Sentimental Literature as Social Criticism: Susan Warner, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Emma D.E.N. Southworth as Active Agents, Negotiating Change in the United States in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

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Abstract

Detractors of sentimental literature argue that such novels are unoriginal and concerned primarily with emotions. Feminist scholars redeem the reputation of sentimental literature to an extent. At present, a multitude of approaches present sentimental authors as active agents, engaging with public issues. Building upon the scholarship of prominent feminist historians and literary critics, this thesis provides direct evidence that three female authors embrace the responsibilities of being a social critic. *The Wide, Wide World* (1850) by Susan Warner, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851) by Harriet Beecher Stowe, and *The Hidden Hand* (1859) by Emma D.E.N. Southworth provide unique commentaries on the separation of the private and public spheres, market revolution, and religion. Decisive differences between the authors' opinions reveal a high degree of engagement with the public issues.

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Introduction

"If you never publish another book, publish this."[1] So Mrs Putnam advised her son, the publisher George P. Putnam, after reading the manuscript of *The Wide, Wide World* (1850) by Susan Warner.[2] Together with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (serialised in 1851, published as a novel in 1852) by Harriet Beecher Stowe, and *The Hidden Hand* (serialised in 1859, published in novel form in the United States in 1888) by Emma D.E.N. Southworth, this sentimental novel explores issues that concerned Americans.[3] This thesis suggests that Warner, Stowe, and Southworth used their novels to communicate to the reader their personal opinions of public issues. Of particular concern to these women was the separation of the private and public sphere, market revolution, and religion. Beneath a veneer of conformity, the three authors present a comprehensive critique of society in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century.

The Wide, Wide World, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and *The Hidden Hand* have been chosen to represent sentimental fiction because each piece is at once representative of an individual woman's perspective and the concerns of a large group of literate Americans. The popularity of the novels, each one selling thousands of copies and going into numerous editions, indicates that the commentaries of Warner, Stowe, and Southworth are intimately concerned with contentious issues of the 1850s. Of course the correlation between social criticism and high sales figures is complicated by the covert nature of the author's comments. Indeed, each novel does conform to popular expectations of sentimental fiction.[4] This thesis identifies what these expectations were, and how the authors subtly manipulated them. Ultimately, such analysis leads to a new evaluation of a class of literature that has been deemed inferior by many critics.[5]

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[1] Anna Warner, *Susan Warner* (New York: G.P. Putnams Sons, 1909), 283.

[2] Susan Warner, *The Wide, Wide World* (New York: George P. Putnam, 1851).

[3] Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or Negro Life in the Slave States of America* (London: Richard Bentley, 1852). Emma D.E.N. Southworth, *The Hidden Hand; or Capitola the Madcap* (New York: Hurst and Company, 1907). The publication date of *The Hidden Hand* serialised, will be treated as the definitive date of publication, despite the text only being published in the form of a conventional novel in 1888. Southworth's social criticisms, in serial and novel form, related to political and economic circumstances in 1859.

Similarities between the origins of the authors are another important reason for focusing on these three sentimental novels. Warner, Stowe, and Southworth were all born in the same decade, the 1810s, and came from middle-class families established in the north-east of the United States.[6] Each woman reached maturity in the north-east, and published her principal novel in the 1850s. Although the three authors communicate divergent opinions, these nominal similarities remain useful as a foundation for comparison. That Warner, Stowe, and Southworth share similar origins, exposes the impact of social changes upon the individual perspectives of the authors.

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[4] F.O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* (London: Oxford University, 1941), xiv. Matthiessen defines the mid-nineteenth century as an age determined by a fusion of appearance and what lay behind it.

[5] Nina Baym, *Feminism and American Literary History: Essays* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 1992), 4-5. Baym understands the parameters for judging literature were a result of individual and communal perspective. Perhaps women wrote 'inferior' literature because they lacked the education and experience to write differently. Nina Baym, "Portrayal of Women in American Literature: 1790-1870," in *What Manner of Woman: Essays on English and American Life and Literature*, ed. Marlene Springer (New York: New York University, 1977), 228. Baym reasons that residual puritan scorn and distrust of fiction, literary nationalism, and high literary aims caused major authors to avoid writing novels. For a transcultural perspective on the dangers of categorizing and judging World Literature see Anders Pettersson, "Transcultural Literary History: Beyond Constricting Notions of World Literature," *New Literary History*, vol. 39, no. 3 (Summer, 2008): 463-79. Annette Kolodny, "Dancing Through the Minefield," in *Feminisms Redux: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, eds. Robyn Warhol-Down and Diane Price Herndl (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 2009), 26. Kolodny discusses the 'sexist' process of canonisation. Peggy Kamuf, "Writing Like A Woman," in *Women and Language in Literature and Society*, eds. Sally McConnel-Ginet, Ruth Borker, and Nelly Furman (New York: Praeger, 1980), 284-98. Kamuf also discusses the difference between men's and women's writing. Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (New York: Norton, 1986), chapter eight.

[6] For a biography of Warner, see Laurie Ousley, "Susan (Bogert) Warner," *American Women Prose Writers: 1820-1870*, edited by Amy E. Hudock and Katharine Rodier (Detroit: Gale Group, 2001). Dictionary of Literary Biography vol. 239. *Literary Resource Centre*. Accessed 23 Aug. 2011. http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.canterbury.ac.nz/ps/i.do?&id=GALE%. GALE/H1200010188. Warner was born in New York City, in July 1819. Until the age of eighteen, and the Panic of 1837, Warner lived a privileged existence. After that year the family's fortune was largely depleted, and the Warners moved to Constitution Island. For a biography of Southworth, see Joanne Dobson, and Amy E. Hudock, "Emma Dorothy Eliza Nevitte Southworth," *American Women Prose Writers: 1820-1870*, edited by Amy E. Hudock and Katharine Rodier (Detroit: Gale Group, 2001). Dictionary of Literary Biography vol. 239. *Literary Resource Centre*. Accessed 22 Aug. 2011. http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.canterbury.ac.nz/ps/i.do?&id=GALE%. GALE/H1200010163. Southworth was born in 1819, in Washington D.C. and lived through an unhappy childhood to be deserted by her husband after four years of marriage. The most comprehensive and accurate biography of Stowe is provided by Joan D. Hedrick, *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life* (New York: Oxford University, 1994). Stowe was born in 1811, in Litchfield, Connecticut. Her upbringing was tumultuous with Lyman Beecher as a

Given the influence of public issues upon the perspectives of the three authors, staggering the dates of publication, 1850, 1852, and 1859, may reveal an evolution of women's perspective upon public issues. In 1850 the United States was at the beginning of a decade of rapid change that would culminate in civil war. By 1859 circumstances had changed. Many of the issues that had concerned Americans at the beginning of the decade had reached a point of crisis. Further research is necessary to positively ascertain whether sentimental literature does map a change of women's perspective of political, economic, and social events during the 1850s. This thesis can only suggest an answer.

Feminist historians have done much to prove the significance of sentimental literature. One important argument, advanced by the scholarship of Jane Tompkins and Linda Kerber, has been that sentimental authors were active agents in the production of social mores, rather than passive recipients.[7] This thesis builds upon arguments for agency by providing specific examples of authors advocating unconventional and rebellious action. Mary Kelley's scholarship provides the opportunity to more clearly

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father. Southworth was born in 1819, in Washington D.C. and lived through an unhappy childhood to be deserted by her husband after four years of marriage.

[7] Jane Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860* (New York: Oxford University, 1985), 69. Tompkins references Pocock, arguing that republican virtue requires active participation in life of the *polis.* Kerber, *Women*. Richard Volney Chase, *The American Novel and Its Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1957), 9-11. Chase's comparison of the American and English novel, reinforces Tompkins point. In contrast to the passivity of 'middlebrow' English novels, American novels were either 'highbrow' or 'lowbrow.' Since the sentimental novels of Warner, Stowe, and Southworth were actively engaging with the society for who they were written, the novels should be considered American. Also see Baym, "Portrayal," 227. Mary McCartin Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood in Nineteenth Century American Literature* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2007), 15-42. Joan Burbick, *Healing the Republic: The Language of Health and Culture of Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1994), 188.

define what ‘active agency’ implies. In “The Sentimentalists: Promise and Betrayal in the Home” (1979), Kelley complicates the theory of sentimental authors as active agents.[8] In the first instance, she interprets descriptions of women’s spiritual superiority in sentimental novels as a sign of frustration with erring husbands. However, Kelley goes on to argue that women writers were struggling to fill a ‘moral vacuum’ in the United States. While the first argument contradicts the ‘active agent’ theory, the second supports it. This thesis confirms Kelly’s theory of female authors confronting a moral vacuum, but denies that the women present themselves as victims. Warner, Stowe, and Southworth do not appear to be content with the moral condition of the United States, and so they strive to implement change.[9]

The scholarship of Jane Tompkins and Elizabeth Barnes is particularly relevant to the analysis carried out in this thesis. In *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860* (1985), Tompkins considers religion and the economy in her approach to sentimental literature, concluding that authors were attempting to redefine the social order in which they lived. Tompkins champions the idea of republican virtue as central to authors’ arguments, emphasising how the home became an intimate version of the United States, in which women could nurture moral sentiments.[10] In this way, Tompkins recognises the significance of sentimental novels.

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[8] Mary Kelley, “The Sentimentalists: Promise and Betrayal in the Home,” *Signs*, vol. 4, no. 3 (Spring, 1979): 434-46.

[9] Gerda Lerner, “U.S. Women’s History Past, Present, and Future,” *Journal of Women’s History*, vol. 16, no. 4 (Winter, 2004): 21-22. Lerner identifies, in 2004, new scholarship interested in the ways ‘deviant’ groups were defined. Although Warner, Stowe, and Southworth were not deviant, they were a definite group, defined by society and attempting to define themselves in the process of writing. A supplementary question is whether they considered themselves to be distinctly different from women who were not authors. This question bear further investigation, which can not be carried out in the course of this thesis.

[10] Baym, *Feminism*, 107, 118. Baym notes a shift to Victorian traditions between the 1820s and 1850s. Focusing on the political significance of sentimental literature, Baym perceives these texts to be looking in towards the home, rather than out to the republic, although Enlightenment republicanism remained in a

Elizabeth Barnes, in *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel* (1997), reverses Tompkin's direction of influence.[11] In Barnes' account, sentimentalism converts the public issues of politics and the economy into subject matter for the private consideration of individuals. Barnes is concerned to show the self-interested nature of authors of sentimental fiction.[12] The political philosophies of democracy and republicanism play an important role, as they do for Tompkins. However, Barnes perceives sentimental fiction to be a form of seduction, and argues that sentimental literature created a 'politics of affinity' necessary for union.[13] She further evokes the sinister nature of those novels by claiming that the authors purposefully denied the didactic potential of their writing, in order to prevent readers thinking critically and practicing intellectual independence.[14] This thesis incorporates the selfish, darker motivations exposed by Barnes with the empowerment of sentimentality embarked upon by Tompkins. The result is a clear representation of the perspectives of Warner, Stowe, and Southworth.

Adjacent to the progression of feminist scholarship, economics has become a accepted framework within which to analyse sentimental fiction. Charles Sellers' *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (1991) plays a central role in

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supplemented and complicated form. Mary P. Ryan, *The Empire of the Mother: American Writing About Domesticity, 1830-1860* (New York: Haworth, 1982), 116-19. The transition noted by Baym is also recognized by Ryan, who emphasizes the importance of generational change. The generation of women who reached maturity during the 1830s suffered intense cravings for affection that would be articulated by their daughters. Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (London, Cambridge University, 1981), 182-85. Here Ryan notes generational change as a significant factor in the development of the middle class. The 1850s saw the second generation of middle-class individuals reach maturity. The home played a vitally important role in cultivating and protecting the middle class. Kerber, *Women*, chapter four.

[11] Elizabeth Barnes, *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel* (New York: Columbia University, 1997), 13.

[12] Ibid., 17.

[13] Ibid., 98.

[14] Ibid., 41.

determining the economic perspectives of the authors.[15] ‘Market revolution’ has an advantage over other terms used to describe the economic development of the United States during the nineteenth century, because it recognises the pervasive effects of change. ‘Market revolution’ indicates that all who contribute to the market, in whatever way, were affected by the revolution. Sellers argues that since all of society contributed to the nation’s economy, every aspect of ante-bellum society was recast as a result of capitalism.[16] He interprets “the non-economic costs, in human relations and stress, [to have been] sufficient to generate massive resistance.”[17] Given the subject of this thesis, it is appropriate that a historian who recognizes the cultural cost of capitalism should provide a central term against which the novels are examined. Other economic perspectives, such as those of Susan Coultrap-McQuin, Melissa Homestead, and Walter Johnson complicate analysis of the three authors’ perceptions of the market revolution.[18]

Although female writers claimed a spiritual superiority to justify their activity, a limited tradition of female authorship led to them suffering from “anxiety of authorship."[19] According to Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, in order to write, women had to rebel against the rules to which they had been socialized, and because they lacked antecedents, these women turned to one another for support. Dependency, as well as independent thought and action is implied in this interpretation of sentimental literature. Criticisms made by Warner, Stowe, and Southworth confirm Gilbert and Gubar's paradoxical concept of the nineteenth-century female writer. The three sentimental authors engage with society, sharing many concerns. However, the responses of the authors to those issues are diverse, unique to the individual, and often revolutionary.

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[15] Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (New York: Oxford University, 1991).

[16] For an important case study of the transformation of American society during the early nineteenth century, see Ryan, *Cradle*. Charles Perrow, *Organising America: Wealth, Power, and the Origins of Corporate Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University, 2002), 25. Perrow supports Sellers interpretation of the economic changes in the United States. Winifred Barr. Rothenberg, *From Market-Places to a Market Economy: The Transformation of Rural Massachusetts, 1750-1850* (Chicago: Chicago University, 1992). In contrast to Sellers, Rothenberg perceives economic change to be the result of rising agricultural production. Rothenberg takes an institutional economic position. T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (New York: Oxford University, 2004). Breen maintains a ‘high republican’ interpretation of economy of the colonies. Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2008), 95-96. Vries challenges Breen for cultivating the Jeffersonian myth with regards to the colonial economy. Sellers is also indicted for misrepresenting colonial American as hostile to commercialism.

[17] Charles Sellers, “Charles Sellers’s Response,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, vol. 12, no. 4, (Winter, 1992): 474.

[18] Susan M. Coultrap-McQuin, *Doing Literary Business: American Woman Writers in the Nineteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1990). Melissa J. Homestead, *American Women Authors and Literary Property, 1822-1869* (New York: Cambridge University, 2005). Walter Johnson, *Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1999).

Since the 1970s, feminist scholars have attempted to represent authors and characters alike as autonomous. Many of these arguments challenge Barbara Welter's prominent article, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860" (1966).[20] Welter interprets the categorisation of a woman in nineteenth-century American society to be based upon her piety, purity, submissiveness, and domestic skill. For instance, in direct confrontation with Welter's thesis, Frances Cogan published *All-American Girl: The Ideal of Real-Womanhood in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (1989).[21] Cogan theorizes that women in the nineteenth century adhered to a survival ethic that emphasized intelligence, physical health, self-sufficiency, and economic self-reliance. This contrasting, but in many respects equally narrow, idea of nineteenth-century womanhood,

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[19] Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "Infection in the Sentence: The Woman Writer and the Anxiety of Authorship," in *Feminisms Redux: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, eds. by Robyn Warhol-Down and Diane Price Herndl (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 2009), 10-19. Kolodny, "Dancing," 33-36. Kolodny considers feminist literary criticism to be inadequate to fully comprehend the myriad ways a text can be interpreted. Baym, *Feminism*, 109. Baym points out that the prevalence of history writing shows women writing in public forms for public purposes. Adrienne Rich, "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision," *College English*, vol. 34, no. 1 (Oct., 1972): 18-30. Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1977), 321-23. Douglas' interpretation of Margaret Fuller's relationship with writing supports Gilbert and Gubar's theory of an 'anxiety of authorship.'

[20] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." *American Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 2, vol. 1 (Summer, 1966): 151-74.

[21] Frances B. Cogan, *All-American Girl: The Ideal of Real-Womanhood in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (Athens: University of Georgia, 1989).

Cogan termed "Real Womanhood." The greater part of feminist scholarship does not challenge Welter's theory of "True Womanhood" so directly, because there is evidence that such an ideal held currency in the mid-nineteenth century, not least in sentimental fiction.

Many scholars have moved beyond the fraught question of how to interpret cultural norms, to approach sentimental literature through innovative methods of literary analysis. For instance, Cynthia Schoolar Williams investigates Susan Warner's manipulation of the masculine literary technique of *Bildungsroman* in her novel, *Queechy*.[22] Williams' argument that Warner consciously subverts the reader's expectations is pertinent to this thesis. Covert, autonomous, rebellious escapades by heroines are considered within this thesis, although the use of *Bildungsroman* specifically is not. Another scholar, Jane Tompkins, applies Foucault's discourse analysis, to present sentimental novels as "nodes within a network."[23] Supporting Tompkins' theory, a principal aim of this thesis is to reveal discourse between the society in which authors lived and the writing they produced for publication. Another interpretation of Tompkins' 'nodes in a network' theory is to see a discourse between pieces of sentimental literature, both within the United States and beyond.[24] Such scholarship has provided a literary context for research, revealing common arguments within sentimental texts. However, such similarities must not be allowed to eclipse the unique arguments made by each sentimental novel.

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[22] Cynthia Schoolar Williams, "Susan Warner's *Queechy* and the *Bildungsroman* Tradition," *Legacy*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Fall 1990): 3-16. Although members of the public sphere are integrated with the private spheres, Warner does not directly challenge the restriction of women to the private sphere. Hiding a tentatively subversive plot within a beginning and ending that emphasizes adherence to the tenets of true womanhood, makes *The Wide, Wide World* challenging to define. The evaluation carried out by Cynthia Schoolar Williams on another of Warner's novels, entitled *Queechy* (1852), indicates that the domestic spirit of the place Ellen embarks from, and where she ends up, may not inhibit the revisionary purpose of the text. The sequence of events after Ellen is forced to leave her maternal home lends itself to the *Bildungsroman* literary tradition, concerned with maturation. Such a plot is typically concerned with the male experience of learning to understand the modern, commercial world. For a good example of how another woman author used irony to avoid direct confrontation, see Elizabeth A. Wright, "'Joking Isn't Safe': Fanny Fern, Irony, and Signifyin(g)," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, vol. 31, no. 2 (Spring, 2001): 91-111. Karen Manners Smith, "The Novel," in *The History of Southern Women's Literature*, eds. Carolyn Perry and Mary Louise Weaks (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2002), 53. Kerber, *Women*, 278.

[23] Tompkins, *Sensational*, xv-xvi.

Analysing three novels determines that the scope of research in this thesis is narrow. The advantage of such a focused examination is that the conclusions of the thesis are accurate. Rather than attempting to apply broad theories to specific cases, as Tompkins and Barnes do, the opinions of Warner, Stowe, and Southworth are interpreted directly through their texts. By building conclusions upon the three novels, with minimal reference to other primary evidence, this thesis contributes significant evidence to feminist arguments for the active agency of sentimental authors.

Feminist historians' restoration of sentimental fiction during the 1970s corresponded with a renewed focus on context in literary analysis.[25] The ascent of New Historicism, or the reintegration of socio-historical and philological methods into the analysis of literary sources, has produced decades of historiography that refuses to separate a text from the context within which it was produced. New Historicism is adapted within this thesis. Context is paramount, since the discourse between the three sentimental novels and the society in which they were produced is a principal subject of analysis. However, reception and interpretation of the authors' ideas by readers is not considered. Such exclusion prevents the authors' intentions being obscured. Analysing the novels in informed isolation provides an accurate evaluation of the perspectives and intentions of Warner, Stowe, and Southworth.

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[24] For example, John Seelye, *Jane Eyre's American Daughters: From the Wide, Wide World to Anne of Green Gables: A Study in Marginalized Maidens and What They Mean* (Newark: University of Delaware, 2005). Donna M. Campbell, "Sentimental Conventions and Self-Protection: *Little Women* and *The Wide, Wide World*." *Legacy*, vol. 11, no. 2 (1994): 118-29. Lindsey Traub, "Negotiating Visibility: Louisa May Alcott's Narrative Experiments," in *Becoming Visible: Women's Presence in Late Nineteenth-Century America*, eds. Janet Floyd, R.J. Ellis, and Lindsey Traub (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010). Michelle Ann Abate, "Topsy and Topsy-Turvy Jo: Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and/in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*," *Children's Literature*, vol. 34 (2006): 59-82.

[25] For a discussion of the incompatibility of the author's intended meaning and the reader's created meaning, see Martyn P. Thompson, "Reception Theory and the Interpretation of Historical Meaning," *History and Theory*, vol. 32, no. 3 (Oct., 1993): 248-72. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 8-9. Wearn evaluates the recent broadening of the field of sentimental literature, finding that 'cultural continuity' has been established, rather than 'elaborate intricacies' being dwelt upon. Wearn's criticism of 'cultural continuity,' as being too reductive, supports the intent of this thesis. There is a need to analyse individual novels, to ascertain the specific manner in which the authors communicate their unique ideas.

The analytical framework of this thesis is an investigation of the authors' attitudes towards three public issues that were highly contentious during the 1850s, namely the separation of the private and public spheres, market revolution, and religion. *The Wide, Wide World*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and *The Hidden Hand* are each analysed individually, with regards to each of these subjects.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many literary critics denigrated sentimental fiction. There was a fear that such "fiction would detach readers' sentiments from the social world of the polity, substituting a private drama of fancy."[26] In 1942, Alexander Cowie defined sentimental literature as an:

> extended prose tale composed chiefly of commonplace household incidents and episodes loosely worked into a trite plot involving the fortunes of characters who exist less as individuals than as carriers of pious moral or religious sentiments.[27]

Cowie argues that sentimental novels were an inferior and unoriginal form of literature that made use of a template that was sure to please a readership of passive, young women. A century earlier, similar attitudes circulated. Henry Carey, a political economist and opponent of international copyright laws, wrote in 1868 that authors of fiction were like flower arrangers, who presumptuously claimed the flowers as their own.

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[26] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 55.

[27] Alexander Cowie, "The Vogue of the Domestic Novel, 1850-1870," *Southern Atlantic Quarterly*, no. 41 (Oct., 1942): 417. Tompkins, *Sensational*, xiv. Tompkins recognises that the popularity of novels written by women undermined their value.

> The owner of the garden would naturally say to him: "The flowers are mine, but the arrangement is yours. You cannot keep the bouquet, but you may smell it, or show it for your own profit, for an hour or two, but then it must come to me. If you prefer it, I am willing to pay you for your services, giving you a fair compensation for your time and taste."[28]

The reference to flowers indicates that Carey had the feminine genre of sentimental fiction in mind particularly. By likening novels to flowers, Carey suggests that the texts would only be popular for a very short period of time, and although they were beautiful, like a flower in bloom, they had no transcendent worth. Further, Carey compares sentimental authors to petty thieves. This association undermines the idea that sentimental authors only wrote to reform the reader. Nathaniel Hawthorne, a direct competitor against women writers, confirms Carey's perception of sentimental novels by dismissing their authors as "a damned mob of scribbling women."[29] Novels were denigrated by many people, for different reasons. However, sentimental authors consciously accentuate many of the characteristics of sentimental literature that critics took issue with.

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[28] Quoted in Homestead, *American Women Authors*, 116-17. For more information on copyright laws, see Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815 – 1848* (New York: Oxford University, 2007), 635. Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 227-28. On one occasion, in *The Wide, Wide World*, the heroine, Ellen and the hero, John Humphreys discuss the relationship between flowers and God. John remarks how "[a] bunch of flowers seems to bring me very near the hand that made them. They are the work of his fingers; and I cannot consider them without being joyfully assured of the glory and loveliness of their Creator. It is written as plainly to me in their delicate painting and sweet breath and curious structure, as in the very pages of the Bible; though no doubt without the Bible I could not read the flowers." These comments support the connection made between Carey's flowers and sentimental literature, for like John's flowers, sentimental literature was intimately associated with religion. Also see Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 255.

[29] Letter from Hawthorne to his publisher, William D. Ticknor (January, 1855), as quoted in Henry Nash Smith, "The Scribbling Women and the Cosmic Success Story," *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Sep., 1974): 47.

For women to publish, making their thoughts and feelings into material for public consumption, was considered improper by many Americans in the nineteenth century.[30] Writing sentimental literature was the most practical choice for women, since the subject matter and the manner of production and consumption negated prejudices against women writing.[31] Social mores dictated that women's work be private. Writing sentimental literature could be conveyed as a private effort. The emotions of both characters and readers are central to sentimental novels.[32] Since women were considered responsible for the emotions of those in their care, advocates of the private character of sentimental literature argued that these novels were appropriate.[33] Reinforcing this argument is the domestic setting of the majority of plots. As well as the content of novels, the context in which they were produced negated the impropriety of the authors' actions. Women could write within their own homes, basing their texts upon domestic experiences. Private contracts with 'gentleman' publishers assured that female authors maintained their good reputations, and that finished works remained relatively unsullied by degrading associations with profit.[34] Once purchased, sentimental novels could be read within the safety and comfort of the home. The sale of sentimental novels depended upon maintaining the respectability of author and reader. For this reason, the private nature of sentimental literature was vigorously promoted.[35]

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[30] Coultrap-McQuin, *Literary Business*, 7. Terry Lovell, "'Writing Like A Woman: A Question of Politics' – The Politics of Theory," in *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Mary Eagleton (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 91. Lovell argues that the claim of a strongly demarcated masculine and feminine in literature indicates a lack of such demarcation in reality.

[31] Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University, 1987), 9. Armstrong identifies distinct differences between domestic and other forms of fiction.

[32] Leslie Aaron Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York: Criterion Books, 1960), xxx, 6. Fiedler identifies the search for 'true feeling' inherent in sentimental literature, with full Romantic revolt. Extending Fiedler's reasoning, the sentimental novel's revolutionary purpose gives the text its universal quality. He also notes the predominantly female audience of sentimental novels, associating the emergence of the novel with the sexual division of labour.

[33] Nancy M. Theriot, *The Mothers and Daughters in 19th Century America: The Biosocial Construction of Femininity* (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1996), 3-5. Theriot discusses texts as activities, rather than 'reality reflectors.'

Not everybody in the 1850s considered nourishing the spiritual and physical health of those within their homes, to be the extent of women's responsibilities. Many men and women considered the nurturing influence of mothers, wives, and daughters to be crucial to maintaining the integrity of the United States.[36] Many critics of the market revolution considered men to be the principal architect's of an ascending culture of exploitation, and women's loving nature to be the only force powerful enough to restore morality to public enterprises.[37] As early as 1776, Abigail Adams implores her husband, John Adams "not [to] put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could."[38] Nearly a century later, Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe dedicate *The American Woman's Home or, Principles of Domestic Science* (1869) to "The Women of America, In Whose Hands Rest the Real Destinies of the Republic."[39] Traditional expectations that women act as 'moral guardians,' were reinforced by the spiritual superiority of women, advocated by

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[34] Coultrap-McQuin, *Literary Business*, see chapters three and four for analysis of Southworth's and Stowe's relationships with their publishers.

[35] Ibid., 3-26.

[36] Baym, *Feminism*, 112. Baym points out that women were doubly witnesses to historical actions because they saw what men did, and then experienced the effects of what men did.

[37] Kerber, *Women*, chapter one. Kerber complicates this idea by demonstrating that during the revolutionary era, women were considered harmful to the development of a republic.

[38] Letter from Abigail Adams to John Adams (31 March, 1776), quoted in Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 12. Also on the subject of women's responsibility to redeem the nation, see Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 42. Kerber, *Women*, 220.

[39] Catharine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home or, Principles of Domestic Science* (New York: Ford, 1869). *The American Woman's Home* is a central text in the Cult of Domesticity. Catharine Beecher was a principal advocate of the Cult of Domesticity.

Evangelists.[40] In this atmosphere of expectation, it was crucial that Warner, Stowe, and Southworth promote the redemptive power of women.[41]

Religious revivalism during the first half of the nineteenth century explains why sentimental novels, with their focus on emotions and redemptive power of love, were so popular in the mid-nineteenth century. The Second Great Awakening, which began around 1800, was the revival of a faith of the heart, as opposed to the mind. A central principle of this evangelical Christianity was that each individual had a personal relationship with God.[42] Another second major principle was that admittance to heaven required a person to actively improve the morality of their neighbours.[43] Evangelists welcomed women, who were celebrated for being more sensitive than men to the will of God. This form of Christianity complemented the reformative intentions of sentimental literature.[44] The emotional content, the intention of reforming the reader, and the personal, private character of sentimental fiction flourished in a religious atmosphere that embraced all these qualities.

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[40] Perry Miller, *The Life of the Mind in America: From the Revolution to the Civil War* (London: Gollancz, 1965), 12. Barbara Welter, *Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University, 1976), 42, 52. Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Knopf, 1992), xvii. Bushman discusses how capitalism conflicted, but also complemented refinement, in the development of a modern economy. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 11.

[41] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 9, 63-64. Barnes interprets the novel as seducer, merging the external authority of the text with the internal authority of the reader to educate. Sentimental novels teach readers how to read, in order to perpetuate the market and minimize the risk of deviant interpretations; novels must convince the reader before they can be didactic. Douglas, *Feminization*, 10. Barnes' view is supported by Douglas' argument that sentimental authors "wrote not just to win adherents to their views, but to make converts to literature, to sustain and encourage the habit of reading itself."

[42] Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 3-14. Martin E. Marty, *Pilgrims in Their Own Land* (New York: Penguin, 1984), 169. Marty considers the Second Great Awakening to be "free enterprise in the marketplace of religion." Miller, *Life of the Mind*, 6. Howe, *What Hath*, 171-201.

[43] Marty, *Pilgrims*, 175-76. Miller, *Life of the Mind*, 7-15.

[44] Baym, *Feminism*, 118. Baym argues that the physical weakness of women was interpreted as a sign of their spirituality. This perspective is intimately linked to the emergence of the middle class. Welter, *Dimity Convictions*, 58-59. Welter points out that the medical profession adhered to a similar perspective regarding women's greater sensitivity, and lesser ability to reason logically.

