Cambridge; by 1870-1900, 70% of literary men attended a university. Of the literary women, about 20% in the whole period 1780-1930 went to a university; in the period 1900-1935, about 38% of female writers gained a university

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education. Showalter's conclusion is that "women writers were deprived of education because of their sex, not because of their class." (Showalter, 40-41, which includes references to the two studies mentioned above) At home, women were often excluded from intellectual activity, even from their basic source of information--reading. Mrs. Gaskell remarked, "With a struggle and a fight I can see all Quarterlies 3 months after they are published . . . till then they lie on the Portico table for gentlemen to see. I think I will go in for Women's Rights." (quoted in Moers, 82) As a Victorian woman, Mrs. Gaskell reflected the general status of women who were "deep-bonneted, full skirted . . . women housebound and chaperoned--women sent away from table after dinner when men talked masculine matters--women denied . . . access to industry and commerce." (Moers, 82) Mrs. Gaskell's remarks rang particularly poignant because, as a Manchester minister's wife, she experienced a wider or different world than many, such as Austen and the Brontës.

Besides being generally denied the educational advantages of boys, nineteenth-century girls also were reined in physically at a certain point. Cumbersome clothing and prohibitions on activities such as running, climbing, tumbling, and even walking, generally accompanied girls' entrance into adulthood. However, it is amazing the great distances women and men walked, as indicated by most authors' writings. In the novels, girls progressed through a phase of youthful, active, tomboy-like activity, such as that of Maggie

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in Mill On The Floss, Jane in Jane Eyre, and Cathy in Wuthering Heights, before they were forcefully or gradually "tamed." Adulthood sometimes brought a reminder of the emphasis on women's appearance as a paramount concern. As a child, a girl could win approval for performance physically or intellectually. As an adult, a woman's world shrunk appreciably when she could no longer count on physical or intellectual activity to win approval:

And what of the writer who is gifted and plain. . . . I would guess that the onset of adolescence brings a shock of a specially female kind, for then such a girl discovers that the . . . admiration . . . for performance, is now withdrawn from her plainness and given instead, by inexorable right, to the beauty. Beauty alone draws the eyes of the world, is the grim lesson of female maturity. (Moers, 198-99)

Whether one agrees with this view or not, nineteenth-century women writers did face a host of institutional challenges including conflicts over their role within the family, struggles to become authors, attempts to obtain an education, and restrictions on their activities because they were women. These challenges fail to include the influence of a religious life. For example, some of the female writers were daughters of clergymen (such as Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell), married to clergymen (Gaskell, again), or considered a spokesperson of the Church (Charlotte Yonge). Many writers did not descend from the church or marry into it (Maria Edgeworth, George Eliot), but it was difficult to stray too far away from considering religious concerns in the nineteenth century. Proponents and opponents of various

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views, from Tractarian to Dissenting, were extremely vociferous throughout the century, and female authors, no less than male authors, often incorporated these views into their works by devices ranging from the portrayal of a silly clergyman (in Pride and Prejudice) to a cruel one (in Jane Eyre) to an heroic one (in Ruth) to the exemplary High Church beliefs (in The Heir of Redclyffe).

The historical milieu and the particular institutional background of each female author can sometimes be assessed for each author. A strong argument can be made that traces the impact of historical and institutional circumstances directly into each author's novels (such as Gaskell's industrial novels or Charlotte Brontë's novels). An equally valid case can be made which shows that in many novels, very little presence of history or immediate institutional circumstances intruded (such as Jane Austen's novels or Emily Brontë's work). Difficulty exists in making that slippery cause-and-effect link between the author's surroundings and her works. Nonetheless, this background should be kept in mind as part of the network which affected these women's views of men.

An equally significant consideration concerns the literary arena within which the women worked. Literary tradition and women writers influenced female authors in varying intensity. For example,

In the case of some women writers, Austen preeminent among them, women's literature has been their major tradition; in the case of others . . . it has mattered

hardly at all: here Emily Brontë's name comes to mind. In the case of most women writers, women's traditions have been fringe benefits superadded upon the literary associations of period, nation, and class that they have shared with their male contemporaries. (Moers, 45)

Mme de Genlis, a popular writer, educator, and teacher of French royal family members in the eighteenth century, wrote "courtesy books," or stories intended for moral or educational purposes. In Jane Austen's Emma, Adèle et Théodore (1782) appeared in translation, and in her letters, she noted reading Les Veillées du Chateau (1784) in French. These two most important of Mme de Genlis' books represented a very small number in a pantheon of moral and pedagogical tales written for a widening audience in the eighteenth century. For three-fourths of the eighteenth century, men wrote most of this type of work; Dr. James Fordyce's Sermons for Young Women, for example, were still read in Pride and Prejudice. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, however, more women began to write these "courtesy books," whose object was the education of girls, and which played a part in the evolution of the marriage of manners and morals in Fanny Burney and Jane Austen (Moers, 220, 227).

While Austen's contemporaries Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey met each other at the university, she met a host of now forgotten female authors at home. Sarah Harriet Burney, Jane West, Anna Maria Porter, Anne Grant, Elizabeth Hamilton, Laetitia Matilda Hawkins, Helen Maria Williams,

and Mary Brunton (whose Self Control in 1810 influenced the rewriting of Sense and Sensibility) have disappeared in obscurity, but they peopled Jane Austen's letters as "literary roommates" and "undergraduate fellows" who provided a rainbow of excellent, good, fair, bad, and terrible writing for her (Moers, 44).

Fanny Burney, both a predecessor and a contemporary of Austen, paved the way for the novel of life and manners. Burney moved away from the eighteenth-century male-dominated novel, which often featured coarse humor as a necessary ingredient. Jane Austen read her novels, contributed to the subscription publication of Camilla, read Evelina aloud to the family at Steventon, and probably lifted the title of Pride and Prejudice from a phrase mentioned in the last chapter of Cecelia (Moers, 71; Masefield, 23, 34).

Madame de Staël struck the imagination of numerous female writers, especially in her novel, Corinne (1807), which explored the myth of the famous woman who talks, writes, and performs for the benefit of the world's applause. Jane Austen, Fanny Burney, Maria Edgeworth, Jane Welsh (Carlyle), Elizabeth Barrett (Browning), George Sand, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Charlotte Brontë either read it, wrote about it, or were urged to read it or write about it. Dinah Craik of Eliot's Adam Bede is supposed to be a direct descendant of the Corinne character (although Corinne is an opera singer and Dinah is a preacher) (Moers, 173-78, 192, 207).

Just as interesting an investigation lies in tracing the literary influences of these early nineteenth-century writers on the next generation. George Eliot provided an intriguing example of the difficulty of determining literary influences. Eliot, as well as others of her generation, no doubt read Burney, Maria Edgeworth, Ann Radcliffe, and Austen. And many of the themes from "mysterious interiors of Gothic romance to the balancing of duty and self-fulfillment in domestic fiction can be traced to the late eighteenth century." But not much direct effect of these authors can be found in Eliot (or in Elizabeth Gaskell, Harriet Martineau, or the Brontës).

In some ways, Austen acted as a negative influence. Eliot's confidant and mentor, George Lewes, persuaded her to read all of Austen's fiction which Lewes felt best represented the art of "dramatic presentation," a quality Lewes judged Eliot lacked. From Eliot's letters, however, it seems clear that Austen did not impress her very much; but in a way, Eliot might have gained a certain resolution from Austen to write from a different perspective. Eliot portrayed carpenters, dairymaids, and farmers as central characters. In effect, she turned the novel inside out by making central characters out of those on the edge of Austen's novels, while relegating to the fringes characters who were central in Austen: "What George Eliot found in Jane Austen was a garden to break out of, a gate to push open, a doorway to enter." This is how Charlotte Brontë also reacted to Austen when she

wrote, "I should hardly like to live with her ladies and gentlemen, in their elegant but confined houses!" (quoted in Moers, 49; also Moers, 45-49, 51-52).

Others who might have influenced Eliot included two authors as diverse as George Sand and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Although it is possible, from Eliot's letters, to determine some of Sand's books Eliot read, there was no direct evidence of influence except mention of a debt of gratitude to the French author and a traceable lineage from George Sand's idealization of the French peasant to the character of the noble carpenter Adam Bede (Moers, 35, 52).

Although they never met, Eliot and Stowe corresponded with each other. In a letter to Stowe, Eliot indicated that she considered Stowe a model in ". . . the great feminine enterprise of rousing the imagination 'to a vision of human claims' in races, sects, and classes different from the established norm . . . George Eliot was Mrs. Stowe's most important disciple among later women writers of the epic age." (Moers, 39) Eliot once wrote to a friend inquiring "'Why can we not have . . . pictures of religious life among the industrial classes in England, as interesting as Mrs. Stowe's pictures of religious life among the negroes?' In embryo, the subject of Adam Bede was here suggested" (Quoted in Moers, 47).

Despite these associations with a variety of female authors, ascertaining literary influences on Eliot is not that clear-cut. For example, she read Balzac at the start of

her career and considered him quite the most wonderful writer. Eliot read so widely (she was well-educated before she met George Lewes) that, "The question of specific influences is a difficult one in considering a writer like George Eliot whose reading in the novel, as in most other fields of literature, was so extensive." (C. T. Bissell, "Social Analysis in the Novels of George Eliot," 233) Eliot never identified with any social group or one class for any length of time. Particularly after her liaison with Lewes, she stayed apart by choice and necessity. Even though her fame eventually obviated this isolation, she wrote all of her novels after she met Lewes, and much of her writing occurred during a period when she stayed apart from "society."

Thus, perhaps Lewes played the role of the greatest proximate literary influence. At least one analyst feels that there is a certain objectivity and detachment in Eliot's novels due to this lack of a class point of view, although this did not prevent Eliot from cutting a wide, deep swath through society in her novels (Bissell, 226-27).

Eliot's self-provided education, her acquaintance with both female and male literary traditions, her relationship with Lewes, her long social ostracism, and her apparent lack of class point of view again point out the complexity of deciding exactly what literary influences most affected an author. Just as great care is needed in assuming a "reductionist notion of reflection" (Stubbs, 54) in regard to the connection between what happened in society and what

writers wrote, so caution is also needed in making connections between what other artists wrote and what contemporaries or descendants created. However, legitimate connections can be made which show literary influences on authors and the effects of historical and institutional surroundings. With an author, however, the creative element cannot be forgotten, and in the end, it is the unique mix of literary, institutional, and historical elements with the creative imagination which is determining:

Because of the posthumous publication. . . . of the Brontës' private fantasies . . . we know the source of Rochester and Heathcliff. These Brontë legends of Gondal and Angria are unique in literary history . . . because they were family fantasies . . . developed from early childhood to advanced adulthood, and written down in miniature imitations of the magazine literature of the day. . . . We know . . . that all the Brontë virgins . . . lived with brute passion, committed adultery and incest, bore illegitimate children, moldered in dungeons, murdered, revenged, conquered, and died unrepentant in . . . Gondal and Angria. (Moers, 172)

In addition to the variety of influences briefly discussed above, these authors also inherited another type of literary influence--conventions of novel writing. The "formal difficulties in the novel itself" (Stubbs, 54) in addition to restrictions levied on female authors because they were female provide a fascinating glimpse into nineteenth-century literature and society.

Nineteenth-century novelists inherited a tradition, albeit a fairly young one, which affected the form of the novel. It is not the intent here to review or discuss the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century history of the novel, but

to remember that nineteenth-century novelists descended from the line of Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), Henry Fielding (1707-54), and Tobias Smollet (1721-71), and drew sustenance from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's (1712-78) roots (Moers, 123). This tradition restrained novelists in general and women in particular, who had to overcome the feeling that writing novels was an unsavory occupation for women. Fanny Burney took a courageous step by entering the field, but ". . . her personality suffered for years from the necessity of demonstrating in her manners that a girl need not necessarily be brazen and fond of publicity because she wrote novels. . . ." (Masefield, 23) Thus, in addition to inheriting a literary tradition, women also faced the difficulties of entering the occupation.

Jane Austen's entrance into the field introduced a formula which proved very difficult to break as the nineteenth century progressed. In an enlightening study titled Victims of Convention, Jean Kennard traces the "two suitors convention" that Austen firmly established as a model. The two suitors formula defined the

female quixotic novel, in which a young girl learns to abandon a view of the world based on fantasy and adjust herself to reality, . . . She used . . . the unscrupulous or 'wrong' suitor and the exemplary or 'right' suitor as the touchstone of value in her heroine's progress toward maturity. . . . The heroine's (maturing) personality and development are . . . defined through comparison with two male characters. (Kennard, 11)

In this formula, "wrong" suitors exhibited such vices as greed and selfishness which violated the social code, although

outwardly they were often quite charming. The "right" suitors reflected the virtues of kindness and duty to neighbors. They had strong feelings, but these were balanced by recognition of the social norm's limits or society's boundaries. By the end of the novel, the heroines were "echoes of the men they marry," although, according to Kennard, Austen wanted all people in society, not just women, to balance private feeling and societal obligation. Conversely, however, the male heroes did not necessarily choose between two women who exhibited "right" and "wrong" characteristics; that is, men were not defined or related to two different standards of behavior which women reflected. Men were usually seen in relation to other aspects of life (Kennard, 18, 44-45).¹ As Kennard notes, few nineteenth- and even twentieth-century novels show women compared to a social standard created by women or who balance their heterosexual relationships with work and other considerations (Kennard, 156).

One of the problems with this formula is that it was a literary convention which did not always reflect the complexities of life. The "hero" and "villain," against whom women compared themselves, embodied virtue and vice. Finding two men who actually reflected this neat split of characteristics would be a great coincidence. Another problem is that

¹Alexander Welsh in The City of Dickens expresses a contrary view about later Victorian novels in which he thinks the hero defined himself in relation to the heroine (Welsh, 219).

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the two suitors convention worked well when no conflict existed between the marriage and the author's point of view (as in Austen's novels), when the maturing of the heroine was not central to the novel (as in Gaskell's Mary Barton), or when the hero and heroine made the wrong choice and conveniently died (as in Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights). When the heroine's maturing was central, however, and when she achieved some individuality and independence at the end, this sometimes created an unsatisfactory ending. Contrary to a certain degree of achieved independence, the heroine still subordinated herself to a man who did not necessarily embody the values of the author to the full degree (as in Eliot's Middlemarch and Charlotte Brontë's Shirley). (Kennard, 13)

Kennard's study illuminates the fact that marriage loomed as the significant female achievement in a large number of nineteenth-century novels. Women novelists tended to imagine marriage as a ". . . state of moral possibility, the successful marriage both reward and arena for a woman's goodness." (Spacks, 79). The emphasis on property in England contributed to the form of the novel in which the link between marriage and property created the drama. The protagonists often lived a whole life in the novel between the coming of age and marriage: "Before the marriage of the hero and heroine the action comes to a standstill, and after the marriage and arrangement of the estate are certain, the novel closes. . . ." (Welsh, 223, 219).

Although courtship and marriage occupied both male and female novelists, women faced a double bind when they wrote about them. Women theoretically were more emotional than men, so love seemed an appropriate topic for them; however, they were not supposed to write about it. If they dwelled on it, men considered them as reflecting the worst traits of women. If they avoided it, men concluded they were inferior as writers. If a woman succeeded in creating an attractive male character, readers immediately began to guess at the author's real-life experience.¹ Nineteenth-century authors smarted under feminine ideals. Charlotte Brontë wrote to George Lewes, "'Come what will . . . I cannot, when I write, think always of myself and what is elegant and charming in femininity; it is not on these terms, or with such ideas, that I ever took pen in hand.'" (Quoted in Showalter, 7) As the century progressed, the Victorian restrictions closed in. The training in "repression, concealment, and self-censorship" inhibited female writers to the point that they developed what amounted to a special language. Victorian readers criticized "coarseness," which ranged from inclusion of 'damns' to the moral tone of the woman writer. This often resulted in a rather pallid, bland prose, which in turn male writers criticized for its lack of

¹Contemporary women criticize female concentration on love as succumbing to the snare which holds them to men. If they write pornography, both men and women conclude they are trying to write like men, since of course no women read pornography, let alone write about it (Moers, 143-44).

passion. When the female writer did take on a more passionate tone or subject, the criticism poured forth in shocked tones, as when the Brontës published Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights.

Compounding this situation, women also faced the problem of portraying male characters. Since so many areas of masculine experience remained closed to them, women relied even more heavily on their imaginations to create men, often projecting aspects of themselves into these characters. By the 1850's, this dilemma resulted in the "woman's man," who was either "impossibly pious and desexed, or impossibly idle and oversexed. . . ." (Showalter, 133) Women writers themselves, showing a mixture of frustration and deference to men, remarked on their inability to portray male characters. Margaret Oliphant concluded that "'. . . men in a woman's book are always washed in, in secondary colors.'" (quoted in Showalter, 135).

Women authors became a controversial subject for critics. In his "The Lady Novelists" (1852), George Lewes wrote that women tried to imitate men, when ". . . to write as women, is the real office they have to perform." (132) Basically, Lewes supported a realistic approach to fiction in which authors based their writing on real experiences of everyday life (Praz, 323-24). However, as can be seen above, approaching fiction from this view led women straight down the path of even heavier criticism. In effect, Lewes pushed female authors to write in a way which he and certainly most

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other male critics would probably have disliked.

George Eliot approached her analysis of her contemporaries in a demanding way, as indicated by her famous article titled "Silly Novels By Women Novelists" (1856). Eliot also felt that women's literature reflected weaknesses and deficiencies in subject matter, moral tone, and educational discipline. She gleefully categorized women's novels into several types: (a) "mind-and-millinery" in which women who were heiresses, or who had ability and charm but no rank or wealth, captured every passing male, (b) "oracular" which expounded the writer's religious, philosophical, or moral theories, (c) "white neck-cloth" which drew a usually insipid clergyman as the main character, and (d) "modern-antique" which analyzed the domestic, struggling everyday affairs of people and overlaid these with classical references, often incorrect ones, a fault which critics accused Eliot herself of committing (448-59).

Eliot felt that these novels often confirmed the already strongly held prejudices against women as being concerned with trifling topics and not well-educated. She desired that female authors conform to high standards of scholarship, greater intellectual orientation, high moral tone, ". . . patient diligence, a sense of the responsibility involved in publication, and an appreciation of the sacredness of the writer's art." (560, 454) Eliot herself, of course, stretched herself to the utmost to conform to these mostly male-devised strictures of writing.

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The litany of restrictions on women as nineteenth-century writers and as women might be summarized as follows. Women generally stayed home with the social, decorative, and child-bearing roles which formed the ideological position by mid-century of women occupying an internal world where feelings predominated, while men moved in the external world which emphasized work from which women were generally excluded. This domestic world led to women's emphasis on love and personal relationships within which their fidelity, continence, lack of sexual desire, and ignorance of sex dominated as desirable traits. Women became guardians of the home, morals, and virtue. By keeping women restricted, men protected their property from the claims of possible illegitimate children. In addition, in life and in the novel, women's primary experiences remained secret: puberty, menstruation, childbirth, menopause, and organic problems never saw the light of day or discussion and often became the subject of incredible diagnosis and treatment by male doctors.

As a result of these limitations, women writers suffered the pains of a literary double standard. For a long time, male writers saw them as competitors for the same market. Once this scare subsided, male critics concluded that women's writing remained inferior to men's because of the weaker female body and the biological imperative of women as childbearers. Women's limited experience in the world led them to cultivate the feelings and overemphasize romance, so if they wrote, they should write only sentimental, romantic,

people-oriented novels which contained no morally dubious characters. But if they did write these types of novels, they risked attacks by male critics for being too sentimental or knowing about sex when it was not proper that they should be aware of such a subject.

Furthermore, women risked the charge that only unhappy, frustrated women wrote books and that they merely imitated men who possessed imagination and trained minds, both of which women lacked. Overall, women's strongest traits included sentiment, refinement, tact, keen observation, domestic expertise, high moral tone (Eliot might have disagreed with this), and knowledge of female character. They lacked originality, intellectual training, abstract intelligence, humor, self-control, and knowledge of male character. Males possessed all of the desirable traits women lacked plus open-mindedness and knowledge of everybody's character (Showalter, 73-98; Stubbs, 3-15).

Male writers did not escape from restrictions on their writing, either. Both men and women faced an interesting combination of inhibitions during the nineteenth century. For example, novels (and other writings) were often read aloud in family settings, which limited the way in which writers presented the story. Serialization led to the "three-decker novel" which forced writers into the contortions of lengthy plots, numerous characters, and endless descriptions. The expurgation or "bowdlerization" of books (named after Dr. Bowdler) took place regularly from the

1830's onward. Mudie's Select Circulating Library, begun in the 1840's, operated as a deterrent and censor to books which Charles Edward Mudie disliked. As a last resort, the Obscene Publications Act (1857) ostensibly controlled pornography, but it also controlled the language, situations, and characters in books. The spate of obscene publications trials in the 1880's and 1890's seemed like a great attempt to control writers and intellectuals who no longer accepted externally defined morality (Stubbs, 15-25; Cruse, 321).

With the combined literary double standard and the general societal moral and literary framework, it is indeed surprising that any nineteenth-century women dared take pen in trembling hand. But hundreds of them did. With this complex, although lightly sketched, historical, institutional, and literary background in mind, it is now appropriate to turn to an overview of what women wrote about men in Britain in the nineteenth century.

It is important to remember that the primary subject matter concerns images, an elusive concept but one encountered often. An image usually means a mental picture which represents something in the outer or external world. These images help us to make sense of reality and provide a "mental shorthand" for ordering experience. Thus, we carry around with us images of things, people, abstractions, events, and places, to give a few examples. As time passes, images enter into our unconscious and help "shape our consciousness". "Our images create the world for us. . . ." (Stubbs, ix, x)



Thus, the novel is significant because it becomes the repository of its author's mental images, which not only tell us something about an author but about the world of that time.

The novel in England developed at a time when industrialization began to create a split between home and workplace, between a private and public sphere. Ideally and in the prevailing image, women became guardians of this private, domestic sphere. The nineteenth-century novel, especially the Victorian novel, became a vehicle which probed that domestic sphere and the relationships within it. Thus, despite literary conventions and the restrictions placed on women generally, their writing probably reflected middle-class women's images of the social structure, men and women, the family, and relationships as well as any other source that might be consulted. In addition, nineteenth-century male and female novelists' views of society tallied more closely in their accounts of how society actually behaved than modern novelists' versions probably will a century from now. The nineteenth-century novelist, especially as the Victorian moral code closed in, worked within a more firmly established social and moral framework and had less inclination or latitude to criticize it. Thus, in looking at nineteenth-century women authors' images of men, there is evidence to think that their views reasonably reflected at least middle-class women's perceptions at the time (Stubbs,

x-xiii; Faber, 11-12; Calder, 9; Spacks, 9)¹

For women writers throughout the century, but especially in the first half, a major problem regarding men centered on how to work them into the plot. Since the realm of experience within the novel remained predominantly domestic, and men remained essentially apart from this scene, novelists turned to a variety of devices. Women characters "adopted" men. Some men were orphans. Others became ill or crippled for a time. Mothers, sisters, or wives instructed men on "manliness." Male heroes could not directly exercise violence or naked power. In addition, numerous balls, parties, holidays, or dinner events allowed men into the home (and conversely, allowed women out). Certain occupations permitted men to enter and leave the domestic scene, so that some retired from military life or led a military life with periodic leaves. Others were clergymen and naturally entered home-life. Several were landowners and spent time overseeing estates and visiting homes. Many male characters existed with a life-style that centered on leisure, and the reader presumes or is told they had money through inheritance. Whatever the case, the women

¹In addition, see David Daiches' introduction to Calder in which he states that readers can now comfortably go back to considering ". . . the human (and more particularly the social) base out of which literature arose in the first place, the kinds of human situations that literature reflects. . . ." (Calder, 9) after about forty years of ingesting the "new criticism" which seeks to separate literature from history, to make it timeless, and to read it for the writing per se.

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authors sought to integrate male characters into an essentially closed domestic scene which the men entered and left at will, often reporting what went on in the active, outside world which existed as the male province.

Somewhat contradictory but explainable images of men occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Women often portrayed men as predators; that is, all but the most worthy men would take sexual and financial advantage of women whenever possible. Thus, it was necessary that women be educated and guarded against male predators. Etiquette, social and craft accomplishments, regard for parents and property, and obedience to religious and other types of authority protected them for marriage and domestic life.

The male predator often appeared as the man who abducted a female and/or eloped with her. Much drama in novels of this earlier period resulted from abduction and elopement. The view that men were predators stemmed not only from the belief that women were physically weaker but also from the fact that women lacked economic rights and independence. After all, fathers paid a dowry to husbands to marry their daughters, and many worried fathers who feared they could not manage dowries for daughters appeared in fiction. For the physically and economically vulnerable female, marriage was not only desirable but acted as a refuge from the world. On the other hand, of course, many respectable men appeared in late eighteenth- and early

nineteenth-century novels. Despite the image of some men as predatory, men also appeared in their roles as benevolent, paternalistic, kindly, and wise beings just as often as did the predators or even fools, who provided diversion or expressed an author's distaste for certain professions (such as the clergy) or roles (such as fathers). In this early period, also, women authors did not overtly question the roles of either men or women, although they might examine the conflicts created by the roles.

A third general trend in the novels of this early period showed that if women's roles were circumscribed, men did not have a wide range of opportunities for employment, either. Early nineteenth-century novels (and Victorian fiction, also) showed men in few occupations. Very few were actually shown working in the context of the novel. This might have been due primarily to the limitations on the women authors themselves as mentioned earlier. The men generally ranged through landowners, officers, lawyers, and clergymen, and many simply had unspecified private means of livelihood. This reflected the middle- to upper-class focus of the novels.

Showalter presents one intriguing theory of images of men in what she considers the feminine phase of writing from the early 1800's to about 1880. Male characters variously represented money, mobility, and power; they loved sports and animals; they could withstand pain; they sublimated sexuality into religious devotion, heroic actions,



or just plain hard work; they reflected success, initiative, thrift, industry, and perseverance; or they championed causes such as improving the lot of the working class, slaves, or prostitutes. In short, they did many things that the women authors wanted to do if they had been men or wanted men to do. In some instances, the male characters reflected characteristics of the successful female author. In Showalter's view, female authors often projected themselves into the male characters: "Their heroes are not so much their ideal lovers as their projected egos" (Showalter, 136).

As the Victorian era approached, the novel tended to narrow in scope. Maria Edgeworth's heroines faced danger but moved freely and widely; Jane Austen's heroines at least stayed busy. Victorian women, however, moved less freely and often reflected "stasis and boredom" (Calder, 56). They represented and moved in the sphere of the "home," that most important Victorian institution:

In Victorian fiction almost the whole of human life could in a sense be contained in the family, for that part of life which lay beyond the confines of the family was usually considered to be incompatible with a moral view of human relations. . . . The Victorian novel may be said to be about men and women, but particularly women, seeking protection and fulfillment. . . . The sources are financial security, property, a spouse, and children. . . . in Victorian fiction. . . . women are seen to be multifariously engaged in a contest with an overwhelming paternalistic society. (Calder, 14-15)

Thus, men still retained their characteristics as Predators and holders of power while also being seen as sources of protection, benevolence, wisdom, security, and paternalistic attributes. More than ever, however, men lived

outside the home; that is, their working lives carried them into the unrelenting commercial, industrial world from which their only respite remained the home, "a haven of peace in a hostile and impure world" (Basch, 7). Not only were women considered guardians of the hearth or "the angel in the home" in this theory, but they also carried on the responsibility of improving men's character, and by implication, improving the character of society (Calder, 34).

Despite this dichotomy of home and work and the usually narrow sphere of action, Victorian novels did present a wider range of male occupations and activities. Depending on the setting, men appeared with greater or lesser frequency as members of the Royal family, titled nobility, country gentlemen, civil servants, armed service officers, doctors, lawyers, tradesmen, industrialists, and farmers. The urban scene included skilled craftsmen, unskilled workers, upper class, middle class, and some artists (Faber, 16-35). Within these roles, one of the men's greatest concerns centered on being or becoming a Victorian "gentleman" which combined ancestry, social behavior, and moral behavior. "Gentle" birth with the right to bear arms most clearly defined a gentleman, although he need not be titled. Looking like a gentleman or possessing "good breeding" counted, also. Gentlemen maintained appropriate manners and conduct; they were self-controlled, generous, brave, honest, and did not brag. Acquiring an education and wealth helped make a gentleman, although these were not definitive attributes.



Morally, the gentleman attempted to be honest at cards, avoid acts of cowardice, defend the helpless, and be virtuous. The gentleman could, of course, participate in the double standard of sexual behavior without regret or censure. Members of the lower and middle classes aspired to the social and moral behavioral aspects, especially the respectability, of being gentlemen (Faber, 126-45).

As women portrayed men in these roles in the mid-century, a number of themes appeared. Both men and women remained essentially desexualized. Women's sexual being existed only for one purpose: procreation (prostitutes existed to satisfy the "male appetite"). Women's desexualization helped men pour their energies into production and work instead of diverting themselves into pleasure and eroticism (Basch, 71). Consequently, a popular male fictional figure was the clergyman. Not only did he easily enter the domestic scene, but he existed as an "intermediate sex," a man acceptable, accessible, more refined, and not too passionate to women. Women also participated in theological debate by writing about clergymen or writing religious novels (Showalter, 139-48).

