THE CHARACTERIZATION OF WOMEN IN THE NOVELS OF CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

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ABSTRACT

THE CHARACTERIZATION OF WOMEN IN THE NOVELS OF CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

By

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One of the most intriguing aspects of Charles Brockden Brown's novels is his striking characterization of women. A reader may well remember Clara Wieland or Jane Talbot long after having forgotten the plot and setting of the novels they appeared in. In contrast to Brown's full and memorable portraiture, women characters in the works of other early American fiction writers, including Irving, Cooper, and Poe, are pallid, sentimental shadows of real persons. Popular contemporaries of Brown, such as William Hill Brown, Hannah Foster, and Susanna Haswell Rowson, delineated their heroines with so much less skill that these often seem caricatures to modern readers. Obviously, the problem arises of accounting for Brown's unusual superiority in this regard to other early American writers.

As no one single type of character analysis provides a broad enough spectrum, an eclectic approach seemed most fruitful. This analysis was organized by relating the

elements influencing Brown's characterization to his three motives for writing: his psychological need for self-therapy; his didactic desire to test and teach the ideas of associationist psychology, Godwinism, and feminism; and his economic need to earn money by writing entertainingly. After an introductory chapter, each of these elements is related to his characterization of women in a separate chapter. A fourth chapter asks not "why" but "how" and analyzes Brown's use of character function, novelistic form, narrative mode, and style to create his women characters.

During his brief career as a writer, Brown's psychological needs became less pressing, and he became less interested in exploring and promoting liberal ideas through his characterization of women. At the same time, he became more concerned with his lack of financial success with his novels. Hence, his last two novels lack the psychological tensions and intellectual controversy of his earlier work. The influence of the sentimental-gothic heroine, used so profitably by such diversely talented writers as Rowson and Richardson, is more obvious in the last two novels. However, Brown had become more of a literary craftsman by this point. As a result, Jane Talbot, little read today because of its lack of intellectual interest, contains Brown's most mimetic characterization of a woman. In terms of literary accomplishment, Brown surpassed other

American novelists of his own time with his ability to characterize women fully and strikingly; when he portrayed Jane Talbot, he surpassed himself.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents and my husband. My parents have aided my education throughout my life, both by their encouragement and their actions. Also, I owe thanks to my husband because of the time and energy he gave me even while working on his own dissertation. Having just completed a doctorate himself, he had personal knowledge of the doubts and hesitancies which I was experiencing, and he was in a special position to offer me not only information but also a great deal of emotional support.

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A number of people have given me special help with the research and writing of this dissertation. First, while I was doing research at the Kent State University Bibliographical and Textual Center, Dr. Sydney J. Krause, General Editor of the KSU-CEAA Brown edition, facilitated my work in every conceivable way. In addition, his family's kindness made my stay there more pleasant. Since that time, Dr. Krause has read many of my chapters and offered helpful criticism. Also at Kent State University, Mr. Dean H. Keller, Curator of Special Collections at the Library, was extremely patient and helpful.

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encouraged me to want to do very well by his great kindness and unassuming helpfulness. Like all of his students, I owe Dr. Nye more than I can acknowledge.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the past decade, the writings of Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810) have become increasingly more intriguing to students of American literature. Several factors have contributed to this rise in interest. For one, readers may be attempting to find some bridge between the sermons of Increase Mather and the fiction of Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe. For another, scholars often find more adventure in working with a writer who is not all but hidden behind a mountain of secondary research; this is the excitement of the less-travelled trail. Finally, they are attracted by Brown's striking superiority to American writers of his own age, such as William Hill Brown, Hannah Foster, and Susanna Haswell Rowson.

In one important respect, Brown's writing, particularly in his published novels, is noteworthy even when compared to that of the first-rate writers of the early republic, such as Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, and Edgar Allan Poe. Brown's characterization, particularly of women, is much deeper than theirs, and he presents a fuller investigation of the role of women in our society.

His interest in women as persons is obvious from his letters, from his fiction, and from Alcuin: A Dialogue (1798 and 1815), a forum on the role and position of women in society. It is fitting that Brown's novelistic presentation of women should be studied in some detail, considering that he wrote the first full-length American work on women's roles.

Washington Irving presents a considerably more old-fashioned and restricted view of women in his writing. While all of his characterization is lightly drawn, that of women characters is even more so. Generally, he portrays women merely in terms of their relationships with men, as some of the titles in The Sketchbook (1820) suggest: "The Widow and Her Son," "The Broken Heart," and "The Wife." Throughout The Sketchbook, Irving reveals a sentimental and conservative view of women. He sanctifies motherhood and shows wives' roles as being moral examples to their husbands. In "The Broken Heart," the authorial comments and the action label women as more emotionally susceptible than men. He even seems to relish virgin deaths--of women--in "Rural Funerals." Clinging to his memories of the Knickerbocker aristocracy, Irving tends to romanticize women in his writing to such an extent that they become idealized shadows of real women.

Somewhat later in the century, the kinds of writing done by Edgar Allan Poe demanded and received little

authorial concern for the characterization of male or female characters. His tales of adventure, crime detection, and grotesquerie rest more on plot and setting than on characterization. Also, his lack of concern for contemporary life contributed to sketchy characterization. Thus, while Poe's tales have been long remembered, it is not for the deep and satisfying portrayals of Morella, Berenice, or Lady Rowena.

James Fenimore Cooper's writing romanticizes the frontier past of America. Accordingly, he hearkens back to the romantic ideal of women happy in the roles of submissive wives and daughters. In The Deerslayer (1841), Cooper's idealisation of Hetty Hutter almost intimates some link between half-wittedness and the submissive virtue he considered appropriate to women. Again and again, Cooper has Deerslayer speak of women's weaknesses and of marked inherent psychological differences between the sexes. Cooper's only concession to the realities of frontier living is to give Hetty and Judith some "masculine" survival skills, such as canoeing; otherwise they would have weighted down the action. In general, Cooper transfers a sentimental view of women to a romanticized Wild West. Their two-dimensionality is sufficient to fulfill the roles necessary in Cooper's wilderness romances.

By contrast, Charles Brocken Brown chose a fictional mode which enabled him to pursue his interest in

characterization, especially in the characterization of women. Because of our decade's re-involvement with an examination of sexual roles in society, Brown's portrayal of women has already resulted in seven dissertations within four years. Three of these, all completed in 1971, deal with Brown as one of a number of writers, so they provide mostly summary and analysis on a general level.[1] The other four deal only with Brown. Judith Ann Cunningham studies Brown's writings as a contribution to the growth of women's rights in America.[2] Mary Ann Dobbin McCay deals with women characters in Brown's novels; her thesis is that Brown became increasingly unable to handle the polarity between innocence and sexual knowledge in women characters, due to his own unconscious sexual questions.[3] On a different tack, Patricia Jewell McAlexander explores sexual morality in Brown's fiction, delving into male and female roles. McAlexander considers Brown to have gone through various stages in his position on sexual morality before he concludes that, for human morality and happiness, there could and must be a balance between passion and reason, represented in his writing by the image of the passionate marriage.[4] Most recently, David Otis Tomlinson has examined women in Brown's writing as a study in the development of his thought. Tomlinson sees Brown's Quaker background as most influential in his portraiture of women prior to 1800, after which his increasing contact with the world causes

Brown to delineate heroines who are neither as independent nor as strikingly intellectual as their predecessors.[5] Tomlinson does not sufficiently acknowledge the maturation of Jane Talbot, who is not only far from being a typical domestic heroine, but who is also Brown's most realistic portrayal of a woman. Granted, her tastes are not as intellectual as those of Clara Wieland or Constantia Dudley.

The greater richness of Brown's characterization of women may be due in part to the tensions created by the struggle in him among his three different aims in writing: self-therapy, the desire to teach, and the wish to entertain so that his novels would be read and sold.[6] The first aim resulted from his own psychological problems and caused his deep interest in character as well as his psychological insight. The second, didacticism, was a product of his age and manifested itself in the attempts to explore and teach the ideas of associationist psychology, Godwinism, and feminism. His interest in exploration and his good taste saved him, however, from the heavy-handed authorial intrusion of his own moral commentary, which was common in the writing of many of Brown's contemporaries. His enthusiasm for liberal ideas receded, as it does in many people, with age and his increasing involvement in the family's mercantile interests. Finally, his desire to entertain, as well as being the birthright of every story-teller, resulted from his desire to make a living from his writing. This naturally

led him to follow fictional patterns of proven popularity, especially the sentimental and gothic novels. The influences of these forms on his characterization of women cannot be overlooked.

In each of the next three chapters, the impact of one of these major motives will be explored. The motive will be correlated with Brown's characterization of women. Finally, his techniques of characterization will be examined in the fifth chapter. The uses of character function, fictional form, point of view, and style will be analyzed in terms of their impact on the characterization of the memorable women in the novels of Charles Brockden Brown.

NOTES--CHAPTER I

[1]Constance Hedin Carlson, "Heroines in Certain American Novels," Diss. Brown University 1971.

Barbara Joan Cicardo, "The Mystery of the American Eve: Alienation of the Feminine as a Tragic Theme in American Letters," Diss. St. Louis University 1971.

Judith Howard Montgomery, "Pygmalion's Image: The Metamorphosis of the American Heroine," Diss. Syracuse University 1971.

Before this decade, one other dissertation dealt with Brown's heroines:

Raymond A. Miller, Jr., "Representative Tragic Heroines in the Work of Brown, Hawthorne, Howells, James and Dreiser," Diss. University of Wisconsin 1957.

[2]Judith Ann Cunningham, "Charles Brockden Brown's Pursuit of a Realistic Feminism: A Study of His Writing as a Contribution to the Growth of Women's Rights in America," Diss. Ball State University 1971.

[3]Mary Ann Dobbin McCay, "Women in the Novels of Charles Brockden Brown: A Study," Diss. Tufts University 1973, pp. 3 and 27.

[4]Patricia Jewell McAlexander, "Sexual Morality in the Fiction of Charles Brockden Brown," Diss. University of Wisconsin 1973.

[5]David Otis Tomlinson, "Women in the Writings of Charles Brockden Brown: A Study in the Development of an Author's Thought," Diss. University of North Carolina 1974.

[6]Support for the existence of each of these three aims will follow in the following three chapters. McAlexander finds, instead, these three basic motives: to be wise; to test ideas; and to provide for his own amusement (pp. 82-83). This analysis overlooks both the seriousness of his personal problems and his strong desire to make himself financially independent through his writing.

CHAPTER II

THE ARTISTIC PERSONALITY AND BROWN'S CHARACTERS

Charles Brockden Brown's personality significantly influenced his characterization and even, more than any external reason, led to his desire to write. Like most authors, Brown wrote from a certain psychological set and from certain biographical experiences. No attempt will be made to psychoanalyze the author to discover which aspect of his psyche caused such details as, let us say, Constantia's refusal of her first two suitors. Such particularity will be avoided both because of its obvious difficulty considering the limited amount of biographical data and because of its dubious validity. The assignation of highly specific motives is a tricky business even with living authors; obviously, this task would be well nigh impossible with an author who has been dead for over a hundred and fifty years.

Evidence drawn from the fictional works will be supported as much as possible by biographical data derived from Brown's letters, his friends' reports, and his nonfiction, as part of an effort to avoid committing the intentional fallacy. Brown did make explicit comments about the therapeutic nature of authorship for him, and his creative

period did coincide with a period of turmoil within his own life; his creative productivity ceased once he had secured his beloved Elizabeth for emotional support. Furthermore, he did make some statements about his attitudes towards characterization as well as about his motivation for creating certain kinds of characters. His preference for these kinds of characters seems to be a partial cause of his creation of such strong female characters. Therefore, it seems perfectly valid to explore the influence of the artist's life and personality on his characterization. While it is important not to over-estimate these effects, an understanding of them does shed some new light upon Brown's characterization and hence upon his novels.

Brown's major biographers and many of his critics amply document the unhappiness of Brown's early years. Harry Warfel, for example, remarks upon Brown's "morbid depression and melancholy."[1] One critic, George Snell, goes so far as to consider Brown's "peculiar sort of morbidity in temperament" as one of two immediate circumstances which helped bring about the creation of his novels.[2]

References to his self-doubt and his distrust of his friends' sincerity recur frequently in Brown's letters. As early as 1788, in a letter to William Wood Wilkins, Brown compares his mind to a desert and calls it an increasingly desolate and gloomy scene of horrors and insanity.[3] Four years later he toyed with suicide. In a letter to Joseph

Bringhurst, he claims to have hovered right on the brink. He then asks Bringhurst if he, Brown, is not a mass of absurdities and contradictions.[4] Many readers of these early letters would be inclined to agree, for the documents show enormous vacillations in spirit and self-esteem, as well as a great deal of posturing. At one point, Brown says of himself:

> I seize anything, however weak and dubious, by which I can hope to raise myself from that profound abyss of ignominy and debasement, into which I am sunk by my own reflections.[5]

One cause of Brown's frequent unhappiness was, of course, his poor health. In a letter to his wife, written in the summer of 1809, a few months before his death, he says he has not possessed "that lightness and vivacity of mind which the divine flow of health, even in calamity, produces in some men" for longer than a half hour at a time since he had reached adulthood.[6]

As well as Brown's genuine psychological problems and unhappiness, an element of posturing must be considered when reading his earlier self-analysis. Many young men of his period indulged in romantic declarations of loneliness and despair, and dramatically hinted at suicide. In his younger days, Brown very likely exaggerated his melancholy. The difficulty for his critics lies in ascertaining how much of his self-portrait is real and how much is theatrics.

Certainly little of Brown's posturing was intended lightly. His sense of humor was ponderous, at best.

According to his letters to Bringhurst, his friendship with William Wood Wilkins soured because Brown abhorred Wilkins' lack of seriousness toward life. When Brown does attempt to jest with his friends, the effect is elephantine and obvious. The letters in which he portrays himself as a tutor in Europe are obvious frauds. Also, since most of Elihu Hubbard Smith's responses to Brown are available, Smith's letters and journals act as a check on, at least, which of Brown's statements were believed by this balanced, serious young doctor.

Furthermore, Brown did have a life-long commitment to sincerity. As early as 1788, he told Wilkins he values sincerity over politeness, and sincerity is a frequent theme in Brown's fiction.[7] Because of his concern for honesty, Brown did not consciously wish to delude his friends. When he discovered he had misled a friend by trying out new ideas and new self-images on him, he seems to have been quick to rectify the false impression. For example, in one letter to Joseph Bringhurst, Brown reassures him that his prior intellectual justification of suicide did <u>not</u> mean he intended to try it.[8]

The final check on the credibility of Brown's comments about himself is the test of time. Brown may have dressed his melancholy in fashionable guises as a young man, but the underlying despair remained, though its intensity swelled and waned depending on circumstances. Those

complaints which recur throughout his life are most likely genuine reflections of his character. Thus his complaint to his wife in 1809 that most of his adult life has been spent in physical discomfort tends to collaborate earlier comments about constant sickness and about the possibility of his early death.

It is no wonder that Brown was attracted to the Franklinesque physician, Elihu Hubbard Smith. Unlike Brown, Smith had clearly defined goals which he was capable of pursuing relentlessly. The lives of the two men "became intertwined much as a Virginia creeper drapes itself upon a strong oak."[9] As well as giving tangible aid at times, Smith occasionally acted much like a psychiatrist to Brown, following the precepts of Dr. Benjamin Rush, under whom Smith had studied. He tried to get Brown to unburden his mind by vocalizing his anxieties, and he encouraged him to form resolutions, based on self-analysis, and then to act upon them.

Smith's letter of May 7, 1796, shows how Brown's extensive personal problems distressed his friends. Here, Smith accuses Brown of giving Dunlap and himself only vague and foreboding hints about his problems. Smith chides him:

> We must know our own errors, or how can we correct them? We must be informed of their whole extent, of their uttermost virulence, or how can we apply the remedy?[10]

At this time Brown's letters, possibly written under the narcotic influence of Rousseau, were melancholic without

explaining the concrete causes of this depression. This greatly disturbed the ever-empirical Smith. Later that month, Smith tries to interpret the cause of his friend's strangely misleading letters:

> The transition is natural, to a mind of sensibility almost unavoidable. You began to fancy that these fictions were real; that you had indeed suffered, enjoyed, known, and seen all that you had so long pretended to have experienced; every subsequent event became tinctured with this conviction and accompanied with this diseased apprehension.[11]

Brown apparently accepted his friend's criticism as just and felt incapable of the kind of reformation urged upon him. In a later letter to Smith, Brown castigates himself:

> How can I remove the burden of your scorn but by transforming myself into a new being. I looked not forward to such a change. I shall die as I have lived, a victim to perverse and incurable habits.[12]

Brown's early emotional problems led to the first of his three major aims in writing: self-therapy.

Several commentators have already remarked on this. R. W. B. Lewis sees Brown as using narrative to annihilate "hard clusters of evil inclination."[13] Alexander Cowie remarks that Brown's books were written partially as self-therapy. Cowie qualifies this statement by calling the self-therapy "unconscious."[14] Brown was less <u>publicly</u> conscious of this aim than of his didacticism but he left more than hints that he was indeed <u>privately</u> conscious of the therapeutic value of writing. This is far more evident within Brown's confidential letters than in his published

articles, as might be expected, considering the private nature of the disclosure. Several times, Brown mentions how much he would value a sympathetic confidant. In a letter to William Wood Wilkins of 1788, Brown deplores his lack of someone with whom he could deposit his melancholy secrets.[15] In another letter to Wilkins, probably written later, he asks whether Wilkins has ever noticed the unaccountably consoling value of pouring out sorrows to a friend.[16] As already stated, Elihu Hubbard Smith encouraged Brown to unburden himself for therapeutic purposes. In a 1792 letter to Joseph Bringhurst, Brown states that a sheet of paper could serve the same purpose. Here Brown notes that when he is weary with himself and the world, he finds writing consoling. He says writing forces him to think and the resultant ideas wash away his cares.[17] In a later letter to his brother-in-law, Dr. William Linn, Brown clearly correlates the need for writing with personal unhappiness.[18] Many of Brown's characters find relief in writing. While this is partially a convention of the epistolary (or pseudo-epistolary) novel, we also see this statement from the male law student in "The Scribbler," who is often felt to be a persona for the young Brown:

> It [writing] is a mental recreation more salutary to the jaded spirits than a ramble in the fields or a contemplation of the starry heavens. I like it better than walking and conversing with my only friend but there is time enough for both to be done.[19]

Brown did not, however, conceive of writing as a final solution to his problems. Instead, it was simply a purgative which drained off accumulated anxieties and sorrow. What he did see as a final answer was the undivided love and attention of a wife. Biographical data point to his rather simplistic belief that all of his personal problems would be solved if he could only talk a suitable female into matrimony. His love was thwarted at least one time, when his courtship with the coy Miss Susan Potts of Philadelphia was broken off by his mother because Miss Potts was not a Quaker. Brown hints at other frustrated courtships and states his view of marriage quite explicitly:

> My conception of the delights and benefits connected with love and with marriage are exquisite. They have swayed most of my thoughts and many of my actions, since I arrived at an age of reflection and maturity. They have given birth to the sentiment of love, with regard to several women. Mutual circumstances have frustrated the natural operations of that sentiment in several instances.[20]

About the time of this letter, he met Elizabeth Linn, who finally relented to Brown's barrage of sentiment. He may already have had this conclusion in mind when he told Anthony Bleeker that he would hate "to be left farthest behind in the race towards the matrimonial goal."[21] Despite Miss Linn's often tepid response to her suitor, she brought him eminent happiness once married. To William Dunlap, he confided: "My companion is all that a husband can wish for, and in short as to my personal situation, I have nothing to wish but that it may last. . . ."[22] Some years before in a

letter to Joseph Bringhurst, Brown had classed both his attachment to women and his attachment to literature as simply passions, pursued only because of a blind instinctive propensity.[23] The attainment of the former passion may have weakened his zeal for the latter, as Brown wrote no more major fiction after his marriage in 1804, and seems to have done little fiction writing after meeting his future wife late in 1800. Ironically, two years after his wedding date, he warned John Hall that Hall would never have a moment of sober application until after he married.[24] Yet Brown's most productive years, as judged by future generations, were sealed by his marriage.

It would be an over-simplification to say that Brown's marriage stopped up his creativity. It would be more accurate to note a definite correlation between his period of youthful emotional distress and his artistry. Such youthful instability would not have appealed to the parents of eligible young women, and it might have stood in the way of earlier attempts to attain satisfactory relationships with women. Also, perhaps of nearly equal importance, Brown had discovered that fiction-writing was not profitable even for a bachelor, let alone a husband and a father. Whatever the exact chain of cause and effect, it seems safe to say that Brown's marriage at least symbolized his end as an artist, and the attainment of matrimony meant the conclusion of some of those insecurities which fed his creativity.

Previous commentators on Brown have paid due attention to the unhappiness of his life, to his use of literature as a purgative, and to the cession of fiction-writing in his later years, when he was married. Less explored is the exact relationship between his early emotional state and certain patterns in his creative work. Warfel makes a start by stating that:

> Like Poe's many years later, Brown's thoughts gravitated naturally to morbid topics now generally classed in the realm of abnormal psychology. It is not surprising, therefore, that his best writing should have been done in terror fiction in which effectiveness depended upon the generation of emotions similar to those which nearly drove him to the brink of suicide.[25]

That realism which Brown drew was indeed "on the dim borderline between fact and fancy," as Brown was exploring himself and the world through conscious fictional excursions into the human mind and heart.[26] It is not irrelevant that he envied Bringhurst's ability to dream vividly, wishing his own soul could, as well, mingle at will with the beings of the world of Allegory. Instead, he wrote, he must be content with insipid realities or at best with those shadowy and fleeting images which his conscious imagination was capable of creating.[27] It would not be an exaggeration to say that Brown lived vicariously through the lives of those shadowy and fleeting images, his characters, thus evading for long periods the torment of his own self-doubts. Certainly, Smith's criticism, mentioned earlier, suggests that Brown appeared to fancy some of the fictions he invented

to be true. Also, within Brown's description of his story of Julius and Julietta, he explicitly told Bringhurst that in his creation of characters, he enjoyed a new existence, in thinking and acting as though he actually were those characters.[28] After the discovery of this personal confession, it seems obvious that Brown's original description of the rhapsodist is a self-portrait: "He loves to converse with beings of his own creation, and every personage and every scene, is described with a pencil dipt in the colours of imagination."[29] Brown's preference for "the colours of imagination" over the mundane world of late-eighteenth century Philadelphia is obvious from his biography and enunciated in his generalization about rhapsodists:

> Tired and disgusted with the world's uniformity, they turn their eyes from the insipid scene without, and seek a gayer prospect, and a visionary happiness in a world of their own creation. The poet, therefore is not a distinct person from the rhapsodist. . . .[30]

Though his writing definitely served as an escape mechanism for Brown, it was more than just simple escapism, as might be judged from the relative complexity and density of the novels and his characterization. As Warner Berthoff so aptly explains:

> Narrative for Brown was . . . capable of a more positive and creative kind of statement; it was an instrument for discovering ideas, for exploring and testing them out; it was, we may say, an alternative to formal systematic speculative thought.[31]

Berthoff's comments are reminiscent of Brown's statement: "Mere reasoning is cold and unattractive."[32] Berthoff

persuasively argues that Brown embodies philosophical discussions in his characters, to see both what would happen to the doctrine and what would happen to the characters.[33] By this device, Brown was able to avoid the plague of moralizing, rampant in so many of his contemporaries, such as William Hill Brown. Thus he achieved:

> Instead of preaching, the living human feeling; instead of the dead hand of abstract definition, the tension of conflicting wills; instead of a summary formula, a dramatic climax.[34]

As Berthoff suggests, Brown probably worked in such a manner because he saw human motivation as exquisitely complex.[35] Brown may have arrived at this view of human motivation because of his personal inability to understand himself, with his sudden flights of fancy and fits of despondency. In "Walstein's School of History," in which Brown discusses his own writing, he informs us that:

> Actions and motives cannot be truly described. We can only make approaches to the truth. The more attentively we observe mankind, and study ourselves, the greater will the uncertainty appear, and the farther we find ourselves from truth.[36]

Perhaps because of the grain of eighteenth century optimism in Brown, he did not totally despair of understanding human motivation, despite the difficulties he saw in this operation. Instead, he felt this uncertainty had some boundaries. Indeed he went so far as to say that some motives were open to explication:

> Our guesses as to the motives of some actions are more probable than the guesses that relate to other actions. Though no one can state the motives from

> which any action has flowed, he may enumerate motives from which it is quite certain that the action did not flow.[37]

Hence, we see Brown in his novels probing deeply into the innermost souls of his characters, laying bare both the professed and the real motives behind their actions.[38] His writer's desk became a laboratory in which he put his characters, male and female, through a qualitative analysis.

Brown was well aware of his own interest in human character. Though he has been classified by many of his critics as largely a novelist of ideas, his own self-conception was of a man mostly interested in human beings. In a 1793 letter to Joseph Bringhurst, Brown muses over the kinds of knowledge worthy of pursuit for their own sakes. While admitting that everything which relates to man is important to an understanding of human nature, Brown divides human history into two spheres: domestic (or solitary) and political. The former is his primary concern; his interest in political events is limited to their effect on human character. He says his attention wanders away from the consideration of general events flowing from general causes to the personal character of individuals. Life and manners, he reiterates, is his favorite science.[39] So might one guess from his novels which, with the exception of the depictions of plague epidemics, are amazingly ahistorical and apolitical considering their intellectual currency. In Brown's novels, his sphere of interest and his highest

abilities happened to coincide. As Warfel suggests, Brown correctly judged that his genius lay in the direction of minute analysis of human feelings and motivation.[40] From his earliest years as a writer, Brown conceived of human character as offering endless cases for study:

> There is no sphere, however limited, in which human nature may not successfully be studied, and in which sufficient opportunities are not afforded for the exercise of the deepest penetration, and as a philosopher is able [to] derive amusement [and] instruction from contemplating a post or a stone, so he whose descriptive powers are vigorous can always make the delineation of them a source of pleasure and improvement.[41]

In part, Brown's attitude was a result of his ability to deal with personal minutae better than with sweeping social change, in the manner of a Tolstoi. As Brown puts it:

> In the most vulgar objects, a scrutinizing spirit can discover new properties and relations. In a scene that to ordinary observers, is monotonous and uniform, he finds an exhaustless source of reflection and inquiry. In a situation where no addition to his knowledge or happiness is expected, he is frequently supplied with the materials of memorable improvement.[42]

Brown saw more than just a scrutinizing spirit necessary for an adequate portrayal of such a complex entity as a human action. One who merely watches carefully and enumerates carefully the appearances which occur deserves only the title of historian, in Brown's opinion. To attain the appellation of "romancer," which Brown considers the higher title, one must go a step further and adorn these appearances with cause and effect, trading "resemblances between the past, distant and future, with the present."[43] Such a man is "a dealer not in certainties, but probabilities,

and is therefore a romancer."[44] Brown might well be speaking of himself with his incessant desire to know, when he continues by asserting that:

> Curiosity is not content with noting and recording the actions of men. It likewise seeks to know the motives by which the agent is impelled to the performance of these actions; but motives are modifications of thought which cannot be subjected to the senses. They cannot be certainly known. They are merely topics of conjecture. Conjecture is the weighing of probabilities; the classification of probable events, according to the measure of probability possessed by each . . . the wise and the ignorant, the sagacious and the stupid, when busy in assigning motives to actions, are not historians but romancers.[45]

Because of this, the writer who is not both historian and romancer is seen by Brown as essentially defective.

It is important to notice that Brown sees curiosity as the key personal characteristic dividing the historians from the romancers. Curiosity is not an epithet from which he shrank though he seems to have realized others sometimes disapproved of it.[46] As James Leland Grove has pointed out, such curiosity disagreeably suggests that the artist himself is uninvolved with life and alienated from human feelings because of this artistic obsession for analyzing and observing the life around him.[47] Grove states that many writers have embodied this aspect of their artistry in a first-person narrator who performs a peeping-tom function and who is generally alienated from and disliked by the people around him.[48] This is a valid generalization about several of Brown's narrators, though Grove stretches his point too far when he includes Clara Wieland.[49] Clara is emotionally

involved with most of the other major characters and they feel deeply about her in return. Though, like all of Brown's heroines, she is unusually analytical, she doesn't pry into the affairs of others except when forced to by the undeniably unusual circumstances in which she finds herself. Rather, it is Carwin who is the peeping-tom. He himself admits that curiosity was the impelling motive for his unfortunate actions.[50]

This refutation of Grove's analysis of Clara is important to pave the way for the observation that Brown's most meddlesome characters are all males. Along with Carwin, one thinks of Ormond, disguising himself as a chimney sweep and listening behind the cloth wall; Edgar Huntly, forcing Clithero to wring out an unwilling confession; and Arthur Mervyn, endlessly breaking into private houses and secret rooms. The excessive curiosity of these characters plays a major role in the unfolding of plot, of course, but Brown does not make all of his prime snoops the principal narrators of the novels, as Coyle states. The only single generalization which can be made about all members of this class of characters is that all are male. Conceivably Brown is making a comment about male/female characteristics, though there is no external evidence to support this. It seems somewhat more likely that Brown as a male novelist, who by his own admission lived through his characters, is projecting a side of himself through the rampant curiosity of these

male characters. This conjecture is not made on the basis of the coincidence alone but rather on the combination of this coincidence with Brown's own comments about curiosity.

To begin with, Grove is surely mistaken when he states that Brown censures curiosity through his "nosey" characters; this generalization does not always hold true. Grove bases this judgment on two main sources: Brown's statement in the preface to Sky-Walk that nothing human is beneath rational curiosity; and Brown's portrayal in the "Rhapsodist" of the ideal artist as one who shows a fervent commitment to truth and the welfare of mankind.[51] In the first place, it is certainly Grove and not Brown who is passing negative judgment on the rationality of Clara Wieland's and Arthur Mervyn's curiosity. As has been demonstrated, Carwin, not Clara, is the character in Wieland whose curiosity has disastrous consequences. Interpretations of Arthur Mervyn's behavior have been too various for us to assume that Brown clearly intended to condemn his young hero's curiosity. For example, Warfel sees Arthur as "blameless."[52] Berthoff judiciously warns us of the dangers of reading too much conscious irony into Arthur Mervyn.[53]

Rather, Brown's own writings show us that he saw no inconsistency between active curiosity and such a fervent commitment to truth and human welfare. Indeed, he seems to justify extreme curiosity, provided that it is motivated by virtuous intentions. In "The Man at Home," the narrator

twice uses other human beings quite openly to advance his own understanding and knowledge. At one point, he visits an old friend who has gone mad "to con over the most instructive lesson that ever was afforded me, on the evil of unbridled passion."[54] He also tells his audience that he often prolongs conversations with his landlady only to note the scantiness of her vocabulary. He justifies this by saying:

> Yet, in acting thus, I intended no evil. I extracted no food for contempt from her errors. They suggested various contemplations on the principles of human intercourse, and on the causes that produce such wide differences between human beings who, in their primitive conformation, and perhaps in their ultimate destiny, are the same.[55]

Brown's personal justification of such laboratory use of human beings is asserted in this comment to a friend:

> The imputation of inquisitiveness, impertinance [sic] of a restless propensity to pry into the affairs of others affects me not . . . the disease must be known before the remedy can be discovered.[56]

Since Brown did defend curiosity, it seems likely that the curiosity visible in so many of his major male characters is a projection of one aspect of himself. Conversely, many of his female characters, notably Clara Wieland and Constantia, are forced to live in a fishbowl world, often having the privacy of their thoughts and actions violated daily. Since several male characters, Clithero and Welbeck in particular, are also subject to such scrutiny, it would not be accurate to state that Brown enjoyed vicariously prying into the lives of only his female

creations. Suffice it to say that the female characters are sometimes the victims but never the perpetrators of unbridled curiosity, and that the meddlesome males are, at least in part, a projection of Brown's own interests and desires.

As well as peeping-toms, Brown also had a predilection for mysterious villains of great intellect. Since, as has been asserted, he lived vicariously through his characters (and probably, especially through the male characters), it is interesting to see this pupil of Bage and Holcroft defend the creation of lofty villains rather than virtuous but ordinary mortals. As the narrator of "The Man at Home" puts it:

> In the selection of the subjects of useful history, the chief point is not the virtue of a character. The prime regard is to be paid to the genius and force of mind that is displayed. Great energy employed in the promotion of vicious purposes, constitutes a very useful spectacle. Give me a tale of lofty crimes rather than of honest folly.[57]

Ten years later Brown reiterates the usefulness of such characters more explicitly in terms of audience when he says:

> The world is governed, not by the simpleton, but by the man of soaring passions and intellectual energy. By the display of such only can we hope to enchain the attention and ravish the souls of those who study and reflect.[58]

In terms of this discussion, what is more important is that such powerful characters captured the author's fancy. Unsure of himself, living in a world of fantasy, it is no

wonder that Brown was attracted to the Ormonds and the Welbecks. No wonder, with such villains, such aggressively prying heroes, that Brown's heroines had to be strong themselves. Charlotte Temple not only would not have survived Clara Wieland's trial at Mettingen, but it is doubious that she could have pitched Jane Talbot's battle against the determined Mrs. Fielder. Eliza Wharton would not have needed Constantia's stature because her opponent, Colonel Sanford, was her undoing without Ormond's powers. Hence, Brown's personal problems not only resulted in his becoming a writer rather than a lawyer, but they also helped shape the very nature of his writing down to the kinds of characters he drew.

NOTES--CHAPTER II

[1]Harry R. Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown: American Gothic Novelist (Gainesville, Fla.: University of Florida Press, 1949), p. 8.

[2]George Snell, "Charles Brockden Brown: Apocalypticalist," University of Kansas City Review, 4 (Winter 1944), 133.

[3]Letter to William Wood Wilkins (1788), Daniel Edward Kennedy, Charles Brockden Brown: His Life and Works (unpublished MS in Kent State University Bibliographical and Textual Center), p. 408. Permission for reading this material and referring to it was kindly granted by Sydney J. Krause, General Editor of the KSU-CEAA Brown edition. These materials will henceforth be referred to by the acronym "DEK." According to Kennedy, this letter was originally printed in Paul Allen's biography of Charles Brockden Brown.

[4]Letter to Joseph Bringhurst (May 5, 1792), DEK, p. 504.

[5]Letter to William Wood Wilkins (n.d.), William Dunlap, The Life of Charles Brockden Brown . . . (Philadelphia: James P. Parke, 1815), I, p. 53.

[6]Dunlap, II, p. 86.

[7]Letter to WWW (1788), DEK, p. 407.

[8]Letter to Bringhurst (n.d.--probably after May 5, 1792), DEK, pp. 574-576.

[9]Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, p. 40.

[10]Letter to Charles Brockden Brown from Elihu Hubbard Smith Diary (May 7, 1796), from Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, p. 57. The acronym EHS will be used for Smith's name and CBB for Brown's henceforth, except when such abbreviation might cause confusion.