By exploiting evangelism's empowerment of women, Warner, Stowe, and Southworth demonstrate a need for women's influence upon politics and business.[45] Men had created laws to support the economy, at the expense of protecting the weak and vulnerable. For instance, the Fugitive Slave Act (1850) placed the fiscal interests of the slave owner above the humanity of the slave.[46] Such laws damaged the moral integrity of the nation. It was therefore necessary for sentimental authors to promote a 'higher law.' The spiritual superiority of women made them better judges of the morality of actions. For that reason, individuals such as the Grimké sisters advocated the greater integration of women into politics.[47] In the 1850s most women would not go so far as to suggest direct involvement in the political process. Indeed many women saw their isolation from politics to be responsible for their high moral values. However, there was a growing awareness of the potential for women to do more than such care for those within their homes. Sentimental authors articulated the positive contribution that women could make to politics in myriad ways, in so subtle a manner as to maintain the reputation of their products as appropriate reading material for women.

The dispute over the future of slavery galvanized the American public. Disagreements over the future of slavery threatened to tear the nation asunder, but they also led to a debate over the rights and responsibilities of women.[48] Slavery was protested against as a question of ethics, of sympathy and of love; principles with which women felt intimately engaged. Advocates argued that love, that special asset of women, must be a force for good not only within the home, but in politics as well.[49]

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[45] Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University, 1990), 100. Kerber, *Women*, 12-13. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 24. Barnes argues that sentimental literature was a response to anxiety over the question of patriarchal authority. Baym, *Feminism*, 107, 118. Baym argues that feminist political theorists interpreted enlightenment liberal and republican thought as inscribing the male body with a universal concept of citizenship, and denying the female. Therefore, if middle-class women had become more concerned with the spiritual life of individuals, their fiction should have become apolitical.

[46] "Fugitive Slave Act," in United States Congress, 19 September 1850. Accessed 31 Mar. 2013. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/fugitive.asp

[47] Gerda Lerner, *The Grimké Sisters From South Carolina: Rebels Against Slavery* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 2-10, 121.

In the 1850s, debates over the efficacy of the separation of the private and public spheres were instigated by several issues, including the market revolution and religious revival. The topic of separate spheres is treated first in order to provide context for the remaining two issues, creating a reference network that is essential to the coherence of the thesis. An additional reason for analysing the separate spheres first, is that sentimental fiction has largely entered the historiographical debate upon the issue of the relationship between the genders.[50]

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[48] For an analysis of the various perspectives on 'reformers' see Martin Duberman, "The Northern Response to Slavery," in *The Antislavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists*, ed. Martin Duberman (Princeton: Princeton University, 1965), 406-12. Howe, *What Hath*, 411-45.

[49] A comprehensive documentation of women's abolitionist activities is provided by: Dawn Keetley and John Pettegrew, eds., *Public Women, Public Words: A Documentary History of American Feminism* (Madison: Madison House, 1997), 147-81. Jean Fagan Yellin, *Women and Sisters: The Antislavery Feminists in American Culture* (New Haven: Yale University, 1989), chapter three. Ruth Bogin and Jean Fagan Yellin, introduction to *The Abolitionist Sisterhood: Women's Political Culture in Antebellum America*, eds. Jean Fagan Yellin and John C. Van Horne (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1994). Bogin and Yellin discuss the pivotal importance of religion as a division within the abolitionist movement. Nancy A. Hewitt, "On Their Own Terms," in *The Abolitionist Sisterhood: Women's Political Culture in Antebellum America*, eds. Jean Fagan Yellin and John C. Van Horne (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1994). Tompkins, *Sensational*, 135. Tompkins argues that Stowe's novel provided a framework or strategy for dealing with cultural conflict.

[50] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Knopf, 1945), vol. 2, 121-24. Tocqueville, in answering "How the Americans Combat Individualism by the Principle of Self-Interest Rightly Understood," emphasizes the amalgamation of private and public interests. Rather than referring to the separate roles of men and women, Tocqueville understands public and private life to be integrated. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University, 1986). Smith-Rosenberg argues that women's sphere remained constant between the 1760s and 1870s, despite major social, economic, and political changes. The use of 'separate spheres' in this thesis is necessary, although the private and public arenas of activity were by no means isolated from one another. The suffragist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton aptly argues: "One may as well talk of separate spheres for the two ends of the magnet as for man and woman, they may have separate duties in the same sphere, but their true place is together everywhere." Quoted in Mary Beth Norton and Ruth M. Alexander, eds., *Major Problems in America Women's History: Documents and Essays* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007), 211. Ryan, *Cradle*, 187-91. Ryan argues that the term 'women's sphere' implies clear, precisely drawn social boundaries, which was not the case in ante-bellum society. Instead, Ryan sees the separate spheres as

Religion will be considered last. The close relationship between the sentimental novel and Christianity in the United States has been consistently commented upon in historiography.[51] Analysing the religious perspectives of the authors last demonstrates how closely Christianity related to the separation of the private and public spheres, and the economic state of the nation, in the minds of the Warner, Stowe, and Southworth.

Ultimately, this thesis consolidates feminist interpretations of sentimental authors as active agents in ante-bellum society. Sentimental authors act upon their principles by seeking to publish their texts, influencing a massive and often sympathetic audience. They are not only advocating their individual interpretations of political, economic, and social events in the United States, but act as role models for those who could divine the rebellious commentary beneath the sentimental template.

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resembling social reality. Also see Justin Charlebois, *Gender and the Construction of Dominant, Hegemonic, and Oppositional Femininities* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011), 2-17.

[51] See Richard H. Brodhead, “Sparing the Rod: Discipline and Fiction in Antebellum America,” *Representations*, no. 21 (Winter, 1988): 67-96. John Gatta, *American Madonna: Images of the Divine Woman in Literary Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1997). Barnes, *States of Sympathy*. Burbick, *Healing*. Douglas, *Feminization*. Tompkins, *Sensational*. Cowie, “Vogue.” Kelley, “Sentimentalists.”

Chapter One: *Separation of the Private and Public Spheres*

Introduction

"You must consider it's not a matter of private feeling; there are great public interests involved, there is such a state of public agitation rising, that we must put aside our private feelings."[52] So Senator Bird counsels his wife, following her denunciation of the Fugitive Slave Act in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. According to Senator Bird, public interests are of greater importance than private feelings. Susan Warner, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Emma D.E.N. Southworth each recognise a tension in the relationship between the private and the public spheres. The disagreement between Senator and Mrs Bird is one example of why there might be such a tension, but each author had their own interpretation of the feasibility of separating the private arena of care and sympathetic feeling, from the public arena of commerce and politics. According to nineteenth-century, middle-class theories regarding the appropriate division of labour between men and women, there should be no tension.[53] Men enthusiastically and masterfully handle business obligations, leaving women to excel in creating a home capable of preserving the moral values of the republican family. However, Senator Bird must defend the actions of the government against his wife's criticisms. Abolitionist protests against the immorality of slavery initiated a reconsideration of the importance of women's influence.[54] Harriet Beecher Stowe's discussion of the separation of the private and public spheres is concerned primarily with the impact and abolition of slavery, while

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[52] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 82.
[53] Baym, *Feminism*, 118.
[54] See Letter from Angelina Grimké to Catharine Beecher, quoted in Lerner, *Grimké*, 183-87.

Susan Warner and Emma D.E.N. Southworth pursue other concerns.[55] All three novels reveal that women were heavily influenced by public events. As middle-class women who had entered the public world through their efforts to publish, the authors attempted to guide their readers through a period of massive upheaval.

During the 1850s, public opinion regarding the separation of the spheres was fraught. Slavery caused many women to reassess the range of their moral influence. The Fugitive Slave Act prohibited the aiding and abetting of fugitive slaves, prompting Mrs Bird to question her loyalty to the political decisions of the United States government. For a woman to take an active interest in the events of the Senate, in this case, is surprising and positively discouraged by her husband. Yet women saw themselves as well qualified, as moral guardians, to voice an opinion on the cruelty and depravity of the institution.[56] Slavery was a private issue in many ways. For instance, a slave owner's house and the wellbeing of his family would often be taken care of by slaves. Women whose families owned slaves held a different perspective on what constituted private and public responsibilities, compared to women whose responsibility it was to carry out domestic chores. The ideal of separate private and public spheres was fractured to mean something different again when applied to slave couples. Being married bestowed the ability, according to Christianity, to create a family and implied a heavenly-divined division of public labour and private nurture.[57] Of course, that these couples were enslaved meant that the husbands had no power to protect or provide for their families; wives were obliged to work at the same tasks as men for as long hours; children did not belong to their parents. In myriad ways, slavery led to a questioning of the division of the public and private spheres by women throughout the United States. While the cruelty inherent in slavery caused some women to question the effectiveness of their indirect influence over politics, many saw a heightened importance in their separation from politics. For women to guard the moral sanctuary of the home would presumably do more for men in politics than women's interference in government could.

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[55] Katherine Moore, *Victorian Wives* (London: Allison and Busby, 1974), 182. Moore denies the primacy of slavery in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, claiming that Stowe was more concerned with Calvinist theology. Thomas F. Gossett, *Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University, 1985), 64-86. Gossett challenges the reader to consider the significance of Stowe's evident racism. Interestingly, he counters the common criticism of Stowe's novel as being sentimental, by arguing that "[t]he chief weakness of a truly sentimental writer is to dissolve into tears when the occasion calls for a clear appraisal, and she is not sentimental in this sense."

[56] Sandra M. Gustafson, *Imagining Deliberative Democracy in the Early American Republic* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2011). Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 22-25. Wearn argues that Stowe's 'good' women, such as Mrs Bird and Rachel Halliday, resist social and legal policy.

Women's role within the home was affected significantly by the Second Great Awakening. Public religious events, such as the Evangelical camp meetings that took place throughout the West and North-East, considered the souls of women as equal to men's, before God. Women had the same responsibility to prepare their soul for God's examination. This meant not only living ethically, but actively seeking to improve the morality of their families and the nation. Public religious revival had a profound impact upon how women interpreted the separation of the private and public spheres. In *The Wide, Wide World,* Warner recognises this dual religious and social issue. Warner's heroine, Ellen, excels at domestic chores and nurtures morality in those around her, to ensure their happiness.[58] Yet she also has responsibilities in public. The circumstances in which Ellen enters the public sphere reflects the author's concern for the morality of the

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[57] Elinor Mead Howells, *If Not Literature – Letter of Elinor Mead Howells*, eds. Ginette de B. Merrill and George Warren Arms (Columbus: Miami University, 1988), xxix.
[58] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 156. Tompkins points out that within sentimental literature there is no distinction between practical and spiritual activities.

United States, and concern over how prepared women were to play a role in shaping its future.

In material terms, as well as spiritual, the first half of the nineteenth century was a period of adjustment to change. Rapid economic growth in the United States required a middle class of white-collar workers to manage the relationship between employer and employee, and to ensure the efficient progression of business. Less physical labour marked these men off from the lower classes. However, because their class lacked an established culture, the middle-class community desired something more to differentiate them from their less affluent contemporaries.[59] For the women of a family not to have to work, was celebrated as a sign of middle-class status by these self-conscious families. Women were celebrated as delicate and esteemed individuals. Such admiration was reflected in men's behaviour.[60] Middle-class manners protected women from the rough and 'offensive' reality of the lower classes. Such communities took pride in their good manners, virtuous behaviour and warm hospitality.[61] In reality, many members of the lower social classes imitated such behaviours. To become middle class was the desire of many lower-class families, and imitation of manners and customs, such as that of the separation of the private and public spheres, was an inexpensive way to bring about that transformation. Limiting women's influence to within the home reflects ideas that permeated all of American society.

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[59] Smith, "Scribbling Women," 58. Fiedler, *Love and Death*, xxvii, chapter one. Fiedler place great significance upon the relationship between the novel and America, stating: "They are the two great inventions of the bourgeois, Protestant mind at the moment when it stood, on the one hand, between Rationalism and Sentimentalism, and on the other, between the drive for economic power and the need for cultural autonomy." Bushman, *Refinement*, xiii-xix. Miller, *Life of the Mind*, 34. Howe, *What Hath*, 288.

[60] Armstrong, *Desire*, 3-4. Armstrong argues that a new kind of women emerged from the domestic fiction of the early eighteenth century, who was essential to the unification of middle-class people, being neither defined by title, nor corrupted by poverty. Men and women gained their identities from essential qualities of mind. Ryan, *Cradle*, 182-84, 203. Burbick, *Healing*, 191, 199. "The expansion of middle-class fiction adapted the formerly religious language of the heart to the more secular and domestic concerns of the new nation."

[61] Beecher and Stowe, *The American Woman's Home*, 197. Beecher states that "[g]ood manners are the expressions of benevolence in personal intercourse, by which we endeavour to promote the comfort and enjoyment of others, and avoid all that gives needless uneasiness." For a discussion of the role of manners in English and American Literature see Lionel Trilling, *Liberal Imagination: Essays in Literature and Society* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), 193-209. Trilling discusses the relationship between manners and the self-conscious, constructed snobbery of the middle class, although he perceives American authors to be forfeiting manners, and all they meant, in their quest for reality. Also see Rochelle Gurstein, "Taste and 'The Conversible World' in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 61, no. 2 (Apr., 2000): 216. Jana L. Argersinger, "Family Embraces: The Unholy Kiss and Authorial Relations in *The Wide, Wide World*," *American Literature*, vol. 74, no. 2, (June 2002): 261. Bushman,

Despite questioning the reality and validity of the separation of the spheres, Warner, Stowe, and Southworth each recognise the importance of the work that women did in the home. Emphasising such sentiments was a strategy, to distract from the discontentment with private sphere inherent in the decision to publish a novel.[62] Many Americans considered the future success of the nation to depend upon women nurturing republican values in their husbands and children. A mother's care gave her children integrity that was independent of the family's wealth or social status. The reputation connected to a family name was eclipsed by the loving influence of the mother.[63] Most explicitly in *The Hidden Hand*, Southworth argues that a child's moral integrity would be of greater value to them as they matured, than would the name of their father. For women to find fulfilment in teaching the next generation was a necessary point for sentimental novelists to reinforce. By confirming society's expectations of their writing, sentimental authors reinforce the good reputation of their writing. The search for fulfilment beyond the private sphere implied a deficiency in the home and challenged their authority as

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Refinement, chapter two. There may be a connection between *George Washington's Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour*, to which Bushman refers as a principal guide to manners, and the *Life of George Washington* that John Humphreys has Ellen read, to improve her education. For reference see Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 43.

[62] Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination," in *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader*, ed. Mary Eagleton, (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 82-89.

[63] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 16, 29, 79. For the importance of naming in relation to *The Wide, Wide World*, see Argersinger, "Family," 255.

moral guardians. To counteract this damaging association with money, the three authors applied their maternal responsibilities to their writing, to provide guidance for those who might lose their purpose in the turbulent changes of the 1850s.[64] Even when these women included what some critics deemed inappropriate content, its presence was intended to ensure the United States would reach its potential as a most Christian nation.

Economic growth, religious revivalism, and slavery's continued existence contributed to a situation in which a private sanctuary was highly valued. Warner, Stowe, and Southworth proposed ways in which a woman might preserve the sanctity of her home. She could not create a sanctuary if the man responsible for the financial security of the home was not honourable. Southworth especially, raises concerns about the laws governing women and their property. In doing so, she clarifies what women had to lose by accepting a subordinate, secular position in relation to men.[65] That women had such meagre recourse against those who threatened their property and liberty, meant that the future of the United States might not be as bright as many hoped. Mrs Bird's spiritual authority entitles her to criticise the Senate's decision to pass the Fugitive Slave Act. Her mild, inoffensive nature, her great concern for the wellbeing of all living things, and her domestic skills all endow her with the authority to speak her own opinion on slavery. Yet she premises her declaration of rebellion with the statement, "I wouldn't give a fip for all your politics, generally[.]"[66] By having Mrs Bird do so, Stowe leaves unchallenged many of the principles of the separation of the private and public spheres.[67] Warner and Southworth examine the issues surrounding that middle-class American ideal, and suggest significant improvements.

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[64] Richard A. Meckel, "A Ministry of Mothers," in *Major Problems in American Women's History: Documents and Essays*, ed. Mary Beth Norton (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1989), 140-44. In this chapter, Meckel discusses the power of maternal influence, and its relationship to the evangelical movement.

[65] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 8. Barnes argues that a woman's gendered body endangered republican structures, because of its disenfranchisement and lack of legal rights to property. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right*, 12. Kerber states that "[c]overture was theoretically incompatible with revolutionary ideology."

[66] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 80.

The decision of Warner, Stowe, and Southworth to earn a living by writing novels is the most certain indication that there was a need to review the boundary between the private and public spheres. Politics, the economy, and even social opinion had progressed beyond the nineteenth-century ideals. The task of the sentimental writer was to subtly reveal to the reader the need to change that most fundamental ideal, the structure of the family. There was value in the traditional structure of the family, in which women nurtured, but the nation needed them to do more. Being excluded from politics and commerce, women perceived the degradation that was taking place within the nation.[68] In different ways, all three authors recognised the need for women to act upon their moral and republican feelings, and direct the nation towards a future that all Americans would be proud of.

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[67] Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1988), 337. Fox-Genovese interprets women as using the idea of separate spheres in order to declare themselves natural custodians of morality, and therefore justified in playing a greater role in political affairs.

[68] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 76.

The Wide, Wide World

Upon hearing the news of her mother's imminent departure, Ellen grieves violently. In response, her mother chastises, "[r]emember, my darling, who it is that brings this sorrow upon us – though we *must* sorrow, we must not rebel."[69] Ostensibly, this is a reference to the evangelical notion that God took an active interest in the well-being of individuals, and did not send hardship without a purpose. However, in the context of Mrs Montgomery's husband and doctor forcing her to separate from her daughter, the phrase has another meaning. It is a warning that despite the suffering that might provoke a woman to actively revolt, she must not challenge the social mores that restrict her presence and influence to the home. Ellen does face numerous challenges to her self-control during the course of her maturation, but always she meets them as her mother would, using the skills of the domestic sphere. Being tolerant, caring, and keeping faith with God enabled Ellen, after severe trials, to emerge a perfect American woman.[70] Occasionally these trials are public in nature, but more often the difficulties are part of the private sphere itself.[71] In this way, Warner makes visible the dangers that lay within the supposed 'sanctuary' of the home, and the necessity of being prepared to meet those challenges. The heroine is warned early in the novel, "[y]ou will hurt both yourself and me, my daughter if you cannot command yourself."[72] The truth of Mrs Montgomery's statement is reaffirmed repeatedly.

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[69] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 13. Tompkins, *Sensational*, 130, 160-62. Tompkins argues that sentimental novels did not deal with political and economic oppression. Upon this point I disagree with Tompkins. Tompkins also argues that suffering had the power to change the world, and it is through Tompkins' own argument that I argue the falsity of her first point.

[70] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 12, 75. Barnes interprets true virtue, in sentimental literature, to be the result of a spiritually regenerated heart that has achieved independence and strength through trial. Johnson, *Shopkeeper's Millennium*, 8.

[71] Fiedler, *Love and Death*, xviii. Fielder notes that the innocent young hero or heroine, who will compulsively return to their limited world of experience, is a distinctly American character. In the context of Warner's novel, Fiedler's theory is true, given that Ellen repeatedly returns to the domestic sphere following her forays into public.

Warner argues two points in her treatment of the issue of the separation of the private and public spheres. She describes a higher law that must be obeyed, regardless of the social mores that restricted women's presence to the private sphere. Secondly, the author reveals the threats that exist to the private sphere. These threats require women be more than "pious, pure, domestic, and submissive."[73] Women must be equipped with republican values in order to overcome those challenges. The most significant reasons why Mrs Montgomery accedes to separation from her beloved Ellen are that her husband no longer has the money to remain in New York, and her doctor supports their travelling to Europe, as being essential to her health.[74] Crucially, just prior to her mother's warning to Ellen not to rebel, the narrator reveals that Captain Montgomery was prepared to force his wife to leave their child. "[T]o the pressure of argument Captain Montgomery added the weight of authority – insisting on her compliance."[75] Selling her mother's ring and purchasing items with the proceeds, is a covert revolt by Mrs Montgomery against both her husband and doctor. From the latter, she is under strict instructions not to over-exert herself, yet she ventures into public to buy and sell.[76] Captain Montgomery gives her money to provide for Ellen all the things she might need during her stay, yet Mrs Montgomery breaks that financial limitation by making use of her own assets. "Mrs Montgomery drew a ring from her finger, and after a little chaffering parted with it to the owner of the store for eighty dollars, being about three-quarters of its real value."[77] She does so without either man knowing what has occurred. Although her actions are not of a domestic nature, the surreptitious manner in which they are carried out is an acknowledgement that it is inappropriate for her to take financial responsibility for her daughter. The mastery with which she enacts her plans is a reflection of how Warner launches her own subtle rebellion against the restriction of women to the private sphere.[78] The powerless position in which Ellen's mother finds herself foreshadows the threats to Ellen's own independence.

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[72] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 13. Also see Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 27.

[73] Welter, "True Womanhood," 152.

[74] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 11. Welter, *Dimity Convictions*, 57. Welter observes that the treatment of disease in women, between 1790 and 1865, was partly based upon the definition of woman and her sphere. Burbick, *Healing*, 179-99.

[75] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 12.

[76] Ibid., vol. 1, 29. Ellen protests, "I am afraid that Dr Green won't let you, mamma?" Mrs Montgomery's response is to "not ask him."

Mrs Montgomery's brief rebellion against the separation of the private and public spheres is acceptable because she is motivated by maternal love. She upholds republican values in the self-determination she enacts, and in the choice of items she buys for Ellen.[79] Ellen's own forays into public confirm the author's strategy of using feminine sentiments and republicanism to justify revolt. Those occasions on which Ellen ventures beyond the private sphere are all prompted by a higher law; in these cases love motivates and justifies Ellen's action.[80] Firstly, the heroine goes shopping to St Clair and Fleury's department store, so that her mother can carry out her wish to send Ellen to her aunt's farm properly attired.[81] On the second occasion, Ellen rides into Twirlwall alone, to fetch a doctor for Mr Van Brunt.[82] To ensure these public adventures are not misinterpreted as a denial of women's restriction to the domestic sphere, they are independent of the main plot. By isolating these forays into public, Warner categorised the acts as exceptional, and therefore not a threat to the separation of the private and public spheres. For the same reason, Ellen suffers great anxiety in the public sphere. In the first instance, Ellen is ignored, taunted, and very nearly hoodwinked by the salesman Saunders.

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[77] Ibid., vol. 1, 34. 33.

[78] Kerber, *No Constitutional Right*, 30.

[79] Baym, "Portrayal," 230. In her review of mid-nineteenth century literature, Baym considers that strong women characters were urged to conform, but were also celebrated for their ability to self-actualize and self-govern. Kerber, *Women*, 208-31.

[80] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 150. Tompkins argues that all sentimental novels take place metaphorically and literally in the closet. Upon those occasions when Ellen enters the public sphere, the description remains focused upon her feelings, therefore Tompkins is correct, Ellen metaphorically remains within the private sphere. Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 8.

[81] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 51-54.

[82] Ibid., vol. 2, 113-24.

> Ellen stood a moment stock still, just where [Saunders] had left her, struggling with her feelings of mortification; she could not endure to let them be seen. Her face was on fire; her head was dizzy. She could not stir at first, and in spite of her utmost efforts she *could* not command back one or two rebel tears that forced their way[.][83]

The same man causes Ellen pain when she rides to find the doctor. Having lost his job at St Clair and Fleury's, Saunders is now working in the post office in Twirlwall. He seeks vengeance by torturing Ellen's horse and terrifying her in the process.

> Ellen wiped away her tears, forced back those that were coming, and began the most earnest remonstrance and pleading with Mr. Saunders that she knew how to make.[84]

Upon both occasions when Ellen ventures into public, she is met by a rude, malicious man, who brings her to tears; Saunders upsets her to such an extent that she can not maintain her habitual self-control. Warner demonstrates that the public sphere is an inhospitable place for women, but one which should be ventured into, temporarily, for the right reasons.

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[83] Ibid., vol. 1, 57. n.b. Every use of italics within quotes is taken from the original text. Conversely, all italics in quotes taken from the original texts are applied in this thesis.
[84] Ibid., vol. 2, 127.

Warner uses these public forays to reaffirm the pre-eminence of men in the public sphere, both as threats and as saviours. Saunders plays the role of the corrupt man by virtue of his association with trade and his disrespectful attitude towards women.[85] In the first instance, he dwells in a large building, full of the "incessant hum of voices" and the "great hurry of business."[86] Ellen is incapable of action of any sort in this intimidating arena. All who should help her "brushed past", and even "the power of speech seemed to be gone."[87] To successfully venture into public, a virtuous man is a necessary chaperone. At St Clair and Fleury's, Ellen is saved from Saunders' ill treatment by a kind, old gentleman, referred to as "her protector".[88] Withholding his name allows Warner to demonstrate that that type of man, rather than that specific individual, is essential to women's pleasant experience in public. A second effect of the women not being privy to the man's name is to emphasise the unnaturalness of women's presence in the public sphere. In comparison, Saunders knows the identity of the man and that he must not be trifled with.[89] In the second venture into public, on the way home from Twirlwall, Ellen is accosted by Saunders and only emancipated when John Humphreys happens to pass by. John is a training to be a minister, and lives with his father and sister, in the parsonage while he has no other responsibilities. Like the kind, old gentleman in St Clair and Fleury's, John considers himself Ellen's protector. His mastery of the situation and dominance over Saunders is absolute, demonstrating the capabilities of men. Warner advises women to depend on honourable men, as a way of compensating for their own vulnerability in public.

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[85] Warner, *Wide World*, 60. Howe, *What Hath*.
[86] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 54.
[87] Ibid., vol. 1, 54.
[88] Ibid., vol. 1, 59.
[89] Ibid., vol. 1, 58.

Ellen ventures into public for reasons that are private in nature. Both selfless love and republicanism are concepts that women were expected to promulgate in their homes. Usually Ellen's responsibility to uphold those values could be fulfilled within the home. The four homes that the heroine experiences reveal the energy and determination required to maintain a nurturing home. Initially, Mrs Montgomery appears to have cultivated a supportive atmosphere in the New York home, yet an unusual characteristic of that home is the reversal of roles taking place inside. The heroine's maternal home is under threat from her mother's failing health, as well as her father's mismanagement of court cases.[90] Consequently, Ellen performs the role of mother. A comment from doctor clarifies the unnatural state of relations between mother and daughter: "Mrs Nurse, this lady whom I put under your care the other day, isn't quite as well as she ought to be this morning; I'm afraid you haven't taken proper care of her." [91] In normal circumstances, Mrs Montgomery would keep Ellen warm, providing her with a ritualistic meal of tea and toast, and tidying the parlour. Instead, Mrs Montgomery acts, and is treated very much like a child. She wants her daughter to read to her before she leaves. "You had better go to bed, my daughter," said Mrs Montgomery. "I will mamma." "Do you think you can read me a little before you go?"[92] She leaves the parlour in a mess, with her boxes and books "helter-skelter", and while Ellen tidies the whole room up, Mrs Montgomery pretends to sleep. Ellen says to herself:

> "Do but see how those chairs are standing – one would think we had had a sewing-circle here – there, go back to your places, - that looks a little better; now

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[90] For a discussion of "Female Complaints" and how doctors approached them, during the first half of the nineteenth century, see Welter, *Dimity Convictions*, 57-69. Burbick, *Healing*, 1-8.

[91] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 21.

[92] Ibid., vol. 1, 15.

> these curtains must come down, and I may as well shut the shutters too – and now this table-cloth must be content to hang straight, and mamma's box and the books must lie in their places, and not all helter-skelter. Now, I wish mamma would wake up; I should think she might. I don't believe she is asleep either, she don't look as if she was."[93]

Despite her maternal home appearing to be an exemplary moral sanctuary, Ellen is spared from neither public turmoil nor private toil. Through the difficulties Ellen encounters in various homes, Warner intended to foster a re-evaluation of women's role in private and public.[94]

While living with her Aunt Fortune, Ellen experiences a more intense version of her previous maternal responsibilities. While her aunt is incapacitated by sickness, she is made single-handedly responsible for the upkeep of the farmhouse. The help Ellen is offered and receives reveals how Warner understood the relationship between public and private.[95] One occasion demonstrates the network of relationships that Warner builds around her heroine, in order to prove the integration of private and public responsibilities. Ellen has been churning butter, while Nancy prepares dinner.

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[93] Ibid., vol. 1, 10.

[94] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 90. Brodhead, "Sparing the Rod," 80. Brodhead argues that in sentimental literature, homes embody different social formations. Ryan, *Empire*, 124-26. Ryan discusses the propensity of adult characters in sentimental fiction to retreat into childhood, escaping the "tension and contradictions of adult family status." Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 1. Wearn affirms Ryan's centralization of the child within the domestic enclave, although she does not discuss the reversal of roles between adults and children. For a comprehensive discussion of the support network that women built around themselves, see Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct*, 129-39.

[95] Kerber, *Women*, 252. The accuracy of Warner's sketch of a Maine farm is confirmed by Linda Kerber's research. Kerber identifies huge household production still taking place long after industrialisation began. Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale University, 1977), 22. Cott argues that within farming families, the interdependence of the farmhouse economy diluted the meaning of women's economic status. Campbell, "Sentimental Conventions," 122. The physical difficulties of Ellen's domestic tasks contrast sharply with Alice's domestic duties. See Campbell's analysis of Alice's kitchen, being a space between the parlour and the actual kitchen. Howe, *What Hath*, 303.

> "Butter come?" said Nancy.
>
> "No Sam has taken it. How are you getting on? O, I am tired!"
>
> "I'm getting on first-rate; I've got all the things in."
>
> "In what!"
>
> "Why, in the pot! – in a pot of water, boiling away as fast as they can; we'll have dinner directly. Harra! who comes there?"
>
> She jumped to the door. It was Thomas, bringing Margery's respects, and a custard-pie for Ellen.
>
> "I declare," said Nancy, "it's a good thing to have friends, ain't it? I'll try and get some."[96]

Ellen is made responsible for the farmhouse, but with Sam finishing the churning, Nancy preparing dinner, and Thomas bringing Ellen a pie that Margery had made for her, the farmhouse could not function properly. The outcome of Ellen's experience indicates that the only way for women to create a happy home was to recognise that the private sphere did not exist in isolation.[97]

Aunt Fortune's demand that the affairs of the house be kept solely under Ellen's charge, refers to a common misconception that the home was impenetrable to the corruption of public affairs. In reality, Aunt Fortune tolerates Nancy Vawse helping Ellen, while Mr Van Brunt does as much as he can in the house by way of lighting fires and teaching domestic skills to the new mistress. Help is also willingly given by a multitude of local women, who wash and bake to lighten Ellen's work-load. Despite her pretensions to independence, even when healthy, Aunt Fortune relies heavily upon the labour of Mr Van Brunt.[98] Confirming this point, neighbours recognise Van Brunt's freedom of action throughout Aunt Fortune's property. His own analogy, when telling Ellen of his imminent marriage to her aunt, reflects the adults' mutual reliance. "We have made up our minds to draw in the same yolk; and we're both on us pretty go-ahead folks so I guess we'll contrive to pull the cart along."[99] Private homes did not exist in isolation. Aunt Fortune's farm epitomises Warner's vision of the reciprocal relationship between the public and private spheres.