On the other hand, women also created another type of man, the brute. Women writers (and readers) apparently saw an appeal in Rochester and his descendents, the "rough lover," who in addition to being passionate, was also ugly, repulsive, brusque, cynical, impetuous, rebellious, sarcastic, and without career dedication. In a way, the fictional

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brutes treated women as equals since they did not protect them or treat them as weak or foolish (Showalter, 139-48).

In presenting the men of whatever role or type, a new theme crept into some women's novels. Women authors blinded, crippled, maimed, or in some way blighted a number of their male central figures, which seemed like a hostile response if not a symbolic castration of the men. This could indeed have been the case, but this reaction could also be construed as giving men a dose of what it was like to be female (dependent, powerless, frustrated), and showing how this experience might prove to be healthy and instructive. To many writers, these experiences made the men whole people and gave them insights into the emotions, intuitions, and inner life which Victorian society instructed women to value (Showalter, 150-52).

The appearance of the "rough lover" and the maimed hero caused shock among conventional Victorian readers and writers. Far more prevalent were patriarchal fathers and paternalistic husbands (even when authors criticized these roles). Female characters often loved men as friends, as teachers, and as father substitutes, in addition to loving them sexually. Together, along with wide age discrepancies between partners, these characteristics contributed to the desexualization of men and women. Lovers acted as surrogate fathers, and master-pupil relationships developed to repress ideas of female sexuality. These conventions placed a great strain on British writers. European novelists of the same

era did not suffer under the same artistic and ideological restrictions (Stubbs, 31-32).

Throughout this period, as in earlier periods, husbands and fathers controlled the money and thereby held the power over wives and children. They might be depicted as "hero and villain, as righteous man and moral pervert, as pillar of society and destroyer of individual freedom" (Calder, 82), but the ideals of the family and marriage remained as the frame of reference for the Victorian authors. Attacking these ideals challenged the family and social structure, although some female authors, such as the Brontës and George Eliot, nurtured the germ of resentment against this "egocentric, authoritarian male point of view" (Calder, 210, 14, 82-83, 202; Delafield, 272, 275).

By the time of the death of George Eliot in 1880, women's writing had passed into a new phase. First, no woman in the era prior to World War I achieved the stature of an Austen, Brontë, or Eliot. Second, beginning by the 1860's, women more likely entered a writing career earlier, stayed in it, married, and had children. By the 1880's, these career tendencies were well-established. Third, from the 1860's to the 1880's, the new generation of writers inaugurated a phase which emphasized emotions, secrecy, crime, and violence as opposed to the domestic novel of the first half of the century. Women in novels confronted men more openly and were more likely to be hostile toward men. These "sensation" novels enjoyed a wide popularity in the latter part of

the century. At the same time, many women writers of this period resisted this new trend and continued to write in a traditional, domestically-oriented vein of the earlier part of the century. Indeed, many established writers criticized the new offerings, and even the sensationalists hesitated to step beyond the boundary of Victorian convention to make a sharp inquiry into women's and men's roles. They did, however, begin to challenge such accepted stereotypes as the May-December marriage and the pattern of female self-renunciation and sacrifice for men, and they often began novels with a woman in conflict with male authority (Showalter, 29, 154, 160-81).

Revelations arising from the 1864-84 campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts confronted respectable, naïve women with ". . . a series of shocking stories of male brutality, profligacy, and vice. It was not just that brutish soldiers benefitted from government supervision of brothels. The policeman and the doctor became agents of the state in their forcible examinations of women accused of prostitution. . . ." In fiction, the reaction to this often took the form of a negative attitude towards the male sexual drive and a desire to improve the sexual morality of men (Showalter, 187, 186-89).

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women's images of men in novels reflected even more dominantly than in the early nineteenth century the notion that marriages should be love matches. A strong current ran

through many novels to the effect that marriage was not especially desirable for women, because women lost more in personal freedom and emotional tension than they gained through marriage. Early twentieth-century novels attacked more openly what men had created: the industrial order, technological innovations, the moral code. And, many women writers hinted that men lacked sensitivity and imagination to understand women's desires to be independent financially, enjoy personal freedoms, and also have satisfactory relationships with men. Despite these trends, however, some women still wrote novels with traditional nineteenth-century male and female characters. For example, men still dominated marriages, controlled finances, and provided status. They were still the creators of civilization. Women still sacrificed themselves to the will of men, depended on them, and viewed marriage as the primary goal and responsibility in life. Women had not yet created standards of their own for assessing their own everyday lives, material culture, or intellectual views. Female characters still defined themselves through men and by male standards. In many ways, despite the trends indicated, the models of men created by Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë haunted the whole nineteenth century. It is their lives and works which are the topics of the next two chapters.

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III. JANE AUSTEN: INTEGRATION

Jane Austen, who was born in 1775 and died in 1817, lived out her short personal and professional life in conservative, rural, southern England. Her father was an Oxford-educated clergyman and her mother came from a well-connected family. They raised eight children, of whom Austen was next to the youngest. Jane had one sister, Cassandra, and six brothers. All of the brothers except George, who was mentally retarded, achieved successful careers in a variety of occupations. Two brothers, Francis and Charles, became admirals. Two others, James and Henry, became ministers. Henry also tried careers in the army and in banking. And, Edward, who was adopted by wealthy, childless relatives, eventually owned considerable property. Thus, Austen's father and brothers provided her with a variety of male role models. Her sister, Cassandra, played an important role throughout Jane's life. Mainly, the two sisters remained at home, but both made brief trips to Oxford, Southampton, and Reading for schooling.

Despite being traditionally considered as having lived an isolated life, Austen shared balls, socials, and visitations with a wide circle of immediate family, relatives, and friends in varied geographical settings. Due

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primarily to personal and financial circumstances, the family moved several times during her life. For her years until early adulthood, Austen lived at Steventon in Hampshire. She and the family then moved to Bath for a few years. This was followed by a period in Southampton and then a lengthy stay in Chawton (Hampshire). Finally, in failing health, Austen lived out her last months in Winchester, where she died in 1817 at the age of forty-two.

These circumstances affected her literary production. She wrote her novels in two groups separated by nearly a ten year span. None of her work appeared in print until 1811, but she wrote three novels in "embryo" at Steventon from about 1796 to 1800: Pride and Prejudice, called at this stage (1796-97) "First Impressions;" Sense and Sensibility, titled originally (1797-98) "Elinor and Marianne;" and Northanger Abbey, first called "Susan," begun soon after. At Bath, she worked on The Watsons (unfinished). At Chawton, she rewrote Sense and Sensibility (published 1811), revised Pride and Prejudice (published 1813), wrote Mansfield Park (published 1814), Emma (published 1815), and Persuasion (written in 1816, published posthumously). Northanger Abbey was also published posthumously. Apparently, Persuasion did not receive as thorough a revision as the prior novels. Lady Susan and Sanditon exist, along with The Watsons, unfinished. In addition to her fiction (including juvenilia), Austen wrote letters to her sister Cassandra and others beginning about 1796. Cassandra destroyed the more intimate letters

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and excised passages from those preserved. (Masefield, 36-45; Lascelles, 1-40, Brown, 8-9).

Several biographical and stylistic circumstances affect an analysis of Austen's images of her male characters. Despite the existence of letters and family memoirs, Austen is not a well-known author personally. She stayed contentedly within the family circle, had little apparent desire to mix in prominent circles, and remained isolated from leading intellectuals of her time. What her readers lack ". . . for illumination on her art, is any extensive record of her deep inner experience, such as we have in the . . . life of Charlotte Brontë by Elizabeth Gaskell." (Gillie, 22) In addition, Austen's letters reflected what is a particular characteristic of many women's autobiographical works. Compared to men's autobiographies,

. . . women's autobiographies rarely mirror the . . . history of their times. They emphasize to a much lesser extent the public aspects of their lives, the affairs of the world, or even their careers, and concentrate instead on their personal lives-domestic details, family difficulties, close friends, . . . Even in the autobiographies by women whose professional work is their claim to fame, we find them omitting their work life. . . . (Jelinek, ed., 7-8, see also Elizabeth Winston, "The Autobiographer and Her Readers: From Apology to Affirmative," 93, 94; Lynn Z. Bloom and Orlee Holder, "Anais Nin's "Diary in Context," 207, 208)

Austen's letters certainly illustrated these observations, and this brief reference to the differences between men's and women's autobiographical writings should be kept in mind when approaching Austen. At the same time, her letters (and the novels) did indicate more than domestic concerns, such as the

influence of Samuel Johnson, William Cowper, George Crabbe, and the artist William Gilpin on her thinking and writing. In addition to noting these biographical details, reading Austen is enhanced by knowing something about the characteristics of the novels: the arena within which she worked; narrative style; use of irony; the functions of the heroine and hero; and the concern for morality, personal relationships, and personal characters.

Many writers, including her contemporaries, have commented on the limited scope of Austen's novels. However, her work reflected the conservative eighteenth-century hierarchical view of society which saw each unit as a "microcosm of the whole. . . . All that was required was to examine the conduct of the individual in the context of his family and immediate community. . . . Being a very formal society, eighteenth-century England placed tremendous emphasis on the moral implications of the individual's polite performance. . . ." ("Introduction," in Monaghan, ed., 2-3) Thus Austen's oft-quoted remarks about writing on a small piece of ivory with small brush strokes about a few families in a country village really required no defense. Instead, her arena encompassed what an eighteenth-century person needed to know ". . . in order to arrive at an understanding of the major forces at work in society." ("Introduction," in Monaghan, ed., 2) At the same time, her work included the nineteenth-century concerns with individuals and their relations to society.

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Her narrative style has always been noted for its economy in words and unelaborate sentence structure. In addition, she developed variety of tone in the characters' conversations, matched the characters' speech to their characters, and evidenced a rhythm in her words which was dramatic. She shied away from figurative language and shifted it when used onto unlikable or burlesqued characters. Finally, she often practiced "forethought" in the action, made sure her details were correct, and established both a sense of place and the passage of time without elaborate description. Habitually, she "established the heroine's position as the point of view for the story." But she had no objection to communicating directly as the narrator, and she regularly used irony as a complicating technique¹ (See Lascelles for a full description of Austen's style).

Just as important, perhaps, is what is not in her narrative, according to Mary Lascelles. Deaths played a small role, usually occurred prior to or outside the action, and did not impinge heavily on the plot. She did not emphasize fortune or chance in human affairs. Although Austen was concerned with money, it did not overwhelm the action. She did not deal with people in large groups or mobs, but focused on the individuals; men never appeared in a scene alone. Her

¹"Irony" can be defined as an awareness of "an irresolvable disparity between ideal and actuality, between social pretense and moral reality, between the way people are and the way they ought to be. . . ." In general, "What Jane Austen means by the term 'satire' is merely the humorous awareness of incongruity that modern critics of her work call 'irony.'" (Nardin, 5, 2-3)

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characters had no need to react to strange or unusual circumstances. Finally, there was not too much evidence of symbolism, abstraction, or the impact of ideas (Lascelles, 130-36).

In organizing the novel, Austen typically first presented the heroine and her original circumstances. Then, the characters who acted as antagonists and intriguers moved in, along with an examination of what in the heroine's make-up presented an obstacle to her future happiness. In all of this, society acted in opposition or set constraints on the individual, who must find a way to achieve a morally acceptable, personally satisfying relationship which did not defy society but which made the constraints irrelevant (Gillie, 119, 143-44).

Jane Austen's heroines suffered from a variety of material, familial, social, and personal disadvantages. They did not always possess great beauty or advanced feminine accomplishments. They were restricted in where they went and whom they met. However, Austen projected virtues onto them which reflected a code of desirable behavior; they possessed or acquired ". . . candour of heart, balance of judgment, sensitivity to truthfulness of feeling . . ." Despite limitations as women, they did have power over their own behavior. By themselves, their function was to ". . . save their societies within their immediate social context . . . the heroine has to discover for herself how to live in relationships, in a sense that will give social living a meaning which society

by itself cannot discover. . . . The Jane Austen heroine was to live from her personal resources in a space which confined them. . . ." (Gillie, 96, 95, 145, 97; Moers, 6, 7)

Within this space, Austen activated her male characters. The heroes were among a group of characters who influenced the heroine but whom the heroine misjudged due to the heroes' natures and/or circumstances. The men in the novels presented a real problem. They appeared primarily through the heroine's eyes and thus the reader sees them only from one point of view. Men and women met in social circumstances with prescribed behavior. Men tried to attract women (and vice versa) but if men failed to act in a conventional social manner, they appeared aloof or reserved. Women did not know how men behaved among themselves. All of this contributed to the difficulties of women knowing men well and made men appear to be mysterious characters: "The heroes, then, are presented under unusual circumstances. . . . In general, it is the role of a Jane Austen hero to provoke, offset, goad, and magnetize the heroine. He may do all these. . . ." (Gillie, 111-12) In addition, the hero functioned as a marriage prospect, a significant role. With few other choices open to her, the heroine did have some choice in whom to marry.

There are at least two other ways to approach the male characters. Austen often posed a group of "nasty" young men against fathers or father figures. These men were not particularly evil (such as Frank Churchill and Wickham),

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but they rebelled against authority. Although Austen presented few successful parents, she did suggest a clear moral lesson: "There are . . . two kinds of men, fathers and sons, the sons indicative of the perils of society while the fathers hold moral law together. . . . Jane Austen's heroines marry fathers rather than sons." (Calder, 22-23) Finally, from a psychological viewpoint, Austen's men may be seen in three classes: ". . . those who are aggressive but not good, /Wickham, Willoughby/, those who are good but unglamorous, /Knightly, Edward Ferrars/ and those who are aggressive and good enough /Darcy, Wentworth/. . . . there seems to be a longing in Jane Austen for aggressive triumph, primarily through a talented, masterful, and socially desirable man." (Paris, Character and Conflict, 181)

How does all of this relate to the presentation of men? Austen's scope (the domestic scene), her narrative style, and use of the characters signals that she created carefully constructed but rather restricted and sometimes skeletal versions of the male characters. Her lifestyle and the structure of her own novels, in addition to the strictures placed on female writers, lead to the observation that

. . . she had never written /until a first draft of Persuasion/ what could be called a scene between lovers. There had been scenes of courtship . . . /but/ no lovers' rights of privacy will be invaded. . . . /and/ when at last the response /mutual love/ comes . . . then the lovers walk away into a friendly cloud. . . . With this reticence which was instinctive in Jane Austen must be ranked other motives for limiting her province, which may be called personal /her lifestyle, and social, or the reaction of the critics/. . . . (Lascelles, 125-27).

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This summarizes the characteristics of Austen's style in relation to her presentation of men. It will also be helpful to review the general subjects in the novels in which the men figured predominantly. Propriety, or manners and conduct, which included appropriate behavior relating to the pursuit of courtship and love, marriage, education, and work and leisure, involved a major portion of the men's time as they carried out various social and professional functions.

People gained knowledge of each other in Austen's novels through their behavior in social situations:

. . . a person's social behavior is the external manifestation of his moral character. In others, it is fidelity to the precepts of a more fundamental 'true propriety'--the latter itself variously identified--that provides the standard of virtue. . . . propriety is true propriety only if it is backed up by solid moral considerations. An ethic of propriety which consists of following the forms of conventional propriety for no other reason than that they are in general use, is never . . . a valid one. True propriety can only spring from some sort of sincere moral commitment to self and others /outward forms often do indicate inner moral worth, however/. . . . Just how close the identification between true and conventional propriety . . . /is/ changes from one novel to another. (Nardin, 1, 15, 16)

A man's social behavior was thus extremely important. Interpreting this behavior correctly provided many of the plot complexities in Austen. To illustrate the above, for example, Mr. Knightley's manners in Emma were generally congruent with his true inner moral worth. John Dashwood in Sense and Sensibility was polite only to be self-serving. Frank Churchill in Emma hid his intentions behind charming manners. Mr. Darcy in Pride and Prejudice behaved correctly, but Elizabeth Bennet interpreted this as aloofness and

haughtiness. The women, too, of course, reflected varying uses of manners. The women generally lived through an educational process (largely through the exercise of manners) intended to mature them (except in Persuasion).

Austen provided numerous examples designed to show how propriety or conduct and manners was significant to the social order and men's responsibilities. Sir Walter Elliot in Persuasion did not take care of Kellynch Hall, so he had to leave because he had not conducted himself according to the standards of his class. Mr. Knightley in Emma did not like to dance, and he did not win Emma's full approval until he danced in a situation which demanded a proper use of manners (David Monaghan, "Jane Austen and the Position of Women," in Monaghan, ed., 113-14, 117). There are also numerous illustrations of how propriety regulated male-female relations within the social order. Young women should not carry on correspondence with men unless engaged, although Darcy's long letter to Elizabeth served as a turning point in Pride and Prejudice. In this example, however, the conventional propriety may be abandoned for a higher cause. Husbands and wives usually referred to each other as "Mr." and "Mrs." Young women and men could be together without a third party, however, and conversations occurred on nearly any topic: "Colonel Brandon . . . can explain to Elinor [in Sense and Sensibility], a girl of nineteen, a whole history of seduction, illegitimacy, and desertion. . . ." (Craik, 39). However, few opportunities really existed for private

tête-à-têtes between men and women as friends or fiancés (Craik, 30-41). In addition to reflecting moral worth and social organization, propriety also indicated a gentleman's social status. Again, Austen provided many details of how men displayed their status: house and grounds should be in proper order, servants should be in appropriate roles and well cared for, and carriages should be used correctly. Although dueling waned, gentlemen still participated in it to show their status; Colonel Brandon took part in a duel outside the action of Sense and Sensibility.

Propriety was heavily involved in courtship and love because courtship took place in full view of the public. Secret courtships and engagements received disapprobation. Initial meeting, attraction, flirtation, infatuation, and love occurred in the social world with accompanying prescribed behavior. For example, society frowned upon love at first sight. Women's love was based not on infatuation but on esteem and gratitude. Men were allowed by society to love more capriciously, but they were expected eventually to esteem the chosen women. Austen subjected all of this to her ironic pen which complicated the true meaning of the courtship. For example, good looks and charming manners did make immediate impressions on men and women. In Pride and Prejudice, Elizabeth was attracted to Wickham, Darcy to Elizabeth, Bingley to Jane, and Mr. Bennet married Mrs. Bennet due to infatuation as a young man (Jan S. Fergus, "Sex and Social Life in Jane Austen's Novels," in Monaghan, ed.,

68-72).

Underneath the wit lay a more serious possible outcome of attraction and flirtation. Earlier novels than Austen's often concentrated on abductions and seductions as a major theme; women remained truly vulnerable. Although not a major theme in Austen, male attraction could result in these same outcomes: "Courtship . . . implies something a man does to a woman, and can include adultery [seduction, and abduction⁷]." (Moers, 71) Lydia Bennet lived unmarried for a time with Wickham (Pride and Prejudice), Maria Bertram committed adultery (Mansfield Park), Colonel Crawford kept a mistress (Mansfield Park), and Willoughby seduced Colonel Brandon's ward (Sense and Sensibility). Although most of this action took place outside the novel, these possibilities lurked nearby.

In portraying courtship, Austen relied on social and literary conventions to show men in love. Mr. Elton (Emma) was a sanguine lover with blushing and sighing symptoms. Captain Benwick (Persuasion) displayed a "melancholy air" as he should in his grief over a departed fiancée. Mr. Knightley kept a reading list that Emma made up as a girl of fourteen. The use of eye contact and exchanges of looks between lovers remained strong images. Diet also played a part; Mr. Woodhouse (Emma) opposed both rich diets, which act like aphrodisiacs, and marriages. Pictures of the beloved played a role in numerous incidents, and mention of the beloved's name often played havoc with the lover's nerves. Men who suffered

in love often showed "oppression of spirits." Edward Ferrars, Colonel Brandon, and Captain Benwick gave way to this langour, and Mr. Knightley evidenced a loss of physical vigor when it appeared that Emma might marry Frank Churchill (McMaster, 11-13, 20-25). In the stages of courtship, increased knowledge always changed the relationship. Attraction or infatuation could lead to dislike or indifference or love. The most thorough studies of love occurred in the novels where the characters already knew each other and came to a deeper understanding of each other's character: Mansfield Park, Emma, Persuasion. In all of Austen, ". . . sex, love and knowledge reinforce one another." (Fergus, in Monaghan, ed., 73, 75, 76).

Eventually, of course, some courtships culminated in marriage, and Austen explored this relationship in intriguing and complex ways. In the novels, marriages had already existed for long periods or they were about to be consummated once the main characters sorted out their various difficulties. However, Austen did not study any marriages over time, and the married couples were secondary characters. Above all, few satisfactory marriages existed during the action of the novel. Mothers and fathers were inept or worse; husband-and-wife relationships were often the object of sharp wit. Austen did not explore men's roles in marriage to any extent. However, it is clear that Austen considered marriage as a predominant institution, and the main characters marched irreversibly toward that status throughout the novels

(Lloyd W. Brown, "The Business of Marrying and Mothering," in McMaster, ed., 28, 29).

Two views of marriage emerged from these seemingly contradictory ideas. The first was the realistic view. Austen lived and wrote in a society which allowed few choices to women and burdened men with great responsibilities. Fathers gave daughters to husbands, and unless daughters came into the marriage with a settlement, husbands literally owned their wives (and their children). In return, women gained status and (theoretically) financial security as wives. On the other hand, men committed themselves to a life-long financial responsibility in an age when no insurance, social services, national medical care, pensions, free schooling, or realistic divorce existed. Thus, constrained and committed to what was considered a life-long bond with few options, many wives and husbands existed in less than satisfactory alliances. Defective marriages, mothers, and fathers in the novels pointed up defective social institutions, including the Church, as much as they served plot purposes. The happy couples at the end of the novels stood out as exceptional persons in this otherwise realistic view and did not necessarily herald the transformation of the society (Brown, in McMaster, ed., 36, 40-41).

The second view of marriage was more idealistic. Austen's main characters (such as Darcy and Elizabeth, Knightley and Emma, Wentworth and Anne) achieved one or all of the following, which made the marriage possible: a new

moral and/or social maturity, deeper understanding, self-sufficiency. Once these transformations occurred, the principals entered into the marriage and often removed themselves from the old society to a new location. The marriages were love matches based on physical attraction, mutual esteem, shared interests, common experiences, and equality. Men were not outwardly dominant in these marriages, and even though the women (except Emma) often gained financial security, the last pages of the novel did not forecast the total subordination of the women as housekeepers and mothers. On the other hand, there is no reason to believe that Austen foresaw other than reasonably conventional marriages. Other than the implied happy marriages of the main characters, only two happy long-married couples existed in the novels of this study: the Crofts (Persuasion) and the Gardiners (Pride and Prejudice). Significantly, neither of these couples came from the rural landed gentry. The Crofts were navy people, and the Gardiners were business-middle-class representatives. Modern critics see Austen's "essential feminism" from this idealistic viewpoint of marriage. But this is a debatable position which focuses on the women in the novels. Most interestingly, perhaps, was the almost complete absence of a positive study of men as husbands and fathers in any of Austen's novels. (Craik, 58-59; Brown in McMaster, ed., 28, 33, 40-41).

Austen did explore rather thoroughly, however, the older man who married the young girl. This theme appeared in

many novels throughout most of the nineteenth century. Some critics believe that in many of Austen's novels, the man, by virtue of his age, experience, and authority, taught the young woman to abandon or modify feminine and adolescent values so that she could survive in a mature, rational, and educated male world. As the teaching progressed, the woman fell in love with the man and vice-versa, and the tutor-pupil relationship became a mutual, happy love match where intellect and emotions complemented each other. (McMaster, 43-46).

This analysis fits certain Austen novels, such as Emma, and makes sense considering the schooling experience of boys and girls at this time. Some boys received instruction from private tutors, then went on to public school and university. These experiences created some sterling characters, such as Darcy and Knightley, although the reader does not know that they went to a university. In contrast, girls generally received their education at home with perhaps some forays to boarding schools. On the whole, they were responsible for their own education which supposedly produced good household managers and some proficiency in music, needlework, decorative arts, and perhaps languages. Women were not to be ostentatious about these accomplishments and, above all, they were not to be idle. Men thus rather naturally become women's teachers in these circumstances, according to some analysts (Craik, 43-47, 48-56; McMaster, 43-46).

On the other hand, Austen introduced many other male characters who did not fit these norms, and who did not necessarily teach the heroine. She alluded to lawyers' training and admission to the navy as learning experiences. Schooling as such played no part in the action of the novels. Clergymen, who received university training, were often not attractive characters. Elizabeth Bennet taught Darcy as much as he instructed her. Anne Elliot remained essentially the same while Captain Wentworth came to be enlightened. Fanny Price (Mansfield Park) also essentially remained the same while Edmund underwent a change (Craik, 43-48, McMaster, 46). Thus, the formal education men received and their position as older and more experienced men who formally or informally instructed young women did not always necessarily dominate Austen's education theme.

Formal education did not really prepare men for work, nor was it intended for that purpose. "That Frank Churchill /Emma/ or Henry Tilney /Northanger Abbey/ or Edward Ferrars /Sense and Sensibility/ . . . should defy domestic tyranny, strike out on his own, and take a job seem beyond Austen's imagining. . . ." (Moers, 74) This summarizes a popular view regarding Austen's men and their work, or lack of it. At first glance, nearly no one, male or female, worked in Austen's novels. However, on a closer look, Austen presented a wider range of male occupations and more trenchant theories on work and leisure than many have imagined.

As a female novelist, Austen faced the same problems as other women writers who devised various ways to work men into the scene. Austen's action took place primarily in drawing rooms, dining rooms, and ball rooms--the inner female sanctum. Men entered and left this arena at will, so essentially they reported what they did elsewhere. Three occupations fitted these requirements and Austen's personal knowledge particularly well: military life, the ministry, and landholding. Men in these careers took extended leaves, made professional visits to homes, carried on responsibilities in a domestic setting, and had leisure time. Lawyers appeared also, but less frequently. Occasional servants, doctors, and tenants also appeared. Austen presented nearly no men engaged in industry, commerce, business, or manufacturing except for Mr. Gardiner (Pride and Prejudice) who was important in the novel and successful.

Austen included soldiers and sailors in Pride and Prejudice, Mansfield Park, and Persuasion. In the Napoleonic era, the military exerted a strong presence even though Austen supposedly took little note of historical events. She described not the regular army, however, but the militia or standing army that remained visible in southern England due to French invasion threats. Men bought commissions and occasionally went into the regular army, but the militia did not attract the best men, as indicated by Wickham, who was a major disruptive character (Christopher Kent, "'Real Solemn History' and Social History," in Monaghan, ed., 99, 100).

Navymen figured more prominently in Austen, primarily because two of her brothers achieved high rank as admirals. She even used some of the names of their ships in the novels. The navy recruited men of lesser class perhaps, but its members could become officers by merit, as did Austen's brothers, as well as through purchase of commission. Austen tipped her pen toward the character-building aspects of navy life as seen through William Price in Mansfield Park and the navymen of Persuasion (Craik, 73-78).

Austen created numerous clergymen as characters. The clergy played a major part in rural gentry life, and society did not separate them from daily activities (they dressed similarly to others, danced, played cards, etc.). But Austen made some of them into ridiculous characters and seemed, at times, to consider the profession as nearly redundant. However, her father and two of her brothers lived successful lives in the ministry. Perhaps her clergyman characters, as did many others, reflected Austen's standards simply by failing to live up to them. Apparently, she did not care for ostentatious manners or emotionalism in the Church, and thus she reflected an establishment instead of evangelical view. Clergymen in the novels spoke no doctrine and carried out no services, but the good ones did their job well and lived according to high moral standards. As time progressed, she wrote somewhat more seriously. Henry Tilney (Northanger Abbey) and Mr. Collins (Pride and Prejudice) gave way to a serious study of the ministerial life with Edmund

Bertram (Mansfield Park) and to the admonition that Mr. Elliot (Persuasion) was suspected of "Sunday traveling." (Gillie, 13, 16; Craik, 79-85, 87, 89-90)

Landlords also occupied a major position in Austen's novels. Many of her men owned land, and she made their duties clear. Although she gave few details of an actual working farm or estate (except for Mr. Knightley's activities in Emma), Austen considered the landowner to be a role model of his class and responsible for a well-run estate. Darcy and Knightley excelled in their duties; their estates were nearly extensions of their personalities. Darcy became much more attractive to Elizabeth when she visited the excellently-run Pemberley estate. Knightley busied himself throughout the novel with duties relating to tenants, managers, servants, farm operation, and his role as a J. P. These men were not idly rich, although Austen presented Knightley differently from Darcy. On the other hand, men who did not perform their duties as landlords and class representatives, such as Sir Walter Elliot, ruined themselves and crippled the estate (Craik, 65-66, 119, 152, 158).