[11]Letter to CBB from EHS, Diary (May 27, 1796), from Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, pp. 63-64.

[12]Letter to EHS, from Historical Society of Pennsylvania collection (Jan. 1, 1798), Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, p. 88.

[13]R. W. B. Lewis, The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 96.

[14]Alexander Cowie, Introduction to KSU-CEAA Wieland, unpubl. TS, at KSU Bibliographical and Textual Center, p. A-13. Permission of author.

[15]Letter to William Wood Wilkins (1788), DEK, p. 408.

[16]Letter to William Wood Wilkins (n.d. but Nov. 5, 1792 or after, according to DEK), DEK, p. 585.

[17]Letter to Bringhurst (Dec. 22, 1792), DEK, p. 617.

[18]Letter to William Linn (Dec. 8, 1804), DEK, p. 1619.

[19]Dunlap, II, p. 271.

[20]Dunlap, II, p. 50.

[21]Letter to Anthony Bleeker, Esq. (Oct. 31, 1801), Dunlap, II, p. 104.

[22]Letter to Dunlap (1805), Dunlap, II, p. 113.

[23]Letter to Bringhurst (1792), DEK, p. 600. DEK thinks this letter was written in August, based on internal evidence.

[24]Letter to John E. Hall (Nov. 21, 1806), DEK, p. 1710.

[25]Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, p. 5.

[26]David Lee Clark, Charles Brockden Brown, Pioneer Voice of America (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1952), p. 191.

[27]Letter to Bringhurst (May 30, 1792), DEK, p. 553A.

[28]Letter to Bringhurst (May 29, 1792), DEK, p. 552.

[29]CBB, "The Rhapsodist, No. 2," Columbian Magazine; or, Monthly Miscellany, 3 (September 1789), 537.

[30]CBB, "The Rhapsodist, No. 2," p. 539.

[31]Warner B. Berthoff, "A Lesson on Concealment, Brockden Brown's Method in Fiction," Philological Quarterly, 37 (1958), 46.

[32]CBB, "Walstein's School of History," Monthly Magazine, 1 (September-December 1799), 408.

[33]Berthoff, "Lesson," p. 47.

[34]Berthoff, "Lesson," p. 56.

[35]Berthoff, "Lesson," p. 54.

[36]CBB, "Walstein's School," Monthly Magazine, 1 (August 1799), 336.

[37]CBB, "Walstein's School," (August), p. 337.

[38]James John Coyle, "The Problem of Evil in the Major Novels of Charles Brockden Brown," Diss. University of Michigan 1961, p. 12.

[39]Letter to Bringhurst (July 29, 1793), DEK, p. 649.

[40]Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, p. 162.

[41]Clark, p. 98. Bracketed additions are presumably Clark's.

[42]CBB, "The Man at Home, No. 3," Weekly Magazine, 1 (Feb. 17, 1788), 65.

[43]CBB, "The Difference Between History and Romance," Monthly Magazine, 2 (April 1800), 251.

[44]CBB, "History and Romance," p. 251.

[45]CBB, "History and Romance," p. 252.

[46]Letter to W.C. (Aug. 29, 1793), copied in CBB's Journal, located at Pennsylvania Historical Society. Photocopy consulted at KSU Bibliographical and Textual Center. W.C. has been hypothetically considered William Coleman by scholars working on the KSU-CEAA edition of Brown's novels.

[47]James Leland Grove, "Visions and Revisions: A Study of the Obtuse Narrator in American Fiction from Brockden Brown to Faulkner," Diss. Harvard 1968, pp. 5-9.

[48]Grove, p. 5.

[49]Grove, p. 12.

[50]CBB, Wieland or the Transformation, in Charles Brockden Brown's Novels, I (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970, rpt. of 1887 edition), p. 224. All references to specific Brown novels will henceforth be noted by title and page number only. All are taken from this reprint.

[51]Grove, pp. 112-115.

[52]Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, p. 145.

[53]Warner B. Berthoff, Introduction, CBB, Arthur Mervyn or Memoirs of the Year 1793 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962), p. xviii.

[54]CBB, "The Man at Home, No. 12," Weekly Magazine, 1 (April 21, 1788), 355.

[55]CBB, "The Man at Home, No. 2," Weekly Magazine, 1 (Feb. 10, 1788), 34.

[56]Letter to W.C. (Aug. 29, 1793).

[57]CBB, "The Man at Home, No. 9," Weekly Magazine, 1 (March 31, 1788), 257.

[58]CBB, "Advertisement to Sky-Walk," Weekly Magazine, 1 (March 17, 1788), 202.

CHAPTER III

WOMEN CHARACTERS AND THE LABORATORY OF IDEAS

Charles Brockden Brown's primary conscious aim in writing was didactic. He believed that the main function and value of fiction was to help "ascertain the precepts of justice and exhibit these precepts reduced to practice. . . ."[1] Like many other authors of his time, Brown felt compelled to justify his novels in prefaces asserting either the veracity of the incidents disclosed or the value of the accompanying sentiments. In his "advertisement" to Wieland, he states that "His purpose is neither selfish nor temporary, but aims at the illustration of some important branches of the moral constitution of man."[2] Brown goes even further than most novelists of his period; he not only proclaims the moral value of fiction, but he also claims its superiority to non-fiction.

> Mere reasoning is cold and unattractive. Injury rather than benefit proceeds from convictions that are transient and faint; their tendency is not to reform and enlighten, but merely to produce disquiet and remorse. They are not strong enough to resist temptation and to change the conduct, but merely to pester the offender with dissatisfaction and regret.
>
> The detail of actions is productive of different effects. The affections are engaged, the reason is won by incessant attacks; the benefits which our system has evinced to be possible, are invested with a

> seeming existence, and the evils which error was proved to generate, exchange the fleeting, misty, and dubious form of inference, for a sensible and present existence.[3]

Though he did not do so publicly, Brown once went so far as to declare Sir Charles Grandison superior to the Bible.[4] He seems to have maintained his belief in the didactic value of novel reading through his later years. In 1804, he assailed its opponents as:

> profoundly ignorant of human nature; the brightest of whose properties is to be influenced more by example than precept; and of human taste; the purest of whose gratifications is to view human characters and events depicted by a vigorous and enlightened fancy. . . .[5]

He continues this rebuke by noting the moral usefulness of powerful pictures of the connections "between vice and misery and felicity and virtue," and he concludes by suggesting that even the most trivial novels are not totally worthless because the kinds of people attracted to them might otherwise be employed in yet more trivial fashions.[6]

The didacticism of Brown's novels is much less static than that of most other American fictionists of the period. His major characters, male and female, never merely symbolize given doctrines. Rather, as Berthoff suggests: "Brown's imagination turned to creating characters who try to live by these doctrines. What would become of them, of the characters and of the doctrines?"[7] While such experimentation often led to rough plot construction, it also resulted in a dramatic tension caused by the characters'

attempts to live by certain ideals. One is much more in doubt about (and probably, therefore, more interested in) Brown's characters than in the characters of a typical English problem novel. Clara Wieland, for example, seems to make a choice whereas Anna St. Ives, in Holcroft's novel, merely embodies a choice.

Three major inter-connected streams of thought are pertinent to Brown's character laboratory: associationist psychology, Godwinian social liberalism, and feminism.

Brown's associationist psychology does not derive directly from any one major proponent of the idea. All of its founders meant something different by "associationism." Brown's use of it is sufficiently non-technical to prohibit an easy attribution of it to any one source. Also, the major specific associationist influence on him is not absolutely certain. He had numerous opportunities to become acquainted with the idea, and he may have learned much of what he knew about it third- or even fourth-hand.

Brown's social liberalism will be termed "Godwinism" for the sake of simplicity. Godwin, of course, originated very little. He is useful as a reference since his Enquiry Concerning Political Justice (1793) perhaps best consolidated and popularized a number of current social and political ideas. Brown was thoroughly familiar with Godwin and with this work in particular as will be seen presently. Brown may well have first become familiar with many of his

liberal ideas through Bage, Holcroft, or any of the French liberal and revolutionary thinkers with whom he was also familiar. However, calling that nexus of empiricism, associationism, and utilitarianism "Godwinism" provides a theoretical handbook for reference.

In this chapter Brown's feminism will be compared to that delineated by Mary Wollstonecraft in her Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (1787), and, much more importantly, in A Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792). A reference is less important here than it is with social liberalism as Brown wrote his own theoretical feminist work, Alcuin: A Dialogue (1798 and 1815). Possibly Brown was familiar with other works on female emancipation, but probably he was most specifically influenced by Wollstonecraft's, as will be shown later. Brown shared her Godwinian basis in empiricism, associationism, and utilitarianism, which makes a comparison of Alcuin and the Vindication most useful.

Each of these three currents of thought--associationist psychology, Godwinism, and feminism--will be discussed separately. First, Brown's familiarity with each will be explored and verified. Then the basic principles of each will be summarized. This will be followed by an examination of female characters who test out these ideas through their human consequences.

Associationist Psychology

Brown's personal reasons for an interest in psychology have already been discussed. To reiterate, Brown, uncomfortably aware of his own internal turmoil, often lived vicariously through his characters. The morbid turn of his own mind led him to create characters whose cases might be described today in abnormal psychology textbooks. In his analysis of abnormal states, Brown was able to combine all the motivating factors of his writing: self-therapy for himself; and, for the audience, the entertainment of the bizarre combined with didactic content.

Brown was certainly not alone in his interest in abnormal psychology. There are many madmen in American literature--one specific manifestation of that dark side of the soul for which the American novel has been noted. Furthermore, there was an especially high degree of interest in insanity in the period 1790 through 1870 due to a number of factors: a growing concern in the United States and Europe over an apparent increase in insanity; an interest in reforms of the treatment of the insane (one sign of the perfectibilistic element in late-eighteenth century optimism); and a concern--scientific, philosophic, and theological--over the nature of mental illness.[8]

American intellectual circles during Brown's time were comparatively tightly knit. Dwelling as he did in Philadelphia and New York, he would have been apt to have

heard of the latest developments in the new science of psychology. Brown, with publications in belles lettres, politics, and geography, was no exception to the tendency of educated men in this era to keep abreast of intellectual developments in all fields of knowledge. Brown had special sources for information about new psychological theories since a number of his friends were physicians, including Samuel Latham Mitchill, Edward Miller, and Elihu Hubbard Smith. His friendship with Smith is especially noteworthy, both because of Smith's influence on Brown and because of Smith's own interest and background in psychology.

Smith's enthusiasm for psychology can be traced directly to his studies under Dr. Benjamin Rush. Though Rush did not publish his Medical Inquiries and Observations upon the Diseases of the Mind until 1812, he was teaching the same theories of abnormal psychology in the 1790's.[9] Rush was the first American physician to make a serious study of mental illness, although his original contributions were few. He pioneered a reform movement for better treatment of the insane and attempted to free mental illness from a moral stigma by emphasizing its medical aspects and its curability.[10] Generally his views were materialistic; he saw insanity as basically a somatic disease, a pathological disorder of the brain having psychological consequences.[11] He believed that there were certain predisposing factors to insanity, including imaginative occupations and the political

and economic environment, but he saw these as simply initiating the physiological process which resulted in the disease.[12] Also, more than his contemporaries, Rush emphasized the importance of psychological methods in the treatment of all diseases.[13]

Rush's influence on Smith can be seen in Smith's use of salivation in the treatment of mania. Smith's belief that physical causes can precipitate mental disorders is obvious in his warning to his sister to cover her children's heads with caps.[14] His belief in the inter-connection of the mind and body is evident in a medical questionnaire he sent to a patient, asking how and in what form the reflections of the patient's mind affect his body, both in its general condition and in regard to the particular disease.[15] His reading also reflects his interest in mental disorders, as does his attempt to play psychiatrist with Brown. Smith knew and applauded Locke's refutation of the theory of innate ideas.[16] Locke's argument helped pave the way for associationism.

"The Rhapsodist" presents evidence of Brown's familiarity with and interest in psychology. For example, he was sufficiently aware of the rise and fall of the Brunonian System to call it:

> a system . . . which has only ingenuity to recommend it; and which, at a former period, when caprice happened to operate with less than usual vigor, was treated with contempt and ridicule. . . .[17]

He also demonstrates his awareness that Herman Boerhaave's teachings were antiquated.[18] Also, of course, in Wieland, he shows his familiarity with that minor spokesman of associationism, Erasmus Darwin, in a footnote referring to Darwin's Mania Mutabilis.

Brown's own psychological stance is rather mixed. This is not extraordinary when one considers that many major figures in psychiatry in America at this time were not themselves theoretically consistent. Rush, for example, often mixed elements of idealism into his usual materialism.

Brown's psychological position could be generally described as a modified sensationism and a psycho-physical associationism. He shows interest in and acceptance of the interconnectedness of mind and body, apparently believing psychological states can produce neurological changes in the brain. Also, there is evidence in Wieland that he accepts the idea of congenital predisposition to insanity. Before examining how Brown's female characters emobdy certain of these psychological ideas or react to them in male characters, it is necessary to describe the constructs themselves.

Sensationism is the philosophical and psychological doctrine that all ideas come from and can be reduced to sensations. While Brown often emphasizes the relation of the senses to the understanding or intellect, he also seems to accept a non-sensational "reasoning" or "reflection"

which characters like Constantia Dudley and Clara Wieland employ to analyse such sensations. Associationism grew out of sensationism as a result of a need to explain how the mind makes sense of the sensory data received. In general, "association of ideas" suggests the tendency of a sense perception or an idea to recall others linked to it, either because of similarity or because both are experienced simultaneously or contiguously.

Brown's associationism has often been noted and is frequently considered an outgrowth of Locke's associationism. This connection is interesting because the chapter dealing with the association of ideas in Locke's An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (II. xxxiii) was not added until the fourth edition (1700), which suggests that it was somewhat of an afterthought. Furthermore, the concept of associationism originated with Aristotle and was revived before Locke by Hobbes. Also, Locke, unlike Hobbes and Hume, largely emphasized the negative aspects of associationism. Finally, Locke was interested in associationism only as a stepping-stone to his theory of knowledge and not as a psychological system.[19]

This frequent attribution of Brown's associationism to Locke rather than, say, Hartley, is probably the result of factors beyond Locke's coinage of the phrase "association of ideas." It results from certain basic similarities between Locke and Brown. Like Locke, Brown emphasizes the

negative aspects of associationism; both were quite convinced of the value of reasoning, a process to which Hartley pays less attention. Brown and Locke both value highly the accurate evaluations of sensory perceptions as these are recorded on the tabula rasa of the mind. Both consider a long train of reflection proper behavior and censure haste in forming judgments.[20] Furthermore, both see madness not as a loss of reason but as perverted reason, the product of faulty association of ideas, the result of "chance" correspondence. Locke in no way suggests that reason can solve all human problems. Indeed, throughout the Essay, he stresses man's limited nature, comparing the understanding to a "dark room."[21] Therefore, when Brown portrays a character who tries to use reason in a situation but fails to understand it, Brown is not denying the value of reason and refuting "optimistic psychology," as Larzer Ziff suggests, but merely pointing out their limitations.[22] Like Locke, Brown practically equates rational action to moral behavior, and he at no time concedes this view of morality. Ideally, the mind, which was thought to be composed of the understanding and the affections, receives sensory impressions which the understanding interprets and transmits to the will, from which actions ensue. Brown and Locke accept the frailty of this process but still see reason as one of the few weapons against total chaos.

Hartley took the principle of the association of ideas and systematized it into a psychology proper. The two fundamentals of his associationism are his long-discredited attempt to trace a specific correspondence between mental and neural activity and his elaboration of all experience according to the principles of association. Brown may well have received his belief in physiological neural responses to psychological experiences from Hartley; Locke deliberately eschews it.[23] The importance of education in forming right associations is mentioned by Locke but constitutes a major portion of Hartley's work.[24] Therefore Brown's emphasis on education may have arisen from either influence.

As mentioned, Brown was also familiar with Erasmus Darwin, specifically his treatise Zoonomia (1794). Darwin, as well as Hartley, may have been the source of the psycho-physical element in Brown's associationism. Though this lengthy work is chiefly concerned with biological questions, the first part of it is a psycho-physical theory of experience which is thoroughly associationistic.[25] From writers such as Hartley and Darwin, Rush had formed his ideas on his subject, so it is possible that Brown learned of these ideas third- or fourth-hand rather than from their originators.

It is unclear whether Brown sees insanity, or just a predisposition to it, as hereditary. During the eighteenth

century, physicians generally believed that only a predisposition to insanity was hereditary. Some precipitant was considered necessary to activate latent mental abnormalities. By the middle of the nineteenth century, congenital predisposition was believed to be a major cause of insanity.

The idea of an "irresistible impulse" was the outgrowth of an expanding liberalism in the public's attitude towards the behavior of the insane. The concept of the "irresistible impulse" implied that if insanity warped the sense of moral obligations, a person's reason might not be able to reject a criminal action before the will became committed to it.[26] Brown uses this idea only in a very general sense. Occasionally a character who is sane but whose momentary passions block rational action will succumb to it. Afterwards the character usually considers the action as foolish. This is one of the mechanisms Brown uses to show his esteem for rational behavior.

Neither the predisposition to insanity nor the irresistible impulse are of major significance to Brown's characterization; neither concept is as recurrent as associationism is in Brown's fiction. These two minor elements will be only briefly noted during the discussion of the novels.

The novel which has been most discussed in terms of psychological content is Wieland. Clara Wieland, one of Brown's most impressive heroines, is at the center of this

novel, and it is through her behavior that associationism and the resultant emphasis on empirical reason are evaluated. As Arthur Gustaf Kimball says:

> The narrative is her; it is her impression of events that is offered to the reader; and, of the many "transformations" in the book, the one ultimately most significant is that of Clara's world.[27]

The emphasis in the novel is not on the events themselves but on Clara's reactions to them. Brown achieves this by limiting the focus of the novel entirely to Clara's consciousness. Though Brown is often justly accused of careless craftsmanship, he is careful in this respect. For example, Clara may wonder what happened while she was unconscious, but she never knows.

It is appropriate for associationism to be tested through Clara's reactions rather than through either of the other two major characters, as both Theodore Wieland and Pleyel are absolutists. Theodore is a religious absolutist, and Pleyel, an empirical absolutist. Wieland immediately assumes the voice of Catherine he hears is supernatural. Quite early in the novel, after Clara tries to dissuade him from jumping to this conclusion, he smiles significantly and agrees that the understanding does have other avenues than the eyes.[28] Also, Clara tells us that he had always regarded their father's death as flowing from some direct and supernatural decree.[29] Pleyel, on the other hand:

> . . . was by no means equally credulous. He scrupled not to deny faith to any testimony but that of his

> senses, and allowed the facts which had lately been supported by this testimony not to mould his belief, but merely to give birth to doubts.[30]

Pleyel says of the mysterious events that he is "unable to explain their origin and mutual dependence" but that he does not therefore "believe them to have a supernatural origin."[31]

Clara's attitude toward the unexplained voices is at once more ambivalent and more open. After hearing the voice in the closet, for example, she carefully thinks over all aspects of the event and decides that while her senses assured her of the truth of it, its "abruptness and improbability made me, in my turn, somewhat incredulous."[32] Similarly, she is not quick to conclude whether the cause of her father's death is supernatural or mechanistic:

> Was this the penalty of disobedience?--this the stroke of a vindictive and invisible hand? Is it a fresh proof that the Divine Ruler interferes in human affairs, mediates an end, selects and commissions his agents, and enforces, by unequivocal sanctions, submission to his will? Or was it merely the irregular expansion of the fluid that imparts warmth to our heart and our blood, caused by the fatigue of the preceding day, or flowing, by established laws, from the condition of his thoughts.[33]

This tension in Clara's mind is a microcosm of the central tension within the novel.

Critics of Wieland have agreed that Clara initially accepts an essentially associationist view of the human mind. This is borne out by textual evidence. When Clara worries about the effect of the voices on her brother, she:

> . . . could not bear that his senses should be the victims of such delusion. It argues a diseased condition of his frame, which might show itself hereafter in more dangerous symptoms. The will is the tool of the understanding, which must fashion its conclusions on the notices of sense. If the senses be depraved, it is impossible to calculate the evils that may flow from the consequent deductions of the understanding.[34]

In accordance to the basic tenets of associationist psychology, sensory impressions were to be relied upon; hence, a distortion of the senses could, as Locke said, cause men to take their fancies for realities and, reasoning correctly from these, "be as frantic as any in Bedlam."[35] Clara's typical reaction, when faced with an apparently incredible situation, is to wonder which of her senses is prey to some fatal delusion, as she does after hearing the cry from the closet.[36] After any such event, she always meditates over the chain of occurrences at great length, questioning her sensory reactions, and trying to reason out the situation.

Clara's belief in the values of reasoning from empirical evidence is visible not only in her behavior but also in her attraction to Pleyel, the extreme empiricist, and in her admiration for her uncle, whose testimony "is peculiarly worthy of credit, because no man's temper is more skeptical, and his belief is unalterably attached to natural causes."[37] When she returns to her normal emotional state after seeing the dead Catherine, she remarks that the scenes she has witnessed "became the theme of deliberation and

deduction, and called forth the effusions of more rational sorrow."[38]

Clara's associationism tends to be materialistic; that is, she seems to believe that patterns in the mind have physical effects. When Wieland falls into fits of insanity, he is described by Clara as having changed physically: "His brain seemed to swell beyond its continent."[39] After her first few meetings with Carwin, she studies his facial features and the shape of his head almost like a physiognomist or phrenologist.

Though commentators agree that Clara initially thinks along associationist lines and values empirical reasoning, they divide on the issue of whether or not she loses faith in such modes of decision making. At one end of the continuum, Larzer Ziff maintains that through her Brown completely abandons what Ziff terms "enlightened psychology" and moves towards "the confused acceptance of supernatural causation."[40] Somewhere in the middle, Harvey Milton Craft suggests that Clara accepts and rejects each of the two dichotymous means of knowledge offered her by other characters and ends up uncertain and confused.[41] What seems more likely than either is that Clara learns that this mode of thought indeed has its limitations, as Locke and Hartley point out, but that careful reasoning from the empirical evidence received by our senses is still the best of the few feeble tools human beings possess. Associationist

psychology is not so optimistic that reason is seen as infallible, and it is a mistake to think that any but its callowest followers saw it as a cure-all for human frailty.

Three main crises test Clara: the mysterious voices, Pleyel's desertion, and her brother's madness and resultant violent behavior. She faces these problems with the disadvantage of a family background of insanity. On the other hand, she has the advantages of both independence and rational education in her fight to retain sanity and equanimity throughout all three battles.

In each crisis, Clara avoids making a hasty judgment and tries to ascertain reasonable causes for the events. For example, when confronted with the mysterious voices, she avoids leaping to conclusions, unlike her brother and Pleyel, and tries to reconcile their seemingly supernatural nature to her adversion to the supernatural. Carwin's games exacerbate the Wieland family's instability. As a result of his actions and despite her rational education, Clara briefly speculates whether a mysterious benevolent agent is interfering in her world. When empirical fact contradicts her speculation, though, she always sides with the evidence. After discovering that the Baroness von Stolberg had not died as the voice had told her, she:

> . . . did not fail to remark that, since this lady was still alive, the voice in the temple which asserted her death must either have been intended to deceive, or have been itself deceived. The latter supposition was inconsistent with the notion of a spiritual, and the former with that of a benevolent, being.[42]

Clara's portentuous dreams also do not destroy the continuance of her belief in reason. After the dream in which her brother beckons to her over a pit, she is puzzled to find herself wondering if it is her brother who is hiding in her closet. She reflects that "Ideas exist in our minds that can be accounted for by no established laws."[45] Her unconsciousness of the extent of her fears concerning Wieland does not mean the dream is therefore caused by a supernatural agency. Rather, the dream is an extension of her conscious and articulated fears of his stability. After her brother hears the voices, for example, Clara worries because Theodore is "of an ardent and melancholy character . . . in some respects an enthusiast."[44] The concept that ideas arise because of association does not necessarily require that one must be conscious of their sources.

Pleyel's insistence that Clara is Carwin's lover and his consequent desertion of her constitute quite a different type of problem. Here she must deal with an irrational lover who prides himself on being the embodiment of empirical reason. Brown reveals Pleyel's true lack of reasonableness early in the novel. When his German baroness does not write, Pleyel immediately jumps to a false conclusion:

> He was seized with the torments of jealousy, and suspected nothing less than the infidelity of her to whom he had devoted his heart. The silence must have been concerted.[45]

Obviously his true self clashes with his self-image. After hearing the evidence against Clara, Pleyel does not assume, as Wieland does, that past knowledge of Clara ought to override his senses. He covers his feelings of betrayal in a performance combining the melodramatic characteristics of a wronged sentimental hero with the intellectual pretensions of a champion of intellectual liberty. Only "irresistible impulse" causes him to even tell Clara the evidence against her.[46] Clara is, of course, deeply wounded, as well as frustrated by his immovability. She sensibly gives up the attempt to prove her virtue when her efforts appear useless. While recovering from the death of Catherine and the Wieland children, she is capable of changing her love for Pleyel into friendship. Concomitantly her desire to prove her chastity moderates to the extent that she wishes to remove his suspicions merely because she wishes to enjoy his good judgment and because he would be pleased to be able to trust her integrity.[47] Within the next two years, under the encouragement of her uncle, explanations are made and continued correspondence leads to their marriage, after the death of his first wife.

Clara's most difficult struggle is to accept that her brother's insanity and its results stem from natural causes. As has been shown, Clara seems from a fairly early point to realize that Wieland is somewhat unstable. For one thing, she is aware of similarities between him and his

father, and she seems to accept the concept of an hereditary predisposition to insanity. Brown reinforces this both by having Clara mention her hereditary dread of water, and by having the physician-figure Cambridge mention that Clara and Theodore's maternal grandfather was insane, as well as their father.[48]

Clara is not willing to accept the extent and the possible irrevocability of Wieland's insanity. Once she accepts the fact that he really did murder his wife and children, she allows herself to consider the possibility that, rather than being totally mad, Wieland was motivated by an external supernatural force. Her uncle helps dissuade her from this point of view by explaining insanity in natural terms. Once she completely understands Carwin's role, she is able to view Theodore's madness as a natural rather than a supernatural tragedy.

Clara's next fear, prompted doubtless by her uncle's discussion of the hereditary predisposition, is of her own ability to remain sane:

> Was I not likewise transformed from rational and human into a creature of nameless and fearful attributes? Was I not transported to the brink of the same abyss? Ere a new day should come, my hands might be imbued in blood, and my remaining life be consigned to a dungeon and chains.[49]

This fear is not alleviated until some time after she is stripped of her remaining delusion: that she can cure Wieland by visiting him and reasoning with him. She tells her uncle that "Surely the sympathy of his sister, proofs

that her tenderness is as lively as ever, must be a course of satisfaction to him."[50] She discovers the true extent of insanity when Wieland attempts to take her life and, in a moment of lucidity, commits suicide. Clara's new knowledge that one cannot reason with madmen is not an attack on the value of reasoning, however. Indeed, the chief exponent of reason, her uncle, had argued this position with her. Clara proves that her belief in associationism has continued throughout her three crises when she describes how the fire has jolted her back to equanimity:

> I was, in some degree, roused from the stupor which had seized my faculties. The monotonous and gloomy scene of my thoughts was broken. My habitation was levelled with the ground, and I was obliged to seek a new one. A new train of images, disconnected with the fate of my family, forced itself on my attention; and a belief insensibly sprung up that tranquillity, if not happiness, was still within my reach.[51]

At the end of her successful handling of her three crises, she decides to write these "memoirs," both because a correspondent requested them and also because her tale "will exemplify the force of early impressions, and show the immeasurable evils that flow from an erroneous or imperfect discipline."[52] Hence, the empirical reason emphasized by associationist psychology is seen as fallible yet superior to other human tools of knowledge.

Next to Wieland, Ormond is the novel in which the female characters most significantly test associationism and the value of empirical reasoning. Though Constantia, as the main character, is the most important in this respect,

these concepts are also examined through the characterization of Sophia Westwyn, Helena Cleves, and Martinette Monrose. Unfortunately, Ormond carries a rather heavy load of ideas, as will be seen in the discussion of its Godwinian elements. No one of these, including associationism, is therefore thoroughly explored or dramatized. The characters in Ormond are made to represent far more than their actions develop. Brown tries to make up for this overload by using dialogue to carry some of the weight. This leads to an over-emphasis on debate and a lack of dramatization.

The focus in Ormond was intended to be on Constantia, as the dedication suggests, though Ormond upstages her for many readers. The novel is supposedly a record of her history and her reactions to two trials: the hardships of poverty and pestilence brought about by her father's financial ruin; and the attempts of Ormond to seduce and finally to rape her. Unlike Clara Wieland's deliberations, Constantia's inner-conflicts are never fully exposed, partially because Constantia does not narrate her own history.

Because the workings of Constantia's mind are veiled, one cannot observe her consciously noting the application of associationist principles. Sophia mentions, however, that Mr. Dudley has conducted his daughter to the school of Hartley and "taught her, as a metaphysician and anatomist, the structure and power of the senses."[53] Her education in the value of basing decisions on logical

premises drawn from sensory perceptions stands her in good stead during her early crisis. Though only sixteen when Craig betrays her father, already:

> She had learned to square her conduct, in a considerable degree, not by the hasty impulses of inclination, but by the dictates of truth. She yielded nothing to caprice or passion.[54]

Unfortunately she does not recognize such irrational impulses either in herself or in Ormond. It is not that she relies too much upon logic but that her reasoning is based on faulty association in this case. Sophia's description shows the correctness of Constantia's reasoning:

> Every thing is progressive in the human mind. When there is leisure to reflect, ideas will succeed each other in a long train, before the ultimate point be gained. The attention must shift from one side to the other of a given question many times before it settles. Constantia did not form her resolutions in haste; but when once formed, they were exempt from fluctuation. She reflected before she acted, and therefore acted with consistency and vigor.[55]

Ormond, too, notes Constantia's ability to reason. In her contest with Ormond, though, her exclusion of the knowledge of her passion causes her to estimate incorrectly. As Sophia says:

> In no case, perhaps, is the decision of a human being impartial, or totally uninfluenced by sinister and selfish motives. . . . Sinister considerations flow in upon us through imperceptible channels and modify our thoughts in numberless ways, without our being truly conscious of their presence. Constantia was young, and her heart was open at a thousand pores to the love of excellence. The image of Ormond occupied the chief place in her fancy, and was endowed with attractive and venerable qualities. A bias was hence created that swayed her thoughts, though she knew not that they were swayed.[56]

Her father recognizes what is happening to her and proposes the European trip to "efface from her mind any impressions which his [Ormond's] dangerous artifices might have made upon it."[57]

Constantia's unrealized bias causes her to underestimate and misunderstand Ormond's warning to her. On his warning visit, he is incredulous at her incomprehension, and, pointing at his forehead, asks her, "Catch you not a view of the monsters that are starting into birth here?"[58] Sophia's exhortations sufficiently convince Constantia of her own wrong reasoning, so she agrees that travel may "enlighten her judgment and qualify her for a more rational decision."[59] However, Constantia still does not sufficiently understand the nature of Ormond's threats. She is so far from such an understanding that, when he visits her at a late hour in a deserted place, she primly informs him that his recent deportment "but ill accords with" his "professions of sincerity and plain dealing."[60] After vainly attempting to reason him into leaving, she finally tries to open the door. When she discovers it is locked, she harbors for the first time a "fear that was intelligible in its dictates."[61] Even then, she hopes she must fear someone other than Ormond, as he does not seem aware that the door is locked, and he is not trying to detain her forcibly. Only after he tells her that he had Craig kill her father and that he murdered Craig himself does her fear correctly

center on Ormond. Her exit blocked, she has little chance left to escape rape, since she is physically weaker than Ormond and incapable of trying to deceive him with false promises, due to "all the habits of her life and all the maxims of her education."[62] Constantia considers killing him with her penknife but worries that "ineffectual opposition would only precipitate her evil destiny."[63] She decides to kill herself, and she tells Ormond this hoping it will deter him. However, he believes that her "cowardice is counterfeited, or that it will give place to wisdom and courage."[64] He tells Constantia he will take "the prize" whether she is alive or dead, leaving her no option but to kill him. Ironically only at this point does she react any way but rationally. Later she tells Sophia that her deed was the product of "a momentary frenzy" and that the knife-stroke was "desperate and at random."[65] She has difficulty ridding herself of the memory of his reproachful gaze and of the accusations of her conscience. Her feelings of guilt suggest that she feels partially responsible for the entire incident. She had reasoned correctly from incomplete evidence and therefore seriously misjudged Ormond. Ormond is, of course, mainly at fault. As Sydney Krause has said:

> Constantia . . . does find herself drawn to the man, and would consider marriage were he less prone to the sort of callously rationalistic argument he puts forth to overcome her fear of his passion.[66]

Sophia, the narrator, comprehends the manner in which Constantia is blinded by passion and understands Ormond

better than does her friend. Thanks to a "fortunate concurrence of incidents" and her obligations to Constantia, she attempts to understand him as fully and accurately as possible.[67] She discovers and relates much of his past history, including his rape and murder of the Tartar girl which prefigures (though it does not sufficiently explain) the final scene of violence. Furthermore, Sophia, unlike Constantia, is acquainted with "the doctrines of that school in which Ormond is probably instructed," meaning, no doubt, European radicalism.[68] Because she is not disarmed by passion, the greater objectivity which Sophia possesses enables her to obtain this additional information. Armed with knowledge and her associationist understanding of Constantia, she can see where her friend has gone astray, and she nearly prevents Ormond's attack. Constantia is indeed "constant" to Sophia's advice, which is based on the greater wisdom that her name implies.

Helena Cleves, Ormond's mistress, exemplifies not reasoning based on false or incomplete evidence, but an inability to reason at all. Her responses are entirely emotional; she understands only that which her sensibilities endorse. For example, from Ormond's frank statements of his opinions on matrimony, a rational woman would have predicted he would not be likely to propose marriage:

> . . . but Helena's mind was uninured to the discussion of logical points and the tracing of remote consequences. His presence inspired feelings which would not permit her to bestow an impartial attention on his

> arguments. It is not enough to say that his reasonings failed to convince her; the combined influence of passion and an unenlightened understanding hindered her from fully comprehending them.[69]

Ormond has a fairly low estimation of her ability to reason, but he has a Pygmalion-like fantasy in which, under his instructions, her voluptuous form and exquisite sensibilities would be united with a capacious understanding. He is thwarted in this plan because even those ideas "which he had conceived her mind to be sufficiently strong to receive and retain were proved to have made no other than a momentary impression."[70] Her inability to associate ideas correctly leads directly to her seduction, betrayal, and suicide.