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[96] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 88.

[97] Seelye, *Jane Eyre*, 108. Seelye describes Aunt Fortune's farmhouse as a "citadel of the Protestant ethic."

Alice Humphreys lives in the parsonage, two mile from Aunt Fortune's farm, with her father, Mr Humphreys. Alice, like Mrs Montgomery, masquerades as a model woman. However, like Mrs Montgomery, she must discipline herself not to rebel against her role as guardian of the home. The threat to her composure is different from Ellen's mother's, and gives the opportunity for Warner to reveal a third menace to the peace of the domestic sphere. Despite an impending storm, Alice takes Ellen to visit Mrs Vawse. Her justification for the trip is to practice French, yet it immediately becomes clear that Alice has sought Mrs Vawse's company for an entirely separate and selfish reason. She misses her brother, John, who has left the Parsonage to train as a minister.

> "I wanted to see you to get a lesson of quiet contentment."
>
> "I never thought you wanted such a lesson, Miss Alice. What's the matter?"
>
> "I can't get over John's going away."
>
> Her lip trembled and her eye was swimming as she said so. The old woman passed her hands over the gentle head and kissed her brow.

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[98] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 90. Tompkins points out how sentimental novels emphasize people's obligations to neighbours, strangers, and mankind.

[99] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 159. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 11. Barnes argues that marriage, as a model of affinity, obscured the democratic principles endowed in sentimental literature.

> "So I thought – so I felt, when my mistress died; and my husband; and my sons, one after the other. But now I think I can say with Paul, 'I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content.' I think so; maybe that I deceive myself; but they are all gone, and I am certain that I am content now."
>
> "Then surely I ought to be," said Alice.
>
> "It is not till one losses one's hold of other things and looks to Jesus alone that one finds how much he can do. 'There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother;'[100]

Mrs Vawse's loss of her mistress, husband, and sons, eclipses Alice's pining for her brother. More importantly, the experiences of this character represent the range of threats women faced from within the private sphere.

> "[Mrs Vawse] was born a Swiss, and brought up in a wealthy French family, as the personal attendant of a young lady to whom she became exceedingly attached. This lady finally married an American gentleman; and so great was Mrs Vawse's love to her, that she left country and family to follow her here. In a few years her mistress died; she married; and since that time she has been tossed from trouble to trouble; - a perfect sea of troubles; - till now she is left like a wreck upon this mountain top. A fine wreck she is!"[101]

Mrs Vawse's love for her mistress initiates a sequence of hardship. Expressing the woes of the old woman in a tale of love implies that the experiences of Mrs Vawse might befall any true woman; only those who placed love before all other considerations could be considered true women. What Mrs Vawse has managed to achieve, by her faith in God's love, acts as a guide both for Alice and Ellen. In overcoming her own trials, Ellen becomes capable of creating a sanctuary similar to that which Mrs Vawse has arranged. Hers is a home specifically designed to withstand the coldest winter. Hers is a heart that will not be broken by the challenges of either the public or private world. Alice and Ellen must teach themselves to disregard the restrictions of the material world, and adhere to natural laws, as Mrs Vawse has done.

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[100] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 228. Warner, *Susan Warner*, 8. Possibly Mrs Vawse is modeled on Abigail Whiting, grandmother of Susan Warner. Anna Warner relates how her grandmother was "brought up in the sweetest, soundest atmosphere of faith and practice, her own life was shining with the light before which privations and labours and even sorrows, fall back and know their place."

[101] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 208. Seelye, *Jane Eyre*, 104, 114. Tompkins, *Sensational*, 165-67. Tompkins interprets the novel's ethic of submission to be aimed at creating an ideal, happy, whole, self-sufficient 'woman on the mountaintop.'

The Lindsey household is the scene of a similar array of threats to Ellen's composure and domestic values. Mrs Lindsey is Ellen's maternal grandmother, and it is to her that Mrs Montgomery bids Ellen go. This new causes Ellen fresh grief, for the Lindseys live in Scotland, and Ellen must leave her beloved friends in Twirlwall. Once in Scotland, Mrs Lindsey's son, Ellen's uncle, demands that she deny the relationships forged in America and change her religious practices. Mr Lindsey's denial of Ellen's past is a test of her commitment to Christianity, and the higher law which she has thus far abided by. For instance, Ellen acknowledges her obligation to obey the summons to leave her beloved parsonage, and travel to Edinburgh to live with her mother's relatives. As strong as her sense of obligation is, Ellen's love for her friends and guardians, and her religious faith is greater. The heroine's persistent attendance to a higher law is proven in an interrogation by Mr Lindsey.

> "What's your fancy for going [to Mrs Allen's room]?"
>
> "I like to hear her talk, sir, and to read to her; it gives her a great deal of pleasure; - and I like to talk to her."

> "What do you talk about?"
>
> "She talks to me about my mother" –
>
> "And you?"
>
> "I like to talk to her about old times," said Ellen, changing colour.[102]

Ellen's conversations with the housekeeper, Mrs Allen, are a form of rebellion. She acts against the wishes of her guardian, whom she believes is enforcing unjust rules. Like her mother, when faced by the controlling demands of men, Ellen finds a way to remain loyal to the higher law while sustaining a seemingly submissive relationship to those men.[103]

Ellen finds sanctuary in neither the public sphere, nor the private. However, in particularly challenging situations for the young girl, Warner devises a reprieve from her trials. By creating a space between the worlds, through her use of windows, Warner reinforces her argument that threats that could emerge from both the private and the public. At the very beginning of the novel, Ellen escapes the impending trouble caused by her father's court case and her mother's ill health. She does so by watching the public world from the parlour window. From her seat on the window sill, the heroine finds solace in the public world. "Ellen sat with her face glued to the window as if spell-bound, gazing out at every dusky form that passed, as though it had some strange interest for her."[104] Likewise, when she gazes through the porthole of the steamboat, she consciously creates a barrier against the pain of separation from her mother and the humiliating treatment of the Dunscombes.

> Ellen wished she might have stayed outside; she wanted to be by herself; but as the next best thing, she mounted upon the bench which ran all round the saloon,

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[102] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 311.
[103] Burbick, *Healing*, 197.
[104] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 10.

> and kneeling on the cushion by one of the windows, placed herself with the edge of her bonnet just touching the glass, so that nobody could see a bit of her face, while she could look out near by as well as from the deck.[105]

In Alice's parlour, which is practically constructed from windows, she escapes the unsympathetic treatment of her aunt. In these spaces between the public and private spheres, Ellen enjoys the comforts of home without suffering; she is entertained by the action of the public world, without risk to her health or virtue.

Warner demonstrates how much women could achieve without openly rebelling against the social mores that separated the private and public spheres. In an unassuming manner, the author demands a reassessment of women's role in the United States. The natural tendency of women to nurture, combined with their innate sensitivity to God's wishes are shown to give women the ability, but not the authority to influence events in the public sphere. As custodians of civic morality, mothers should influence political decisions.[106]

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[105] Ibid., vol. 1, 80.

[106] Kerber, *Women*, 11.

Uncle Tom's Cabin

Warner suggests, after a comprehensive examination of situations challenging women in the 1850s, that social restrictions upon women be moderated. Although Stowe does not challenge the boundaries of the private and public realms of women and men respectively, her female characters are empowered with a political influence that plays no part in Warner's tale. Stowe's intention of bringing an end to slavery suffuses her text. In the preface, she states:

> The object of these sketches is to awaken sympathy and feeling for the African race, as they exist among us; to show their wrongs and sorrows under a system so necessarily cruel and unjust as to defeat and do away the good efforts of all that can be attempted for them by their best friends under it.[107]

Female characters, more so than male, articulate the immorality of enslavement. Through motherhood, through Christianity, and through "plain right thing[s]," the decisions and actions of women lead the reader to the conclusion that slavery must end.[108] Stowe describes flourishing families that fight slavery, the tense coexistence of slavery with domestic life, and ultimately, the complete breakdown of separate spheres under slavery. Women must have a role in politics if the nation hoped to reach its potential, yet they must play that role from the private sphere. The future of the nation rested upon the shoulders of mothers, as they raised their children in their image.

One character who demonstrates 'right' feelings, according to Stowe, is Mrs Bird. Like Mrs Montgomery and Alice Humphreys, Mrs Bird is an ideal woman. She takes no interest in issues that have little moral significance, but “anything in the shape of cruelty would throw her into a passion, which was the more alarming and inexplicable in proportion to the general softness of her nature.”[109] She is responsible for creating a home that attracts her husband to make an arduous journey in order to spend just one night with his family. Senator Bird states that “a cup of your good hot tea, and some of our good home living is what I want.”[110] Stowe’s description of the lady emphasizes her vulnerability and mildness:

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[107] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, viii. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 96.
[108] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 83. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 3.

> Mrs Bird was a timid, blushing little woman, of about four feet in height, and with mild blue eyes, and a peach-blow complexion, and the gentlest, sweetest voice in the world – as for courage, a moderate-sized cock-turkey had been known to put her to rout at the very first gobble, and a stout house-dog of moderate capacity would bring her into subjection merely by a show of his teeth.[111]

Such a description is made just prior to her statement of rebellion against the Fugitive Slave Act. “I’ll break it, for one, the first time I get a chance; and I hope I *shall* have a chance, I do!”[112] Mrs Bird’s religious faith, innocence, caring nature, and domestic skill are only enhanced by her declaration of independence from immoral laws. After meeting Eliza, the escaped slave, for the first time it is significant that neither Senator nor Mrs Bird mention the latter’s revolt. Not withstanding Mrs Bird’s definite statement of rebellion, the role that the Bird family would play in Eliza’s escape demonstrates the moral influence that Mrs Bird had upon her loved ones.[113] Stowe implies that such an achievement should be the aim of all American women.

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[109] Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 81. Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 266. Fiedler argues that “[n]ot love but death is Mrs Stowe’s true Muse.”
[110] Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 79-80.
[111] Ibid., 81.
[112] Ibid., 82.

Stowe demonstrates that women give society its moral character. When the author introduces the Hallidays, she reaffirms the importance of women in cultivating a heavenly home. The Quaker community, that this family belongs to, denounces slavery and actively supports slaves attempting to reach freedom.[114] Quaker women are portrayed as maintaining a homogeneous network, in order that all members of the community are properly cared for.[115] The dual contribution of religious and physical nourishment is epitomised in the activities of Rachel Halliday, as she sits in her squeaky chair, sorting dried peaches and solving “difficulties spiritual and temporal[.]”[116] In the Halliday home, where Eliza is reunited with her husband, Rachel’s ministrations create a peaceful environment, in which all is accomplished efficiently. Stowe reaffirms the dominance of the matriarch when she portrays Rachel sitting in the patriarchal position, at the head of the breakfast table.

> Rachel never looked so truly and benignly happy as at the head of her table. There was so much motherliness and full-heartedness even in the way she passed a plate of cakes or poured a cup of coffee, that it seemed to put a spirit into the food and drink she offered.[117]

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[113] Jeanne Boydston, Mary Kelley, and Anne Margolis, *The Limits of Sisterhood: The Beecher Sisters on Women’s Rights and Women’s Sphere* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1988), 160-63.

[114] Gilman M. Ostrander, *Republic of Letters: The American Intellectual Community, 1775 – 1865* (Madison: Madison House, 1999), 7.

[115] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg. “The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America,” in *Major Problems in American Women’s History*, eds. Mary Beth Norton and Ruth Alexander (Lexington: D. C. Heath, 1989).

[116] Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 139. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 4.

[117] Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 145. For a discussion of the significance of ‘heart language,’ see Burbick, *Healing*, 179-99.

The dominant nature of her role as carer is recognised by her husband, Simeon Halliday, when he performs the "anti-patriarchal operation of shaving."[118] In this environment, defined by its freedom from slave labour, women determine the pace and activity of life, and achieve fulfilment for themselves and their families.

Women's dominant role within the home is confirmed by their active refutation of slavery. In contrast, in homes in which slavery is tolerated or endorsed women are weak, corrupt, and incapable. Their homes exude anxiety and disruption. Marie St. Clare exhibits a deficient womanhood in Stowe's terms. [119] Her purpose, in regards to Stowe's perception of the women's role in society, is to demonstrate the deplorable impact of money and slavery upon the personality of a woman.

> Marie never had possessed much capability of affection, or much sensibility; and the little that she had had merged into a most intense and unconscious selfishness; a selfishness the more hopeless from its quiet obtuseness, its utter ignorance of any claims but her own. From her infancy, she had been surrounded by servants, who lived only to study her caprices; the idea that they had either feelings or rights had never dawned upon her, even in distant perspective.[120]

A further sentence indicates her monetary measurement of love.

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[118] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* 145. Douglas, *Feminization,* 11. Douglas' interprets sentiment rather than matriarchal values to have been strengthened by sentimental fiction.

[119] Smith, "The Novel," 53. Smith notes the habit of sentimental authors of criticise weak and materialistic women. Kerber, *Women*, 203. Kerber's research on the role of women in creating post-revolution America provides credibility for Smith's observation. The association of fashion with incompetence in a woman dated back to the creation of the Republic.

[120] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 159-60.

> There is not on earth a more merciless exactor of love from others than a thoroughly selfish woman; and the more unlovely she grows, the more jealously and scrupulously she exacts love, to the uttermost farthing.[121]

Her religious faith amounts to posturing.[122] Her open criticism of St. Clare confirms her recalcitrance. As to Marie's domesticity, she proves herself incapable of managing her household humanely.[123] Her treatment of slaves and friends alike is cruel and selfish. Her punishment of Rosa's indiscretion proves this.[124] The slave hands to Miss Ophelia a letter, in the hope that she might appeal for leniency from Marie. "It was an order, written in Marie's delicate Italian hand, to the master of a whipping-establishment, to give the bearer fifteen lashes." The contrast between the daintiness of Marie's writing style and the brutality initiated by the words, reflects the superficial nature of her virtuosity.[125] Marie insists on maintaining the image of a pious, caring woman, yet her actions define her as a brutal, unscrupulous, immoral individual.

Marie's despicable nature is emphasised in a passage following Augustine St. Clare's realisation of a lost lover's continued affection. Parted by the artifices of the guardian of the "high-minded and beautiful woman," in grief and haste, St. Clare married Marie instead. St. Clare's lost love and marriage to Marie is described by metaphor.

> But the *real* remained – the *real*, like the flat, bare, oozy tide-mud, when the blue sparkling wave, with all its company of gilding boats and white-winged ships, its

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[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid., 186-89, 288.

[123] Ibid., 331-35.

[124] Fox-Genovese, *Plantation Households*, 293. Fox-Genovese considers the importance of gender identity to servants. This is a particularly relevant topic in the St. Clare household, as the slaves adopt the manners, and literally the dress of the St. Clare family. For example, see Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 171, 210-12, 221-23. Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 13. Johnson considers how slaves were used by their owners as a form of representation.

[125] Stowe, *Uncle Tom Cabin*, 68. Brodhead, "Sparing the Rod," 67. Brodhead argues that whipping becomes a scene of initiation into slavery.

> music of oars and chiming waters, has gone down, and there it lies, flat, slimy, bare – exceedingly real.[126]

Marie is as calculating and as greedy as any businessman, negotiating the best deal to ensure her own wealth. The woman is worse still, because she attempts to refute her own responsibility for the immoral acts. Her reaction to Miss Ophelia's plea for Tom's freedom demonstrates her lack of loyalty to her husband, her unsympathetic nature and her greed. She dismisses Miss Ophelia's suggestion that Tom be freed, claiming "Tom is one of the most valuable servants on the place; it couldn't be afforded any way."[127] Upon Miss Ophelia's insistence that it was St. Clare's dying wish, Marie cowardly retreats behind a visage of weakness; her professed vulnerability is contemptuous. On this occasion, "Marie had her face covered with her handkerchief at this appeal, and began sobbing and using her smelling bottle with great vehemence."[128] Marie's denial of taking an active part in the negotiations regarding her husband's household is equally false. She tells Miss Ophelia, "St. Clare's brother has written, and he and the lawyer think that the servants and furniture had better be put up at auction, and the place left with our lawyers."[129] Yet the reader is made aware of her artifice when Adolph shares a discovery with Tom. "I hid myself behind the curtains when missis was talking with the lawyer. In a few days we shall all be sent off to auction, Tom."[130] Marie has an active role in deciding the future of the estate, but implies she did not, so as to prevent her image being tainted by any negative association with business. Throughout her novel, Stowe portrays women's higher sentimental awareness as a means for them to recognise the reprehensible nature of slavery. Yet with her portrayal of Marie she reveals that loving and nurturing behaviour is not intrinsic to the female sex, but rather was a result of upbringing.

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[126] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 159.
[127] Ibid., 335.
[128] Ibid., 336.
[129] Ibid., 335.
[130] Ibid., 333.

The presence of Marie's counterpart, Miss Ophelia, reveals the corruption created by slavery by filling the former's role as domestic manager, mother, and advocate for humanity. In the examples above, Miss Ophelia's is the voice of compassion, raised on behalf of Rosa and Tom. Marie's motherhood is also forfeit to Miss Ophelia, because of her selfishness. As the new domestic manager, St. Clare's cousin is facing an impossible task.

> Indolent and childish, unsystematic and improvident, it was not to be expected that servants trained under [Marie's] care should not be so likewise; and she very justly described to Miss Ophelia the state of confusion she would find in the family, though she had not ascribed it to the proper cause.[131]

Miss Ophelia upholds the austere and industrious reputation of the northern states, from whence she came. Her presence on the New Orleans plantation passes judgment on the St. Clare family. To reinforce the contempt that Marie deserves, Stowe has Miss Ophelia come into conflict with Old Dinah, the cook. Dinah means judgement, and her behaviour certainly passes judgment on Marie. The cook's tyrannical rule of the kitchen was characterised by excuse-making, inflexibility, and erratic activities; Marie "found it easier to submit than contend; and so Dinah had ruled supreme."[132] The degree to which the family's republican virtues had been undermined by slavery is evident in this statement. "No feudal baron in Magna Charta times could have more thoroughly resented some incursion of the crown[,]" than Dinah does Miss Ophelia's attempt to put order to her chaos.[133] Stowe demonstrates the corrupting effects of slavery using metonymy. Significantly, Mrs Bird's cook is also named "old Aunt Dinah." By repeating the name, Stowe confirms the responsibility of the woman in authority, for the emotional state of her servants.[134] How individuals behave within this home represents the social discord being experienced throughout the nation. Slavery governed and divided the house, as it had dominated the United States' government and compromised the integrity of the nation.

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[131] Ibid., 213.

[132] Ibid., 214. Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 89.

Mothers, wives, and daughters were responsible for the integrity of the home, and by extension, the nation. However, if slavery was tolerated or encouraged there, women could not fulfil their obligations. Hence, the mansion on Legree's plantation is the ultimate desecration of the private sphere.[135] In mimicry of the moral guardianship that a woman should perform, Stowe offers the relationship between Legree and his mistress, Cassy. The enslaved woman achieves significant influence over her owner by exploiting his superstitious beliefs. Cassy also adopts the typically feminine role of nurse, yet when she appears in the gin-house, to ease Tom's suffering, she appears angelic and demonic simultaneously.[136] As if in response to Tom's prayer Cassy enters, bringing light and water. She treats Tom's wounds, and then sits back to talk. When she tries to convince Tom of the futility of his moral behaviour, "the bitter woman, with her wild eyes and melancholy voice, seemed to him an embodiment of the temptation with which he had been wrestling."[137] She proceeds, with "dark, atheistic words" to describe in gruesome detail the hell that they were trapped in. Cassy would have been a good woman, had slavery not destroyed her faith in humanity. She was raised as if free, taught embroidery and French in a convent, and gave birth to two children whilst in a loving relationship. Until the ramifications of her enslavement were made evident, she is an ideal wife and mother.[138] She appears as both an angel and a demon to Tom because slavery has corrupted her.[139] However, hope for her soul is reignited by her realisation of her own deterioration, which causes her great pain, as would only affect someone who was truly good. Cassy cries out in response to Tom's observation, "'*O God a' mercy! you speak the truth! O – O – O -!*' And, with groans, she fell on the floor, like one crushed and writhing under the extremity of mental anguish."[140] Enslavement corrupts Cassy, as being in charge of enslaved people corrupts Marie St. Clare.

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[133] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* 213.
[134] Ibid., 83.
[135] Karen Halttunen, "Gothic Imagination and Social Reform: The Haunted Houses of Lyman Beecher, Henry Ward Beecher, and Harriet Beecher Stowe" in *New Essays on Uncle Tom's Cabin*, ed. Eric J. Sundquist (New York, Cambridge University, 1986), 107-34.
[136] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 62.

Stowe recognises the humanity of slaves when she places them in the roles of wives and mothers. Cassy's relationship with Legree reflects the mockery that slavery makes of Christian marriage. The impact of slavery upon relations between men and women is also evident in Legree's slaves' huts. As in the mansion, no distinction is made between appropriate roles for men and women. Slave women are forced to work in the fields as hard as slave men, and they must share any hut that they can find space to sleep in. The dehumanising treatment of women is illustrated in the plight of a slave woman, bought at the same auction as Tom. The slave woman, Lucy, holds this conversation with Sambo, the man made her master by Legree.

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[137] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 369-70.
[138] Ibid., 374-75. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 18. Wearn argues that Stowe recognizes how women were controlled through the maternal role.
[139] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 370.
[140] Ibid., 372.

> "Wal, Lucy, yo my woman now. Yo grind dis yer corn, and get *my* supper baked, ye har?"
>
> "I an't your woman, and I won't be!" said the woman, with the sharp, sudden courage of despair; you go long!"
>
> "I'll kick yo, then!" said Sambo, raising his foot threateningly.
>
> "Ye may kill me, if ye choose – the sooner the better! Wish't I was dead!" said she.[141]

The complete corruption of marriage is one strategy by which Stowe reveals the inherent evil of slavery.[142]

To reinforce her support for the separation of the private and public spheres, Stowe follows the altercation between Sambo and Lucy with an incident that reiterates the unique roles that men and women were suited to. In the midst of Legree's plantation, a charitable act revives the humanity of the enslaved and triggers a movement to the natural state of relations between men and women.

> Tom waited till a late hour to get a place at the mills; and then moved by the utter weariness of two women, whom he saw trying to grind their corn there, he ground for them, put together the decaying brands of the fire where many had baked cakes before him, and then went about getting his own supper. It was a new kind of work there – a deed of charity, small as it was; but it woke an answering touch in their hearts – an expression of womanly kindness came over their hard faces. They

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[141] Ibid., 359.

[142] Ryan, *Empire*, 129-40.

> mixed his cake for him, and tended its baking; and Tom sat down by the light of the fire, and drew out his Bible – for he had need of comfort.[143]

The division of labour in this scene is typical of idealised domestic relations. Tom's study of his Bible is reminiscent of the first time he is described reading: in an idealised domestic setting. He is in his own cabin, surrounded by family, and reading his Bible whilst his loving wife prepares the evening meal. Stowe reiterates that, even to slaves, the separation of labour between men and women is natural.

Stowe argues that maintaining to unity and integrity of the United States required the abolition of slavery. Complementary to this aim, but also significant in its own right, was the restriction of women to the private sphere.[144] Indeed, it was no real restriction, for so much could be achieved from within the home. Stowe argues, by the examples of Mrs Bird and Rachel Halliday, that women must bring about the end of slavery. Influencing men to act in the interests of humanity was crucial, but not the extent of women's power. Children would learn from their mothers the moral rules that should govern behaviour. Stowe argues that next generation of republican mothers and fathers absorb the lessons of experience when they watched their parents react to slavery. For instance, Mrs Bird's "boys had a very reverent remembrance of a most vehement chastisement she once bestowed on them, because she found them leagued with several graceless boys of the neighbourhood, stoning a defenceless kitten."[145] The experiences of slave children would be quite different. Cassy's second son would never grow up to witness the cruelty of the institution into which he was born, while the likely experiences of her first son and daughter torment her. Free women had an obligation to their nation, to their husbands, children, and to slaves throughout the country.

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[143] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 359.

[144] Ryan, *Empire*, 129-40. See Ryan for a discussion of the relationship between domesticity and the slave trade.

[145] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 81.

The Hidden Hand

The unconventional exploits of Cap, the heroine of *The Hidden Hand*, indicate a revolt against the restriction of women to the private sphere by Southworth.[146] Selling newspapers, chasing criminals, and duelling were perceived by many readers in the mid-nineteenth century as an affront to propriety.[147] However, Southworth is not rebelling directly. Upon those occasions when Cap chooses to disregard social mores or the instructions of her guardian, she is following a higher law. Being more evident to women, than to men, the higher law gains its authority from nature and God. Her revolutionary actions confirm republican and Christian principles. A comparison of the behaviour of Stowe's Mrs Bird and Cap clarifies the concept. Stowe emphasizes Mrs Bird's domestic skill before presenting her absolute denial of the Fugitive Slave Act. Cap determines to "find what she would do for [her patriarch's] extra comfort, and found a job in newly lining his warm slippers and the sleeves of his dressing-gown."[148] At the same time as presenting these gestures of love, she denies Old Hurricane's authority to control her actions. She proves her independence by threatening to call Old Hurricane "before the nearest magistrate, to show by what right [he] detained [her]."[149] The revolutionary sentiments of Mrs Bird are justified by her undeniable domestic, maternal nature. Cap performs the same nurturing, loving deeds, and comes to a similarly revolutionary conclusion.[150] It would be immoral for Old Hurricane to control Cap, in the same way that it was immoral for Congress to demand Americans return escaped slaves to their owners. Cap revolts against the infringement of women's rights, as Mrs Bird revolts in support of the liberty of enslaved people.[151]

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[146] n.b. 'Cap' refers to the daughter of Eugene and Capitola Le Noir, while 'Capitola' refers to the wife of Eugene Le Noir. This method of reference will be used throughout the thesis. However, the use of 'Cap' and 'Capitola' in direct quotations from *The Hidden Hand* will be kept as in original.

[147] Dee Garrison, "Immoral Fiction in the Late Victorian Library," *American Quarterly*, vol. 28, no.1 (Spring, 1976): 71-89. Sari Edelstein, "'Metamorphosis of the Newsboy:' E. D. E. N. Southworth's *The Hidden Hand* and the Antebellum Story-Paper," *Studies in American Fiction*, vol. 37, no. 1 (Spring, 2010): 35-36. Edelstein considers *The Hidden Hand* to be an amalgamation of styles, genre, and forms, some of which mocked sentimentality and Christianity.

[148] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 149.

Southworth confirms the separation of the public and private spheres using many popular sentimental strategies. The heroine helps maintain Hurricane Hall with Mrs Condiment, while the slaves enjoy their Saturnalia.[152] She also learns domestic skills such as "cutting and basting, back-stitching and felling, hemming and seaming."[153] Cap benefits by fulfilling these domestic roles. During her refusal to relinquish independence, the heroine presents her arguments against Old Hurricane's controlling behaviour from the position of wounded femininity. "She paused, dropped her head upon her bosom, a sudden blush flaming up over her face, and tear-drops glittering in her downcast eyes."[154] Such gestures, symbolic of feminine virtue, are also emphasised in the revelatory scene in the magistrate's court in New York City, where Cap is exposed as a girl in boy's clothing. Upon the insistence of the Recorder, Cap revealed her reason for masquerading as a boy.

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[149] Ibid., 149-51. Smith, "The Novel," 55. Smith notes that "authors of the southern domestic novel firmly reject the ideal of the southern lady."

[150] Tompkins, *Sensational*, xvi. Tompkins argues that typical and familiar forms were depended upon by sentimental authors. This thesis argues that sentimental authors exploited these forms to disguise their true, rebellious purposes.

[151] Fox-Genovese, *Plantation Household*, 334-71. Fox-Genovese discusses the relationship between abolitionism and the women's rights movement, linking both closely to 'bourgeois individualism.' Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 96. Johnson takes a different perspective, positing that slaves emancipated women as wives and mothers, thereby subverting the patriarchy and slavery. Kerber, *Women*, 231, 249. Kerber argues that middle-class women were emancipated by industrialization.

[152] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 469.

[153] Ibid., 134.

[154] Ibid., 150.

> "Oh, sir, I can't – I – How can I? Well, being always exposed, sleeping outdoors, I was often in danger from bad boys and bad men," said Capitola, and, dropping her head upon her breast and covering her crimson cheeks with her hands, for the first time she burst into tears and sobbed aloud.[155]

Cap justifies her actions by exhibiting physical manifestations of virtuous womanhood and making sincere declarations that she had no other choice. Although Cap frequently performs unwomanly deeds, she is not rebelling against the separation of the private and public, but rather considers her actions justified by a higher law than that governing the social habits of men and women. Her revolt is justified because it is a result of social and economic circumstances that are beyond the power of women to control.[156] If women were given the legal right to own property, engage in trade and commerce etc. then they would not need to dress as men.

The significant role that motherhood plays in *The Hidden Hand* confirms Southworth's support for women remaining within the private sphere. In various families, mothers are responsible for bestowing identity on the next generation.[157] Capitola Le Noir is a mother who has concealed her child's true identity. By Christian faith she maintains her sanity, in the face of unlawful confinement for seventeen years. Her composure prompts Traverse Rocke to ask her how she became committed to a mental asylum, and so the truth and Cap's identity is revealed.[158] Similarly, Marah Rocke holds the truth of her son's paternity. She keeps his father's identity a secret until she can announce the revelation with the knowledge that it will be beneficial. Crucially, it is the efforts to maintain her virtue as a wife, through the immediate trials leading to her separation from Old Hurricane and the long years of exile, that enable the acknowledgment of Traverse as heir to Hurricane Hall. The self-control demonstrated by Capitola and Marah makes possible the positive outcome of their trials. By continuing to adhere to social etiquette, they preserve the integrity and identity of their families.