The development of male characters from Darcy through Knightley and Wentworth pointed to Austen's changing attitudes towards work and leisure. In her early novels (Northanger Abbey, Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice), Austen supported the idea of a wise use of leisure time; men (and women) could be, but they did not necessarily do anything. Rich people gave livings; men inherited estates. Even though

no state help existed for men and they worked or received a living, the emphasis in these early novels was more on judging individuals for what they were, not for what they did. Characters had a real problem with leisure time, and Austen often discussed self-improvement and self-discipline-oriented activities. The individual ". . . is neither expected to do sustained, socially valuable work, nor expected to be unhappy because he has little to do." (Jane Nardin, "Jane Austen and the Problem of Leisure," in Monaghan, ed., 129, 123-129; Craik, 9; Moers, 73)

In the later novels (Mansfield Park, Emma, Persuasion), however, Austen's attitude changed, apparently due to the influence of Samuel Johnson's idea of work. He considered ". . . the value of sustained, useful work--work as a religious duty, work as a means to satisfaction, idleness as seductive, yet debilitating, work as necessary to the maintenance of mental balance. . . ." (Nardin, in Monaghan, ed., 132) The last novels considered work as personally and socially fulfilling; self-improvement through leisure activities no longer qualified as being purposeful and utilitarian. Thus, the religious life as a profession, the landlord as an active participant, and the self-made and prosperous naval officer were in turn explored in the last three completed works. Austen still measured men's characters by who they were, but she gave increasing emphasis to what they did.

In this survey of men's activities in the novels, Austen, above all, concentrated on two themes: character and

personal relationships refracted through the societal lens. The truly good men (and women) set high standards of outward social behavior and inner moral worth: ". . . character--and the fruit it bears--is always of supreme importance. . . ." Character is tested through ". . . relationships between individuals; these are materials with which she always works, and the terms in which she reveals her very serious preoccupations with personal morals and the individual's relation with society." (Masefield, 58, 48-54; Craik, 4-5) How well these general observations bear scrutiny will be seen on closer examination of the men in Pride and Prejudice, Emma, and Persuasion. Even with the revision and publishing history, Austen wrote these three novels in the order given. They fulfill the criteria of reflecting a career development over time as well as the other criteria mentioned in Chapter I.

Men play many roles in Austen's novels as they move through the activities described in the previous section. Women relate to them in society generally and as marriage prospects. Men have occupations or professions. They hold political power and reflect social status. They act as suitors, husbands, fathers, friends, teachers, and lastly, they serve as ideals or heroes. Austen portrays them primarily through the heroines' eyes.

In Pride and Prejudice, the major male characters are Darcy, an aristocratic land owner; Bingley, his landowner friend; Collins, a clergyman; Mr. Bennet, husband, father,

and a member of the lesser gentry; Mr. Gardiner, uncle to the Bennet girls and a successful tradesman; Wickham, an officer in the militia; and Colonel Fitzwilliams, an officer. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet have five daughters and an estate entailed to Collins, which makes it necessary for the Bennet girls to find suitable husbands for financial security.

Sisters Elizabeth and Jane are aware of their circumstances and this awareness colors their relation to men. If they do not remember that each man who passes through the neighborhood is a potential husband, Mrs. Bennet reminds them. In addition, class complicates relationships. From her middle-class viewpoint, Elizabeth sees aristocratic men as snobs (Darcy, in turn, looks down on anyone remotely connected with trade). Propriety or manners and conduct also pose a problem. All of the men whom Elizabeth meets reflect some behavioral flaw, if not immediately, then eventually. Along with these obstacles, Elizabeth values relationships with men which hinge on true mutual personal feeling (Monaghan, 64-66; 94, 106, 107). At one point, after all of the men concerned enter the story, Elizabeth vents her frustrated and disappointed feelings. Bingley has abandoned Jane, Darcy has acted too haughtily, and Wickham's charm barely covers his mercenary motives. Elizabeth declares:

. . . I have a very poor opinion of young men who live in Derbyshire, and their intimate friends who live in Hertfordshire are not much better, I am sick of them all. . . . I am going to-morrow where I shall find a man who has not one agreeable quality /Collins/, who has neither manner nor sense to recommend him. Stupid men are the only ones worth knowing after all. (PP, 107)

And, she plans to go on a summer holiday with the Gardiners: "Adieu to disappointment and spleen. What are men to rocks and mountains?" (PP, 107) Of course, Elizabeth knows that marriages loom on the horizon, and the novel explores the prospect of marriage in detail from several angles. Elizabeth consistently feels that ". . . one should marry for love, for personal satisfaction, and out of a regard for the human qualities of one's partner. At the same time, one cannot ignore the socio-economic position of the other person." (Paris, 102, 103) Elizabeth confirms this position by refusing to marry Collins, a very foolish man (PP, 74-77). Mrs. Bennet sees marriage only from the viewpoint of establishing her daughters with men of considerable wealth. She announces this on page one of the novel and consistently holds this materialistic position until the last pages, when Elizabeth announces her engagement to Darcy. Mrs. Bennet, in near ecstasy, proclaims: "Lizzy! how rich and great you will be. . . . what jewels, what carriages you will have! . . . Ten thousand a year! Oh, Lord! . . . I shall go distracted. . . ." (PP, 261)

Mrs. Bennet's views, though exaggerated, are not unfounded. Charlotte Lucas provides a realistic, if poignant, version of the lack of prospects for women without husbands. Austen uses forethought by introducing Charlotte's opinions early: "In nine cases out of ten, a woman had better shew more affection than she feels. . . . Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance." (PP, 14, 15) Charlotte

follows through with a concerted attack on Collins' attentions. She accepts his proposal quickly ". . . from the pure and disinterested desire of an establishment. . . . Without thinking highly either of men or of matrimony, marriage had always been her object; it was the only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune. . . ." (PP, 85, 86) This prospect of an unhappy, loveless, convenient marriage appalls Elizabeth, who persists in her insistence on mutual esteem and love as the basis for women's relation with men (PP, 88, 94).

These views on women's relations with men and the prospect of marriage serve to introduce the men in their various roles. Austen provides an occupational span of clergymen, landed gentry, military men, and some tradesmen and lawyers. None of these men is really shown working, however. They pass in and out of the drawing rooms, leaving their occupations behind. However, how they act might indicate something about Austen's views towards their responsibilities. Clergymen come under attack through Collins. Darcy reflects the proper functions of a landlord, and Bingley is an amiable if weak person. There is little clue, however, as to Bingley's activities as a landlord. Mr. Bennet makes a weak husband and father, but Austen does not really comment on his role as lesser gentry farm owner and manager. Wickham makes a poor militia officer, and, no doubt, he will be a poor regular army officer, but Colonel Fitzwilliam is an exemplary regular army man. Mr. Gardiner is a

fine example of a middle-class tradesman, but Sir William Lucas is also a tradesman who becomes an insufferable petty titled aristocrat. Elizabeth's uncle Philips is a lawyer who is neutrally presented, but Wickham's father was also a lawyer until he became Darcy's capable estate manager (PP, 11, 47, 48, 55, 56, 96). Austen seems to be saying that certain duties exist for men in each of their occupations or professions; failure to pursue their duties results in personal problems and failure to serve society. The professions themselves do not really come under attack or receive praise, except that Austen does reserve a bias toward the landowner as a preeminently responsible social agent.

Through their positions, inherited or earned, the men exercise political power and confer social status. Even someone like Collins gains status and confers it due to his clerical position. All of the women at one time or another allude to the possession of power and status. At the Netherfield Ball, "Charlotte could not help cautioning her Elizabeth in a whisper not to be a simpleton and allow her fancy for Wickham to make her appear unpleasant in the eyes of a man of ten times her consequence." (PP, 63) When Elizabeth and Colonel Fitzwilliam converse at a later time about his problems as a younger son, Elizabeth retorts: "Now, seriously, what have you ever known of self-denial and dependence? When have you been prevented by want of money from going wherever you choose, or procuring anything you had a fancy for?" (PP, 126-27) At the near-end of the novel, power and status still

remain on Lady de Bourgh's mind as she spitefully reminds Elizabeth of how really low the Bennet family is on the social scale, and how much power the de Bourgh family, with Darcy at its head, confers on others (PP, 245, 246).

Throughout, Elizabeth's and Darcy's relationship is greatly affected by his status and what it would mean for her to be his wife. In the end, Darcy must come to some accommodation with the Bennets and the Gardiners, and Elizabeth must gain a positive view of the aristocracy (Monaghan, 66-68, 81, 90-91). However, it is very significant that Elizabeth revises her opinions quite drastically once she sees the Pemberly estate, and she dates her love for Darcy from that visit (PP, 258): "Elizabeth's change of feeling is produced almost entirely by Darcy's wealth and grandeur. . . . Darcy's love means that she is . . . an appropriate mate for 'one of the most illustrious personages'. . . ." (Paris, 132, 134)

Although men confer status on women, the men must travel the route of courtship to acquire the women. Courtship, as indicated earlier, presents problems in this society, ". . . given the restrictive patterns of courtship and the modest behavior prescribed for women. . . ." (Paris, 108) Young people seldom know one another well at all. Men must press their advantages, and women must respond suitably in social settings at what sometimes seems breakneck speed under Austen's ironic handling. Appearances, physical and behavioral of both men and women, mean a great deal.

Bingley is attracted almost at once to Jane at the first dance. An evening, then a few weeks, is sufficient time to establish him as a serious suitor. He exhibits signs of love. Elizabeth remarks to her aunt Gardiner: "I never saw a more promising inclination. He was growing quite inattentive to other people, and wholly engrossed by her. . . . Could there be finer symptoms?" (PP, 98) Under Darcy's influence, however, Bingley abandons his suit, and aunt Gardiner, in this same conversation, is prompted to observe that men often exhibit this behavior: "A young man . . . so easily falls in love with a pretty girl for a few weeks, and when accident separates them, so easily forgets her, that these sort of inconstancies are very frequent. . . ." (PP, 98) The Bennets and Gardiners eventually discover that Darcy is the major blocking force in this courtship. Once Darcy removes his opposition, the dénouement of engagement occurs very quickly over the course of six socially correct visits which Bingley pays to Jane and the Bennets (PP, 229-38).

Collins also moves through the courtship ritual quickly. Even though he is an object of Austen's derision, Collins still reflects the pattern, if exaggerated, of male courtship: visits, meals, conversation, some time alone with the intended, declarations, informing the parents, a period of engagement, and the marriage. He intends to woo Jane until he finds her interested in Bingley. He changes his goal to Elizabeth ". . . while Mrs. Bennet was stirring the

fire." (PP, 49) Elizabeth refuses him, and little time elapses before he proposes to Charlotte while carrying on most of the courtship in the Bennet house. No affection, as in the Bingley-Jane relationship, exists, but Collins does follow through the ritual of wooing a wife.

Even though Darcy's and Elizabeth's courtship takes longer to conclude, about four months, immediate impressions are made by appearance: each is attracted to the other. Most encounters occur in public places, such as the dances, the Bennet house, the Bingley house, or Pemberley, with many people observing. It really takes a break in the courtship pattern to bring Elizabeth and Darcy together. They meet alone in significant encounters, which is acceptable but not at all common, and Darcy writes Elizabeth a lengthy letter, even though they are not engaged. Once the major misunderstandings are cleared away, their road to engagement is not too long. Darcy comes to dinner and is polite to Mrs. Bennet; he and Elizabeth finish unraveling some misunderstandings and are privately engaged in one conversation (PP, 35, 36-38, 71, 251-56).

Wickham is never a serious suitor to Elizabeth, but Austen uses him to show the power, seductiveness, and sometimes danger of initial appearance and charm towards women. He impresses Elizabeth right away. At the Netherfield ball, ". . . the young man wanted only regimentals to make him completely charming. His appearance was greatly in his favour; he had all the best part of beauty, a fine

countenance, a good figure, and very pleasing address."

(PP, 50) He uses the courtship ritual to cover his mercenary intentions, and even though Elizabeth never really considers marrying him, his actions are enough to block her route to Darcy. Wickham presses his advantage onto the young Lydia, and he is successful in seducing her, carrying her off, and under pressure, marrying her.

Austen spends more time on courtship and the prospect of marriage than she does on actual husbands and fathers. She provides a slice of Collins' life as husband, and his character as a husband matches his actions as a bachelor and suitor. Aunt Gardiner is presumably happy with Mr. Gardiner. The Lucas couple and the Philips couple exist in very shadowy form. The reader sees little of Darcy as a husband, although the last pages of the novel hint at his exemplary behavior towards Elizabeth.

The most complete portrait of a husband and father is Mr. Bennet, and this is a somber picture, indeed. Although he is given witty lines, he is a weak and detached figure who neglects his duties as a husband and father. In his younger years, Mr. Bennet fell into the trap of being attracted to Mrs. Bennet only on the basis of appearances. The existence of five daughters tells the reader that he probably fulfilled his sexual desires and duties, or so it appears that the Bennets kept trying to have a son. But even though he has five daughters to marry, he does little socially to enhance their prospects. He makes only perfunctory appearances in

the house to meet visitors, and he refuses to attend social functions. He is lax about discipline and allows the young Lydia to enter into the seductive atmosphere of a town with a military garrison attached. Generally, he retreats into his library domain with the clear understanding that he is not to be disturbed.

Elizabeth is fond of him, though, and he considers her the only light in his life. He respects neither his wife nor his other daughters, except perhaps Jane. He is galvanized into action and some regret for a short time when Lydia runs away with Wickham, but Gardiner and Darcy actually carry out the majority of parental responsibilities in this affair. Elizabeth feels her father's (and mother's) failings keenly, and their failures as teachers and role models echo constantly in her thoughts throughout the novel. In the end, Elizabeth removes herself from the family, and the Gardiners become substitute parents, even though she retains her affection for her father.

Men exist as suitors, husbands, and fathers to women, but they rarely exist as friends on a long-term basis. The situation of women made it nearly impossible for women to have male friends. Men were authority figures, relatives, or possible relatives, but there is no male-female friendship in Pride and Prejudice that does not resolve itself into one of the above relationships. The possibility does exist that Elizabeth and Darcy become friends as well as husband and wife at the end of the novel.

Friendship implies equality, and men are much more likely to become teachers or tutors to women. Pride and Prejudice contains a twist on this role, because Elizabeth teaches Darcy as much as he teaches her. Elizabeth dislikes his influence on Bingley, his resentment towards Wickham, and his treatment of her and her family. He must learn about all three, although Elizabeth learns that his dislike of Wickham is properly placed. Darcy's lessons are matters of conduct, while Elizabeth's lessons are in the area of her judgment (McMaster, 50-52). Elizabeth's painful lessons are made more apparent through the device of Darcy's letter to her. His letter inaugurates his role as teacher, since he explains the truth about Wickham and why he removed Bingley from Jane. Elizabeth is so struck at her judgmental failures that she undergoes a transformation: "How despicably have I acted! . . . I, Who have prided myself on my discernment. . . . How humiliating is this discovery! Yet, how just a humiliation! Till this moment, I never knew myself. . . ." (PP, 143, 135-40) Thus, Darcy's letter allows her to know herself. Again, however, the male as teacher is not the dominant motif, since Darcy must also earn Elizabeth's approval through an educational process.

Darcy becomes the hero of the piece, after all, but Austen presents comments on the ideal man through the negative as well as positive actions of other male characters. Jane remarks that Bingley is "sensible, good-humoured, lively . . . with happy manners!--so much ease, with such

perfect breeding!" Elizabeth adds "He is also handsome."

(PP, 8) However, once Bingley leaves the arena, Elizabeth muses that he exhibits ". . . easiness of temper, that want of proper resolution. . . ." because Darcy so easily persuades him to leave (PP, 93). In the same way, Wickham at first possesses ideal qualities: ". . . whether married or single, he must always be her model of the amiable and pleasing." (PP, 105) However, Elizabeth learns from Darcy that she relied on Wickham's word due to appearance only: "His countenance, voice, and manner, had established him at once in the possession of every virtue. . . ." (PP, 142) Similarly, but with the opposite effect, Darcy makes a good impression on Elizabeth due to his handsome appearance, but his haughty manner takes him out of consideration for some time as an ideal (PP, 6, 130-33).

Thus, appearance may at first make the ideal man, and outward manners may at first impress or irritate the woman. Ultimately, however, outward appearance and manners must conform with conduct in serious matters and inner moral worth to make a true hero. Darcy's conduct towards his servants and tenants, fulfillment of his duties as landlord and community leader, and defender of traditional values through his intervention with Lydia and Wickham gradually create his attractiveness as the novel proceeds to the point when Elizabeth concludes ". . . he was exactly the man, who, in disposition and talents, would most suit her. His understanding and temper. . . . his judgment, information, and knowledge of

the world. . . ." make him an ideal man (PP, 214; Paris, 105; Craik, 67-68; Mudrick, 117, 119). Despite these traits, Darcy remains basically rather flat. He is not drawn too fully, and he is seen through the women's eyes, especially Elizabeth's, which characterizes the presentation of all of the men in their various roles.

Austen presents a different scene in Emma. Emma Woodhouse and her semi-invalid father preside as the first family in the Highbury community. She is a favored daughter, has no money problems, and exhibits no desire or need to be married. The major male characters consist of Emma's father; George Knightley, the squire of Donwell Abbey, who lives nearby and visits the Woodhouses often; Mr. Weston, who has just married Emma's governess, Miss Taylor; Frank Churchill, Weston's son, who has lived in another community with the Churchill family for some years; John Knightley, George Knightley's brother, who is married to Emma's sister, Isabella; and Mr. Elton, the minister, who marries during the course of the story.

Because of Highbury's situation at the opening of the novel, Emma's favored position, and her relationship with her father, Emma has little inducement to comment or think much about her own relation to men in a romantic context. Highbury is basically a stagnant community with almost no formal affairs occurring. Mr. Woodhouse feels bereft because Miss Taylor has had the audacity to marry and desert them. Change of any kind represents a threat. In this situation, Emma

happily, so she thinks, really lives two lives. One is her formal, outward, everyday life which is bound by caring for her father and participating in what few social events exist. The other is her "imaginist" life or her very active mental world into which she directs her real energies. She considers herself a successful manipulator of people's lives because, as the novel opens, she takes credit for the Weston marriage and plays a large part in controlling an orphan protégé, Harriet Smith. With these "successes" in mind, Emma continues on this path of trying to manipulate various relationships (Austen-Leigh, 306-7; Monaghan, 116, 122, 123). The one non-manipulative relationship which exists is that between Emma and Knightley, a man sixteen years her senior, who is a long time friend and, by his brother John's marriage to Isabella, essentially a relative of the family. His frequent visits at the Woodhouse home take on the character of father-daughter exchanges.

In some of these exchanges, Emma and Knightley discuss marriage. Emma not only states her personal position but gives a comment on the contemporary state of the institution:

. . . I have never been in love; it is not my way, or my nature; and I do not think I ever shall. And, without love, I am sure I should be a fool to change such a situation as mine. Fortune I do not want; employment I do not want; consequence I do not want; I believe few married women are half as much mistress of their husband's house, as I am of Hartfield; and never, never could I expect to be so truly beloved and important; so always first and always right in any man's eyes as I am in my father's. (E, 57-58)

Thus, Emma is aware that men confer financial security and status, but she already possesses these. She is willing to consider marriage for love, but only as long as she can maintain power, which is highly unlikely in a conventional marriage. Emma also feels that men desire beauty and vacuousness in their wives, which Knightley denies (E, 42-43). Although Emma is certainly aware of the status of women in her society, she is not yet mature enough to enter into the courtship and marriage relationships with men herself, at least not on a serious basis. She is still a child in her father's house and in Knightley's eyes. At the same time, she is willing to manipulate and observe other people in these relationships. Interruptions in the static life of Highbury are necessary to cause Emma to change her position.

The Highbury community is so enclosed that few occupations are represented. Almost no range exists outside of rural landholding. Austen creates another minister, Elton, who reflects poorly on his profession and marries a socially climbing wife after he embarrasses Emma with a futile attempt to attract her. At one point, he serves as a marriage prospect for Harriet Smith, but only in Emma's eyes. Despite his unattractiveness as a character, he still has status, and he really would not consider marrying the lowly Harriet. John Knightley is a lawyer who carries on his professional life in London. Austen presents him as generally preoccupied with his work and with little spare time. Even though he fastidiously protects his time at home, he exerts an

overbearing presence on his wife and children. Amiable Mr. Weston is in business of some sort not specified and has retired to the country life. Frank Churchill is unemployed with no prospects. Mr. Woodhouse is, of course, retired from life as a landowner and active community participant. Interestingly, Austen paints a sketchy, favorable portrait of Robert Martin, who is one of Knightley's tenants. He does not appear directly very often, but Knightley champions him as an admirable, hard-working man who is articulate and reads serious books such as the Vicar of Wakefield. Emma, whose idleness leads her into her imaginary world, looks down on Martin. Eventually, however, Harriet recognizes his true worth and marries him.

Martin and the main male character, George Knightley, represent Austen's evolving views on work as a commendable activity. Knightley also incorporates Austen's predilection for portraying the landowner as an admirable, socially responsible type. Whereas Darcy was a responsible landlord, he was largely absent from his estate. In Emma, however, Knightley moves in and out of the action as a working landowner. As is the usual pattern, Austen does not show Knightley actually working, but when he enters the drawing room or ball room he is often just returning from his estate and taking care of matters involving farming, tenants, or managing. He consults his brother on legal matters relating to his role as a Justice of the Peace, and he attends meetings as a parish official: "Knightley's human potential has

clearly been developed by his vocational involvements."

(Nardin, in Monaghan, ed., 136-37; Moers, 73-74)

Emma is aware of Knightley's occupation and the consequent power and status which he can grant to a wife, even though she already possesses a certain degree of both. She also knows that if Knightley marries, Knightley's nephew Henry, John's son, will not eventually inherit Donwell Abbey. On a visit to the estate after a long absence, Emma is reminded that it belongs to Knightley and that it essentially exists as a projection of his personality:

She felt all the honest pride and complacency which her alliance with the present and future proprietor could fairly warrant, as she viewed the respectable size and style of the building. . . . It was just what it ought to be, and it looked what it was--and Emma felt an increasing respect for it, as the residence of a family of such true gentility. . . . It was a sweet view. . . . English verdure, English culture, English comfort. . . . (E, 244, 245, 246)

On the whole, however, this theme of men as holders of power is not dominant. Emma gains status through her father and her association with the Knightleys. But any change in her status threatens Emma throughout the novel. The courtship ritual, or rather the lack of it, reflects the unusual position Emma occupies in Highbury. Formal occasions for courtship rarely occur. Mr. Woodhouse can endure very little company, and he opposes marriage. He considers Isabella, his daughter, and Mrs. Weston, the former governess, as basically "lost" due to their marriages. Knightley's visits to Hartfield are not visits of courtship. Elton marries, and during his courtship, he exhibits some signs of a

man in love, such as sighing. But the courtship takes place outside Highbury, and he is seen mostly as a married man. Only an outsider who injects himself into Highbury can break this pattern.

When Frank Churchill finally appears in Highbury to visit his recently married father, Mr. Weston, he brings a new vitality, and for two weeks, he carries on what seems to be a standard courtship of Emma. He visits often, compliments her, and enters into the family circle. Together, they decide that the Crown Inn should again be the scene of a ball. When he returns from an absence of two months, the ball takes place and he plays a major part. At Box Hill, he openly flirts with Emma. When he first appears, Emma is impressed by his looks and charming manners towards her. Basically, no one has treated her this way. She imagines that she is in love and makes remarks to herself about symptoms of listlessness, weariness, restlessness, and stupidity (E, 177-78).

However, Emma feels uneasy once he leaves on the two-month trip. After all, he did delay very long before visiting his father, she does not want to marry anyone, anyway, and he went to London just for a haircut! Emma decides she really does not love him and hopes he will not resume his attentions to her. Both of them carry on the flirtation at Box Hill as a game, not as a serious interchange, although it has serious consequences. Emma enjoys the male companionship, however, and the ritual that goes with it. It enhances

her and makes her feel desirable. Emma does not realize Churchill's real intent, which is to cover a secret engagement to Jane Fairfax, another new arrival in the community, who lives with her relatives, the Bates. Churchill uses the courtship process as a cover, carries on a secret engagement which is not proper, and embarrasses and hurts his intended, Jane, rather purposefully through his association with Emma (Mudrick, 197-99).

Emma's relationship with Knightley does not take on the trappings of courtship until late in the novel. He plays the role of a near relation and the frequent visitor. Unconsciously, perhaps, he is attracted to Emma because Austen reveals that he has kept a memento of Emma's childhood, and he appreciates her physical beauty as a woman. Knightley assumes the mantle of a confirmed bachelor, though, and he dislikes change, also. Both need to become aware of sexual stirrings towards each other. This begins to occur at the Crown Ball and at the Donwell Abbey visit. Knightley rescues Harriet from a social snub by Elton by dancing with her. This impresses Emma, since Knightley does not dance, and he then dances with Emma. At Donwell Abbey, Emma realizes the attractiveness and importance of the estate. Once these events occur, two further situations shake them into considering each other romantically. Frank Churchill's attentions rouse Knightley into the realization that Emma is, after all, a lovely twenty-one year old woman. Then, because of her "Knightley rescue" at the Ball, Harriet confesses to

Emma that she loves him, and she thinks he returns the feeling. Harriet's announcement affects Emma immediately: "Emma's eyes were instantly withdrawn. . . . A few minutes were sufficient for making her acquainted with her own heart. . . . Mr. Knightley must marry no one but herself!" (E, 280)

Essentially, however, Knightley really does not carry on a courtship. And, even when Emma realizes her love for him and they declare mutual affection, at first she does not consider marriage. A plot twist at the very close of the novel allows the marriage, much to Mr. Woodhouse's consternation, and Knightley moves in with Emma at Hartfield.

The marriage of Emma and Knightley closes the novel, and, as usual, Austen does not provide glimpses of the hero as husband. In one view, their marriage represents an achieved maturity on Emma's part, a completed personality on Knightley's part, and a union of equals, in addition to acting as a symbol of a resurrected Highbury (Monaghan, 141-42; Fergus, in Monaghan, ed., 83). However, once Emma realizes her love for Knightley, she acts in a traditional female mode of dependence. She gains her sense of identity and purpose through Knightley. She thinks:

What had she to wish for? Nothing, but to grow more worthy of him, whose intentions and judgment had been ever so superior to her own. Nothing, but that the lessons of her past folly might teach her humility and circumspection in future. . . . She could now look forward to giving him that full and perfect confidence which her disposition was most ready to welcome as a duty. (E, 328)

Emma only becomes worthy of Knightley as a marriage partner when she shares his point of view and accedes to his version of reality and truth.

All along, this marriage has been threatened by Emma's father. Her relationship to him is so strong and potentially so destructive that she suppresses her feelings towards others and is perhaps a reason for her flight into her imaginary world. Mr. Woodhouse serves as a severely limiting character who is not a good role model or teacher to Emma. Even though it appears that Emma controls the household as hostess and favored child, Mr. Woodhouse really controls and limits her life. Emma chooses visitors carefully because her father cannot stand excitement or many people. He eats a sparse, bland, restricted diet which he seeks to impose on others. He rarely leaves the house. A Christmas eve dinner at the Westons, a half-mile away, is a major production. A visit to Donwell Abbey requires detailed attention to his needs. He is disconsolate at Mrs. Weston's marriage, and he is not reconciled yet to his daughter Isabella's marriage. Unless he is tended to in every particular, Mr. Woodhouse simply threatens to die. On Mr. Knightley's declaration of love, Emma thinks first that she cannot leave her father and thus will not marry Knightley. Emma's relationship to her father remains unchanged throughout the novel. Austen seems to approve of her devotion and duty, but does not seem to realize what this type of relationship costs.

Austen presents only a few other husbands and fathers: Elton, John Knightley, and Weston. None, except Weston, is an admirable husband, and the fathers (Knightley, Weston) provide few examples of commendable actions. Elton's wife manipulates him to a great extent. Knightley is a restrictive husband and father who is quick to be irritated, always busy, a formal father to his children, and lacking in respect towards Emma's father, who receives assiduous attention despite his crochety character. He usually makes Emma nervous when he is present (E, 63, 198, 206). Weston is a pleasant man who rescues Miss Taylor from the status of "old maid" and who will become a father again in this second marriage. But he has shown little attention to his son, Frank Churchill, and he sent him to relatives as a young boy when Frank's mother died. Although this could be considered responsible behavior, and it was not unusual for relatives to adopt children, Mr. Weston rarely corresponded with Frank and almost never saw him.

Again, marriage, husband-wife relationships, and parental roles per se are not necessarily Austen's main themes. Emma resists her own marriage and plays with marriage through others. Few married couples appear in the novel, and Austen approves of Emma's relationship to her father. Austen uses the absence of other role models to show Emma's education under the guidance of Knightley. She must abandon adolescent values and activities and learn to merge her inner life with her outward behavior in order to

become a worthy adult. Knightley acts as the teacher in these tasks and the medium through which Emma comes to know herself. Knightley is a "perfectionist" who can meet his own standards; approves of Emma's duty to her father; enjoys his superiority in age, wisdom, and maturity; likes being right; and, finally, becomes aware of Emma's potential as his wife (Paris, 92).