Martinette is Helen's opposite. The differences among the early educations of Constantia, Helena, and Martinette are obviously designed to show the effects of early connections of ideas in the mind. Constantia's rational education does not prevent her from erring, but it is shown to be superior to Helena's sensuous education and Martinette's fierce training. Martinette is aware of the effects of her education and thinks of it in associationist terms. When asked by Constantia how a woman's heart can be inured to the shedding of blood, she answers: "Have women, I beseech thee, no capacity to reason and infer? Are they less open than men to the influences of habit?"[71] Like her brother Ormond, Martinette is willing to justify any action in terms of reason and habit, and this eventually makes her

repugnant to the more balanced Constantia. Brown obviously recognizes that being habituated to violence does not justify violent acts. Like Locke, Brown wanted reason harnessed to beneficent, not malevolent, ends.

Through the three characters, Helena, Constantia, and Martinette, Brown shows that the proper association of ideas is the result of a judicious balance of reason and sensibility. Constantia, through her experiences, is reinforced in her belief that the proper association of ideas is necessary for correct decision-making. And, even more importantly, through Sophia's aid she learns that our mental connections are not always clear to us; reason is only the best of a few fallible tools. She learns she must acknowledge her emotions, for to disregard them is to risk reasoning rightly from false premises.

The use of women characters to explore associationist psychology is far slighter in Brown's other novels: Arthur Mervyn, Edgar Huntly, Clara Howard, and Jane Talbot. The first two of these novels are psychologically interesting and, especially Edgar Huntly, probe deeply into the mind, but the focus in both is primarily on male characters. In Clara Howard and Jane Talbot, women characters are again central, but associationist principles are replaced by social ethics as the main areas of concern. Various female characters in each of these four novels contribute in a minor way to an understanding of Brown's exploration of associative principles.

In both volumes of Arthur Mervyn, the emphasis is upon Arthur's education, which is furthered considerably by the women he meets. Susan Hadwin, for example, is a minor static character, "a soft enthusiast" whose over-indulged sensibilities result in insanity when her lover doesn't return from the pestilent city.[72] Her sister, Eliza, whom Arthur Mervyn loves before her inheritance seems lost, is made of more rational material. She listens to Arthur's pious advice to be independent and to consult only her own understanding.[73] She then shocks him by angrily demanding equal experience to form her understanding, refusing simply to be "screened from the weather" and given enough to eat and drink.[74] Hence, she forces Arthur to consider that associative principles might apply to women.

Ascha Fielding, though undeveloped except through her story of her past, seems to accept the concept of associationism. Just as Clara Wieland and Constantia Dudley are taken to Europe to forget their troubles, Ascha travels to America after her own trials, saying:

> I believe the worst foes of man, at least of men in grief, are solitude and idleness. The same eternally-occurring round of objects feeds his disease, and the effects of mere vacancy and uniformity are sometimes mistaken for those of grief.[75]

This older, more experienced woman is idolized by Arthur, who has what can only be called an Oedipal attraction to her, whom he constantly calls "my lost mama come back."[76] She

occupies him so completely he feels he scarcely has a separate existence, as his "senses were occupied by her, and my mind was full of those ideas which her discourse communicated."[77] (This may be one of the few associationist descriptions of being in love in literature.)

The only female character in Edgar Huntly to develop any aspects of associationism is Mrs. Lorimer. First of all, she and her brother seem to have been intended by nature "as examples of the futility of those theories which ascribe every thing to conformation and instinct and nothing to external circumstance."[78] Mrs. Lorimer is as beneficent as her brother is malevolent. There is only one flaw in the otherwise perfect Mrs. Lorimer: her "absurd opinions of the sacredness of consanguinity" which either result from or result in her belief that she will not be able to live beyond her twin's death.[79] Reasoning correctly from this fundamentally unreasonable premise, Mrs. Lorimer demonstrates that derangement can result from any faulty association of ideas.

In Clara Howard, Clara obviously accepts associationist theory but does not recognize the possibility that she can reason falsely, given all necessary information. The understanding of others may be a "dark room," but she believes herself an exception. One of the novel's central faults is that her annoying self-righteousness is allowed to prevail.

When she first learns of Philip Stanley's prior commitment to Mary Wilmot, Clara gives him over to her, without ever speaking to Mary. Mary tells Philip: "I never will be yours! Have I not heard all your pleas,--all your reasonings? And am I not now furnished with all the means of a right judgment?"[80] She obstinately clings to this decision, bragging that her "reason cannot be deceived."[81] Philip rarely shows any justifiable anger at her high-handedness, which suggests that he deserves her. Once she knows that Mary is happily married to another, she grandly accepts him back with the warning that her "maturer age and more cautious judgment shall be counsellors and guide to thy inexperienced youth."[82]

Jane Talbot suffers from the opposite defect; she does not trust her own judgment enough. She differs, too, in that she recognizes her deficiency: "No will, no reason, have I of my own."[83] Jane Talbot is a somewhat better novel than Clara Howard partially because the plot reveals Jane's error whereas the plot of Clara Howard vindicates Clara's imperious pride. Jane is shown going through agonizing trials because she is not sure whether she owes her first loyalty to her foster mother, Mrs. Fielder, or to her lover, Henry Colden.

Jane seems to learn to value her own judgment a little more in the course of the novel. While trying to convert Colden, she learns the error of accepting religious

tenets on the basis of a habituated deference to the opinions of others. She recognizes that such unnatural connections of ideas are "on a level, as to the proof that supports it, with the wildest dreams of savage superstitions or the fumes of a dervise's fanaticism."[84] By scrutinizing the foundation of her own opinions, she breaks this unnatural connection and her piety becomes "more rational and fervent."[85] One might note that like many other Enlightenment thinkers, Brown wanted to have it both ways: he wanted to see the free exercise of reason, but he also hoped this would produce only proofs of an order-producing Deity. This conflict within Brown is perhaps responsible for an inconsistency in the directions taken by his two main characters in this novel. While Jane learns that reason can be trusted to defend belief, Henry Colden is converted only when he has "long since abjured the vanity of disputation" and accepted meditation as the only road to truth.[86] This inconsistency is unresolved.

Thus, through the minor female characters and the heroines of his minor novels, Brown demonstrates, with varying degrees of success, different aspects of associationist thought. The heroine of Wieland and the main female characters of Ormond, through actions and dialogue, test out this psychological theory in some depth. The overall conclusion they present is that human existence is complex and that reason is not an infallible guide. Self-deception is

common; hence, one must be alert and willing to listen to those who offer a different view of one's actions. Reason based upon correct premises, reached only through education and experience, is still the best guide to moral behavior, however. In Brown's last two novels, though, this reason is trusted only if it coincides with social convention.

Godwinism

Brown's acquaintance with Godwinism is easy to prove. Brown's earliest writings show a predisposition to many Godwinian tenets. For example, long before the publication of Political Justice (1793), Brown mentions the usefulness of all acquaintances.[87] Also in 1788 he advocates complete sincerity.[88]

Brown may have become familiar with Political Justice as early as the year of its publication because one excerpt from it was printed in one of his favorite journals, The New York Magazine.[89] Numerous Godwinian ideas, including perfectibilism and utilitarianism, recur in his writing between 1793 and 1795, but it is impossible to know whether he derived these from Godwin, from some other source, or from his own thinking. Brown was certainly aware of Political Justice by 1795, as he mentions it in a letter to Bringhurst.[90] At the time of his death, a copy of the 1793 edition with markings in Brown's handwriting was listed among Brown's possessions.[91]

Brown, by his own admission, was an admirer of Godwin's Caleb Williams (1794). He must have been an early reader of this, since by 1795 he had begun his Philadelphia novel using it as a model.[92] This was probably the work of which Smith was speaking in 1796 when he mentions Godwin and Holcroft to Brown as authors of works they had read together with delight, since Smith does not record reading Political Justice until several years later.[93] Smith remarks that Godwin had chased away Brown's Rousseauesque "phantoms" of sensibility: "Godwin came & all was light."[94] Obviously Brown was an early and enthusiastic reader of Godwin, though fortunately not an entirely uncritical one.

Godwinism evolved, in part, from several Lockean concepts. Godwin, like Locke, assumes the tabula rasa and believes human character to be built up out of sensations by associations. Godwin carries associationism further and accepts a mechanical materialism which Locke sees as purely speculative.[95] Both Locke and Godwin emphasize the importance of forming one's conceptions of truth on empirical fact through reason. To Locke, reason is seen more as the only feeble hope of severely limited creatures, whereas Godwin embraces a perfectibilistic view of human possibilities. Between 1793 and 1800, Godwin obviously did shift positions, moving from esteeming only reason to valuing emotions more; there is no evidence Brown was familiar with this later Godwinism, though.[96] Both Locke and Godwin, in

accordance with their ontological views, naturally emphasize the importance of government and education as formative agencies. Therefore it is entirely consistent for Brown's work to reflect simultaneously the influence of both thinkers.

Unlike Locke, Godwin is known primarily for his ethical writings rather than his ontological originality. Deriving much of his thought from empiricism and mechanistic associationism, Godwin bases his ethics on utilitarianism. He is consistently concerned with the choice of "that mode of action on the part of the individual, which constitutes the best possible application of his capacity to the general benefit."[97] Godwin is not a Benthamite, however, since like Brown he insists that a deed cannot be virtuous if the motivation is not virtuous. Utilitarianism leads to numerous specific positions, such as the need for knowledge for virtuous behavior, a belief that promises are evil, and the necessity of sincerity.[98] Sincerity is requisite, according to Godwin, to enable other men to act from the truth. Godwin goes so far as to believe that:

> Sound reasoning and truth, when adequately communicated, must be victorious over error: Sound reasoning and truth are capable of being so communicated: Truth is omnipotent: The vices and moral weakness of man are not invincible: Man is perfectible, or in other words, susceptible of perpetual improvement.[99]

With such a formidable chain of events waiting upon honesty, it is no wonder he considers insincerity criminal.

Godwin accepts the moral equality of all people; that is, that the "treatment to which men are entitled, is to be measured by their merits and their virtues."[100] Hence, hereditary luxury is unfair, as well as personally corrupting. Furthermore, luxury and pageantry in one part of society and extreme poverty in the rest lead to criminal behavior by the poor, who naturally resent this inequity.[101]

Moral behavior is, then, doing the greatest general good as the result of benevolent intention. One has a duty to help others; therefore, it is impossible to do anyone a favor. One must determine whom to help strictly on the basis of worth and not because of gratitude or kinship.[102] Moreover, one ought not bind oneself to specific future actions by promises; one's first obligation is to perform the wisest action rather than to honor promises.[103]

As only the wise can accurately determine how to confer the greatest good, the most virtuous must be well-educated people of great capabilities.[104] The simple may have good intentions, but they will make wrong choices.

Godwin designed a scale of human happiness. At the bottom was the laboring peasant, who is "happier than a stone," followed by the men of rank, fortune, and dissipation.[105] One rung up from these was the man of taste and liberal accomplishments. But higher than any others was the man with the resources and capabilities for benevolence:

> The man who has once performed an act of exalted generosity, knows that there is no sensation of corporal or

> intellectual taste to be compared with this. . . . He ascends to the highest of human pleasures, the pleasures of disinterestedness. He enjoys all the good that mankind possess, and all the good that he perceives to be in reserve for them.[106]

Hence, informed benevolence tends not only towards universal happiness but towards personal pleasure as well. This concept connects Godwin's faith in mankind's ability for perpetual improvement to his belief in associationism; pleasure will be associated with virtue. Thus Godwin's perfectibility is not so naively optimistic as it might seem at first glance. On the basis of these ethical principles, which stem from empiricism, associationism, and utilitarianism, Godwin devised a detailed political theory. However, because Brown's Godwinism is ethical rather than political, there is no need here to summarize Godwin's politics. Godwin's views on feminism and marriage will be mentioned in the course of the discussion of feminism, since these same ideas were generally developed more fully by Mary Wollstonecraft.

The discussion of how Brown's female characters test Godwinism is an extension, in some respects, of the examination of his use of characterization to test both associationism and the value of reasoning from empirical evidence. Associationism and empirical reasoning are, as has been pointed out, the foundation blocks of Godwinian ethics, although, especially in his earlier writing, Godwin

often carried them to more optimistic extremes than his predecessors.

In general, Brown's acceptance of Godwinism is greater in his earlier published novels and lesser in the later ones. It is difficult to classify Arthur Mervyn, his most Godwinian novel, the writing of which was spread out over the period when he was writing Wieland and Ormond, both more skeptical of Godwinism. One could say that there is a definite shift between the three novels written and published first and the three which follow them; that is, from Wieland, Ormond, and Arthur Mervyn to Edgar Huntly, Clara Howard, and Jane Talbot. Those elements of Godwinian thought remaining in the last three seem to be the personal elements, virtues such as truthfulness, honesty, and beneficence (within limits). Constructs related to political and social reform, such as feminism and anti-authoritarianism, are either removed, negated, or toned down. Brown came to accept reason as relative to the assumptions of the existent society. He saw normative behavior as efficacious, and therefore he approved of it.[107]

The major aspects of Godwinism are present in the characterization of Clara Wieland. First, utilitarianism is shown to result in some portion of her thoughts and behavior. More importantly, her development examines several aspects of the proposition that knowledge leads to right action.

This rather static utilitarianism is evident in the nature of her benevolence. When she feels her life is endangered, she wonders if she has offended any of her acquaintances. After some thought, she realizes that:

> My purse, scanty as it was, was ever open, and my hands ever active, to relieve distress. Many were the wretches whom my personal exertions had extricated from want and disease. . . .[108]

Her benevolence does not seem to have been uninformed. Indeed, she speculates on how the "influence of progressive knowledge" can dissolve "the alliance which commonly subsists between ignorance and the practice of agriculture."[109] Thus her benevolence is aimed at benefiting large numbers rather than just a few pet wards.

According to Godwin, as suggested, right action could be achieved only by reasoning rightly from full knowledge. Hence sincerity is valued and truth is believed sufficient to repel vice. These tenets are evaluated through Clara's characterization.

Originally Clara had refrained from directly expressing her love to Pleyel, feeling this would be improper before he had avowed his own affection. She refrains despite her knowledge of his jealousy of Carwin and of the results produced by his prior jealousy of Theresa. When he is late for a play rehearsal, she momentarily decides to drop her pose, but she reconsiders, deciding "that a confession like that would be the most remediless and unpardonable outrage upon the dignity of my sex."[110]

Her continued reticence helps form his jealous assumption that she is Carwin's mistress, after he has heard the incriminating voices. Her frankness is too late, and he does not believe her protestations of innocence. In retrospect, she realizes she has erred:

> My scruples were preposterous and criminal. They are bred in all hearts by a perverse and vicious education and they would still have maintained their place in my heart, had not my portion been set in misery. My errors have taught me thus much wisdom:--that those sentiments which we ought not to disclose it is criminal to harbour.[111]

Hence Clara's experience, backed up by the characterization of Carwin, explores and verifies the maxim that insincerity, a lack of total openness, can lead to great difficulties.

If insincerity breeds complications, truth does not, on the other hand, instantly overcome error. When Carwin leaves Clara's closet and tells her his far-fetched tale, she no longer can believe "that certain evils could never befall a being in possession of a sound mind; that true virtue supplies us with energy which vice can never resist."[112] As well as learning that the deranged mind will not be moved by reason, she must learn that the supposedly sane mind, distorted by passion, will not be moved by the righteousness of innocence. Before attempting to vindicate herself with Pleyel, she asks herself: "Would not truth and the consciousness or innocence, render me triumphant? Should I not cast from me with irrestible force, such atrocious imputations?"[113] Apparently not, according to the results of

her attempt. Only when Clara's uncle brings about a meeting between Carwin and Pleyel does Pleyel believe her innocence, and several years are needed to heal the breach caused by his unreasoning jealousy and her insincerity. Clara learns from this proving another Godwinian tenet, that experience is educational.

Ormond's Godwinism is even more mixed. As Jane Townend Flanders has noted, Ormond demonstrates the conservative theme that misused reason can threaten morality, but the novel does concur with many specific principles of Godwinian thought.[114] The book is structured similarly to Caleb Williams, being based upon the conflict between a younger person who is poor but intelligent and virtuous and one who is wealthy and experienced but, in some way, corrupt. It is incorrect to call Ormond a monster of Godwinism, however, since Brown condemns many of his characteristics including his selfishness, his dissimulation, his abuse of reason, and his low opinion of women.[115] More fairly, Constantia, armed with Godwinian virtues, is in conflict with Ormond, who represents a perversion of Godwinian principles.

Constantia, as a result of the comparatively rational education she receives, tests out the consequences of using her reason as a guide to behavior. Sophia says:

> She had learned to square her conduct, in a considerable degree, not by the hasty impulses of inclination, but by the dictates of truth. She yielded nothing to caprice or passion.[116]

As mentioned, this behavior fails for her when she neglects to recognize her own faulty associations in dealing with Ormond. Her desire to live "by the dictates of truth" results in several characteristics derived from Godwinian ethics including her benevolence, her attitude toward error in others, and her disregard of wealth or family ties in decision making.

Evidence of her benevolence is given throughout the novel. Like Clara Wieland:

> There was nothing, consistent with her slender means, that she did not willingly perform for the service of others. She had not been sparing of consolation and personal aid in many cases of personal distress that had occurred in her neighborhood.[117]

Brown does not seem to "test" the value of beneficence in this novel, and it is simply accepted as a given. Indeed, he presents a black-and-white object lesson on the value of benevolence. Constantia goes to nurse the dying Mary Whiston who was deserted by her brother. Constantia becomes only mildly ill with the disease, but the unfaithful brother dies in agony because no one dares come near enough to give him water. An entire farm family, responsible for his neglect, perishes, presumably from the fumes given off by his rotting corpse.

A related characteristic is Constantia's refusal to desire punishment for those who wrong her. This premise is examined through her responses to Thomas Craig. When she first finds him, she considers having him tried for

embezzling her father's money, "but her heart rejected the thought of being the author of injury to any man."[118] When she sees him in Ormond's house, she considers warning Ormond of Craig's past treachery but changes her mind because Craig "may now be honest, or tending to honesty, and my interference may cast him backward, or impede his honesty."[119] Craig, however, seems to be incurably criminal, for he not only lacks gratitude for her leniency but thinks Constantia "Just the dreamer she ever was! Justice! Compassion! Stupid fool! One would think she'd learned something of the world by this time!"[120] He rewards her compassion by sending her off with a bad bank note. Her mildness is constant, and after her father's death, she feels no vengeance toward the murdered, for the "evil already endured" did not incite her to extend that evil to others.[121] Consistently, when Ormond demands gratitude for killing Craig, she tells him her only feeling is remorse. By making the man whom she refused to bring to justice the instrument of her father's death, Brown makes Constantia's attitude toward Craig's crimes seem erroneous and foolhardy. Yet at the same time, there is grandeur in her aloofness from revenge and her compassion toward the criminal.

Constantia makes her decisions without regard to kinship, a characteristic which is obvious when she decides to speak to Ormond about marrying Helena. She considers herself an appropriate person to point out the way of duty to him:

> The father or brother of Helena might assume the office without indecorum. Nay, a mother or sister might not be debarred from it. Why then should she, who was actuated by equal zeal, and was engaged by ties stronger than consanguinity in the promotion of her friend's happiness?[122]

She nurses Mary Whiston, whom she hardly knows, with the same care she would have given her father. This path of behavior appears condoned by the course of events.

Constantia is also unmoved by considerations of monetary gain. She bears up under her family's financial losses with fortitude and cheerfulness. Through his tale of these trials, Brown shows the social problems of poverty. Constantia's unwillingness to exchange freedom for financial security is dramatized when Balfour proposes: "Homely liberty was better than splendid servitude."[123] Unlike Clara, she has no hopes of improving the unsatisfactory suitor as Constantia "was too wise to place an unbounded reliance on the influence of truth."[124]

Unlike Constantia, Helena Cleves, because of her education, "must not only be supplied by others, but sustained in the enjoyment of a luxurious existence."[125] She is not reduced to a subsistence level, as Constantia is, but merely compelled to live as a poor dependent with a relative; yet, she "could not bear the diminution of her customary indulgences."[126] This weakness helps propel her into Ormond's arms. Therefore, through the contrast between these two female characters, Brown shows how being ensnared by luxurious habits influences judgment and diminishes freedom.

One anti-Godwinian sentiment expressed in this novel is that there is a need for religion. This idea remains fairly static, though, and is given only minor emphasis. Sophia tells us that part of Constantia's peril in facing Ormond's arguments is being "a stranger to the felicity and excellence flowing from religion."[127] This is not made to seem an essential ingredient in Constantia's vulnerability to Ormond, however.

Sophia, in her approval of Constantia's Godwinian virtues, creates a kind of echo effect. She herself does very little but come to America to rescue Constantia, using her greater experience to understand the situation. The theme of experience's effects on human nature is reinforced by another static and undeveloped character, Martinette, as has been noted. Though Martinette plays no major dramatic role in the novel, she acts as a female counterpart to her brother. Both justify means by ends. Both tend to rationalize their own departures from professed principles, such as sincerity. For example, Martinette hides her atheism from the devout Lady D'Arcy but claims that her "imposture was merely of a negative kind" because she "deceived her rather by forbearance to contradict, and by acting as she acted, than by open assent and zealous concurrence."[128]

Arthur Mervyn is Brown's most straightforwardly Godwinian novel. The prime prepetrator of Godwinian doctrine is Mervyn himself, who is so earnestly beneficent,

sincere, and optimistic that Brown has unjustly been accused of satire.[129]

The female characters in this novel are primarily intended to be recipients of Arthur's beneficence and examples of Godwinian virtues or vices. Of the first of the two most important women in the novel, Eliza Hadwin's Godwinism relates mainly to her demand for sexual equality and consequently will be discussed later. Ascha Fielding remains largely static. For the most part, Brown retells her past adventures rather than following the present ones. She is a most appropriate mate for an aggressive young Godwinian hero, in part because she has the experience he lacks. Dr. Stevens says "Her sympathies are enforced by reason, and her charities regulated by knowledge."[130] She reveals her entire past to Arthur, recognizing the folly of keeping him in ignorance. The story of her marriage shows her willingness to accept an erring husband and to forgive him for his error. She has had money and independence but has not used them for luxuries or social gratifications, because "she had been long ago tired and disgusted with the dull and fulsome uniformity and parade of the play-house ballroom."[131] Her correctly Godwinian views were gained by experience. Arthur says he has:

> . . . heard her reason with admirable eloquence against the vain distinctions of property and nation and rank. They were once of moment in her eyes; but the sufferings, humiliations, and reflections of years have cured her of the folly.[132]

Godwinism is not so much explored as extolled in Ascha.

Through the actions of the title character, Edgar Huntly critically examines unchecked benevolence and the premise that human error is always rectifiable. Brown uses a minor character, Mrs. Lorimer, to demonstrate the danger of a single element of irrationality. Mrs. Lorimer seems in many ways an example of Godwinian virtue. She is governed completely by "the precepts of duty" and uses her independence from a dissolute husband "to live thenceforward conformably to her notions of right," employing her income benevolently.[133] Clithero admires her for "the inviolable consistency of her actions and opinions, the ceaseless flow of her candour, her cheerfulness, and her benevolence."[134] She considers rank a vain distinction and educates Clithero, encouraging him in his love for her niece, Clarice. Her only irrationality is her near-fatal belief that the stroke which kills her brother will not only have the same effect on her but will "set her portion . . . in everlasting misery."[135] This knowledge, in combination with his heavy burden of gratitude, drives Clithero insane. Mrs. Lorimer's education may have caused her to be the opposite of her twin, Wiatte, but education seems to have been insufficient to teach Clithero the Godwinian precept that gratitude should not be allowed to affect one's judgment.

In Clara Howard, the heroine of the same name exmplifies several Godwinian virtues, including her overwhelming benevolence and her unwillingness to make decisions on the basis

of class or affluence. She seems to function in part as a mentor for the supposedly erring Philip Stanley.

Philip is in awe of nobility and rank, the result of the effect of European books on his inexperienced mind. He "could never forget" that his "condition was that of a peasant," and despite his intellectual knowledge that this is false, he "was the slave of those sentiments of self-contempt and humiliation which pertain to that condition elsewhere, though chimerical and visionary on the western side of the Atlantic."[136] These sentiments make him ambitious of dignity and fortune. Clara, on the other hand, judges others "not by the specious but delusive considerations of fortune or birth, but by the intrinsic qualities of heart and head."[137] She offers to divide her inheritance with Philip in the event that her parents do not do this in their wills, so that lack of money need not be a factor in his marriage to Mary. Through his acquaintance with Clara, Philip learns that "wealth is only the means of every kind of happiness; it is not happiness itself."[138] She teaches him that using affluence properly is more difficult than bearing up gracefully under poverty, which he now realizes he has not done.

The theme of erroneous education leading to improper attitudes towards money also is explored through Mary Wilmot. Mary has been "trained up in the most luxurious manner . . . the mistress of her father's purse."[139] She naturally

acquires "the prejudices and expectations of an heiress" and is "not wise enough to endure poverty and straitened accommodations, and a toilsome calling, with serenity."[140] She considers working for money degrading, and she is embarrassed to have her former friends see her in such conditions.

Through the characters of Mary and Clara, Brown assesses the concept of self-sacrificing benevolence. Mary tells Clara that she exults having it in her power "to vie with you in generosity."[141] The lesson of selfless generosity is one Philip learns slowly, doubtless a result of the inanity of Clara's insistence that the two of them give up their happiness so he can wed Mary, whom he does not love. Philip stands to lose any way one looks at the situation, given Clara's ultimatum:

> If you cannot ardently and sincerely seek her presence, and find, in the happiness which she will derive from a union with you, sufficient motives to make you zealously solicit that union, you are unworthy, not merely of my love, but of my esteem.[142]

Philip steels himself to "the pursuit of the promotion of her happiness."[143] Clara vacillates in her impractical plan only when it appears he is dying, but she quickly reconsiders, telling him she cannot "riot in bliss, and deck myself in bridal ornaments, while she [Mary Wilmot] lives pining in dreary solitude. . . ."[144] Ironically, she believes Mary's sacrifice of Philip the result of "a generous but erroneous self-denial."[145]

In only one letter does Philip rebel abainst Mary's wrong-headedness. He complains that she is benevolent only to Mary and not to Sedley. As for himself:

> I am so far sunk into depravity, that all my desires are the instigations of guilt, and all my pleasures those of iniquity. Duty tells you to withstand and to thwart, not to gratify, my wishes.[146]

Unfortunately, by the end of the letter, he seems to have given up energy to live for his own happiness, and he resigns himself to live for Mary's pleasure. The novel ends "happily," with Mary engaged to the wealthy Sedley, and Clara to the hapless Philip. Nowhere in this novel does Brown suggest that unchecked, unreasoned benevolence can lead to more pain than pleasure, as he does in Edgar Huntly. In Godwinian fashion, beneficence is contagious, but the beneficence in Clara Howard is based upon the socially accepted convention of the binding nature of promises rather than upon utilitarian principles. Godwin would not have approved.

The final message of Jane Talbot seems to be that generally one should conform to socially sanctioned behavior. Through his characterization of Jane, Brown concedes a little to Godwinism: certain Godwinian personal virtues, such as sincerity and a sense of duty are maintained; and social conformity should be supported by reason, if possible.

Jane's sincerity and openness are obvious in her attempt to disclose her history and character thoroughly to Henry Colden, since his future happiness will be affected by them. To her acquaintance with Henry she attributes her

growth in candor. She is open with her foster-mother as well; she learns the merit of frankness with her after the ill-advised loans to Frank, Jane's profligate brother. Yet, on the other hand, Jane is put into Miss Jessup's power by her "open, impetuous temper . . . confident of innocence, and fearless of ungenerous or malignant constructions."[147] Perhaps Brown is advising openness with close associates but more guardedness with the rest of the world.

Jane is extremely concerned with performing her duty. The tension which develops arises from the question of to whom she owes her first duty. Several incidents in the novel suggest that reason should function generally to justify obedience to social norms. As has been shown, the novel approves reason only when it justifies conventional Christianity; when it contradicts it, as in Henry's case, reason should be exchanged for meditation. To Brown, there is definitely a "right" reason which upholds Christianity. The question of religion does reinforce the Godwinian maxim approving discourse on all subjects, as Jane, who was "imagined to incur such formidable perils" from discussing religion with Henry, actually learns a more "permanent and rational" piety from their talks.[148]

The question of reason versus convention is also brought out in the question of whether Jane should act on the authority of her relatives or use her own judgment. This question is raised quite early by her relationship

with her father and her brother. Her father, because of overindulgence, creates a debased character in his son which leads Frank to rob him. Jane is helpless to stop the swindling because her father's pride "was easily offended at being thought to want the counsel of a girl."[149] She herself is moved by her own soft feelings toward Frank and the "inexplicable charm in the mere tie of kindred."[150] She gives over half her money to her brother but later recognizes the full extent of her error. When Frank returns from Europe and again tries to assume an almost paternal authority, based on brothership and eldership, she resists, telling him he has forfeited the right to be her "real brother--one who had the tenderness becoming that relation."[151] In this case, Brown approves her assertion of her own reason over the ties of kinship.

The situation seems reversed when Jane is forced to decide between Henry and her foster-mother. Henry complains: "Your mother's wishes, though allowed to be irrational and groundless, are to be gratified by the disappointment of mine, which appear to be just and reasonable. . . ."[152] The irresolute Jane wants reason to be on Mrs. Fielder's side, as the pull of duty is stronger than her love for Henry. She begs her foster-mother to disclose what she knows against him, because, as Jane claims, "without disclosure I cannot--as a rational creature--I cannot--change my resolution."[153] Jane's comment clarifies her desire to

have good counsel back up what she perceives as her duty to Mrs. Fielder: "I want, I had almost said, I want to share your antipathies. I want only to be justified in obeying you."[154] She also urges Henry to behave towards his father with "a submissive and suitable deportment."[155] Though Mrs. Fielder, on her deathbed, confesses she has wronged Jane and Henry, Jane is not bitter but is consoled by the memory that she has been dutiful. The device of having Henry Colden returned to Jane, improved as a husband by his conversion, seems to justify the tenet that, except in extraordinary cases, behavior should conform to social authority.[156] Through the character of Jane, reason is made secondary to convention.

Brown's main female characters test tenets of Godwinism, and the minor ones represent specific aspects of it. Gradually, the experiences of these major characters, ranging from Clara Wieland and Constantia Dudley, to Clara Howard and Jane Talbot, suggest first that reason unsupported by experience is insufficient, and later that reason unsupported by social convention is dubious. Brown seems to have come to the conclusion that most human beings are incapable of handling moral responsibility in isolation. Though Godwinian elements remain, Brown's last novels beat a retreat from even the partial Godwinism of the earliest.

Feminism

Brown's interest in feminism could have been initiated by any of a number of sources. One of the earliest was probably his Quaker background. The Quakers' belief that all possess the Inner Light and their relative lack of a formal church hierarchy have made them traditional supporters of sexual equality. The numerous immigrants from England and France, radicals seeking asylum in America, brought ideas of female emancipation. Through them, Brown was probably familiar with Helvetius and Codercet, who viewed both sexes as equally dependent upon experience and knowledge.[157] Brown was also, as has been noted, familiar with the basic ideas of Locke and thoroughly conversant with Godwin's Political Justice; the ontology of Locke and the ethics of Godwin prepared the way for Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792).

Brown's knowledge of this specific work seems highly probable. Many of his commentators have assumed it had had a direct influence on Alcuin: A Dialogue, Brown's full-length work on women's rights, and on Brown's characterization of women.[158] Certainly Brown was familiar with Wollstonecraft, both from his knowledge of Godwin and from other sources. Brown's father owned a copy of Wollstonecraft's French Revolution, and the Monthly Magazine published an article on her character.[159] Brown may well have read her introduction to the Vindication when this was reprinted in 1793

in his favorite New York Magazine.[160] It is, therefore, highly likely that Brown was familiar with Wollstonecraft and her feminist writings. His interest in feminism need not be supported by extraneous documents, as it is well-substantiated by several of his essays as well as by Alcuin, which will be examined after a summary of Wollstonecraft's feminism.

Two works postulate Wollstonecraft's feminist views: her early Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (1787); and, more importantly, the well-known A Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792). Wollstonecraft's ideas stem in part from Locke and Godwin. From Locke, the human mind is seen as a white sheet of paper on which our experiences work through associationism to create ideas. Like Locke, she strongly emphasizes the use of reason and sees all human beings as equal and free. She also sees marriage as a compact.

Of her ideas, those which might be considered Godwinian include the belief that cohabitation is evil, a fairly radical idea which does not find its way into her earlier writing. Like Godwin, she believes truth always overcomes falsehood; this, of course, leads to the view of sincerity as a primary virtue.[161] Her voice is as strong as his in denunciations of rank, luxury, and superstition. As the champion of women's equality, she had a special reason for denouncing the idleness in which luxury and rank resulted.

In essence, Mary Wollstonecraft worked from empiricism, associationism, and utilitarianism to insist that women, too, are human beings and are entitled to all consequent privileges. Women begin with the blank sheet of paper, and their follies and passions are the natural result of having little experience of worth. Women are not allowed to sharpen their capabihities by facing adversity.[162] Intead of being taught to reason, they are taught to please. Because all true virtue is the result of reason, women cannot be virtuous. Over and over, Wollstonecraft inveighs against the idea of having a different standard of virtue for men and women, though she does state that women "may have different duties to perform."[163] By being taught only to please, women are robbed of virtue and decked with false graces in its place.[164]

Because of her belief that women need both experience and reason for virtue, Wollstonecraft formulated a number of suggestions on female education. First, she argues that women be encouraged to strengthen their bodies so that they can be healthy mothers and wives. At present:

> . . . the limbs and faculties are cramped with worse than Chinese bonds, and the sedentary life which they are condemned to live, while boys frolic in the open air, weakens the muscles and relaxes the nerves.[165]

Secondly, they should be taught to regulate their behavior by reason rather than by unthinking adherence to a network of specific rules. Likewise, they should choose their religious beliefs on the basis of their own reasoning, rather

than that of their husbands or fathers. They should not be taught to over-exercise and over-emphasize the sensibilities in place of reason since whatever "tends to make a person in some measure independent of the senses is a prop to virtue."[166] Women should be employed in serious matters rather than in an idle social round and in the sensuous pleasure of dress and make-up. Women should be taught not to be flattered by arbitrary insolent respect, paid to them only because they are women because those men who are most assiduous in this respect are often the most tyrannical.[167] Furthermore, unearned deference like inherited rank, corrupts. If women are given the opportunities to strengthen body and mind through experience and proper education, Wollstonecraft promises an improvement in virtue, if not total equality. According to Wollstonecraft, there is no way of knowing whether or not "woman is essentially inferior to man because she has always been subjugated."[168]

Wollstonecraft devoted some thought to two themes which recur in Brown's novels: female chastity and marriage. She berates society's emphasis on the reputation of chastity rather than on actual chasteness, and considers the idea that the first sexual error depraves a woman's character completely absurd.[169] She also considers it ridiculous for society to require only this one virtue in women:

> If the honour of a woman, as it is absurdly called, be safe, she may neglect every social duty, nay, ruin her family by gaming and extravagance; yet still preserve a shameless front--for truly she is an honourable woman![170]

Between 1787 and 1792, Wollstonecraft moved from advocating late marriage to recommending early marriage. As far as can be determined, her other views on marriage underwent no significant change. Not surprisingly, she holds that children should select their own marriage partners, though they might delay a marriage if the parents strongly disapprove. She insists that marriage would never be held sacred until women are capable of becoming their husbands' companions and not merely their mistresses because "Love, unsupported by esteem, must soon expire, or lead to depravity. . . ."[171] This view of love is colored by her belief that reason should not merely guide but dominate the senses. She considers love resistible and believes one can love more than once. Consistently, she feels that a romantic sensibility is debilitating to men and women. More important than any one passion is the principle of universal benevolence; here again the Godwinian influence is visible.