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[155] Ibid., 56.

[156] Kerber, *No Constitutional Right*. Smith, "The Novel," 53. Smith identifies in Cap's development during the novel, an example of *Bildungsroman*. For an analysis of *Bildungsroman* in Warner's writing, see Williams, "Susan Warner's *Queechy*," 3-16.

[157] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 38. Gatta points out that in sentimental literature, mother figures gain an accepted self-dependence from their association with the Virgin Mary. Kerber, *Women*, 283-89.

Mothers played an important role as guardians of their children's hereditary identities. Equally significant is the impact they have upon their children's moral character. Repeatedly the existence or non-existence of a mother-figure is the crucial factor in determining the morality of sons and daughters.[159] Craven Le Noir has grown up without a mother or any feminine influence. No woman has lived in the Hidden House for nearly two decades; apart from the captive Capitola and the black housekeeper, Dorkas Knight; both of whom had no moral influence over the young man. As a result, Craven develops a corrupt and cruel character. In contrast, Traverse has benefited from the uninterrupted and undiluted influence of his mother, the esteemed Marah Rocke.[160] As a result he has become a generous, compassionate, and hard-working man. Similarly, Herbert Greyson has benefited from Marah's loving influence, for after his own mother died, she adopted that role. Neither 'son' was greatly influenced by masculine figures;

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[158] Lynette Carpenter, "Double Talk: The Power and Glory of Paradox in E.D.E.N. Southworth's *The Hidden Hand*," *Legacy*, vol. 10, no. 1 (1993): 17-30. Carpenter explores the multiple paradoxes created by Southworth, such as when a family home becomes a prison and asylum, only to return to being a family home. Traub, "Negotiating Visibility," 158, 165.

[159] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 66.

[160] Ryan, *Cradle*, 194.

Traverse assuming that his father was dead, and Herbert knowing that his father was dead, and his uncle estranged. Nurturing the next generation of children into individuals worthy of America's glorious heritage bestowed a massive responsibility upon mothers.

In many situations in the novel, women who share no kinship with a child are capable of cultivating honourable behaviour within them. Indeed, the heroine is raised by a free, black woman named Nancy Grewell. On the stand, in the court room, Cap acknowledges that the care she received from her surrogate mother consistently fulfilled all her needs.[161] The implications of Nancy leaving New York are shown starkly in Cap's poverty. Without a mother-figure, Cap sinks into poverty, and even more disturbingly, can not maintain her identity as a girl. Cap's cross-dressing reveals that even well-established social rules could not remain in force without mothers exercising control. Nancy's role as mother extends to her keeping Cap's true identity a secret, in order to protect her. Reiterating the importance of surrogate mothers is Marah Rocke's care of Herbert, and later, Clara. To each of them, despite their dissimilar needs, Marah provides the moral guidance and the practical knowledge that would carry them through life uncorrupted.[162] No child in this story reaches maturity with a traditional family structure of father and mother. Southworth repeatedly argues the pre-eminence of mothers in a child's upbringing, in order for that child to become a valuable member of society. A father alone would not suffice.

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[161] Carpenter, "Double Talk," 17-30. Carpenter points out an intriguing paradox. Cap is sold into slavery as if she were truly Nancy Grewell's Daughter. Later, Cap vows that Herbert Greyson "always did make a Miss Nancy of her!" Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 405.

[162] Smith-Rosenberg, "Female World," 131. Smith-Rosenberg cited this interdependent care-giving in the female world as a significant indicator of the continuity of women's private sphere. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance*, 31. Matthiessen identifies in Emerson's writing, a synthesis of art and knowledge. The combination of practical and contemplative thought evident in this male writer is also seen in the novels of the three female writers. Ryan, *Empire*, 106. Ryan recognizes benevolent associations assuming social roles traditionally assigned to family. Howe, *What Hath*, 193.

Southworth analyses the relationship between a person's identity, character, and social class. Knowing a person's real family name was crucial to recognising their ancestry and social class. However, the author argues that, regardless of a family's affluence, a responsible mother would cultivate good manners and moral behaviour in her children.[163] When the plight of Marah Rocke is first brought to the attention of Old Hurricane, her virtuous behaviour compels him to promise aid, without knowing the name of the woman he is promising it to. Cap queries her uncle about this state of affairs, after Herbert Greyson has recounted what he knows of Marah's tale: "uncle, do you know you never once asked Herbert the name of the widow you are going to befriend, and that he never told you?"[164] As keeper of her own and her son's identities, Marah had chosen not to reveal to Herbert that his uncle was her estranged husband. In the event, Old Hurricane states that, "whatever their names are, it's nothing to me."[165] Marah's honourable character warrants aid, but the realisation of her true identity evokes the prejudices of the patron and causes him to deny it. Marah's estrangement by her husband leaves her in a vulnerable position, yet this only accentuates the glory of her having maintained a virtuous lifestyle. Despite her husband's neglect, her legal submission to Old Hurricane, and her weak position as a woman doing physical work, Marah maintains manners expected of middle-class women. Southworth proposes that wealth should be no barrier to women behaving virtuously.

Southworth examines the redemptive capacity of good women through the character of Black Donald. Meetings between the criminal and the heroine are occasions for Southworth to extol the redemptive qualities of women.[166] Cap's feminine virtues have thus far been discussed in reference to those who guided her maturation. Her relationship with Black Donald ignites her own maternal qualities. Throughout the novel, Cap speaks her admiration of the arch criminal, for she recognises the independence with which he acts and envies his disregard for autocratic authority. She believes he is following the higher law that she herself adheres to.[167] However, when he traps her in her own bedchamber with him, the threat that he poses to her virtue and her life causes her to reconsider her approach. By invoking his mother, she attempts to remind him of that woman's moral lessons. "I will call you as your poor mother did, when your young soul was as white as your skin, before she ever dreamed her boy would grow black with crime!"[168] Clearly, the villain's mother is remembered fondly, for Black Donald reacts to Cap's reference with "a violent convulsion of his bearded chin and lip[.]"[169] Playing upon his mother's moral influence, Cap draws his attention to the state of his soul before God's judgement, in consideration of the crime he is about to commit.

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[163] Armstrong, *Desire*, 4. Armstrong argues that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a new system developed in which the title, status, and ancestry of a woman no longer determined her quality or value.
[164] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 73.
[165] Ibid., 74.

> "Donald, in all your former acts of lawlessness your antagonists were strong men; and as you boldly risked your life in your deprivations, your acts, though bad, were not base! But now your antagonist is a feeble girl, who has been unfortunate from her very birth; to destroy her would be an act of baseness to which you never yet descended."[170]

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[166] Baym, "Portrayal," 219-20. Baym argues for the exclusive use of nature in the masculine plot. Rather than compete, women used "domesticated natural symbolism."

[167] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 476. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 51.

[168] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 480.

[169] Ibid., 481.

[170] Ibid., 482-83.

Throughout this ordeal, Cap follows decorum, presenting her ‘guest’ with refreshments, and tidying the room. In Black Donald’s mother and Cap, Southworth’s portrays the influence that women could bring to bear by fulfilling their motherly and domestic duties.[171]

Cap relentlessly pursues moral purposes, even if that meant rebelling against social mores and federal laws. Such commitment to higher principles is evident in Cap’s helping Black Donald escape for jail, even after he refuses to leave her bedchamber. In her dealings with another criminal, the influence of a higher law is similarly evident. Duelling is illegal, and social mores prevented women from directly challenging accusations made against their own honour. When such a transgression is committed against Cap, neither rule prevents the heroine calling out the culprit. The heroine’s revenge is divinely inspired. Her initial plan to kill Craven Le Noir is altered because she is unable to justify the act to God. “For the first time Capitola doubted the perfect righteousness of that purpose which was of a character to arrest her prayers upon her lips.”[172] Instead, ‘tempering justice with mercy,’ she fills her gun with split peas.[173] Under the impression that his death is imminent, Craven confesses his provocation of the attack, thereby clearing Cap of guilt.[174] Cap disregards social mores that demand women’s submissive behaviour, and physically defends her reputation. The high value which Cap places upon her good reputation reflects Southworth’s own valuation of women’s domestic and moral behaviour.

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[171] Ibid., 484.
[172] Ibid., 456.
[173] Ibid., 464.
[174] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 460-66. Gustafson, *Imagining*, 167-79.

Cap's defiance of the rules governing women's behaviour, is one way in which Southworth recognized the threats that women suffered. Cap keeps Craven's insulting note, because she believes that, upon seeing the note, any judge would deem her justified in protecting her reputation.[175] She needed "the warrant for punishment of that man, signed by his own hand[,]" because some men might interpret her own behaviour as the cause of Craven's actions. John Stone, who defends his 'cousin' in front of other men, later justifies Craven's actions. He councils Cap:

> "You are a will-o'-the-wisp who lures a poor fellow on through woods, bogs and briars, until you land him in the quicksands! You whirl him around and around until he grows dizzy and delirious, and talks at random, and then you'd have him called out, you blood-thirsty little vixen! I tell you, Cousin Cap, if I were to take up all the quarrels your hoydenism might lead me into, I should have nothing else to do!"[176]

Despite Southworth's insistence that John Stone intended to punish Craven himself, his statement to Cap reflects a popular attitude within nineteenth-century society: that women could seduce men to corruption. The inability of women to take public action to defend themselves, was an aspect of the separation of the private and public spheres that Southworth criticizes. Spiritual authority inherent in women justified their speaking in public, therefore federal laws and social mores that prevented such actions did not deserve recognition.

When Cap presents herself before the magistrate, having organized the removal of Craven's body from the side of the road, she seeks and gains recognition from the government representative. The heroine gains a public identity and proves her virtue by presenting her case. Clara practices a similar stunt, although slightly less flamboyantly. Her speech at the Orphan's court is intended to define her as a betrothed woman and to deny the right of Colonel Le Noir to control her. Although this speech has little consequence in the plot of the novel, its significance is emphasized by it being the only aspect of the first Williams vs. Le Noir Orphan's Court case described in any detail. Though Clara's speech, Southworth simultaneously defends women's right to public action, and demonstrates the strength they gain by upholding the virtues of the private sphere. Clara pre-empts her rebellious speech by acknowledging Colonel Le Noir's guardianship. The goodwill provoked by this statement enables Clara to make the following announcement.

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[175] Ryan, *Empire*, 122, 125.
[176] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 453. Sellers, *Market Revolution*, 244.

> "Your honour, I owe it to Doctor Rocke here present, who has been sadly misrepresented to you, to say (what, under less serious circumstances, my girl's heart would shrink from avowing so publicly) that I am his betrothed wife – sacredly betrothed to him by almost the last act of my dear father's life."[177]

Clara's character is a clear representation of feminine virtue. Her decision to define her virtue and to claim her right to self-determination in a public court of law justifies every woman doing so, without risk of condemnation. The two heroines conform to a higher law by taking public action, enabling Southworth to demonstrate the immorality of restricting women's actions to the private sphere.

Southworth's experience of the social mores preventing women earning a living and defending themselves in a court of law may well have inspired her approach to the separation of the public and private spheres. Women are central to the plot of her novel, not only as redeemers and carers, but as active agents, who controlled their own identities and those of their children. As givers of identity, Nancy, Marah, Clara, Cap and Captiola, all determine the course of events that bring balance and justice to Tiptop. Yet these women do not challenge their restriction to the private sphere. Rather, they manipulate those rules to act in accordance with a higher law. They could defend their virtue, by speaking in court, by shooting the slanderer, or by dressing in boy's clothing.

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[177] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 313.

Conclusion

In *The American Woman's Home*, Catherine Beecher writes that "[t]he family state then, is the aptest earthly illustration of the heavenly kingdom, and in it woman is its chief minister."[178] All three authors confirm the prevalence of this idea by recognizing the centrality of women within the home and within the nation. However, differences of opinion emerge when the authors consider the extent to which women are responsible for public issues. Stowe perceives greed and slavery as threats to the integrity of women. For this reason, Stowe advises mothers, daughters, and wives to restrict themselves to influencing patriarchs within the home. Engaging in commercial or political acts ought to be avoided at all cost. In contrast, Warner and Southworth encourage women to apply their skills and qualities to the public sphere. Adhering to a higher law, that transcends federal legislation and social mores, the heroines of *The Wide, Wide World* and *The Hidden Hand* assume control of ambiguous situations. Occasions in which Ellen ventures into public are fraught with anxiety, yet her reasons for entering the public sphere are beyond contention. Her responsibilities as a woman lead her to disregard the separation of the private and public spheres.[179] Extending into public those qualities and skills that make women ‘chief ministers’ of the home, would benefit the nation. Southworth adopts a similar attitude, although her interpretation of higher law emphasizes republican, more so than Christian values. Protecting her own liberty by using it, Cap undermines her guardian’s attempts to control her. The authors communicate their individual understandings of what makes the United States worthy of esteem. Each author perceives her heroine to be exercising woman’s prerogative as ‘chief minister’ of the family.

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[178] Beecher and Stowe, *American Woman's Home*, 19. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 2. Wearn discusses this very quote, identifying Beecher's and Stowe's framing of women's influence in the masculine terms of religion and politics. Tompkins, *Sensational*, 143.

The concept of higher law, as practiced by sentimental heroines, is strongly influenced by the American ideals of republicanism, liberty, and independence.[180] The “self-evident truths” that define the birth of the United States are evoked by the authors.[181] Women’s influence was essential to the nation maintaining its leadership of the civilized world, in religious and politics terms. Neither Warner or Southworth saw a benefit in women’s exclusion from the public sphere. Ellen and Cap could not appear more dissimilar, yet the authors both promote a higher power that justifies women’s presence in public.[182] A parallel event in the two novels reveals where the attitudes of the two authors differ. Cap rides alone to assert her freedom, while Ellen rides alone only for

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[179] Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 6. Wearn discusses the requirement of women to sublimate their personal desires.

[180] Smith, “Scribbling Women,” 51. In contrast, Smith interprets the novels as conforming. “Supported as this doctrine is by copious quotations from the Bible and from evangelical hymns, it brings the realm of the Ideal that had been so problematic for writers of the American Renaissance under the same system of law and of implied covenants that prevails in society.”

[181] “The Declaration of Independence: The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America.” In Congress, 4 July 1776. Accessed 31 Mar. 2013. ww.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html

[182] Baym, “Portrayal,” 217. Baym discusses the contrast between the dark and fair haired female figures.

the sake of Mr Van Brunt.[183] Although the authors treat their heroine differently, both Ellen and Cap are justified in their riding alone. They each adhere to a higher law. Where that higher law diverges is in the emphasis the authors place on religious and republican motivations. Both are valid interpretations and transcend positive law.[184]
Cap acts out her autonomy, denying the authority of Old Hurricane to prevent her riding alone. Ellen denies the authority of social mores to prevent her helping a friend in desperate need.

Stowe understood that a higher law should determine the actions of Americans. The characters of Mrs Bird and Rachel Halliday represent the author's endowment of women with responsibility for the moral virtue of the nation.[185] Stowe's perception of women's responsibilities only diverges from that of Warner and Southworth, upon the issue of women's physical presence in public. Stowe reinforces the sensibility of women's restriction in the private sphere by describing the horror of the slave markets, in which women are forced beyond their 'natural' situation, and demeaned.

> He put out his heavy, dirty hand, and drew the girl [Emmeline] towards him; passed it over her neck and bust, felt her arms, looked at her teeth, and then pushed her back against her mother, whose patient face showed the suffering she had been going through at every motion of the hideous stranger.[186]

Stowe emphasizes Emmeline's fair complexion, piety, and virtue, so as to reinforce the comparison between the slave's exposure and the exposure that any woman would face in the public sphere. The mother's reaction indicates Stowe's intention of equating these slave women with all women. A mother's role was to create a sanctuary within the home, to protect and nurture those in her care, and to prevent her daughters experiencing such humiliation as Emmeline suffers.

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[183] Ellen DuBois, "The Radicalism of the Woman Suffrage Movement: Notes Towards the Reconstruction of Nineteenth Century Feminism," in *Major Problems in American Women's History*, eds. Mary Beth Norton and Ruth M. Alexander (Lexington: D. C. Heath, 1989), 210.
[184] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 46.
[185] Chase, *American Novel*, 5. Chase would support this assessment, since he claims that the depiction of character by American novel-writers is deep, but narrow and predictable.
[186] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 345. Johnson, *Soul By Soul*. 14-16.

Warner and Southworth do not deny the positive role that mothers could have within a home.[187] Indeed, by adopting the role of mother, Ellen and Cap become more powerful. Ellen often measures her actions by her mother's and Alice's moral standards. The result of their influence is to make Ellen an exemplar of American virtues and a worthy representative to Britain. Crucially, Ellen adopts the role of mother for Nancy Vawse. The heroine converts Nancy's chaotic and malicious tendencies, into moral and productive activities. By setting a good example for Nancy, being kind and forgiving, Ellen redeems the wayward child from a life of sin. Similarly, the maternal love channelled by Southworth's heroine redeems the arch villain, Black Donald. Pleading with him, forgiving his past and present threats to her virtue, Cap manages to save her aggressor from death and damnation. In the same novel, the high morality and perseverance of mothers is responsible for the restoration of the right inheritances to the right people. All authors agree that good mothers were essential if the United States was to maintain its integrity.

The authors are united in their demand for action.[188] Within or beyond the private sphere, virtue must be actively sustained. Coordinating with the author's preference for women to remain in the private sphere, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* advocates women becoming actively engaged in moral issues from within the home. Characters that refuse to take action are vilified. For instance, Marie St. Clare and Cassy demonstrate a deficient womanhood that is uninterested or incapable in taking action against slavery. Southworth perceives the restriction of women to the private sphere to be unjust, yet agrees with Stowe's demand for action. She argues that women must use their capacity for action, so that they not suffer under more powerful, less principled individuals. It is by actively pursuing a moral purpose that the good women of *The Hidden Hand* earn the high regard in which they were held. Whether by maintaining one's virtue as a wife, or alerting the household to a criminal's presence, self-determination characterises Southworth's good women. This theory is often purposefully undermined by Southworth, in her campaign to expose the degradation resulting from the legal inequality of women, yet she still promotes action over passivity. Similarly, for Warner, facing trials within and beyond the home requires women to take action. Repeatedly, Ellen and other female characters deal with public issues that infiltrate the private sphere. While Cap achieves self-determination by revolting against Old Hurricane's attempts to control her, Ellen uses her energy to maintain self-control.[189] Tolerating her aunt's malicious behaviour, and circumventing the demands made by her uncle, Ellen covertly takes action to sustain her religious and ideological integrity.[190]

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[187] Susan K. Harris, "The House That Hagar Built: Houses and Heroines in E. D. E. N. Southworth's *The Deserted Wife*," *Legacy*, vol. 4, no. 2 (Fall 1987): 17-29. Harris considers the importance of homes and houses to Southworth.

[188] Baym, *Feminism*, 110.

All three authors consider it impractical that the separation of the spheres continue to be applied as an absolute. The United States had developed to the point where it was necessary for women to play a broader role. Sentimental novels offer a way for people to explore the changes that were taking place around them. Each of the three novels offers unique suggestions of how women’s role in society should evolve to meet the growing demand for morality.

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[189] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 172. Although this theory may appear to support Tompkins' argument for the submission of women being supported by sentimental fiction, in fact rebellious action is hidden below a façade of submission.

[190] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 88-90.

Chapter Two: *Market Revolution*

Introduction

Since the turn of the nineteenth century, the United States had been undergoing significant changes to its economy. These changes amounted to a transformation in the expectations of Americans. Every man, woman, and child felt the impact.[191] New opportunities would change society in unexpected, and not unanimously welcome, ways. Each of the three authors experienced this change as a challenge to, rather than an easing of their trials. Susan Warner was forced to renounce her fashionable, affluent life for an austere existence in the countryside. It was necessary for Harriet Beecher Stowe to take up writing as a means of supplementing her husband's income. Emma D.E.N. Southworth's abandonment by her husband left her destitute. She was forced to support herself and her children by teaching for meagre wages.[192] These three middle-class, New England women illustrate the diverse ways in which the turbulent economy affected those not directly involved in its machinations. For this very reason, the market revolution features significantly in each of their novels.

Social expectations left women in a disadvantaged position. As authors, Warner, Stowe, and Southworth were well aware of the need to act within these restrictions. The doctrine of the separation of the spheres excluded the guardians of the private sphere from most forms of public action. As a result, in times of need, women had a minimal selection of jobs to turn to; all of which were inadequately paid. Southworth's description of Cap's experience looking for jobs in New York City reflects the lot of needy women during the market revolution. Simply put, "as I was a girl they had no work for me."[193] The limited range of work was made all the more debilitating by 'innovations' in the manufacturing process. Efforts by entrepreneurs to undersell their competitors caused the simplification of patterns for shoes, clothes, furniture, etc.[194] This meant less skill was required to complete the job, so unskilled workers could be hired, and the least expense incurred in wages. Water-powered machinery, developed during the early nineteenth century, meant that women and children's labour could be exploited in yet another way. Women working in factories, in dangerous conditions, for long hours and minimal pay epitomised the immoral image of the market revolution.[195]

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[191] Baym, *Feminism*, 112. Baym points out that women were doubly witnesses to historical actions because they see what men do, and then experience the effects of what men do. Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 20-60.

[192] Welter, *Dimity Convictions*, 53. Welter argues that because teaching was not paid well, teachers were considered more morally motivated, and capable of saving the youth from the corruption inherent in materialism. Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 34. See Cott, on women teaching regular winter term instruction because they commanded lower wages. Ryan, *Cradle*, 215-18. Ryan discusses the labour of middle-class women within benevolent societies.

In both city and countryside, the emergence of new markets had a profound impact on production. In rural areas, the entire purpose of production was revolutionised. Being self-sustaining was no longer enough for farmers. There was now the opportunity to profit from agriculture. High demand for crops, from England in 1812 had initially made viable the high costs of transporting goods.[196] With the transportation revolution, moving costs ceased to be prohibitive. It was now relatively cheap to take produce by canal, rail, or toll road from the fields to hungry workers in industrial areas.[197] Demand was high. Change in the purpose of farming contributed to the breakdown of traditional agricultural society. Work no longer stopped when enough had been produced to ensure the comfort of the family. Maintaining the family estate, for some, was no longer the most efficient use of resources. Alexis de Tocqueville notes the capitalist tendencies of republican farmers in his first volume of *Democracy in America*. “[T]here [was] a strong pecuniary interest in favour of selling, as floating capital produce[d] higher interest than real property, and [was] more readily available to gratify the passions of the moment.”[198] Tocqueville recognises a change in attitude towards family that marks the market revolution as more than the increased momentum of the economy. Individuals in the 1850s may not have recognised the scale or significance of this shift in the aspirations of farmers, but the authors certainly acknowledged people’s natural inclination to thrive.

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[193] Warner, *Wide World*, 54.
[194] Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 25.
[195] Sellers, *Market Revolution*, 25-28.
[196] Ibid., 15.
[197] Howe, *What Hath*, 211.

Such changes fostered uncertainty regarding the republican virtue of the farmer. People did still associate moral behaviour with the countryside however. The closeness to nature that farming implied, was idealised by people in industrial areas as a more innocent way to live.[199] In reality, being reliant upon the consumer, upon transport networks, and a plethora of middle-men who facilitated the market meant farmers lost independence and became part of the profit-driven action of the cities. Farmers were now accountable to somebody. Fluctuations in the price of land were also contributing to the instability of the agricultural lifestyle. All depended in how close a farm was to the canal, railroad, or toll road; the farmer could either stand to profit from the introduction of new transport networks, or suffer crippling losses. Land lost its innate value, and became judged solely for its profitability, which was negligible if produce could not be cost effectively transported to market. The federal government further undermined the perception of farming as the pinnacle of independence by confiscating private farmland.

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[198] Tocqueville, *Democracy*, vol. 1, 49.

[199] Tamara P. Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen: The Meaning of Coutnry Life Among the Boston Elite, 1785-1860* (London: Yale University, 1989). 3-6.

Their purpose was to facilitate growth in the economy, by emancipating land that would not be willingly sold to the domestic transport projects. Farming was losing its republican value. So much uncertainty regarding the future of single farms reflected concerns for the future of the nation.

Even the passing of property from one generation to the next came to reflect the unpredictability created by economic competition. Change was occurring at such a rate that property was no longer attractive as an investment. It was doubtful that individuals could assure the prosperity of their descendants when whole families, as well as individuals, were being forced to migrate across the nation to find jobs. Some were attracted by the abundant opportunities in coastal cities, working with traders and merchants. Others were forced by necessity to join the inferior class of mill workers, whose entire existence became connected to the prosperity of one particular mill.[200] With the scarcity of secure jobs, the communities of the West appealed to many. A reincarnation of the pioneer spirit attracted those disenchanted with what they saw as the corruption of the industrial world.[201] The West also offered anonymity to those whose past might otherwise preclude them from attaining prosperity. The ownership of land had, from the very beginning, been a pillar of American society. That landed property should be so deeply affected by the market revolution reflects the significance of the changes taking place.

The market revolution was celebrated by some Christians as proof of God's favour and the leadership role the United States would perform in the Millennium.[202] However, many Americans were not sure that the rapid changes in the economy were an improvement. The morality of the nation appeared to be being degraded by individuals' selfish pursuit of profit. Lawyers emerged, during the nineteenth century, as advocates of pecuniary interests, as opposed to morality. For example, lawyers argued the doctrine of contributory negligence, on behalf of their business-owning employers. This legislation allowed employers to avoid the nuisance of providing a safe working environment, by making the employee responsible for any accident they might be involved in. The argument that this legislation would allow workers to earn higher wages by taking dangerous jobs does not disguise the self-interest of the business owners. Wealthy men were exploiting the neediest men by offering them higher wages to risk their lives.[203] Lawyers reinforced their power, and in doing so, highlighted flaws in the democratic system, by acquiring positions on state courts. Once ensconced, they could not be replaced by democratic means, and their continued usefulness to men in power ensured they would not be forced out. The ascendancy of lawyers indicates a shift in power from the many to the few. Democracy and republicanism appeared to be under threat, as men isolated themselves in their attempts to gain wealth and power, often at the expense of their neighbours.

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[200] Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 36.
[201] Burbick, *Healing*, 190.
[202] Duberman, "Northern Response," 400. Marty, *Pilgrims*, 186. Howe, *What Hath*, 285-323.

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[203] Susan S. Williams, "Widening the World: Susan Warner, Her Readers, and the Assumption of Authorship," *American Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 4 (Dec., 1990): 565-86. Williams emphasizes the importance of money to Warner. Citing issues such as the competition between Ellen Montgomery and Ellen Chauncey at Christmas, and the alteration made to the manuscript edition before publication. Williams sees an overriding financial motivation in Warner's authorship. Homestead, *American Women Authors*, 129-49. Homestead considers whether Stowe was exploiting the characters in her novels in a similar fashion to the businessmen. Coultrap-McQuin, *Doing Literary Business*, 50-78, 80-104. Coultrap-McQuin investigates the publishing relationships of Southworth. A recreation of the separation of the spheres appears to have been the case. Southworth was not willing to take financial risks, instead performing non-competitive behaviour. Coultrap-McQuin interprets Southworth as writing to please others and promote social good. According to Coultrap-McQuin's analysis, Stowe valued piece-of-mind over money, but was astute enough to educate herself in business and hold a nonexclusive commitment to her publisher. According to Coultrap-McQuin, Stowe used manipulation, took what she felt she deserved, stated what she wanted, and expected a great deal from her publishers. Claire Parfait, *The Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin, 1852-2002* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 1-31, 203-05. Boydston, Kelley, and Margolis, *Sisterhood*, 157, 349. In *The Limits of Sisterhood*, the relationship between Catharine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe is analysed with regards to the financial perspectives of each sister.

By the 1850s, the market revolution was causing Warner, Stowe, and Southworth great concern. Of particular interest was the potential threat to the moral integrity of the nation. Invested parties celebrated the growth in industry as ensuring the perpetuation of republicanism and Christianity. A nation with a strong economy could achieve far greater things than a nation without funds.[204] Those whose livelihoods, property, or value systems were threatened by the changes felt otherwise. The importance of the market revolution to every American, regardless of gender, age, class, or race, is reflected by its strong presence in the three sentimental novels.[205] Given the supposed threat of the market revolution to the unity and morality of the nation, it would be logical for sentimental novelists to denigrate the changes, and seek to revive enthusiasm for the idealised past of republican farmers and stoic pioneers.[206] Sentimental literature did attempt to provide consensus. However, the three authors were not unanimous about the best way to ensure a prosperous and moral future for the Union.[207] Each author has a unique plan for the nation, yet all three consistently emphasise the need for restorative action.

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[204] Howe, *What Hath*, 217.

[205] Eric J. Sundquist, introduction to *New Essays on Uncle Tom's Cabin*, ed. Eric J. Sundquist (New York: Cambridge University, 1986), 300-01.

[206] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 28. Barnes argues that the 'idea of a country' was inseparable from loving attachments first cultivated in that land. Baym, *Feminism*, 5-15. Baym complicates this concept as it applied to literature. According to Baym, American literary critics have maintained a perspective celebrating nationalistic literature, and disregarding literature that was not groundbreaking. Baym's point supports Barnes. Also see Chase, *American Novel*, x, 5. Chase esteems the romance novel as "a vehicle for intellectual and moral ideas." The possibility of profound disorder, disunity, alienation, and contradiction can all be found in the American novel, in contrast to the English. Chase perceives American authors as "explorers [who] see more deeply, darkly, privately and disinterestedly than imperialists."

[207] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 124. Tompkins argues that sentimental authors were attempting to reorganize culture from woman's point of view. Baym, *Feminism*, 8-9. Baym considers women writers have been treated as the enemy, as an impediment and an obstacle to the revelation of American culture. Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 21. Cott uses the term 'obstacle' when relating how the legal conditions of marriage embodied women's economic status. Gustafson, *Imagining*, 30.