By the end of the novel, Emma realizes that Knightley has been right in his judgments of every single instance where she behaves according to her own conception of attitudes and values, with the exception of her behavior towards her father. Knightley disapproves of Emma's crusade to remake Harriet Smith, whom he considers a poor companion. He indicates this to Mrs. Weston, thereby faulting her as a poor teacher to Emma. He states directly to Emma early in the novel: "You have been no friend to Harriet Smith." (E, 41, 23, 24) He notes the impropriety of Emma's matchmaking attempts. He reproves her for interfering in the courtship of Harriet and Robert Martin, whom Knightley considers an exemplary person. He also warns her against an attempt to pair Mr. Elton and Harriet.

Knightley also corrects Emma on proper social behavior. Even though she thinks that she acts properly, he chides her on her slights to Jane Fairfax. Emma's most serious mistake is to insult Miss Bates at Box Hill, for which Knightley seriously rebukes her: "How could you be so insolent in your wit to a woman of her character, age, and

situation? . . . Her situation should secure your compassion. It was badly done indeed!" (E, 257)

Knightley makes known his suspicions of Frank Churchill's behavior fairly early in Churchill's tenure at Highbury. When Frank sends a letter to Emma which reveals his secret engagement to Jane Fairfax and explains his attentions to Emma, Knightley reads the letter in open disapproval: "He trifles here . . . as to the temptation. He knows he is wrong, and has nothing rational to urge.--Bad--He ought not to have formed the engagement. . . . Mystery; Finesse--how they pervert the understanding!" (E, 306-7)

Emma must meet Knightley's high, correct standards. He makes this clear early in the novel:

To be sure--our discordances must always arise from my being in the wrong.

'Yes,' said he, smiling--'and reason good. I was sixteen years old when you were born.'

A material difference then. . . . and no doubt you were much my superior in judgment at that period of our lives; but does not the lapse of one-and-twenty years bring our understandings a good deal nearer?

Yes--a good deal nearer. . . I still have the advantage of you by sixteen years' experience, and by not being a pretty young woman and a spoiled child. (E, 67)

Knightley holds this advantage until the end. Emma reforms her behavior towards Jane Fairfax and Miss Bates; she chastizes Frank Churchill in front of Mrs. Weston; and she feels guilty about her role in Harriet's life. However, whether Emma's character will remain subdued when married to

Knightley is questionable. To Austen, Knightley emerges as a true hero. He plays the role of an exemplary landlord, reflects the advantages of work, and is the agent of Emma's education into his conception of adulthood. No other character in the novel comes close to fulfilling these roles.

Written within a year of her death, Persuasion presents a heroine and scene quite unlike Austen's fresh, young women and rural, landed society of Pride and Prejudice and Emma. Anne Elliot, about twenty-eight years old, lives with her father Sir Walter Elliot and sister Elizabeth at Kellynch Hall in Somerset. Though a titled estate owner, Sir Walter has allowed Kellynch Hall to deteriorate through profligate spending and rents it to an admiral and his wife, the Crofts. Sir Walter moves the family to rooms in Bath, while Anne spends some time with her other sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Charles Musgrove, at Uppercross.

In Persuasion, the majority of male characters are not rural landholding gentry. Only Sir Walter and his cousin and eventual heir, William Elliot, represent this class. Charles Musgrove and his family come from the middle-class. The remaining male characters are naval officers: Admiral Croft; Captains Benwick and Harville, whom Anne meets at Lyme; and Captain Wentworth, former fiancé of Anne, who returns to the scene after an eight-year absence.

Anne exists in an unenviable position throughout most of the novel. She is the least favored daughter but the most talented and intelligent. She has a poor chance of marrying

well or marrying at all. She carries the burden of an unrequited love for Captain Wentworth, whom her father and family friend Lady Russell refused to let her marry because of his poor prospects and lower-class status. Thus, Anne's feelings towards men are strongly affected by this experience. She has had many years to reflect on men and marriage. Anne's feelings on these subjects are not expressed until the last pages of the novel because she has repressed them and has had no one to whom to express them. However, her feelings can be judged to be those she holds throughout the novel.

Anne and Captain Harville carry on a lengthy conversation at the White Hart in Bath while others of their acquaintance, including Wentworth, hover at the edge of the action. Anne's view of men focuses on their advantages and activities in the world, which tend to distract them from developing deep feelings for the women in their lives. On men in the world, Anne remarks:

We live at home, quiet, confined, and our feelings prey upon us. You are forced on exertion. You have always a profession, pursuits, business of some sort or another, to take you back into the world immediately, and continual occupation and change soon weaken impressions.
(P, 221)

On men's advantages, Anne contends:

Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything /on men's or women's constancy, feelings, etc./ (P, 222)

On men's feelings, Anne asserts:

We certainly do not forget you so soon as you forget us. . . . Your feelings may be the strongest. . . . but . . . ours are the most tender. . . . I believe you equal to every important exertion, and to every domestic forbearance. . . . All the privilege I claim for my own sex . . . is that of loving longest, when existence or when hope is gone. (P, 221, 222, 224)

Captain Harville refutes all of this, but he is not the main target here. Anne really directs these remarks to Wentworth, who hears all of this conversation on the side. Anne is telling him, in a bitter way, that she continued to love him all during his seafaring absence. At the same time, she blames him to some extent for quitting her without a struggle when her father and Lady Russell disapproved of their marriage. Marriages thus still occur as the result of appropriate social and financial matches. Significantly, however, the only marriages presented in Persuasion are middle-class (the Musgroves, the Musgrove parents, the Crofts, and the Harvilles), and the only happy unions occur among the naval personnel. Before Anne meets the Harvilles, she thinks at one point that no couple of her acquaintance seems happy except the Crofts, because the others lack true mutual affection and esteem for one another (P, 63, 64).

The naval marriages always exist on the periphery of danger, however, for the men's occupation is at sea and their success is measured in war and the number of ships and amount of booty they capture. In Persuasion, Austen abandons the ideal of the landowner and extolls the naval community as a desirable lifestyle and profession. This is, indeed, a major

change in her thinking about men's occupation, power, and social status. Although her choice of characters in this novel may represent a new plot device, the evidence indicates that Austen chose characters and plot for deeper reasons than variety.

The novel opens with Sir Walter Elliot admiring his place in the book on the Baronetage. He concerns himself only with the externals of his own beauty and rank. He allows the estate to slip into disrepair and is not willing to take measures to correct this. His finances are so bad that his solicitor advises him to rent Kellynch Hall (P, 9-17). Clearly, then "Sir Walter lives uselessly and fails to perform even the minimal duties of his station." (Jane Nardin, "Jane Austen and The Problem of Leisure," in Monaghan, ed., 137) Sir Walter does not realize that rank, looks, and manners only count if they reflect the inner man and a real social function (Monaghan, 146, 147). William Elliot, the heir, proves to be an unworthy person who also relies on looks and charming manners. Austen is genuinely distressed at the sunken position of the gentry.

On the other hand, the navy men exhibit numerous good qualities. The solicitor, Mr. Shepherd, muses that they ". . . have very liberal notions, and are likely to make desirable tenants." (P, 22) Louisa Musgrove, one of Charles' sisters, exults on their ". . . friendliness, their brotherliness, their openness, their uprightness. . . ." (P, 95) Captain Wentworth, Anne thinks, ". . . had

distinguished himself, and early gained the other step in rank--and must now, by successive captures, have made a handsome fortune. . . ." (P, 33) thereby theoretically wiping away Sir Walter's and Lady Russell's objections. When Anne meets Wentworth's navy friends, she thinks:

. . . such a betwitching charm in a degree of hospitality so uncommon, so unlike the usual style of give-and-take invitations, and dinners of formality and display, . . . 'These would have been all my friends,' . . . (P, 94)

The navy men work and are quite frankly acquisitive; they are businessmen. All of the admirable men in Persuasion reflect these traits. Austen indicates quite strongly that ". . . doing useful labour and proving that one has done so by earning money and professional success can give direction and purpose to a life--a possibility which the early novels ignore." (Nardin, in Monaghan, ed., 140-41) In a major reversal of position, Anne worries that her family is not worthy of Wentworth once they decide to marry: ". . . she felt her own inferiority keenly. . . . to have no family of respectability, of harmony, of goodwill to offer in return for all the worth and all the prompt welcome which met her in his brothers and sisters. . . ." (P, 239)

Thus, status, formality, and rank mean little to Anne if they are not accompanied by sincere feelings and intent. Being men of feeling, the naval characters make the most interesting suitors. Captain Benwick is still recovering from the death of his fiancée when Anne meets him, and he exhibits signs of depression and melancholy. However, true

to the Austen style, Benwick revives quickly due to the naval companionship and the visit of the Musgrove girls to Lyme. Shortly, he becomes engaged to Louisa Musgrove which relieves Wentworth, who has initially approached Louisa as a marriage prospect.

Ritual plays a smaller role than usual in the courtship pattern in Persuasion. Two of the major arenas, the Uppercross location with the Musgroves and the Lyme location with the naval personnel, notably lack formality and courtship situations. Since they were once engaged, Anne already knows that Wentworth is ". . . a remarkably fine young man, with a great deal of intelligence, spirit, and brilliancy. . . ." which appealed to her as a girl. When Wentworth left, she lost her "bloom" (Paris, 161). As a spurned lover, Wentworth takes on an unseaworthy ship as his first command, which intimates that he would not have feared going down with it in his distraught state (McMaster, 39-40).

Wentworth must reintroduce himself as Anne's suitor. This presents problems in this setting. Four situations allow him to do this, and they reverberate with a repressed sexuality. At the Musgroves, the child Walter climbs all over Anne's back much to her discomfort. Wentworth steps in and whisks him away, which indicates that he is responsive to Anne. This is further demonstrated when he insists that, after a lengthy walk, Anne go with the Crofts in their carriage because he knows she is tired. At Lyme, when Louisa, through careless actions, falls off a stone wall and hits her

head, Anne reacts the most swiftly in the emergency. Terribly impressed, Wentworth insists that she return to Uppercross with him and Henrietta, Louisa's sister, to break the news to the Musgroves. Doing this, he rewards Anne for her actions and removes her from the certain job of nursing Louisa, which is left to Mary and Charles Musgrove. Finally, Wentworth overhears Anne's conversation with Harville on men, love, and constancy. He realizes that she gave him up on principle, not out of weakness, and in a letter, he professes that he has continued to love her for the eight years of their separation. Reestablished in each other's eyes, they soon come together as lovers. Theirs is more truly a love story than other Austen novels. Wentworth emerges as a more romantic type than Darcy or Knightley. After all, he is not only handsome and possesses good manners, but he pursues a dangerous profession, has acquired a fortune by his skill, and will go on living this way after the novel closes.

Again, there is no indication of how Wentworth will act as a husband or father except that he will certainly be absent at sea and be in danger. In reality, Anne derives little security and permanence from this marriage, but she happily anticipates being a navy wife and living in a navy community at the close of the novel. She witnesses two attractive husbands, Admiral Croft and Captain Harville. The Crofts exist in a mutually happy union to which each contributes equally. Mrs. Crofts has spent much time at sea with her husband which, most unusually, helps her share her

spouse's occupation. Captain Harville, injured on duty, spends his time usefully employed in his small house. Charles Musgrove, who once courted Anne, manages to endure wife Mary's near-hypochondria and complaining nature through a "civil and agreeable" sense and temper. Anne does admire this. However, except for sport, ". . . his time was otherwise trifled away, without benefit from books or anything else." (P, 45) He seems to pay little attention to his son, and when the boy takes a bad fall, Charles decides to visit his family, much to Mary's distress. However, Anne indicates that nursing belongs in a woman's province. In this society, Charles' inattention here can not probably be taken as neglectful.

Austen levels the most severe criticism of the parental role at Sir Walter Elliot, "a conceited, silly father," who is left with three adolescent girls at the death of his wife. Anne retains a habitual respect for him even though he neglects his duties. He is totally blind to Anne's worth, criticizes her choice of friends as too lowly, and keeps as a companion to his daughter Elizabeth a designing widow, Mrs. Clay (P, 10, 11, 150). As mentioned earlier, the prospect of re-introducing Wentworth to her father and family mortifies Anne.

Sir Walter, as do so many Austen parents, neglects his duties as role model and teacher. In this last Austen novel, no male functions as a teacher to the females. In this instance, it is Wentworth who must be educated. He

". . . must come to appreciate Anne's virtues and to understand his own faults. . . . blindness and pride. . . ."

(Paris, 153-54) He considers Anne weak for breaking their engagement. He could have married her when he first made his fortune. He comes into her circle again to find a wife, but he attaches himself at first to the trifling Louisa Musgrove. He needs to overhear Anne telling Harville that men may love strongly, but women love longest, before he is really sure of his true feelings.

Despite this "blindness and pride," Wentworth emerges as a dashing hero. This is primarily due to his actions in the navy, but his other qualities slowly surface. Anne recalls from their earlier courtship, "his own decided, confident temper," "his own amiable heart," and his good manners (P, 62, 88, 135). His sensitivity to her needs appears through the four events described above. Interestingly, however, Anne's description of an ideal man occurs when she meets William Elliot, who has good looks, polished manners, knowledge of the world, and family attachment. He is "steady, observant, moderate, candid; never run away with by spirits or by selfishness. . . ." (P, 135, 136-40) Anne continues this favorable assessment, but she later learns through an old friend, Mrs. Smith, that William Elliot is untrustworthy and uses his looks and manners as a veneer for his opportunism (P, 153). In contrast, Wentworth does not possess the polished manners of the upper class, but he, along with the naval community, bases his actions on ". . . generous,

kindly, sensitive feelings. . . . truly genteel /but/ . . . not always strictly decorous." (Nardin, 137) Presumably, Anne finds all of the other qualities at first attributed to William Elliot in Wentworth.

At the end of Persuasion, there is less security and certainty than in Pride and Prejudice and Emma. It is not clear what kind of a life Anne will lead or how long Wentworth will survive; he can lose his fortune or his life. Although women still depend on men and identify themselves through men in relationships and marriage, the admirable men now work at a profession. Austen criticizes men's loss of responsibility and status as landowners while she holds out the prospect of a new society run by men which is not based on the land.

Considering Pride and Prejudice, Emma, and Persuasion by analyzing Austen's images of men leads to illuminating but not always consistent conclusions. Two situations should be kept in mind. First, Austen's family, class, and the historical time-period did have some effect on what she wrote. The type of analysis which separates the literature from the life and times of the creator is certainly valuable and has enjoyed great popularity and esteem. However, reintegrating the creator with her creations provides a more satisfying, richer canvas on which to view Austen's works.

Austen came from a closely-knit family within whose circle she remained until the day she died. It is difficult to imagine that the development of her views on men were not

affected by the men in her family. Her father, whom she regarded with great esteem and affection, played a large role in her education. Her brother James, who became a minister, also played a significant part in her education through letters, shared reading, and the example of an Oxford education, which her father also possessed. Edward, who was adopted by wealthy relatives, was somewhat removed, but he provided a home and visiting place for his mother and sisters for periods after the elder Austen's death. Henry tried careers in the army and business before bankruptcy helped persuade him to try the ministry rather late in life. He experienced a successful career change. Francis and Charles entered cadet school and navy life as boys between the ages of twelve and fourteen. They rose on merit to become admirals, who participated in a glorious era for the British navy. Jane corresponded regularly with all of the brothers, maintained a life-long affection and regard for them, and participated in their lives directly as she observed them pass through phases as suitors, husbands, fathers, and career men.

Austen passed through phases herself. She experienced, along with her mother and sister, the necessity of being dependent on her male relatives for an income and a home. Although she did enjoy a measure of success and income from her books, these came rather late in her life. How she wrote as a young woman of nineteen or twenty in "First Impressions" certainly changed as she grew older and more

mature. She rewrote Pride and Prejudice at about age thirty-seven, wrote Emma when she was about forty, and in declining health, composed Persuasion when forty-one years old. In those twenty or more years, her world had to grow wider, more varied, and more complex through her own moves and her father's and brothers' lives. Although she remained primarily in a conservative, rural society, she also must have become aware of political, economic, and social changes developing in England after nearly twenty-five years of intermittent warfare, which encompassed nearly all of her adult life.

Secondly, authors exercise much choice of what to put into their works. They also operate within various literary conventions and according to their own vision. For purposes of the plot or due to the requirements of the form, Austen created men in certain occupations with certain personality characteristics. For instance, despite apparently admirable role models in her own family, she provided some silly clergymen and numerous poor husbands and fathers for didactic, illustrative, or narrative purposes. At the same time, certain men were drawn so that the heroine made a choice between men who were "good" and men who were "bad," despite the rather limited supply of real men who were so black and white. In addition, although the reader is made directly aware of the heroines' inner thoughts and outer behavior, the men were seen only from women's viewpoints, through the men's conversations with women, or through the men's actions as

reported to the women. Thus, men's inner life was not presented, and they were seen only in social, domestic, home-bound situations. Men's thoughts could only be inferred. Along with this generally sketchy outline of the men, Austen's own highly developed ironic style kept the reader aware of the incongruity which often existed between what both men and women said and how they thought and actually behaved. Thus, defining the men's characters becomes especially tricky due to viewpoint and irony.

With these biographical and literary considerations in mind, it is still possible to make some general observations about the male characters. First, propriety or manners and conduct was extremely important in the male world. How men related to people and things defined them to a great extent. Towards people, they should show correct behavior which included appropriate manners, speech, looks, and demeanor. Towards objects, they should show proper care of material possessions, houses, and grounds. However, these outward conventions could be dropped or modified if a higher moral cause or true feelings were at stake. Outward behavior was significant for the smooth running of a highly regulated society, but it had to match or be congruent with inner worth. Thus, a man reflected true propriety when he was honest; had true, sincere feelings; acted responsibly towards friends, relatives, and dependents; and carried out the responsibilities of his class. All of the Austen heroes (and the heroines) reflected these traits, which were discussed at length

in the three novels.

Within this framework, Austen's men (and women) carried on their lives. For male-female relationships in general, Austen's ideal remained essentially the same in all three novels, although the setting and class of the characters changed. True, mutual, sincere feelings should regulate male-female relationships along with mutual respect. Elizabeth remarked in Pride and Prejudice that love, personal satisfaction, and regard for human qualities should dominate marriages. The women in all three novels expressed these same feelings. Realistically, however, women were severely disadvantaged in comparison to men in the world. All three of the heroines realized this and made specific comments about it at some point, with Anne Elliot's statement being the most complete. In consequence, then, women did marry for status and financial security because men conferred these advantages. Elizabeth gained the most, but Emma also enhanced her position. Anne, on thinking about it for eight years, still considered valid Lady Russell's advice not to marry Wentworth earlier. She gained a great deal financially when she did marry him, and his status was no longer a problem due to his wealth and navy rank.

As role models, men received a great deal of criticism in Austen's novels. The great majority of husbands and fathers were invariably weak, silly, neglectful, or even harmful. But, because this was still a traditional society, the daughters in the three novels retained a habitual respect

for their fathers and commented on it. Of course, daughters had little opportunity or right to criticize fathers openly. These failed role models could not all have been devices of plot construction, thus Austen made a serious statement on the necessity of men to carry out both familial and class responsibilities. All of the admired men did just this. Austen's ambiguous position on men as teachers may have reflected the problem of male role models. Men did not appear uniformly as teachers to women. As analyzed previously, Darcy learned from Elizabeth as well as teaching her, Knightley did act as the significant teacher, and Wentworth underwent all of the education. Austen marked out clearcut expectations for men in society and criticized them for failing to meet her standards as role models.

The most significant development over time of the male characters occurred in Austen's presentation of their occupations or professions. There might have been a majority of bad husbands and fathers, but there were still some or one good one in every novel. Austen was somewhat ambiguous on her clergymen creations. There was no clear development on men as teachers. However, the admired male characters and some of the criticized male characters in all classes developed from men who did not work or were not seen working in the early novels to working men with a purpose in the later novels. In Pride and Prejudice, Darcy, Bingley, Mr. Bennet, Wickham, Colonel Fitzwilliam, and Collins did not work. They inherited or had been given their positions. None of them

earned their positions and, there was almost no discussion of their positions as landowners, landlords, clergymen, or military men. There was little or no separation between a workplace and a home or between work time and leisure time. Only Mr. Gardiner was an exception to this. The emphasis was on what men were or on their characters, not on what they did.

In Emma, both admired and criticized male characters worked. George Knightley, John Knightley, Robert Martin, and even Mr. Elton, who was often absent on clerical duties, worked purposefully at a specific position, even though they still only reported their work to the women and were not actually observed working. Mr. Weston was the only nonworking, favorably presented male character, but he had worked in trade and earned enough to live a country life. The workplace and home, work time and leisure time were more separated in Emma.

In Persuasion, the naval men represented a middle-class, acquisitive, hard-working, professional group of men. All of the men with positive qualities came from this group. Thus, there was a clear development, as indicated earlier, from Austen's three earlier novels (including Pride and Prejudice) and the three later novels (including Emma and Persuasion) on the subject of work and leisure time. In addition, Austen moved away from the landed society altogether in Persuasion. Workplace and home, work time and leisure time were totally separated. And, interestingly, Mrs. Crofts observed her husband at work, and presumably Anne Elliot would share her husband's sphere, also.

In these three worlds, women still found their identities through men, still sought financial security and status through marriage, and largely lived their lives through men. However, Austen did not present stereotypical men nor present the men with one set of character traits and the women with another. Comparing the three novels reveals a wider range of characters than at first suspected. That is, Austen gave the reader a mixture of heroes; weak fathers, poor husbands; a few good fathers and husbands; a range of occupations; some men who did not contribute to the plot but seemed to be good, amiable men; some positive acting and good, amiable men; some men with positive and negative character traits; a few neutral male characters who did not seem to embody positive or negative traits; and last, a number of charmers and insinulators. On the other hand, Austen's women shared many of the same character traits with the men. That is, they also reflected qualities of honesty; true, sincere feelings; and responsibility towards others, as well as exhibiting characteristics of greed, silliness, and disingenuousness. Women did not carry out their lives in as wide a public sphere as men did, but it was important for them to behave in a morally and socially correct manner. What this says about Austen is that, given the restrictions of her personal and literary world, she created men who showed a wide range of human qualities and who reflected her own personal and professional development, as well as societal developments, over a twenty-year span.

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IV. CHARLOTTE BRONTË: ALIENATION

Readers of Charlotte Brontë (1816-55) know a great deal more about her life and her work than they know about Jane Austen. Austen rarely spoke about her writing in her letters. Her sister Cassandra destroyed many of the letters, and those that remain were written primarily to Cassandra when they were apart, so there are numerous gaps. With Brontë, however, a fuller record exists. Arthur Bell Nicholls, her husband, kept many of her papers. Her lifelong friend, Ellen Nussey, preserved all of Charlotte's letters to her. In addition some letters from another lifelong friend, Mary Taylor, letters to her brother Branwell and her sisters from Brussels, courtship letters from her mother Maria Branwell to her father Patrick, letters to another friend Laetitia Wheelwright, and some letters to Monsieur Constantin Héger also remain. The developments of her professional life can be followed through remaining childhood manuscripts and letters to William Smith Williams and James Taylor, employees of her publisher, George Smith (Shorter, 23-26).

These letters and papers document a remarkable and tragic life, one that, although fully recorded, is still subjected to much study. This record reflects Charlotte's strong attachment to her home in Haworth (Yorkshire) and to her

family. Important connections can be made between the events of her life and the life in her literature. Significant links exist between the men in her surroundings and the men in her literature; thus it is necessary to review events in her life which affected her writing and the fictional men she created.

"Few great authors have been so tied by domestic conditions as were the Brontës. . . ." (Offer, 12). The Reverend Patrick Brontë, born in Ireland and educated at Cambridge, married Maria Branwell of Cornwall whom he met while in an early curacy. They became parents of Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte, Patrick Branwell (called Branwell), Emily, and Anne before they moved to the permanent living at Haworth in 1820. Ill on arrival, Mrs. Brontë died at Haworth in 1821, leaving Patrick with six children from age eight to under two. Mrs. Brontë's sister, known to the children as Aunt Branwell, came to the parsonage soon after to care for the family and to remain until her death in 1842. Mr. Brontë never remarried.

Faced with a large household to support, Patrick Brontë decided to send the oldest daughters, Maria and Elizabeth, then Charlotte and Emily, to the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge. This decision, fraught with momentous consequences, probably derived from Mr. Brontë's opinion that he could better educate his only son rather than his daughters at home. Interestingly, this reversed the pattern of children's education, since boys usually went away. As a practical matter, there would be fewer children underfoot. Finally, providing education for the girls would mean that

they might have a chance later to earn a living since the incumbency at Haworth would not provide an inheritance.

In the next series of deaths to befall the family, Maria and Elizabeth, while at Cowan Bridge, contracted consumption and died within a year. Mr. Brontë withdrew Charlotte and Emily and brought them home in 1825, where for the next six years, he took responsibility for the children's education. During this time, the four children, prompted by a box of toy soldiers provided by their father in 1826, began to create a complex web of fantasy stories which claimed their attention into early adulthood. Mr. Brontë fell ill in 1830 and this reminded Charlotte of the necessity of fitting herself for a job. She went to Miss Wooler's school at Roe Head from 1831-32, where she met her two lifelong friends, Ellen Nussey and Mary Taylor. After another period at home, Charlotte returned to Roe Head as a governess-teacher from 1835-36, with Emily coming along as a student for a short time. Anne replaced Emily eventually. Then, Charlotte moved with the school to Dewsbury Moor, also as a governess-teacher, from 1837-38. Emily remained at home.

During the period 1839-42, Charlotte received two proposals of marriage, a serious one from Ellen Nussey's brother, Henry, and one she interpreted as frivolous from a visiting Irish curate who knew her one day before proposing. During this period, Charlotte also spent two short periods as a governess with different families. Extremely dissatisfied with governess life, Charlotte determined to go to school

abroad for experience and language education with the hope that the sisters would open their own school.

In February, 1842, Charlotte and Emily crossed the channel to Brussels to attend the Pensionnat Héger, a husband and wife enterprise. Monsieur Héger became a significant influence on Charlotte's life. The sisters returned to Haworth for their aunt's funeral in October, 1842. Emily then stayed at the parsonage, and Charlotte returned, as a teacher this time, to Brussels in January, 1843. The next year would be a most difficult time and a turning point in her life. On her return to Haworth in January, 1844, Charlotte entered a period marked by her growing awareness of a strong attachment to Monsieur Héger while at the same time watching the ordeal of her brother Branwell's dissolution and death from 1845-48.

The sisters, meanwhile, seriously worked on becoming professional authors. Under the pseudonyms of Currer (Charlotte), Acton (Anne), and Ellis (Emily) Bell, they published a book of their poems in 1846. To several publishers, the three sent, together, the manuscripts of Emily's Wuthering Heights, Anne's Agnes Grey, and Charlotte's The Professor. Emily's and Anne's works were accepted, but Charlotte's was not (The Professor was published posthumously in 1857). Advised by the firm of Smith, Elder to try again, Charlotte sent Jane Eyre which was immediately accepted and published in 1847, along with Emily's and Anne's works which another publisher printed.

A short-lived euphoria prompted by the success and controversy of all the books and the mystery of the authors' identities ended with the deaths of Branwell (who never knew of his sisters' writing) in September 1848, Emily in December, 1848, and Anne in May, 1849. All died of consumption, with Branwell's condition complicated by long use of alcohol and drugs. This truly calamitous series of deaths seriously interrupted but did not stop Charlotte's writing. Smith, Elder published Shirley in October, 1849 and Villette in January, 1853. From 1847, Charlotte experienced a rather painful period of fame which brought little monetary compensation. Afflicted with shyness, she nonetheless ventured forth from Haworth to travel to London and other places on various journeys where she met, among others, William Thackeray, George H. Lewes, Harriet Martineau, and Elizabeth Gaskell. James Taylor, a member of Smith, Elder's firm, became seriously interested in Charlotte who reported in letters that she was attracted to him while he was apart from her, but once he actually came on the premises, she experienced revulsion towards him. She finally rejected the idea of ever marrying him.¹

By now nearly consumed with loneliness, despite brief sojourns away from the parsonage, Charlotte accepted a proposal from her father's curate, Arthur Bell Nicholls, who had been at Haworth since 1845, an observer of this remarkable

¹Although most sources indicate he proposed to her, I found no evidence of an actual statement of proposal by him.

family drama. At first, Patrick Brontë refused any consideration of Charlotte's marriage to a mere curate. Eighteen months elapsed between Nicholls' proposal in December, 1852 and the marriage in June, 1854. Entered into with great reserve and trepidation, the marriage apparently did make Charlotte content. However, this happiness, too, was short-lived. After a wet walk on the moors in November, 1854, Charlotte caught a cold which, combined with early pregnancy, led to respiratory problems and aggravated morning sickness. She died on March 31, 1855 at age thirty-nine. (See Gérin, Lane, Peters, and Ratchford for indepth examinations of Charlotte Brontë's biographical and literary life. Lane "updates" Elizabeth Gaskell's The Life of Charlotte Brontë and includes most of Gaskell's text within her work. For Patrick Brontë, see Annette Hopkins, The Father of the Brontës)

This sketch of Charlotte Brontë's life is extremely important because its events are closely linked with her creativity. From the time she was a child until she died, everyday affairs and traumatic happenings covered a teeming imaginative life. Part of her genius derived from her ability to combine her inner, imaginary world with her outer, realistic world in such unusual ways for the period that critics and readers concluded wrongly that she simply had made up numerous incidents with no basis in fact. To the world who knew her, she was the small, plain, shy minister's daughter who lived quietly in the parsonage which faced a graveyard, backed on the Yorkshire moors, and stood a few

hundred yards away from the Black Bull Inn. Those who visit Haworth today have little trouble, however, concluding why all of the Brontës wrote as they did.