In general, women should be educated as though they would have to take care of themselves--as well they might, for wives could become widows and daughters helpless dependents upon unconcerned relatives. Wollstonecraft does not wish women to have power over men, but over themselves. She summarizes her stance when she says:

> Moralists have unanimously agreed, that unless virtue be nursed by liberty, it will never attain due strength --and what they say of man I extend to mankind, insisting that in all cases morals must be fixed on immutable

> principles; and that the being cannot be termed rational or virtuous who obeys any authority but that of reason.[172]

To be virtuous, women must be given the opportunity to attain that reason.

Brown's interest in speculating about women's capabilities and responsibilities appears as early as 1788, in "The Man at Home." In the seventh of these essays, he discusses the demands on the time of a housewife with children and offers suggestions to a Miss De Moivre, concerning how she might spend her time profitably; most of his suggestions would have appealed more to a "bluestocking" than to the typically educated woman of this time.[173]

Alcuin: A Dialogue, possibly written as early as the fall of 1796, was the first full-length feminist work by an American author. The first half was published as a pamphlet in 1798 and serialized in slightly altered form that year in the Weekly Magazine, under the title "The Rights of Woman, A Dialogue." The second half was published only posthumously, in 1815 within Dunlap's Life; Brown may have been discouraged by friends or his own compunctions from publishing this more radical portion which questions the current state of marriage and advocates divorce.

The work is organized as a four-part dialogue between Alcuin, a young schoolmaster, and Mrs. Carter, a wealthy widow. Alcuin, who through much of the work, balks at Mrs. Carter's suggestion that women be given equal rights

and responsibilities, concludes by radically suggesting that the term "marriage" can mean any adopted mode of regulating sexual intercourse.[174] Mrs. Carter, a reformer rather than a radical, objects to this and is given the last word. This conclusion strongly implies that Mrs. Carter is Brown's mouthpiece. Jane Townend Flanders has even suggested that the main purpose of the dialogue is to refute Alcuin's unwise attitudes.[175] Throughout the dialogue, both disputants accept associationist learning theory. Probably Brown, like Wollstonecraft, in accordance with associative thought, considered the current state of most women the result of faulty education.

Part I of Alcuin is concerned with unequal educational and occupational opportunities. Alcuin argues that women, by circumstances, cannot be expected to be wise and learned, though he later inconsistently says that women are in the better position to gain knowledge.[176] Mrs. Carter complains of her limited education and the exclusion of women from the liberal professions. Alcuin tries to argue that women (meaning middle- and upper-class women) are better off than men. When prodded, he admits that luxury does not contribute to virtue. This theme constantly reappears in the Vindication. Brown also shares Wollstonecraft's conviction that: "Men and women are partakers of the same nature. They are rational beings; and, as such, the same principles of truth and equity must be applicable to both."[177]

Brown is, however, less concerned than she is with the relationship between reason and virtue and more with women's social and legal rights.

Part II concentrates on women's right to participate actively in politics, especially their right to vote. Mrs. Carter tells Alcuin that it is a gross abuse that women, on the basis of a physical difference alone, are prohibited from sharing the power of choosing rulers and making laws to which they, too, are subject. Women are kept from the much-hailed freedom of the new and democratic nation. She likens this inequality of women to "that prejudice which has so long darkened the world, and taught men that nobles and kings were creatures of an order superior to themselves."[178] This, too, is reminiscent of Wollstonecraft.

The second half of the dialogue begins with Alcuin's description of an imaginary excursion into a utopia. He is defeated in an argument based entirely on reason with his own imaginary "other," a citizen of this utopia. Men and women dress alike, are educated the same, and participate in the same employments. The utopia is based upon empiricism, associationism, and utilitarianism. Both men and women are assumed to begin life with their minds empty slates. Only differing circumstances account for dissimilarities between any two individuals later in their lives. Duties, including physical labor, are divided equally among all members of the community, as:

> The greater the number of those who are employed in administering to pleasure, the greater will be the product. Since both sexes partake of this capacity, what possible reasons can there be for limiting or precluding the efforts of either?[179]

The last portion of the dialogue is devoted to a discussion of marriage. In total, Mrs. Carter's attitude is that the institution itself is sacred but that many of the current laws and customs attributed to it ". . . by making it a compact of slavery, by imposing impracticable conditions and extorting impious promises have, in most countries, converted it into something flagitious and hateful."[180] Her two specific charges are that it enslaves wives to their husbands and that it leaves women destitute of property. The changes she advocates are easier access to divorce, revised property laws, and the cessation of cohabitation between husband and wife. Mrs. Carter believes that the exercise of reason and the enjoyment of liberty are necessary to an enlightened choice, that marital harmony which rises above the common understanding of love, which she sees as "an empty and capricious passion . . . a sensual attachment which, when unaccompanied with higher regards, is truly contemptible."[181]

At the end of this final section, though Alcuin has consistently objected to Mrs. Carter's demand for reforms, he suddenly becomes an advocate of what she terms:

> . . . that detestable philosophy which scoffs at the matrimonial institution itself, which denies all its pretensions to sanctity, which consigns us to the guidance of a sensual impulse. . . .[182]

Brown, never a radical, gives Mrs. Carter the last words to describe his idea of the perfect marriage, which is similar to Wollstonecraft's:

> Marriage is a union founded on free and mutual consent. It cannot exist without personal fidelity. As soon as the union ceases to be spontaneous, it ceases to be just. This is the sum.[183]

And, this is the marriage for which Carles Brockden Brown's idealistic heroines longed.

The examination of the value of empirical reasoning and Godwinian virtues based on reason is all the more radical in Wieland because these are tested through the characterization of a woman, Clara Wieland. The feminism of this novel is simply the extension of Enlightenment values to a woman.

Clara is given much the same privileges as her brother, Theodore. They were educated together at home and presumably given similar instruction. Their father's property was divided equally between them rather than going entirely to the only son; this may be modelled after Wollstonecraft's injunction for parents not to leave their daughters uneducated and dependent upon brothers or other relatives. Clara refuses to live with her brother and Catherine, being "desirous of administering to a fund and regulating a household" of her own.[184] Despite these similarities in their backgrounds and situations, Wieland is more vulnerable, presumably because he happened to be more influenced by the hereditary insanity. The strength given

to Clara by her "unfeminine" rational education and her relative independence saves her from the same fate.

The question of frankness and sincerity takes feminist coloration in Wieland because it is the "outrage upon the dignity" of her sex which prevents Clara from stating her feelings to Pleyel.[185] Wollstonecraft inveighs against the falsity and miserable consequences of women hiding their affection; this form of insincerity is peculiar to women. In his unfinished novel, Stephen Calvert, Brown more explicitly expostulates on the falsity of considering this a biological difference:

> We are taught that a woman will assiduously counterfeit indifference till the man has vowed his affection; that the secret of her heart, instead of spontaneously flowing to her lips, can only be extorted . . . that these are feminine attributes . . . interwoven with the female constitution.[186]

As mentioned, Clara learns the error of her scruples. She is aided in her disclosure by the change in the relationship between herself and Pleyel, as she realizes "That knowledge which I should never have imparted to a lover, I felt little scruple to communicate to a friend."[187]

Another question raised by Wieland is whether women are not more irrational than men; specifically, whether they are not more easily frightened. Carwin tells Clara that his curiosity to discover whether she is exceptional partially motivated his behavior, because:

> A woman capable of recollection in danger, of warding off groundless panics, of discerning the true mode of proceeding and profiting by her best resources, is a prodigy.[188]

Clara considers herself relatively unsusceptible to fears. She remarks that she is "not fearful of shadows" and that she finds only "ignorance and folly" in "tales of apparitions and enchantments."[189] She also has no fear of robbers and hence does not bother to use any means "to prevent or counterwork their machinations."[190] Her servant's vocal admiration for her relative fearlessness leads Carwin to put her to the trial. To him she seems "easily swayed by fear."[191] His criticism seems unjust. It evinces neither the fallibility of reason or women's particular vulnerability to irrational impulses for someone to run from the sound of two hidden intruders, plotting one's murder. Indeed, an attempt to confront the "perpetrators" would seem foolhardy. Furthermore, Clara is capable of returning to the house after the murders there. Finally, Clara's irrationality requires more fuel to flame it than does Pleyel's, as his easily provoked jealousy shows. Clara is, of course, more rational than her brother, despite the differences in sex. Brown seems to conclude, through Clara, that irrational behavior results from a combination of education, habit, and hereditary predisposition rather than from sex.

Marriage is not a central topic in Wieland. Clara's paternal grandfather chooses a wife in spite of his parents' prohibitions. Also, early in the novel, Theodore Wieland spurns the role of tyrannical husband and insists on giving

his wife's opinions weight in decisions affecting them both.

Marriage is a far more major theme in Ormond. The concept of the sanctity of marriage may be un-Godwinian, but it is in accordance with Wollstonecraft. Brown's own esteem for the institution reinforces his belief in its sanctity:

> Marriage is incident to all; its influence on our happiness and dignity, is more entire and lasting than any other incident can possess. . . . To enable men to evade the evils and secure the benefits of this state, is to consult, in an eminent degree their happiness.[192]

Constantia demonstrates a proper attitude towards marriage. She rejects her first suitor because of scruples relating to "his age, to the imperfectness of their acquaintance, and to the want of that permanence of character which can flow only from the progress of time and knowledge."[193] Her parents feel they have the right to order her to marry him, but they forbear--out of kindness, according to their view of the situation. Constantia's fears concerning this young man prove to be well-founded since he stops his suit as soon as her father's misfortunes are known. This disappointment supports Constantia in her belief that marriage requires a serious and mature consideration of which the young are incapable.[194] She decides as a result that she will not marry for seven years.

Constantia's next suitor, Balfour, offers her economic security, with the condition that she "promise obedience

to one whose judgment was glaringly defective" im comparison to her own.[195] She realizes she could very easily persuade him to do as she wished through cunning, but she does not wish to stoop to this. She decides that to "abdicate the use of her own understanding was scarcely justifiable in any case" and that her liberty is more important than the security of wealth.[196] Marriage should be more than an affair of property, she feels. Her father, whose acceptance of life's evils has become rather fatalistic by this point, makes no effort to dissuade her once her mind is set.

Her feeling that marriage is possible only between equals extends to her decision concerning whether Helena and Ormond should marry. Though, as a proper utilitarian, she decides marriage would provide the greater good and the lesser evil, she worries that: "A marriage of minds so dissimilar could only be productive of misery immediately to him and, by a reflex action, to herself [Helena]."[197] In her consideration of Ormond, Constantia does not realize he thinks marriage absurd because he has artfully hidden this belief, planning to marry her if seduction fails. She therefore deliberates over him as she would over any suitor. In this instance, she recognizes him as mature and as an intellectual equal. She also realizes her own attraction to him (though she does not know the extent to which it influences her judgment). She hesitates, though, because

"Ormond was imperfectly known" and had "embraced a multitude of opinions which appeared to her erroneous. Till these were rectified, and their conclusions were made to correspond, wedlock was improper."[198] This hesitation springs from her belief that marriage is justifiable "only by community of affections and opinions."[199] Thus, Constantia exemplifies the feminist position that women are better off single than unsuitably married.

Ormond bases his disapproval of marriage on "the irrevocability of the vows" as well as the "general and incurable imperfection of the female character."[200] In none of his novels does Brown concur with the former opinion, although in Alcuin he shows an argument for divorce. Ormond's second tenet appears to be substantiated by Helena who "was calculated to excite emotions more voluptuous than dignified."[201] Except for her chess-playing all of her skills require only memory and sensibility, but never reason. Her attractiveness to Ormond lies in these skills and in her physical beauty. Ormond unsuccessfully tries to augment her talents by his teaching, but his failure at this leads him to decide that: "To make her wise it would be requisite to change her sex. He had forgotten that his pupil was female, and her capacity therefore limited by nature."[202] Helena's fate is Brown's argument against the foolishness of leaving female children uneducated and without provision.

Constantia convinces him that women are men's equals, with individual differences caused in both cases merely by birth and education. Brown tells us that the education of women is usually "limited to what is sensual and ornamental" as Helena's obviously had been. Constantia's father has instead "sought to make her, not alluring and voluptuous, but eloquent and wise."[203] His aim is successful. As has been noted, Ormond is impressed by Constantia's ability to reason, and he observes that her skill and strength in the face of adversity "were proofs of a moral constitution from which he supposed the female sex to be debarred."[204] By her behavior, Constantia proves women's equality to Ormond and successfully defeats most of the challenges she meets. She is more capable of handling Ormond than is Helena, though her experience does not teach her to recognize that, unperceived, her passion has swayed her judgment; this is the result of her education and not her sex, however.

Martinette, though unessential to the action of the novel, functions as Helena's opposite. She also parallels her brother, as a monster of rationalization, as mentioned. Brown's abhorrence of extremes is obvious in his portrayal of her in which "The female was absorbed, so to speak, in the rational creature. . . ."[205] Martinette, like Helena and Constantia, demonstrates the role education has in forming women's character. Hers has made her feel "imbued by a

soul that was a stranger to the sexual distinction."[206] Her characterization is so extreme that she appears not just unfeminine but inhuman.

Sophia, though delineated mostly through her generalizations rather than her actions, shows what can be accomplished by a balanced woman unswayed by a hidden passion. In her own history, she proves that obligations and situations considered unsuitable for women can be handled if given experience.[207] Hence, her mother's lunacy, illness, and death makes her "expert in the management of all affairs relative to property."[208] Her experience and detachment give her the wisdom to be a formidable ally of Constantia's against Ormond, most likely refuting any remaining doubts he may have retained about female competency.

In Arthur Mervyn, women characters teach Arthur that women, as well as men, are affected and formed primarily by education. In the first volume of the novel, Arthur thinks in such terms as a "woman's fears" and "the usual attributes of women," and his responses towards individual women are either simple adulation, if the woman is virtuous, or complete horror, if she is "depraved."[209] For example, when he begins to realize Clemenza Lodi is Welbeck's mistress, he notes that the "charms of this angelic woman were tarnished and withered" although he had "formerly surveyed her as a precious and perfect monument."[210]

In the second volume, Arthur at first seems to hold a more equal view of the sexes. At one point he suggests that knitting stockings is no more whimsical for him than for a young, active woman.[211] Yet, when he meets Miss Carlton, a minor character in a peripheral incident, Arthur assumes intellectual weakness from her external frailty and timidity, and learns otherwise to his surprise. Miss Carlton teaches him his first lesson.

The characterization of Eliza Hadwin provides the second. When she is left alone, Arthur assumes he is necessary as a protector and presumes to make decisions for her. For example, he decides for her that her "sex and age disqualified her to superintending the harvest-field and the threshing-floor."[212] Annoyed at both his lack of love for her and his presumption, Eliza berates him:

> I do not know how I should tell you every thing. You care so little about he that--I should only be troublesome. I am old enough to think and act for myself, and shall advise with nobody but myself.[213]

She is angered that he thinks "that assistance and counsel must all proceed" from him.[214] She tells him her weakness and ignorance proceed from the same causes as his and that she has an equal right to education and experience to alleviate them. In all, she teaches him "that human ignorance was curable by the same means in one sex as in the other; that fortitude and skill were of no less value to one than to the other."[215] Arthur opts for the woman who can teach him through her own past experience rather than for learning

together with Eliza. Eliza is dropped from the novel entirely, once Brown moves her to Ascha Fielding's home. This is a defect in the novel because the reader's interest is aroused by her earlier characterization, especially her unexpected outburst.

Of all Brown's novels, Edgar Huntly is least concerned with feminism. The main character, Edgar Huntly, remains steadfast in his view of the sexes as unequal, unlike Arthur Mervyn. Edgar refuses to send his fiancee, Waldegrave's sister, those letters of her brother which argue against religion, saying that she, like others of her sex, "art unaccustomed to metaphysical refinements."[216]

Mrs. Lorimer demonstrates the evil of parents choosing a daughter's husband. The good man of her own choice is harassed, and a scoundrel is forced upon her. His early death leaves Mrs. Lorimer free and, having learned the evils of an unsuitable marriage, she remains single for a long time, "determined to profit by her newly-acquired independence," which suggests that Brown believes women are happier single than unsuitably married.[217]

Clara Howard, though only peripherally concerned with feminism, deals with two related issues: women's education; and the problem of marriage. The difficulties which result from improperly educated women have already been discussed in terms of the character, Mary Wilmot. The question of proper education is not limited to women

characters; Mary's father and, supposedly, her brother also suffer the effects of improper education. Furthermore, in this novel, Brown elaborates very little on what he considers a proper education to be.

Marriage is explored in more depth. The sanctity of marriage is taken for granted. When Philip hears a rumor that Mary Wilmot is living with Philip Sedley, but not as his wife, he writes that it is "sacrilege so much as to whisper to one's heart the surmise."[218] Through the characterization of Clara, Brown clearly defines the basis on which love is to be placed. When Philip balks at being returned to Mary, Clara tells him:

> In my eyes, marriage is no sensual or selfish bargain. I will never vow to honour the man who deserves only my contempt; and my esteem can be secured only by a just and disinterested conduct. Perhaps esteem is not the only requisite to marriage. Of that I am not certain; but I know that it is an indispensable requisite to love. I cannot love any thing in you but excellence. Infatuation will render you hateful or pitiable in my eyes.[219]

Later she tells him she loves him as she ought to love him--she loves his happiness and his virtues. This policy would be more effectively represented in the novel if she ever seemed to show concern for his happiness. Instead she appears to be responding largely from an over-heated, irrational generosity, enjoying her martyrdom. The vision of marriage she describes to Philip, once she finally consents, sounds more matriarchal than equal, with her firmly pointing out his youthful errors.

Mary Wilmot shows more concern for Philip's happiness by refusing to marry him until he can reciprocate her love and by leaving him for Clara (although she cannot resist leaving a Wertheresque farewell note bound to give him guilt pangs). Furthermore, she, like Constantia Dudley, will not marry him for security alone, and she therefore refuses Sedley until she can return his esteem and love.

Marriage is also an important issue in Jane Talbot, where it fits into the overall feminist question of whether women should follow their own reason or social authority in decision-making. The problem of reason versus social authority can be applicable to either sex, of course, but in Jane Talbot, the emphasis is feminist. For example, once Jane realizes her religion needs the support of reason, she tells Henry:

> Excellent advice is this to the mass of women; to those to whom habit or childish fear or parental authority has given their faith. . . . As to me, I was once just such a pretty fool in this respect as the rest of my sex.[220]

Jane's experience proves that women, too, can make right use of reason on important questions like religion.

From her childhood, Jane's brother and father have derided her ability to make rational decisions. This may account for her hesitancy and pliability later. The question of the amount of authority owed to kin is intensified because of Jane's sex. Of her brother, she notes that:

> . . . as my elder brother, and as a man, he thought himself entitled to govern and despise me. He always treated me as a frivolous girl, with whom it was a waste of time to converse, and never spoke to me at all except to direct or admonish.[221]

When she hesitates to lend him money, he wonders where "a raw girl should gain all these scruples and punctilios."[222] Her father, though kinder, shares this sexual bias, and refuses to heed her comments about Frank's mishandling of the money. In this instance, Jane is obviously willing to risk censure and ridicule for important issues.

She also appears willing to act independently of her father and brother in her choice of a mate. Her father had arranged a marriage with her cousin Risberg. Jane realizes "the folly of such premature bonds" as soon as she reaches the age of reflection, and though she does not "openly oppose" her father's wishes, she holds herself "free to obey any new impulse which circumstances might produce."[223] She equally repudiates her brother's attempts to dissuade her from marrying Risberg, deciding that if Risberg has been falsely maligned, she should act with complete independence of her brother's inclinations.

Jane does not completely fulfill her good intentions, but, under the joint attack of her father and the revered Mrs. Fielder, she is finally talked into marrying Lewis Talbot. He is a solid citizen whom Mrs. Fielder hopes will tamp down Jane's romantic sensibilities. Jane learns from this experience: "Never, never let the placable

and compassionate spirit be seduced into a union to which the affections are averse. Let it not confide in the after-birth of love."[224] Nevertheless, though she is not talked into another tepid marriage, Mrs. Fielder's maternal sway does cause a long delay in her marriage to Henry Colden. This incident seems less related to her sex than to the overall theme of children obeying their parents, as Janes considers Henry Colden's responsibility to his father equally important. Furthermore, the problem of their differing religious sentiments needs the time given by the separation for even a somewhat credible resolution. The question of whether women in particular ought to be guided by social and parental constraints seems to be given a negative answer. Instead, both sexes are advised to show caution before following reason unchecked by authority.

Thus, Charles Brockden Brown's didacticism took a rather experimental form. Consistently, he made use of major women characters to test certain tenets through their experiences. Their experiences increasingly tended, throughout the course of his novels, to advocate moderation and to support a shift from reason to reasonability. Individual behavior which deviated from normative social behavior became more suspect as Brown's continued investigations into the human heart made him more conservative in his hope for human perfection.

NOTES--CHAPTER III

[1]CBB, "Walstein's School of History," Monthly Magazine 1 (September-December 1799), 408.

[2]CBB, "Advertisement," Wieland, p. 23.

[3]CBB, "Walstein's School," p. 408.

[4]Letter to Bringhurst (Dec. 21, 1792), DEK, p. 615.

[5]CBB, "Novel-Reading," from "A Student's Diary, No. 24," Literary Magazine 1 (March 1904), 404. Ellipsis is CBB's.

[6]CBB, "Novel-Reading," p. 405.

[7]Berthoff, "Lesson," p. 47.

[8]Charles T. Pridgeon, Jr., "Insanity in American Fiction from Charles Brockden Brown to Oliver Wendell Holmes," Diss. Duke 1969, p. 6.

[9]Pridgeon, footnote 2, p. 87, notes that this can be seen by examining Edward Cutbrush's "An Inaugural Dissertation on Insanity" (1795), written under Rush's direction.

[10]Norman Dain, Concepts of Insanity in the United States, 1789-1865 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1964), pp. 5 and 15. My indebtedness to this fine history is more considerable than documentation can indicate.

[11]Dain, p. 16.

[12]Dain, p. 17.

[13]Dain, p. 21.

[14]Elihu Hubbard Smith, Diary of Elihu Hubbard Smith, ed. James E. Cronin (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1973); Letter to Mary Mumford (Oct. 4, 1796), p. 227.

[15]EHS Diary, Letter to Nathaniel Terry (Dec. 20, 1795), pp. 107-108.

[16]EHS Diary, Letter to Mary Mumford (Oct. 4, 1796), p. 226.

[17]CBB, "The Rhapsodist, No. 4," The Universal Asylum and Columbian Magazine 3 (Nov. 1789), 664.

[18]CBB, "The Rhapsodist, No. 4," p. 664.

[19]Howard C. Warren, A History of the Association Psychology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), p. 6.

[20]Pridgeon, pp. 107-108.

[21]John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, ed. Alexander Campbell Fraser (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1959), I, p. 212 (II, xi, 17).

[22]Larzer Ziff, "A Reading of Wieland," PMLA 77 (Mar. 1962), 54.

[23]Locke, I, p. 26 (Intro., 2).

[24]Locke, I, p. 531 (II, xxxiii).

[25]Warren, p. 68.

[26]Dain, p. 49.

[27]Arthur Gustaf Kimball, "Rational Fictions: A Study of Charles Brockden Brown," Diss. Claremont 1965, p. 45.

[28]Wieland, p. 56.

[29]Wieland, p. 55.

[30]Wieland, p. 94.

[31]Wieland, p. 150.

[32]Wieland, p. 79.

[33]Wieland, p. 39.

[34]Wieland, p. 55.

[35]Locke, I, p. 209 (II, xi, 13).

[36]Wieland, p. 104.

[37]Wieland, p. 39.

[38]Wieland, p. 177.

[39]Wieland, p. 172.

[40]Ziff, p. 54.

[41]Harvey Milton Craft, "The Opposition of Mechanistic and Organic Thought in the Major Novels of Charles Brockden Brown," Diss. Tulane 1964, p. 33.

[42]Wieland, pp. 202-203.

[43]Wieland, p. 106.

[44]Wieland, p. 55.

[45]Wieland, p. 60.

[46]Wieland, p. 155.

[47]Wieland, p. 210.

[48]Wieland, pp. 101 and 197.

[49]Wieland, p. 199.

[50]Wieland, p. 205.

[51]Wieland, p. 256.

[52]Wieland, p. 25.

[53]Ormond, p. 32.

[54]Ormond, p. 20.

[55]Ormond, p. 142.

[56]Ormond, p. 153.

[57]Ormond, p. 205.

[58]Ormond, p. 247.

[59]Ormond, p. 206.

[60]Ormond, p. 267.

[61]Ormond, p. 269.

[62]Ormond, p. 273.

[63]Ormond, p. 275.

[64]Ormond, p. 276.

[65]Ormond, p. 276.

[66]Sydney J. Krause, "Ormond: Seduction in a New Key," AL 44 (January 1973), 573.

[67]Ormond, p. 109.

[68]Ormond, p. 255.

[69]Ormond, p. 117.

[70]Ormond, p. 123.

[71]Ormond, p. 201.

[72]Arthur Mervyn, I, pp. 132-133.

[73]Arthur Mervyn, II, p. 79.

[74]Arthur Mervyn, II, p. 80.

[75]Arthur Mervyn, II, pp. 208-209.

[76]Arthur Mervyn, II, p. 214.

[77]Arthur Mervyn, II, p. 212.

[78]Edgar Huntly, p. 43.

[79]Edgar Huntly, p. 116.

[80]Clara Howard, p. 290.

[81]Clara Howard, p. 377.

[82]Clara Howard, p. 409.

[83]Jane Talbot, p. 92.

[84]Jane Talbot, p. 134.

[85]Jane Talbot, p. 136.

[86]Jane Talbot, p. 203.

[87]CBB, "The Man at Home, No. 1," Weekly Magazine 1 (Feb. 3, 1788), 4.

[88]Letter to WWW (1788), DEK, p. 407.

[89]See "On the Composition of Government," The New York Magazine or Literary Repository 4 (July 1793), 404-407.

[90]Letter to Bringhurst (Oct. 30, 1795), DEK, p. 709.

[91]See DEK, p. 125A3f6 and DEK, p. 1712B.

[92]Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, p. 54.

[93]EHS Diary, Letter to CBB (March 27, 1796), p. 146.

[94]Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown, p. 64.

[95]Locke, I, pp. 26-27 (Introduction, 2).

[96]Basil Willey, The Eighteenth Century: Studies on the Idea of Nature in the Thoughts of the Period (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), p. 235.

[97]William Godwin, Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, with Selections from Godwin's Other Writings, abr. and ed. by K. Codell Carter (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 83.

[98]Godwin, pp. 144-145, 103-104, and 152-153.

[99]Godwin, p. 55.

[100]Godwin, p. 78.

[101]Godwin, p. 24.

[102]Note that by 1800 Godwin saw family relationships more favorably, stating that one could do more good in this sphere than in others. See Basil Willey, p. 236.

[103]Godwin, p. 103.

[104]Godwin, pp. 148-150.

[105]Godwin, p. 187.

[106]Godwin, p. 188.

[107]John S. Martin, "Social and Intellectual Patterns in the Thought of Cadwallader Colden . . . and Charles Brockden Brown," Diss. Wisconsin 1966, p. 715.

[108]Wieland, p. 85.

[109]Wieland, p. 71.

[110]*Wieland*, p. 101.

[111]*Wieland*, pp. 98-99.

[112]*Wieland*, pp. 109-110.

[113]*Wieland*, p. 132.

[114]Jane Townend Flanders, "Charles Brockden Brown and William Godwin: Parallels and Divergencies," Diss. Wisconsin 1965, p. 287.

[115]Flanders, pp. 324-326.

[116]*Ormond*, p. 20.

[117]*Ormond*, p. 102.

[118]*Ormond*, p. 89.

[119]*Ormond*, p. 93.

[120]*Ormond*, p. 95.

[121]*Ormond*, p. 210.

[122]*Ormond*, p. 141.

[123]*Ormond*, p. 82.

[124]*Ormond*, p. 82.

[125]*Ormond*, p. 138.

[126]*Ormond*, p. 118.

[127]*Ormond*, p. 176.

[128]*Ormond*, p. 192.

[129]Anyone who can still accuse Brown of a sense of humor after reading his novels should see Flanders' excellent refutation of the idea that Arthur Mervyn was drawn in satire (p. 148).

[130]*Arthur Mervyn*, II, p. 218.

[131]*Arthur Mervyn*, II, p. 212.

[132]*Arthur Mervyn*, II, p. 217.

[133]*Edgar Huntly*, p. 36.

[134]Edgar Huntly, p. 40.

[135]Edgar Huntly, p. 72.

[136]Clara Howard, p. 330.

[137]Clara Howard, p. 327.

[138]Clara Howard, pp. 359-360.

[139]Clara Howard, p. 317.

[140]Clara Howard, p. 318.

[141]Clara Howard, p. 397.

[142]Clara Howard, p. 302.

[143]Clara Howard, p. 303.

[144]Clara Howard, p. 348.

[145]Clara Howard, p. 348.

[146]Clara Howard, p. 379.

[147]Jane Talbot, p. 188.

[148]Jane Talbot, p. 136.

[149]Jane Talbot, p. 26.

[150]Jane Talbot, p. 9.

[151]Jane Talbot, p. 121.

[152]Jane Talbot, p. 85.

[153]Jane Talbot, p. 63.

[154]Jane Talbot, p. 62.

[155]Jane Talbot, p. 209.

[156]CBB objects to Richardson's emphasis on filial duty, saying that this should depend on the parents' characters. See "Objections to Richardson's Clarissa. To the Editor of the Monthly Magazine," The Monthly Magazine, and American Review 3 (Nov. 1800) 322.

[157]Cunningham, pp. 100 and 109.

[158]Cunningham, p. 110. See also Lulu Rumsey Willey's The Sources and Influences of the Novels of Charles Brockden Brown (New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1950), pp. 126-127.

[159]See L.M.'s "Reflections of the Character of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin," Monthly Magazine 1 (August 1799), 330-335. DEK notes that it is unlikely this was written by CBB; he suggests (Samuel) Latham Mitchill instead. DEK, 1302C.

[160]In The New York Magazine; or Literary Repository 4 (Feb. 1793).

[161]Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1967), p. 203.

[162]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, p. 97.

[163]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, p. 92.

[164]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, p. 72.

[165]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, p. 79.

[166]Mary Wollstonecraft, Thoughts on the Education of Daughters . . . (London: J. Johnson, 1787), pp. 26-27.

[167]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, p. 97.

[168]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, p. 73.

[169]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, pp. 200 and 207.

[170]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, p. 206.

[171]Wollstonecraft, Thoughts, p. 83.

[172]Wollstonecraft, Vindication, p. 282.

[173]CBB, "The Man at Home, No. VII," Weekly Magazine 1 (March 17, 1788), 193-195.

[174]CBB, Alcuin: A Dialogue, ed. Lee R. Edwards (New York: Grossman, 1970), p. 87.

[175]Flanders, pp. 98-99.

[176]Alcuin, pp. 13 and 21-22.

[177]Alcuin, p. 26.

[178]Alcuin, p. 43.

[179]Alcuin, p. 63.

[180]Alcuin, p. 75.

[181]Alcuin, p. 82.

[182]Alcuin, p. 70.

[183]Alcuin, p. 88.

[184]Wieland, p. 42. CBB strongly states women's competency to manage for themselves in his "The Household. A Fragment," Monthly Magazine 3 (Aug. 1800), 81-87.

[185]Wieland, p. 101.

[186]Dunlap, II, pp. 329-330.

[187]Wieland, p. 257.

[188]Wieland, pp. 220-221.

[189]Wieland, p. 65.

[190]Wieland, p. 76.

[191]Wieland, p. 222.

[192]CBB, "Walstein's School of History," p. 409.

[193]Ormond, p. 21.

[194]Though Godwin did not hold marriage sacred, in this respect he and Brown concurred in their views of marriage. Both also agreed that unwise marriages result in great unhappiness and a destruction of mental and moral vigor; and that, without sexual equality, marriage is just an affair of property. See Flanders, pp. 301-302.

[195]Ormond, p. 82.

[196]Ormond, p. 82.

[197]Ormond, p. 137.

[198]Ormond, p. 177.

[199]Ormond, p. 177.

[200]Ormond, p. 118.

[201]*Ormond*, p. 116.

[202]*Ormond*, p. 126.

[203]*Ormond*, p. 32.

[204]*Ormond*, p. 155.

[205]*Ormond*, p. 75.

[206]*Ormond*, p. 201.

[207]*Ormond*, p. 246.

[208]*Ormond*, p. 246.

[209]*Arthur Mervyn*, I, pp. 37 and 40.

[210]*Arthur Mervyn*, I, p. 77.

[211]*Arthur Mervyn*, II, p. 18.

[212]*Arthur Mervyn*, II, p. 62.

[213]*Arthur Mervyn*, II, p. 79.

[214]*Arthur Mervyn*, II, p. 80.

[215]*Arthur Mervyn*, II, pp. 81-82.

[216]*Edgar Huntly*, p. 127.

[217]*Edgar Huntly*, p. 36.

[218]*Clara Howard*, p. 290.

[219]*Clara Howard*, p. 301.

[220]*Jane Talbot*, p. 134.

[221]*Jane Talbot*, p. 10.

[222]*Jane Talbot*, p. 33.

[223]*Jane Talbot*, pp. 8-9.

[224]*Jane Talbot*, p. 56.

CHAPTER IV

SENTIMENTAL AND GOTHIC FIRST COUSINS

Brown wrote fiction to entertain, as well as to further his own self-therapy and his didactic purposes. This desire to entertain was probably influential in his choice of two highly popular fictional models: the sentimental novel and the gothic novel. Both forms had been well-received in the United States by the time Brown was writing novels, and he enjoyed both himself. His other favorite kind of novel, the novel of purpose, was itself an adaptation of the sentimental formula, using sentimental conventions as a vehicle for the promulgation of new and liberal ideas.