The Wide, Wide World

Warner promoted mutual understanding as the key to the future of the United States. Integration of rural and urban society was necessary for the prosperity of the nation; to lead the world into the Millennium required both the republican virtues of the self-sufficient farmer and innovations of the entrepreneur in manufacturing.[208] Ellen personifies the hopes of the nation to achieve perfection. The synthesis of academic learning and domestic skills forge a perfect American heroine. Moving beyond the antipathy of agricultural and industrial communities towards one another, would allow mutual appreciation and learning. Each manner of existence held its benefits, and to incorporate the best parts of each society would allow the United States to reach its potential. Following Alice's death, John counsels Ellen to "let sorrow but bring us closer to [God]."[209] Warner offers her readers the same advice. The trials of the market revolution must be endured and made the best of, in order that the nation may become like heaven.

The Wide, Wide World begins with reference to a court case, the loss of which initiates the heroine's quest for perfection. That Warner should open her novel with an example of the palpable impact of the market revolution upon women shows her realism, and the important role she felt women would inevitably play in the changes taking place.[210] While the court case brings initial suffering, Ellen becomes more deeply religious because of it. The market revolution benefits women in a more material manner as well. Life was made more comfortable by access to luxury items, such as coal and wool carpets. Books, Bibles, and writing desks enable an education congruent with the republican principle of independent thought. Maintaining relationships, such as that between Ellen and her mother, is made easier by the development of the United States Postal Service. In the same way that rural and urban communities were integrated, Warner reveals how closely the domestic home and the public world of business were related. The market revolution was a private affair, not only because of the comfort it provided to domestic life, but also in domestic contributions to the market place. For instance, the economy and energy that Aunt Fortune expends on the domestic duties of her farm add to the value of the property.[211] For Warner, the future success of the nation requires tolerance and cooperation, not a reversion to a fantasy of idealised, pioneering communities.

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[208] Howe, *What Hath*, 304.

[209] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 182. Fiedler, *Love and Death*, ix, xxi. Fiedler recognizes the significance of Ellen's withdrawal into nature, after her surrogate mother dies. Fiedler's theory is that in the American novel, the wife or mother is substituted for nature. Further discussion of the value placed upon the natural world in sentimental fiction takes place in chapter two. The combination of love and death that is infused in the characters of Mrs Montgomery and Alice Humphreys is identified by Fiedler as the defining characteristic of the American novel. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 103. Barnes differentiates between maternal values, which were glorified, and mothers, or surrogate mothers, who were a source of pain and weakness. Jerome J. McGann, *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigation in Historical Method and Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1985). 247-52. McGann notes a similar pairing of symbolic structures of religious and natural idealizations in the religious poetry of Christina Rossetti. McGann argues for the writer being influenced by the cultural contradictions of her period, especially with regards to Christianity. Smith-Rosenberg, "Female World," 132. Smith-Rosenberg draws attention to the empathy cultivated by emotional responses to events such as a death among family or friends. Empathy had an important function, to develop women's self-esteem. Gatta, *American Madonna*, 39-40.

The very first sentence in Warner's novel refers to the court case that Ellen's father has been pursuing.[212] Ellen asks: "Mamma, what was that I heard papa saying to you this morning about his lawsuit?"[213] Mrs Montgomery's response to this direct, almost accusatory question is to defer answering by claiming weariness. Comparing this question to a statement made by Ellen after her mother is rested, provides significant insight into the relationship between the economy and women, as Warner perceived it. "I thought, mamma, I heard papa telling you this morning or yesterday, that he had lost that lawsuit."[214] The event, the lawsuit, and the women are separated. The second statement is a description of the event Ellen witnessed, rather than a direct question. Denying ownership of the lawsuit gives a detached impression. That all certainty is replaced by vague notions reflects both the care Ellen takes with her mother, and by extension, the destructive nature of the news itself. Ellen's conscious distorting of the facts is confirmed by the replacement of 'saying to you,' with 'telling you.' Mrs Montgomery's swooning at the direct questioning of her daughter shows that she can not assimilate the changes taking place in industry. Through Ellen's assertive, then consciously imprecise questioning, Warner demonstrates the intelligence required of women to excel in the industrialised nation. Women had to be willing to adapt if they were to prosper in the new nation.

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[210] Kerber, *Women*, 248.

[211] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 171.

[212] Warner, *Susan Warner*, 263. Anna Warner relates the events of her father's serial court cases. Anna Warner makes a direct connection between Susan Warner's experiences and her heroine's trials: "The room was very still and full of thoughts. Then Aunt Fanny spoke. "Sue, I believe if you would try, you could write a story." Whether she added "that would sell," I am not sure; but of course that was what she meant. I think the opening words were written that very night. No wonder she began with a lawsuit!"

[213] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 9.

Through the activities and conversations of Ellen and her mother, Warner points out that women's interests, to a large degree, had become integrated with the economy. Despite Mrs Montgomery's aversion to the market revolution, she actually benefits from it in many ways. Her puritan meal of tea and toast is cooked to perfection on a fire made of Liverpool coal. She benefits because trading relations with England are healthy and her husband is intent on gaining wealth. The luxuries of the city are also illustrated in Ellen's comparison of moss with carpet. While walking besides a brook near her aunt's farm, Ellen proclaims, "[i]s that moss! How beautiful! How green and soft it is! I declare it's as soft as a carpet." Nancy's response, that "all the carpets [she] ever saw were as hard as board, and harder," demonstrates how manufactured products had made a positive contribution to society; especially within the home.[215] The feminine element of the market revolution is epitomised in the department store of St Clair and Fleury's; "one of the largest and best stores in the city, and the one [Ellen] knew where her mother generally made her purchases[.]"[216] Warner implies that, through St Clair and Fleury's, Mrs Montgomery has access to every item she could require. At the jewellery store, Mrs Montgomery exchanges her mother's ring for cash, to provide Ellen with items which will allow her to maintain independence, regardless of circumstances. That Mrs Montgomery has a buyer for her ring, and can purchase the specific items Ellen requires, is a result of the thriving economy. With the sale of the heirloom, Warner asserts how much more important it is to provide for the future, than to hold onto the past. The market revolution was supplying women as much as it was men.

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[214] Ibid., vol. 1, 9-11.

Warner also recognises the market revolution's positive impact on democracy, showing how developments had made education more accessible.[217] The author demonstrates how industry and city life enable citizens to improve themselves, and think as individuals. The stated purpose of the gifts given by Mrs Montgomery is perhaps most significant. She provides "everything necessary to the keeping up of good habits," thereby hoping that Ellen will not have to rely on others; she will not have her ideas manipulated by unknown forces.[218] Here republican ideology complements a scenario celebrating the market revolution.[219] Ellen is free to make up her own mind about issues regarding religion, education, and appearance because her mother had provided her with the items necessary to act independently: a Bible, a writing desk, and a wash stand.[220] Along with these items, the hymnbook from Mr Marshman and a copy of John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) from John Humphreys provide Ellen with a multitude of resources by which to determine the rectitude of her actions. The personal advice of her guardians and their annotations give additional guidance to her deliberations.

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[215] Ibid., vol. 1, 146. Veronica Stewart, "The Wild Side of *The Wide, Wide World*." *Legacy*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1994): 2, 5, 9. Stewart understands Nancy to be Ellen's internal conflict.

[216] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 53. The association Warner forges between domestic and economic activities reinforces her argument for the integration of the private and public spheres. Ellen's domestic chores are described by the author as "little matters of business," and later the careful dressing of her mother is described as "business" also. When Ellen is told by her mother to choose a Bible, the heroine's countenance looks "as though a nation's fate were deciding[.]" Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 34. Expressing domestic duties in terms reserved for the industrial environment reiterates Warner's intention.

[217] Tompkins, *Sensational*, xiv. Gustafson, *Imagining*, 17.

The market revolution made the tools required for a republican education more accessible. However, in Ellen's case, the quick pace of the economic growth is not conducive to clear thinking. In this way, Warner complicates her connection between the market revolution and independent thought. It is at the Humphreys' that we encounter the key to Warner's position on education. The stability and calm of rural surroundings clearly supports intellectual growth.[221] Alice's cabinet of curiosities, her encouragement of questions, and her welcoming yet disciplined behaviour immediately put the reader in mind of a schoolmistress. That such a superior educational environment should exist in the hills of Maine is unexpected, especially by Ellen's Scottish relatives. When the Lindseys discover Ellen's broad and accurate knowledge base they wonder: "to think that the backwoods of America should have turned us out such a little specimen of – [positive insinuation]."[222] The heroine leaves New York, a centre of fermenting ideas, before she has begun to mature. The novel ends with the heroine having achieved maturity and acceptance in Edinburgh; another centre of intellectual thought. However, her maturation and the majority of her education takes place in “the backwoods of America.”[223] Such celebration of the countryside is countered by Mr Humphreys’ response to the ill health of his daughter. The patriarch seeks the opinion of doctors from the city, rather than his local town, indicating a lack of confidence in rural doctors.[224] Viewed in the context of Warner’s promotion of integration, the comparison of Ellen’s experiences and Mr Humphrey’s actions displays the attractions of both urban and rural communities.

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[218] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 37.
[219] Gustafson, *Imagining*, 26, 169.
[220] Kerber, *No Constitutional Right*, 17. Kerber, *Women*, chapter seven. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 49, 107-09. Ryan, *Cradle*, 198-210. See Ryan for a comprehensive discussion of women's role as consumer. Howe, *What Hath*, 234.
[221] Burbick, *Healing*, 267.
[222] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 257.

To prove that broad national developments had a personal dynamic, Warner consistently shows that the market revolution did not stop at the walls of homes, but affected women within.[225] Repeatedly, windows act as barriers, and portals between the private and public spheres. However, the presence of light in ‘window scenes’ reflects Warner’s sympathetic approach to the relationship between the market revolution and the domestic sphere. Sitting in the parlour while her ailing mother sleeps, Ellen becomes absorbed in watching the dreary street outside her window. What Ellen watches is “for the most part dingy, dirty, and disagreeable – women, children, houses, and all[.]”[226] The author specifies three constituents of the domestic sphere, ‘women, children, houses,’ all negatively impacted by the economy. While she watches, a lamplighter journeys along the street, providing light so that the business of the day can continue a little longer. The unnatural state of urban society is implied by the lamplighter’s manipulation of human activity. Lighting lamps can be interpreted as contributing to the exploitation of factory workers and increasing the pressure to constantly pursue profit.[227]

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[223] Ibid., vol. 2, 257.
[224] Welter, *Dimity Convictions*, 57. Burbick, *Healing*, 5.
[225] Baym, *Feminism*, 112.
[226] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 9.

A different interpretation of that light implies that education and free-enterprise thrived because of the market revolution. Darkness falls while Ellen watches the New York street, yet it is never truly dark.

> At length, in the distance, light after light began to appear; presently Ellen could see the dim figure of the lamplighter crossing the street, from side to side, with his ladder; - then her drew near enough for her to watch him as he hooked his ladder on the lamp-irons, ran up and lit the lamp, then shouldered the ladder and marched off quick[.][228]

The lamplighter promptly arrives to maintain the artificial light. His efficient movements are reminiscent of a factory line. If light is symbolic of hope, knowledge, and goodness, then the city will never be corrupted. Diligence and ingenuity, personified in the lamplighter, never allow the darkness of ignorance or immorality to prevail. Later, in Alice's parlour, one of the first elements that Alice draws her guest's attention to is the presence of sunlight throughout the year, due to the large window and the glass door. "Every morning, Ellen, the sun rising behind those hills shines in through this door and lights up my room; and in winter he looks in at the south window, so I have him all the time."[229] Given the scenes of religious and secular education that take place within this room, a parallel can be drawn between the constant presence of light and morality;

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[227] Seelye, *Jane Eyre*, 118. Seelye interprets Mrs Montgomery's death "as a lamp lighting the way." Hence, between the time that Ellen questions her mother about the court case, and when she receives an answer, the analogy of the lamplight indicates that her mother's failing health and her father's financial losses will lead Ellen closer to God. Smith, "Scribbling Women," 51-57. Smith compares Maria Cummins' *The Lamplighter* (1855) with *The Wide, Wide World*.

[228] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 9-10. Seelye, *Jane Eyre*, 97.

[229] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 196.

regardless of whether the light shines in city street or country parlour, it means a bright future for the nation. Warner's treatment of windows at once recognises the permeability of the barrier between the public and private spheres, and the positive impact of the market revolution.

As well as goods and produce being easier to transport and therefore cheaper, the transportation of people was a significant benefit of the market revolution. Warner embraces the new modes of transport, and champions them as a truly positive contribution. Ellen's initial journey from her maternal home is on a steamer. In itself, this mode of transport is not paid particular attention to, yet Ellen's experience onboard creates a positive association.[230] Aboard the steamer, Ellen meets a kind, old gentleman.[231] To encounter such a pious, intelligent, and generous person aboard the steamer reflects well on the steamboat industry as a whole. The form of transportation that brings Ellen to her aunt's house is entirely different. Warner narrates, "[q]uite a contrast this new way of travelling was to the noisy stage and swift steamer."[232] Like the steamer, Warner embraces the positive aspects of this mode of transportation. Cart and oxen become Ellen's "chariot," as she rides atop in an armchair, with her feet on a carpet specially placed there for her comfort.[233] Warner draws out the benefits and disadvantages of both modes of transport. By doing so she proves that both rural and urban communities had something good to contribute to the nation.

Warner presents her position on industrialisation by comparing situations of industry in the countryside with those in cities. Profit-driven selfishness existed as much in the countryside as in the city, and the social benefits of such activity were equally valid in both locations. Comparing a rural "working bee" with urban commerce is a way for Warner to show that the motives driving economic development were endemic throughout the nation.[234] The image of bees occurs during Ellen's first foray into the public world of commerce. When she enters the fabric merchants, St. Claire and Fleury's, the "buzz of business" greets her.[235] Industry in New York City parallels that in Twirlwall. Aunt Fortune's 'working bee' is as motivated by selfishness, as is the business of St. Claire and Fleury's. The matriarch's initial reservations about arranging the communal work party are based upon not receiving sufficient work in exchange for the entertainment she would provide.[236] Mr Van Brunt's solution of combining the apple coring and bacon rolling into one 'bee' satisfies Aunt Fortune's profit-driven plans.[237] Social interaction and consolidation of the community are the public benefits of this selfish action. Later in the novel, two characters who are introduced to the reader at the working bee are engaged to be married. Ellen's discovery of their engagement implies the positive social role that the economic institutions could have.[238] The opportunity to socialise at the 'bee' facilitates the engagement of two of the workers involved.

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[230] Williams, "Widening the World," 575-77.
[231] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 82.
[232] Ibid., vol. 1, 114.
[233] Ibid., vol. 1, 114-16

Warner represents the mutual misconceptions of urban and rural communities in the opinions of characters in her novel. The antipathy in the following judgements corresponds to the disunity of the nation. When Ellen first reaches Thirlwall she is taken into the kitchen of Mrs Forbes. She is placed by the fire and brought a bowl of milk, with the preposition that "[i]t's real good country milk – not a bit of cream off. You don't get such milk as that in the city I guess."[239] Mrs Forbes does not know, but she assumes that in the city milk, and probably most other things, are diluted and corrupted from the pure, original state that they retained in the countryside. In another scene, when Ellen is told by her aunt that she is making turnpikes, Ellen responds by questioning: "Turnpikes! I thought turnpikes were high, smooth roads with toll-gates every now and then."[240] Aunt Fortune disagrees and proceeds to insult Ellen's mother in "a tone that conveyed the notion that Mrs Montgomery's education had been very incomplete."[241] Mrs Forbes associates cities with corruption, and Aunt Fortune implies that urban women are incapable, and ignorant. Ellen's integration of both urban and rural experiences allows her to achieve a form of perfection, indicative of what the nation could achieve if antagonism between city and countryside was put to one side.

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[234] Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees or Private Vices, Publick Benefits* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988). Accessed 17 Oct. 2012. http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/846/66863.

[235] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 54. Marty, *Pilgrims*, 218-19.

[236] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 70. Tompkins recognizes the exchange value of information. She argues that, as if stories were a currency, they facilitate the building of society.

[237] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 227.

[238] Ibid., vol. 2, 122-23.

The mid-nineteenth century held many challenges for a woman in Warner's weak financial position. Concerns regarding the market revolution suffuse *The Wide, Wide World*, emerging in places ostensibly void of any reference to the developing economy. The parlour of an isolated country parsonage contains judgments of the morality of inhabitants of industrial cities. The moss surrounding a brook celebrates the advances in manufactured products. Taken in the context of Warner's desire for a united nation, even the most unassuming details take on economic significance. Animosity between city and country folk was an issue, because the future glory of the nation depended upon mutual understanding and consideration. Cooperation was required on all sides if the religious and secular potential of the nation was to be fulfilled.

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[239] Ibid., vol. 1, 111.
[240] Ibid., vol. 1, 166.
[241] Ibid., vol. 1, 166-69.

Uncle Tom's Cabin

The preservation of the Union was perceived as essential by both Warner and Stowe. To them, and for both religious and secular reasons, remaining a united nation would benefit all people living in the United States. Warner understands the future economic strength of the nation to be dependent upon the integration of rural and urban society. Stowe approaches the maintenance of unity from a more abstract perspective. Rather than focusing on the fabric of the market revolution, Stowe promotes love and the pursuit of profit as representing the most profound conflict of the 1850s, both within the individual and the nation. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* demonstrates that industry was crucial to the strength of the nation, but that it must be embarked upon for moral reasons, if true goodness was to come of it. Expending energy for the selfish accumulation of wealth would ultimately undermine the integrity of the nation.

Stowe's incorporation of love and the pursuit of profit is intended to persuade the public to abolish slavery. Economic arguments were important weapons in the slavery debate. Stowe chose to explain her perspective using the families and homes that the main characters experience. Each family displays a different ratio of love to profit. Both Eliza Harris' and Uncle Tom's journeys begin on the same plantation, and advance to show the range of possibilities lying before the United States in the 1850s. Eliza and her family travel north, aiming to reach the free shores of Canada. Along the way, they are sheltered by various families. North of the Ohio River, compassion, morality, and justice dominate. The culmination of the Harris family's journey is their own attainment of perfect economic harmony. In contrast, the conclusion of Uncle Tom's journey is defined by intense suffering and abject loneliness. Each home that Tom is bought into illustrates the ramifications of valuing wealth above morality. Fundamentally, slavery was the complete subordination of love to profit. Tom's martyrdom represents the battle being fought throughout America.[242] Championing the benefits of pure love and self-sacrifice, while denigrating those who wilfully defile humanity for selfish ends, was Stowe's way of remedying the tension created by the market revolution.[243]

The Bird family of Ohio, where Eliza first seeks shelter, illustrate how the United States could reach its potential, both economically and religiously. This family unit represents the nation, with Senator Bird engaging with the political ideas that govern from above, while Mrs Bird protects the moral integrity of the family from within the sanctuary of the home. The disagreement between Mr and Mrs Bird represents the conflicting perspectives circulating throughout the nation, regarding the market revolution. Igniting this tension, both in the Birds' home, and throughout the United States, was the Fugitive Slave Act. Senator Bird's advocacy for the financial interests of Kentucky slave-holders conflicts with Mrs Bird's "plain right thing[.]"[244] Many Americans, like Mrs Bird were concerned by the rate of economic development, and feared that the moral responsibility to "feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the desolate[,]" was being drowned by greed.[245] Stowe recognises and attempts to allay those concerns, by revealing Senator Bird's hidden humanity.[246] His reaction to Eliza's presence in his home, illustrates how an apparently hard-hearted politician can be as compassionate as a loving mother.[247] To reinforce faith in the latent kindness of business men, Eliza is passed from John Bird to John Van Trompe, a business associate of the former. Both men had originally been involved in selfish endeavours, but each had recognised the immorality of their actions and reformed. Stowe's hope for the future of the nation was that politics and industry would be an aid to morality, rather than an inhibitor.

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[242] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 56-60.

[243] Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* (New Haven: Yale University, 1973), xiv. Sklar argues that self-sacrifice was the most important concept within domestic ideology.

[244] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 83.

[245] Ibid., 82-83.

[246] Ibid., 86-90.

Improving American society is argued to be the responsibility of both men and women. Mr and Mrs Bird each have a unique contribution to make and an active role to play in the management of their home. The Halliday home, in which Eliza is reunited with her husband, is Stowe's demonstration of how, together, men and women could achieve optimal balance between love and the pursuit of profit. Within the Quaker household, duties are shared and efficiency optimised by the good management of Rachel Halliday. Her home gains significance as a site of reunion, of safety, and of nurture. Such qualities are only achievable and tangible because of the financial independence of the Quaker community, thanks in part to her husband's efforts managing their agricultural production. Although Stowe recognises the advantages of manufacturing innovations, such as George Harris' bagging machine, she also celebrates the independence of farmers. Simeon Halliday sees himself as accountable to a higher law than that proclaimed by the United States legislature. He argues, "[t]he Lord only gives us our worldly goods that we may do justice and mercy; if our rulers require a price of us for it, we must deliver it up."[248] That Simeon refers to the government as 'our rulers' reflects the tyrannical nature of the government's legislation regarding slavery. His willingness and ability to pay the ‘price’ for acting morally is proof of the achievement of perfect economic balance. Recognising that their actions break the law proves that these Quakers are self-aware, independent agents, capable and willing to act as they believe right. Simeon’s use of the authoritarian term ‘rulers’ indicates his feeling that the United States legislature had become tyrannical by its enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act. Stowe advocates for a surge of moral action to return the United States government to its republican, moral foundations.

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[247] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 97-98. Barnes analyses how the senator becomes a man by sympathy.
[248] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 146.

Charity, such as that performed by the Halliday family, is made possible by financial security. The effects on society, if the economy was not secure, are elucidated in the events on the Shelby plantation. The sufferings of Eliza and Tom begin in Kentucky, and are caused by the irresponsible financial decisions made by Mr Shelby. This wealthy gentleman becomes enslaved by his debt to the slave trader, Haley. All involved in the negotiations recognise that Haley is in a more powerful position than his debtor. Mr Shelby must tolerate Haley’s presumptuous attitude because he is incapable of any action save meeting his demands. Further, the patriarch’s mismanagement of the plantation has undermined his wife’s efforts to nurture the humanity and religiosity of her slaves. Mrs Shelby defines her husband’s sale of Tom and Harry succinctly, as “open acknowledgment that we care for no tie, no duty, no relation, however sacred, compared to money?”[249] That Mrs Shelby is able to restore the financial security of the plantation, following the death of her husband, is proof of the truth in her accusation. The extent of Mr Shelby’s inadequacy is evident when he tells his wife, “I’m going to get out my horse bright and early, and be off. I can't see Tom, that's a fact[.]"[250] His cowardice reinforces the idea that the improper use of money would corrupt a person's integrity. Later, valuing humanity above profit allows the matriarch to create a plantation capable of sustaining itself without slavery. That it is financially viable for George Shelby to free every one of his family's slaves, and to pay them a wage, confirms the benefits to the economy of a loving presence at the helm of every business.

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[249] Ibid., 34. Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 92. Johnson states: “Amidst the public celebration of white male equality it was difficult for slaveholding, white men publicly to declare their superiority.” Having a slave solved this issue, because slaves were a social status symbol.

The economic benefits of love can also be distinguished in Aunt Chloe's response to her husband's sale. Her reaction demonstrates the advantages of freedom and free labour.[251] Her energy and industry enables her to create a heavenly sanctuary for her family. "The whole front of [her cabin] was covered by a large scarlet bignonia and a native multiflora rose, which, entwisting and interlacing, left scarce a vestige of the rough logs to be seen."[252] This description of the family's cabin is a metaphor for the harsh reality of slavery being disguised by feminine diligence and care. In order to recover Tom from the depths of the South, Mrs Shelby and Chloe must deny the principles of slavery. It is only under free-labour that love and profit can be pursued concurrently. Mrs Shelby allows Chloe to hire out her labour to a confectioner.[253] By permitting Chloe to keep her earnings, to use to buy back Tom, Mrs Shelby negates Chloe's enslavement. The positive contribution that Chloe can make towards Tom's purchase price describes the advantages of free labour. Being motivated by love, Aunt Chloe exerts herself, seeking new opportunities, which she would not attempt merely for the sake of her owners' profit. While the illusion of security remains intact, she personifies efficiency and good management. The destruction of that illusion stimulates her innovation. That her efforts fail is a result of the greed inherent in slave labour.

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[250] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 36.

[251] Barbara Ryan, *Love, Wages, Slavery: The Literature of Servitude in the United States* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2006).

[252] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 20.

[253] Ibid., 264-66.

Mrs Shelby's positive response to Aunt Chloe's enterprising behaviour confirms Stowe's celebration of progress and innovation. A similar entrepreneurial attitude characterises George Harris, both while enslaved and free. The circumstances in which George first proves himself a capable engineer are intended to show the detrimental effects of slavery upon the nation's economic potential. George invents a machine to clean hemp, thus improving the efficiency of the bagging factory to which he had been hired out. George is recognised by the factory manager as an intelligent and honest individual, but George's depraved master refuses to acknowledge George as anything but a "labour-slaving machine."[254] Mr Harris exploits his power over the man to end his efforts at self-improvement. Once George reaches Canada and liberty, he is able to expand his abilities and contribute to the economic success of his adopted nation. Although motivated by different concerns, the industrious behaviour of George and Aunt Chloe is fundamentally the same. While enslaved, the differences between the success of their actions is due to the attitudes of their owners. Mr Harris is intent on crushing George's humanity, while Mrs Shelby supports the moral acts of her slave. Mr Harris' efforts to brutalise George and separate him from his family lead to the United States losing a financial asset. Mrs Shelby's willingness to support the efforts of her slave to improve her situation leads to profit. In the novel, slavery severs and then prevents the reunion of Aunt Chloe's family. Stowe argues that, in reality, slavery's continued existence would lead to the irrevocable partition of the States.

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[254] Ibid., 13.

The immorality of slavery is reiterated by St. Clare, the owner of the plantation to which Tom was brought after separation from his family. Yet such statements require acting upon for them to have meaning.[255] Upon the Louisiana plantation, despite his having control over such affairs, St. Clare does not impose his principles. In debate with his cousin, Miss Ophelia, St. Clare illustrates another way in which slavery could corrupt the character.

> "But suppose we should rise up to-morrow and emancipate, who would educate these millions, and teach them how to use their freedom? They never would rise to do much among us. The fact is, we are too lazy and unpractical, ourselves, ever to give them much of an idea of that industry and energy which is necessary to form them into men. They will have to go north, where labour is the fashion – the universal custom; and tell me, now, is there enough Christian philanthropy among your northern states to bear with the process of their education and elevation?"[256]

With this speech, St. Clare denies any responsibility for the improvement of the condition of his slaves. St. Clare represents the insidious corruption wrought by the slave trade.[257] He is aware of his slaves' suffering, and capable, legally and financially, of helping them, yet he does nothing. His sensitivity to the suffering of the vulnerable is reinforced by his effeminacy, while his position as patriarch gives him financial control of the estate, with exceptions.[258] In the argument above, he justifies his laziness as an irrevocable "fact", thereby denying responsibility for his own shortcomings, and passing the task of reforming the nation to industrious persons in the North. St. Clare's speech recognises his own weakness when he differentiates between the “industry and energy which is necessary to form [freed slaves] into men[,]” and the laxness that will contribute to their degeneration into impotent and effeminate hypocrites, as St. Clare himself had become.[259]

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[255] Elizabeth Ammons, *Critical Essays on Harriet Beecher Stowe* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1980), 5.
[256] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 325.
[257] Ryan, *Empire*, 123-24.
[258] See Kerber, *No Constitutional Right*, 17-18.

St. Clare’s unwillingness to accept what Eva tried to teach him, about the importance of love, leads to the complete disintegration of the plantation. In comparison, the positive economic affects of love are explained in the actions of his cousin, Miss Ophelia. Despite concerted efforts, this northern woman can not change Topsy’s attitude. Yet once Miss Ophelia understands her own shortcomings, thanks to Eva’s loving example, she seeks to improve herself and is then able to guide Topsy. With Ophelia’s love, the young girl can believe her guardian acts in her best interests, and willingly follows her guidance. Unlike St. Clare, Ophelia acts upon her new-found principles. In the North, love could coexist with the pursuit of profit, Ophelia and Topsy’s relationship flourishs, and both make positive contributions to American society.

Tom’s loving actions whilst on Legree’s plantation illustrate the need for care and goodwill in all business enterprises. Legree consciously undermines the humanity of his slaves, in order to maximise the profitability of his plantation. All acts of kindness are given a monetary cost, and from Legree’s perspective any cost is too high. Tom challenges Legree’s domination by preaching the spiritual ramifications of denying humanity.

> It is true, opportunities were scanty; but on the way to the fields and back again, and during the hours of labour, chances fell in [Tom’s] way of extending a

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[259] Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 219-23. Adolph’s mannerisms indicate the detrimental effect that St. Clare’s attitude has upon slaves.

> helping hand to the weary, the disheartened, and the discouraged. The poor, worn-down, brutalised creatures at first could scarcely comprehend this; but when it continued week after week, and month after month, it began to awaken long-silent chords in their benumbed hearts.[260]

Tom is able to revive the humanity of many of the slaves, so that they "gather together to hear from him of Jesus."[261] The salvation of Legree's two overseers demonstrates the difference that love could make. Sambo and Quimbo are both converted to Christianity by Tom's patience and his forgiveness, after Legree had tried to remake these men in his own image.

> [Tom's] wondrous words and pious prayers had struck upon the hearts of the imbruted blacks who had been the instruments of cruelty upon him; and, the instant Legree withdrew, they took him down, and, in their ignorance, sought to call him back to life – as if *that* were any favour to him.[262]

Legree's denial of love, forgiveness, charity on all fronts condemns his plantation, and sanity, to disintegration.

George Shelby chased after Tom as he was driven away by Haley, because he wished to protest the sale and to give Tom his dollar, as a symbol of his promise to rescue him. "*I've bought you my dollar!*" he whispers to Tom mysteriously.[263] Stowe's strategy to reform the United States is encapsulated within this scene of farewell. The author recognised that there must be a financial commitment made to ensure the achievement of a moral goal. "[O]ver his heart there seemed to be a warm spot, where those young hands had placed that precious dollar."[264] Later, St. Clare pledges to free Tom, but does not make the financial arrangements to enact his liberation from slavery. Stowe argues that commitment is meaningless without financial investment; having money was meaningless unless good was being done with it. George represents the best possible future for the United States. Rather than a rough wooden hut, under George's leadership Tom would have a new house. George promises Tom, "I'll build your house all over, and you shall have a room for a parlour with a carpet on it, when I'm a man." When George is a man, money will be used to support the weak, and in doing so will support the continued economic prosperity of the nation.