In developing her various images of men, Charlotte's views of men in general were certainly affected by her deep interest in the Romantic movement. She grew up during the height of the Byronic cult ". . . with its 'men of loneliness and mystery,' . . . with their 'foreheads high and pale,' which 'sable curls in wild profusion veil,' . . ." (Masefield, 130). The Brontë children were accustomed to expressing themselves, at least at home, freely, and they could read anything they wished. In a letter giving advice to Ellen Nussey, Charlotte suggested all of the following authors: Milton, Shakespeare, Goldsmith, Pope, Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, and Southey; Bewick and Audubon for natural history; and Hume and Rollin for history (Lane, 107). Both Tory and Whig newspapers as well as Blackwood's Magazine arrived at the house. Charlotte also admired the artwork of the popular "annuals," 3½" X 5½" boxed albums of prose and poetry plus a series of engravings executed by John Martin which illustrated romantic themes. Charlotte transmuted his representations of ancient lost cities, in addition to engraver William Finden's works accompanying Byron's poetry, into the pictures in the "Glass Town" series (Moglen, 24, 25; Lane, 72, 75; Gérin, 5, 30, 41-49).

Fed by Romantic imagery and tales of popular political figures of the era, such as Wellington and Napoleon, and

prompted by a gift of wooden soldiers from their father, the four children created an extensive literature. Charlotte chronicled: "Our plays were established: Young Men, June, 1826; Our Fellows, July 1827; Islanders, December, 1827." Charlotte entered aggressively into the masculine world of these plays, then took over the Young Men's Magazine established by Branwell. Collaborating with Branwell on what became the "Glass Town Chronicles," she dealt with war, politics, adultery, great escapades, intrigue, and murder. Eventually, when Charlotte went off to Roe Head School, Glass Town was destroyed, and the two created Angria, which was dominated by Zamorna, mainly Charlotte's creation, who was aggressive, overly masculine, rich, tyrannical, sinful, and adored by his mistresses. Charlotte, who had been writing with the masculine pseudonym of Lord Charles Albert Florian Wellesley, concentrated more and more on the theme of passionate love and withdrew more and more into her own realm of creative freedom. She wrote, independently, many short stories or novelettes.

The fantasy life continued to mesmerize Charlotte, as well as Branwell and her sisters, who created Gondal, for many years. Her years at Roe Head as student and governess-teacher meant a tense dual existence for Charlotte: daily, mundane duties combined with nearly hypnotic episodes of "making out" as Charlotte's friends described her creative periods. Finally, Charlotte made a conscious effort to end ". . . the violent, long-drawn, uninhibited daydream life to

which . . . /the plays/ gave rise. . . . Charlotte in maturity recognized the dangers of the dream and consciously broke out of it, though not without anguish, and not before it had conferred its curious bloom on many areas of her mind." (Lane, 78, 79) In late 1839, at age twenty-three, she decided to abandon Angria and concentrate on serious composition (Lane, 82-83, 97-100; Peters, 20, 26, 39, 50, 98). The origins of most of her chief male characters were certainly found in the juvenile writings, however much they may have been modified by her later real life experiences with men. In addition, other characters and situations, such as the Reed family, Lucy Snowe's dream, Jane Eyre, Bertha Mason, Paulina Hume, and many more appeared in embryo in Charlotte's tales. (See Fannie Ratchford, The Brontës' Web of Childhood for a detailed, though not very interpretative account of the childhood writings)

The rough, emotional, masculine lover of her fantasies affected Charlotte's general views of men in her real life as well. Throughout her correspondence, she commented on the different natures of men and women and the dependence of women on men. Letters to Ellen Nussey and Margaret Wooler noted that men were strange creatures, to be envied, feared, and mistrusted (Letter to Margaret Wooler, January 30, 1876, in Shorter, 133, 134; Keefe, 30, 31; Peters, 202, 203). She was convinced that men, brought up and educated with few limitations on their activities, not only could pursue careers not open to women, but developed minds at once ". . . broader,

stronger, less censorious, more generous--and she felt at ease with these qualities." (Peters, 84) She used her own example to advise William Smith Williams to educate his daughters as well as his sons so they could be independent: "'How should I be /if I didn't have a career/ with youth past, sisters lost, a resident in a moorland parish where there is not a single educated family?'" (Letter to W. S. Williams, July 3, 1849, in Shorter, 395)

Thus, contradictory feelings existed in Charlotte's mind: attraction to strong, emotional, intelligent men which implied a willingness to submit to them as superiors coupled with the opinion that women should be financially independent from men and intellectually equal to them. Throughout her life, men with similar qualities attracted her. For example, Monsieur Héger, James Taylor, and Arthur Bell Nicholls exhibited varying degrees of strength, emotion, dominance, intelligence, and temperament (Peters, 199, 304; Moglen, 73, 232-33).

How did these general views affect her feelings towards marriage and men as husbands? Charlotte never expected to marry, although marriage was still a central topic in her life as it was for all women. For many years, she expressed the same Romantic imagery that appeared in her juvenilia. When she was about twelve, she announced that she would never marry. On the occasion of Henry Nussey's proposal in 1839, she replied:

I feel convinced that mine is not the sort of disposition calculated to form the happiness of a man like you. . . . I will never, for the sake of attaining the distinction or matrimony and escaping the stigma of an old maid, take a worthy man who I am conscious I cannot render happy. (Letter to Henry Nussey, March 5, 1839, in Shorter, 295)

To Ellen, she proclaimed:

I had not, and could not have, that intense attachment which would make me willing to die for him; and, if ever I marry, it must be in that light of adoration. . . . why, it would startle him to see me in my natural home character; he would think I was a wild, romantic enthusiast indeed; I would not sit all day long making a grave face before my husband. (Letter to Ellen Nussey, March 12, 1839, in Shorter, 296-97)

About a year and a half later, however, Charlotte advised Ellen to consider marriage only with men of "common sense, a good disposition, a manageable temper" and then only fall in love, gradually, after the first year of marriage while making sure not to allow her husband to become a tyrant (Letter to Ellen Nussey, November 20, 1840, in Shorter, 305-6). Charlotte's real world intruded on her fantasy world. She knew full well that women lived in a disadvantageous position in society, subject to the whims of fathers, brothers, and husbands, however much they might be adored in fantasy as well as real life. Only rational, controlled, strong women might check male rule (Perters, 95, 96).

Charlotte's comments on marriage continued in a similar vein for many years. To whomever she wrote, she saw marriage only for women who brought money and beauty as bargaining tools so that they might keep an emotional hold on their husbands and retain a degree of independence. Other women should mark out a career, remain single, and be content

with their existence (Lane, 173, 200, 268; Peters, 147, 184; Letters to Ellen Nussey, August 9, 1846; April 23, 1851; Letter to W. S. Williams, June 15, 1848, in Shorter, 307, 317, 321-22, 383).

Arthur Bell Nicholls' proposal to Charlotte came as a great shock to her and to her father. She did not love him; basically, she had ignored him for many years. He had exhibited few characteristics of her ideal lover, except for a poignant and stubborn constancy once he made the proposal. This, perhaps, more than any reason other than her compelling loneliness convinced Charlotte to accept him. Her letter to Ellen announcing the engagement revealed her state of mind:

What I taste of happiness is of the soberest order. I trust to love my husband. I am grateful for his tender love to me. I believe him to be an affectionate, a conscientious, a high-principled man; and if, with all this, I should yield to regrets that fine talents, congenial tastes and thoughts are not added, it seems to me I should be most presumptuous and thankless. . . . There is a strange half-sad feeling in making these announcements. (Letter to Ellen Nussey, April 11, 1854, in Shorter, 486)

Brontë had many good reasons for not entering into marriage. Her knowledge of real marriages was quite limited in that she observed almost none over a long period. Of her acquaintances, Constantin Héger, William Smith Williams, James Kay-Shuttleworth, Henry Nussey, and Elizabeth Gaskell were nearly the only married people she saw at all, and she saw them, except M. Héger, for periods never exceeding a few weeks. She was intellectually superior to Nicholls and did not agree with some of his conservative clerical opinions. She probably feared a late-in-life initiation into sexual

knowledge and knew that her frail physique could not stand bearing children, although she had no idea how to prevent becoming pregnant (and indeed she was pregnant within a very few months).

However, as Charlotte would say, "Reader, she married him." Surprisingly, to her and all around her, the marriage proved amiable. The stiff, statue-like Nicholls gradually disappeared and was replaced by her "dear boy" who showed affection, consideration, and devotion to her. Nicholls also, however, acted as a mid-nineteenth-century conventional husband and controlled Charlotte's time to a great extent. She commented on this several times in letters to Ellen, indicating both a puzzled pleasure in being kept so busy as well as irritation at being constantly in attendance. Despite her happiness and busyness, Charlotte's experience as a married woman would have probably decreased her literary production, even if she had lived for some years. Conjecture can also be made that her literary perceptions of men and married life would no doubt have altered if she had continued to write. Certainly, her images would have been different in her published novels if they had been produced as a married woman (Peters, 443-47, 459, 461-68; Lane, 303-6; Gérin, 532, 551). Her fantasies, indulged in for so long a period from teenage years to adulthood, probably fell far short of reality and would have affected her writing, no doubt.

If Brontë had few real models of men as marriage partners, she observed her father and brother at close range

for many years. Her father Patrick Brontë and her only brother Branwell loomed significantly in her life. Biographers of the Brontës have altered their views of Patrick over time, but he still remains a controversial figure in terms of how he influenced his children's lives. For many years, the dominant assessment of Patrick's relation to Charlotte derived from his portrayal in Elizabeth Gaskell's The Life of Charlotte Brontë, which Brontë himself commissioned Gaskell to write shortly after Charlotte's death and which he corrected when he found errors. But he never critiqued the overall presentation of his character which Gaskell outlined generally as ". . . an eccentric, domineering, selfish and irascible old man." (Lane, 27) However, Gaskell's interpretation of him came largely from her visit to the parsonage late in 1853, a period when Patrick and Charlotte were not on good terms because of the tension aroused by Nicholls' proposal and courtship. On the other hand, Mr. Brontë did have an isolated, almost austere lifestyle in the midst of a busy household of children and servants. He ate nearly all of his meals alone, indulged in a limited, bland diet, and retired promptly at the same hour every night. Over the years, he suffered numerous health problems, spent much time alone in his study, and rarely traveled once he settled the family at Haworth.

Whatever the Reverend Brontë's habits, his children, of course, knew only one father, and their conception of him was not as an eccentric. To them, Patrick Brontë stressed

education and, without doubt, he exerted a formative intellectual influence on all of them. Once returned from Cowan Bridge, Charlotte and Emily joined Branwell and Anne for a six year period at home. Patrick did not follow a formal educational program, but even before Cowan Bridge, Charlotte as well as the others read anything they desired from their father's library and discussed all the events of the day with him. He allowed them considerable freedom within the routine of the household which they used to write reams of fantasy tales. A Church of England minister (he opposed Catholic Emancipation) and a Tory politically, he still stressed the process and value of arriving independently at opinions. Apparently, he treated his own wife as an intellectual equal and during his years as a minister he spoke out against ill-treatment of wives. He indicated sympathy towards the working classes, and he supported the Reform Bill of 1832. His stories of the Luddite riots very near where he had served as a curate helped Charlotte in the later descriptions in Shirley. He was probably more aware of the children's writing than long supposed. He knew they wrote stories, and he heard the sisters read their manuscripts to each other in the evenings. He took great pride in their literary achievements, but, of course, enjoyed Charlotte's longer-lasting success the most. He read all of her novels and made suggestions on some. Perhaps his greatest contribution was simply allowing the children to develop freely within the isolated confines of the parsonage while making his library available to them.

The hesitation of all the children to leave home for any length of time suggests the freedom and serenity they felt there (Lane, 27-29, 52-54, 70-75; Gérin, 5, 30; Moglen, 24-25; Hopkins, 61, 70, 88, 109-13).

Despite his contribution to Charlotte's intellectual development, considerable for a female of this period, Patrick Brontë did undeniably restrict Charlotte's movements. Throughout her correspondence, she constantly referred to her duties at the parsonage: "Her frustrated letters to Ellen about the postponements and restrictions laid down by Papa . . . begin a theme that runs through her letters all her life." (Peters, 86) Concerns for her father's health, comments on his recoveries, and expressions of thanks dotted hundreds of her letters to friends. She wrote to him regularly when absent and provided lively descriptions of the persons and sights encountered. These concerns, however, might not necessarily reflect a tyrannical father. After all, death was a common occurrence in this period and it accompanied Charlotte from the time she was a girl of five. In 1849, after the loss of Branwell, Emily, and Anne, within the past year, she wrote to Ellen: "'After what has happened, one trembles at any appearance of sickness, and when anything ails Papa, I feel too keenly that he is the last the only near and dear relation I have in the world.'" (Letter to Ellen Nussey, August 23, 1849, in Shorter, 230) Mr. Brontë's health remained something of a puzzle. From Charlotte's first preserved letter to him at age thirteen, his health was a constant

reference. Ironically, Patrick Brontë lived to the advanced age of eighty-four, and he outlived not only his wife but every single one of his children.

His health as well as his children's deaths did affect Charlotte's view towards her father. She often remarked, particularly after only the two of them remained, that she could not mention to him any illness or indisposition she suffered: "'I am too much disposed to be nervous. This . . . is a horrid phenomenon. I dare communicate no ailment to Papa; his anxiety harasses me inexpressibly. . . . Solitude, Remembrance, and Longing are to be almost my sole companions. . . .'" (Letter to Ellen Nussey, July, 1849, in Lane, 252) It is difficult to believe that the sense of ". . . duty, subservience, sacrifice, and dependence. . . ." towards her father did not affect her feelings in spite of her love for him and her awareness that he feared she, too, might die, or what might be almost as bad, she might marry someone and leave him totally alone (Peters, 224).

These two fears dominated their relationship in the years after 1849. Mr. Brontë often had forebodings of his daughter's impending marriage, and he hinted darkly that this would mean the death of him. When she informed him of Nicholls' desire to marry her, he became nearly apoplectic. However, as long as Mr. Brontë disapproved, Charlotte would never marry even though she felt her father to be unjust. Over the course of an eighteen month period when Nicholls remained persistent, she eventually convinced her father that

it would be to his advantage to have his curate permanently on the premises. Mr. Brontë's declared opposition focused on the lowly position of Nicholls. Charlotte would be degraded by marrying a curate when she, after all, enjoyed the reputation of a famous author. However, Patrick no doubt harbored a more serious opposition. He was convinced that she could never stand the rigors of childbirth; much of his ranting covered this fear. Once Brontë accepted Nicholls and the marriage and honeymoon ensued, Charlotte re-established an even stronger bond with her father. Events met Patrick's worst fear, however, and ten months after the marriage Charlotte died (Lane, 287, 298, 300; Hopkins, 118; Peters, 343-44, 374, 416-17, 439-40).

Charlotte matched the bond to her father with an equally important attachment to her brother Branwell: "The course which Branwell's life followed profoundly affected Charlotte's personal and artistic development." (Moglen, 39) As the only boy, his family expected great achievements from Branwell, who at an early age like the others, exhibited some literary and artistic talent. Patrick kept him at home and outfitted him with a politically conservative and culturally Romantic education. Charlotte and Branwell established a creative partnership when she was about ten and he about nine years old which continued for many years. Branwell, in many ways, existed as an alter ego. Through him, Charlotte saw what it was like to be petted, to be indulged, to be active in the world, to be "manly" (that is, to box, spend time at

the Black Bull Inn, to drink, and to take drugs). Spare money in an economically hard-pressed family went to Branwell's education; the girls contemplated governess duties not to earn income for themselves but to help put Branwell through art school. For many years, Charlotte never doubted Branwell's rightful place as center of attention in the family.

Charlotte shared her fantasy life primarily with Branwell. However, within a few years after the collaboration began, Charlotte realized she held the superior talent. She created characters modeled on Branwell, which at first reflected a partly amused, tolerant creator: "Patrick Benjamin Wiggins, the portrait of her brother she created half-mockingly, half good-naturedly during these years [early 1830's] falls something short of the dashing tough he imagines himself. . . ." (Peters, 38) In the late 1830's, she withdrew from Branwell's tales and created her own. In the Angrian tales, she explored a brother-sister relationship in "Henry Hastings," the new persona of Branwell. By this time, Branwell's weaknesses had become apparent, and he failed to establish himself in art school. "Henry Hastings" forecast the eventual defeat of the protagonist (Peters, 38, 43-44, 48, 50, 77; G  rin, 139).

Charlotte accepted Branwell's reverses, however. In addition to the conventional place assigned sisters in relation to brothers, Charlotte also imbibed the Romantic ideal that women should expect and accept masculine weaknesses:

"Branwell could, after all, be forgiven. . . . Flaws--even vices--were central to the romantic concept of masculinity. It was part of the female's role to understand and overlook. Patience, understanding, tolerance, duty--these were aspects of the self-abnegating personality which complemented the idolatrous needs of the masculine posture." (Moglen, 40; G  rin, 131) In addition, a psychological case might be made in favor of almost lover-like sentiments toward Branwell which existed in Charlotte's mind. The fantasy stories allowed Charlotte to explore possible sexual feelings towards her brother and men in general which she could never fully admit to in the real world.

Branwell did establish himself for short periods in jobs; his longest tenure was as a tutor at Thorp Green for about two years from 1843-45. As a male tutor, he lived considerably better than Anne and Charlotte did as governesses. He earned more money in his first post than Charlotte did in her third, and his responsibilities consisted only of teaching, not of sewing and caring for small children. This position ended in disgrace, however, when his employer, Mr. Robinson, dismissed him for allegedly carrying on an affair with Mrs. Robinson (what "affair" meant in 1845 is never really made clear in any of the Bront   correspondence). Disconsolate, Branwell came home, never held another job, and slipped destructively along a steep path of drinking and drugs until his death in 1848. From 1845 on, Charlotte's tone toward her brother changed permanently. If she accepted

flaws in his character earlier, she did not accept his behavior in this episode. Charlotte's disapproval and disappointment were not so much based on the fact that he loved Mrs. Robinson or might have behaved in a manner not acceptable to society. What motivated her feelings now seemed to be based on two principles. Charlotte had returned from Brussels in 1844 following a year's experience which she perceived as inattention by both the Hégers. She felt that Mme Héger had turned M. Héger against her. Once again at Haworth, she endured two years of silent suffering due to her continued perception that Héger deliberately paid her little attention and then rejected her. But, she mastered her feelings and went on. Branwell did not, and he made the entire household suffer. In addition, during the time of Branwell's decline, all of the sisters made a decision to become professional authors (and they each published a novel during this period). Perhaps spurred on by the human wreck living a few feet from them, the sisters determined to make use of their talents. Charlotte never forgave Branwell for wasting what talent and opportunities he possessed.

Charlotte's letters to Ellen and William Smith Williams did not mention her own sufferings of love, but she penned an ironic comment to Williams: "'My poor father naturally thought more of his only son than of his daughters. . . . My unhappy brother never knew what his sisters had done in literature--he was not aware that they had ever published a line. We could not tell him . . . for fear of causing him

too deep a pang of remorse for his own time mis-spent, and talents misapplied.'" (Letter to W. S. Williams, October 2, 1848; Shorter, 139)

Perhaps, as one writer suggests, Charlotte's development as a writer depended on Branwell's decline. By involving herself in his fantasy life and by pinning her hopes of success on him she remained entwined in his life. By separating herself from him once she realized the danger of the hold of the fantasy world and the force of her own separate, superior talent, she could establish her own personal and creative identity (Moglen, 39, 58, 75-78). However, Charlotte had no means of divining the future. She began to have doubts about Branwell's talent by the time she was thirteen or fourteen. She started her own stories and characters when she was about sixteen. She tore herself away from the "infernal world," as she termed it, when she was about twenty-three, while Branwell remained enmeshed in it. All of these developments occurred many years before Branwell's serious problems began in the 1840's. Charlotte's creativity did not seem to be built on his gradual self-destruction. Her own ardent, intellectual, and essentially independent nature presaged creative development despite Branwell's example. However, there can be little disagreement that he provided for her much intellectual stimulation at an early age and almost a textbook example of a debauched life lived under the same roof. The smallness of the parsonage and closeness of family life guaranteed that Charlotte was not at all

protected from observing many of the most intimate details of Branwell's activities and illness. Even though she loved him, in her earlier years with an almost desperate intensity, Branwell probably contributed to her creations of flawed men as heroes.

Besides her father and brother, the other male role models most readily available were curates and ministers. Charlotte's father, a staunch Church of England minister with occasional tendencies towards a mild evangelicalism, and her Aunt Branwell, a Methodist with Calvinist tendencies, provided a strong religious background. However, despite many protestations to the contrary of her attachment to the institution of the Church of England, Charlotte disliked nearly every curate who graced the neighborhood. Her father aside, Charlotte's first memorable experience with ministers occurred at Cowan Bridge where she met the Reverend Carus Wilson, the model for Brocklehurst in Jane Eyre. Wilson seemed actually to be worse than his fictional counterpart in some respects. He wrote periodicals such as the The Children's Friend in which, for example, he related the death of a student: "'I bless God that he has taken from us the child of whose salvation we have the best hope and may her death be the means of rousing many of her schoolfellows to seek the Lord while he may be found.'" Wilson basically believed that children were better off dead so they could remain sinless. These severe religious sentiments, in addition to the mental and physical suffering Charlotte and her sisters suffered under his

authority, caused in Charlotte a life-long hostility to him and what he represented (Peters, 13, 15-16, 19).

Closer to home, a series of curates assisted Mr. Brontë over the years. William Weightman, the first to be mentioned in Charlotte's letters, appeared excellent in many respects, but the sisters dubbed him "Miss Celia Amelia" because of his auburn curls and frequent blushes. Charlotte judged him at various times intelligent, interesting, generous, open, sweet-tempered, and cheery as well as handsome. However, he was also somewhat fickle and insincere in his dealings with women. Since he was really the first male outside the family who had a relationship with the sisters, his impressions on Charlotte were important. Despite his flaws, Charlotte preferred him to nearly all of his successors (four of them before Nicholls arrived in 1844), whom she generally considered selfish, narrow-minded, pompous, and dull. She bridled at any suggestion that she might marry one of them. To Ellen she described them as "' . . . a self-seeking, vain, empty race. . . ." and "' . . . as highly uninteresting, narrow and unattractive specimens of the coarser sex.'" (in Peters, 413, 414)

Nicholls' arrival did not appreciably change Charlotte's view. To Ellen, she commented "'I cannot for my life see those interesting germs of goodness in him you discovered; his narrowness of mind always strikes me chiefly.'" Nearly two years later, she wrote "'Who gravely asked you whether Miss Brontë was not going to be married to her papa's

curate. . . . a cold, far-away sort of civility are the only terms on which I have ever been with Mr. Nicholls.'" (Letters to Ellen Nussey, October 9, 1844, July 10; 1846, in Shorter, 465, 466) Of course, she eventually did marry "papa's curate," but his narrow views still continued to worry her even after they were husband and wife. Charlotte, however, always carefully distinguished between the Church of England as an institution and the fallible men who occupied its positions. She was delighted when the neighborhood curates found themselves in her books but dismayed when critics accused her of lack of respect in the portraits. Letters to William S. Williams reflected her determination to write freely about individuals while she maintained her attachment to the institution (Letters to W. S. Williams, December 23, 1847; March 3, 1848; April 2, 1849, in Shorter, 407, 341, 392).

A woman in Brontë's geographical location and social position did not often meet eligible men outside the family circle except for clergymen. Her experiences with a wider circle of males did not come until she went to Brussels and later entered her literary career. Influenced by the Romantic literature she read and the fantasies she created, it was not surprising that Charlotte mentally often blended concepts of men as friends, men as teachers, men as romantic objects, and ideal men, which would lead her to much soul-searching and occasional deep suffering. Her relationships with Constantin Héger, George Smith, and James Taylor all reflected these feelings.

Freed from the parsonage and in contact with the first adult, intellectual male she had met in a teaching capacity, Charlotte responded whole-heartedly by studying diligently in Brussels. As a teacher, Héger was well-known as a dominating personality and a hard taskmaster. These characteristics fitted Charlotte's personality and developmental stage well. She could be dependent on him and accept his authority, but he was not her father or her brother. He was a teacher, a "safe" man existing in a position somewhere between men in the family and a romantic attachment. She needed a friend, and so she always considered him in all her letters to her other friends and to him; she could not admit freely pangs of sexual love for a married man which she began to suspect in her second year at the Pensionnat: "She saw herself in all innocence as a devoted pupil who owed gratitude, loyalty, friendship--every emotion short of love--to the teacher who had provided her first intellectual satisfactions. To the fact that he was also a man of compelling personality . . . she seems at this time to have been curiously blind. When she awoke, at Haworth . . . it was too late to change." (Lane, 176, 165, 175; Peters, 127-28, 130; Moglen, 63)

In readers' opinions today, Brontë's interest became sexual, even if it was not so at first and even if she did not directly admit these feelings. Her letters to Héger, all but the early ones unanswered, resembled her childhood heroine's attachments to dominant men, pupil-master

relationships, and idolatrous feelings. When he wrote that she should talk about her family and her activities and limit her correspondence to every six months, she found it impossible. When he stopped writing, Charlotte continued. Four letters to H  ger remain extant: July 24, 1844; October 24, 1844; January 8, 1845; and November 18, 1845. Excerpts indicate that she grew from being puzzled about his lack of writing to being increasingly more despondent to the point where she considered his letters the breath of life itself. In the letter of July 24, 1844, she did report news of her plans to establish a school, but her first line indicated the restrictions H  ger had placed on their correspondence already (Charlotte left Brussels in January, 1844) and how much she desired a letter from him:

Je sais bien que ce n'est pas    mon tour de vous   crire. . . . je t  cherai de ne plus   tre   go  ste et tout en regardant vos lettres comme un des plus grands bonheurs que je connaisse, j'attendrai patiemment pour en recevoir jusqu'    ce qu'il vous plaira et vous conviendra de me'en envoyer. En m  me temps je puis bien vous   crire de temps en temps une petite lettre--vous me'y avez autoris  e.

As if to indicate to herself and H  ger that his letters should be from equal to equal and derive from his own wish, she remarked at the close of this letter:

. . . vous   tes trop bon pour oublier que je le d  sire de meme--oui--je le d  sire beaucoup--c'est assez--apr  s tout--faites comme vous voudrez Monsieur--si, enfin je recevais une lettre et si je croyais que vous l'aviez   crite par piti  --cel   me ferait beaucoup de mal.
(G  rin, 583, 585)

By January, 1845, Charlotte had received no further word from H  ger and she admitted to him how much this vexed

her:

Mais quand on ne se plaint pas et qu'on veut se dominer en tyran--les facultés se révoltent--et on paie le calme extérieur par une lutte intérieure presque insupportable/. Jour et nuit je ne trouve ni repos ni paix--si je dors je fais des rêves tourmentants où je vous vois toujours sévère, toujours sombre et irrité contre moi. . . .

Charlotte began to enter into a pleading tone further on, begging for some word, some 'miettes de pain' to comfort her:

Si mon maître me retire entièrement son amitié je serai tout à fait sans espoir--s'il m'en donne un peu--très peu--je serai contente--heureuse, j'aurai un motif pour vivre--pour travailler, Monsieur, les pauvres n'ont pas besoin de grand'chose pour vivre--ils ne demandent que ces miettes de pain qui tombent de la table des riches--mais si on les refuse ces miettes de pain--ils meurent de faim. . . . (Gérin, 586, 587)

Finally, Charlotte reached the depths of despair in the last surviving letter to Héger, dated November 18, 1845:

Je vous dirai franchement, qu'en attendant, j'ai tâche de vous oublier, . . . j'ai cherché les occupations, je me suis interdit absolument le plaisir de parler de vous--même à Emilie . . . c'est humiliant cela--de ne pas savoir maîtriser ses propres pensées, être esclave à un regret, un souvenir, esclave à une idée dominante et fixe qui tyrannise son esprit. . . . écrire à une ancienne élève ne peut-être une occupation fort intéressante pour vous--je le sais--mais pour moi c'est la vie. (Gérin, 587, 588)

Charlotte's sojourn in Brussels and these letters marked "The biggest single experience of her life. . . ." (Gérin, 255) These events indicate to a reader of today that Charlotte knew little of the boundaries or etiquette that mark relations with a teacher, a friend, and a romantic interest. Her Romantic reading and earlier submergence in her childhood fantasies gave her a language of romance which

startled the recipient of these letters¹ and which seemed to doom Charlotte to a life of unrequited hope. To Charlotte, however, she communicated feelings to a beloved teacher, a strongly desired friend, one who met her on an intellectual plane that she cherished.