Brown's desire to entertain had fairly complex sources. Of course, he generally rationalized entertainment as simply a means to the socially acceptable end of "supplying men not only with knowledge of just ends and just means, but with the love and the zeal of virtue."[1] Didactic intent justified the author's quest "to charm curiosity, and sway the passions."[2] However, Brown did not see non-didactic fiction as necessarily pernicious, and he generally defended novel reading as harmless. This may

have been due to his perpetual optimism about the chances for enlightenment even with light fiction and a dull reader:

> If you cannot transform him [the reader] to angel or philosopher, you may somewhat influence his taste, character and manners. If you cannot highly or lastingly benefit, you may innocently entertain, you may gain an occasional hearing, at least, you may rouse his curiosity, and by a skillful use of familiar illustrations, by the lucky dexterity of invention and wit, blend his pleasure with his benefit, and accomplish by the same means, more ends than one.[3]

Brown's desire to entertain was also the result of that normal authorial wish to be widely read. In his case, this wish was no doubt strengthened by his feelings of personal inadequacy. A final reason for wanting a mass audience was his hope of profiting from his writing. Brown was born into a Quaker merchant family which placed a high value on material self-sufficiency, if not on wealth. As a young man, Brown had rejected the family's attempts to make him into a lawyer, and he no doubt wanted to prove himself by becoming a financially successful person doing the only kinds of work for which he was temperamentally suited. Monetary success would justify his choice of profession. At the same time, however, he still felt the pressure of the gentlemanly idea of the man of leisure who writes for his own pleasure alone. In comparing professional and avocational writers, Brown remarks wistfully:

> As there is nothing I should more fervently deprecate than to be enrolled in the former class [professional writers], so there is nothing to which I more ardently aspire, than to be numbered among the latter. To write, because the employment is delightful, or because I have a passion for fame or for usefulness,

> is the summit of terrestrial joys, the pinnacle of human elevation.
>
> There is my friend H. . . . Can a man be situated more happily? His aunt not only secures him and his charming Eleanor from the possibility of want, she secures them not only the pleasures and honors of extraordinary affluence, but even from the common cares of a master of a family.[4]

Having no such obliging aunt, Brown was driven by necessity into an attempt at professional writing which does not seem to have been financially successful. Certainly he did not earn enough to live upon during his first years as a writer. His mother's diary shows constant gifts of money to Brown. Kennedy suggests that he may have had an allowance from a brother, a share on invested capital in the family shipping firm, and help from his wife's family.[5] Certainly Brown himself admits that his writing was not lucrative. In a letter to his brother James in 1800, Brown announces his intention to write about more cheerful incidents than those of Edgar Huntly. He appears to attribute the lack of profit of his novels to their gloomy or extraordinary nature because he follows this resolution by writing: "Bookmaking, as you observe, is the dullest of all trades, and the utmost that any American can look for in his native country is to be reimbursed his unavoidable expenses."[6] Despite the final lack of monetary success, his desire for financial self-sufficiency as well as his didactic purpose and his ego helped create in Brown a strong desire to write entertainingly enough to capture a large audience.

The influence of sentimental and gothic fiction was widespread in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century United States. The sentimental romance, modeled upon Richardson, was the most popular fictional mode among Americans at this time. As Russel B. Nye has stated, "It was not accidental that the first English novel to be reprinted in America was Benjamin Franklin's 1744 edition of Pamela."[7] Nye also notes that of the twenty-four American novels published before Wieland, twenty were Richardsonian romances.[8] These include such well-known and much-copied novels as William Hill Brown's The Power of Sympathy (1789), Susanna Haswell Rowson's Charlotte Temple (1791), and Hanna Foster's The Coquette (1797). Short magazine fiction from 1741 onward also shows numerous and varied expressions of sentimental currents, with a primarily British influence until the turn of the century, when German literature began to become influential.[9]

Brown himself attests to his admiration for British sentimental writers, particularly Samuel Richardson. He considered Richardson the "sublimest and most eloquent of writers" and favorably compared Sir Charles Grandison to the Bible: "it is, as a work of invention, more accurate and uniform and consequently more instructive."[10] Brown was also a reader of that lesser sentimentalist, Fanny Burney. He notes in "A Jaunt to Rockaway in Long Island" that a volume of Cecelia helped pass time on this vacation.

A copy of Camilla was found in his library upon his death.[11]

Numerous critics, including such divergent commentators as Herbert Ross Brown and Leslie Fiedler, have remarked upon the influence of the British sentimental novel upon Brown. Many elements of Brown's writing give evidence of this overall impact, including: the epistolary or pseudo-epistolary form; the theme of duty or reason versus passion; the seduction motif; and various character types, such as the seducer-villain, the man-of-feeling, and, last but not least, the sentimental heroine.

Gothic literature was also very popular in the United States, especially in the late 1790's. It was especially popular on the stage and, as short fiction, in the magazines. Brown's friend William Dunlap produced three gothic plays during this decade. Brown was certainly aware of these, and he may have seen them or discussed them with his friend. Concerning the abundance of gothic short fiction, Nye has observed that:

> The magazines overflowed with stories crammed with haunted castles, secret passages, ghosts, damp tombs, mysterious chests, unearthly shrieks, and most importantly with magnificently malevolent villains patterned after Mrs. Radcliffe's Montoni and Schedoni, or Lewis' satanic monk, Ambrosio.[12]

The sources of American gothicism were Great Britain and Germany. The two most influential models from England were probably the novels of Ann Radcliffe and Matthew "Monk" Lewis. Brown was familiar with both strains.

Whether or not he knew German, and there is no strong evidence that he did, many translations of German gothic novels would have been available to him, also.

Brown obviously admired Radcliffe highly, calling her "the most illustrious of the picturesque writers" and praising her narrative as "beautiful and interesting." He probably read and enjoyed both The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) and The Italian (1797), judging by his comment:

> Her last two romances, "Udolfo," and "The Italian," are little else than a series of affecting pictures, connected by a pleasing narrative, and in which human characters and figures are introduced on the same principles that place them on the canvas, to give a moral energy and purpose to the scene. This is the great and lasting excellence of her work. . . .[14]

Brown's familiarity with the standard formula of the gothic novel is obvious from his introduction to Edgar Huntly, in which he tells us that he intends to substitute the "incidents of Indian hostility, and the perils of the Western wilderness" for "Puerile superstition and exploded manners, Gothic castles and chimeras."[15] Such remarks suggest that he was able to separate the kernel of gothicism from the husk and to re-vitalize the genre.

Brown's acquaintance with the literary craze for German literature is reflected in Wieland. Clara comments on the proposed reading, in German, of a tragedy by a Saxon writer. According to her description of the work, the tragedy is no doubt an example of extreme German romanticism:

> . . . it was minute and diffuse, and dictated by an adventurous and lawless fancy. It was a chain of audacious acts and unheard-of disasters. The moated fortress and the thicket, the ambush and the battle, and the conflict of headlong passions, were portrayed in wild numbers and with terrific energy.[16]

The Wieland ancestry from the German poet Christoph Martin Wieland also shows Brown's familiarity with German literature. Harry Warfel, who thoroughly develops Brown's familiarity with German sources, notes that Brown had read Wieland's Sämliche Werke in the Monthly Review.[17] He also observes that Brown reflected the heightened British interest in German art in the 1790's, and he suggests that Brown probably had German friends since he lived in Pennsylvania. Warfel hypothesizes that Brown may have gotten the initial ideas for Wieland from his reading of Cajetan Tschink's Geisterseher, which had been translated by Peter Will in 1795 as The Victim of Magical Delusion.[18]

Warfel's view of Brown's principal novelistic mode is obvious from the title of his biography and critical work, Charles Brockden Brown: American Gothic Novelist (1949). Brown's gothic tendencies have been noted by numerous critics, and one of the principal issues in Brown scholarship is the question of whether he was more heavily influenced by the sentimental or by the gothic modes. Certainly many elements in his novels derive from the gothic tradition, including the seemingly supernatural agencies; the villains who appear to have mysterious powers; the forbidden rooms and darkened houses; the gothic wilderness; and

all the other elements of horror and terror. The duration of the critical debate over the superior impact of one or the other of these two traditions suggests that both were considerable. With this evaluation in mind, it seems worthwhile to examine the women characters in typical sentimental and gothic novels to show first that there is no significant distinction between their characterization in each before going into the nature of their similarities to and differences from Brown's women characters.

The heroine is surely the staple female character, and often the central character of either sex, in both sentimental and gothic fiction. The classic plot of both forms tends to include and even to center upon the removal of a sensitive, well-brought-up girl from a nurturing home into a hostile environment. When the novel does focus upon such a character, she may be defined as the "heroine" of that novel. The threat in her new environment is generally embodied in a villain of unusual intelligence who wishes to use her without responding to her needs as a person and a member of a society. This is often explicitly represented by an attempted rape which the heroine naturally tries to avoid, although her forced isolation makes resistance difficult and dangerous. Other minor women characters are also similar in both sentimental and gothic novels, including villainesses, kind but garrulous servants, and confidantes. These characters are expendable, however, and it

is the heroine who is the pivot around which the sentimental or gothic novel revolves.

One frequently hears terms such as "a standard sentimental heroine" and "a typical gothic heroine." Yet, if representative novels by, say, Richardson and Radcliffe are compared, the same kind of heroine seems typical of both genres. The heroines do not seem to be radically different, although the gothic heroines face more mysterious and more terrifying hostile circumstances. By the time of the gothic novel, the villains have become Mediterranean counts or friars rather than rakish English gentlemen who are received in the best London society. The place where the villain detains the heroine against her will is transformed from an English townhouse or country estate into a crumbling castle in Italy or a catacomb beneath a convent. The change in trappings does everything to increase the reader's terror at the possible plight of the isolated heroine, though the trials themselves are roughly equivalent in their end results upon the heroine's life. Pamela and Emily, for example, avoid physical violation and end up happily married whereas the violated Clarissa and Antonia are permitted to die in relative peace of mind. The gothic environment, of course, can help establish or strengthen certain themes which are absent from or present in more muted forms in the sentimental novel. These include the decadence of the aristocracy, illustrated by dilapidated

castles and seedy noblemen, and the benefits of resisting hypersensibility.

This similarity in the characterization of heroines in sentimental and gothic novels can be seen by comparing the heroines of Pamela (1741), Clarissa (1747-8), and Evelina (1778) to those of The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) and The Monk (1796). Samuel Richardson and Fanny Burney represent the sentimental novel, and Ann Radcliffe and Matthew G. Lewis, the gothic novel. The title characters of the sentimental novels are basically quite similar to Emily St. Aubert of Udolpho and Agnes de Medina and Antonia Dalfa of The Monk. This is not to say, of course, that the heroines are all but interchangeable. Even the two heroines created by the same novelist, Richardson, differ; Pamela has a robust resilience which Clarissa lacks, and Clarissa is more genteelly refined as a result of her education and social class. Also, none of the other three novelists has Richardson's capability for precise characterization, though Radcliffe comes closest. Burney relies too much upon stock characteristics and moralization, and Lewis tends to over-idealize his virtuous women characters. However, despite authorial differences in style and skill, there is no major shift in the characterization of women, especially of heroines, between the sentimental novel and the gothic novel, as these prototypes will demonstrate.

These particular novels were chosen for obvious reasons. With the exception of Evelina, all of the others are among the best known of their genres today. Evelina is the best of the novels of Fanny Burney, who was a very typical and strictly popular sentimentalist. Brown had read several of her novels, though there is no record that he had read Evelina. As mentioned earlier, he thought extremely highly of Richardson, and he had read Clarissa. Altogether, these three novels combine elements of the best and the most popular sentimental fiction. Similarly the two gothic novels are the most prominent of the major gothic strains: the terror of Radcliffe and the horror of Lewis. Unlike the works of Richardson, both works represent the culmination of a genre rather than the impetus to it; like Clarissa and Pamela, The Monk and Udolpho are probably the most widely read novels of their genres today. Brown admired Radcliffe and enjoyed Udolpho.[19] There seems to be no record of his response to "Monk" Lewis, but the reference in Ormond to Martinette's education by a lecherous priest strongly suggests that Brown had read The Monk sometime before 1800.

The gothic heroines are similar to their sentimental precursors both in the guides they choose to regulate their behavior and in the major characteristics of their behavior.

One of the most striking generalizations which can be made about these six heroines is that most of them are capable of defying authority when that authority is presented by the novelist as unworthy or perverted. For example, when Mr. B. tries to seduce her, Pamela's sharp response brings her a rebuke, to which she responds, "Well may I forget that I am your servant, when you forget what belongs to a master."[20] Evelina braves the scorn of her immediate family by generosity to Mr. Macartney who is later conveniently revealed to be her brother. Clarissa defies, with regret, her entire family when it wrongfully tries to pressure her into marrying Solmes; however, she is uneasy, despite her strong rationale, at disobeying her father, and she tries to justify herself by saying that the matter was not originally her father's will but her brother's.[21] Similarly, Agnes finally defies her family in her attempted elopement with Raymond, although she did encourage him to make an effort to win over her family's concurrence to their marriage, while this still seemed possible.

In Udolpho, the uneducated Antonia successfully fends off Ambrosio's attempt to pervert her religious beliefs, despite her great respect for his ecclesiastical position. Emily is quite capable of rejecting Montoni's attempts to assert himself over her. She obeys her aunt only with some discrimination. Earlier, when her aunt tells her that she

should wish for the world's approval, Emily says: "I am anxious for my own respect; my father taught me the value of that; he said if I deserved my own esteem, that of the world would follow.[22] The source of this inner-directedness is generally the education of the heroines by their parents, whether these were parents by blood or by adoption. This education is often made explicit by the commands of the parents, as in cases of St. Aubert and of Pamela's parents. Sometimes, too, the children directly thank their parents with statements which reveal the nature of their moral and intellectual training, as when Evelina thanks her guardian, the Reverend Villars, for being a protector and guide. Once separated from their parents, the daughters retain the precepts they were taught and base decisions upon them. Emily St. Aubert, for instance, remembering her father's warnings about the dangers of indulging sensibility, attempts to overcome first her regret at her position in Madame Cheron's house and later her dismay at being under the "protection" of Montoni.[23] The education received under the right authority gives the heroines strength to defy false authority when they are isolated from direct guidance.

The inner-directedness is often externalized in both sentimental and gothic novels through the heroines' reflections. One sees Clarissa, for instance, agonizing over the morality of her disobedience in letters to her

confidante Miss Howe; the epistolary form common to the sentimental novel facilitates this kind of dialogue, whether it be the interior dialogue of a journal entry or the exterior dialogue produced by an exchange of letters. Of the two gothic novels, Udolpho, with its greater emphasis on internal strife, stresses the process of reflection more than The Monk does. This emphasis in the three sentimental novels and in Udolpho helps support the theme of reason triumphing over momentary passion. Emily, for instance, conquers the passion of the moment to refuse Valancourt's suggestion of a clandestine marriage, a refusal obviously approved by Radcliffe who later says: ". . . the strength of her mind had enabled her to triumph over present suffering, rather than to deserve the reproach of her conscience by engaging in a clandestine marriage."[24] The relative absence of the presentation of reflection in the heroines of The Monk probably results from a combination of factors: the slighter focus on the consciousness of any character; the larger number of important characters and the centering around Ambrosio; the author's lack of concern with didactic intent; and the greater stress on physical rather than emotional action. In general, however, a fairly extensive pattern of careful reflection before decision making characterizes both sentimental and gothic heroines.

Religion is the second source of help in isolation for both the sentimental and the gothic heroines. Religious

belief strengthens Clarissa in her stand against wrongful authority and helps her forgive Lovelace for having destroyed her life. Pamela's prayers fortify her so that she is proof against Mr. B's arguments, despite the submission she feels is proper because of her servant background. Evelina feels supported by "the prayers and the wishes" of Reverend Villars when she is in the clutches of Madame Duval.[25] Likewise, Emily depends for support in all her major crises on prayer. After her aunt's death, when she faces Montoni alone: ". . . she frequently addressed herself to Heaven for support and protection, and her pious prayers, we may believe, were accepted of the God, that giveth comfort."[26] In The Monk, Antonia's piety helps her refute the subtle theological arguments of the salacious Ambrosio. A distinction is made in this novel between "good" and "bad" religious authority. Those elements which are extrinsically Roman Catholic, such as the monastic life and many of those who lead it, are looked upon as evil. Hence, Agnes "scrupled not to treat as ridiculous many ceremonies which the nuns regarded with awe" during her education in the convent.[27] She does not want to become a nun herself, and, once she has accepted her vows, she tries to show Virginia de Villa-Franca that she should lead a more virtuous and worthwhile life in the secular world than in the convent. Agens rejects the extrinsic forms of Catholicism, and yet once she has committed herself she

feels it would be a crime to break her personal promise to God; she refuses to elope from the convent with Raymond until her pregnancy makes any other course of action impossible. Thus Lewis shows her as pious but rejecting what the author considers false religious authority.

The heroines of sentimental and gothic novels are not only similar in the guides to behavior which they choose to follow but also in their characteristics. Physically, all are beautiful. This is often necessary to the plot, for most are the lust-object of a villain who abducts them. The authors also may have considered that beauty might help women readers want to identify with the heroines' adventures.

In addition, all of these heroines are noteworthy for a high degree of general decorum; they are models for their sex in every respect. Contrary to popular beliefs about sentimental and gothic heroines, these characters tend to hold up very well considering the extraordinary troubles they encounter. Emily St. Aubert, for example, loses both parents and an aunt and survives two attempted kidnappings, virtual imprisonment, a near shipwreck, and continual obstructions to marriage with the man she loves. Though her sanity wavers at low points during her imprisonment, she is physically and mentally healthy at the end of the novel.

Furthermore, all of these characters maintain a high level of sexual decorum. Pamela turns down Mr. B's offer of riches for herself and her poverty-stricken family. Once properly married to him, she flutters at the preparation of the bridal chambers ". . . for a guest, that, however welcome, as now my duty teaches me to say, is yet dreadful to me to think of," and she blushes whenever her potential children are mentioned.[28] Clarissa's sense of sexual decorum is so highly tuned that she is repulsed when the odious Solmes brushes against the hoop of her skirt.[29] Though less finely wrought, Evelina is distraught by Sir Clement's forwardness in the carriage and alarmed by the suggestive remarks of strange men when she is left alone at Vauxhall, much as Emily St. Aubert is frightened by the overtures of Montoni's friends. Emily is extremely scrupulous about the words she says to her beloved Valancourt, and is shocked by her aunt's accusations of what Emily considers gross indelicacies. At the beginning of The Monk, Antonia's innocence is so complete that it actually leads her into breaches of decorum, as when she sees nothing strange about Ambrosio entering her bedroom. After Ambrosio rapes her, she feels that "death was to her a blessing" because she would have not felt free to marry her beloved Lorenzo.[30] Although Agnes' one lapse might make her seem an exception to the sexual decorum of these heroines, she

so deeply regrets her one moment of passion that she would have renounced Raymond forever, had she not been pregnant.

Both sets of heroines are less docile, on the whole, than popular belief would have one believe. Though they are obedient to their parents and their religious dictates, they are so only provisionally; that is, providing that these authorities seem reasonable to them. Their tendency to be guided finally by their inner dictates rather than by outside authorities leads more to the characteristic of independence than that of docility. In this, they embody that break away from the sanctity of the institution to the sanctity of the individual. Emily St. Aubert, for example, does not let her aunt guide her decision making simply because Madame Cheron is her legal guardian, although she obeys those of her commands which do not directly violate her own will. Despite their determined independence, these heroines are not rebels but peacemakers. All seek to avoid confrontation with authority whenever this can be done without compromising their integrity; Emily advises her aunt to do the same when she deals with the irascible Montoni. Clarissa, for instance, does everything in her power to prevent litigation between Lovelace and her parents. These characters simultaneously want to maintain respect for authority and to establish their individual independence from that authority.

Sensibility, that capacity for strong emotional feelings, is also abundantly present in many of these sentimental and gothic heroines. Even the country-bred Pamela falls into fainting fits when Mr. B. attempts to seduce her. Clarissa is called "over-nice, over-delicate" by her best friend, Miss Howe, though Richardson defends his heroine in an authorial aside.[31] Interestingly, exaggerated and feigned sensibility is criticized in two of these novels. In Evelina, the title character, who tends to try to control her agitation, is favorably contrasted to the pretentious Lady Louisa who proudly announces "I am nerve all over."[32] Throughout Udolpho Emily attempts to follow her father's advice to avoid the indulgence of oversensibility.

Finally, both sets of heroines are characterized by beneficence, material and emotional. In the eighteenth century beneficence was considered the natural product of sensibility, as can be seen in Radcliffe's description of Emily:

> She had discovered in her early years uncommon delicacy of mind, warm affections, and ready benevolence; but with these was observable a degree of susceptibility too exquisite to admit of lasting peace.[33]

Likewise, it is Evelina's sensibility which leads her to perform benevolent actions, such as helping the poverty-stricken Macartney and interceding when the Captain torments Madame Duval. Both the sentimental and the gothic

novelists seem to be trying to present some balance between self-control and sufficient sensibility for their heroines to respond passionately to distress or injustice. The necessity of sensibility for beneficence can be seen in Lewis' characterization of the villainess Matilda, who completely lacks sensibility. Matilda advises Ambrosio not to help the imprisoned Agnes because this might arouse suspicion of him. He agrees that her reasoning is valid, but:

> . . . when he thought of her expressions respecting the devoted nun, he could not help blaming them as cruel and unfeminine. Pity is a sentiment so natural, so appropriate to the female character, that it is scarcely a merit for a woman to possess it, but to be without it is a grievous crime.[34]

Thus, the gothic heroines greatly resemble their sentimental precursors. Both are amenable to the authority of parents and church until these violate individual conscience; then, they quietly stand their ground. As well as the common denominator of physical attractiveness, both tend to share many personal characteristics, including both general and sexual decorum; a firm but gently stated independence; a balance between sensibility and self-control; and, finally, an abundant beneficence. The gothic heroine is sister to the sentimental heroine, born ten or twenty years later, and faced with similar trials in a more exotic setting equipped with a more mysterious villain.

The sentimental/gothic heroine is at least first cousin to Brown's heroines, and she is also closely related

to his "good" minor woman characters, such as Eliza Hadwin in Arthur Mervyn. Although there are differences, both in degree as well as in kind, there are many major similarities between the sentimental/gothic heroines and Brown's heroines. The extent of these similarities suggests that Brown used this prototype as a model, a rational act for a late eighteenth century novelist who wanted his novels to be read, considering the popularity of these two genres. David H. Hirsch's analysis of Brown's use of the gothic form equally applies to his use of the sentimental/gothic heroine; the novelist was simply using a type which was both popularly accepted and functional as a vehicle for ideas, so there is no need to assume either a Chase-ian preoccupation with fleeing social reality or a Fiedler-ian fixation on the inability to love.[35]

Brown's heroines follow similar patterns in their choice of guides by which they can regulate their behavior. The shift of authority from the institution to the individual is certainly evident in Brown's characters. Like the heroines of the sentimental/gothic novel, they are often separated from that major source of authority, the parents; this reinforces the theme of the self-directed individual through the direct action of the plot. Like Emily St. Aubert, the characters Clara Wieland, Constantia Dudley, Helena Cleves, Martinette de Beauvais, Eliza Hadwin, and Mary Wilmot are left orphans. All of these characters

are forced to make decisions on their own. Most are generally capable of developing autonomy, providing that the parental education has lain the groundwork for this. Clara Wieland, for instance, runs her own household despite the offer of a home with her much-beloved brother and his family. Constantia Dudley, after her mother's death, has her blind father dependent upon her. She considers and rejects Balfour as a suitor despite the affluence he could bring her. In contrast to the heroine of Ormond, Helena Cleves is totally dependent after her parents die, and the differences in their education account for this. Martinette's education makes her autonomous, but it neglects the inculcation of tenderness or compassion, as her history reveals. Eliza Hadwin is left "ignorant and weak" when she is orphaned, which she correctly attributes to her lack of education and experience and which she sees as remediable. Mary Wilmot "had been trained up in the most luxurious manner. . . . All the prejudices and expectations of an heiress were early and deeply imbibed by her."[36] As a result, her pride is greatly wounded by the poverty she faces, and her adjustment is difficult. She even tries to hide her losses from those who would help her. It is in Jane Talbot that Brown shows the most allegiance to parental authority and the least to individual autonomy; as described in the prior chapter, Brown had moved considerably from his experimental adoption of Godwinian liberalism

by the time he wrote this novel. Jane's position is sometimes similar to Clarissa Harlowe's since both must choose between renouncing either autonomy or parents at many points. Jane is not blamed for her sacrifice of Colden to Mrs. Fielder's falsely grounded commands. Yet, Jane's father's refusal to listen to her warnings about Frank's mishandling of the money is seen as false pride. Jane's early marriage to Lewis Talbot, urged upon her by her father and Mrs. Fielder, is also presented as the result of a faulty use of authority. Frank's attempt to assert himself over Jane is seen as false authority, too, as Jane's language shows: "He insinuated that brothership and eldership gave him something like a title to parental authority and insisted on obedience."[37] Like Clarissa, Jane sees a great deal of difference between the authority of a father and that of a brother. Jane's conflict concerning where her obedience lies neatly parallels Clarissa's barrister-like deliberations of where her duty to her father begins and ends. The delicate balance between autonomy and authority in Jane Talbot comes closer to that of the English and sentimental novel than does any other Brown novel. This novel's careful division of authority into "true" and "false" categories also characterizes Udolpho, in which Emily gives absolute obedience to her father, qualified obedience to her aunt, and no more than an occasional diplomatic show of it to the rascal, Montoni.

Brown's heroines' struggle with the question of individual autonomy versus a reliance on parental authority seems based on the sentimental/gothic model. When Brown is more influenced by Godwin or other liberal thinkers, his characters become considerably more autonomous than this model. For example, Constantia Dudley is responsible for her father's livelihood as well as for her own. Constantia's willingness to completely disregard traditional patriarchal patterns and act on her own can also be seen in her decision to talk to Ormond concerning his relationship with his mistress:

> The father or brother of Helena might assume the office without indecorum. Nay, a mother or sister might not be disbarred from it. Why then should she, who was actuated by equal zeal, and was engaged by ties stronger than consanguinity in the promotion of her friend's happiness?[38]

It would be hard to imagine Evelina or even Emily thinking such a task would be suitable to an unrelated female, difficult to see them undertaking a similar errand, and impossible to picture them fulfilling it with "invincible" composure as Constantia did.[39] In Clara Howard and Jane Talbot, the novels during the writing of which Brown was probably least influenced by social liberalism, his women characters are much more similar to those of the sentimental/gothic novel in the degrees of personal autonomy which they embody.

Brown, like his sentimental precursors, often uses the pseudo-epistolary form. In novels which utilize this

form, such as Wieland, he too uses it to show his heroines' reliance upon the stream of reflection proper to rational thought and appropriate to a degree of individual autonomy. In Ormond, which the heroine does not narrate, her narrator, Sophia Westwyn, attempts to provide us with an indirect view of Constantia's process of decision making, telling us, for instance, that:

> She [Constantia] had learned to square her conduct, in a considerable degree, not by the hasty impulses of inclination, but by the dictates of truth. She yielded nothing to caprice or passion. Not that she was perfectly exempt from intervals of weakness or from the necessity of painful struggles, but these intervals were transient, and these struggles always successful.[40]

Clara Howard and Jane Talbot utilize this same decision-making process despite their greater conservatism. Hence it is evident from all of Brown's major women characters.

Brown's two earlier heroines, Clara Wieland and Constantia Dudley, are far less reliant on religion as a guide to behavior than are the sentimental/gothic heroines. Clara describes the casual religious education of Catherine and herself:

> Our education had been modelled by no religious standard. We were left to the guidance of our own understanding and the casual impressions which society might make upon us. . . . It must not be supposed that we were without religion; but with us it was the product of lively feelings, excited by reflection on our own happiness, and by the grandeur of external nature. We sought not a basis for our faith in the weighing of proofs and the dissection of creeds. Our devotion was a mixed and casual sentiment, seldom verbally expressed, or solicitously sought, or carefully

> retained. In the midst of present enjoyment, no thought was bestowed on the future. As a consolation in calamity, religion is dear.[41]

Clara's remarks show that she regrets her lack of religious fervor and education and that she feels these might have aided her in her trials. The causes and results of her father's and brother's religious zeal suggest that probably only the lack of education, not the lack of enthusiasm, was the key ingredient in their madness, especially since both father and brother were self-taught devotees. Constantia Dudley also lacks a religious education. Her father had believed that religious truth is "incompatible with infantile and premature instruction."[42] Therefore, he purposefully leads her mind away from religion "to accustom her to the accuracy of geometrical deduction and to the view of those evils that have flowed, in all ages, from mistaken piety."[43] As a result, she becomes indifferent to religion and is supported in her views by her good opinion only. Her friend and narrator, Sophia, considers her for this reason particularly vulnerable to the atheistic Ormond, whom Constantia would have otherwise rejected on religious grounds and whose arguments would have then presumably been revealed to her as specious. Sophia simply states this, however, and Constantia's need for religion is never developed dramatically, which makes it less convincing.

Clara Howard seems to be conventionally grounded in religion. Brown shows us this much as Burney demonstrates

Evelina's piety. Interwoven with these characters' conversations, especially in crisis situations, are pious exclamations such as Clara's after Philip rescues the drowning girl: "The merciful God grant that he may find you alive!" and, later, "Thanks to my God, you are out of danger."[44] Religion is much more an issue in Jane Talbot, as has been discussed at length in the previous chapter. In this novel Jane deviates markedly from the unquestioning piety of the romantic/sentimental heroine, which she terms superstitious and false ". . . since it merely originates in deference to the opinions of others, wrought into belief by means of habit."[45] Jane's insistence on rational justification for religion moves considerably beyond the model of the sentimental/gothic heroine who occasionally questions the authority of the family and society but not religion. The Monk's Agnes, with her rejection of the nuns' superstition, and Antonia, with her refutation of Ambrosio's theological entanglements, come closest. However, they are still very far away from Jane's investigations since their actions are simply reaction rather than action, a mere reflection of Lewis' crudely chauvinistic rejection of Catholicism. Brown's heroines' religious autonomy, as well as their greater independence from their families, is sometimes more extreme than the sentimental/gothic model. This is again apparently the result of the influence of liberal social philosophers on Brown.

Brown's women characters share some major characteristics with the sentimental/gothic heroine, including general decorum, sensibility, and the tendency to try to control their sensibility with reason. There are some major divergencies, however. Brown's women do not always have the physical beauty of their precursors. Also, they are sexually bolder and less easily shocked by references to sex. Finally, they often lack even the appearance of docility, being markedly courageous and independent.

Brown's heroines are much like Richardson's in that their behavior is thought by many other characters to be a model for the female sex. This is particularly true of Brown's first two, Clara Wieland and Constantia Dudley. Clara is so much a model to those around her that Pleyel keeps a journal of everything she does and says. His attention is so minute that it extends to "the colour of a shoe, the knot of a ribbon" and the arrangements of her breakfast table.[46] Carwin's interference in the life of Clara and her friends is instigated by her reputation. Judith, no paragon of virtue, is so awed by Clara's virtues that she praises her highly to Carwin, whose curiosity leads him to tempt this prodigy. Similarly, Constantia's general decorum wins the approval of the unsentimental Balfour and the admiration of the exacting Ormond. Her strength in adversity is contrasted, of course, to Helena's lack of resourcefulness. Clara Howard and Jane Talbot are also both

highly principled, though Jane is such a realistically drawn character that her foibles make her an unlikely sentimental heroine.

Brown's women also tend to be susceptible to sensibility, though somewhat less so than the heroines of the typical sentimental or gothic romance. Brown, like these English novelists, condemns over-sensibility though some ability to feel is shown to be necessary to virtue, as can be seen from Brown's introduction to Arthur Mervyn:

> Men only require to be made acquainted with distress for their compassion and their charity to be awakened. He that depicts, in lively colours, the evils of disease and poverty, performs an eminent service to the sufferers, by calling forth benevolence in those who are able to afford relief. . . .[47]

Clara Wieland is certainly the most feeling of Brown's women characters. She has, as William M. Manly suggests, a tendency to veer into a melodramatic world of haunting speculation, though this does not completely negate her reliability as a narrator, as Manly also states.[48] Clara's sensibility is easily aroused. She writes her memoirs in part because it is "a luxury thus to feast upon my woes."[49] Within a more mundane situation, her sensibility is obvious when she describes Catherine:

> She never met my eye or occurred to my reflections without exciting a kind of enthusiasm. Her softness, her intelligence, her equanimity, never shall I see surpassed. I have often shed tears of pleasure at her approach and pressed her to my bosom in an agony of fondness.[50]

Her feelings are moved by Carwin's voice upon their first meeting, even though the content of his speech is only a request for something to drink. Pleyel, easily aroused to jealousy, says of Clara's reactions to Carwin: "They bespoke a sensibility somewhat too vivid. . . ."[51] Clara strives to make reason reign over feeling rather than to encourage these tendencies in herself, however, and the value of reason to guide oneself is asserted in Wieland, as suggested by the previous chapter.

Constantia, thanks to her rational education, is able to overcome sensibility far more than any of the model gothic and sentimental heroines. She is obviously conscious of the dangers of over-sensibility, as we can see when, after nursing the fatally ill Mary Whiston, she tries to stifle her feelings that she is mortally ill herself.[52] The narrator, to reiterate, says of Constantia that she "yielded nothing to caprice or passion."[53] Inexperience and a lack of self-knowledge draw Constantia into dangers, but never emotionalism; her only moment of frenzy is after Ormond attempts to rape her, when the ambivalence between her fear and her feelings of attraction to him would naturally be extremely distressing. Helena, by contrast, is all sensibility, all passion, with no tempering reason. Her temperament is obviously meant to be a didactic counterpoint to Constantia's. At the other end of the continuum is Martinette. At first glance, "Her education seemed not

widely different from that which Constantia had received."[54] However, her experiences in the French Revolution completely harden her so that she is insensible to individual human suffering. As she expresses her invulnerability to Constantia, "What are bleeding wounds and mangled corpses when accustomed to the daily sight of them for years?"[55] When Constantia expresses disbelief that Martinette, being a woman, would become so inured to the shedding of blood, Martinette reminds her that women are as influenced by habit as men. Through Helena and Martinette, Brown criticizes the extremes of hypersensibility and insensibility since neither leads to virtuous behavior.

In Arthur Mervyn, as in Edgar Huntly, most of the sensibility is seized by the hero of the title. A minor character, Susan Hadwin, is "a soft enthusiast, in whose bosom devotion and love glowed with an ardour that has seldom been exceeded."[56] Her sensibility leads indirectly to her death of a broken heart, a sentimental cliché. Ascha Fielding is her opposite. After her own great sorrows, she brings herself to America, in hopes that the change of surroundings and the activity will restore her contentment. Her plan is efficacious, and self-control is rewarded, whereas Susan Hadwin's self-indulgence is punished by its consequences.