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[260] Ibid., 406.
[261] Ibid.
[262] Ibid., 426.
[263] Ibid., 104. Gurstein, "Taste," 209-10. Gurstein discusses the relationship between the qualities of items, and the internal sentiments they evoke in a person.

The Hidden Hand

Southworth considers the market revolution to be a positive development; she emphasizes its opportunities, and propensity to cultivate morality.[265] To reinforce her message, rural, agricultural society is riddled with criminals and corruption. An individual's location in countryside or city is treated as irrelevant to their character. Southworth recognises the positive affects of the urban environment when she demonstrates how Cap's experiences in New York City prepare her fully for threats to her freedom and even her life. An exchange between the heroine and Old Hat, a freed slave woman, shows the revolutionary impact that economic growth would have.

> "Gold! Gold!" said the hag curtly, holding out black and talon-like fingers, which she worked convulsively.

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[264] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 105-06.

[265] Smith, "The Novel," 56. This evaluation conflicts with Smith's assessment of southern domestic fiction as glorifying the rural utopia of the South, "contrasted with the cold, materialistic urban North."

> "Gold! gold, indeed! for such a wicked fortune! Not a penny!" said Cap
>
> "Ho! you're stingy; you do not like to part with the yellow demon that has bought the souls of all your house!"
>
> "Don't I? You shall see! There! If you want gold, go fish it from the depth of the whirlpool," said Cap, taking her purse and casting it over the precipice.[266]

Cap is a Le Noir by birth, but her experiences in New York City have cultivated her morality. The heroine has been taught to value independence and integrity above wealth. Since the very first Le Noir settled in Virginia, greed has defined the family. Old Hat's claim that Cap is also guilty of avarice is denied by the heroine, when she throws her wealth into the depths. Southworth represents her hopes for the future of the United States, in Cap's reaction to Old Hat's accusation.

In many respects Southworth was a realistic author. Despite a glowing review of the effects of the growing economy, she acknowledges difficulties caused by the rate of change. While advances in technology and growth in business benefited many, the most vulnerable groups in society were often left without support. The irresponsible development of urban areas is shown to lead to homelessness, dislocation, and ultimately, blurred gender distinctions, which symbolise the breakdown of all social boundaries.[267] While Cap's experience of New York City relates a tale of ingenuity, survival, and independence, for other female characters the market revolution sent them into greater poverty. Through various female characters, Southworth argues for greater self-determination for women. Through the degeneration of various female characters, the author argues that women deserve to benefit directly from the growing economy. Women should be capable of moral actions because they are financially secure themselves; they should cultivate the ability to judge character accurately and therefore be able to make good decisions; most of all women should be free to determine their own course of action.

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[266] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 337.

[267] Ibid., chapters six and seven.

Vice, such as that practiced by the Le Noir family, was independent of industry; sin was not unique to cities. Men had always been tempted to take more than they were entitled to. Henry Le Noir did so with the Indians, when he betrayed his friendship with the Succapoos, and murdered their last remaining warriors in order to claim their land. Colonel Le Noir murdered his own brother, and attempted to murder his brother's heir, in order to inherit the family estate. Craven Le Noir attempts to marry, by coercion, the wealthy heiress, Clara Day. Having his plot foiled, Craven befriends and then slanders Cap to force her to accept his offer of marriage. These men inhabited the rural countryside, yet act as if enthused with the selfish drive for profit that, supposedly, typified the urban business owner. Southworth constantly reiterates that being surrounded by nature does not promote moral behaviour.[268] Direct comparison is created between crimes committed in urban and rural areas with Cap's reaction to Mrs Condiment's story of Eugene's murder and Capitola's disappearance. Having heard the story, Cap declares: "[h]ow dreadful! I did not think such things happened in a quiet country neighbourhood. Something like that occurred, indeed, in New York, within my own recollection, however[.]"[269] Southworth identifies a need for less prejudice against the market revolution.[270] That would not be accomplished by merely fighting the momentum of the market revolution. A revision of laws and the regulation of business is necessary.

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[268] Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*, 3-6. Gatta, *American Madonna*, 6. Sellers, *Market Revolution*, 254.
[269] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 234.

Cap vocalises a widely held presumption that corruption thrived in industrial areas. To disprove the heroine's prejudices, the author relates how those male characters who do spend time in cities benefit from the experience. Traverse travels to Washington D.C. to attend a series of medical lectures. He returns with "improved appearance and manly bearing."[271] Herbert Greyson's experiences in New York City reinforce his innate virtues. He continues to support his friends financially, and shares with them what he has learnt in his time abroad. Industrial cities provide a central location for professional development, the sharing of ideas and the refinement of character.[272] Cap gains such useful skills as disguise and the ability to distinguish criminals. Even with such skills, she maintains her integrity. The heroine's sincere declarations of chastity in the court house, after she has been discovered dressing like a boy, confirm her honourable behaviour even in the most dire of circumstances.[273] Cap lists her most valuable abilities as those learnt in New York. For example, in Hurricane Hall she exposes Black Donald by showing her knowledge of the tricks of northern manufacturers.[274] Later, she describes the city with pride, as the place "[w]here [she] learnt to fear God, to speak the truth and shame the devil!"[275] Again, during her efforts to save Clara Day from enforced marriage, she reasons that "[she] wasn't brought up among the detective policemen for nothing!"[276] Cap implies that nobody can deceive her. Despite leading a subsistence lifestyle up until the point when Old Hurricane discovers her, Cap can read, "[c]ast accounts and write."[277] Southworth celebrates New York City as a site for the sharing of ideas, including the cultures, news and ideas.[278]

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[270] Sarah Josepha Hale, *Woman's Record; Or, Sketches of all Distinguished Women* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1853), 794. In her anthology of prominent female figures, Sarah Josepha Hale notes Southworth's "enthusiasm for depicting character as it is actually found (in which she excels,) beyond the limits prescribed by correct taste or good judgement." That a contemporary should note this attribute is significant because it highlights the uniqueness of Southworth's strategy. Presumably "correct taste or good judgement" would not have a southern belle's morality be nurtured during her homeless escapades in an industrial city. That Cap had not left the city in ten years negates the possibility that rural influences could be responsible for Cap's bravery. Baym, *Feminism*, chapter eleven. Baym considers Hale to be a profoundly political writer, promoting the spiritual superiority of women and the political significance of the domestic sphere. Hale perceived the restriction of women to the private sphere to be complementary to their political empowerment.

[271] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 245.

[272] Ostrander, *Republic of Letters*, 33.

[273] Edelstein, "Metamorphosis," 33. Judith Butler, "Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions," in *Feminisms Redux: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, eds. Robyn Warhol-Down and Diane Price Herndl (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 2009), 471-74. Butler theorises that 'drag,' or dressing in the typical clothes of the opposite sex, is a double inversion. The purpose of dressing in drag is to prove that "appearance is an illusion," revealing the imitative structure of gender itself.

Conflict between the Colonel Le Noir and Major Warfield is another way in which Southworth illustrates the detachment of virtuous behaviour from financial incentives. Major Warfield's lack of interest in the economy and his propensity to act charitably contrast with the greed of the Le Noirs. The veteran is in a position to adopt Cap and finance Herbert's officer-training at West Point. His wealth is not a product of the market revolution; as the New York Cab driver informs Cap, Old Hurricane is "a real nob – a real Virginian F. F. V., with money like the sands on the seashore!"[279] Descriptions of forest, mountains and rivers surrounding Hurricane Hall, and Southworth's inclusion of the paternalistic slavery practiced here reinforces the irrelevance of urban industrial growth to Warfield's wealth. Southworth's purpose is made clear when a comparison is made between Old Hurricane and the other F. F. V., the Le Noirs. These elite have a well-established and prosperous estate, but have chosen to exploit their holdings to create a coal mine and manufacturing facility. Southworth presents a consistent argument that the location of one's home and the motivation to practice philanthropy were mutually exclusive conditions.

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[274] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 187. Cogan, *All-American Girl*, 4. Cap's actions adhere to such a theory of Real Womanhood, as Cogan proposes.
[275] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 345.
[276] Ibid., 379.
[277] Ibid., 65.
[278] Howe, *What Hath*, 222.
[279] F. F. V. = First Families of Virginia. Not necessarily the first families to settle, but rather the richest and most socially prominent. Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 46.

Throughout her novel Southworth shows the opportunities that the growing economy created for men to support their dependants. Good male characters are consistently providing for mothers, wives, offspring, and even sponsoring the education of poorer people's children. The best example of such generosity is Dr Day. His success in business provided him the tools and time to teach Traverse, and the expendable income to finance the young man's medical courses in the capital city. In addition, the doctor employs Traverse's mother as house-keeper. The market revolution would ultimately benefit Traverse directly, by giving him the opportunity to refine his skills in the city of New Orleans. Having earned a sterling reputation, the fledgling doctor could support both his mother and wife. When she believed she would soon be invited back by Old Hurricane Marah Rocke, Traverse's mother, had stated that she and Traverse "must be very good to the poor, in more ways than in giving them what we do not ourselves need, for we shall know what it is to have been poor."[280] Regardless of Old Hurricane's acceptance or denial of Marah's innocence, she would have been able to practice her principles, because Traverse had seized the opportunities created by the market revolution. The market revolution created jobs and resources that allowed families and friends to help one another, and to improve the United States.

Although Southworth comprehensively explains the positive impact that the market revolution could have upon a person's character, she also criticises the effects of too rapid change. The ruthless, competitive environment of New York City is shown to leave individuals incapable of practicing charity. During Cap's trial for cross-dressing great emphasis is put on the displacement that she suffers as a result of industrial advances.[281] Nancy Grewell leaves Cap in the care of the Simmons family, while she travels back to Virginia. At first the family is able to support her, but when they themselves sink into poverty they can not provide her more than a roof over her head. None of her "Granny's" acquaintances have work for her; she is left unable to support herself, with no community to fall back upon.[282] That Cap is discovered selling newspapers on the docks, dressed as a boy, is a consequence of the effects of industrialisation on the physical environment and economy, rather than on people's humanity. Granny Raven's circumstances reiterate the inhumane affects of irresponsible economic change. Due to its isolation, The Old Road Inn is adopted by Black Donald and his gang, as a hideout. The owner of that property, Granny Raven must now cater for the criminals because she has been cut off from her community. "[S]ince the highway had been turned off in another direction, both road and tavern had been abandoned, and suffered to fall to ruin."[283] Isolation, suffered by many women, is shown by Southworth to be a common consequence of the swiftly developing economy.

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[280] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 109.

While good men are recognised as gaining a more cultivated demeanour by association with cities, women have great difficulty forging an honourable identity either in city or countryside. Southworth argues that the legal and economic rights of women were sorely in need of revision. Cap, Marah Rocke, and Cap's mother are prime examples of the challenges facing women who lacked the financial support of male relatives. Through their stories, Southworth identifies the failure of United States law to protect the vulnerable. The pain caused by that failure was exacerbated by the market revolution. Cap earns her confident and capable identity through her own behaviour. Having been separated from her relatives at birth, she must face the world unprotected. Even with her bravado, only her young age allows her to impersonate a boy, so that she can earn a living. Marah Rocke has no such advantage. Like Cap, Marah has earned her identity as a patient, honourable, and forgiving woman through her own efforts. Her desertion by Major Warfield left her without parents, foster parents, or husband for protection. By different circumstances but with a similar result, Cap's mother is left without protection. In Dr St Jean's mental asylum, Traverse's assertion that he could "connect no idea of woman's frailty with that refined and intellectual face," shows how successful Capitola had been in creating an independent identity.[284] Her unwavering faith in God and constant self-possession lead to her release from confinement and reunion with her daughter. Without the reformation of ideas regarding women's right to work and live independently of men, those women without protectors would remain vulnerable to the worst of treatment: "a life of dishonour!" as Colonel Le Noir threatens Clara Day.[285]

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[281] Gustafson, *Imagining*, 167-79, 183. Gustafson discusses criminal trials as a site at which the democratic hero (or heroine) might make a stand against the law. This element of Gustafson's analysis of democracy is particularly relevant in *The Hidden Hand*, to all instances when Cap comes into conflict with what the heroine considers an unjust law.

[282] Boydston, Kelley, and Margolis, *Sisterhood*, 349.

[283] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 170.

The case of Marah Rocke is especially important as a description of the vulnerability of women within the market revolution. Despite her conscientious and industrious behaviour, self-determination is inaccessible for Marah. The weak economic position of women was reinforced by marriage laws.[286] Marah's legal status as the wife of Old Hurricane prevents her remarrying, or taking work unfitting for her high social class. The latter she admits when confronted by Dr Day's kind offer of employment. She admits, "there is one [who would take] bitter umbrage at the fact that I should accept a subordinate situation in any household."[287] Any assets that Marah might accumulate would be legally the property of her husband. Old Hurricane's dismissal of his wife exposes how fickle Southworth believed men could be, and how unwise it was to rely upon them. Despite his adoption of Cap, his sponsorship of Herbert, and his offer of sanctuary to his sister, Old Hurricane refuses to acknowledge his responsibilities to Marah, because he is convinced of her infidelity.[288] That the course of a woman's life could be determined by a tenuous accusation of adultery, is proof of the need for women to have greater control of their own lives. For Marah, a change in marriage laws would have granted her autonomy. Being paid a fair wage for her industry or being allowed to take on more challenging, higher paid jobs would have helped her to improve her situation.[289] These women's stories reveal Southworth's critique of the social mores that remained ingrained in American culture, despite social relationships undergoing significant changes throughout the United States.[290]

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[284] Ibid., 547. Harris, "The House," 17-29.
[285] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 373.
[286] Fiedler, *Love and Death*, xx. Fiedler's conceives 'love' in sentimental fiction, as a synthesis of seduction and marriage. This theory is complicated by Southworth's dominant secular perspective.

One solution that Southworth describes, in the home of Marah Rocke, is the mutual support of women for one another. At Staunton, in the early days, the social arrangement of Marah's cottage allowed two women to live more comfortably on the meagre wages they could earn.[291] Mrs Greyson convinces Marah to let she and her son stay in the rented cottage. "Their households became united. One fire, one candle and one table served the little family, and thus considerable expense was saved as well as much social comfort gained."[292] Women's helping one another was a practical, logical solution to the hardship their sex suffered as a result of the market revolution. That the sons raised in that environment become ideal republican men reinforces the wisdom of women uniting. The mutual support of Marah's cottage contrasts to the greed of the Le Noirs. Cap's inheritance of the Hidden House would lead to a revolution in the purpose of the estate. The accumulation of wealth would no longer be its sole purpose. Rather, a situation similar to that of Marah's cottage would be created. Cap and her mother would create a nourishing environment from the corrupt vestiges of the previous occupants.[293]

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[287] Southworth, 167. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right*, 14.
[288] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 42.
[289] Traub, "Negotiating Visibility," 173.
[290] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 144-45.
[291] Williams, "Widening the World," 581. Ryan, *Cradle*, 210. Fox-Genovese, *Plantation Household*, 337. Fox-Genovese discusses universalism coming into existence at mid-century, which bound women together by their gender rather than dividing them based on class or race. Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct*,

When Cap encounters Old Hat, on her way to visit the Hidden House, she comes face to face with the only other character in the novel that cross-dresses.[294] Old Hat's choice of clothing implies that she has slightly lost her mind. Yet Cap has shown that there were very sensible reasons for a woman to disguise herself as a man. The vulnerable position in which women were placed, by the progression of the market revolution, was a serious concern for Southworth. Her own life had been marked by isolation, desertion, and the inability to keep herself and her children in comfort and

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129. Argersinger, "Family," 257. Gatta, *American Madonna*, 47-49. Gatta offers a biblical reference for the mutual support of women. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 17. Barnes challenges the idea that female bonding offered new and liberating alternative to seduction to male dominated culture.

[292] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 76.

[293] Harris, "The House." 17-29. Harris considers Southworth's symbolic use of the house in *The Deserted Wife* (1850). Harris understands Southworth to be recognising women's talents for active self-determination in her depiction of Hagar's rise to dominance over her husband. Houses become a metaphor for women's capacity for independence.

[294] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 20. "[A] negro, whose sex from the strange anomalous costume it was difficult to guess. The tall form was rigged out first in a long, red, cloth petticoat, above which was buttoned a blue cloth surtout. A man's black beaver hat sat upon the strange head and completed this odd attire." Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 335. "It was a very tall, spare form, with a black cloth petticoat tied around the waist, a blue coat buttoned over the breast, and a black felt hat tied down with a red handkerchief, shading the darkest old face she had ever seen in her life." Butler, "Bodily Inscriptions," 471-72.

safety. She knew the advantages that the market revolution had created, but recognised that many of the most vulnerable would continue to be excluded.

Conclusion

There was a degree of consensus between Warner, Stowe, and Southworth regarding the market revolution. All recognise the irreversible nature of the economic changes that were taking place, and that no individual would remain unaffected by the social ramifications of those developments. Not one of the authors glorify the innocent age of the pioneers. To do so would have been inconsequential, since the momentum of the market revolution had even changed that most fundamentally republican occupation, farming.[295] The texts created by Warner, Stowe, and Southworth offer a way to understand the market revolution and to recognise one's own role within the transforming society.[296]

Sentimental novels reached women, who were largely excluded from the machinations of business, but who were significantly impacted nonetheless. One character in each novel personifies the respective author's hopes for the future of the United States. Ellen's personal quest for perfection involves synthesising the dynamic urban environment with the well-established culture of the republican farmer.[297] Within George Shelby, Stowe cultivates an understanding of the need to combine business acumen with respect for humanity. The heroine of Southworth's saga succeeds where those before her had failed. Cap's education enables her to recognise the importance of morality above wealth. Each author offered a way forward, to improve the United States as it underwent a revolution in its economy. All three authors are determined that good should come of the changes.

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[295] Sellers, *Market Revolution*, 15.

[296] Douglas, *Feminization*, 13.

[297] Burbick, *Healing*, 192. Burbick understands Ellen "becomes a proper republican woman of America who knows how to join people together through the "right" values that extend to the workplace, the nature of female labour and education, and the proper use of the world of goods."

Certain issues are touched upon by all three authors. Education is one such issue, that was of immediate interest to the readership. Ensuring that one's children receive a moral upbringing is emphasised across the novels as an obligation on all parents. Warner's promotion of mutual understanding between people living in cities and in the countryside, encapsulates education. While the market revolution supplies the tools for Ellen to educate herself, good tutelage requires the patience and consistency of those who inhabit the countryside. Stowe's concern is to promote the coordination of business dealings with ethics. Education would play an important role in bringing about that union. In Stowe's novel, a person needs to be capable of negotiating deals and managing business, in a way that did not compromise their own moral integrity. Equally important is the need to teach children to act with kindness, honesty, and love. Southworth's perception of the role of education, in tackling the difficulties created by the market revolution, reiterates the positive impact of the growth of urban centres. Cities are described as sites for the coming together of intellectual people, to debate, to learn, and to teach. Experiencing the dangers and luxuries of urban centres was an education in itself, as Cap demonstrates. Tempering all three authors' attitudes to education was religion. Even Southworth, the most enthusiastic supporter of the market revolution, has her heroine taught at a Sunday school, and raised "to fear God, to speak the truth and shame the devil!"[298] Promoting the correct form of education was an important part of guiding parents and children alike through the challenges of rapid economic change.

In the novels, it falls to both men and women to instruct the next generation. However, all the authors comment on differences between how women and men are affected by economic changes. Stowe's campaign for a constructive balance between love and the pursuit of profit requires the active enthusiasm of both men and women. According to the nineteenth-century understanding of the sexes, women ensure that laws of morality are upheld, while the business acumen of men provides plenty of money to allow the interests of humanity to be upheld. Cooperation and mutual respect mean that men and women have equally important roles to play in the future success of the nation. Warner and Southworth take a less idealistic view of the challenges facing women. Warner describes how the accessibility of luxury and educational items mean women have greater opportunities for self-improvement and enjoy more comfortable surroundings. However, to benefit from the changes, women need to be astute and proactive. To remain passive within the fast-paced market revolution is to risk dooming oneself to isolation and poverty. Such self-possession takes for granted that women have the legal rights and opportunities to improve their own situations. Southworth denies that assumption. While the author embraces economic changes, she criticises the inequality in the legal rights granted men and women. Through the life-stories of various female characters, Southworth demonstrates the weak position of women. Little agreement is discernable between the authors' perceptions of women's proper role in the market revolution. As the activities of women's rights advocates confirm, the social changes caused by the market revolution challenge women's traditional economic responsibilities and freedoms.[299]

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[298] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 345.

The economic strength of the United States was critical to the nation's identity. Prior to the market revolution, that identity had been largely characterised by hard-working, self-sufficient farmers.[300] Economic growth caused a reassessment of the myriad ideas that made up the American self-image. Warner, Stowe, and Southworth recognise the challenges of forging an authentic identity from the rapid and unpredictable surges of the economy. The authors present compelling images of how the new nation should be seen. Warner's appreciation of agricultural society and urban commerce supports a balanced identity; she neither romanticises, nor denigrates the past. The author recognises that profit-motivated actions had always been and would always be a part of human nature, and to deny that tendency would mean losing more than money. The creation and maintenance of communities would be put at risk.[301] A balance of love and the pursuit of profit is what Stowe wishes would define her nation. Southworth takes a more subtle approach, separating a person's virtuosity from their location and estate. Repeatedly, her characters disprove common assumptions about the relationship between a person's morality and where they live or how much they own. For Southworth, the nation's identity is defined by the moral value of its people. All three novels intend to create consensus on the identity of the United States in the future. The ideal identity and how to create it reflects the authors' personal concerns.

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[299] Ginzberg, *Work of Benevolence*, 98-107.

[300] John Dickinson, *Letters From a Farmer in Pennsylvannia* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1999). Accessed 31 Mar. 2013. http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/609/102299 (1767-1768). These texts represented the self-image of Americans. Also see Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 77.

[301] Warner, *Wide World*, 296-320.

The character of the United States had changed. Warner, Stowe, and Southworth argue that that change was not entirely for the better. To reach its potential, the nation's trajectory needed altering. A common attitude among Americans was that the United States had a responsibility, a manifest destiny to lead the world. Whether the nation was to lead the world into the Millennium, the second coming of Jesus Christ and the creation of a utopia on earth, or simply show less civilised countries the way to perfection, morality must be revived.[302]

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[302] Johnson, *Shopkeeper's Millennium*, 109-13. Marty, *Pilgrims*, 186.

Chapter 3: *Religion*

Introduction

“Moore, Byron, Goethe often speak words more wisely descriptive of the true religious sentiment than another man whose whole life is governed by it.”[303] This extract is taken from Harriet Beecher Stowe’s description of St. Clare’s religious convictions following the death of his angelic daughter, Eva. The comparison of literary figures with devout laymen and religious ministers emphasizes the significance of emotions in the worship of God. A transition from strict adherence to doctrine, towards an emotive, accessible faith had been taking place in America since the 1800s.[304] This resurgence of religious feeling is known as the Second Great Awakening. Waning support for a dominant, assertive, demanding theology created various responses from different groups throughout America. The search for a ‘true religious sentiment’ identified by Stowe had begun. In contrast to the conventional, masculine traits of Calvinism, the new idea of true religion was emotive. Love of God and His creations defined the revivalist ethos.[305]

Systems of belief differed between geographic areas of America. However, the enthusiasm for Christianity was generally evangelical; for example, Eva St. Clare epitomises Evangelism. Her youth and gender do not exclude her from religious significance, but rather make her a channel for God's power. She is God's messenger, and spreads the news of his love for every soul.[306] Evangelists believed that love, not doctrine, paved the road to salvation.[307] Eva's determination to help Uncle Tom read the Bible is indicative of evangelical enthusiasm for reading God's words as he meant them to be understood, rather than through the medium of a minister. As Eva protests to her mother, "the Bible is for everyone to read themselves."[308] She has no power to instigate change apart from through her love; this prompts a heart-felt reaction from those she offers it to.[309] Her death is reminiscent of Christ's sacrifice to save the soul of every sinner. Eva tells the assembled slaves, "I'm going to give all of you a curl of my hair; and, when you look at it, think that I loved you and am gone to heaven, and that I want to see you all there."[310] Through her actions on earth and the manner of her death, many who met her are saved from damnation.[311] In each novel, to varying degrees, there are characters who personify the evangelical belief system. The repetition of these characters indicates a commitment among Susan Warner, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Emma D.E.N. Southworth to evangelical principles.

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[303] Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 315.
[304] Douglas, *Feminization*, 7. Gustafson, *Imagining*, 18. Gustafson suggests that the human ability to convince meant that art and not revelation was responsible for changes in belief. The purpose of sentimental authors, of convincing the reader of the legitimacy of their point of view, might have conflicted with Calvinist Protestantism. However, evangelist denominations generally embraced writing cultivating sympathy, if it would lead to greater religious faith within the recipient. John L. Thomas, “Antislavery and Utopia,” in *The Antislavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists*, ed. Martin Duberman (Princeton: Princeton University, 1965), 241-68. Thomas considers the relationship between religious revolution and slavery, in the nineteenth century. Howe, *What Hath*, 285-322.
[305] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 79.

Debates, concerning if and when the Second Coming of Christ would occur, had intensified since the 1800s. Despite specific dates for such an event passing without spectacle, a feeling of expectation suffused the nation. Evangelical preachers were concerned with preparing the individual for entrance to heaven. Their larger aim was to develop the nation to be an example to the rest of the world, in preparation for the Millennium.[312] Every person was equally important to this mission, although evangelists believed the sensitive natures of women and children made them better channels than men for the wishes and blessings of God.[313] Advocates of religious revivalism promoted the idea that every individual should voluntarily devote themselves to Christianity. By emphasising the ability of a person to control their own moral destiny, revivalists sought to foster active reform.[314]

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[306] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 53-71. Gatta discusses how love-based Christianity, built around the Madonna archetype, challenged predominantly masculine Puritanism. Burbick, *Healing*, chapter thirteen.

[307] Howe, *What Hath*, 186-90.

[308] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 268, 272-73. Mason I. Lowance, "Biblical Typology and the Allegorical Mode: The Prophetic Strain," in *The Stowe Debate: Rhetorical Strategies in Uncle Tom's Cabin*, eds. Mason I. Lowance, Ellen E. Westbrook, and R.C. De Prospo (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1994), 160.

[309] Douglas, *Feminization*, 3-4.

[310] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 299.

[311] Lowance, "Biblical Typology," 170-73.

The First Amendment to the Constitution changed the relationship between ministers and their congregations.[315] Protestant ministers would no longer have their livelihoods provided by the government.[316] Religious denominations were forced to compete for members, just as businesses competed on the open market, for customers. At the same time economic development meant the composition of communities were transformed, as individuals and whole families moved to pursue job opportunities. These two changes had a profound impact upon the religiosity of the nation. Religion became part of an American culture of self-willed activity, free choice, and fair competition.[317]

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[312] Helen Petter Westra, "Confronting Antichrist: The Influence of Jonathan Edward's Millennial Vision," in *The Stowe Debate: Rhetorical Strategies in Uncle Tom's Cabin*, eds. Mason I. Lowance, Ellen E. Westbrook, and R.C. De Prospo (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1994), 141-58. Westra considers the impact of Calvinist Millennialism upon the rhetoric in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She argues that Stowe manipulates Calvinist doctrine to serve her abolitionist purpose. For further consideration of the importance of rhetorical control in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, see Lowance, "Biblical Typology," 159-83.

[313] Marty, *Pilgrims*, 175-76.

[314] Howe, *What Hath*, 304.

[315] "The Bill of Rights." In Congress, 4 March 1789. Accessed 31 Mar. 2013. http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html. "Amendment One: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

[316] Douglas, *Feminization*, 8, 24. Douglas perceives the gradual withdrawal of state support to be part of a democratisation and industrialisation of the United States. Marty, *Pilgrims*, 233-34. Marty points out that despite the civil and religious spheres of life being increasingly separated, Protestants continued to try to pass laws to their own advantage.

[317] Douglas, *Feminization*.

Religious revivalists' disparagement of institutional religion was focused upon the lack of agency granted to the layman. Their solution to this failure was to celebrate self-discipline as a demonstration of the strength of one's religious convictions. Discipline gave a person agency in their own salvation, as well as contributing towards their financial prosperity. In the West there were few established institutions therefore self-control and moral behaviour were seen as especially important to sustain trade and faith. In the Northeast, where the majority of trade and manufacturing took place, self-control was necessary for success in business.[318] Discipline had a positive effect on both spiritual and secular affairs, since prosperity was considered a blessing from God. That Roman Catholicism had the highest conversion rate by mid-century, despite being linked in American minds with absolute monarchy and authoritarian hierarchy, supports evidence of the attractiveness of ritual and strict rules to democratic Americans.[319] The composition, internal interactions, and social role of Christian denominations, meant that religion was becoming more closely integrated with republicanism.

A personal relationship with God was central to sentimental religion. That God took a particular interest in the well-being of each soul created a bond that surmounted all earthly connections. Unless a person believed that they did good to please God alone, there was always the risk that loss or grief would affect a person's faith. For instance, St. Clare's motivation for all business activities had been Eva therefore following her death, he was incapable of finding satisfaction in any deal he made. Stability was a result of personal commitment to God. In a country racked by issues such as an internal slave trade, to have such a constant, loving presence was reassuring, and ensured consistency. In another respect, the personal relationship with God challenged the stability of society by undermining the authority of earthly law. While it was appropriate to yield to valid forms of authority on earth, if those in authority demanded immoral action then it was a true Christian's duty to defy them. Being accountable to God alone motivated many to mend their ways. The independence of a personal relationship with God was supportive of democratic beliefs, yet undermined the political system by appealing to a higher authority. Essentially, it was a more perfect form of democracy, in which none were excluded and all had their concerns heard.[320]

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[318] Tocqueville, *Democracy*, vol. 1, 51.

[319] Tocqueville, *Democracy*, vol. 2, 29. Howe, *What Hath*, 319-20. Howe counters Tocqueville's claim of the popularity of Catholicism by pointing out that Catholicism lacked a millennial sense of urgency, or a specifically American perspective.