It took Charlotte about two years to undergo the separation and to recover from her experience with Héger once she returned from Brussels. She was particularly wary of other men, especially once she entered into a wider circle after the publication of Jane Eyre. George Smith, head of her publishing firm, no doubt attracted her, and she commented on him in letters to Ellen. She visited him and his mother a few times in London. Only twenty-four when they met, Smith was too young for Charlotte at thirty-two in her estimation. However, she continually forced herself to crush her emotions for him. To Ellen, she wrote: "'Were there no vast barrier of age, fortune, . . . there is perhaps enough personal regard to make things possible which are now impossible. If men and women married because they like each others' temper, look, conversation, nature . . . the chance you allude to might be admitted as a chance--but other reasons regulate matrimony. . . .'" (in Peters, 368) Smith always remained charming and cordial, but he was not pleased with his and his mother's portraits as John Graham Bretton and Mrs. Bretton in

¹Héger tore up the letters which were recovered and put back together by his wife who apparently thought she might need them one day as evidence of Charlotte's feelings and Héger's innocence. The Hégers' reactions were passed on to family members who reported them to Clement Shorter.

Villeter. Author and publisher's relationship slowly withered after its completion. Charlotte portrayed Graham Bretton as capable and charming but rather egocentric and superficial. Interestingly, Smith paid Brontë poorly for her novels; she received the same fee of 500 pounds for each book. In 1859, he offered Thackeray 4,200 pounds for a twelve part novel; in 1862, 10,000 pounds to George Eliot for Romola serially; 2,000 pounds to Mrs. Gaskell for Wives and Daughters; and larger sums to Mrs. Humphrey Ward in later years (Peters, 410-12).

Charlotte met two other men at Smith, Elder. William S. Williams, the reader who discovered Jane Eyre, remained an intellectual confidante. She wrote him nearly a hundred letters over the years, and they reflect a far different Brontë than is revealed in letters to Ellen Nussey. This correspondence highlighted what probably remained her most satisfying intellectual relationship.

A more complicated relationship developed with James Taylor, another member of the firm. He grew to love Charlotte, but she could not bring herself to see him in a romantic way. Unprepossessing physically and lacking "true good-breeding" in Charlotte's view, he never failed to arouse negative feelings and almost a physical revulsion in her. In different letters to Ellen, Charlotte assessed him as "' . . . of the Helstone order of men--rigid, despotic, and self-willed. . . . Still, he is horribly intelligent, quick, searching, sagacious. . . . though clever, he is

second-rate. . . . Were I to marry him, my heart would bleed in pain and humiliation; I could not, could not look up to him.'" (Letter to Ellen Nussey, undated, in Shorter, 430; in Peters, 372; in Lane, 275) There is no indication that Taylor actually proposed to Charlotte, but her answer would have been a decided "No." He did not measure up to her conception of the ideal man. For Charlotte, the ideal man combined aspects of intelligent friend, teacher, and romantic lover, as well as being someone who had recognizable faults but to whom she could give all of her love. Charlotte's fictional heroes exhibited varying degrees of these characteristics.

Charlotte Brontë's literary career followed a most unusual path. In a sense, many of the major events of her life were over by the time she began to write for publication. She wrote from the time she was eight years old, however, so she had already experienced the discipline, the practice, and the frustration involved in writing. She had only to add her emotional involvement in real-life events to produce her adult novels. Although she collaborated with her sisters on a book of published poems and sent The Professor to several publishers, it was Jane Eyre which established her reputation and which impressed readers, not aware of her prior writing, as a remarkable first novel. In Jane Eyre, Brontë created some of the most famous fictional men in English novels.

Jane Eyre depicts a rather narrow range of men's activities. There are only two married men of note

(Brocklehurst, Rochester). Few occupations are illustrated (the ministry, landowning, one doctor, a few servants). Only Rochester is seen as an employer. No fathers appear (except Brocklehurst) within the scope of the novel's action. Other role models such as brothers, uncles, and cousins appear briefly (John Reed is a brother and cousin; St. John Rivers is a blood cousin whom Jane considers as a brother in many respects). Because they are either employers, headmasters, suitors, or relatives, no men take on the function of just friends to any woman. St. John Rivers does teach Jane language for a short period, but it is debatable, I think, whether Rochester fulfills this teacher role. Brontë's use of male characters focuses on them as holders of power and status, as potential or actual suitors, and as reflectors of moral standards.

Until the time she is about eighteen, Jane has limited contacts with men. At Gateshead, she lives with John Reed, has some contact with male servants, and talks to Mr. Lloyd, the apothecary. At Lowood, she sees the Reverend Brocklehurst mostly from a distance. Only when she goes to Thornfield does she speak to a man for the first time for any length of time. And, even in this circumstance, Jane is Rochester's employee and his social inferior. Her general relationships with males, then, focus on their position as authority figures and her situation as a dependent female. Much of Jane's behavior, even towards the man she loves, derives from this awareness of her social and financial dependency and her

great desire to be independent in a patriarchal society. In addition, she has a tremendous need for love. Jane has been seriously harmed in early life by her damaging relationships with authoritarian males (and females). This, in addition to her need for love, affects her views toward men. Male social status and political power bear down on Jane. Her cousin John Reed

. . . no one thwarted, much less punished; though he twisted the necks of the pigeons, killed the little peachicks, set the dogs at the sheep, stripped the hothouse vines of their fruit, . . . he called his mother 'old girl' too; sometimes reviled her for her dark skin . . . bluntly disregarded her wishes . . . he was still 'her own darling.' (JE, 17)

His mother, his sisters, and the servants assume his superiority; he can even hit Jane without being punished. His cruelty is accepted, but Jane's attack on him is considered unjustifiable and excessive. This childhood experience teaches her that men wield power and that being poor has no virtue. She is well aware from the time she is a child that men are essentially unrestrained in the world while women must stay at home.

Jane's lessons continue at Lowood. The Reverend Brocklehurst is an even more formidable enemy. Jane sees him at first, when he visits her aunt, as a black pillar. Accepted by many modern, Freudian-oriented analysts as a penis symbol, this imagery of Brocklehurst might not be necessarily accepted. To a little girl of ten (or to a sexually uninitiated young woman in her early twenties), a tall, black-clad figure might appear to be just this--a black

pillar. Cloaking selfishness, greed, and vanity in the garb of religious principles, Brocklehurst literally exercises a power of life and death over the girls. His actions as an authoritative figure include wrongfully accusing Jane of being a sinful girl in front of the assembled girls, ordering a naturally curly girl's hair to be cut in defiance of conforming to nature, and deliberately (or at least without much thought) allowing inadequate, bad food to be served to the girls. Many readers, as indicated in reviews and letters to editors, considered Brontë's portrayal of Brocklehurst to be immoral and an attack on the Church. However, more importantly, he represents a corrupt, hypocritical use of authority with an accompanying class and sexual bias. For example, at the very moment that he proclaims against adornment and indulgence, his wife and two daughters appear in the classroom dressed in velvet, silk, and furs (JE, 65-69, 86).

Jane wins battles, however small, against both John Reed and Brocklehurst, and her relationship with Rochester is also marked by struggles between servility and independence. He is her employer and social superior; as a landowner and member of an old family, he wields considerable power in the district. In their second conversation, Jane grants him command over her, but only on the basis of how well he uses it, not just because of his age, experience, and social connections (JE, 136-37). Pulled in by his personality and his good treatment of her, Jane does fall in love with him, but her initial thoughts revolve around the impossibility of this

relationship due to Rochester's status:

It does good to no woman to be flattered by her superior, who cannot possibly intend to marry her; and it is madness in all women to let a secret love kindle within them. . . . is it likely he would waste a serious thought on this indigent and insignificant plebeian? . . . don't make him the object of your fine feelings, your raptures, agonies. . . . He is not of your order: keep to your caste; and be too self-respecting to lavish the love of the whole heart, soul, and strength, when such a gift is not wanted. (JE, 162-65)

Mrs. Fairfax, who harbors other reasons for her disapproval, indicates her feelings when the engagement is later announced: "Gentlemen in his station are not accustomed to marry their governesses." (JE, 267) This awareness of status and power never really leaves Jane's consciousness. In her relationship with St. John, her final decision is to reject him because he will repress her as a husband; he will exercise influence over her through his status as clergyman and legal rights as a husband which would eventually exhaust her (Eagleton, 29-30; Moglen, 140, 146).

This issue of leverage within relationships plays a large part in Jane and Rochester's courtship and period of engagement. Jane succumbs to Rochester's magnetic personality, seeing him in turn as an employer, then as a comfortable relation, then as a romantic interest, and finally as a fiancé. Aware of her own developing sexual interest, she continually attempts not only to control her own passion but that of Rochester. For a proper governess and employer, Jane and Rochester actually share many confidences and physical contacts. He leans on her because of his sprained ankle when they first meet; he leans on her when she informs

him of Richard Mason's visit; he takes her hand more than once; he informs her of his profligate past life; she goes into his bedroom to put out the fire (thus seeing him in nightclothes); he directs her to go into his bedroom closets and drawers to fetch clothing for Mason; they embrace each other more than once; he kisses her right before his proposal of marriage; and they kiss several times after she agrees to marry him. This serves to arouse both of them, and it becomes Jane's task to keep Rochester under control.

Of equal importance to controlling Rochester's passion, however, is resisting his attempts to remake her. As a fiancé, Rochester is seen as continually attempting to treat Jane as a possession. He wants her to have family jewels and to wear satin and lace. Jane's reaction is to insist that he continue to treat her as the governess until the marriage; in fact, she even proposes to remain a governess after they are married and earn her own way. She abhors the idea of being "kept," and, significantly, shortly after the engagement is announced, Jane writes to her uncle in Madeira. She thinks:

It would, indeed, be a relief . . . if I had ever so small an independency; I never can bear being dressed like a doll by Mr. Rochester, or sitting like a second Danae with the golden shower falling daily round me. I will write to Madeira the moment I get home, and tell my uncle John I am going to be married, and to whom: if I had but a prospect of one day bringing Mr. Rochester an accession of fortune, I could better endure to be kept by him now. (JE, 270)

Many of Rochester's actions derive from his past experience with several mistresses. As a wealthy man of traditional

upbringing, society allowed him to live a life of sexual indulgence. For him, showering gifts on women was a natural activity; Jane tries to teach him that this is not a necessary nor even desirable part of the role of suitor. Despite Jane's tendency to bow before her "master" and ". . . not . . . see God for his creature of whom I had made an idol." (JE, 276), she maintains her recognition of the dangers of dependency.

St. John Rivers appears in the role of suitor for a brief time, but his actions are dominated by religious principle and martyr-like personality. Though handsome (blond, tall, and Grecian-like), he is sexually somewhat tame. In fact, he represses his own sexuality in relations with Rosamund Oliver who loves him. Jane is attracted to him but probably more due to his extreme religious dedication and ambition which arouses in her a temptation to submerge herself in a dominant personality. However, even before Rivers proposes to her, Jane crosses him off as a potential husband:

St. John was a good man; but. . . . Literally, he lived only to aspire . . . he would never rest; nor approve of others resting around him. . . . I comprehended all at once that he would hardly make a good husband: that it would be a trying thing to be his wife. (JE, 395)

His proposal focuses on Jane's mental qualities and capacity for labor which suit her, in his opinion, for a missionary's wife. Jane considers going with him, as his cousin, but not as his wife. After her experiences with Rochester, Jane knows what she wants in marriage, and it is not St. John's suffocating masculinity:

. . . he asks me to be his wife, and has no more of a husband's heart for me than that . . . rock. . . . Can I receive from him the bridal ring, endure all the forms of love (which I doubt not he would scrupulously observe) and know that the spirit was quite absent? . . . I will never undergo it. (JE, 407)

There are so few husbands in Jane Eyre that it is difficult to construct a model. Brocklehurst is a husband, but the brief glimpse of him indicates a man who sees his wife and daughters as ornamented possessions. Rochester is actually a husband throughout the novel, but he carries out his functions as a husband, to both Bertha and Jane, outside the action of the novel. The circumstances affecting both marriages are highly unusual and point up one of Rochester's purposes as a focus of the moral dilemma of the novel. There are three aspects of Rochester's behavior which relate to this dilemma. He has kept mistresses, he is married but has kept that a secret from the rest of the world and Jane, and he decides to commit bigamy by marrying Jane while his mad wife lives in the attic of Thornfield. In a society which accepted promiscuous behavior from men, his sexual activities were not condemned. He admits to Jane that he abhorred this phase of his life and after Jane discovers the secret of Bertha, he indicates that his wanderings were really for the purpose of finding a "good and intelligent woman" (which to a modern reader seems self-serving). He also equates having a mistress with owning a slave because both are "inferior," a rather revealing term to describe his romantic relations with women (JE, 138-139, 143, 306-14).

Although Jane does not approve of his past life, she is willing to overlook it; after all, she does agree to marry him even though she knows about Céline Varens. Perhaps she enjoys a vicarious participation in his past sexual life. Rochester is a potent male figure, and Jane is a passionate character. However, his lack of truthfulness about Bertha and his willingness to commit bigamy force Jane to reject him as a husband or as a lover. To him, his offer to support her as his mistress and eventually to marry her in France transgress a mere human law. To her, his offer reminds her of her need for independence and an immutable moral standard; she would feel inferior and as a slave if she became Rochester's mistress: "I care for myself. . . . Laws and principles are not for the times when there is no temptation; they are for such moments as this. . . . If at my individual convenience, I might break them, what would be their worth?" (JE, 319)

So Jane leaves Thornfield, despite her love for Rochester and the fact that she forgives him in her heart for his transgressions, for they are not so much aimed towards her but at himself. Before Jane and Rochester can be re-united in marriage both must undergo severe moral tests. Jane must endure and reject St. John Rivers' compelling personality and offer of martyrdom in a tropical climate. Rochester must be blinded and lose a hand in the fire that kills Bertha and destroys Thornfield. Properly punished for his moral lapses and with Bertha dead, Rochester can marry Jane. So, the marriage represents the reward for moral and

emotional growth by both partners and the culmination of a "love-story." (Craik, Brontë Novels, 71-72, 103-3) However, two other considerations must be kept in mind. Before this marriage occurs, Jane receives an inheritance which allows her to give her cousins Diana, Mary, and St. John substantial support and to be independent herself. And, just as important, Rochester is in a dependent position when they are married, and he remains that way for two years.

Jane's need for love but fear of dependence on an authoritarian male are resolved because not only is the marriage a physical and spiritual union of equals (from Jane's testimony) but she achieves a certain measure of power over Rochester.

Rochester is dependent on Jane in many ways throughout the novel. At their first meeting, he leans on her for support. She saves him from the fire in his bedroom. He leans on her when he hears Mason has arrived. He seeks her out to help when Bertha stabs Mason; he has to depend on her to remain silent about this event, and he says to her, "You too have power over me, and may injure me. . . ." (JE, 219) After their engagement, Rochester says, "Jane: you please me, and you master me. . . . I am influenced--conquered; and the influence is sweeter than I can express; and the conquest I undergo has a witchery beyond any triumph I can win." (JE, 263) She restrains him from becoming too physically demonstrative towards her, and this, "Mr. Rochester affirmed . . . was wearing him to skin and bone. . . ." (JE, 276) When he

asks her to be his mistress, he becomes so emotionally distraught that it appears he comes quite close to raping her. But Jane controls the moment and not without satisfaction: "I felt an inward power; a sense of influence which supported me. The crisis was perilous; but not without its charm. . . ." (JE, 305)

And, when Jane appears at Ferndean, her first declaration is that she is independently wealthy. She chooses to take on the task, however, to "rehumanise" Rochester and act as his eyes and good arm: "I love you better now, when I can really be useful to you, than I did in your state of proud independence, when you disdained every part but that of the giver and the protector." (JE, 449) After the marriage, Jane relates: "Mr. Rochester continued blind the first two years . . . perhaps it was that circumstance that drew us so very near . . . I was then his vision, as I am still his right hand. Literally, I was . . . the apple of his eye. He saw nature--he saw books through me. . . ." (JE, 454)

He remains to her, however, her "master," the ideal man of deep feeling and stormy moods, intelligence and shared interests. He is essentially a good man, whom fate has dealt a tragic blow. Jane feels a kinship towards him. They are both responsive to nature, and they are both outsiders of society in many ways. But, it is only through his moral flaws, gradually developed conscience, and loss of power that he becomes a satisfactory partner for Jane:

. . . the reduction of Rochester's virility and the removal of them both from contact with society are

necessary to maintain the integrity of the emergent female self. Rochester is brought into the 'female' world of love and morality, out of the 'masculine' universe of power. . . . (Moglen, 143)

In this sense, Rochester receives the greater education. Although Brontë's heroes are typically seen as fatherly, teacher-type men, evidence indicates that the heroes in Jane Eyre, Shirley, and even Villette receive as much as or more of an education than do the women. This is the experience of both Robert and Louis Moore in Shirley.

Unusual circumstances surrounded the composition of Shirley. It is clear from her letters that Charlotte deliberately attempted to write a book for the market, that is, one intended to deal with the "woman question" and with contemporary industrial unrest. In doing this, Brontë included in the novel many general observations about the plight of mid-nineteenth-century women and their relations to men. Additionally, she abandoned the use of the first person female narrator. Readers immediately notice that men, the curates who open the novel, speak among themselves. No women are present here or at certain other places in the novel. Thus, in several instances, there is no attempt to see the men through women's eyes, which required that Brontë at least try to create the perception that she "saw" men as completely and accurately as she saw women. The action and much of the plot belong to the men. Second, Shirley's appearance marked one of the earliest attempts to deal with social change caused by the Industrial Revolution. Finally, between the time of Louis Moore's appearance and the chapter titled "The Valley

of the Shadow of Death," Charlotte's brother Branwell and her two remaining sisters, Emily and Anne, died. Critics of the novel argue that the deaths altered the characters, the structure, and the tone. For example, from this perspective, Shirley becomes more like Emily as the novel progresses; the novel's structure is not harmonious; and the mood darkens or becomes more somber. A critique of structure and character is not a main focus here, but the circumstances surrounding the novel's creation should be kept in mind.

Brontë still presents few men as husbands, fathers, or brothers. Hiram Yorke is the only important married man in the action of the novel (Joe Scott and William Farren are also husbands); Matthewston Helstone is a widower. Yorke is also the only significant father. Helstone and Sympson appear in biting portraits as uncles. Brontë provides some landowners (Yorke and two of Shirley's suitors, Samuel Wynne and Philip Nunnely); several clergymen, a millowner (Robert Moore), a teacher (Louis Moore), and some workingmen (Joe Scott, William Farren). Some young boys, Yorke's sons, also appear. Despite the inclusion of the millowner-working class element (which is highly significant), this is still a rather narrow range of male activities.

"Nowhere else did Charlotte portray the contrast between man's active and women's passive lives so vividly." (Peters, 319) This active-passive contrast defines women's general relationship with men throughout Shirley. Caroline and Shirley independently as well as in conversations with each other comment often on the separation of women's and

men's lives. This different existence makes men and women mysteries to one another and makes it difficult for them to communicate. Men are always the "significant other" for women. Men are complete within themselves because they work, they have responsibilities, they can move about freely, and they have status. Men think little about women and stride in and out of their lives with impunity. Caroline, in love with her cousin Robert,

mused over the mystery of 'business,' . . . endeavored to realise the state of mind of a 'man of business,' . . . 'Different, indeed,' she concluded, 'is Robert's mental condition to mine: I think only of him; he has no room, no leisure to think of me. The feeling called love is . . . the predominant emotion of my heart. . . . I have to live, perhaps, till seventy years. . . . How am I to occupy it? What am I to do to fill the interval of time which spreads between me and the grave?' (S, 147-49)

Robert, himself, agrees with this observation. To Caroline, he says: "I find in myself, Lina, two natures: one for the world and business, and one for home and leisure. . . . brought up in mill and market; the person you call your cousin Robert is sometimes a dreamer, who lives elsewhere than in cloth-hall and counting-house." (S, 210) Caroline astutely concludes that men could not and would not live the lives of sewing, cooking, visiting, and husband-hunting that they assign to women.

Shirley also experiences the dilemmas of men's and women's separate existence. In order for her to function in her capacities as landlord and millowner, Shirley is described in masculine terms. That is, as a woman, she would not usually be in these positions. When she is engaged in her

male activities, Shirley whistles, moves freely, imagines herself as a soldier, refers to herself as a man, and is referred to as a man. For example, Helstone refers to her as a man after their conversation about her duties as a landlord. A second instance occurs when Shirley analyzes the women in the area as potential wives from a masculine perspective. In a third example, Shirley is in masculine guise when she is dispensing several hundred pounds for charitable efforts with the help of the senior clergymen. Significantly, there are no more masculine references to Shirley once Louis Moore appears on the scene; she becomes more and more "feminine."

Shirley refers to men as superior beings, and she rhapsodizes on the perfect male. However, she also believes that men interfere with relationships between women once the men appear on the scene (Shirley is concerned about her relationship with Caroline). She is convinced that men analyze women incorrectly, and that ". . . women read men more truly than men read women." (S, 285) She refuses to assign men all available wisdom or judgment. Despite her status and financial interest in the mill, Shirley is deliberately kept out of plans to defend it. She uses her wits to learn when an attack will occur, and, along with Caroline, watches the battle--from a distance. This incident, more than any other, perhaps, reflects the contrast between the active and passive lives of the men and women in the novel who live out separate existences.

The men's and women's separate perspective can also be seen in their attitudes toward marriage. Brontë provides three views of marriage: marriage is a love match; marriage is a union intended for improving wealth and status; marriage is detrimental to the health and psychological well-being of both women and men and is to be avoided in favor of a single life. Varieties of characters reflect these positions. The only one who changes significantly is Robert Moore, who evolves from a belief in marriage for wealth and status to a belief in marriage for love. Generally, the women believe in love as the basis for marriage except for Mrs. Pryor, who was treated badly by a drunken husband, and Mrs. Yorke, who is an intelligent woman destined only to raise children and oversee a house. Overall, the men are depicted as perceiving marriage to be something of an interruption in their busy lives or to be necessary for status and money considerations. Louis Moore truly loves Shirley, but he certainly gains considerably by marrying her. For all the characters, even though women achieve status and a somewhat wider arena of activity along with perhaps a measure of love, marriage is an institution in which husbands are masters and women are clearly subordinates.

All of the major characters contribute different notes to these themes. Early in the novel, the curate Malone and Robert Moore converse alone. Malone says:

If there is one notion I hate more than another, it is that of marriage--I mean marriage in the vulgar, weak sense as a mere matter of sentiment . . . some fantastic tie of feeling. . . . But an advantageous connection,

such as can be formed in consonance with dignity of views and permanency of solid interest, is not so bad, eh?
(S, 31-32)

Moore replies:

As if there was nothing to be done in life but to 'pay attention,' as they say, to some young lady, and then to go to church with her and then to start on a bridal tour, and then to run through a round of visits, and then, I suppose, to be 'having a family.'--'Oh, que le diable emporte!'--I believe women talk and think only of these things, and they naturally fancy men's minds similarly occupied. (S, 33)

Of course, Moore is very occupied with a serious financial threat to his business. But, he continues to link marriage to his fortunes well into the novel. In a later discussion with Hiram Yorke, Moore concludes that ". . . marriage and love are superfluities, intended only for the rich. . . ." His criteria for a mate include beauty, which, with money, make a desirable woman. However, he would not take an ugly woman with money! (S, 141) Since these discussions take place without women present, the reader is supposed to conclude that these are these two men's honest thoughts about marriage.

Caroline's uncle Helstone is presented as a true misogynist. He is a widower whose wife, in essence, died of neglect: "He thought, so long as a woman was silent, nothing ailed her, and she wanted nothing. . . . He made no pretence of comprehending women. . . . they were a different, probably a very inferior, order of existence. . . ." (S, 53-54) He ignores Caroline's great unhappiness as a woman with nothing to do, and he advises her to remain single. Publicly, Helstone acts politely, even gallantly, towards women, but

". . . at heart, he neither respected nor liked the sex. . . . he liked to see them as silly, as light-headed, as vain, as open to ridicule as possible; because they were then . . . inferior. . . ." (S, 102-3)

Caroline, Shirley, Mrs. Pryor, and Mrs. Yorke are, as Shirley once remarks, better at divining men than the men are at analyzing the women. They all know that, whereas women have one life (domestic), men have two (domestic and the external world), and that the men will only occasionally pay heed to the women. Caroline desires love but worries that she would not be able to command a long-term emotional interest in her. Shirley sees the ability to love as only one criterion and cautions Caroline to consider qualities such as kindness, justice, patience, truthfulness, considerateness, and conscientiousness in a possible husband (S, 178, 179). Shirley knows she is a desirable wife, but she carries out a bitter struggle with her uncle Sympson to avoid simply marrying a man who is her social and financial equal. Shirley does marry a man she loves, her former tutor, Louis Moore. However, she also presents a case throughout the novel for marrying a "master." This prepares the reader for her to succumb, supposedly, to the masterly control of Louis and to give up most of her functions as landowner and millowner to him. But, there is nothing in the character of Louis Moore that indicates a masterful personality, and it is so difficult for Shirley to lose her independence that she persistently delays the wedding date. In this sense, Shirley

becomes a victim to conventional marriage standards.

Brontë depicts Louis Moore as enduring a considerable struggle as a suitor before he becomes fully acceptable to Shirley. He must carefully conceal his feelings for Shirley because he is a mere tutor. He displays some of the typical traits of a man in love, such as wandering about the house one evening when alone, seeing and touching some of Shirley's things, while he pines for her. He must abandon his position as a tutor and command respect because he is a gentleman. Uncle Sympson is so provoking about their engagement that Moore attacks him and orders him out of the house (a "masterly" touch on Moore's part). And, Shirley accepts him on the ambivalent conditions that he not tyrannize her, that he be ". . . my companion . . . my guide . . . my master . . . my friend. . . ." (S, 492) Considering that Shirley rejects Robert Moore, her match with Louis becomes somewhat more believable.

Robert Moore undergoes an educational process through three events before he becomes a husband. As indicated earlier, he sees marriage as a possibility only for the idle rich and fails to see, or at least acknowledge, Caroline's love for him. He proposes to Shirley for two reasons. He cannot believe her interest in him is due merely to friendship, and he is in tight financial straits (Shirley has already provided him with a loan). They are both rudely shocked by his proposal and her rejection. Both realize that it is extremely difficult for men and women to be just

friends in a society which teaches women to be inveiglers and insinulators and men to consider women as prizes. Robert tells Yorke, later, that, "I'll do it no more . . . never more will I mention marriage to a woman unless I feel love. . . . Credit and Commerce may take care of themselves." (S, 424-25)

While away in London, Robert comes in contact with poor, uneducated, out-of-work people who awake in him a sense of justice which has been absent or deeply somnolent in Yorkshire. He begins to connect Caroline's entreaties to him to be more just to his workingmen with an awareness of her love. Finally, Moore is shot and undergoes a languishing convalescence at the Yorkes before Caroline's visit to him promotes an improved constitution and recovery. Caroline tells him that she nearly died for fear she would never see him again. In a parallel fashion, Moore nearly dies before Caroline's presence makes him desire to live. Thus, Moore must make a long journey and suffer like Caroline before he becomes a husband. However, there is little indication that their relationship will be different from the conventional marriage, except that Moore asks Caroline to help him "do good" with his money.

Shirley does not present a positive view towards marriage, men as husbands, or men as fathers, brothers, and uncles. Generally absorbed in their work, the men consider the women's world as insipid at worst, only occasionally interesting at best.

The men's occupations do claim nearly all of their attention. This is as true for the working men of the novel, such as Joe Scott, as it is for the clergy, the landowners, and the millowners. Brontë presents two groups of clergymen: the three curates Donne, Malone, and Sweeting; and senior clergymen such as Helstone, Cyril Hall, and Dr. Boulton, some of whom are sincere, principled ministers. The curates are uniformly selfish, egotistical, silly, narrow-minded, and interested in the power their positions command. The only senior clergyman who occupies much space is Helstone. His behavior exhibits such ironies as to prevent any sanguine view of his character or profession. He dislikes women and considers them inferior, but he is close to gallant in his overt behavior towards women, and he has full responsibility for his niece Caroline. He is a man of peace, but he carries arms and has missed his calling as a soldier. He hates the institution of marriage, but, of course, regularly marries couples. Although Brontë also describes him as "brave, stern, implacable, faithful . . . true to principle, honourable, sagacious, and sincere. . . ." (S, 42), it is difficult to find even modicum amounts of good qualities in his portrayal.