Within Clara Howard, both Clara and Mary are rampantly sensible. Clara turns hot and cold towards Philip,

becoming very loving only when she thinks he is about to die. Her hysterical benevolence is rewarded by the plot. Mary does things like leaving Wertheresque notes for Philip, saying:

> Be under no concern, my friend, on my account. Think not how I shall endure the evils of my former condition, for I never shall return to it. Thy Mary is hastening to the grave with a very quick pace.[57]

Their indulgence in sensibility seems almost a parody at times, which is one reason that Clara Howard is Brown's weakest novel.

Jane Talbot is, in some ways, much like Emily St. Aubert. Both have a natural tendency to over-sensibility. Mrs. Fielder says to Jane:

> Certain indications I early saw in you of a sensibility that required strict government; an inattention to anything but feeling; a proneness to romantic friendship, and a pining after good not consistent with our natures.[58]

Both heroines have parents or guardians who attempt to temper these tendencies towards emotional indulgence. Jane's guardian, unfortunately, rather than trying to teach her self-control, tries to control Jane by demanding unquestioning obedience to herself. Thus Jane is rendered incapable of consulting her own understanding about Henry Colden and simply obeys whichever one is present. As Jane expresses this herself:

> A very different creature, doubtless, I should have been, if placed under any other guidance. So easily swayed am I by one that is lord of my affections. No will, no reason, have I of my own.[59]

Her brother takes advantage of her persuadability early in the novel, and Mrs. Fielder behaves much the same way later, though not for such selfish reasons. Jane realizes that her lack of freedom from her emotional ties is a fault and attempts to become more independent of her feelings. To a certain extent, she is successful, as evidenced by her ability to withstand her brother's insistence that she return with him to Europe. Brown, as mentioned in the previous chapter, attempts to strike a not-entirely successful medium between the value of self-sovereignty and the value of following wise authority. The death of Mrs. Fielder, her last minute approval of Henry Colden, and Colden's conversion all permit a happy ending despite Jane's lack of adequate freedom from the emotional influence of those she loves.

In total, many of Brown's women are prone to sensibility, though not to the extent that the typical sentimental or gothic heroine is. Like many of the writers in these British genres, Brown tends to approve a balance between sensibility and rationality, though his balance generally tips even more toward the latter. From this sensibility comes the benevolence which all of Brown's heroines possess and which was discussed as part of Godwin's influence on Brown in the previous chapter.[60] Brown may question benevolence through one male character, Edgar Huntly, but he never questions it through his female

characters. This is true even when beneficence may seem to the reader to be carried to ridiculous and irrational extremes, as when Clara Howard gives up Philip to Mary Wilmot. Benevolence is one characteristic which Brown's women have completely in common with the sentimental/gothic heroine.

Brown's heroines sharply differ from this model in three respects. First, they are not always physically attractive; physical beauty is not shown as a prerequisite for masculine attention. Also, they are sexually much bolder than their British counterparts. Finally, they often lack even the appearance of docility.

Brown's women characters vary a great deal in their physical attractiveness, and he generally devotes less space to outward appearances than do such sentimental and gothic novelists as Richardson and Lewis. His emphasis is much more upon the characters and minds of the women. This may be partially accounted for by Brown's de-emphasis on the standard seduction plot. It also may be a result of Brown's greater interest in the intellectual and moral than in the more sensuous aspects of aesthetics. Indeed, those women characters whom he presents as being chiefly noteworthy for physical beauty are often intended as negative contrasts to more complete women. Helena Cleves is a good example of such a character. Her physical attributes are described in much greater detail than are those of the

heroine, Constantia; Brown describes Helena's beauty at great length:

> Helena Cleves was endowed with every feminine and fascinating quality. Her features were modified by the most transient sentiments, and were the seat of a softness at all times blushful and bewitching. All those graces of symmetry, smoothness, and lustre, which assemble in the imagination of the painter when he calls from the Paphian divinity, blended their perfections in the shade, complexion, and hair of this lady.[61]

Clemenza Lodi, Welbeck's mistress in Arthur Mervyn, is another example of this type of character, and she is similarly described.

The heroines and more approved women characters tend to vary in physical appearance, but even when they are very lovely, Brown underplays their physical attractiveness. Clara Wieland's beloved Pleyel would be in an excellent position to praise her beauty during his conversations and monologue. However, the few comments he makes about this are clearly subordinated to his concern with her intelligence and spirit, as can be seen in his most physical descriptions of her:

> "Here," said I [Pleyel], "is a being after whom sages may model their transcendent intelligence and painters their ideal beauty. Here is exemplified that union between intellect and form which has hitherto existed only in the conceptions of the poet."[62]

He continues by speaking of her abilities to debate, her principles, and her other talents. One would be hard pressed to draw a portrait of Clara from the description of her attentive lover.

Similarly, Constantia's beauty, though mentioned at a number of points in Ormond, is neither stressed nor made concrete. As noted, less space is devoted to a physical description of Constantia than is given to that of Helena. Constantia's physical appearance is not made a major element in Ormond's desire to seduce and his decision to rape her. In this respect, Brown sharply differs from sentimental and gothic novelists. Lewis, for instance, centers Ambrosio's lust for Antonia in her physical beauty and, less importantly, her innocence; Ambrosio wants her as soon as he sees her. Richardson, in his portrayal of Lovelace's lust for Clarissa, comes closest because Clarissa's pride and inaccessibility form a major part of her attractiveness to her assailant.

A number of Brown's other women characters are simply assumed attractive, the author devoting a similar lack of attention to their appearances. These include Miss Carlton and Eliza Hadwin in Arthur Mervyn, Clarice and Mrs. Lorimer in Edgar Huntly, Jane Talbot, and Clara Howard. Other women are presented as plain or actually unattractive. Mary Wilmot, for instance, contrasts her own homeliness to Clara Howard's beauty in a discussion with Philip:

> That passion which a form homely and uncouth like mine, tarnished and withered by drudgery and sorrow and by comparative old age (for I am nine years older than you) . . . was incapable of weakening, cannot fail to be excited by the youth and beauty, the varied accomplishments and ineffable graces, of this stranger.[63]

Her self-description is not merely modest self-disparagement since it is corroborated by Philip's account:

> She was much older than I. Humiliation and anxiety had deeply preyed on her constitution, which had never been florid or robust, and made still less that small portion of external grace or beauty which nature had conferred upon her. . . . I never loved Mary Wilmot. Disparity of age, the dignity and sedateness of her carriage, and perhaps the want of personal attractions, inspired me with a sentiment very different from love.[64]

That Philip's love should center on the lovely Clara rather than on the homely Mary fits the sentimental formula. However, this consistency is contradicted by the wealthy Sedley's unflagging pursuit of Mary's love. Once Mary has recovered from her heartbreak over the loss of Philip Stanley, his persistence is rewarded with marriage.

In Arthur Mervyn, Brown reverses the usual formula. Mervyn rejects the loving Eliza whom he describes as having "artless loveliness" and about whom he says:

> She has surely the sweetest voice, the most speaking features, and most delicate symmetry that ever woman possessed. Her guileless simplicity and tenderness made her more enchanting.[65]

Instead he chooses Ascha Fielding about whom Dr. Stevens says "A brilliant skin is not hers; nor elegant proportions; nor majestic stature. . . ."[66] Clearly Brown has rejected the simplistic equation of physical beauty and intrinsic character, an equation prevalent in his sentimental and gothic precursors. His lack of emphasis on the superficial permits him more time and space to explore characteristics

which are the result of something beyond mere chance, and the implication is that his readers should do likewise.

Another difference between Brown's women and their precursors is that many of the American heroines repress their sexuality less. They tend to be more direct in their relationships with men and to find conventional feminine modesty difficult and even dangerous. This directness often permits Brown's heroines more tenderness, verbal and physical, with their lovers before marriage, though they by no means permit pre-marital sexual consummation.

Clara Wieland learns the value of openness, as Pleyel's jealousy might have been forestalled had she given him a direct avowal of her affections. At the same time that she is deciding not to say anything, she thinks to herself, "The line of delicate propriety--how hard it is not to fall short, and not to overleap it!"[67] After her trials are complete and when she has regained Pleyel, she views even her halting modesty as perverse: "My scruples were preposterous and criminal."[68] Clarissa, on the other hand, is so far from being able to admit her attraction to Lovelace, even to herself, that she says "I am . . . by God's grace, above temptation from this sex."[69]

Clara Wieland also rejects, at least emotionally, the sentimental ethic that the rape victim should kill herself rather than her assailant:

> No cowardice had ever been held by me in greater abhorrence than that which prompted an injured female to destroy, not her injurer ere the injury was perpetrated, but herself when it was without remedy. . . .[70]

She is, as mentioned, angry at herself for having considered self-destruction when she feels in danger, and she is determined not to repeat this error.

Ormond, as Sydney Krause has suggested, contains considerably more sensual excitement than even the blatantly sexual gothic novel, The Monk, and it hold more explicit sexuality than its sentimental predecessors.[71] As Krause has noted, part of the vicarious excitement results directly from the greater depth of the characters and the fact that:

> Constantia also differs from the stereotyped pursued maiden in that she is keenly attracted to her seducer and refuses to see his motive even when he suggests it to her.[72]

This is a convenient blindness for one who always feels obliged to act rationally according to the information she knows; thus, she thinks she can absolve herself on the basis that she cannot be expected to act on what she does not recognize. If she had allowed herself to consciously recognize Ormond's sexual intentions, she would not have reacted to his night time visit to her deserted country home "with some degree of palpitation . . . whether from fear or from joy, or from intermixed emotions, it would not be easy to ascertain."[73] Her unconscious self-deception might have been easily bearable had she not been forced to kill Ormond to avoid rape.

Constantia is also an unlikely sentimental/gothic heroine because of her disregard for sexual conventions. She is not as easily distressed by sexual overtures as, say, Pamela or Emily. For instance, when she goes to the tavern to find Craig, the innkeeper lewdly suggests that her pretty face will bring him home soon enough; however:

> Constantia was not disconcerted at this address. She knew that females are subjected, through their own ignorance and cowardice, to a thousand mortifications. She set its true value on base and low-minded treatment. She disdained to notice this ribaldry. . . .[74]

Also, she becomes close friends with Helena, even though she knows Helena is Ormond's mistress, and with Ormond himself, who publicly keeps a mistress and flaunts society in various ways. Helena's position does not horrify her; rather, Constantia is concerned with the unhappiness which results from her friend's role. She even hesitates before deciding that marriage would be the best solution, and she is distressed at Helena's suicide. A sentimental heroine would have considered marriage or death the only viable solutions to Helena's problems. Once Constantia does determine that Ormond should marry his mistress, she violates all convention by seeking an intereview with him, a near stranger at this time, to inform him of his duties.

Eliza Hadwin, in Arthur Mervyn, is similarly unconventional. She is explicit about her love for Arthur. She asks to live with him in the city as a sister, not a wife, in an attempt to avoid losing him. Although Arthur is

concerned with the gossip which such a situation would probably arouse, Eliza has no fears of this.

Jane Talbot feels conflicted between passion and duty. This conflict is present in many sentimental and gothic heroines, but Jane's frequent disregard for sexual conventions and her expressions of fondness to her lover are not typical. Mrs. Fielder often articulates Jane's indiscretions from the viewpoint of one who has a highly sentimental view of sexual chastity; she is given to remarks like "The preservation of your virtue was unspeakably of more importance in my eyes than of your life."[75] For one thing, while betrothed to Lewis Talbot and visiting friends, Jane permitted "such very frequent visits, such very long walks" that the friends inform Mrs. Fielder who writes Jane a warning note about allowing "one not regularly introduced" such liberties.[76] Once Jane is married and Talbot is away on a voyage, her relationship with Colden becomes, to Mrs. Fielder's eyes, regrettably more intimate and confidential. Jane also commits a great indiscretion by permitting Colden to spend the night in her house once during a storm. Only she and her maid are there, and Jane talks with him until three or four o'clock in the morning. This incident opens the way for Miss Jessup's slanderous evidence for Jane's supposed infidelity to Talbot. The doctored letter causes Jane great confusion because of her unconscious emotional infidelity. She tells Colden:

> Me thinks I then felt as I should have felt if the charge had been true. I shuddered as if to look back would only furnish me with proofs of a guilt of which I had not hitherto been conscious--proofs that had merely escaped remembrance, or had failed to produce their due effect, from some infatuation of mind.[77]

Once she is widowed, she gladly permits Colden liberties that no sentimental or gothic heroine could have allowed without enormous guilt; certainly Pamela does not permit Mr. B. half as many demonstrations of affection. For instance, in a letter to Colden, Jane teases him by saying: "But that somebody's hand was never (if I recollect aright) so highly honoured as this paper. Have I not told you that your letter is deposited next my heart?"[78] In a reversal of the behavior of most sentimental heroines in love, she accuses her beloved of being "not quite passionate enough" and urges him to show "a little more impetuosity and fervour in thy tenderness."[79] Apparently, she frequently takes the initiative in demonstrativeness; she tells Colden that "The little impertinent has often stopped your mouth--at times too when your talk charmed her most; but then it was not with words."[80] At another point, she writes him that she would bestow a hearty kiss or two if he were within arm's length.[81] Emily St. Aubert would have been shocked at such behavior.

Their increased sexual independence is just one facet of Brown's heroines' tendency to be much more independent than the sentimental and gothic models they followed. As has been shown earlier, they have a much greater tendency

to follow inner sanction than external authority. Often they reject even the appearance of docility which Pamela and Emily cultivated. This is more true of Clara Wieland and Constantia Dudley than of Jane Talbot. In this instance as in so many others, the characterization of women in Brown's novels leans more towards the sentimental-gothic model the less it is influenced by his earlier interest in testing out liberal ideas derived from associationist psychology, Godwinian liberalism, or feminism. Hence, Brown's earliest women characters are somewhat less like the sentimental and gothic prototypes than are the later ones. All of them, however, despite differences (especially differences of degree), show the strong influence of this type on Brown's characterization. The strength of this influence is not surprising, both because he appreciated these two genres and because he recognized their popularity. Because of personal reasons and a desire to instruct, Brown hoped that his own novels would be equally entertaining so that many people would buy and read them.

NOTES--CHAPTER IV

[1]CBB, "Walstein's School," (August), p. 337.

[2]CBB, "Walstein's School," (August), p. 337.

[3]CBB, "A Modern Socrates. To the Editor of the Monthly Magazine," Monthly Magazine 2 (May 1800), 328. Clark states that this article "may with fair certainty be assigned to Brown." Clark, p. 251, footnote 13.

[4]CBB, "Authorship," Literary Magazine 1 (Oct. 1, 1803), 9.

[5]DEK, p. 68A3.

[6]Letter to James Brown (April 1800), from Clark, p. 195.

[7]Russel B. Nye, "Introduction," to KSU-CEAA Ormond, unpubl. TS at KSU Bibliographical and Textual Center, p. III, 1.

[8]Nye, p. III, 1.

[9]Mildred Davis Doyle, "Sentimentalism in American Periodicals, 1741-1800," 1944 abr. of Diss. New York University 1941, p. 2.

[10]Letter to Bringhurst (Dec. 21, 1792), DEK, p. 615.

[11]Nye, p. III, 3.

[13]CBB, "On a Taste for the Picturesque," Monthly Magazine 3 (July 1800), 13.

[14]CBB, "On a Taste for the Picturesque," p. 13.

[15]Edgar Huntly, p. 4.

[16]Wieland, p. 97.

[17]Harry R. Warfel, "Charles Brockden Brown's German Sources," MLQ 1 (Sept. 1940), 359.

[18]Warfel, "German Sources," pp. 362-363. Tschink's work was a variation on Schiller's incomplete work, Der Geisterseher (1789).

[19]See footnotes 13 and 14, this chapter.

[20]Samuel Richardson, Pamela (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1958), p. 16.

[21]Samuel Richardson, Clarissa (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), p. 115.

[22]Ann Radcliffe, The Mysteries of Udolpho (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 126.

[23]Radcliffe, pp. 119 and 123.

[24]Radcliffe, p. 584.

[25]Fanny Burney, Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1965), p. 92.

[26]Radcliffe, p. 375.

[27]Matthew G. Lewis, The Monk (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1952), p. 145.

[28]Richardson, Pamela, p. 367 and pp. 279, 395, and 494.

[29]Richardson, Clarissa, p. 26.

[30]Lewis, p. 375.

[31]Richardson, Clarissa, p. 184.

[32]Burney, pp. 260 and 267.

[33]Radcliffe, p. 5.

[34]Lewis, p. 234.

[35]David H. Hirsch, "Charles Brockden Brown as a Novelist of Ideas," Books at Brown 20 (1965), 167-168.

[36]Clara Howard, pp. 317-318.

[37]Jane Talbot, p. 123.

[38]Ormond, p. 141.

[39]Ormond, p. 143.

[40]Ormond, p. 20.

[41]Wieland, p. 42.

[42]Ormond, p. 175.

[43]Ormond, p. 175.

[44]Clara Howard, pp. 310 and 312.

[45]Jane Talbot, p. 134.

[46]Wieland, p. 141.

[47]Arthur Mervyn, I, p. 4.

[48]William M. Manly, "The Importance of Point of View in Brockden Brown's Wieland," American Literature 35 (1963), 313.

[49]Wieland, p. 240.

[50]Wieland, p. 47.

[51]Wieland, p. 142.

[52]Ormond, p. 50.

[53]Ormond, p. 20.

[54]Ormond, p. 185.

[55]Ormond, p. 201.

[56]Arthur Mervyn, I, p. 132.

[57]Clara Howard, p. 296.

[58]Jane Talbot, p. 66.

[59]Jane Talbot, p. 92.

[60]See Chapter 3, pp. 69-70, 73, and 76-81.

[61]Ormond, p. 116.

[62]Wieland, p. 140.

[63]Clara Howard, p. 298.

[64]Clara Howard, p. 319.

[65]Arthur Mervyn, II, pp. 78 and 87.

[66]Arthur Mervyn, II, p. 218.

[67]Wieland, p. 98.

[68]Wieland, p. 98.

[69]Richardson, Clarissa, p. 187.

[70]Wieland, p. 116.

[71]Krause, pp. 572-574.

[72]Krause, p. 577.

[73]Ormond, p. 261.

[74]Ormond, p. 92.

[75]Jane Talbot, p. 74.

[76]Jane Talbot, p. 68.

[77]Jane Talbot, p. 82.

[78]Jane Talbot, p. 53.

[79]Jane Talbot, p. 54.

[80]Jane Talbot, p. 79.

[81]Jane Talbot, p. 110.

CHAPTER V

BROWN'S NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE AND THE CREATION OF CHARACTER

In the preceding chapters, the focus has been upon how Brown's three motives for writing--self-therapy, didacticism, and the desire to entertain--led to the three major emphases in his characterization of women. In this chapter, the focus will shift to an examination of how Brown employed narrative techniques to create women characters who were far more memorable than those of his American contemporaries. Character function, form, point of view, and style constitute four categories of narrative techniques which intersect to create character. All of these categories inter-relate and, at some points, over-lap.

The concept of character function assumes that particular characters perform specific functions in certain works. The range of functions and the particular functions required vary enormously according to the nature of the work. Spenser's Una, Milton's Satan, Tolstoi's Pierre Bezukhov only begin to suggest the possible range. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg have established three useful divisions of character functions: the illustrative, the

representational, and the esthetic.[1] In its purest form, into which fictional characters rarely conveniently fall, the illustrative character demonstrates ethical or metaphysical principles; the personification of Lust in a medieval morality play is illustrative and does not move the audience to respond as though this figure were a whole or real human being. By contrast, the representational type does elicit such a response. Scholes and Kellogg divide this category into the sociological and the psychological:

> Most representational meaning in narrative lies in that area contested by the individual and society. Some novelists are more concerned with social portraiture, others with psychological, but representational values must be seen both psychologically and sociologically. They are the product of the novelist's concern for the identity of the individual and the welfare of the society.[2]

Of these two forms of representational presentation, Scholes and Kellogg suggest that the psychological is more mimetic than the sociological since characterization by sociological situation requires a process of generalization. By contrast:

> . . . characterization by presentation of thought process does not inevitably include references to systems of psychological classification. The psychological impulse tends toward the presentation of highly individualized figures who resist abstraction and generalization, and whose motivation is not susceptible to rigid ethical interpretation.[3]

Not inevitably, certainly, but Brown is at times directly influenced by such psychological systems, as shown in the third chapter of this dissertation. While he is an exception

to Scholes' and Kellogg's generalization, psychological classification does not weigh as much in the balance with Brown's characterization of his principal women characters as does mimesis.

The third type of character function which Scholes and Kellogg present is the esthetic. This function, which tends away from both mimesis and meaning, utilizes characters for a strictly literary purpose. A villain whose sole function is to be villainous would be an example of this type. In Brown's work, the maiden in distress whom Edgar Huntly rescues is a textbook example of the esthetic function; she is both maidenly and distressed, but not a bit more.

Art, following life, tends not to be so easily categorized. Character function is no exception, as Scholes and Kellogg would be among the first to insist. For instance, they posit the tales of Hawthorne as belonging to those "narrative works which gain many of their effects precisely by straddling this precipitous border between the illustrative and the representational."[4] Many of Brown's major characters, too, are at once esthetic, illustrative, and representational, leaning toward mimesis. The esthetic element may be traced to his use of sentimental and gothic models; the illustrative, to his didacticism; and the representational, to his authorial eye turned upon himself and others.

In speaking about the representational element in Brown, it is useful to borrow W. J. Harvey's term, "angle of mimesis." Harvey informs us that Middlemarch has a far narrower angle of mimesis than does Alice in Wonderland.[5] While all of Brown's novels tend more toward Eliot's angle in Middlemarch, some have a narrower angle of mimesis than others. Most critics would agree that the angle is narrowest in Brown's last two novels, Clara Howard and Jane Talbot; widest in the middle two, Edgar Huntly and Arthur Mervyn; and in-between in the first pair, Wieland and Ormond. No value judgment is intended by this ranking. It merely reflects a difference in the nature of the novels themselves. Interestingly, women characters are least important in those novels in which the mimetic angle is widest, though no particular significance can be attributed to this. It is important not to make too much of this shift toward mimesis in Brown's last pair of novels because all six were published within a four-year period (1798-1801) and, at one point in 1799, Brown apparently worked on five of his published novels simultaneously.[6]

In addition to function, form affects characterization. The class termed "narration" splits into two major orders which Scholes and Kellogg call the empirical and fictional.[7] The novel certainly constitutes a major family of the fictional order. Novels can be further subdivided into numerous genera. All of Brown's novels fall into the

genus of "epistolary novel" if this term is used very loosely. Its looseness is obvious when the vast differences in the forms of Ormond, Arthur Mervyn, and Jane Talbot are considered. To differentiate these forms adequately, we must incorporate point of view.

Point of view, in all its shadings, has tremendous effect on character. Scholes and Kellogg say well what should be but is not obvious when they remind us that point of view is different for the author than it is for the audience. For the author, it is

> . . . the primary way he controls and shapes his material. Once made, his choice of point of view and the mode of language appropriate to it will influence his presentation of character, incident, and every other thing present.[8]

On the other hand, for the reader:

> . . . point of view is not an esthetic matter but a mode of perception. The point of view in a given novel controls the reader's impression of everything else. . . . The story takes the shape its author has given it, a shape guaranteed for us primarily by the point of view through which the characters and events are filtered.[9]

In Brown's case, as with so many other eighteenth century novelists, we cannot know how much his control and shaping reflect a conscious choice. In our century, the novel and criticism of narrative technique are taken much more seriously than they were a hundred and seventy-five years ago; we must be careful not to graft our obsessions onto another age. Despite this caution, the distinction between point of view for author and audience remains valuable.

Just as the epistolary novel form is used too broadly by Brown to be a useful classification, so the term "first person narrator" does no more than stack all of his novels into a single heap. Wayne Booth, who has adamantly objected to such oversimplifications, proposes some distinctions which will be useful in consideration of these novels.[10] First, he suggests that a differentiation be made between the historic person of the author and the implied author. The historic author's personal viewpoints will always differ at least a little from the author created in the novel, the implied author. Narrators can be divided into those who are undramatised (who may be essentially the same as the implied author) and those who are dramatised. Dramatised narrators include observers and narrator-agents who produce some effect on the events. All of Brown's narrators are dramatised narrator-agents; when the term "narrator" is used in discussing Brown's novels, this should be remembered. He presents a complete continuum of narrator-agents, ranging from the peripherally involved Dr. Stevens in Arthur Mervyn, to Sophia Westwyn's greater involvement in Ormond, to Clara Wieland's central and total involvement in Brown's first novel.

Narrators can also range from being extremely self-conscious of their roles as writers to being apparently unconscious of their writing functions. None of Brown's major narrators is an unconscious scribe, though the

narrators in the last two novels are much more conscious than in the others. Some of the "incidental" narrators within the framework of the other novels are unconscious insofar as their words are addressed only to characters and not to readers; Clithero's confession exemplifies this.

Narrators can choose to tell their stories primarily as scene, mostly as summary, or as a combination of both, the most common. While "telling" is sometimes flatly considered inferior to "showing" by many modern critics, obviously summary permits compression of time and enables a writer to focus on more important events or characters by greater dramatic development. Within Brown's novels, those narrator-agents who are least actively involved tend to offer mostly didactic commentary, whereas those who are more actively involved are also important to the dramatic structure. In Ormond, Sophia Westwyn remains an ethical voice in the wings until she rejoins Constantia midway through the novel. After this, her didactic barrage influences Constantia to give up Ormond, which causes him to attempt rape, and which finally concludes in his death. No other of Brown's narrators makes such a shift.

Another important element is the degree and kind of distance. The kind of distance principally involves moral, intellectual, temporal, and spatial. The narrator has more or less distance from the implied author, the characters in the story, and the reader. The implied

author, in addition to having a certain distance from the narrator, has more or less distance from the reader and from the characters. One of the problems which frequently arises in Brown criticism in that critics often read greater distance between the implied author and the characters than Brown probably intended. This causes them to see purposeful irony where they should see a difference in values between those of an eighteenth century implied author and those of a twentieth century audience.[11]

A special type of distance which Booth mentions is reliability. A narrator may be reliable or unreliable. If he is unreliable, he may be simply mistaken, or he may be trying to misguide us; there are also differences in degree of unreliability. Modern novelists tend to use the purposefully unreliable narrator much more than their predecessors, so care should be taken in finding ironic unreliability in Brown's fiction. Whether or not he or she is reliable, the narrator's viewpoint can be isolated, supported by other viewpoints, or corrected by other narrators. This is an important element in the presentation of characters.

Finally, Booth points out that narrators may be considered limited to what can be learned by natural means, or they can seem to have a special privileged access to information. Brown's women characters present the full possible continuum here, ranging from Clara Howard's

complete ignorance of events until she had received informative letters to Sophia Westwyn's mysterious comments to the equally mysterious I. E. Rosenberg on her sources of information about Ormond: "It was not prudent to unfold all the means by which I gained a knowledge of his actions. . . ." and "I shall omit to mention the means by which I became acquainted with his character. . . ."[12]

The fourth element of narrative technique which helps create characterization is style. Style is, as any translator could tell us, inextricably bound up with content. The way we say something seeps into and becomes part of whatever it is that is communicated. What two words, for instance, are truly synonymous? From the other end of the situation, obviously an author's very choice of subject elicits some words more readily than others; a mysterious death is more apt to call forth words like "murder" or "suicide" than "giraffe" or "calliope." This permutation is more obvious in some literary forms than in others. It is a stronger tendency in the tightly knit sonnet than in the epic drama, and stronger in the epic drama that in that "baggy monster," the novel. The major reasons for this have been suggested by Ian Watt, who states that the aim of producing a supposedly authentic account of actual experience of individuals leads to diffuseness rather than concentration and to representation rather than metaphor.[13] In general, the style of novels,

the way they are written, is closer to the language of everyday life than is the style of poetry--excluding those modern novels which depart from both the traditions of romance and of realism. This greater referentiality results in less of a meld of style and content and makes it easier to consider style separately.

Style is comprised of two major elements: syntax, including sentence structure, sentence length, and punctuation; and diction, encompassing the sources of words, their relative familiarity, and whether they are more or less abstract or concrete, and figurative or literal. The style creates a "tone" or implied attitude towards the subject and the reader, which is often discernible even when it is very difficult to analyze how the writer has created it stylistically. The style in which a character "speaks" or "writes" helps characterize him or her, even though Brown may not have attempted to do so as consciously as a modern author might.

In general, attitudes towards Brown's style have shifted quite a bit. As David Lee Clark has said:

> It is significant that Brown's contemporaries considered his style elegant, pure, and unaffected, while later generations, with some exceptions, condemned it as Latinized, overscholarly, artificial, and melodramatic. The "elegant" style of his novels was falling into disfavor even as he wrote.[14]

John Neal, for instance, in 1824 praises Brown's simplicity:

> His language was downright prose--the natural diction of the man himself--earnest--full of substantial

> good sense, clearness, and simplicity; very sober and very plain, so as to leave only the meaning upon the mind. . . .[15]

Such praise was tempered by the fact that Neal did not believe Brown knew how to write differently. Even more favorably, G. C. Verplanck in 1819 praises Brown for both simplicity and close observation of external objects:

> Most of his descriptions are simple and many might appear bald. There is no attempt at what is too vaguely called fine writing; no needless ornament, no sacrifice of spirit and energy from a weak ambition of harmony or finish, no use of a strictly poetical turn to excite the imagination, when another and simpler one will convey the meaning more definitely.[16]

That Brown's early critics were no more unanimous than his later ones can be seen by Richard Henry Dana's criticism eight years later. Dana claims that he has difficulty bearing with Brown's "dull poverty and pedantry of phrase" as well as with "a most painstaking avoidance of the Saxon, whenever it is possible, and a use of words of Latin origin in such combinations as they were never put into before."[17]

It is the negative opinion of Brown's style which has predominated in this century until very recently. This is obvious from both the relative absence of attention to Brown's style and also the nature of what has been said. Those twentieth century critics who favor Brown have usually tempered criticism or benign neglect of his style, with admiration for his ground-breaking role as an American novelist, his presentation of abnormal psychology, or his use of ideas. For instance, Warfel praises Wieland for

intellectual content and psychological insight into characters, but says of the style:

> Brown's style emphasizes the intellectuality of the novel. The vocabulary is large; the words are not notably learned although the tendency to employ polysyllables of Latin derivation is apparent. . . . Circumlocution replaces direct description.[18]

More recently, the pendulum has swung back to a somewhat more favorable view of, and greater interest in, Brown's style. Donald Ringe typifies this change by remarks such as this:

> Though it is not at all difficult to find in his [Brown's] books examples of his writing that are clearly ludicrous, such defects are not really so serious as they seem to be when the sentences are pulled out of context and viewed in isolation. Brown is, of course, no great stylist; but in his three best books, the style serves as a suitable vehicle for the action presented.[19]

Despite this shift in attitude and interest, commentators have generally underplayed or overlooked one important cause of much which is now considered pretentious writing. That is, Brown's writing probably seemed simpler and more straightforward to reviewers of his age because they contrasted it to other writing of their time, whereas to an audience accustomed to modern writers, it appears relatively Latinate and convoluted. The movement towards a plain and easy prose which began in the late seventeenth century had already influenced some writers by Brown's time, but the tradition of stylistic embellishment had not died entirely. According to Ian Watt, before the eighteenth century:

> The previous stylistic tradition for fiction was not primarily concerned with the correspondence of words to things, but rather with the extrinsic beauties which could be bestowed upon description and action by the use of rhetoric. So even if the new writers of fiction had rejected the old tradition of mixing poetry with their prose . . . there would still have remained a strong source of interest in its own right, rather than as a purely referential medium.[20]

Watt is speaking, of course, of an English audience, but there is little reason for Americans to have felt much differently as early as 1800; certainly they admired many of the same writers as did their British counterparts.

It must be remembered in these considerations that the reading of much secular literature was relatively new to those outside of the upper classes. Brown himself yearned at times to be that magnificent anachronism, a gentleman of letters. Members of the upper-class audience had been well-educated to understand and to write, for their own amusement, literature in a style quite unlike ordinary speech. They could understand classical allusions, for they had read the classics; Latinate words posed no difficulty, for they could read and write Latin. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that many early novels were written in what now seems a rather "high" style. The break from the older tradition could hardly be made overnight, and writers of the new genre, the novel, needed time to develop new traditions. To many of his contemporaries, therefore, Brown's novelistic style may have represented another step in the direction of simplicity and directness.

For the purposes of these prefatory remarks on style, it has been necessary to lump together all of Brown's writing as though he used a single style consistently. This is, of course, not the case. One of the major reasons for the recent increase of interest in Brown's style is that he does alter style to fit the occasion and the character.

In the course of this consideration of how Brown's choice of character function, form, point of view, and style combine and interact to characterize women, we will begin with Wieland and proceed chronologically through the novels, noting comparisons and contrasts as these seem appropriate. Despite the short span of time in which Brown wrote all of his novels, Jane Talbot, while not Brown's best-remembered female character, is the one whose characterization involved the greatest craftsmanship. Therefore, this choice of organization will permit us to conclude with some reflection upon a great but often overlooked achievement by Brown.

Wieland contains four women characters: Clara Wieland, Catherine Pleyel Wieland, Louisa Conway, and Judith. Of these, only Clara is characterized in any depth, and her characterization is extensive indeed. Judith, Clara's servant, fulfills a largely esthetic role: her affair with Carwin is necessary to explain his original motives for secrecy and ventriloquism. Also, her stories

about Clara arouse Carwin's curiosity and lead him to test her fearlessness. Louisa Conway, on the other hand, is so unnecessary esthetically that the scenes in which she appears are often considered a flaw in the total pattern of Wieland, a peripheral subplot. Her only discernible esthetic purpose is to provide Clara a chance to prove her benevolence which Brown could have done in other simpler ways. Possibly he had intended to expand Louisa's role and hasty composition led him astray. As it is, her only significant function is illustrative. She provides an opportunity for Clara to discover and relate Louisa's mother's story, a standard seduction subplot in which her mother is betrayed by a secretive male. A vague parallel is possible here with Carwin's secrecy. In Wieland's conclusion, Clara herself draws this parallel out further than seems natural by stating that in both cases, if the victims had been wiser, the deceivers would have been foiled.[21]

Catherine is a surprisingly flat character. Considering her relationship with Catherine as both beloved childhood friend and sister-in-law, Clara tells us very little about her. Clara describes her statically in a few scenes and tells us that they have similar religious views and temperaments. Catherine may be an additional foil to Wieland, whose metaphysical interests and disposition are so diametrically opposed to his wife's. If so, this is another

way she fulfills an esthetic function, her major role in the novel. Mainly she embodies the reproachless wife and produces the children for her mad Wieland to slaughter. Their deaths, in turn, give Clara a mystery to solve and a tragedy to overcome.