Religious revivalism transfused all areas of society, but the home was regarded as the centre of moral influence. Sentimental religion connected the loving heart of women in particular with the nation's destiny.[321] The salvation of a man's soul was not the responsibility of his mother, wife, or daughter, but there was an expectation that mothers teach their children about God's personal interest in their souls.[322] Additionally, the loving devotion of a mother to her child was considered redeeming, for immoral actions would be avoided upon remembrance of their mother's faith in them. The self-assurance gained from maternal love and trust in God would foster an independent attitude, protecting the child from corrupting influences. For the market revolution did threaten the unity and integrity of the nation, despite advocates praising the religious nature of the nation's economic success.[323] As the primary instrument of God's communion with man, women's love could maintain the Union. While women could be moral guides to their families, the sentimental novel would be their aid in reviving and teaching Christian faith.

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[320] For a discussion of the affect of deliberation upon democracy, see Gustafson, *Imagining*.

[321] Burbick, *Healing*, 182.

[322] Baym, "Portrayal," 221. Baym argues that women were inseparable from the idea of motherhood in nineteenth-century literature.

[323] Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*.

For many families, guidance in times of need came not only from the Bible, but also sentimental fiction. Such literature played an important supportive role in the movement from the pessimistic predestination of Calvinism to hopeful revivalism, promoting moral action as the way to achieve self-determination.[324] Domestic settings and seemingly unchallenging content made sentimental novels often more accessible than the Bible. As Stowe implies in the quote above, writers could, perhaps, know more about "true religious sentiment" than ministers themselves. Didactic content combined with entertainment value, created novels capable of guiding the nation. Cheaper printing methods and increased literacy helped the diffusion of these ideas.[325]

Susan Warner, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Emma D.E.N. Southworth did not challenge the doctrinal tenets of Protestantism. Rather, they cast doubt upon how effective doctrine would be in redeeming a nation crippled by sin, facing the imminent judgement of Christ. Active reform was a more fitting manifestation of faith in such circumstances. Each author promoted different specific strategies, but they were united in their support for a proactive, sentimental religion, supported by literature, championed in the home, and led by women. Warner celebrates women's religious power by personifying ideal religion in multiple mother figures. Additionally, *The Wide, Wide World* advocates educational reform to safeguard the moral integrity in the United States. Stowe uses women's sensitivity to God's wishes to emphasise their influence over men, and as a result, their ability to hasten the abolition of slavery. Southworth empowers women by combining their redeeming influence with self-determination, within religion and in public.[326] Through the actions of characters, the reading public could explore their own hopes and doubts.

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[324] Marty, *Pilgrims*, 181.

[325] Baym, "Portrayal," 214. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 6. See Barnes for how print culture created an intangible concept of public good, which subsumed personal desire. Howe, *What Hath*, 222-32.

The Wide, Wide World

Sentimental novels were a didactic tool for families to use to open a conversation about morality in a non-confrontational context. More so than either Stowe or Southworth, Warner takes this task seriously. In the words of Anna Warner, her sister's debut novel was "[n]ot the mere vague wish to write a book that should do service to her Master: but a vivid, constant, looking to him for guidance and help[.]"[327] Warner was searching for the perfect religious sentiment. She perceives individualistic morality to be the answer to the religious apathy identified by revivalist preachers following the First Great Awakening. The term individualistic morality draws republicanism, democracy, and independence into a religious context. Society could be reformed by the moral actions of individuals; especially mothers, who were portrayed as personifications of true religion. That is not to say that men were less accountable for their actions. Individualistic morality was the responsibility of each person to live ethically, constantly striving for God's blessing.[328] As Anna recognises, this was not a pandering book, but an uncompromising dissection of American society during a period of massive upheaval. Warner references a diverse range of ideas in her quest to teach the reader true religion.

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[326] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 57.
[327] Warner, *Susan Warner*, 264.
[328] Marty, *Pilgrims*, 208. Howe, *What Hath*, 189.

The predominance of domestic scenes and a plot charting the heroine's spiritual growth through emotional trials, make Warner's novel the most typically sentimental of the three examples. However, the unchallenging façade hides a plethora of controversial ideas. Warner subtly incorporates ideas into her text, creating a collage in which no one idea is distinct enough to cause offence, but in which all raise important questions regarding religion. Four issues feature prominently throughout, surfacing in the text to be tackled in a different way each time. Firstly, women are consistently argued to be spiritually superior to men. Indeed, religious perfection is personified in mothers. However, this is complicated by the second topic of interest to Warner: the Perfectionist community at Oneida. The leadership of John Humphrey Noyes contradicts Warner's celebration of women as more sensitive to God's wishes.[329] Individual accountability is the third and interrelated concern raised by Warner. Regardless of gender, a person must actively seek God's favour. Finally, Warner's evangelism and republicanism are congruous, and indicate how Warner believed the nation should develop.

Religious sentiments shared between Alice Humphreys and Miss Sophia Marshman, elucidate how the author wishes the reader to perceive evangelism. Whilst Ellen lives the reality of individualistic morality, Alice explains to Miss Sophia the philosophy behind the action. It is stated that avoiding evil is insufficient; a person must do positive good if they hope to enter heaven. Even then, nothing is assured.

> "Well I don't see what one *is* to trust to," said Miss Sophia, - "if it isn't a good life."

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[329] Robert David Thomas, *The Man Who Would Be Perfect: John Humphrey Noyes and the Utopian Impulse* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1977), 103.

> "I will answer you," said Alice, with a smile in which there was no sorrow, - "in some words that I love very much, of an old Scotchman, I think; - 'I have taken all my good deeds and all my bad, and have cast them together in a heap before the Lord; and from them all I have fled to Jesus Christ, and in him alone I have sweet peace.'"[330]

Alice is referring to David Dickson when she cites 'an old Scotchman.'[331] Dickson's interpretation of Calvinism denied the unconditional nature of predestination. He proposed that a person's actions on earth could impact their entrance into heaven. Early in the novel, the reader is introduced to the same concept, when George Marshman prays with Ellen aboard the steamer from New York, "Here now to thee I all resign – My body, soul, and all are thine."[332] Good deeds alone were insufficient. Jesus' blessing was still essential. The repetition of these sentiments confirms their centrality to Warner's religious perspective.

The ability of women to take autonomous action is proven by Warner, in her description of Ellen's education. After Aunt Fortune effectually denies her conventional schooling, Ellen resolves to teach herself. "I'll study by myself! I'll see what I can do; it will be better than nothing, any way. I'll begin this very day!"[333] The first book she pulls from her trunk to begin this self-education is significant.

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[330] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 174.

[331] Ibid., vol. 2, 173-74. David George Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism, 1590-1638* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000).

[332] Ibid., vol. 1, 90. Tompkins, *Sensational*, 137.

[333] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 171.

> "Here you are, my dear Numa Pompilius," said she, drawing out a little French book she had just begun to read, "and her *you* are, old grammar and dictionary, - and here is my history, - very glad to see you, Mr Goldsmith!"[334]

Numa's success as an emperor was reliant upon his relationship with the nymph, Egeria. She was his source of knowledge for religious and secular traditions. Warner's reference to this symbolic relationship credits women with agency in the creation of nations.

The religious development of the heroine is discussed both in its own right, and in regard to her relationship with those around her. Crucially important to charting Ellen's strides towards religious perfection is the conversion of Nancy Vawse.[335] Nancy's behaviour while Ellen is sick in bed tests the latter to breaking point. At this point, Nancy is impulsive and almost animal-like. Her "rambling", "rummaging", "hurling", and "tumbling" is beyond Ellen's abilities to tame.[336] Later, Ellen has the opportunity to punish Nancy for her behaviour by accepting Aunt Fortune's refusal to let her attend the working bee. The heroine chooses to forgive Nancy's previous indiscretions and actively appeal on her behalf.[337] The kindness is reciprocated when Nancy steals back a letter, addressed to Ellen from her mother.[338] This letter initiates the third and final phase of Ellen's maturation. At the insistence of her mother, Ellen must join her maternal grandmother in Scotland. Nancy is crucial to the development of the story because her redemption correlates with Ellen's own religious development.

Warner personifies perfect religion in mothers. Maternal love was celebrated as a redeeming force in evangelism, and within nineteenth-century theories of womanhood.

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[334] Ibid., vol. 1, 172.
[335] Stewart, "Wild Side," 1-16.
[336] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 252-59.
[337] Ibid., vol. 1, 301.
[338] Ibid., vol. 2, 232-36.

The challenge, for Warner, was to make these symbolic characters approachable, rather than intimidating. Through examples of motherhood, Warner reveals what she believes to be a perfect religion. Individualistic morality is perfect religion. Ellen's mother epitomises individualistic morality. Her loving nature and exclusive reliance on the Bible as the source of God's will, present her as an emblem of independent thought and well-informed judgement.[339] Ellen declares them depth of her trust in her mother, saying:

> "Why, mamma: - in the first place I trust every word you say – entirely – I know nothing could be truer; if you were to tell me black was white, mamma, I should think my eyes had been mistaken. Then every thing you tell or advise me to do, I know it is right perfectly. And I always feel safe when you are near me, because I know you'll take care of me. And I am glad to think I belong to you, and you have the management of me entirely, and I needn't manage myself, because I know I can't; and if I could, I'd rather you would mamma."[340]

In the revolutions of the story, the next figure to play the role of Ellen's mother is Aunt Fortune. Her complete lack of love for Ellen makes her ineffectual as a mother. Alice Humphrey assumes the role.[341] Since motherhood is achievable for the majority of women, and relevant to every person, the author finds perfect advocates for individualistic morality in both Mrs Montgomery and Alice. The relationship between motherhood and religious perfection is extended when Ellen assumes Alice's place in the Humpreys' household.

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[339] Tompkins, *Sensational*, 163. Tompkins argues that the Bible becomes an emblem of women's dominion over the spiritual.

[340] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 20.

[341] Ibid., vol. 1, 266. Brodhead, "Sparing the Rod," 80. Seelye, *Jane Eyre*, 111. Seelye argues that Alice fails in her feminine influence over Ellen.

> Ellen rose up in the morning and lay down at night with the present pressing wish to do and be for the ease and comfort of her adopted father and brother all that it was possible for her.[342]

Despite the other occupants of the household being ministers, both Alice and Ellen consider it necessary for Ellen to be present, to provide spiritual guidance, which the doctrinal knowledge of ministers could not provide. The role she must play has been taught to her by her mother, and by Alice, and she combines their guidance with the more practical experience gained by acting as mother for Aunt Fortune, during her sickness. In this role Ellen fulfils Warner's challenge of finding the personification of true religion.[343]

The divine portrait of motherhood is clarified by Warner's approach to fatherhood. The significance of the mother is heightened by the reliance of father figures upon these women. One scene in particular illustrates the positive impact of Ellen acting as mother in the Humphreys' home. The figures of fatherhood in this scene are ideals in their own right. There is no hint of the selfish, unfeeling behaviour of Captain Montgomery. Mr Marshman, John Humphreys, and his father, Mr Humphreys all perform as fathers for Ellen during the novel. Ellen's reaction to Mr Marshman's arrival initiates change in the atmosphere of the house, from that of self-destructive mourning to healing mutual affection.[344] Ellen's grief allows Mr Humphreys to recognise his own grief, which both John and Mr Marshman understand to be essential in his coming to terms with Alice's death. The presence of Mr. Marshman also maps the change in Ellen from child to mother. His guidance of Ellen early in the novel is necessary because she loves her mother more than she loves God.[345] Later, at the point of Alice's death, she had learnt to rely solely upon Jesus Christ, and therefore can offer her own guidance to those in need.

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[342] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 197.

[343] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 4, 38-39. Rather than challenging the predominantly masculine symbol-system of Puritanism, Gatta understands Ellen's motherhood to work in harmony with fatherhood.

[344] Douglas, *Feminization*, 18-19. Not one of these ministers exhibits the self-depreciation identified by Douglas. Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 35.

> She had scarce touched Mr. Marshman's hand when she hastily withdrew her own, and gave way to an overwhelming burst of sorrow. It was infectious. There was such an utter absence of all bitterness or hardness in the tone of this grief; there was so touching an expression of submission mingled with it, that even Mr. Humphreys was overcome. Ellen was not the only subdued weeper there; not the only one whose tears came from a broken-up heart. "Ellen" – said Mr. Humphreys then after a few minutes. She rose and went to the sofa. He folded her close to his breast. "Thank you, my child," he said presently; - "you have been a comfort to me. Nothing but a choir of angels could have been sweeter."[346]

John Humphreys' reliance on Ellen, to transform his father's attitude, demonstrates Ellen's ascendance to sincere faith.[347]

Ellen's experiences with these three ministers indicate a cooperative approach towards the Church.[348] Yet, Warner denies the claims made by some ministers that they hold authority to interpret God's will. The superiority of mothers to ministers is evident in the comparison of two scenes. The church in Edinburgh is a sanctuary for Ellen, when she seeks solitude after a disagreement with the Lindseys.

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[345] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 1, 85-91.
[346] Ibid., vol. 2, 191.
[347] Douglas, *Feminization*, 4.
[348] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 52.

> It was a great relief to be able to weep freely; at home she was afraid of being seen or heard or questioned; now she was alone and free, and she poured out her very heart in weeping that she with difficulty kept from being loud weeping.[349]

Upon taking her seat, the heroine immediately bursts into tears, lamenting her religious transgressions. Crucially, although she is in church, Ellen's surroundings are meaningless to her, other than as a safe and quiet place to think.

> Not one word of the sermon did Ellen hear; but she never passed a more profitable hour in church in her life.[350]

The building, congregation, and minister do not affect her. The profit she gains by this visit to church is entirely self-perpetuated, or rather, guided by God alone .

> [S]he resolved to make the Bible her only and her constant rule of life in every thing[.][351]

Warner denies ministers their authoritative role of guiding the devout through periods of strife. To reiterate the natural divinity of mothers, Warner creates a parallel between the circumstances in which Ellen enters this church and those when she first meets Alice. After Ellen discovers Aunt Fortune reading a letter from her mother she is distraught, and walks up a mountain in search of relief from her grief. Similarly to when she enters the Scottish church, Ellen does not notice her surroundings.

> Carpeted with moss, and furnished with fallen stones and pieces of rock, this was a fine resting-place for the way-farer, or loitering place for the lover of nature.

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[349] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 288. Seelye, *Jane Eyre*, 94.
[350] Ibid., vol. 2, 288.
[351] Ibid., vol. 2, 288.

> Ellen seated herself on one of the stones, and looked sadly and wearily towards the east, at first very careless of the exceeding beauty of what she beheld there.[352]

At Ellen's point of religious crisis Alice arrives, and with her friendship the heroine gains religious solace and guidance. Nature offers her something more than the church could: an external, sincere guide. The personal, perfect religion of mothers, exemplified by Alice, is demonstrated to be the solution to Ellen's distress. In a broader sense, the perfect religion of mothers was the answer to the nation's spiritual confusion.

Considering the isolated circumstances in which Warner wrote her first novel, it seems unlikely that the principles of an obscure religious community would find their way into the book. However, ideas first preached by John Humphrey Noyes in the early 1830s do feature in *The Wide, Wide World*. It may also be significant that Noyes' second attempt at creating a community devoted to his ideas was begun in Oneida County, New York, two years prior to the publication of Warner's novel. The similarity of the name of the hero of the novel, John Humphreys, with that of the leader of the "Perfectionists" is the most obvious indication of Warner's interest in that religious denomination. Additionally, many of John Humphreys' character traits are reminiscent of those attributed to Noyes.[353] Both men demand complete obedience and claim God-like powers. Other evidence supports this comparison. Warner's analysis of the perfectionist doctrine is not sympathetic, but it is undoubtedly present throughout the novel.

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[352] Ibid., vol. 2, 178.

[353] "The Oneida Community: The Life and Death of its Founder, John H. Noyes," in *New York Times* (1857-1922); 15 Apr 1886: 5. http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.canterbury.ac.nz/docview/94425615?accountid=14499. John Humphrey Noyes, "History of American Socialisms," in *Strange Cults and Utopias of Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Mark Holloway (New York: Dover, 1966), 614-36. Thomas, *The Man Who Would Be Perfect*, 130-161. Marty, *Pilgrims*, 192. Howe, *What Hath*, 302.

Warner was searching for the true religious sentiment, and she found it in John Humphreys. However, his presence as exemplar of religious faith complicates Warner's argument for women's special religiosity. John proves that the pursuit of religious perfection was not solely the concern of women. His uniqueness should mean that he is no threat to Warner's campaign to empower women, but a distinct lack of feminine influence does make him incongruous with Warner's argument for the maternal spiritual power. The loss of mother and younger sister are not described as having had a major influence upon him. Similarly, Alice's devotion to him is not recognised as having an impact upon John's faith. He never goes to her for guidance, nor defers to her judgment. This lack of female affiliation is confirmed by his treatment of people and animals. For example, he humiliates Saunders, he faces down William and Gilbert at the Ventnors, and breaks the will of his charger, the Black Prince, proving himself masculine in a conventional, conservative manner.[354] Even with Ellen he tolerates no weakness, nor excuses any mistake. John's exceptional religious, physical, and intellectual abilities are incongruous with Warner's celebration of women in religion. Yet his presence in the tale is essential. He is an illustration of what men alone can achieve.

Warner illustrates that self-control was essential for perfect religion to be practiced.[355] A significant measurement of Ellen's self-control, which links this virtue to independent thought, is her refusal to drink alcohol. Whilst sharing Christmas with John and Alice at Ventnor, Ellen is offered sparkling wine by her host, but subtly refuses to drink.[356] She follows the example of Alice and John, emphasizing her faith in their judgement.[357] This faith is tested later, when Ellen has been separated from both exemplars of religious perfection and is pressured to drink. Mr Lindsey frames his demand for her to drink in such a way that nullifies not only her principles, but her self-determination. The autocracy of the Lindsey household conflicts undeniably with the self-determination Ellen has learnt from her religious mentors.

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[354] See respectively Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 125-29; vol. 2, 29; vol. 2, 101. Douglas, *Feminization*, 18-19. In Douglas' view, the effeminate association of 'liberal' ministers was a consequence of the evangelical denominations' emphasis on the domestic and emotional. In contrast, masculinity was virile and worthy of admiration.

[355] Seelye, *Jane Eyre,* 99.

> "Taste it, Ellen!"
>
> This command was not to be disobeyed. The blood rushed to Ellen's temples as she just touched the glass to her lips and set it down again.
>
> "Well?" said Mr. Lindsey.
>
> "What, sir?"
>
> "How do you like it?"
>
> "I like it very well, sir, but I would rather not drink it."
>
> "Why?"
>
> Ellen coloured again at this exceedingly difficult question, and answered as well as she could, that she had never been accustomed to it, and would rather not.
>
> "It is of no sort of consequence what you have been accustomed to," said Mr. Lindsey. "You have to drink it all, Ellen."[358]

The link between religious principles and independence is crucial to understanding Warner's perspective on religion. To practice an ideal religion required the ability to think, and act independently. Mr Lindsey forces Ellen to recognise him as her father, but she does not grant him the loyalty she does John.

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[356] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 13.
[357] Ibid., vol. 2, 272.
[358] Ibid.

> "I could not have disobeyed *[John]*, possibly! – but I could [the Lindseys], if it was necessary, - and if it is necessary, I will!"[359]

Evidently, curtailing a person's freedom to live by their own principles produced a relationship devoid of true loyalty.

Warner's prescription for perfect religion incorporates, yet also pursues, an interest in the perfectionism of John Humphrey Noyes. She adopts the socially acceptable principles of the Oneida Community. Characters that fulfil the role of mother are celebrated by the author, while conventional ministers are denounced.[360] Although the personification of individualistic morality was gendered female, no concerted denigration of masculine figures takes place. Men were depicted as equally likely to achieve ideal religion, as exemplified by John Humphreys. Each person is advised to take responsibility for their own actions, and to not only live blamelessly, but do positive good. Direct and sole accountability to God allowed a person to act morally, regardless of pressures to do otherwise. To know what was moral required proper education. To act morally required self-determination.

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[359] Ibid., vol. 2, 273.
[360] Ibid., vol. 1, 322-34.

Uncle Tom's Cabin

Stowe's perception of ideal religion was active, and founded on the loving relationship between God and his creations.[361] This interpretation was most effective in petitioning the reader to act against slavery. The relationship between the material and the love economy is discussed in order to offer the reader a comprehensive analysis of possible solutions to the slavery issue. Two ideas in particular, formed a cohesive force to challenge religious and secular justifications for slavery.[362] Firstly, Stowe's portrayal of a mother's love for her child creates affinity between different types of people. In some characters Stowe presents a comforting, equalising impression of maternal love, while in others she exposes slavery's destructive impact on families.[363] Secondly, God's 'love' of each and every soul undermines the pro-slavery argument based on property rights.[364] Stowe incorporated aspirations for the nation, alongside predictions of the dire eventualities if slavery were to continue. St. Clare refers to the book of Matthew, in the bible: One should have expected some terrible enormities charged to those who are excluded from Heaven, as the reason; but no - they are condemned for *not* doing positive good, as if that included every possible harm."[365] This biblical reference supports Stowe argument that action was required to change America's dependency on an evil institution, and to regain unity.

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[361] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 53.
[362] Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University, 1972), 427. Fox-Genovese, *Plantation Household*, 328. Fox-Genovese argues that by the 1830s, many churches supported slavery.
[363] Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 12. Wearn observes how Stowe "cannily uses maternal essentialism to sway her audience to accept her culturally-challenging views."
[364] "Fugitive Slave Act."
[365] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 323. Burbick, *Healing*, 1. Burbick argues that Stowe is "enacting a sophisticated form of the jeremiad, prophesizing doom in order to wake up their American neighbors to their true path of heroic greatness."

Maternal love is promoted by Stowe as the most powerful motivator. Women of both races are united by the enormity of their love for their children. In the Bird household, Stowe equates the loss of a child to slavery to the loss of a child to illness, in order to illustrate the equalising potential of maternal love.[366] By retrieving her dead son's clothes from the locked trunk, Mary Bird prevents another mother losing her child. Stowe cultivates the reader's empathy with Eliza by equating her misery to that of Mrs Bird, a mother whose son died.

> "Ma'am," [Eliza] said suddenly, "have you ever lost a child?"
>
> The question was unexpected, and it was a thrust on a new wound; for it was only a month since a darling child of the family had been laid in the grave.[367]

Stowe's reliance on maternal influence prioritises natural feelings above the masculine rationalism that dominates Puritanism, and in so doing places sentimental religion above institutional.[368] If, like the archetypal matriarch, they influence others to act in love, they redeem the nation from the sin of slavery.

Stowe adopts a dual approach to maternal love, combining the equalising potential to motherhood with the torturous reality facing slave mothers.[369] The experiences and reactions of Lucy and Cassy are intended to inspire revulsion and horror in the audience. Within one chapter, Lucy is broken down entirely; she transforms from a happy mother and wife, into an inert ghost, without either baby or husband to love. Upon discovering the sale of her child, Lucy's stagnant reaction is ominous. "The woman did not scream. The shot had passed too straight and direct through her heart, for cry or tear."[370] Within a few hours she has forsaken life altogether. Her suicide conflicts with the fulfilling sacrifice performed by Mrs Bird, of her dead child's clothes. Cassy reaffirms the terrifying strength of a mother's love by killing her son. Having been tortured by the love of her first son and daughter, Cassy makes the only choice left to her.[371] She kills her second son, to prevent him suffering. Stowe presents maternal love in both comforting and challenging contexts, in order to convince the reader that slavery would end under the influence of mothers, or slavery would continue, forcing mothers to commit suicide and murder.

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[366] Boydston, Kelley, and Margolis, *Sisterhood*, 155, 160-162.

[367] Stowe, *Uncle Tom*, 86. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 17-18. For a comprehensive analysis of motherhood for enslaved women, see Fox-Genovese, *Plantation Household*, 291-333.

[368] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 8, 57.

[369] Lowance, "Biblical Typology," 164.

Maternal love is also considered in the character of St. Clare, whose piety is paradoxical. His character provides Stowe the opportunity to promote the influence of maternal love and the necessity of active religiosity, by showing the degeneration that becomes inevitable without such virtues. With a devout and loving mother, and an angelic daughter, St. Clare is surrounded by influences affirming God's love for all living things.[372] Stowe's description of his childhood implies that St. Clare should be deeply pious. Yet the disillusionment of losing his true love has created a man without conviction. Ultimately, Eva's death and Tom's guidance do redeem him, but while he lives, St. Clare's religious attitude is contradictory. He believes he will be held accountable for slavery, but does not believe he can do anything to change it.[373] He recognises the corruption in institutional religion, and the intrinsic power of the bible, but does not attempt reform.[374] For Stowe perhaps, he epitomises the average reader, who knows the truth but will not act.

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[370] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 133.

[371] Kathleen Margaret Lant, "The Unsung Hero of Uncle Tom's Cabin," *American Studies*, vol. 28, no. 1 (Spring, 1987): 52-53. Wearn, *Negotiating Motherhood*, 18.

[372] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 299.

[373] Ibid., 241.

Stowe's vision of the future of America was founded upon each individual being personally responsible to God. She could see that relying on political or religious institutions to lead the nation to its heavenly potential was unwise considering many ministers' support of slavery.[375] Stowe enthusiastically refutes ministers' claims of integrity. They are portrayed as the enemy: supportive of slavery and devoid of humane feelings. Within the Shelby and St. Clare households, ministers provide religious support for an economic system in which the strong exploit the weak. Mr Shelby cites a pro-slavery sermon, by an anonymous minister, as an argument against his wife's moral condemnation of slavery. Although Shelby did not agree with the minister's sentiments, he still attempts to use the sermon to justify his actions.[376] In the St. Clare household, religion is denigrated by the hypocrisy of both St. Clare and his wife. Marie holds a superficial attitude to both her own and her slaves' religious education. She performs poses of religious devotion, as are appropriate for the good plantation mistress, yet she refuses to support the religious education of her slaves. Marie states:

> "I'm sure they can go to church when they like, though they don't understand a word of the sermon, more than so many pigs, so it isn't of any use for them to go[.]"[377]

As with Mr Shelby, she references sermons heard in church to justify her support of slavery. Both Mr Shelby and Marie are characters created by Stowe to excite the disgust of the reader by their selfish affluence. Institutional religion was supporting the economic interests of its wealthiest patrons, at the expense of its most impoverished.[378] Such corruption would lead to the destruction of the nation.

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[374] Ibid., 190. Gatta, *American Madonna*, 61.
[375] Douglas, *Feminization*.
[376] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 35.
[377] Ibid., 183. Sundquist, introduction, 14.

Stowe's disgust at ministers, who used the Bible to justify slavery, can be seen in a comparison she makes aboard the steamer to New Orleans. She presents the professions of slave trader and pro-slavery minister as mutually supportive and equally sinful. Both support a system that is morally wrong, because it brings them financial gain. While a preacher supports slavery, claiming "Cursed be Canaan; a servant shall he be, the Scripture says[,]" the slave-trader Haley retreats to his accounts to avoid feeling guilty for his role in perpetuating an industry that he knows is immoral.[379] The former uses religion to obviate guilt; the latter uses money to do the same. It is primarily the social unrest caused by his profession, rather than any religious convictions, that cause him to consider stopping. As John, the honest drover sarcastically points out to Haley, "[i]f ye'd only studies yer Bible, like this yer good man, [referring to the minister referenced above] ye might have know'd [your righteousness] before, and saved ye a heap o' trouble."[380] Ministers who support the slave trade are as guilty as those who run the slave trade.

Characters within the slave trade represent diverse religious attitudes. The three major characters involved in the slave trade provide significant insight into Stowe's perception of the relationship between slavery and religion. For instance, Haley is a portrait of the complete corruption of religious principles. He recognises the immorality of his trade, yet continues to work. "I took up the trade just to make a living; if 'tan't right, I calculated to ‘pent on ‘t in time, ye know.”[381] He has concern for his soul, but is content to postponed repentance until the day he has exploited as many human souls as to afford him the leisure to be ‘moral.’ Salvation for Haley is an economic consideration, and this point is reiterated in every commercial exchange he makes. His advice to Shelby regarding the reaction of Eliza to the sale of her son is ostensibly to avoid upset, but really is intended to prevent unnecessary harm to either ‘commodity.’ For instance, Haley suggests:

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[378] Fox-Genovese, *Plantation Household*, 328.
[379] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 127-29.
[380] Ibid., 127.

> “It is mighty onpleasant getting on with women sometimes. I al’ays hates these yer screechin’, screamin’ times. They are *mighty* onpleasant; but as I manages business, I generally avoids ‘em, sir. Now, what if you get the girl off for a day, or a week, or so; then the thing’s done quietly, - all over before she comes home.”[382]

At the Shelby’s, Haley also uses Tom’s religious virtues to drive down the price, so that he can include Eliza’s child in Mr Shelby’s settlement. Later, selling Tom to St. Clare, Haley reverses his convictions and lists Tom’s piety among his positive attributes, in order to raise his price. St. Clare exposes Haley’s hypocrisy when he stages a playful argument with the slave dealer. This is an intriguing exchange considering St. Clare’s hypocrisy. Before the eyes of God, these two men are as bad as one another.[383]

Haley’s acquaintance, Tom Locker, embodies the potential of man to be redeemed. By presenting Locker as the cruellest of slave catchers, Stowe emphasizes the redemptive power of women. His moral convictions are first revealed in a philosophical disagreement with Haley, which raised the issue of retribution. Haley speaks of religion as something to be bought, deferred, and priced, whereas Locker does not talk about religion at all. Haley states: "I b'lieve in religion, and one of these days, when I've got matters tight and snug, I calculate to 'tend to my soul and then ar matters." Locker responds by accusing Haley of "run[ning] up a bill with the devil all [his] life, and then sneak[ing] out when pay time comes!"[384] Although Locker is not religious, he has qualities that define a good Christian. His honesty and bravery indicate his potential for conversion.[385] After Locker is seriously injured while attempting to recapture the Harris family, he is place in the care of a Quaker woman, Grandmam Stephens. As Locker recollects, the Quakers were "[n]ice people, wanted to convert [him], but couldn't come it, exactly. But, tell ye what, stranger, they do fix up a sick fellow first rate, - no mistake."[386] The unprejudiced care supplied by the woman, combined with the memory of his own virtuous mother, ends his career as a slave catcher and inspires commitment to the Quaker lifestyle, if not the religious principles.[387] Stowe describes the potential within each person to be redeemed.

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[381] Ibid.
[382] Ibid., 5.
[383] Ibid., 155-56. For a discussion of the various motivations for buying slaves, see Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 78.