Helstone is an evolution of the three young curates; all of them have great potential for becoming different versions of him. They are not appropriate men for a church vocation. The three men deal superficially and disdainfully with religion, with each other, and with those around them. However, despite her opinions of the individuals within it,

Brontë does defend the church as an institution: "Let England's priests have their due; they are a faulty set in some respects, being only of common flesh and blood . . . but the land would be badly off without them: Britain would miss her church if that church fell. God save it! God also reform it!" (S, 245)

Closer to the core of the novel is Charlotte's picture of the man of business, the representative of the merchant-industrial classes of England, Robert Moore. Except for the fact that Caroline loves him, there is little to recommend Moore for much of the novel. He is consumed by his responsibilities as owner of a mill and is disliked in the district, partly because he is foreign, but mostly because his intention to install new machinery will cause much unemployment. Despite an attentive sister and cousin, he pays them little regard except to see them when he wishes and ignore them at other times. As a type of the industrial entrepreneur, he seeks to conquer nature and eagerly looks forward to new inventions and progress (women in the novel are close to nature; men are apart from it). He is alienated from much around him; as a foreigner, he is disliked even more. Financially pressed by the blockade of English goods due to war, Moore seeks to end the war for practical reasons, and he has no patriotic sense or abstract concept of duty which guides his views towards conflicts (S, 32, 35-37, 116-21, 143-44).

These circumstances separate Moore nearly totally from the concerns of women and vividly highlight the paternalistic structure of the society. Caroline is puzzled, disturbed, and attracted by his activities. Shirley only enters his world because she is his landlord and gives him a loan, but he never considers her as an equal in business. The women simply have or do nothing in their lives which is valued as much as men's work: "Only men in this novel can be saved by works. . . . Manhood, the guild which structures the events of the novel, is a closed corporation existing only for the benefit of its members. . . ." (Keefe, 141, 134)

Complicating the circumstances of Moore's business interests is the effect of social status on characters and situations. Robert Moore and his brother Louis Moore are not nouveaux riches; they are born gentlemen who come from a two centuries' old family trading tradition. The fact that both men are in some distress (Robert with financial problems and Louis as a tutor) does not erase their gentlemanly status. Robert Moore's associations are primarily with "the establishment," which supports him in an effort to defeat the worker. Even though Robert Moore comes to believe more in an idea of justice for workingmen, the novel ends with Robert's vision. Through marriage, Louis becomes a squire and will become a political figure in the area. He and Robert divide the parish between them, and Robert will build workers' cottages, double the value of Shirley's land, and continue the industrialization process. Squire and mill-owner triumph in this

scenario.

Neither Robert nor Louis mitigates the paternalistic structure of the society. Hiram Yorke, the leading local squire, maintains this structure, also. Although he speaks about equality and is anti-authoritarian, Yorke's family life is traditional. His boys have prospects, but his girls do not, despite a rather "liberal" upbringing. Mrs. Yorke, a bright and intelligent woman, is tied to the family as wife and mother and chafes at the restrictions of marriage. Thus, Brontë not only makes the separateness of men's lives clear, she points to the well-known position of men as arbiters of political power and social status.

Robert Moore remains the hero of the novel because he is admired and loved by Caroline and thought handsome and good by Shirley. He fulfills the women's desires, but he also is a hero because he struggles against hardship and is successful at the end of the novel. Finally, he is clearly superior in looks, demeanor, intelligence, and principle to Sir Philip Nunnely, the curates, Helstone, Yorke, and even his brother Louis. Brontë examines him as both a private man at home and a public man with other men at business. Brontë also creates Robert as the person who changes the most through education (Shirley may change substantially after marriage, but this is conjecture). Robert learns lessons about love, about the role of status, and about his role in society through his experiences with Shirley, his trip to London where he meets the poor and destitute, and his shooting and

convalescence. From his educational trials, he becomes a more fit partner for Caroline who has been aware of the lessons and acted as his teacher throughout much of the novel.

If Shirley has a somewhat somber quality, at least in the last parts, Villette is positively mournful. Written when Brontë felt she could cope with her Brussels experience, Villette's sense of oppression rarely lifts throughout the entire story, even though three pairs of "lovers," their changes in circumstances, and feelings move the plot: Lucy Snowe loves Dr. John Graham Bretton, then Monsieur Paul Emanuel; Ginerva Fanshawe flirts with Graham, then marries the worthless fop Count de Hamal; Graham loves Ginerva, then Paulina de Bassompierre. The main focus is on Lucy's relationships with Graham and Paul.

Again, the range of male activities is limited, if anything, more limited than in Jane Eyre and Shirley. There is one father, de Bassompierre, and one husband, Graham Bretton (late in the novel). Brothers, uncles, and cousins are non-existent. Graham and Paul are seen working as doctor and teacher, and there are brief appearances by a priest. To some extent, Brontë explores how men act as friends to women, since both Graham and Paul function as male friends to Lucy at certain times. Men act as suitors when Graham courts Ginerva and Paulina, and de Hamal sues Ginerva. Paul is a suitor to Lucy, also. Although situations which focus on the importance of social status occur, and people in the novel

marry, men as the focus of status and search for a suitable husband are not the main concerns of Brontë. Villette encloses a narrow world where Lucy's nearly pathetic search for love and acceptance receives the most attention.

In such a small world, Lucy has few contacts with men. She knows Graham as a boy of sixteen and as an adult; she knows Paul Emanuel; and she has brief contacts with Paulina's father, de Bassompierre, and a priest. It is not unlikely that she would love, for a long time, an engaging, handsome, intelligent man like Graham Bretton without the possibility of reciprocal love. It is not surprising that a personality such as Paul Emanuel's would have a profound effect on an inexperienced young woman, who represses her personality and shuts her emotions. In both cases, Lucy is operating on the idea of a general relationship between men and women as one in which the men fulfill ". . . a gorgeous dream of male potency with which she can fall in love. . . ." (Keefe, 174), and one in which she cannot ". . . avoid defining masculinity in terms of male domination of the female." (Kennard, 105)

She sees men as creatures apart from herself. Her lack of beauty and low self-esteem cause her to feel that men disregard her: "Suitor or admirer my very thoughts had not conceived. . . . into the realm of feelings, and hopes which such prospects open, my speculations . . . had never once had warrant to intrude. . . . I went to church and I took walks, and am very well convinced that nobody minded me." (V, 115-16)

At the ball which followed the play, Brontë makes it clear that men are potentially dangerous intruders into a vulnerable female world:

In the ballroom, indeed, not a single male spectator was to be seen who was not married and a father, M. Paul excepted. . . . he was the soul of honour and might be trusted with a regiment of the fairest and the purest. . . . kept far aloof /were/ . . . a small, forlorn band of jeunes gens. . . . /Madame Beck says to them/ 'Vous ne passerez vous à moins que ce ne soit sur mon cadavre, et vous ne danserez qu'avec la nonnette du jardin.' . . . the admission of these rattlesnakes, so fascinating and so dangerous /fit Beck's surveillance instincts/. . . . (V, 143-47)

Brontë reiterates this male difference and apartness, as in other novels, on an occasion when Lucy and the other women wait for Graham and de Bassompierre to return out of a snowy night: "How often, while women and girls sit warm at snug firesides, their hearts and imaginations are . . . forced out by night to wander . . . to dare stress of weather, to contend with the snow-blast, to wait . . . watching and listening to see and hear the father, the son, the husband coming home." (V, 275) The sharpest example, perhaps, of the male as apart or as the "other" is that Emanuel is a foreigner and a Roman Catholic, both of which are anathema to Lucy, who is very bigoted.

Since Lucy's world is so limited and Lucy acts as the narrator, the few men she meets must serve in many male roles. Graham Bretton and Paul Emanuel are seen at various times in their work as doctor and teacher, as examples of power and status, as reflectors of certain moral considerations, as suitors, as friends, as dependent on women, and as ideal men.

Graham becomes a husband; only M. de Bassompierre is seen as a father. He is presented in a familiar pattern of treating his little girl as a little girl into adulthood, objecting to her marriage to Graham at first, and considering men as dangers to his virtuous daughter.

As a boy of sixteen, Graham is described as a "handsome, faithless-looking youth," who is "spoiled, whimsical" (V, 27). His friendship with six-year old Paulina is a matter of study for Lucy as is his relationship with his mother. He reappears as an adult, now a doctor, when he comes to the pensionnat to attend one of Madame Beck's children. Lucy recognizes him as the man who helped her to the school on her first night in the city. She does recognize him as Graham Bretton, but the allusion to this is veiled. She does not directly tell the reader his identity until she wakes up in the Bretton household after her traumatic September vacation experience. (V, 167-79). Now back in her life and a regular visitor at the pensionnat, Graham becomes the object of Lucy's deep craving for attention, friendship, and love.

It is unusual in this period to find doctors in novels, but Graham is shown at work. His intelligence and charm as a boy reappear in the medical man. Lucy accompanies him on rounds and finds

. . . him hard-worked, yet seldom over-driven, and never irritated, confused, or oppressed. . . . Cheerfully, habitually, and in single-minded unconsciousness of any special merit distinguishing his deeds--he was achieving, amongst a very wretched population, a world of active good. The lower orders liked him well; his poor patients in the hospitals welcomed him with a sort of enthusiasm. (V, 197-98)

Lucy quickly points out, however, that Graham has a public and a private personality. In his private life, ". . . there is expressed consciousness of what he has and what he is, pleasure in homage, some recklessness in exciting, some vanity in receiving the same." (V, 198) This consciousness of status and power affects Graham's treatment of women. Even though he acts as a friend to Lucy by overseeing her recuperation beyond the call of duty, by escorting her to events, and by writing her a few breezy, newsy letters, he is rather callously unaware of her growing feelings for him. He never considers her as womanly or worthy of serious emotional attention.

Instead, he acts stereotypically male by being drawn to Ginerva Fanshawe, a superficial, attractive girl of some status. An intelligent, respected professional, he is fascinated by a female who enjoys the knowledge that one of her major functions in life is to manipulate men. Rhapsodizing to Lucy, Graham says:

She is so lovely. . . . such a simple, innocent girlish fairy. . . . Graceful angel! Does not your heart yearn towards her when she pours into your ears her pure, childlike confidences! (V, 153-54)

Ginerva's character is so far removed from Graham's conception that Lucy is startled at the depth of his deception, and in an uncharacteristic outburst, tells him so during one conversation. He acts in a stereotypical, lover-like manner towards Ginerva for some time while trying to convince Lucy to help him with his pursuit. Eventually, Ginerva's behavior in public breaks the spell on Graham. Ginerva, who has not

loved Graham to any degree, snubs Mrs. Bretton at a concert and acts overly friendly towards M. de Hamal, whom she eventually marries. Graham concludes: "Ginerva is neither a pure angel nor a pure-minded woman." (V, 218)

Graham's courtship of Paulina de Bassompierre proceeds more smoothly. He behaves in a standard fashion with at first puzzlement and bewilderment, then with longing looks, deep sighs, and inability to concentrate. Finally, he declares his love to an equally sighing, lovelorn Paulina. But, he still disregards Lucy's feelings by requesting her to tell Paulina "sweet nothings" about their childhood while he watches. Lucy refuses to do this and refuses to listen to Paulina's raptures concerning Graham. Lucy is still too much in love with Graham to be comfortable with him in his role as suitor to another. In addition, she may simply dislike, as many people do, observing or listening to two people in love: "There is, in lovers, a certain infatuation of egotism. They will have a witness of their happiness, cost that witness what it may." (V, 412)

Even though Graham keeps a place for her in his life after his marriage and "improves" (Brontë's term to describe him), Lucy's view of him grows steadily more critical as the novel progresses. Blessed with good looks, charm, and intelligence, Graham remains a type of man who considers women primarily for the purposes of fulfilling his pleasures and needs.

Paul Emanuel, too, is chauvinistic. He cannot bear competition from women (in one instance, he drives a female teacher from the pensionnat), and he enjoys his status as a male teacher in a school full of women and young girls. To some extent, this chauvinism may explain his method of operation as a teacher, for he can exercise irritability, short-temper, berating remarks, and domineering personality over vulnerable girls and women without fear of being checked. Notably, when he is giving a public lecture or appears in public, Paul does not exhibit these traits. To Lucy, these passionate outbursts are often fretful, but she responds with energy to his aggressive personality as he teaches the children and her.

Paul pushes Lucy to perform in certain ways which fulfill his own needs. But, he acknowledges in her a reservoir of deep feelings which no one else recognizes, even though he makes references to her need to be "kept down" or tamed. Paul forces her into the play as a male courtier to Ginerva's character. He attempts to insult her in front of the class when she sits down to sew in front of him. He is a tough taskmaster when teaching Lucy. As she progresses, he pushes her to extremes until finally she gives up. The lessons resume, but Paul acts much more subdued. He constantly harasses her to go in front of the audience on exam day to do a spontaneous French composition; this carries on to the point where Lucy struggles to get out of a locked room away from him.

This is hardly the portrait of a hero. Why does Paul eventually take on his garb as an attractive hero to Lucy? First, as Lucy eventually concludes, of all of her acquaintances, he analyzes her more correctly than anyone; he makes several remarks about her banked fiery nature, and he is aware when she is sad or wounded. Despite his temper, Lucy and the others know he has a tender heart, which on occasion he exhibits, such as on his fête-day and on the country outing. Besides, she rather enjoys his displays of anger, which make him more intriguing, and which she usually can counter on her own, anyway.

He offers her friendship more than once, and he eventually becomes attentive in a way resembling a suitor. He leaves her books and gifts, converses with her on her plans for a school, and spends many hours in conversation with her on varied subjects. They become comfortable with each other: ". . . the mutual understanding was settling and fixing; feelings of union and hope made themselves profoundly felt . . . affection and deep esteem and dawning trust had each fastened its bond. . . . he would leave with . . . 'Il est doux, le repos! Il est précieux, le calme bonheur!'" (V, 427)

In addition, Lucy discovers that Paul carries an honorable burden. He supports a dead lover's grandmother (Madame Walravens), a priest (his old tutor), and a servant, and has been doing so for years. The contrast with Graham is vivid. Seen in Lucy's mind for some time as something of a

mysterious character, Graham has little substance. Presented with forthrightness with all of his faults, Paul turns out to be a man of great substance and with a true mystery in his life. Lucy thinks, again in contrast to Graham, "How often . . . has this man, this M. Emanuel, seemed to me to lack magnanimity in trifles, yet how great he is in great things!" (V, 383) Lucy's feelings for Paul grow remarkably with her new knowledge: ". . . how good he was; . . . a stainless little hero. . . . He had become my Christian hero. . . ." (V, 386-87)

Finally, Paul loves her and provides her with a sanctuary, a school she can manage as she pleases. He loves her for herself. Still concerned with her appearance, Lucy says:

'Ah! I am not pleasant to look at. . . . Do I displease your eyes much?'. . . . He . . . gave me a short, strong answer--an answer which silenced, subdued, yet profoundly satisfied. Ever after that I knew what I was for him; and what I might be for the rest of the world I ceased . . . to care. (V, 466)

He gives her the school before he departs for Guadeloupe to act as overseer for the Walravens estate. His interest in her welfare ". . . broke on me like a light from heaven. . . . I promised to work hard and willingly. 'I will be your faithful steward,' . . . He was my king." (V, 469-70)

For Lucy, Paul journeyed from being a "dark little man" to being her "king." He softened on the journey and revealed his humanness. To Lucy, Paul's faults dimmed, and he combined the traits of father, friend, teacher, suitor, and hero which were unbeatable in her eyes. This is an unconsummated match, for Paul drowns at the end of the novel.

But, for Lucy, who is not presented with much sexuality (despite the references to her fiery nature), having Paul as a physical husband is probably not particularly important. Lucy resolves, to some extent, her antipathy to foreigners and Roman Catholicism. After all, she does remain in Villette for many years while Emanuel is away. And, she separates him from these two traits because she loves him. She also rationalizes that he is like he is because he is foreign and of a different religion. They have contributed to the personality who loves her and whom she loves. However, Lucy also teaches, and even though she is no real competition to Emanuel, by setting her up independently in the same profession as he participates, Lucy does have some power. Perhaps the combination of Emanuel as foreigner, as Catholic, and as a competitor in teaching are too much, and this explains Emanuel's death. In addition, Brontë herself, in response to her father's wishes and her publisher's requests to keep Emanuel alive, indicated to them that Lucy could not be fully happy and would not get the man she loved. This reflected, perhaps, Brontë's own frustrations in Brussels and her lack of romantic expectations for the rest of her life.

Although Jane Eyre, Shirley, and Villette can be analyzed and enjoyed as independent works of fiction, knowledge of Charlotte Brontë's life makes her novels and the male characters she portrayed far richer and more intelligible creations. From four major sources in her life cycle, Brontë

drew inspiration, models, situations, and incidents for her characters.

First, her family, within whose circle she lived throughout her life, provided unusually strong support. Her father was an authoritarian, active presence until the day she died. Branwell existed for many years as a creative partner and alter ego. And, her sisters provided literary support as well family warmth. At the same time, family life could be severely confining and, no doubt, limited Charlotte's exposure to many areas of life. Second, Patrick Brontë, himself university educated, gave Charlotte an educational background which stressed Romantic literature, politics of the day, and a conservative or Tory inclination, while also giving her considerable freedom in the house to develop her writing as she wished. Third, her educational and governing experiences had great impact on her personal development as well as providing her with sources for her writing. Finally, her Brussels sojourn proved to be the most dramatic incident in her life (other than the years of the fantasy life and the deaths in the family) and became the substance of two books.

The plain, small, isolated parson's daughter lived a visibly traditional, rather mundane life on the surface. But these four sources stirred within her a seething creative imagination whose results in literary form made her an innovator and purchased her immortality. Unconventional situations, expressed passion, less regard for society's

strictures, honest revelation of flaws in characters, criticism of those who failed to live up to the ideals of established institutions, and assertion of individuals' desires and needs not only brought her fame but also severe criticism by contemporaries.

With these biographical and literary notes in mind, several conclusions on the presentation of male characters in Charlotte Brontë's novels can be made. In some instances, Brontë presents the men in the novels in pairs as alternate choices for the women. Jane Austen did this, also. The result of this pairing is often the existence of a set of desirable traits in one man and the existence of a less desirable set of traits in the second man. For example, Rochester is dark, emotional, and passionate, while Rivers is light, restrained, and sexually passionless. Jane opts for Rochester's characteristics. In Shirley, however, Caroline really has no alternate choice to Robert Moore, and there is not a clear-cut dichotomy between Robert and his brother Louis. Graham Bretton and Paul Emanuel in Villette are not really opposites, either. They are physically different: taller vs. shorter, lighter vs. darker. However, both express emotion, although in different ways. Both are serious professionals. Both tend to treat women as possessions. Emanuel is a better judge of Lucy's character, and his temperament is different than Graham's, and these are reasons why he "wins" her. However, the men in Shirley and Villette are not two sides of the same coin or presented in black and

white terms as all "bad" or all "good." There is more of a dichotomy or a two-sided image in Jane Eyre in the presentation of Rochester and St. John Rivers. However, Rochester is by no means all "good," nor is Rivers all "bad." To some extent, Brontë seemed to be carrying on the convention of the two suitors in which the heroine is presented with a choice of two men who are physically different, whose personalities differ, or whose values or principles may diverge. This seems to be primarily for plot purposes, and it is not likely that Brontë, who created heroes with important flaws, felt men in real life split neatly into two opposing types, but exhibited a mixture of negative and positive traits.

General observation of male-female relationships reveals that women feel that love for men will conquer all, or that love is all-important for happiness. There is a strong tendency for the heroines to submerge their personalities into the heroes' personalities and lives. Much of this originated in Charlotte's juvenile writings, also. However, despite this sometimes overpowering urge, the heroines also desire identity, independence, and usefulness, and they usually check their emotions with a strong sense of morality and reason. The women also recognize that men are apart, that they act in the world, and that there is an essential separateness because of the different experiences of men and women, which perhaps never can be bridged. The actions of Jane, Caroline, Shirley, and Lucy towards the men almost always bear out these generalizations and create much tension

within the heroines.

For their part in relationships, the Brontë heroes are all older than the women, which gives them a considerable edge in social and sexual experience. They also usually express strong emotions, not only for their loved partner, but about life itself. Relationships with women are not usually of the greatest concern in men's minds, however. In many instances, the heroines have to wait for men to enter the feminine domestic sphere, or they serve as a prompter to the men's emotions, or they have to exert pressure on the men to come onto the plane of emotion with the women. As suitors, men generally reflect traditional literary norms. They give gifts (Rochester, Paul Emanuel, Graham Bretton); want to spend as much time as possible in the beloved's presence (Rochester, Louis Moore, Graham Bretton); handle objects of the beloved (Louis Moore); sigh, moan, and groan considerably (Rochester, Louis Moore, Graham Bretton); wax eloquent on the virtues and beauty of the beloved (Graham Bretton); read or write poetry and thoughts of love (Louis Moore, Philip Nunnely). Not theoretically allowed release of sexual tension in any other way, the men act "lovelorn." The least "lovesick" of any of the men is Robert Moore, whose love for Caroline is slow to awaken and is not a consuming part of his life. The men also tend to treat the women as possessions. The women resist this attitude, and in some cases, they gain enough independence or educate the males to overcome this tendency. However, power over females in relationships is an

undeniably strong urge exhibited by all the major male characters in the three novels.

The relationships culminate in marriage for all of the heroines except Lucy Snow. Marriage is acceptable to the heroes and heroines only for true love; questions of status or financial gain that a marriage will bring are not uppermost in the minds or actions of the major female characters, although these concerns are subjects in all three novels. Jane, the governess, marries a wealthy landowner, but she brings an inheritance to the marriage. Shirley, a wealthy landowner herself, marries her former tutor. Caroline marries a middle-class (though from an old family) businessman, but his risks are great. And, Lucy intends to marry a professor who, despite being esteemed, brings burdensome responsibilities with him. Although desiring independence, the women make clear that their love for the men, not the men's status, is the most important reason for marrying them. Strong personal relationships dominate the progress towards marriage of the main characters, but there is little indication that these marriages, although happy, will be other than conventional male-dominated unions. Even Jane, who acquires an inheritance and some power over Rochester, writes of how she has submerged her being into Rochester and how useful she has been to him.

As for the remainder of the characters, barely a good marriage exists, and few intact families of mother, father, and children appear in the three novels. This would not be

unusual in mid-nineteenth-century society due to death and long absences by men depending on their activities. The make-up of family life in the Brontë novels is worth noting. The Brocklehursts and Jane's nurse Bessie and her husband and children are the only complete families in Jane Eyre; the Yorkes, the William Farrens, and the Symptons appear in Shirley; none exists in Villette. As a consequence of this, few role models of husbands or fathers are on the scene. Interestingly, perhaps the most "complete" male role model is Graham Bretton of Villette, who acts at various times as a son, friend, suitor, professional working man, and husband. Such a dearth of marriages, husbands, and fathers no doubt fit certain plot considerations, but this lack of positive male role models also reflects Brontë's opinions and experiences. She saw few marriages, maintained a very Romantic conception of men, which probably no real man could match, and generally referred to men as the 'coarser sex' in her letters to women. Finally, it must be recalled that the image of the family unit in Victorian times was just that--an image, an ideal. It would not be unusual for the portrayals of families to fail to meet an ideal image.

Brontë does usually project a positive image of men in their occupations or work life, except for the clergy, the occupational group she knew best. Clergymen are uniformly chastized for a variety of behaviors. Some are silly and pretentious, such as the curates in Shirley; some are harmful, such as Brocklehurst in Jane Eyre; St. John Rivers suffers

from excessive zeal and religious principle in Jane Eyre; Helstone is miscast in his clergyman role in Shirley. No clergy appear in Villette except for a Catholic priest who, along with the religion, is criticized. Brontë always defended her attachment to the Church of England, but the large number of negative portrayals speaks to her personal experiences and to a clergy in need of education and reform in England at this time.

Otherwise, Brontë portrays men involved in energetic worklives. Even in Jane Eyre, where the rural gentry is more of a focus, Rochester goes out on duties and is seen as a good landowner from an old, respected family. Rivers also assiduously carries out his clerical duties (as does Brocklehurst, even though he has a negative effect). In Jane Eyre, what men are is more significant than what they do. In Shirley, men work and are seen doing it without women present. The picture of the aggressive, acquisitive middle-class millowner is very significant in this novel. Louis Moore is seen as a teacher, and several landowners are present, such as Yorke, Sympson, and Nunnely. The only positive portrayal of landowners, however, is that of Yorke, who has several negative qualities as well. What men do as well as what they are is quite important here, and Brontë is critical of men who usurp authority or expect rewards merely because of position (such as her Uncle Sympson and Philip Nunnely), or those who seek to despoil the "natural order" (such as Robert Moore). Brontë is not at all enthralled with

a whole nation of shopkeepers, and she frowns on material gain for its own sake. Even though she gives good qualities to Joe Scott and William Farren, her sympathies are not with the working class, either. In Villette, one of the first urban novels, men also work; Paul Emanuel is a teacher and Graham Bretton is a doctor. There are almost no gentry types except de Bassompierre and de Hamal. Again, what men do is as significant as what they are. As the novels progress, so too, does Brontë progress in presenting a more complete male character in terms of a working life. In Villette, there is no question at all of what Paul Emanuel or Graham Bretton do, for they are observed at their work. Lucy is also a teacher, and this almost puts her into an equal occupational position with Paul Emanuel.

Despite this one instance of near equality in occupation and despite love matches in all three novels, women remain severely disadvantaged in relation to men. There is at least one extended comment in each novel on men's mobility, usefulness, worklife, wider horizons, and status in contrast to women's lives, regardless of the fact that Jane has a job, Shirley is a landowner, and Lucy has a professional life. All of the women express a desire to be useful, as men are, in the world. Jane does have a role, first as a governess, but then as a helpmate to Rochester. Shirley has a role, first as a landowner, then as a wife to Louis, at which point she presumably loses her former function. Caroline has no use or role until she marries Robert. Lucy

attains independence and usefulness, but only keeps them through the auspices of a male. Thus, male advantages suffer little diminution.

However, there is one area in which Brontë allows the women advantages, and this is as teachers and humanizers of men. Much has been written about the male teacher-female pupil relationship in Brontë's novels, but an examination of the primary male characters does not indicate that they act uniformly or consistently as teachers. They may be older, somewhat fatherlike, but they do not do all of the educating in how to live a moral life or how to be an adult. In Jane Eyre, Rochester receives most of the education through experience and Jane's love. He suffers severe punishment for his past immoral behavior. He also changes considerably due to Jane's behavior towards him and their relationship. In Shirley, Robert Moore also learns the most through experience and the love of Caroline. From early in their relationship, Caroline makes many comments to Robert on how he should behave towards his workmen. Robert also learns more about the problems of the poor on a trip to London. Paul Emanuel is a dominating personality and teacher, but softens considerably as the story progresses. Lucy comments that Graham Bretton changes and improves after his marriage to Paulina. All of these men profit by the "love of a good woman."

In situations where men act formally as teachers, it is still questionable what the women learn. St. John Rivers teaches language to Jane as she becomes ever more aware of

his personality. However, she knows what her own personality is, and she knows it is not compatible with Rivers, who is, however, portrayed as being especially aware of Jane's characteristics. Louis Moore has been a tutor to Shirley prior to the action of the novel, but he must cast off that role in order to marry her. She also knows her own needs and desires; Louis does not make her aware of them, and Louis has much to learn as a newly-minted landowner. Shirley is just waiting for the appropriate man to match her. Paul Emanuel stretches Lucy intellectually, and she enjoys watching him teach. However, even though he perhaps formally teaches her the most, she also has an already formed personality. She also becomes an excellent and respected teacher, and it is not clear what part he plays in this development. She knows what it is that he arouses in her. Emanuel does not teach her emotions or intellectual acuity; he merely directs or redirects them. Paul Emanuel probably changes the least, but almost all of the major male characters are educated to a great degree of morality, self-control, equality in relationships, and humanness by the end of the novels.

This susceptibility to education and to change marks part of Brontë's description of the hero. For the Brontë men have mixed natures; they are neither all bad nor all good: "The Ideal Hero must be saturnine, faithless, proud, disillusioned, masterful, melancholy, abrupt, a man of mystery with a past. . . ." (Gérin, 89) Thus, Rochester (and Paul Emanuel to some degree) are logical extensions of some traits

of Branwell and the conceptions of Byron. At the same time, Charlotte admired rationality, self-control, loyalty, sincere religious principle, and a strong devotion to duty, traits which Lord Wellington, another hero, reflected (Moglen, 26). St. John Rivers, Graham Bretton, Louis Moore, Robert Moore, and Paul Emanuel incorporate some of these characteristics. The heroes exhibit flaws, and they are dependent on women in at least one situation. Rochester transgresses society's moral standards; he becomes dependent on Jane. Rivers is a martyr; he is made financially independent by Jane. Robert Moore is too acquisitive and uncaring; he depends on Shirley for a loan. Louis Moore has no status; he becomes prominent through marriage to a woman of status. Paul Emanuel is temperamental and domineering; he is tied to Madame Walravens in a complex series of obligations. Graham Bretton is superficial and callous; he depends on his mother for unstinting love and support.