In constrast, Clara is a tender balance of the esthetic, illustrative, and representational. Her esthetic role is obvious: she is the main narrator-agent and the heroine who is intricately involved with all major plot strands. Her illustrative role has been dealt with in the third chapter; she acts out or embodies elements of associationist psychology, Godwinism, and feminism. She goes beyond these categories at many times to be truly mimetic, surprising to the reader and, perhaps, to the author. It is not esthetically necessary for her to decide to meet Carwin at Mettingen; Brown has already shown the escaped Wieland breaking into Pleyel's house and trying to find Clara at their uncle Cambridge's house. It would not have been improbable for him to have tried once again, this time successfully so that the attempted murder could have taken place elsewhere. Instead, Clara surprises the reader by giving in to her desire to see her old house after apparently having recognized the foolishness of it and changing her mind. She demonstrates her feeble rationalization, a process with which most readers would be able to identify, by stating that she must go there to retrieve some

journals which obviously her uncle could have obtained for her. This incident causes a number of responses in the reader: surprise at her action, fear for her, and recognition of her self-justification of a silly decision. Such a complex of responses gives the reader a sense of her realness which is obtained neither from the other female characters in this novel nor from the heroines of Brown's competitors' novels.

The form of Wieland is only nominally epistolary. Lewis M. Bush supplies a more positive term for it: fictitious autobiography. He suggests that it is set in the form of a rhetorical monologue, that it is a confession novel whose non-fiction predecessor is the memoir.[22]

The narrative pretense is that Clara has been requested to write an account of the events which occurred in her family to an unidentified person who has a right to hear of them. She also justifies the narrative because of its didactic value. Apparently, the bulk of it is to seem to have been written before the fire which finally forces her to leave the source of her sorrows. Within this narration, Clara is alternatively calm and re-frightened by the events she has just survived, though she tries to remain composed. This long discourse includes two short letters from Carwin, Pleyel's long soliloquy, part of a transcript of Theodore Wieland's defense before the bar, and Carwin's confession to Clara. One final letter by

Clara to her mysterious correspondent follows the major narration. This letter, supposedly written three years after the fire, permits Clara to recount her recovery and to re-evaluate the events which have happened to her. Obviously, the novel's form allows less opportunity to hear other viewpoints on Clara, other characters, and the reported events than a truly epistolary novel would, and it allows Clara to control how much of the consciousness of other characters is seen. It does provide extensive self-evaluation and self-characterization of Clara herself. To borrow words from John Bayley, the process of creation in this form is one and the same with the reader's knowing and finding out what she is like.[22] Her process of telling what has happened, her very words, create her for the audience. This is appropriate since the center of the novel is not the action, as gory and dramatic as it is, but Clara's response to it, her transformation.

Clara's is not the only transformation in the novel, although it is the most important one. The repentant Carwin becomes an agriculturist in Pennsylvania, and the stricken Wieland, of course, commits suicide once he comprehends his murder. This is one example of the device which gives somewhat more shape to Wieland's form than does Clara's essentially chronological monologue. Warner Bertoff defines this element of order as:

> . . . thematic repetition of successive and cumulative analogy. Brown's novels proceed through a chain of incidents which, though disconnected, restate and sometimes deepen, each one, the common theme.[24]

The Stuart-Maxwell subplot is, as suggested earlier, a less successful version of this technique. The Wieland family history of insanity, especially religious mania, is a much better one since it operates on several levels: as a plot device, it foreshadows Theodore Wieland's madness; as intellectual background, it suggests the hereditary nature of insanity; and as explanation of character motive, it helps create Clara's concern about her brother, which leads to her foreshadowing dream about him.

Clara, as the central narrator of Wieland, is also the most actively involved of all of Brown's female narrator-agents. She is relatively self-conscious of herself as a writer. Occasionally she explains events to her correspondent. For instance, after Pleyel mentions that a voice has told him that the Baroness de Stolberg is dead, she tells her reader "This was her whom he loved."[25] At several points when she becomes emotionally involved with events, she talks about her difficulty in continuing with the narration. One might say that her continuance helps exemplify her fortitude, if it were not that without it, the novel would end prematurely. Paul Witherington, in his dissertation on Brown's narrative techniques, has made the perceptive observation that Clara describes all major characters in Wieland in their order of appearance, which is

somewhat staggered so that Brown can take them one at a time.[26] In general, he states, one character's estimation of another is generally given a full and immediate presentation; such presentation is made more believable by its presence in some kind of letter form as well as by Brown's belief in physiognomy.[27] As a narrator, Clara frequently uses summary, not only to characterize others but also to relate habitual occurrences, such as the typical lifestyle at Mettingen, and past occurrences when the action is not too exciting. For instance, her summation of her father's history becomes more detailed and involves directly quoted conversation the nearer she comes to the point of her father's death, at which time it becomes scene. Similarly, events which occur to her directly tend to be presented in scene when they are very exciting or frightening, such as Wieland's attempt to murder Clara.

One of the most characteristic marks of Clara's narration is her constant internal monologues when something troubles her. This incessant self-debate creates a Clara who is extremely reflective, conscientious, and concerned with issues such as causation and motivation. Point of view shades directly into characterization at this point. Witherington observes that each of these debates follows the same basic pattern. The debate is framed by introductory remarks which state her solitude and agitation, and concludes with an announcement that the debate is over.

Between these frames, she relives the experience and questions its reality; she relates it to past experiences; she analyzes the significance of events with emphasis on motives; she analyzes herself, exploring her alternatives; she resolves to be more courageous; and she expresses further doubts.[28] The formality of this pattern reminds us that while Brown uses interior monologue, it does not present a "stream of consciousness": it does not imitate actual thought. However, it is important to the plot in revealing Clara's confusion; to the thematic content, in exploring the nature of appearance versus reality; and to Clara's characterization, in developing the characteristics mentioned above.

The use of Carwin's and Wieland's points of view does not greatly expand the characterization of Clara. Carwin tells her, "I found you easily swayed by fear," but his judgment seems severe considering both the imaginary scenes he has put her through and the actual threats she has faced.[29] Pleyel, in his long soliloquy on Clara, helps corroborate our favorable views of her intelligence and self-discipline.

Witherington has commented that the purpose of the multiple narrators may be to suggest the complexity of the origin of evil, but another explanation that he offers seems more probable; that is, that the multiple focus fills gaps in information.[30] The reason that the second

explanation, though less interesting, is more probable, is related to the concept of reliability. Wieland is a certified lunatic and Carwin is a self-admitted charlatan. Pleyel, as shown from his unreasonable jealousy about Theresa de Stolberg, tends to leap to conclusions, when his emotions are involved. All of this leaves Clara's reliability in a relatively good position. Her position is improved by several factors. First, her lengthy soliloquies create an image of an earnest, sincere individual who is trying to find the truth. She weighs evidence and changes position when new facts justify such a change. For instance, when she learns that Theresa de Stolberg is alive, she moves away from her belief that the voice which asserted the baroness's death was a benevolent spirit.[31] Also, Clara admits to not understanding events or her own behavior when this is so, and attempts to clarify her beliefs to her correspondent when she thinks she has been unclear; for instance:

> I now speak as if no remnant of doubt existed in my mind as to the supernatural origin of these sounds; but this is owing to the imperfection of my language, for I only mean that the belief was more permanent and visited more frequently my sober meditations than its opposite.[32]

The one exception to her reliability seems to be her accounts of her relationship with Pleyel. When she goes to Pleyel's house to defend her chastity, she sees him gazing at something which she assumes is her picture.[33] She and the reader only learn much later that at this time Pleyel had

learned his baroness was still alive, and that he was preparing for a journey to meet her, not for a trip to forget Clara's supposed infamy.[34] After she is enlightened, she feels as though she no longer loves Pleyel. This feeling, a product of her generally low state, is reversed once she regains her mental health. In her final letter, in which she supposedly speaks with all illusions behind her, she is guilty of yet another fallacy, her belief that Pleyel had been bound to Theresa "by ties more of honor than of love."[35] Conveniently, she has forgotten Pleyel's wild jealousy when he thinks Theresa may have been unfaithful to him during their courtship. Generally, Clara's view of Pleyel seems to be shaped by her wish that he love her as much as she loves him.

This is the only element of her life in which what Clara says seems to contradict events. Usually the implied author is undistinguishable from Clara. Her verisimilitude is further established by the use of footnotes to support her evidence.[36] Furthermore, the fact that she is limited to what she could have learned naturally adds to her believability; the use of privileged undisclosed sources can add an air of artificiality if not of untruthfulness.

Limited to one reliable narrator-agent who is the only fully developed woman character, the reader must accept much of what Clara tells about herself as truth. Her self-portrayal shows by statement and action that she is loving,

observant, independent, relatively brave, truthful, benevolent, just, and a little vengeful. Her heart is attracted by religion, but her mind doubts. Sometimes these qualities are presented as event only; she does not remark on her powers of observation, but we see them applied to a comparison of the Wieland and the Pleyel property. Also, she does not note her own vengefulness, but she does try to call down a just punishment on Carwin for having sparked the fatal chain of events. Occasionally, she proceeds in the manner of an essayist, naming a quality and then offering supporting examples, as she does with her benevolence when she tries to decide who could be trying to hurt her.[37]

The final element of narrative technique which Brown employs to create characters in Wieland is style. The most important element here is how the way in which characters speak helps characterize them.

Among the women characters in Wieland, Clara is the only one heard frequently enough for her style to add significantly to her characterization. As narrator, all she "writes," with the exception of direct quotations of other characters, may be considered self-characterizing. Her style chiefly portrays herself as one who values reason and control but who is not always capable of attaining these goals despite great efforts. For instance, in the third chapter, Clara is summarizing her childhood and the growing bonds of affection between Catherine Pleyel and Theodore

Wieland. The sentence structure of most of this summary tends to favor the short simple sentence, conventional subject-verb order, and avoidance of exclamation. The tone is controlled and matter of fact:

> My brother's advance in age made no change in our situation. It was determined that his profession should be agriculture. His fortune exempted him from the necessity of hard labour. The task to be performed by him was nothing more than superintendence.[39]

The only element of this, Clara's normal, controlled summary style, which would distinguish it from modern conversation is the slightly greater use of words of a Latin origin: "agriculture" rather than "farming"; "necessity of" rather than "need for"; and "superintendence" rather than "overseeing." Yet, seven sentences later, her memories cause too much pain, and Clara exclaims: "Oh, my brother."[40] She recovers herself immediately: "But the task I have set myself let me perform with steadiness. The felicity of that period was marred by no gloomy anticipation."[41] A similar shift can be observed later before her description of Carwin, when she remembers the harm his meddling has done. Her agitated attempt to control her language contains a number of the characteristics which, in addition to exclamations, often mark her speech when her restraint is overthrown by emotions: "thee" and "thou" forms; deliberate repetition, sometimes building to a high point by the use of periodicity; figurative language; and questions:

> And thou, O most fatal and potent of mankind, in what terms shall I describe thee? What words are adequate to the just delineation of thy character? How shall I detail the means which rendered the secrecy of thy purpose unfathomable? But I will not anticipate. Let me recover, if possible, a sober strain. Let me keep down the flood of passion that would render me precipitate or powerless. Let me stifle the agonies that are awakened by thy name. Let me for a time regard thee as a being of no terrible attributes. Let me tear myself from contemplation of the evils of which it is but too certain that thou wast the author, and limit my view to those harmless appearances which attended thy entrance on the stage.[42]

Her success in this endeavour is obvious from her following sentence: "One sunny afternoon I was standing in the door of my house, when I marked a person passing close to the edge of the bank that was in front."[43] David Loren Butler, in his thesis on the style of Brown's novels, has observed that Brown characteristically uses a clear and uncomplicated style; however, when he attempts to show a disturbed mind, an unusual event (such as Wieland's slaughter of his family), or duplicity, then Brown "resorts to the unorthodox and prolix style which critics so often condemn without realizing Brown's deliberate shifts in style are made to underscore characterization or theme."[44]

The use of questions is particularly characteristic of Clara's style during her self-debates. For instance, after Clara disregards the mysterious voice and finds Carwin in her closet, she ponders the nature of the being who had warned her of him:

> Why should I be selected as the object of his care? or, if a mere mortal, should I not recognize some one whom benefits imparted and received had prompted to love me. What were the limits and duration of his guardianship? Was the genius of my birth intrusted by divine benignity with this province? Are human faculties adequate to receive stronger proofs of the existence of unfettered and beneficent intelligences than I have received?[45]

The apparent seriousness of the events which have recently befallen her preclude this from suggesting idle curiosity. Instead, the style of her self-catechisms heightens the impression they give of her as an earnest seeker after truth, weighing evidence and trying to find answers.

Another critic has suggested more in Clara's style which might be considered self-characterizing. Carl W. Nelson has suggested that Brown's use of Cicero is an ironic emblem for Clara's embellishing deceitfulness as a narrator. He specifically suggests that Cicero's speech to Cluentius, mentioned in the fourth chapter, is a revealing analogue to Clara's narrative because Cicero afterwards bragged that in arguing for an unjustifiable cause, he had thrown dust in the eyes of the jurors.[46] This seems unlikely for several reasons. First, as shown before, Brown presents Clara as a relatively reliable narrator except when she describes her relationship with Pleyel. Also, an allusion to an undisclosed portion of Cicero's oration for Cluentius would require a crossword puzzle intricacy of craftsmanship which is not at all characteristic of Brown; it is reminiscent instead of such modern

writers as Nabokov and Durrell. Finally, if Brown meant to characterize anyone with the references to Cicero, it would be Theodore Wieland rather than Clara. It is he who is the Ciceronian scholar, who purchases Cicero's bust, and who defends Cicero's genius in that oration. In the last instance, Clara is not even involved in the argument; she is, instead, sewing.[47]

Nelson also remarks that Clara tries to inflate her tale with Manichean imagery of supreme good wrestling supreme evil in her account of events which have befallen her.[48] While Nelson's description is accurate, his interpretation seems to ignore the fact that for a long time available evidence suggested supernatural intervention to Clara, in which case this imagery would be appropriate, not inflationary.

While Clara's speech shows skill on Brown's part in using style to characterize, his skill had its limits. Except for dialogue, he does not seem confident to record conversation in any way but summary. No women characters other than Clara have enough direct discourse for characterization. This may appropriately emphasize Clara's consciousness. However, in the several monologues offered by male characters, there is insufficient distinction in style to differentiate them adequately from each other and from Clara. For instance, in Pleyel's long monologue on Clara's fall from virtue, his anguished style is quite

similar to Clara's own in her moments of tensions. One explanation may be that in recording conversation, Clara as narrator unconsciously alters other characters' style, but this may impute more subtlety in craftsmanship to Brown than is likely.

Even more than Wieland, Ormond centers around the conflict between a female protagonist and a villainous antagonist. Ormond has more women characters that play at least secondary roles, and the use of narrative technique to characterize the women characters also differs in some interesting ways.

Several of the women characters are so minor that they have smaller roles than does Mr. Dudley's lute. These include Constantia's mother, Mrs. Melbourne, Mary Ridgely, Madame Roseli, and the Dudleys' maid, Lucy. Aside from these there are a number of relatively minor ones worthy of some mention: Mary Whiston, Sarah Baxter, Lady D'Arcy, and Sophia's mother. Both Mary Whiston and Sarah Baxter have the same principal character functions of illustrating Constantia's benevolence. The Mary Whiston incident does this more effectively because of its greater length and its use of concrete detail showing the repulsiveness of caring for a fever victim without help or money:

> Mary's condition hourly grew worse. A corroded and gangrenous stomach was quickly testified by the dark hue and poisonous malignity of the matter which was frequently ejected from it. Her stupor gave place to some degree of peevishness and restlessness. She

> drank the water that was held to her lips with unspeakable avidity and derived from this source a momentary alleviation of her pangs.[49]

In addition to her illustrative function, Sarah Baxter has a minor esthetic function. She is the kindly lower-class woman who recognizes Constantia for a lady despite her rags. She is also a hook for the Baxter subplot which gives a first mysterious glimpse of Martinette. Lady D'Arcy is present only in Martinette's history. She illustrates the constancy of Martinette's goals by contrast to her own flightiness. Also, she enables Martinette to move away from the wicked Bartoli and functions as the comedic parent by forbidding Martinette to marry Wentworth for a time. Sophia's mother's function, although exemplifying the dangers of profligacy and other extreme behavior, is primarily esthetic. Her early depravity accounts for Sophia and Constantia being reared almost as sisters. Her later repentance and illness require Sophia to leave Constantia for a long period; out of duty, she must accompany her mother to physicians in England and to a more salubrious climate in Italy.

As well as these minor characters, Ormond contains two secondary women characters, Helena Cleves and Martinette. Both are, for the novel form, very much illustrative characters. It is interesting to observe how Brown expands in their cases on his usual practice of introducing a character fully with all action stopped. Helena principally

occupies one chapter, and Martinette, two. Their character sketches seem roles given very much for their own sakes and for contrast with each other.

Of the two, Helena has the most connection with the rest of the plot. She provides Constantia an opportunity to practice a more complex kind of benevolence in her role as intermediary between Helena and Ormond. Her role as Ormond's mistress helps characterize him, as does his treatment of her once he falls in love with Constantia. Mostly, though, she exemplifies a logical extreme of traditional femininity, permitting Brown to demonstrate how an inadequate and frivolous education can ruin women.

Martinette's connection with the rest of the novel is esthetically quite tangential. She obviously exists as Helena's opposite, showing in her absence of feeling the other dangerous pole to which faulty education can lead women. Also, she is a female double of her brother, Ormond. Helena and Martinette help illustrate by contrast Constantia's balance of emotion and reason, as well as Brown's own preference for centrism.

The two major women characters are Sophia Westwyn and Constantia Dudley. Sophia is also the narrator, but she becomes more than simply a story-teller in the second half of the novel at which point she is re-united with Constantia. Obviously, she fulfills all three character functions. Esthetically, she is the voice which tells the

story and adds editorials. Also, she causes Constantia to give up Ormond and arranges to whisk her safely off to Europe. It is even more difficult in Ormond than in Wieland to separate the implied author from the narrator; hence, as far as is discernible, Sophia Westwyn does present the voice (literally) of wisdom and experience. The name "Sophia" is an obvious clue, as is her contrasting her experiences in Europe to Constantia's ignorance of world affairs and the dangers of both revolutions and their propagators. Her mimetic function is slighter, yet she does have a kind of density in her very busyness, such as her tireless tracking of her friend and, best of all, her mad dash for the Dudley farmhouse. Mimetic impact is more difficult to gauge than the other functions, and critics have not often responded to Sophia as a mimetic character, so this may be an unprovable hypothesis.

Constantia is more universally accepted as a blend of all three elements. Her esthetic role is obviously a variation of the sentimental heroine's role. Illustrative aspects in her characterization include those elements of feminism and Godwinism discussed in the third chapter. Her representational function is much more obvious than is Sophia's. If she seems too "good" to be mimetic, she does make errors in understanding her own heart. The internal debate and hesitancy which precede many of her decisions give her actions dimensionality. The debate can be seen

in her thoughts before she goes to visit Ormond to remonstrate with him about his relationship with Helena. Once there, her hesitancy is obvious when she begins by discussing Craig, a recognizable ploy for any reader who has ever been in an awkward social situation. Also, Ormond's strange behavior causes her much puzzlement, ranging from incomprehension of what he is saying to discomfiture when he departs for his six-minute dinner. Such touches add a degree of mimesis not evident in other women characters in Ormond, though the angle of mimesis is wider than in Brown's portraiture of Clara Wieland, partially because of problems with the narrative point of view.

Ormond, like Wieland, is only nominally epistolary. The correspondent to whom it is addressed is identified and located, I. E. Rosenberg of Germany, unlike Clara Wieland's undisclosed correspondent. However, Ormond's narrative is not divided into letters at all but consists simply of a cover letter to I. E. Rosenberg plus a single narration. If Wieland is a fictitious autobiography, Ormond is a fictitious biography, the pseudo-authenticity a nod to its eighteenth century audience's dubiousness about the morality and value of novels. Relatedly, Sophia Westwyn justifies the value of her tale to her correspondent by saying that if Rosenberg is not deeply interested in the fate of Constantia, then the information about the democratic

lifestyle in the United States may still make reading her account useful.

While the main thread of plot and theme in Ormond is Constantia's relationship with Ormond, Sophia's focus is not nearly that limited. For the sake of dramatic impact, too much space is given to Stephen Dudley's history. Nelson has suggested that:

> Brown was not after formal unities of dramatic action, nor, in a tradition that saw such loose meanderings as Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne offered, to name only the most competent, could he be expected to seek such qualities.[50]

Dramatically irrelevant subplots, such as that of Mary Whiston or Martinette, illustrate values approved by Brown, demonstrate the presence of qualities in characters, or develop characters by comparison and contrast. Nelson justifies this looseness in Ormond further:

> The story does not exist for its own sake. It is an excuse for discourse, and the subject is always the same--the human sensibility, its laws, tendencies, and needs, according to the moralizing point of view embodied in the narrative voice.[51]

Brown's use of the narrative voice in Ormond influences the ways in which he can develop women characters. The sole narrator is Sophia Westwyn; this is the only published novel of Brown's which nominally contains merely a single narrator. Although Sophia is a narrator-agent, she is less involved in the action than is Clara Wieland. This gives a quieter tone to the novel. Also, the relative lack of involvement may embellish her position as commentator.

Her entry into the action immediately results in Constantia's giving up Ormond, and it marks the new direction which Constantia takes.

Sophia and Clara are equally conscious of their roles as narrators. Sophia does not often refer to her writing tasks, but she does preface the Baxter story with the necessary comment to Rosenberg that this incident's connection to the main narration would become evident later.[52] Similarly, she precedes her sketch of Ormond with remarks on the problems of understanding and describing him: "I know no task more arduous than a just delineation of the character of Ormond."[53]

Perhaps because she is a less involved narrator-agent, Sophia uses less "scene" than does Clara Wieland. Summary is used for background, characterization, and conversation. Her cameo presentations of Helena and Martinette have already been noted; she begins her characterization of Ormond in the same way. The fact that Sophia veers away from the rape attempt to relate her own travels to the farmhouse is often cited as an example of how Brown throws away opportunities for dramatic scenes.[54] What Sophia omits in scene, she more than compensates for in the amount of commentary. The point of her commentary is almost always moral, as befits her name.

As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to separate Sophia from the implied author. Therefore, as Patricia

Jewell McAlexander has noted: ". . . it is difficult to know whether the interspersed moralizing in the novel should be considered as Brown's own opinion (as many critics take it to be) or as that of his characters."[55]

One of the very obvious elements in Sophia's narrative style is that she considers her judgment superior, morally and intellectually, to that of other characters. For instance after Constantia kills Ormond, she describes the other people on the scene in this fashion:

> The people that surrounded me were powerless with terror. Their ignorance and cowardice left them at a loss how to act in this emergency. They besought my direction, and willingly performed whatever I felt proper to enjoin upon them.[56]

Obviously, too, Sophia has no doubts that Constantia needs her advice and help to survive, despite the many trials which her friend has gotten through on her own. She regards Constantia's attraction to Ormond with a jaundiced eye:

> The mind of my friend was wavering and unsuspicious. She had lived at a distance from scenes where principles are hourly put to the test of experiment. . . . Hence, my friend had decided without the sanction of experience, had allowed herself to wander into untried paths, and had hearkened to positions pregnant with destruction and ignominy.[57]

Obviously, there is a great deal of narrative distance here. It may be that by having the reader view characters through Sophia's viewpoint, Brown is trying to create what Bayley calls "that form of shared superiority or patronage which author and reader mutually enjoy in a novel of old-type characterization."[58]

If so, this effect is reduced by our reservations about the infallability of Sophia's judgment, arising from her unreliability as a narrator. While she sincerely wishes to be truthful, her prejudices sometimes blind her. To some extent she realizes her bias for Constantia: she warns I. E. Rosenberg of this in the preface. Her extremely positive treatment of Constantia contrasts with her antagonism for all other characters.[59] She is, for instance, very critical of Stephen Dudley. At a time when he is blind, reduced to abject poverty, bereft of his wife, and dependent on his daughter, Sophia notes critically that he could seldom be prompted to smile.[60] Another element of Sophia's narration which brings her reliability into question is her view on Constantia's lack of religious beliefs. As one commentator has noted, she would have us believe that Constantia's lack of religion had created the difficulties she had in dealing with Ormond. Yet, Constantia seems remarkably capable of taking care of herself through her other troubles without the solace of religion. Furthermore, not needing religion to handle Ormond alone before Sophia's entrance might be considered a personal strength. Finally, the other evidence which Sophia presents about religious beliefs would seem to contradict Sophia's view of its potential value for Constantia. The one religious authority in Ormond is the corrupt Father Bartoli. Also, the two examples of religious conversion represent no more

than enthusiasm. Lady D'Arcy's conversion to Catholicism is seen as just another passing fancy for a woman easily swayed. While these first two incidents may simply reflect anti-Catholicism, Sophia's account of her own mother's conversion to Methodism cannot be:

> In this, as in her former career, she was unacquainted with restraint and moderation. Her remorses gained strength as she cherished them. . . . Her thoughts became, by rapid degrees, tempestuous and gloomy, and it was at length evident that her condition was maniacal.[62]

Yet, despite these experiences with religious belief, Sophia sees its absence as the cause of Constantia's problems.

Another reason that Sophia's reliability is difficult to accept is that it is difficult to accept the range of her knowledge.[63] She attempts to account for her astounding knowledge by mysterious references to secret sources of information about Ormond and extensive conversations with Constantia. Yet, an enormous suspension of disbelief is necessary to accept such things as her knowledge of the workings of Constantia's mind and her exact quotations of Martinette's lengthy autobiographical monologue. There is an obvious conflict here between probability of knowledge and the authorial desire to create impressions of first-hand experience; Sophia's narration is an uneasy compromise, wavering between a limited and an omniscient narration.

All of these signals of narrator unreliability may cause the audience to hesitate in accepting Sophia's view of characters. We may be slightly less prone to accept the totally negative portraits of Martinette. Also, we probably see Constantia as less virtuous but more competent to fend for herself than Sophia would have us think. Finally, Sophia's wisdom may be read at times as merely a kind of physical and moral busyness. Interestingly, this helps create the mimetic element in her own characterization, perhaps because imperfect characters who think too well of their own judgments seem more human than infallible oracles.

Style is less important in Ormond than it is in Wieland for characterizing the heroine. Because of the difference in point of view, there is less of Constantia's exact language to develop her. As mentioned above, the narration leans more toward summary; the style of Sophia's summary can only characterize Sophia.

Some directly quoted conversation is given for Constantia, as well as for a few of the other female characters. As Paul Witherington has observed, speech for characters in all of Brown's novels tends to be limited to monologue and dialogue:

> Dialogue between two characters suits Brown's limited talents in writing conversation and picturing a large scene, and it suits his inclination to work with the complementary and antagonistic relationship between two people, the confession of the revelation and the conflict of ideas.[64]

Constantia is not quoted in even this limited form of dialogue until some twenty-eight pages after her introduction, and her direct words are not heard again for forty-six pages. In these first two pages, both manner of address and content combine to show her respect for her father.[65] Not until her first dialogue with Ormond do we hear much from her lips. In most of her interviews with Ormond, her conversational style is simple, plain, and direct. For example, when she refutes the slanderous stories Craig has told about her to Ormond, her diction and sentence structure are simple and her tone is controlled:

> You are deceived. I am sorry, for your own sake, that you are. He must have some end in view, in imposing these falsehoods upon you, which perhaps they have enabled him to accomplish. As to myself, this man can do me no injury.[66]

In these conversations, Ormond by contrast often shows himself as mysterious, abrupt, and less conventional. At the end of their first dialogue, he tells her cryptically:

> Your home is your citadel. I will not enter it without leave. Permit me to visit you when I please. But that is too much. It is more than I would allow you. When will you permit me to visit you?[67]

When Constantia complains that he clothes his words "in a garb so uncouth" that she does not understand him, he mockingly bows and asks:

> Shall I have the honour . . . of occasionally paying my respects to you at your own dwelling? It would be cruel to condemn those who have the happiness of knowing Miss Dudley, to fashionable restraints. At what hour will she be least incommoded by a visitant?[68]

She retorts that she is as little pleased by such formalities as he, and she answers his question. Generally, Constantia's conversation shows her as direct but neither cryptic nor rejecting polite conventions.

At times, Sophia attempts to represent the workings of Constantia's consciousness. This is somewhat less effective than Clara Wieland's account of her own thoughts because of the improbability of narrator knowledge, but some of the same stylistic devices help show Constantia's character. In particular, Brown uses questions liberally to show her debating an issue within herself. For instance, when she considers how to approach Ormond on the issue of marrying Helena, she asks herself:

> In what manner should it be performed? Should an interview be sought and her ideas be examined without confusion or faltering, undismayed by ludicrous airs or insolent frowns? But this was a point to be examined. Was Ormond capable of such behavior?[69]

Constantia's speech exhibits marks of passion and excitement less often than does Clara Wieland's, suggesting Constantia's greater self-control and calmer response to problems. However, during and immediately after her fatal interview with Ormond, she does speak in an exclamatory style, using archaic forms, when she addresses Sophia:

> What voice is that? Sophia Courtland! O my friend! I am imprisoned! Some demon has barred the door, beyond my power to unfasten. Ah, why comest thou so late? Thy succour would have somewhat profited if sooner given: but now, the lost Constantia--[70]

Such speeches show Constantia, though of an usually "constant" temper, not completely impassive.

While Helena barely speaks directly at all in the novel, Brown does use her last letter. Its style is simple, almost childlike, and the tone created by her unconscious repetition is that of pathos; it is a terrible reproach which affects Ormond greatly.

Martinette is characterized by Sophia's editorializing, Constantia's response to her, and her own words. Her long autobiographical account is given in a simple style and a flat tone, considering the bloody nature of the events she narrates. In her conversations with Constantia, two items are noteworthy. The first is the use of archaic forms "thee" and "thou," which is unusual considering that Brown usually saves these for times of great passion. Perhaps, accustomed to the Quaker plain style, he uses this to denote her revolutionary avoidance of forms of address suggesting rank. The other element, which has received little notice, is the scornful tone with which she addresses Constantia. For instance, when Constantia states that Martinette's vagabond background is wonderful, Martinette responds: "Wonderful! Pish! Thy ignorance, thy miscalculation of probabilities, is far more so."[71] Constantia's politeness in response may seem even more wonderful. Another example is in the contrast she makes between herself and Constantia: "You grew and flourished, like a frail mimosa,

in the spot where destiny planted you. Thank my stars, I am somewhat better than a vegetable."[72] This scornful, egotistical tone backs up the content of her long narration. As well as suggesting her warlike nature, her egomania is evident in comments like her self-congratulation about her survival in military camps: "Few would survive these hardships with better grace than I did."[73] It is difficult to imagine Constantia trumpeting her own hardiness in such fashion.

The narrator is also characterized by choice of language. There are greater style shifts in her language than in Constantia's; more instances in which her language becomes effusive, exclamatory, prolix, and archaic. Of course, she has a larger number of opportunities to show us the inner workings of her consciousness than does Constantia, but the impression which is given is that she is more emotional and less controlled. This may seem ironic, considering her role as advisor to her friend. Another difference between the styles of Sophia's and Constantia's thoughts is the relative absence of questions in Sophia's. Considering the mysteries she faces in finding Constantia, this is striking. It suggests a person with a very fixed view of life and morals, one who sees everything in black and white rather than in shades of gray. This view is supported by Carl Nelson, who sees Sophia as sentimentally inflating her rhetoric to suggest a Manichean

world view of a struggle between Satanic physical evil and renunciatory spiritual virtue; Ormond, being the evil, and Constantia, being the virtue, of course.[74] As has been noted, Sophia does tend to be extremely favorable towards Constantia and negative towards all other characters. Her most powerful invective is saved for Ormond, of whom she once says:

> There was no fortress, guarded by barriers of stone and iron and watched by sentinels that never slept to which she might retire from his stratagems. If there were such a retreat, it would scarcely avail her against a foe circumspect and subtle as Ormond.[75]

The incident of Ormond's brutalities while in the army was fearsome, but Sophia does seem to need to inflate her friend's virtue and her own role as savior by making Ormond more demonic than he is. Unlike Clara Wieland, Sophia is not driven by circumstances to consider the Manichean view the only plausible explanation for occurrences.

Arthur Mervyn and Edgar Huntly are easily grouped together for the purposes of this study because of the relatively small proportion of attention to female characters. Because of this, the analysis of narrative techniques will be summarized quite briefly.

The first volume of Arthur Mervyn utilizes a fairly large number of women characters, but only two are drawn in any detail. In addition to some extremely shadowy figures like Arthur's mother and Mrs. Wentworth, there are three secondary characters who are presented a little more

fully: Eliza Stevens, Clemenza Lodi, and Susan Hadwin. Eliza functions esthetically by urging her husband to allow Arthur to stay, and by encouraging him to tell his story. In addition to these actions, her husband's comments characterize her--as one with a luxurious education who usually shuns nursing.[76] Likewise, Clemenza Lodi largely has an esthetic function. In her case, she embodies the helpless orphan who is robbed of virtue and money by the villainous Welbeck, thus providing Arthur with another cause for his benevolence. Susan Hadwin also offers Arthur a chance for benevolence in her role as the languishing beloved. Her esthetic function slides into the illustrative by offering the narrator a chance to denigrate such soft enthusiasm as she exhibits.

Betty Lawrence and Eliza Hadwin are both somewhat more mimetically drawn than any of the other women in this first volume. Betty, of course, also functions esthetically by removing Arthur from his home and following him with slander. She is Brown's fullest portrayal of a lower-class woman. Her machinations to seduce Arthur reveal both her lustiness and her humorous misjudgment of character. Eliza Hadwin is even more fully drawn. She, too, provides Arthur with a chance for benevolence and helps demonstrate both his mercenary attitudes towards marriage and his misjudgment of women. Enough of her own discourse is given to characterize her differently than Arthur views her.

The second volume introduces some other very unimportant women characters like Mrs. Althorpe and the widow of Amos Watson, who function only as plot machinery. Two new secondary characters, Mrs. Villars and Miss Carlton, are brought forth. Like most of the secondary women characters in this novel, Mrs. Villars' function is largely esthetic; she runs the house of prostitution from which Clemenza must be rescued by Arthur. She is also illustrative in that her shooting of Arthur reveals the dangers of passion. Miss Carlton is used solely illustratively to demonstrate female fortitude and ingenuity in a fairly tertiary side plot.