In contrast to slave owners and dealers, slaves are generally attributed redemptive power. Stowe uses their capacity to redeem to prove the equality of every soul. As far as slavery could corrupt the slave owner, it could redefine them in other ways as well.[388] For instance, the reciprocity of the relationship that develops between Tom and St. Clare emphasizes the equality of souls before the Lord. St. Clare comes to rely upon Tom as though he truly believed the arguments he teasingly bandied before Haley.[389] The interaction appears to be ridiculing Haley's own religious attitude, but later it gains a second significance. When Eva is dead and St. Clare inconsolable, he turns to Tom for religious guidance, as if Tom really could help him enter heaven.

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[384] Stowe, *Uncle Tom*, 68-69.
[385] Ibid., 205.
[386] Ibid., 395.
[387] Ibid., 208.
[388] Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 136.
[389] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 155.

> "If Mas'r would only pray!"
>
> "How do you know I don't, Tom?"
>
> "Does Mas'r?"
>
> "I would, Tom, if there was anybody there when I pray; but it's all speaking unto nothing, when I do. But come, Tom, you pray now, and show me how."[390]

The relationship between the two men is shifted from that of master and slave, to penitent and redeemer. In their respective religious roles, the fact that Tom is the property of St. Clare under American law is irrelevant. Stowe proves that God "loves" both souls; the definition of their relationship upon earth being irrelevant.[391]

The transformation of the master-slave relationship, between Ophelia and Topsy, into that of mother and daughter reiterates the equality of souls. St. Clare buys Topsy for several reasons. Compassion for the abused child, cynicism of Ophelia's strict religious values, and frustration at the North's superior attitude towards the South's reliance on slavery all inspire St. Clare to give Ophelia the gift of a slave. Topsy's body is a battleground for the political, social and religious debates raging within the Union.[392] The author represents the conflicting religious ideas in the odd mixture of dishonesty and truthfulness that Topsy enacts. In the beginning of Ophelia and Topsy's relationship, the latter is incurably disobedient. The reader discovers later, that the reason for her disobedience is the lack of love in her life. As a result of Eva's loving desire to see her in heaven, Topsy becomes a Christian and makes a concerted effort to behave.[393] The love of Eva, and later Ophelia revives Topsy's humanity from her condition as a commodity.[394] As a result, Topsy and Ophelia develop a relationship akin to that of mother and daughter. Ophelia is redeemed by the realisation of her own maternal love for her ward. Topsy's soul is redeemed, and literally emancipated by Ophelia's love for her, while Ophelia is converted to sentimental religiosity, and becomes capable of contributing to the abolition of slavery.[395]

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[390] Ibid., 313-14.

[391] Ibid., 313.

[392] Jim O'Loughlin, "Articulating Uncle Tom's Cabin," *New Literary History*, vol. 31, no. 3 Summer, 2000): 580. O'Loughlin investigates the meaning of Topsy's "random appropriation of behaviours from others." Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 89.

Stowe's technique of attributing slaves roles that took them beyond the enslavement of their bodies is complicated by Cassy's relationship with Legree. Maternal love allows her to achieve domination of her owner.[396] Stowe's intention with the development of this relationship is to show that to forsake maternal love could lead to a person's complete destruction. Cassy's life is defined by the slave trade's exploitation of maternal love. Yet, after many years of wretchedness, her concern for Emmeline draws her back from the brink of self-destruction.[397] Her love for this surrogate daughter inspires her efforts to escape. Indeed, it is maternal love that provides the opportunity to escape. When Cassy observes Legree's terrified reaction to the lock of Eva's hair that curls itself around his finger, she recognises the significance.[398] Upon her death bed, Legree's own mother had forgiven his sins against her, and confirmed the sentiment by placing a lock of her hair in the letter that brought the tidings of death. Eva's love for

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[393] Gatta, *American Madonna*, 59. Abate, "Topsy-Turvy," 75.
[394] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 309.
[395] Westra, "Confronting Antichrist," 149.
[396] Lant, "Unsung Hero," 60.
[397] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 422.
[398] Ibid., 382. Lant, "Unsung Hero," 47-71. Lant discusses Cassy's difference from every other woman character. In her escape, Lant argues, Cassy demonstrates the only effective way of ending slavery.

Tom, Cassy’s love for her children and for Emmeline, and Legree’s mother’s love for her wayward son combine to transform Legree’s ownership of Cassy. The result is Cassy’s domination of the man who abused her, who forsook all love and all religion for the sake of profit.

Stowe’s task was to unite her nation against an institution that she believed would be responsible for its degeneration into corruption. Her approach to the problem was promoting a pro-active, love-based religion. By bypassing the authority of ministers, and appealing directly the God, she credited every character with a soul worthy of salvation. The inclusivity of this sentimental religion was intended to appeal to the widest possible readership, and make the actions demanded of them worthwhile. The hell depicted on Legree’s plantation warned the public of the consequences of maintaining slavery, while the domestic heaven of George and Eliza’s home in Canada represents the potential happiness of the nation.[399] Stowe uses love to show the potential of the United States. A mother’s love for her child, God’s love for his creations, and action in the name of love all conspired in Stowe’s text to motivate the public to abolish slavery. By replacing the economy of capital based in the rational mind, with economy of sentiment based in loving heart, Stowe intends to convert all people to an active condemnation of slavery.

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[399] Westra, “Confronting Antichrist,” 146.

The Hidden Hand

The religious content of *The Hidden Hand* is influenced by Southworth's political opinions. She uses religion to expose the corruption in the relationship between the Church and government. Religious references have the secondary purpose of highlighting the need for social reform. Despite glimpses of 'sincere' sentimental religion, the overwhelming impression is that religion was a tool to Southworth, in the same way it had become a tool to criminals, to the government, and to the judicial system. She warns the reader to be aware of who they trust, regardless of profession, or status.[400] Religion provided the most fertile ground for the author's social commentary because it penetrated every aspect of American life. Although a large proportion of the text is devoid of religious reference, at those points at which religion does surface, it does so with massive significance. She uses her ascendancy as a woman author to criticise the very institutions she appears to be supporting.

The extent of Southworth's criticism is clearly seen in her religious characters. Legitimate ministers only perform secular functions; whereas criminals masquerading as ministers profess deep divinity. Black Donald is the arch-villain, and his disguises provide the strongest indication of Southworth's perception of religion. While dressed as a Quaker, he visits the "county seat where court is now in session, and [sells] cigar cases, snuff boxes and smoking caps to the grand and petit jury, and a pair of gold spectacles to the learned judge himself!"[401] Quakers were considered the most passive, innocent, and trustworthy of the multitudinous Christian denominations in America at the time.[402] Trading on his disguise as the most honest of all men, Black Donald not only profits from the extravagance of lawyers and members of the court; he humiliates them by doing so. That the most highly educated men in the county should have their luxuries supplied by criminals, is a significant commentary on the political system. That they did so without questioning the source, scorns their intelligence. The judicial system had been corrupted by greed to such an extent that they were unaware even of their own duplicity.

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[400] Ginzberg, *Work of Benevolence*, 109.
[401] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 175.

Southworth also uses the Quaker disguise to point out the fallibility of members of religious institutions. The need to think and judge independently is the moral of Southworth's story.[403] Quakers' good reputation reinforces the point that, if a hardened criminal could successfully play the part of such a devout, no member of that or any other religious sect should be trusted without proper knowledge of their identity. Later, Black Donald deceives Old Hurricane and Mrs Condiment by emulating a devout preacher, in order to free his comrades from jail.[404] The same issues of identity and intelligence are raised. As a Justice of the Peace, Old Hurricane should be intelligent enough to recognise the trick. Southworth argues that all people are inherently fallible, therefore the integrity of ministers must be enforced if people are to become more moral.

Black Donald's disguises highlight the culpability of religion in the degeneration of a pillar of American independence: republican government. The same result is implied by Southworth in the pandering of legitimate ministers to the demands of the judiciary.[405] Throughout the novel, every occasion for a minister's services is essentially secular. The opening chapter sees Old Hurricane forced from his fireside to hear the confessions of Nancy Grewell, the former guardian of Cap. The facilitator on this occasion is Reverend Mr. Parson Goodwin, parish minister of Bethlehem, St. Mary's. He creates, but plays no role in the meeting that initiates the entire story.[406] Later, the Reverend is consulted by Old Hurricane on possible methods of disciplining Cap. This is a subsidiary event that serves only to reinforce the untameable, duplicitous nature of Old Hurricane's ward.[407] Having duped the Reverend into believing she has a man hidden in her room (in reality, a Blenheim poodle) he storms out, instructing Old Hurricane to "[t]hrash that girl as if she were a bay boy, for she richly deserves it!"[408] The only other role played by the Reverend is conciliatory. Upon the discovery of Black Donald's true identity, after he frees his men from jail, the Reverend only attempts to placate Old Hurricane with the concession that "[w]e are all liable to suffer deception."[409] Goodwin is the only minister in the story, yet he is never called upon to make a religious assertion. He is shown to be the servant of secular powers, not God.

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[402] Howe, *What Hath*, 195-97.
[403] Howe, *What Hath*, 188.
[404] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 264-69.
[405] Sellers, *Market Revolution*, 47-59.

Marriage plays an important role in *The Hidden Hand*. In fact it drives the plot, and is responsible for many of the calamities that strike the characters. The parallels drawn between the family and the republican philosophy of the United States endow each union, made and broken in the course of the novel, with massive political significance.[410] Distrust, miscommunication, wilful deceit, and murder characterise the elder generation's marriages. However, Southworth anticipates a better future when she describes the republican womanhood achieved by the next generation. The author argues that the empowerment of women must be achieved for marriages to succeed. Dr Day's opinions on marriage resonate throughout the text. The age restriction he puts on Clara's marriage to Traverse is proven beneficial by the tragic marriages of Capitola Le Noir and Marah Rocke. Both are married very young, to men far older than themselves. Capitola's ignorance of her legal rights and Marah's inability to communicate her feelings lead to isolation and misery.[411] In comparison, Traverse respects the wishes of his deceased benefactor and does not marry Clara until she is twenty. Cap is as aware of her legal rights as Clara, more than capable of communicating with men, and sufficiently empowered to ensure the success of her marriage.[412] Southworth's final observation that both women still had to discipline their husbands, confirms her optimistic, yet practical attitude to marriage.

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[406] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 15-18.
[407] Ibid., 213-14.
[408] Ibid., 226.
[409] Ibid., 316.
[410] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 15.

The marriage of Marah and Old Hurricane conveys the concurrently religious and secular attitude the author takes towards marriage. Both characters recollect the reasons for their estrangement from one another by making reference to mythical events. In Marah's cryptic statement, she refers to the beginning of her marriage to Old Hurricane as "the time in Paradise, before the serpent entered!" Combining this reference to the garden of Eden, with the recollection that Old Hurricane tells her that she "should be called Naomi instead of Marah"[413] provides a religious foundation for the couples relationship. However, while recounting to Herbert Greyson the truth of her tragic marriage, Marah compares herself to "Lear's Cordelia."[414] For Southworth, marriage was not only a religious affair, but was equally important socially and economically. Old

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[411] Kerber, *No Constitutional Right*, 14.
[412] Kerber, *Women*, 206.
[413] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 108.
[414] Ibid., 117.

Hurricane also indicates religious motivation for marriage with the justification, that "because she adored me as a sort of god, I loved her as an angel and married her…"[415] However, within a few sentences he compares their marriage to the relationship between King Numa and the nymph, Egeria. By implying Marah to be akin to Egeria, Old Hurricane shows that his wife is his guide and councillor as much as she is his 'angel.' However, this analogy is discrete since Old Hurricane compares himself to Numa to convey the 'stealth' of his covert visits to Marah's cabin. The unknowing reader might assume that this was the true purpose of the reference. However, any person who knew the myth of Numa and Egeria would recognise that Southworth was crediting Marah with being the source of her husband's knowledge, and consequently his power. By combining biblical, mythical, and literary references in Marah and Old Hurricane's recollections of their marriage, Southworth argues that that sacred union is motivated by much more than religion.

Marah's comparison of herself to "Lear's Cordelia" is significant for another reason. Firstly, these two characters are father and daughter, reiterating the age difference and reinforcing Dr Day's claim that to marry too young is harmful to women. Secondly, although Marah says that she was "tongue-tied" like Lear's Cordelia, this is a miss-interpretation of the Shakespearean character. Cordelia was not incapable of speech; she chose not to. Her love for her father, King Lear, was a pure love in comparison with the selfish flattery of her sisters.[416] For readers who understood the intentional misreading by Marah, it is clear that Southworth places the blame squarely at the feet of Old Hurricane, for failing to understand the depth of Marah's love. For readers who were unaware of the context of the reference, being tongue-tied placed responsibility on social conventions, for allowing a girl to marry while so young that she is incapable of communicating her feelings. For those who knew Shakespeare's *King Lear*, the implications of Marah's 'mistake' were clear. Both women were exiled for their honesty, for refusing to flatter, when no reassurance should have been necessary.

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[415] Ibid., 106.
[416] For a discussion of the significance of Shakespeare in America rhetoric, see Gustafson, *Imagining*, 80-83.

Southworth's attitude towards religion is reflected in the education that she provides Cap. The heroine has learnt not only her perspicacity, but also her faith in New York City, at the Sunday school to which Granny Grewell sent her. The training she received at Hurricane Hall continued the practical element of her education. Old Hurricane teaches her "grammar, geography and history, and made her write copies, do sums and read and recite lessons to him. Mrs Condiment taught her the mysteries of cutting and basting, back-stitching and felling, hemming and seaming."[417] However, at critical points in the text, Cap expresses a sincere, almost intrinsic religiosity. She forms an independent and considered opinion of the people around her, regardless of their profession or status, as proven by her consistent outmanoeuvring of Black Donald. The religious education that Cap has received has turned her into the ideal of republican womanhood, encompassing self-sustaining faith and independent thought. Within a novel that consistently portrays real ministers as paper-pushers, and criminals as ministers, Cap embodies Southworth's hopes for the future of the nation. Her heroine is truly independent, in religious and secular terms.

Christmas is a significant event in Southworth's novel, although not for religious reasons. For instance, the slaves' saturnalia is 'held sacred' by Old Hurricane, while no reference is made to a religious ceremony for the master or his ward. The Holy holiday also provides the opportunity for Black Donald to perform his most dastardly deed. Captured in her own bed chamber, Black Donald's actions provide the opportunity for Cap to practice her Christian obligation to redeem wayward souls. She argues every possible way to convince Black Donald that he should not abduct her. Cap besieges her captor:

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[417] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 134.

> "Your Creator, Donald, gave you the strength, courage and spirit that all men and women so much admire; but He did not give you these great powers that you might use them in the service of his enemy, the devil!"[418]

References to Christmas also force the comparison of characters to biblical figures. For example, Pitapat references the gilt-edged Christmas books to convey the ethereal beauty of Clara.

> "How us has got a new neighbour – a bootiful young gal – as bootiful as a picter in a gilt-edged Christmas book – mid snowy skin, and sky-blue eyes and glistenin' hair, like the princess you was a readin' me about[.]"[419]

While the association between Clara and Mary is clear from the Christmas reference, that the book is gilt-edged possibly indicates fraud, or fakery quite at odds with the dignity of the nativity. Another reference to Christmas occurs in a conversation between Herbert and Marah. While recounting the tale of how Old Hurricane left her, she mentioned her husband's promise that they would spend Christmas together.[420] Combining the thwarted hopes that this tale recounts, with the imitation 'gilt-edge' of the Christmas books, and the opportunity for devilry that Black Donald exploits, Christmas is a paradox of falsity and virtue.

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[418] Ibid., 482.
[419] Ibid., 323.
[420] Ibid., 118.

Unlike conventional sentimental authors, Southworth draws inspiration from Old Testament stories, as well as Greek and Roman myths. The most interesting instance is when Cap recounts to herself a provocative combination of inspirational figures. When faced with Black Donald in her bed chamber she chides herself for cowardice; "[t]hink of Jael and Sisera! Think of Judith and Holofernes! And the devil and Doctor Faust." This combination raises many questions, which ultimately lead the reader to doubt Southworth's commitment to the expectations on the sentimental author. Although Jael and Judith were biblical figures, they both used feminine charms and violence against men.[421] Both women purposefully allow the enemy to enter their homes, intending to murder them. That Cap references these women in her reaction to Black Donald shows her propensity to seize control of the situation, despite the surprise and danger. The sixteenth-century German folklore reference, the devil and Dr Faust, adds another dimension to Cap's reaction. Cap might believe herself to be playing the part of Gretchen, who attempts to redeem the man who has destroyed her. Goethe's version of the tale has Gretchen help redeem Faust. Of these three references, two refer to virtuous women who exploit their own charms to destroy evil men, and the third refers to an innocent girl, who will plead for the salvation of the man responsible for her defilement. Each of these heroic role models reinforces Southworth's campaign to empower women, both for spiritual power and physical capabilities.

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[421] Jael drove a stake through Sisera's temples after hospitably offering him milk. Judith decapitated Holofernes after letting him enter her home and getting him drunk. For analysis of Jael as a character type in the wives of northern New England, see Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York: Knopf, 1980), 167-83. This Old Testament tale hints at the eggnog that Cap offers to Black Donald before opening the trapdoor. Black Donald, like Holofernes, is motivated by sexual desire for Cap.

Cap's efforts to force the confession of Craven Le Noir bare important similarities to the actions of Jael and Judith. Although she does not react like Gretchen, and pray for Craven to heed his ways, in other respects this event does reinforce the intrinsic morality of the heroine. For despite the humiliating insult, she will not kill. Her principles will not allow her to kill a man, regardless of the justification; so she replaces the bullets with dried peas. Religion prevents Cap acting immorally, but it does not hinder her action. In fact her plan is improved by the intercession of faith. The result is that the wounds that appear to Craven to be fatal, are in reality only skin deep. "[U]nder the terrors of a guilty conscience and of expected death, his evidence partook more of the nature of a confession than an accusation."[422] Cap exacts her punishment by humiliating Craven as a liar, and as craven. Indeed, it is not his soul that Cap is interested in redeeming, but rather her own reputation. The confession of Colonel Le Noir is similarly emancipatory. Again, the religious implications of a Catholic sacrament hold less significance than the legal implications. With the Colonel's confession, Marah can reclaim her rightful place as Old Hurricane's wife, Capitola regains her identity as a sane woman, and Cap can claim her birthright of the Hidden House. Although motivated by a desire for personal salvation, the confessions of both Craven and Colonel Le Noir are more important for their legal and social implications, than for their religious significance.

Southworth's denigration of American society's naive relationship with religion is evident throughout her novel. From the characters that impersonate ministers, to the characters who are ministers, questions needed to be asked of figures wielding religious authority. By celebration of Cap's individualism, the author shows the reader what can be done to remedy the corruption in institutional religion. Self-sustaining, individualistic faith was necessary to discriminate between those impersonating and those with real Christian values. Condemning the Christian institution of marriage, Southworth reveals the reality of married life, the legal weakness of women, and their vulnerability.[423] Women must be empowered for marriage to be a beneficial institution. The political implications of Southworth's marriage argument are clear. Women must also be empowered for the Union to be successful. Although the author recognises the Christian foundations of American society, for the future of the nation to be successful, women must be treated as rational, sane, and competent individuals.

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[422] Southworth, *Hidden Hand*, 462-63.

Conclusion

All three authors created an idea of true religious sentiment. The specific details differed, but evangelism formed the foundations. In their novels, evangelism was emotive, anti-institutional, disciplined but not doctrinal, and congruence with republican ideals. The religious convictions of each author determined how they treated the changes taking place in American society. The United States in the 1850s suffered major upheavals, and these novels were a medium by which the public could gain a perspective over the changes. Sentimental novels also acted as a guide, to show the reader how to engage with new ideas.[424] For instance, Warner represents her idea of perfect religion through motherhood. Maternal love is both attainable and relatable to. Stowe also evokes maternal love to create an emotional response from the reader. By this strategy, she hopes to change people's attitudes to slavery. Southworth confirms this strategy, making women the champions of true religious sentiment. Although the authors unanimously embrace maternal love as a solution to the nation's religious lethargy, they each hold unique opinions, which are revealed by close analysis of their writing.

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[423] Barnes, *States of Sympathy*, 89.

[424] Matthiessen, *American Renaissance*, 33. See Matthiessen for the active nature of language.

Ministers of the religious revivals encouraged women to take part in public worship. They praised emotional displays of faith, claiming that doctrinal knowledge was unimportant compared to natural, heartfelt devotion. In the nineteenth century, women were generally considered to be more emotional, more in touch with their own and others' feelings, and therefore more sensitive to God's commands. Given these qualities, it is unsurprising that in each novel, female characters are associated with religion more frequently than male characters. The authors understand the empowerment women gained by being made emblems of religious faith. However, the association of women with religion is complicated by all three authors, in their efforts to define true religious sentimental. In Warner's novel mothers do personify perfect religion, but John Humphreys also performs this role. He is depicted as highly masculine and highly religious.[425] Warner's acceptance of men as exemplars of religious perfection bears further consideration. In Warner's opinion, men can achieve perfection, with minimal maternal guidance. There is also an exception to the spiritual importance of women in Stowe. Marie St. Clare is extraordinarily irreverent, insensitive, and lacking in affection. This character shows how slavery could corrupt even those figures who should be religious examples to the nation.[426] The certainty of Southworth's religious argument permits no exception. In the roles of ministers and politicians, men are corrupt. Those men who are not corrupt are heavily influenced by mother-figures. It was in the interests of women to cultivate the association of their sex with religious perfection. However, the spiritual superiority of their sex was also a useful strategy to use in the negative, to show men as saint-like, mothers corrupted by slavery, and men incapable of maintaining their religious integrity.

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[425] Burbick, *Healing*, 194.
[426] Fox-Genovese, *Plantation Household*, 334. Johnson, *Soul By Soul*, 89.

Between all three novels there was consensus regarding the changing roles of religious ministers. Warner, Stowe, and Southworth each provide an analysis of the role of ministers in the degeneration of the nation's religious integrity. The crucial difference between a good and bad minister was his honesty. A selfish minister was willing to compromise his own integrity and that of the Bible in order to garner support from his congregation. During Ellen's time in Scotland, Warner reveals representatives of the Church to be of no help to the needy. In contrast, in the United States, those ministers who have a personal relationship with the heroine are decisive in her progress towards religious perfection. In Stowe's work, ministers pander to the wishes of rich members of their congregations, while true representatives of God, such as Uncle Tom, maintain their faith and integrity in the face of terrible threats. Stowe's representation of Quakers credits them with being an ideal form of communal worship. The course of their lives is dictated by their beliefs, and no worldly rules could alter that. The uncompromising stance taken by the Quakers is in complete contrast to the depictions of members of religious institutions given by Southworth. The sole Quaker that features in *The Hidden Hand* was in fact, the arch villain in disguise. Ministers, for Southworth, are either yes-men or criminals. While Warner and Stowe both show how ministers could be worthy of their titles, Southworth's unstinting criticism calls for complete reform of institutional religion.

Despite concerted criticism of Christian ministers, responsibility for one's religious faith is shown by all three authors to lie with the individual. Self-control was an important issue in evangelical Christianity. The form discipline in the novels illustrates how important the authors perceived self-control to be in pursuing true religious sentiment. Throughout *The Wide, Wide World* the heroine is constantly chiding herself for acting immorally. It is instilled in her that all the difficulties she becomes involved in are her own fault. Self-control is essential to achieving religious perfection, and Ellen has not yet mastered herself.[427] There are many issues surrounding control in Stowe's novel because of the overarching issue of slavery, yet she does not emphasise the punishments that slaves are submitted to. Instead, the purpose of the novel to improve the nation, determines that discipline take the form of threatened punishment for master and slave. If slavery is to continue, murder and suicide would take the place of love and charity. Stowe does not focus on unjustified, corporal punishment, but is intent on showing the more profound punishment of damnation. Southworth's interpretation of control is different again. Discipline is self-imposed by Cap. She refuses to be controlled by anyone. The heroine's independent and self-willed behaviour saves her life on the streets of New York City, and allows her to escape from various attempts at kidnap while in Virginia. For Warner, self-discipline has an intensely religious purpose, whereas Southworth perceives self-discipline to be a political ideal. Stowe controls the reader through her novel, warning against the dire consequences to tolerating slavery. Attitudes toward discipline are different in all three novels, yet the authors all recognise the importance of self-control.

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[427] Warner, *Wide World*, vol. 2, 271.

Self-discipline was not the full extent of behavioural controls implemented by Evangelists. The belief that God was personally interested in each soul was congruent with the republican ideals of the United States. Republicanism demanded that every person be free to act as they felt best. The empowerment that the direct relationship with God gave to the faithful was an important element in all three novels, both in religious and political terms. The connection between political and religious freedom is confirmed by Warner in Ellen's reaction to Mr Lindsey's claiming of her. "But what if they were to want me to do something wrong? – they might; - John never did – I could not have disobeyed *him*, possibly! – but I could them, if it was necessary, - and if it is necessary, I will!"[428] This self-reflection follows a thorough examination of what defines a truly great man, by Ellen and her uncle. The answer being, in Ellen's estimations "[o]ne who always does right because it is right, no matter whether it is convenient or not[.]"[429] Warner argues that higher always supersedes positive law. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* a similar sentiment is voiced by Mrs Bird in reaction to her husband's defence of the Fugitive Slave Act. "It's a shameful, wicked, abominable law, and I'll break it, for one, the first time I get a chance[.]"[430] Throughout her novel, Stowe argues that true religious sentiment was a higher authority than United States' law. Southworth, in contrast primarily uses references to religion to reveal corruption in the political system. As the exemplar of Christian virtue and republicanism, Cap reveals the author's hopes for the integration of these two pillars of American society. In their individual ways, all three authors argue the need for moral action in the government of the United States.

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[428] Ibid., vol. 2, 273.
[429] Ibid., vol. 2, 270.
[430] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 82.

These three examples of sentimental literature reveal the degree to which the authors were responding to the constantly changing religious state of their nation. Helping the public understand the expectations of true religious sentiment is a task that all three embrace. Each pursue it in a different way, yet they all consistently support evangelical Christianity. There was a need to reinvigorate the republican spirit of the layman and to recognise women as active participants in society. Both of these causes are given a religious dimension by the authors. The achievement of their nation's destiny, as a leader of the faithful, relies upon changing the perspective of the reader. Warner is intent upon reinvigorating the nation's lagging religiosity. Stowe too sees the reviving of love and charity as the answer to disagreement over the future of slavery in the United States. Southworth places the religious changes in the larger context of political and economic corruption in the United States. Each author has their own way of solving the problem, but all recognise the religious state of their nation as in need of revision.

Thesis Conclusion

Susan Warner, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Emma D.E.N. Southworth are astute critics of the public issues that unsettled ante-bellum society. Their novels are representative of women's engagement with public issues in an era defined by women's restriction to the private sphere. *The Wide, Wide World*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and *The Hidden Hand* also prove the ingenuity of women writers during the nineteenth century. The authors manipulate the demands of publishers and readers alike, to provide a social commentary on the United States in the 1850s. While Stowe's novel has been thoroughly analysed, the works of Warner and Southworth remain a largely unrealised source of information on gender relations, the economy, and religious revival. The three novels offer a unique perspective on a significant period in the history of the United States.

The authors' opinions on the separation of the private and public spheres reflect the controversy surrounding that issue. Analysis of the novels reveals that all three authors believe the nation would benefit by following the moral counsel of women. However, the authors disagree over how such a transformation in American politics should be brought about. Stowe advocates women maintain their separation from public sites of politics. The abolitionist author argues that women are more powerful within the home, influencing men's opinions by their loving example. Warner agrees with Stowe to an extent, although she recognises that certain situations require a woman to enter the public sphere. For that reason, it is crucial that women be well prepared to deal with the challenging experience. Like Warner, Southworth recognises that adherence to a higher law requires women to appear in public on occasion. Warner and Southworth encourage women to act upon their principles, regardless of whether doing so brought them into conflict with social mores. The similar attitudes of these two authors indicate that during the 1850s no radical changes to women's perception of the separation of the spheres occurred. Stowe's support of absolute separation of the private and public spheres is due to the abolitionist content of her novel. Stowe states her purpose as changing people's attitudes to slavery. It was not in her interests to contest women's restriction to the private sphere, because doing so might distract readers from the central issue.[431]

Stowe is the strongest critic of the market revolution because, like the separation of the spheres, the republican farmer was a powerful ideal in American culture, and helped garner support for the abolition of slavery.[432] Whereas Warner and Southworth demonstrate a discerning approval of the market revolution, Stowe champions the pioneering, republican family. Warner's embrace of capitalism is restricted to its positive impact on the lives of women. Innovation in transport, home furnishing, and access to educational material are described with approval. Southworth's opinion of the affects of market revolution is more judicious. She argues that there are more significant factors in determining a person's behaviour than whether they live in an industrial or a rural location. Warner celebrates some significant innovations brought about by market revolution, while by the end of the decade Southworth seems relatively unconcerned by the effects of industry upon people's morality. The rate of economic development during the 1850s may be responsible for the difference in attitude between these two authors.

The perspectives of the authors regarding religion are not as straightforward as their consideration of the separation of the spheres and market revolution. All three support evangelical Christianity and celebrate motherhood as a moral force. However, beyond these uncontroversial principles, the authors' opinions diverge. The issue of self-control demonstrates the diversity of opinion. Southworth champions the independence and autonomy of her heroine, and integrates religion within a republican framework. In contrast, Warner's heroine disciplines herself in direct relation to God. Her self-reproach consistently ends in prayer. Stowe considers discipline to be an entirely religious concern. Her approach is understandable considering slavery's unappealing association with physical discipline. The threat of imminent judgment by God is the principal motivation for moral behaviour in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It is impossible to determine, from the research undertaken, whether these diverse commentaries reflect a broader shift in attitude in the United States.

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[431] Sundquist, introduction, 6-7.
[432] Ibid. 31.

Mrs Putnam's demands of her son, "[i]f you never publish another book, publish this one."[433] Her statement gains new significance in light of a comprehensive examination of the texts. Certainly, there was a need for a revival of moral sentiments. All three novels are a response to this demand. Yet the authors achieve much more than simply reviving the conscience of the reader. Warner, Stowe, and Southworth provide social commentaries that are personal, covert, and astute.

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[433] Warner, *Susan Warner*, 283.

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