In the three worlds of Jane Eyre, Shirley, and Villette, the men often struggle between Romanticism and rationality: passion, abandon, and immorality fight with self-control, exercise of reason, and conformity to conventions. In general, the presentation of extreme Romantic traits does diminish. Paul Emanuel exhibits his emotions, but there is much less struggle between these emotions and his rational faculties than there is in Rochester. Despite this, the Brontë heroes, like the Romantic heroes of Byron and her childhood, exist outside of society to some degree.

Rochester is alienated as a younger son who makes an undesirable social marriage, then flouts society's conventions by taking mistresses. St. John Rivers leaves England for a slow death as a missionary. Robert Moore is alienated from nature and a foreigner in the land. Paul Emanuel has to leave Lucy and his homeland and is eventually drowned. He would have become alienated from his family and friends if he had married a Protestant. Only Louis Moore, who becomes integrated into landed society, and Graham Bretton, who remains integrated in society throughout, overcome alienation from the people and land around them. This alienation is one reason why "society" as such is not so significant to many of the heroes' and heroines' romantic lives. Louis and Graham, who achieve or maintain integration, make socially good marriages, but they, too, marry for love.

Sometimes, it is difficult to follow the line of development of Brontë's male characters. All of the men, except Graham, are alienated from society to some degree, and the only one who really seeks integration is Louis Moore. In this sense, Paul Emanuel is not much different than Rochester. They both have a mysterious past and carry heavy burdens. However, Rochester is a landowner, albeit a younger son, from an old family, and he lives a life of leisure on inherited money, much of it from his wife. His emotions are played out on a grander scale, and the reader is uncertain whether he will be able to control himself in his love for Jane. The portrait of him on a burning mansion trying to rescue a

deranged wife cements this image of a man larger than life. His internal struggles are a real contest between Romantic excess and classical rationalism.

Emanuel is much more life-sized. He is a small man carrying out a rather ordinary job in an urban, middle-class setting. He is not particularly appealing. There is much more restraint. Emanuel provokes no grand images. His outbursts of temper or irritability may reflect no more than that he lives in a constrained, school atmosphere, largely in the company of women. His outbursts may reflect his sense of frustration at carrying a burden of financial support of several people and being tied to a long-dead past. His outbursts seem more designed to win him his own way, and he is never shown acting this way outside the pensionnat. Although he has Romantic traits (dark, mysterious, emotional, flawed), there is much less of an internal contest between Romanticism and rationality. Paul Emanuel is in control.

In her own world, Charlotte Brontë also suffered from the struggle between Romanticism and rationality. Her internal creative thoughts combined with her everyday life to produce the men in her novels. Alienated herself from much around her, she sought integration through her writing. As such, she projected many of her hopes, desires, needs, and frustrations onto her male creations. The development from Rochester to Paul Emanuel represented a long personal and literary journey from an adolescent's fiery Romantic, hopeful imagination to a mature woman's realization of what life, in the end, could offer her in realistic terms.

V. CONCLUSION: FROM INTEGRATION TO ALIENATION

Before making a direct comparison and contrast between Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë, it is important to recall a number of modifying circumstances mentioned in the first chapter which affected them and their writing as well as other women of the first half of the nineteenth century. First, inherited and contemporary literary conventions as well as restrictions on women writers certainly limited the modes and subjects of female novelists. In addition, the biographies of Austen and Brontë were closely linked to what they wrote. This is explicit in Brontë and more implicit in Austen. Because Austen's life is less fully known than that of Brontë, it is necessary to search for the implied authorial personality in her writings. Nonetheless, enough information is available to indicate the effect of biography on her subject matter.

Along with these two sets of circumstances, it is very important to note an area of study which affects the subject of this essay but which has only been mentioned in the course of the writing. Matters of language and style are ultimately reflections of a particular society, sets of conventions, and the mode of knowledge of a certain era. A group of writers including Michel Foucault, Jonathan Culler,

and Roland Barthes seeks to study how and why writers of a particular time-period say what they do, as well as to remind readers that they, too, bring more to the text than just a knowledge of language. These attempts to seek meaning beneath the structure of the language move away from linguistic analysis and traditional literary criticism as techniques of study and open up further avenues of understanding Austen and Brontë as well as ourselves as readers.¹

This is one area of further investigation which this essay opens. In addition, while just scratching the surface of the first half of the nineteenth century, this study also leads to further possibilities. The method of analysis used on Austen and Brontë, as described in the first chapter, can be used on George Eliot as a writer even further along the path of seeing men as alienated heroes rather than integrated heroes. Later nineteenth-century women and lesser known female writers throughout the century would also be very useful areas of study for images of men. How class related to portrayals of men has only been mentioned. Much more study is desirable to understand how the institutions of the family, religion, and education played a part in creating and transferring images of men to women. Finally, nineteenth-century French or American (or other nationalities) women novelists would be excellent subjects for analysis.

¹See Michel Foucault, The Archeology of Knowledge; Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics; and Roland Barthes, Writing Degree Zero.

Further areas of investigation aside, a number of valuable comparisons and contrasts can be made as a result of the systematic analysis of Austen's and Brontë's male characters. First, despite the differences in style, structure, subject matter, and time periods of the two women, which Brontë herself noted, there are many more similarities among the male characters than might be at first observed.

Both Brontë and Austen confined themselves primarily to men who ranged from the landed gentry to the middle classes. There were few or no servants, laboring men, skilled workers, or factory workers present on the lower end, nor were there any upper nobility or royalty on the upper end of the social and economic ranks. Some titled men, many landholders, and professional men abounded. This, of course, reflected the positions, mobility, and knowledge of the authors and reminds readers of the focus of the first half of the nineteenth-century novels.

All of the male heroes were older than the heroines and possessed experience which the women lacked. The men ran estates, handled finances, and worked at various occupations. Only in teaching could women "compete" with men. Presumably, the men also had sexual knowledge or experience. Nearly all of these experiences were legally, socially, or traditionally closed to women. Generally, the men had little or no intention of allowing women into these areas, except as sexual partners.

This combination of age and experience meant that women did not participate in "male culture" (nor did men participate in "female culture") which might be defined as groups of experiences, traditions, mores, norms, folkways, and institutions in which males (or females) exclusively participate. Shirley entered into the male culture, but only when she feigned male traits. Male culture thus included, in the early nineteenth century, a number of professional occupations (clergy, law, medicine), business, the military, athletics, education at the university level, public life, and leisure activities such as travelling freely alone, being in bars or pubs, hunting, and engaging in sexual activities. In contrast, men could not physically experience menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause. These generally remained taboo topics in literature and society well into the twentieth century and still fall into areas which many men do not discuss comfortably or openly with women or among themselves. Men also participated little in childrearing.

The grounds on which men and women did meet was the home--the woman's sphere. In all of the novels, the men walked briskly in and out of this sphere at will, while the women remained essentially confined to it. Occasionally, men were forced to stay in the domestic sphere due to illness or accident, but this was not their "natural" arena. Women, in a sense, "pulled" men into the domestic sphere to meet on the plane of emotions. Men allowed this and paid women by

considering their emotions: love and marriage became a major price that men paid so that women stayed in the domestic realm. Men's consideration of emotions never became their primary activity or goal, however, while for women, emotions often were more important than other aspects of life. Both men and women understood that, the exchange made, the men "got on."

Thus, not allowed into male culture, women did not "know" men; the female authors never "knew" men, either. Consequently, based on the range of men presented in the novels as well as both real and fictional lack of entry into male culture, the conclusion is that both Austen and Brontë gave an incomplete rendering of men. They provided images and not the reality or truth of what men were "really" like. If their images are subjected to an historical reality test, they would fail. However, their images of men remain as important as the reality of men, for women's images of men (and men's images of women) are as important to society at any period as surely as is reality. The question here becomes: is it necessary to be male to "know" men (and vice-versa)? Other parallel areas which this question involves are: must one bear children or be a father to know children; must one be black, Chicano, or American Indian to know them; must one speak another language to know another culture? In all of these examples, images compete with reality in arriving at knowledge and understanding, so images are important to catalogue and analyze.

These references to "knowing" men, being excluded from the male culture, and the subsequent incomplete rendering of men raises a related question of whether Austen and particularly Brontë were working out sexual fantasies of men as male writers were (and are) accused of doing. Sexual fantasies might be defined to include three parts: images of desired physical appearance, images of what it would be like to have sexual intercourse or other types of sexual contact with the desired object (male or female), and images of the object's desired personality characteristics. The limitations of the time on both men's and women's writing ruled out references to the second type of fantasy, except that the numerous contacts between Jane and Rochester could be construed as sexual. Both Austen and Brontë did present physical descriptions of men which to them and to society at the time either were attractive or came to be considered the norm as attractive. In this way, they both reflected and created images of desirable physical characteristics of men. In addition, both of them presented certain men with a set of desirable personality traits. However, many of the women also exhibited these traits, such as sincerity, truthfulness, warm feelings, loyalty, etc. In this sense, Austen and Brontë did create sexual fantasies if the first and third parts of the definition are used, because both described the physical appearance and personality traits of the major male characters which they approved.

Beyond these, there are distinct limitations to interpreting Austen's and Brontë's portrayals of men as sexual fantasies. First, they were confined to acceptable literary conventions of how women could deal with men, which has already been discussed. This generally meant that women in real life and in the imaginary life of the novels were not supposed to know about sex or treat characters in sexual ways. This limitation Brontë objected to more than once as she refused to ". . . think always of myself and what is elegant and charming in femininity. . . ." Brontë was roundly criticized for her passionate tone, portrayal of emotions, and immoral portraits of the clergymen characters, which were considered not only inaccurate and disrespectful, but not what a lady should write about. Despite Brontë's refusals to conform to many conventions, she still created basically "desexed" clergymen as well as many older men, except Rochester, as suitors and husbands who were effectively less sexual and more fatherly than a man of near the women's age. Despite much modern Freudian psychology, feminist writing, and the acceptance of women having sexual feelings and fantasies, it is difficult to read more into Austen's and Brontë's subconscious other than that Austen wrote according to a circumscribed code of writing and that Brontë knew she had strong feelings, fed by Romantic imagery, which she proceeded to inject into her juvenile writings and, in less florid form, into her adult novels. I am not willing to accept as standard interpretation that Brocklehurst and

St. John Rivers existed as penis symbols because they were described as columns.

A second limitation, along with care in reading modern interpretations into nineteenth-century novels, is that there are, I believe, different perspectives operating in male and female writers. Very broadly, many male writers and men in general often fantasize women as "sexy" or voluptuous and desirable as objects of sexual intercourse (women create men like that, too). However, along with this "sexy" image often goes an image of women as sweet, docile, domestic, weaker, emotional, subservient, incomplete without men, less intelligent, etc., traits which modern psychologists analyze as negative traits. That is, men do not want to be like this which they consider inferior. Women, when analyzed, also consider these as inferior traits. Significantly, and this applies to both Austen and Brontë, positive traits include mobility, having power, being strong, energetic, contributing to society, being rational or in control, etc. Austen and Brontë's men shared many of these latter traits, and many of their women desired to have these traits and approved of them. My conclusion is that Austen and Brontë's images of men, especially Brontë's, were strongly affected by their desire, as well as many creative women's desires, to be like men and to do what men did. On the contrary, men's sexual images or fantasies do not include being like women or doing what women do. This difference in perspective significantly alters conceptions of Austen and particularly Brontë working out

sexual fantasies in their fiction in the same way that men are analyzed as doing.

Even though Austen's and Brontë's men entered fitfully into the domestic realm and considered it an inferior realm to their world, they conferred legitimacy on this and all other arenas. They legitimized children; ushered women into adulthood through marriage; settled status on wives, children, and relatives; and provided financial security, even though heroines often wanted financial and "spiritual" independence from male dominion. This is more pronounced in Brontë where all of the women, except Caroline, could exist by themselves if necessary. This legitimization by men served to point up the severe disadvantages of the women. Both Austen and Brontë women could not do what they wished and were not mobile. Since men conferred status, women sought social and emotional identity through men, and the women often sought "usefulness" as the only way to cope with disadvantages. The form of usefulness changed, since Austen's women, of course, never worked.

Austen and Brontë clearly indicated that age, experience, access to male culture, and conferring legitimacy made men the builders of civilization. Men ran the estates, conquered the land, sailed the seas, civilized the heathen, remolded the economy, and created religious institutions. Logically, this should have made them pinions of the moral order, also. However, although this was true of Austen's heroes, it did not necessarily characterize many of her other

men. And, in Brontë, two of the heroes needed moral education by the women. Also, the men were often portrayed as apart from or alien to the natural world. Austen's heroes rearranged it, improved it, or sailed in it. Brontë's heroes, except for Rochester perhaps, were alienated from it or regarded it as irrelevant. The portrayal of the failure to support uniformly the moral order and the separation from nature which marked many of their men may well have been reflections that Austen and Brontë found some problems, at least, with the world that men created.

What men were and did loomed significantly in Austen and Brontë, for these related to their moral worth and to their status as heroes. Heroes had to be congruent, that is, their inner values, thoughts, and feelings should match their outer behavior. This was especially difficult for Austen and Brontë to indicate, since as further evidence of the incomplete rendering of men, they seldom portrayed men thinking, or the "inner man." Brontë did present men alone and in conversation with each other, but whether that made the men more "complete" is unlikely. The social aspect of behavior was particularly important to Austen, but in all of her novels she allowed a certain laxity of adherence to the social moral code in deference to a higher, natural law. In Brontë, the heroes' inner feelings were more important than outer behavior. The heroes were essentially good men or came to be in the course of the novel, and this matched or came to match their outward behavior. The best indication of the

match between inner and outer, what the men were and what they did, became the marriages. All heroes married or would marry based on true, mutual, sincere feelings of love.

Despite several statements in literary criticisms and biographies, the heroes were not uniformly teachers to women. The male teacher as a character served several purposes in a novel. He could be on the domestic scene easily. He could act as a friend to the women without being in compromising romantic situations. Few male friends to women existed in Austen and Brontë. Combined with age and experience, the teacher-type male character reflected accepted social and literary models of men. However, a quick review indicates that in Austen, Darcy learned as much as he taught Elizabeth. Wentworth received the education and not Anne, and even though Knightley educated Emma, it is not likely that her character changed much after marriage. In Brontë, Rochester and Robert Moore needed to be morally educated and Louis Moore had to learn how to be a landowner, even though his formal role was as a tutor throughout most of the novel. Paul Emanuel was seen in his teacher role, and he actually taught Lucy. However, she took on the task of humanizing or softening him, which Caroline and Jane also did for Robert and Rochester. All of the heroines were sharp and more than half of them acted aggressively. They were superior in many ways to most of the people around them, and they certainly were intelligent enough to know that society valued compliant women or women who matched society's expectations of them,

which would include being taught by men. However, regardless of outward compliance, all of the heroines equalled the heroes in most respects, and, in all cases, the heroines had to wait patiently until a man worthy of them appeared on the scene to recognize and love them.

This aspect of recognition and love confuses the issue of whether the heroes taught the heroines. The heroines' tendency in Austen and Brontë remained one of submitting through love to the hero, and recognizing that the heroine's social and economic identity would be found through the hero. However, in all instances (except Emma), the heroines knew their own emotional make-up, were quite aware of the social and moral framework of society, and knew how to behave in society. Thus, it was only in a minority of instances that men actually behaved as teachers, that is, formally taught subject matter to the women, taught them morals, or taught them about the social and economic structure of society.

Because of this, Austen and Brontë projected considerable tension into the novels. They, of course, were both women who desired recognition and love, but they also received education away from home, at home by male relatives, and were self-taught. They knew they had superior intellects and may often have resented the authority of men who traditionally considered themselves omniscient teachers of women. But, to fit both literary and social conventions, Austen and Brontë created heroes who gave the appearance of being

teachers, but very few actually performed that role.

This leads to the final comparison between Austen and Brontë. Men were uniformly portrayed as poor role models to an almost startling degree, except for the heroes. And in Brontë, all of the heroes harbored serious flaws. Husbands and fathers (as well as many wives and mothers) were nearly all weak, lacked responsibility, were sometimes harmful, reflected authoritarian traits, or were not present. Brothers, uncles, cousins, and clergymen fared little better. Good fathers, husbands, and other male role models did appear in the "new societies" at the end of the novels, and in Persuasion, existed in the naval society. Few positive marriages or "complete" families (parents and children under one roof) appeared in either novelist's works. In Brontë, this trait was even more attenuated. Daughters respected fathers or deferred to their authority, but the daughters of both novelists were all more competent and more intelligent than their fathers and manipulated them rather easily. As mentioned earlier, the "nuclear family" of our modern conception would not have been common in the nineteenth century at any rate, due to deaths, absences, and the custom of including many family members and non-members in an extended family.

However, although some of these portrayals and situations reflected plot purposes and reality, this lack of positive male role models indicated at least some discomfort with the societal structure. For a society which prized family life and was ordered on a hierarchical, patriarchal

basis, these images of fathers, husbands, and brothers present on the scene were a blow to established society. Neither Austen nor Brontë proposed solutions, but whether purposely or unconsciously, they reflected a serious, sustained criticism of society which had been going on since early in the nineteenth century, and which often concentrated on a criticism of bourgeois family life.¹

Differences in time period, temperament, and life experiences produced, of course, many contrasts between Austen's and Brontë's male characters. Men's relationships to society, to the women, and personal characters were changing, not only in novels, but in society. In Austen, "manly virtue" and responsibility were connected with property. Both Darcy's and Knightley's character reflected their status as landowners. Austen mourned the loss of manly virtue connected with property and shifted the most attractive and desirable manly qualities to the navy in Persuasion. This connection of character to property was not particularly relevant to Brontë. Even though Rochester was a landowner, this did not relate to his main character traits. Negative qualities marked Robert Moore, a new industrialist, who owned a mill. For Graham Bretton and Paul Emanuel, there was no connection between owning property and their characters.

¹In England and on the continent, for example, vigorous criticism of bourgeois life, the subject of Austen and Brontë, emanated from Charles Fourier, Robert Owen, Friedrich Engels, and Karl Marx by the end of the first half of the century.

This relation to property reflected the men's relation to society. In Austen, this connection was far more important. Being responsible, doing one's duty, displaying proper manners, and being on good behavior in society marked a gentleman. In Brontë, men's relation to society was less significant. Marriage did not act as a vehicle for the regulation of social life as well as the expression of the individual as it did in Austen. Solutions to the problems of the heroes and heroines did not rest in conforming to society's standards or remaining in society. Major male characters grew progressively more middle-class and less concerned with matters of status in Brontë. The urban, middle-class setting of Villette was far removed from the estates of Darcy and Knightley. Above all, all of the Brontë heroes were to some extent or to a great extent removed or alienated from society.

Personal relationships and character also changed. Power was much more evident as a factor in Brontë's men and women. Since Brontë's women, except for Caroline, worked, gained independence, or were independent, this might have been why this element became more important. Power only becomes an issue if two sides can compete on some level or if one side resists power. All Brontë men desired to put down or keep down women and to treat them as possessions in their role as suitors. Power was not as much of an issue in Austen's relationships. Women desired love, esteem, and security, but they did not seek work or chafe at their

positions. Brontë's Caroline and Shirley reflected this issue of power. Caroline served as an excellent example of what happened to a woman without power. Shirley gave up considerable power for love, but only after a great internal struggle which was reflected by delaying her wedding. All of the Brontë women suffered much tension as they struggled between submerging their identity into the male and retaining personal and financial independence. Despite this tendency to submerge identity, Brontë reflected a greater awareness of the apartness of men and women. Austen commented on this in Persuasion, but it became more of a major theme in Brontë. This may have reflected a greater frustration on the part of women to be able to do things men did, or at least not to have to wait for men to pay attention to women. This theme may have also reflected that, in addition to the essential biological separateness, men were more apart physically as more work-places became separated from the home by the middle nineteenth century. As urbanization increased, more professional men such as doctors and businessmen worked in hospitals, offices, and buildings apart from the home. Working-class men (and women) went away to work in factories instead of working in or near the home in craft shops.

With regard to personal character, Brontë's heroes displayed more flaws. Austen's Darcy and Wentworth needed to be educated, but they showed almost all attractive qualities, and Knightley was perfect! Brontë's men displayed major problems and changed morally or temperamentally. Brontë's

men, in what was both more realistic but also related to the Romantic influence, also evidenced more dependence on the women--through injury, illness, finances, or position. Women gained leverage this way, and emphasis on dependent situations reflected men's and women's concerns with power.

Brontë's heroes, except Robert Moore, exhibited more outward passion. Austen's heroes were warm and sincere, but always in control. The Brontë men occasionally came close to losing control and expressed feelings of love more openly. For example, there is a great distance between Darcy and Knightley and Rochester and Emanuel. Part of Darcy's problem was that he did not communicate well and that he was considered reserved and aloof by Elizabeth and her family. The actual courtship and declaration of love were quite tame and compressed into a small time period. Knightley was portrayed as such a fatherly figure to Emma that nearly the whole novel elapsed before he considered her as an attractive, eligible woman for him to marry. Again, the courtship and declaration of love were very composed, restrained, and required little time. On the contrary, as indicated before, Rochester's expressions of love and need for Jane were numerous as were his expressions of struggle to mute his passion for her. The instances of physical contact between them abounded. Louis Moore and Graham visibly acted "love-sick" toward their intendeds. Paul Emanuel expressed his irritability and temper, but he also expressed tender sentiments and solicitations towards Lucy. Some of the Brontë heroes' main tasks

were to gain in self-control and rationality as the novel progressed.

Above all, Austen's heroes were all integrated fully into middle-class society--into its institutions, behavior, and codes. Even the charmers and insinulators remained within society. The heroes in Brontë (except Graham Bretton) were all alienated to some degree; they were all outsiders and did not necessarily seek integration into the society which their collective efforts as the builders of civilization had created.

Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë created fictional societies and fictional men, but it is difficult to forget that they lived and created within a real historical context. Austen (1775-1817) lived within a period in which "England changed more fundamentally than it had for hundreds of years before." (Harrison, 22) Before the 1760's, England was characterized by an agricultural life which was reflected in a small population, a low standard of living for the majority, a hierarchical social system dominated by rural landowners, a property system dominated by primogeniture, and an aristocratic oligarchy which ruled. During her lifetime, fundamental changes occurred; by the time she died, England was about halfway through a radical social, economic, and political transformation. Agricultural improvements, a number of mechanical inventions, and changes in transportation acted as both cause and result of a transition to dependence on manufacturing and mining, large population increases, an

increase in urban centers in size and number, a great increase in wealth, an increasing degree of social mobility, and a desire for political democracy. In addition, Austen lived through the American Revolution, French Revolution, and the accompanying wars which resulted in ". . . an enormous refutation of the aristocratic, ordered, classical world of the eighteenth century . . . /and the French Revolution/ reinforced that complex of changes in sensibility known as the Romantic movement." (Harrison, 68)

During Brontë's lifetime, England completed the transition from a rural to an urban society (although more workers continued to farm than to work in factories) and from an agriculturally-focused to an industrially-focused economy. The aftermath of the American and French Revolutions, the Napoleonic Wars, and the agrarian and industrial changes affected England in all spheres while Charlotte lived and wrote. She knew about the great era of political reform, the railroad and steamship era, the ferment of social protest and revolt, and the upheaval in the Church of England. If, during Austen's life, "Agriculture was made more efficient and its output was raised. But the social price of this was a weakening of traditional community values in the villages, a hardening of class divisions, and the degradation arising from rural poverty." (Harrison, 48) Then, during Brontë's time, "Life in the new industrial towns, the discipline of the factories and the strenuous, incessant activity of the mines and mills in which men /and women/ were harnessed

to machines, all meant great problems of human adjustment." (Thomson, 43) This adjustment included the general governmental economic policy of promoting national wealth through unchecked private enterprise, a policy largely separated from governmental political and social policies. Despite the costs in human suffering of the transition to an industrial society, England reflected a "buoyant, optimistic, and somewhat arrogant mood of 1851" in the Crystal Palace Exhibition which Charlotte visited. This mood persisted for the next twenty years (Thomson, 103).

Within this matrix of change, changes in women's status occurred, also. The movement for legislation affecting women's legal standing, employment, and life opportunities has been briefly reviewed in Chapter I, along with the restrictions placed on women novelists. Charlotte Brontë was aware of much of this type of legislation and commented not only on the "woman question" but on her inability or lack of intention to adhere to these restrictions.

Subsequent generations cannot hold creative artists responsible for not including in their works direct reflections or concrete illustrations of all aspects or happenings of a period. Both Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë have been criticized for a lack of historical content. However, both writers can be asked if they treated the concern of how women should take part in the experiences of life, which included all of the changes summarized. Then, did this concern affect their creation of male characters?

Austen, from the examples of the novels studied, did not make women's participation or desire for participation in a wider area of life than the domestic sphere a major consideration in her early work. Women's participation was confined largely to securing or keeping a firm place in the propertied hierarchical social system. Her last novel, Persuasion, however, moved away from this focus and indicated a desire on Anne's part to experience more of what men experienced in a wider range of activities, while still being aware of the separateness of men's and women's worlds. This shift in focus resulted in the creation of different male characters. Darcy's and Knightley's concerns centered on property and on their part in the social structure. Wentworth, a navy man in a risky profession, reflected Austen's growing awareness of an emerging middle class not based on land, while her father, Sir Walter, and her cousin, Mr. Elliot, reflected the weakening of landed society. Anne's hero was not the landed proprietor, but the self-made man of adventure in whose life Anne could participate vicariously if not actually as a wife on shipboard.

In Brontë's life, this concern over expanding women's participation in life's experiences, was much more developed, and the topic entered into her novels to a greater degree. All of the major female characters made a point to comment on both their confined lives and the separate existences of men and women. The male characters, in turn, reflected these two situations. Rochester, a man of strong, expressed emotion,

lived a stormy, tempestuous life which included wandering around the world, harboring a mad wife, and supporting mistresses. Robert Moore, a foreigner and alienated from the Yorkshire populace, nonetheless functioned in the mysterious, attractive, sometimes dangerous world of business. And Paul Emanuel was a highly respected professor who moved in and out of the pensionnat at will, while Graham Bretton doctored to the city's poor. Even St. John Rivers' desire to minister to the heathen had a certain attractiveness to it for Jane.

Despite the women's characters' growing desires to be more broadly included in life's experiences, the men in both Austen's and Brontë's novels still remained dominant in relationships and in the world, and the women accepted this dominance, even if they worked out marriages based on love and mutual regard. The changing economic structure, ferment, and protest in the political, social, and economic spheres in Brontë's time did lead to changes in women's activities and some legal changes in their status. But women were still highly restricted in their movements, still considered weak and vulnerable physically, and still at considerable disadvantages economically. These disadvantages also contributed in two ways to the male images which both Austen and Brontë produced. In a world of "weak" women, weak men would be criticized, if not despised. The images of mobile, strong, economically viable, and virile men were necessary to complement or compensate for weak, vulnerable women. And, as indicated in prior discussion, it was more than likely

that Brontë, and Austen to some extent, desired just as much to do what the men did or to be like the men they created than it was that they were working out sexual fantasies of men.

Both Austen's and Brontë's fictional men affected the whole nineteenth century. Brontë reacted negatively to Austen's "ladies and gentlemen, in their elegant but confined houses!" But Brontë utilized Austen's convention of the two suitors to provide her heroines with choices of two types of men. Austen's more "classical" men, or restrained, polite, near-perfect, and gallant, affected portrayals of men throughout the century, even when authors rejected the model. Brontë's less restrained, less conventionally polite, flawed, and much rougher "romantic" men also reappeared in variations again and again in nineteenth-century fiction and produced descendents through Rhett Butler and the contemporary neo-gothic romance.

One of the most significant "lessons" to be learned from this essay on Austen and Brontë and the nineteenth-century literary scene is that they did not presume to "know" men and that they both commented in letters that they created incomplete male characters with few inner thoughts who were usually only seen in the women's domestic sphere. If this is accepted as fact from the pens of two of the great observers of society and human nature, then it seems that they accepted an essential separateness of men and women. For even though men presumed to know women, as indicated in the

earlier discussions of the nineteenth-century literary world, men did not know women, either. Not only biological differences but vast differences in experience separated men's and women's existences.

In today's society, many of the same concerns of women as they relate to images of men still exist. Women still seek identity through men, as well as status and security, in modern literature and society; many women still believe that men "make" the world and conquer civilization; vast numbers of women still suffer under severe disadvantages due to lack of employment opportunities and educational advantages. Certain institutional changes have come about, ways of thinking have been slowly altered, and even some biological disadvantages have been overcome. However, the only way to overcome separateness will be when women's activities are no longer limited or considered inferior, when they are not apart, when women enter men's spheres as readily as men stride in and out of the domestic sphere, when men participate in women's spheres instead of being mostly observers, and when biological differences are recognized and accepted, but not seen as forever limiting. Then, perhaps, men and women will not be alienated from one another, nor will men feel alienated from the society they have been given credit and blame for creating and guiding. Then, perhaps, biology and past traditions will not remain destiny and become the blueprint for future history.

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