The most important new female character in the second volume is Ascha Fielding. Even more than Eliza Hadwin, Ascha functions on all three planes. Esthetically, she is the dark wealthy mama for whom Arthur is searching. One commentator has been fascinated by the vampire-like way in which he wants to absorb Ascha's knowledge and experience. This same critic has also warned that it is dangerous for the post-Freudian reader to make too much out of Arthur's maternal fixation, because his behavior falls directly in line with the sentimental love tradition in which the romantic lover is like a suppliant at his mother's knee.[77] Ascha also illustrates certain virtues such as benevolence and the love for privacy rather than the public pomp which her wealth could buy for her. Several qualities

help make her mimetic. One is undeniably the fact of her physical unattractiveness, singular for the beloved in a novel of this period. The other is the reader's sympathy for her feelings, her shifts of mood, when the unseeing Arthur talks to her of his concern for Eliza Hadwin. Before Arthur sees her love, it is revealed to the reader, who shares her frustration at his blindness.

Unlike the preceding two novels, the form of Arthur Mervyn is a set of frames within a frame. The outermost frame is Dr. Stevens' narration of Arthur's story, which in turn contains tales told by Welbeck, Wallace, Estwick, and Medlicote. Stevens also hears Welbeck directly at one point and listens to a tale by Wortley. Wortley's narration frames Williams' story of his brother-in-law, Amos Watson. In all, Arthur Mervyn is the verbal equivalent of one of those puzzles which contains box within box within box.

The form hints at duplicity because the number of narrators places the narration at several removes from the characters, possibly echoing the theme of appearance versus reality.[78] Not knowing whom to believe affects audience acceptance of what one character says about another. While there seems no reason to doubt Dr. Stevens' sincerity, the unreliability of some of the other narrators seems obvious. Welbeck, for instance, practices duplicity in most of his actions. Wortley would like to seek revenge on Welbeck

through Arthur. Finally, Arthur himself is in a defensive position throughout the novel, trying to refute the various charges brought against him before his benefactor's tribunal. This role would require him to put the best light on his own actions. Furthermore, Arthur's characterization of women, often presented in summary form, is contradicted several important times when we actually hear from these women themselves. These misjudgments, while probably not purposeful, decrease the acceptance of his portrayals of women whom we do not hear directly, like Betty Lawrence.

One example of such misjudgment occurs with Ascha Fielding. Arthur's reverence for her causes him, as mentioned before, not to realize that she loves him. When she questions him about Eliza Hadwin, the reader can see her discomposure in the tone of her speech:

> Thou knowest that her gentle heart is touched with love. See how it shows itself in the tender and inimitable strain of this epistle. Does not this sweet ingenuousness bewitch you?[79]

Her conversation is accompanied by blushes and starts, but Arthur does not comprehend her feelings.

The other major instance of his misunderstanding of the women in his life is when he persists in "fixing" Eliza Hadwin as a sweet uneducable farm girl, refusing to see the similarity in their backgrounds. In her famous statement of revolution, both her militant tone and content tell the reader how far Arthur has underestimated her.[80] Also, once

he decides that he might do better than her for a wife, he coolly decides that her passion for him "was young and easily extinguishable" as long as he quickly removed "any mistakes into which she had fallen."[81] He ignores the fact that she had not been mistaken in her perceptions of his original intentions. Thus, style conspires with content in making Arthur's characterization of women open to question, both of his expediency, as well as his insightfulness.

Edgar Huntly has even fewer women characters. The minor women characters include Miss Waldegrave, Edgar's fiancee; Clarice; the girl whom Edgar rescues; and Old Deb. Miss Waldegrave, sister to Edgar's dead friend, functions esthetically as his correspondent. She is characterized by Edgar in his praise of her justness of Weymouth. Also, in his unflattering comments to her, he tells her that her lack of education does not fit her for metaphysical refinements and that she loves independence and ease so much that she may not be just to Weymouth. Clarice also has a purely esthetic function as the maiden offered to Clithero as a reward by the benevolent Mrs. Lorimer. She is not differentiated from any other young, pretty girl. Similarly, the girl whom Edgar rescues from the Indians is a piece of plot furniture drawn less fully than the rescued maidens of some dime novels. Unlike these other three minor characters, Old Deb has no apparent esthetic function, yet her cameo portrayal has a mimetic force despite its brevity.

Brown shows her grandly ordering about both her dogs and the intruding white settlers alike, an eccentric with a touch of the frightening clinging to her.

The only woman character of any major importance is Mrs. Euphemia Lorimer. Her esthetic function is obvious; she is Clithero's benefactress and the target of his insanity. She embodies the virtues of benevolence, democracy, and fortitude as well as the weakness of believing that her fate is mysteriously linked with her twin's. This balance of many virtues plus one weird fault does not come across mimetically. She is too statically a virtuous figure against whom Clithero's madness is silhouetted.

The form of Edgar Huntly returns to the fictitious autobiographical form used in Wieland. It is made slightly more epistolary because it is more reasonable that Mary Waldegrave, being Edgar's fiancée and Waldegrave's sister, would be interested in an account of the events.[83] Also, the major letter to Mary is dated and contains a closing. After this major narrative are three short letters: two from Edgar to Sarsefield, and one from Sarsefield to Edgar. Witherington has suggested that Edgar Huntly contains two books, the first being the episodic story of Indian warfare, and the more important being a tightly knit study of guilt and its effects.[84]

Since the women in Edgar Huntly are characterized almost entirely by the summary of the two main narrator-agents,

Clithero and Edgar, narrator reliability is important. However, Clithero is obviously insane, and Edgar Huntly's reliability is assailed by his grave mistakes in judging Clithero, shown by Sarsefield's closing letter. There is no outside correction for these judgments, so they cannot be taken with any great sureness. Unlike Arthur Mervyn, this novel does not contain enough direct discourse from even the principal woman character to correct potentially false portrayals. Therefore, neither the style nor the content of the women characters' speech helps develop their characterization in Edgar Huntly.

Clara Howard has fewer characters than Edgar Huntly, but these few are both more developed and more important to the novel. Aside from such extremely minor figures as Mrs. Valentine and Mrs. Bordley, there are four: Mrs. Howard, Mrs. Wilmot, Mary Wilmot, and Clara Howard. Mrs. Howard functions esthetically only. She is, of course, Clara's mother. Philip Stanley compares Clara to her mother, seeing both as poised and attractive.[85] This parallel is thematically relevant, for Mr. Howard had to prove his worthiness to win his wife's love, just as Philip has to prove his to win Clara. Mary Anne Wilmot illustrates the fate of forgetting "her dignity and her duty."[86] This error brings her to America with her husband and her illegitimate child. This past may partially account for Mary Wilmot's touchy pride.

The two main female characters are Mary Wilmot and Clara Howard. Both function esthetically, illustratively, and representationally. Esthetically, Mary becomes the necessary moral task which Philip is assigned by his stern taskmistress, Clara. Her past behavior exhibits the fault of having too much pride in the face of economic adversity. Some of her very faultiness, the contradictions between her self-conception and reality, give her a mimetic dimension. For instance, she considers her farewell note to Philip an act of generous self-sacrifice, whereas it is obviously calculated to make him feel very guilty about his behavior; it is an act of vengeance for his disloyalty. Clara Howard functions esthetically as the beloved, the grande dame sans merci whom Philip must win. As with Mary, the contradictions between Clara's self-image and true character provide a mimetic dimension in her characterization. In Clara, the conflict is between her self-perception as a person who is more rational, more controlled, and wiser than Philip, and her true self, a person who is as emotional and more foolish than he.

The form of Clara Howard represents Brown's first use of the truly epistolary, which he employs again in Jane Talbot. As Witherington has pointed out, the major problem with the epistolary form as Brown uses it is that the author's control is too clearly seen.[87] Letters are never lost or delayed unless it suits Brown's purposes. Also,

as letters are not predominantly sent to any one person in the novel, there is some blurring of focus.[88] As well as these disadvantages, his use of the epistolary form has its advantages. Dramatic suspense and the immediacy of a character's feelings are expressed more forcibly. Characterization sometimes gains depth by the use of multiple points of view. Also, the use of letters simplifies time shifts. Finally, as in the fictional biography, fictional epistles allow ample opportunity for the ratiocination and soul-searching of characters, anticipating the internalized psychological action of more modern and sophisticated writers.[89]

McAlexander makes additional observations concerning the overall forms of both Clara Howard and Jane Talbot. First, in his previous novels, Brown had presented one larger-than-life protagonist, each of whom, whether male or female, contains a struggle between passion and reason within herself or himself. Now, in these last two novels, Brown uses a split-protagonist technique with an equal focus on a male and female character, with the woman in Clara Howard generally speaking for duty, reason, and institutions, while the man speaks for passion. Their final union presents a meld of these two sets of values.[90]

Point of view is, of course, affected by the move to an epistolary form. With letters, there is no sure way of distinguishing the implied author from the narrator. Brown

does not provide an authorial preface as Richardson does in Clarissa so that the reader may know how the author would have the characters judged. The entire group of thirty-three letters is sent in a packet to some unknown correspondent of Philip Stanley, who is curious about Stanley's transition from watchmaker's apprentice to wealthy gentleman. Within this packet are several letters within letters, reminiscent of the Chinese puzzle box narration of Arthur Mervyn. The principal narrators are Philip Stanley, Clara Howard, and Mary Wilmot. One Francis Harris exists in the novel solely to receive a thirty-seven page letter from Stanley, giving a history of his entire situation to someone on the outside.[91] All of the three principal narrators are very actively involved narrator-agents. All are quite conscious of their roles as writers of particular letters, though not as contributors to the narrative as a whole. All use a combination of scene, summary, and commentary, the latter having a largely moral purpose. Of the three, Clara perceives herself as morally superior to the other characters, knowing what is best for all of them; her role as the pursued beloved lady may contribute to this false conception, as may her greater education and her wealth, despite statements asserting her lack of concern about class backgrounds. Their three points of view tend to help correct any false impressions they would create of themselves. Finally, they are generally limited to what they can learn

naturally. The closest Brown comes to using any privileged source of information is when, coincidentally, Mary Anne Wilmot turns out to have been the cousin of Mrs. Howard; the use of only one such unlikely coincidence shows unusual restraint for an author of Brown's period, of course.

The use of Clara's and Mary's letters themselves allows ample material to examine how their speech characterizes them in style and content; in contrast, only the summaries of others characterize their mothers. Clara, as mentioned earlier, perceives herself as superior in her rationality and moral discernment. When she feels she has the upper hand, her style is usually simple and straightforward; her tone, cool if not unkind, as in an early letter upbraiding Philip:

> My life has known much sorrow, but the sharpest pangs will be those arising from the sense of your unworthiness.
>
> In my eyes, marriage is no sensual or selfish bargain. I will never vow to honour the man who deserves only my contempt; and my esteem can be secured only by a just and disinterested conduct. Perhaps esteem is not the only requisite to marriage. Of that I am not certain; but I know it is an indispensable requisite to love. I cannot love any thing in you but excellence.[92]

She is capable of working herself into a kind of frenzy of benevolence and apparent self-abnegation, especially when this is necessary to rouse Philip to what she perceives as his duty. At such times, she tends to use archaic forms, questions, exclamations, and figurative expressions. This

can be seen when she reproaches Philip for believing gossip about Mary's chastity:

> Ah, my friend, art thou so easily misled? Does slander find in thee a dupe of her most silly and extravagant contrivances? At second-hand, too, with all the deductions and embellishments which must cleave to every story as it passes through the imagination of two gossips![93]

Her finest oration occurs when, after relenting briefly toward Philip, she tries once more to make him feel guilty about Mary:

> Does not your heart, my Philip, bleed for poor Mary? Can I rob her of so precious a good, bereave her of the gem of which she has so long been in secure possession? Can I riot in bliss, and deck myself in bridal ornaments, while she lives pining in dreary solitude, carrying to the grave a heart broken by the contumelies of the world, the horrors of indigence and neglect, and chiefly by the desertion of him on whom she doted?[94]

This rings more of theatre than of genuine anguish. When she is truly distressed, her style is less fanciful. She then uses shorter sentences and paragraphs and jumps from one idea to another, as she does in the ninth letter. After hearing that Philip may die as a result of saving a girl in a drowning incident, Clara writes:

> My father carries you this. The merciful God grant that he may find you alive! Philip, is it impossible for you to forgive me. But I deserve it not. I have lost you forever! My wickedness and folly merited no less.
>
> My father smiles, and says there is hope. He vows to find you out, to restore you to health, to bring you back to us alive and happy.
>
> Good God! What horrible infatuation was it that made me write as I did? If thou diest, just will be my punishment. Never more will I open my eyes to the light.[95]

Thus, her genuinely impassioned style differs from her self-indulgent histrionics, designed to manipulate Philip into guilt or action. These differences in style show a discrepancy between Clara's self-image and her real self.

Mary Wilmot's style of expression can be seen in two long letters: one written to Clara Howard, relating her experiences since her disappearances; and a much earlier one, bidding farewell to Philip, who sends a copy of it in a missive to Clara. The first letter shows little difference in style from that of Clara's "controlled" letters. It is difficult to perceive any of the differences which education or personality would probably have caused between these two characters. This paragraph of Mary's might have been written by either:

> I once again entered my native city. Sedley was prepared to meet and welcome me. He was apprized of my contention as to Stanley, and did not disapprove; he even wrote the billet by which I invited your friend to my lodgings.[96]

Her earlier letter to Philip, written at a time when her emotions must have been extremely aroused, is written in a more controlled manner than Clara's impassioned style. There are few exclamations and questions, and no flights of figurative fancy; the tone seems a mixture of sadness and a proud attempt to hide that sadness:

> I see how it is. This Clara will be yours. That intelligence, that mien, that gracefulness, which rustic obscurity cannot hide, which the garb of a clown could never disguise, accompanied with the

> ardent commendations of her father, will fascinate her in a moment. I cannot hesitate what to wish, or how to act.[97]

At the same time, form and content combine to reproach Philip for his boorish betrayal of her. The sad tone is combined with embarrassingly negative contrasts of herself and Clara, with reminders of the wealth he will gain from marrying Clara, and with direly phrased prophesies of her own death. Mary tells him:

> Long before the expiration of the half-year, I shall be removed beyond your reach. This is not the illusion of despair. I feel in my deepest vitals the progress of death. Nature languishes within me, and every hour accelerates my decay.[98]

The self-abnegating contrasts show her lack of self-esteem, perhaps stemming from her illegitimacy and her loss of fortune. More importantly, in a letter ostensibly freeing Philip, she binds him in tethers of guilt.

The difference between Mary's and Clara's conflict between self-concept and reality is that Mary is convinced of her error after Mrs. Valentine brings it to her attention, and she corrects it by assuring Philip of her happiness. Her trials may have made her more willing to see imperfections in herself than Clara is, since Clara has never been tested by fortune. Clara never relinquishes her self-image as the high-priestess of rationality and morality. In her last letter to Philip, she tells him that she will assume some of the prerogatives of an older sister in their marriage because she considers herself superior in moral discernment.[99]

Interestingly, Mary and Clara are doppelgängers in many ways. They are second cousins; both have loved Philip; and both are faced with the aforementioned conflict between self-image and reality. Finally, they are similar in their pride. For instance, they vie with each other in benevolence as though it were a competitive sport. Mary's particular arena is false pride in her economic situation. The plot resolves this by her marriage to the wealthy Sedley. Clara's pride is her moral superiority, and she comes through the novel with her moral certitude intact.

Jane Talbot is a longer and more successful epistolary novel than Clara Howard. There is one minor woman character worth consideration, Harriet Thomson; one secondary character, Miss Jessup; and two major characters, Mrs. Fielder and Jane Talbot herself.

Harriet Thomson makes a brief and belated entrance as the sister of the dying friend whom Henry Colden goes to comfort. She fulfills a largely esthetic function. Her arguments foreshadow and make more plausible Colden's conversion.

Miss Jessup plays a slightly larger role. She occurs fairly early in the novel as the gossip who makes Jane undeservedly jealous of the sick woman whom Colden is visiting. Brown skillfully foreshadows Miss Jessup's larger esthetic role by having Jane remark about her at this time that ". . . she is not entirely without design

in her prattle."[100] Later, Miss Jessup is responsible for stealing and forging part of a letter which causes Mrs. Fielder to believe that Jane had an adulterous relationship with Colden. This, of course, helps create Mrs. Fielder's hatred for Colden.

Mrs. Fielder does not go much beyond an esthetic function. It is interesting to observe that she provides a new twist on the role of the comedic parent who forbids a child's marriage in that some of her objections to Colden are valid and in that she is motivated by genuine concern for Jane rather than selfish purposes. To this extent, at least, she departs from type in the direction of mimesis; her words and actions present her as loving and protecting Jane, despising Colden, and using her considerable energy and determination to keep them apart.

Jane Talbot obviously fulfills an esthetic function as the comedic heroine caught between the wishes of a beloved parent and her love of a young man. However, Jane is Brown's most mimetic portrayal of a woman character, even an average woman.[101] Brown skillfully characterizes her in scene and statement as wavering from actions which she feels she should do, quite unlike the dauntless Constantia. For example, she knows full well that she should not lend her brother money, and yet she does so. Her persuasibility causes her to be an easy mark for the determination of Mrs. Fielder as well as for the loving

embraces of Henry Colden. Furthermore, she seems lifelike because she actually changes, from a state of over-sensibility to one in which sensibility and rationality are more in balance. Her religious change is one indication of this change as is the fact that when her brother returns from Europe, he is no longer able to win her over as he was before he left.

Like Clara Howard, Jane Talbot is truly epistolary in form. Jane Talbot also has the form-related problems of being blurred in focus due to the various correspondents and to being too clearly under Brown's control. The same advantages are shared: suspense and immediacy; easy time shifts; provision for opportunities to explore individuals' consciousness; and depth of characterization by various points of view on the same person. This last quality can be seen in the characterization of Jane which is created by her own comments and those remarks and actions of Henry Colden, Mrs. Fielder, Jane's father, Frank, Miss Jessup, and Mrs. Montford. One advantage of the epistolary form in revealing characters in a love relationship is that it permits the two lovers to characterize each other both directly to the beloved and indirectly to other parties. The form of Jane Talbot, like that of Clara Howard, also rests on the union of two protagonists who initially represent sensibility and rationality. The male-female roles switch from Clara Howard; in this final novel, it is the male who

represents rationality (if not institutions) and the female who represents passion, at least initially. In Jane Talbot, Brown adds a further refinement by having these two protagonists move to more centrist positions themselves before they can be united.

The epistolary form of Jane Talbot affects point of view. There are seventy letters and no narrative pretense of shipping off the whole packet to someone, a departure from Brown's practice in his other novels. As in Clara Howard, there are again some letters within letters and other variations of the "puzzle box" narration. Also, as in Brown's other novels, it would be difficult here to distinguish the implied author from the narrators in Jane Talbot. Henry Colden, Jane Talbot, and Mrs. Fielder are the principal narrators; Colden's sister and brother-in-law are introduced towards the end of the novel largely to provide correspondents now that Mrs. Fielder is dead and now that Jane and Colden no longer correspond. All of the principal narrators are very actively involved as well as being conscious narrators insofar as they are writing letters. None of the main narrators seems unreliable as none of their behavior deviates markedly from their self-images. The comments of the various narrators sometimes support and occasionally correct each other's, adding correction when there is misleading or incomplete evidence. Mrs. Fielder, as appropriate to her position and years, perceives her

viewpoint as wiser than that of Jane or Colden; at times, the reader might agree with her while at other times, her difference of opinion seems more directly a product of her different role.

There is sufficient direct discourse to consider how the styles of Miss Jessup, Mrs. Fielder, and Jane help characterize them. Miss Jessup's is the least useful because there is the smallest quantity. Tone and content in her one letter to Mrs. Fielder suggest the deepest remorse for the unhappiness her deceit has caused:

> I know how little I deserve to be forgiven. Nothing can palliate the baseness of this action, I acknowledge it with the deepest remorse, and nothing, especially since the death of Mr. Talbot, has lessened my grief, but the hope that some unknown cause prevented the full effect of this forgery on his peace. . . . All my enmities and restless jealousy found their repose in the same day.[102]

The insincerity of her contrition is obvious by her immediate denial of the forgery and her confession to Mrs. Fielder. Thus, the style and content of her letter condemn her by being at such variance with her actions.

Mrs. Fielder writes in a grand and passionate style and is prone to the use of deliberate repetition of words and phrases. She often uses strong words easily in her condemnation of Colden, as she does after Miss Jessup claims her confession is a lie:

> I pity you, sir; I grieve for you: you have talents of a certain kind, but your habits, wretchedly and flagitiously perverse, have made you act on most occasions like an idiot. Their iniquity was not sufficient to deter you from impostures which--but I scorn to chide you.[103]

One wonders what she would have said if she had deigned to chide him! Only on her deathbed does she seem to have any doubts that her views are unassailable. Stylistically, the same use of repetition and even periodic structure remains, though her sentences are shorter. Interestingly, she cannot unbend enough even at this point to speak the name of Henry Colden, which she goes to great pains to avoid:

> I have wronged thee, Jane. I have wronged the absent; I greatly fear, I have. Forgive me. If you even meet, entreat him to forgive me, and recompense yourself and him for all your mutual sufferings.[104]

Jane is, of course, most fully characterized of these three women by her own style. Her pliability is shown by her equally sincere promises of fidelity to Henry Colden when she is near him, and to her mother when Mrs. Fielder is close enough to control her. When Jane has first renounced Colden and gone to live with her mother, he simultaneously receives two letters from Jane, both vehement in tone and exclamatory in style. The first gives him this advice:

> Oh, comfort me, my friend! plead against yourself; against me. Be my mother's advocate. Fly away from these arms that clasp you, and escape from me, even if your flight be my death.[105]

The subsequent letter, written just three days later, is in the same style and even uses the same imagery of flight: "Fly to me. Save me from my mother's irresistable expostulations. I cannot--cannot withstand her tears."[106] The

use of the same style in these two contradictory letters clearly demonstrates her ambivalence.

Earlier, Brown uses her style at more relaxed times to characterize her as affectionate and even sensual. She teases Colden for his forebodings of their poverty should they marry:

> What do you mean, Hal, by such a strain as this? . . . Must I huddle, with a dozen squalling children and their notably-noisy or sluttishly-indolent dam, round a dirty hearth and meagre winter's fire? Must sooty rafters, a sorry truckle-bed, and a mud-encumbered alley be my nuptial lot?[107]

Her use of Colden's nickname, of exaggeration, and of coined hyphenated adjectives helps create the affectionate and teasing tone. Her sensuality, exemplified by chiding Henry for his cold style of parting from her and writing to her, is also evident in her style. Coyly, she teases him about touching her breast:

> I have just placed this dear letter of yours next my heart. The sensation it affords, at this moment, is delicious; almost as much so as I once experienced from a certain somebody's hand placed on the same spot. But that somebody's hand was never (if I recall aright) so highly honored as this paper. Have I not told you that your letter is deposited <u>next</u> my heart?[108]

Her repetition of the location of the letter, the coyness of "a certain sombody's hand," and the parenthetical remark designed to cause him to remember their caresses, all help create a tone of sensuality.

Witherington has suggested a shift in Jane's style which reveals her move away from insecurity and some unsureness of Henry's love.[109] For instance, early in the novel,

she speaks of her heart to Henry as a "temple," later as a more assailable "mansion," and, in her last letter as merely a "frail tenement."[110] While style does not help reveal that shift in her from sensibility to rationality, the content of her words and actions alone is enough to do this. More of a change in style, reflecting some change in personality, is evident in Colden's later letters which move towards the exclamatory and staccato, showing the outpouring of distress and anticipation.[111] Earlier, the differences between his style and Jane's had helped characterize both of them, emphasizing their differences. As Butler has suggested, Colden's style at that point

". . . reflects rational thinking rather than the excited and breathlessly bombastic nature of Jane's short sentences, exclamations, invective, and reversed syntax.[112] Jane is also characterized by the contrast between her style and her brother's, whose style is rough and blunt, even profane. Early in the novel, he calls himself a "damned oaf! to be thus creeping and cringing to an idiot--a child--an ape!"[113] Later, the difference between Jane and Frank is clearly exhibited in this exchange about Talbot's death:

> Jane: It is long since the common destiny has ended all Talbot's engagements.
> Frank: Dead is he? Well, a new aspirer, I suppose, has succeeded, and he is the bone of contention. Who's he?[114]

In Jane Talbot, Brown shows that he has learned a great deal about writing dialogue. The dialogue in his last novel is

not only clearly differentiated in style but also helps create characters by its differentiations. Hence, Jane Talbot leans much less heavily on the summary characterization by a narrator than do Wieland and Ormond.

In the last two novels, despite their more limited scope, Brown's plots are more unified and the overall form is subsequently tightened. The endings seem more closely unified with what came before them than does Wieland's. In his very last novel, Brown was able to portray his most mimetic women character because of his improved literary technique. Jane Talbot most skillfully uses character function, form, point of view, and style; and the result is his closest approximation of a real woman, Jane Talbot herself. Charles Brockden Brown's scope may have narrowed in his last novels, but his craftsmanship shows improvement despite the brief course of his career as a novelist.

NOTES--CHAPTER V

[1]Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 88-105. I am also indebted to the lectures of Professor Bernard J. Paris of Michigan State University on this topic.

[2]Scholes and Kellogg, p. 98.

[3]Scholes and Kellogg, p. 101.

[4]Scholes and Kellogg, p. 89.

[5]W. J. Harvey, Character and the Novel (London: Chatto and Windus, 1965), pp. 16-17.

[6]Paul Witherington, "Brockden Brown's Other Novels: Clara Howard and Jane Talbot," Nineteenth Century Fiction 29 (December 1974), 258.

[7]Scholes and Kellogg, p. 13.

[8]Scholes and Kellogg, p. 275.

[9]Scholes and Kellogg, p. 275.

[10]Wayne C. Booth, "Distance and Point-of-View: An Essay in Classification," Essays in Criticism 11 (1961), rpt. in The Theory of the Novel, ed. Philip Stevick, pp. 91-107. The following six paragraphs present a summary of relevant distinctions made by Booth.

[11]Ian Watt remarks on the existence of this same problem in modern criticism of Defoe. See The Rise of the Novel (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1967), p. 127.

[12]Ormond, pp. 4 and 109.

[13]Watt, pp. 27-30.

[14]Clark, Charles Brockden Brown: Pioneer Voice of America, p. 307.

[15]John Neal, "American Writers, No. II," Blackwood's Magazine 16 (October 1824), 421.

[16]G. C. Verplanck, "Brown's Life and Works [A review of The Life of Charles Brockden Brown . . . by Dunlap]," North American Review 9 (June 1819), 73 and 76.

[17]Richard Henry Dana, Sr., "The Novels of Charles Brockden Brown," U.S. Review and Literary Gazette 2 (August 1827), 323-324 and 329.

[18]Warfel, Charles Brockden Brown: American Gothic Novelist, p. 108.

[19]Donald A. Ringe, Charles Brockden Brown (New Haven, Conn.: College and University Press, 1966), p. 139. Ringe considers Wieland, Edgar Huntly, and Arthur Mervyn Brown's best. See p. 138.

[20]Watt, p. 28.

[21]Wieland, p. 263.

[22]Lewis M. Bush, "The Genesis of the American Psychological Novel," Diss. University of Maryland 1969, p. 144.

[23]John Bayley, "Character and Consciousness," New Literary History 5 (Winter 1974), 226.

[24]Berthoff, "A Lesson on Concealment," p. 47.

[25]Wieland, p. 62.

[26]Paul Witherington, "Narrative Techniques in the Novels of Charles Brockden Brown," Diss. University of Texas 1964, p. 125.

[27]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," p. 124.

[28]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," p. 164. Witherington gives as examples of her announcement of conclusion: "Such were the reflections that haunted me during the night, and which eventually deprived me of sleep," and "Such were the ideas that, during the night, were tumultuously revolved by me." See Wieland, pp. 86 and 114.

[29]Wieland, p. 222.

[30]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," pp. 24 and 112.

[31]Wieland, pp. 202-203.

[32]Wieland, p. 167.

[33]Wieland, p. 134.

[34]Wieland, p. 202.

[35]Wieland, p. 258.

[36]It is universally accepted that anything footnoted must be true.

[37]Wieland, p. 85.

[38]Wieland, pp. 140-143.

[39]Wieland, p. 41.

[40]Wieland, p. 41.

[41]Wieland, p. 41.

[42]Wieland, pp. 69-70.

[43]Wieland, p. 70.

[44]David Loren Butler, "A Study of the Literary Style of the Novels of Charles Brockden Brown," Diss. St. Louis University 1972, p. 71.

[45]Wieland, pp. 113-114.

[46]Carl W. Nelson, "The Novels of Charles Brockden Brown: Irony and Illusion," Diss. SUNY (Binghamton) 1970, pp. 14-16.

[47]Wieland, pp. 43-45 and 50.

[48]Carl W. Nelson, "Brown's Manichaean Mock-Heroic: The Ironic Self in a Hyperbolic World," West Virginia University Philological Papers 24 (September 1973), 32-33.

[49]Ormond, p. 51.

[50]Carl W. Nelson, "A Just Reading of Charles Brockden Brown's Ormond," Early American Literature 8 (Fall 1973),

[51]Nelson, "A Just Reading . . . ," p. 164.

[52]Ormond, p. 60.

[53]Ormond, p. 109.

[54]Sydney Krause on "Ormond: Seduction in a New Key" argues that this criticism is unjust and that Brown did not permit us to see Ormond's struggles with Constantia so that we would be left with as good an impression of Ormond as possible. See pp. 582-583.

[55]Patricia Jewell McAlexander, "Sexual Morality in the Fiction of Charles Brockden Brown: Index to a Personal and Cultural Debate Regarding Passion and Reason," Diss. University of Wisconsin 1973, p. 204.

[56]Ormond, p. 282.

[57]Ormond, p. 246.

[58]Bayley, "Character and Consciousness," p. 226.

[59]Nelson, "Brown's Manichaean . . . ," p. 37.

[60]Ormond, p. 27.

[61]William L. Hedges, "Charles Brockden Brown and the Culture of Contradictions," EAL 9 (Fall 1974), 118.

[62]Ormond, p. 220.

[63]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," p. 104.

[64]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," p. 120.

[65]The first mention of Constantia is on page 10; she is directly quoted first on page 38 and next on page 84.

[66]Ormond, p. 145-146.

[67]Ormond, p. 151.

[68]Ormond, p. 151.

[69]Ormond, p. 142.

[70]Ormond, p. 280.

[71]Ormond, p. 187.

[72]Ormond, p. 188.

[73]Ormond, p. 197.

[74]Ormond, p. 26.

[75]Ormond, p. 256.

[76]Arthur Mervyn, I, pp. 8 and 17.

[77]McAlexander, pp. 252-253 and 250.

[78]Butler, p. 133.

[79]Arthur Mervyn, I, p. 189.

[80]Arthur Mervyn, II, pp. 79-82. See my closer evaluation of this within the feminism section of the third chapter.

[81]Arthur Mervyn, II, pp. 77-78.

[82]Edgar Huntly, pp. 127 and 148.

[83]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," p. 98.

[84]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," pp. 32 and 148.

[85]Clara Howard, pp. 339-340.

[86]Clara Howard, p. 368.

[87]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," pp. 160-161.

[88]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," p. 99.

[89]Butler, pp. 141-142.

[90]McAlexander, pp. 292-293. McAlexander argues that the male voice speaks for passion in Jane Talbot too, but I disagree. See my treatment of that novel later in this chapter.

[91]Clara Howard, pp. 314-351.

[92]Clara Howard, p. 301.

[93]Clara Howard, p. 355.

[94]Clara Howard, p. 351.

[95]Clara Howard, p. 311.

[96]Clara Howard, p. 396.

[97]Clara Howard, p. 298.

[98]Clara Howard, p. 298.

[99]Clara Howard, p. 409.

[100]Jane Talbot, p. 56.

[101]Witherington agrees. See his "Narrative Techniques," p. 45, and "Brockden Brown's Other Novels," p. 272.

[102]Jane Talbot, p. 191.

[103]Jane Talbot, p. 198.

[104]Jane Talbot, p. 217.

[105]Jane Talbot, p. 180.

[106]Jane Talbot, p. 181.

[107]Jane Talbot, p. 110.

[108]Jane Talbot, p. 53.

[109]Witherington, "Narrative Techniques," p. 272.

[110]Jane Talbot, pp. 97, 137, and 235.

[111]Butler, p. 155.

[112]Butler, p. 154.

[113]Jane Talbot, p. 34.

[114]Jane Talbot, p. 121.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In summation, then, Charles Brockden Brown's remarkable female characters were the result of a complex and often conflicting set of motives: his psychological need for self-therapy; his didactic desire to test and teach the ideas of associationist psychology, Godwinism, and feminism; and his economic necessity for writing entertainingly, which, to him, meant following the popular sentimental and gothic patterns. All of these motives not only caused him to write but also influenced the kinds of characters he presented. His psychological problems probably made him want to live through powerful male villains who required equally strong female characters for counterbalance. This need eventually weakened to the point that, after his marriage in 1804, he did not need to write fiction at all. His progress toward this point begins with his portraiture of villains with seemingly (or perhaps actual) supernatural powers in the first two novels and moves towards his portrayal of definitely terrestrial villains like Frank in Jane Talbot; their female counterparts become concomitantly less awesome. An analogous shift

takes place in Brown's testing of associationist psychology, Godwinism, and feminism. Throughout the brief course of his novels, the experiences of his women characters increasingly tend to support moderation and a change from reason to reasonability. As he becomes more conservative in his hopes for human perfection, individual behavior which deviates from even the appearance of normative social behavior becomes suspect. With the lessening of impact of liberal ideas, the influence of the model of sentimental and gothic heroines increases. In Clara Howard and Jane Talbot, therefore, the women characters are most strongly influenced by these types. However, even in these last two novels, Brown's heroines show a much greater tendency to follow inner sanction instead of external authority than do their British cousins.

Compared to his contemporary American novelists, Brown's use of narrative techniques to achieve subtle characterization is just as impressive as the impact of his complex set of motives. In character function, he departs from the use of purely esthetic types--such as the repentant fallen heroine, Charlotte Temple--to create women characters who balanced esthetic, illustrative, and mimetic functions. In his final novel, tamer in the exploration of ideas than his first ones, he creates his most mimetic average woman, Jane Talbot. Also, Brown uses a variety of novelistic forms, all calculated to reveal the inner workings

of the human consciousness. For the purpose of characterization, he was more successful with the fictional autobiography and the purely epistolary forms than with the fictional biography form used in Ormond that creates some disbelief in the narrator's access to other characters' thoughts. The question of narrator reliability influences audience acceptance of characterization by the narrator in all of Brown's novels, especially since the views of the implied author are rarely evident. Finally, Brown utilizes stylistic techniques to characterize women. The range of Clara Wieland's responses and feelings is clearly shown by her shifts in syntax. While in his earlier novels Brown has difficulty differentiating characters of the same social class by speech styles alone, he does improve in this skill so that by Jane Talbot, contrasting distinctions of style help create character.

Brown's women characters are, then, equally fascinating for the shifts they reveal in his artistic personality and thinking, for the ever-improving techniques which create them, and, of course, in and of themselves as portrayals of headstrong idealistic people of nearly two centuries past. It is no wonder that they have interested so many students of American literature.

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